

SUPREME COURT DEFIED BY MOB

Hanging of Negro at Chattanooga, Without Precedent

EXECUTION STAYED

But in Face of Order From the Highest Tribunal, Citizens Effected Lynching

Special to The Telegram.

CHATANOOGA, Tenn., March 31.—Morally in contempt of the United States supreme court, this county of Hamilton, of the state of Tennessee, is waiting to see whether grave complications will not arise over the lynching of Ed Johnson, colored, after the highest tribunal in the land had ordered a stay of execution. The law was taken into its own hands, as has been so often done in the south, by a band of determined individuals to uphold the rather popular principle that crimes against the honor of white women

her way home in the suburbs. She is a working girl. Johnson was convicted in the state court last Feb. 6, and sentenced to be hanged March 20. Four days later N. W. Parden and S. L. Hutchens, colored attorneys, attempted to file a motion for a new trial, but under a rule of the court it was too late. The supreme court of Tennessee reviewed the record and said no error had been committed in the trial.

A writ of habeas corpus for Johnson was then sought of United States Circuit Judge Clark at Knoxville. He refused it. An appeal from his action was taken, and at noon on March 19 the United States supreme court granted a stay of execution.

In the meantime preparations had been made for the legal hanging on the next day of Johnson, who was again in the Chattanooga jail.

The city seemed quiet that evening. It was decidedly so at the jail. Except for Jailer Gibson, the coat was entirely clear. At 8 o'clock a dozen men, some with handkerchiefs over the lower part of their faces, strolled into the jail office. Then a few more came in, and after a while there were about seventy-five. About one-third of them were actively engaged in what followed.

While some of them argued with Gibson, two heavy doors were laboriously battered down. Just two and a half hours were consumed at the jail by the mob, and in the course of that time Sheriff Shipp was summoned to the jail by telephone. He endeavored to argue with the mob, but was locked up in a bath room.

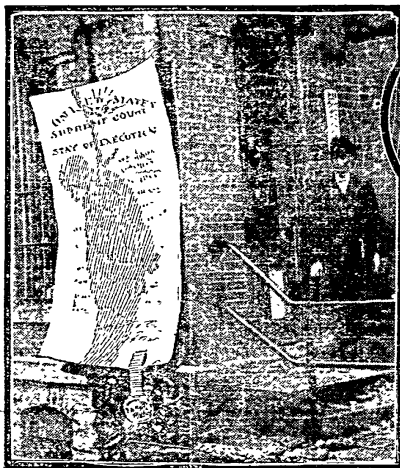
After securing him the mob dragged the negro through the street, vetoing the suggestion of several men to "kill him now."

On the bridge all demands for a confession were met with the words from Johnson, "I'm ready to die, but I never done it." He was promptly hoisted off

his feet by a rope around his neck. A fusillade of shots was turned loose and one bullet cut the rope, allowing the body to drop to the floor. No more time was wasted. The body had fifty bullets in it when it was found there by officers.

Next day the negroes were given their dead and they buried Johnson. Since then the city has been in a ferment. Numerous clashes between whites and blacks have occurred, and at times it seemed as if the city was on the verge of a huge race battle.

There is somewhat of a hush to see whether the supreme court or the federal authorities will act on this first nullification in history of an order of the highest court. If action does follow it will prove a grave matter. Results seem to hinge upon whether, under a strict construction of the law, the man Johnson was in the custody of the Federal court at the time he was taken from jail.



must be met with the extreme penalty as the only practicable deterrent.

Johnson's victim was Miss Nevada Taylor, 19, who was waylaid while on

Door where the lynchers entered the Chattanooga jail, the turnkey and Ed Johnson, whom the highest court in the land could not save.