

# Arkansas Gazette

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## ***WITH OFFICERS MAKING NO ATTEMPT AT RESTRAINT, MOB BURNS NEGRO'S BODY AND CREATES A REIGN OF TERROR***

**BODY DRAGGED  
THROUGH MAIN  
STREET OF CITY**

**Then Is Burned on Car  
Tracks at ninth Street  
and Broadway.**

**BLACK MAN IS BEATEN**

Frenzied Crowd Barely Re-  
Strained From Burning  
Him Alive.

**GUARD RESTORES ORDER**

Not content with lynching John Carter, 38-year-old negro, for an attack upon two white women yesterday morning, a hysterical mob dragged the body through Main street, by police headquarters, and burned it on the car tracks at Ninth street and Broadway, center of the negro business district.

Then, unrestrained by police or other authorities, the mob rioted from 7 to 10 o'clock, taking possession of West Ninth street, the negro business district. One negro was beaten severely and a white boy was shot accidentally through the leg. Except for the sound counsel of one sane man who addressed the mob at the height of its frenzy, the negro would have been burned alive on the funeral pyre of John Carter.

The one negro beaten by the mob at Ninth and Broadway, who later gave his name as Aren [this is different from the name farther down in the article, which says "Asen"] Christian, is believed to have been the only one injured in the rioting. It was reported that one had been killed outright and another had been shot, but these rumors could not be corroborated late last night.

### **Major Pitcock Is Willing**

Maj. James A. Pitcock, chief of detectives, urged Captain Crow to allow him to take steps to stop the rioting at Ninth and Broadway.

"If you'll let me pick 50 men, I can go up there and stop this business," he said. "We may lose a few men, but we would have the situation in hand."

“No,” said Captain Crow. “Can’t do it. This is in the hands of the City Council. We can’t do anything.”

At 10 o’clock the National Guard arrived and the rioting ceased. But until then there was no attempt on the part of the police, the sheriff’s department or any other official to quell the riot, or to check the indiscriminate firing of weapons, of which there were thousands in evidence.

Ordered by Governor Martineau, who was in Van Buren last night, Company H. 206th [number not entirely readable; 200 or 206] Coast Artillery, Arkansas National Guard, proceeded from the armory in the City park to Ninth street and Broadway, in charge of Capt. Harry Smith. Governor Martineau left Van Buren at midnight on a special train.

The detachment consisted of about 70 men in uniform, equipped with rifles with bayonets fixed, and carrying tear gas bombs. There was no violence after the guardsmen arrived, and no resistance was offered when Captain Smith took charge of the situation and coolly advised the crowd to disperse.

Guards were stationed along West Ninth street and patrols covered practically all of the city, especially those sections populated by negroes.

During the three hours in which the horde of maniacal men rules the city, there was an almost constant rattle of small arms in the vicinity of Ninth street and Broadway, punctuated at intervals by the heavier boom of shotguns. The firing was aimless, directed into the air or into the pavement.

Robert Love, aged 18, 1810 Main street, was the only victim of the careless shooting. He was sent to the General hospital where the manhandled negro also was sent.

Countless gallons of gasoline and kerosene were poured upon the bullet-ridden body of John Carter, who was lynched at 5:40 p.m. in the Hopson-Sachs addition, southwest of the city, by a posse which had been searching for him since 9 a.m. when he attacked and beat Mrs. B.E. Stewart and her daughter, Glennie.

### **Crowd at Funeral Pyre**

Thousands of persons, including men, women with babies in their arms, crowded around the fual [sic] pyre, presided over by two or three sweating, hoarse-voiced men.

Boxes, limbs and pieces of doors, windows, and even furniture were piled upon the body later when it ceased to flare sufficiently to please the spectators, and the body of John Carter was reduced to a charred crust.

Once, when a bucket of gasoline poured over the blaze flared brightly, it revealed the terrified face of a negro sneaking through the crowd. Apparently, he was a country negro, come to see what the excitement was about.

He was stealing away when one of the mob saw him—the first negro who had appeared on the scene since a torch was applied to the body at 7 p.m. He had his hands in his trousers pockets.

“What you got in your pockets?”

### **Pistol Found on Him**

The scared African raised his hands above his head: a man searched him and found a long-barreled pistol. He struck the negro over the head and he fell unconscious. He was placed in a car, just as the mob surged forward crying,

“Lynch him!”

“Burn him!”

“No! No!” shouted the one or two comparatively sane men in the crowd, “he hasn’t done anything. Let’s take him to police headquarters.”

An attempt was made to carry out the move to police headquarters, and the car was pushed west on Ninth street and down Arch street for half a block. Then a man fired into the car and others around him began firing into the air and into the pavement.

A white youth, Robert Love, was shot through the leg and a bullet glanced from the pavement and struck a man on the hand. Several were powder-burned.

When the bullet struck the car, the men in it abandoned it and a dozen others dragged the limp body of the unconscious negro to the pavement. He was trampled upon and kicked by as many as could get near him.

### **Youth Silences Mob**

Then he was dragged back to Ninth street and Broadway to be burned alive. But before he was thrown upon the coals, a slender young man, known only to the crowd as “Bill,” mounted the steps of a negro church on the northeast corner of the street and shouted for attention. The mob became silent for the first time during the night.

“Listen, men,” he spoke quietly and calmly, “don’t be fools. We’ve already righted one wrong, and if we ever get our hands on Frank and Lonnie Dixon, we’ll right another. But you’ve done enough for one night.

“This nigger has done nothing, except carry a pistol in a place where he could not possibly use a pistol. He’s nothing but a country coon come to town to see what’s going on and he found more than he expected.

“Send him on down to police headquarters, since there seems to be no policemen handy (laughs and jeers), and charge him with carrying a concealed weapon. If he doesn’t feel well, they can send him to the hospital.

“And you young fellows, put your pop-pistols back in your pockets before you kill one another. One kid has already been shot because some of you handle your guns like you would a toy balloon. You women take your babies home and put ’em under the covers. Then come back and everybody can stick around and have a good time.”

His words were greeted by applause and laughter. A delegation was sent to the city hall with the unconscious negro. Policed looked him over and said, “Take him on to the hospital.”

Someone else intervened with a suggestion that he be send in an ambulance. Healy & Roth sent an ambulance and the negro went to the General hospital.

About midnight he regained consciousness and attendants learned that his name was Asen Christian [*sic*], but his address was not learned.

### **Police Stay Away**

When it seemed that a second lynching was inevitable, two or three sane citizens telephoned police headquarters and described the situation, making an earnest appeal for interference in the plan to burn or hang an innocent negro. They received evasive replies and they waited in vain for the arrival of a squad of police.

Before the capture of the second negro it was reported to the leaders of the mob around the fire that the negroes of the city were mobilizing on East Sixth street and that a Western Union messenger boy had been shot by them.

### **East Sixth Street Searched**

There was a brief consultation among the leaders and one of them addressed his followers:

“The niggers are getting together down on East Sixth street and they’ve shot a Western Union boy,” he said. “Now all you men who have guns stay here, and all who know where they can get guns, go get ’em, and let’s go down there and wipe out the niggers.”

“If we can’t find enough guns of our own,” suggested another, “let’s break into a hardware store somewhere and get some. We need ammunition, too.”

Presently 100 cars, loaded with armed men, started for East Sixth street, but after a parade from one end to the other, in which they saw no more than two negroes together, they returned to Ninth street and Broadway.

### **Mayor and Chief Missing**

Neither Mayor Moyer nor Chief Rotenberry was at home or at the city hall during the trouble. Aldermen Gay, King and Bilheimer, Thomas Tatum, secretary to the mayor, Assistant Chief of Police Crow and others declared that they did not know the whereabouts of the absent officials. Those present appeared very much agitated and declined to make statements.

Assistant Chief Crow said that the police were helpless to cope with the mob, and he made no effort to interfere with the parade to Ninth street and Broadway or to prevent the burning of the body. Informed that several officers were engaged in a card game in the basement of the city hall during the rioting, Crow said he was not aware of that, but 30 minutes later the game still was in progress.

### **Police Well Armed**

Arms and ammunition were much in evidence at the well guarded city hall, and after the excitement had died down somewhat some of the policemen went several blocks from the building, directing traffic when the drivers permitted themselves to be directed.

While Major Fredeman waited with a company of National Guardsmen for authorization to order them out, an effort was made to learn who, in Mayor Moyer's absence, might request the guard's assistance. But Little Rock was without even an acting mayor, so the alderman said, so Major Fredeman was forced to hold his men until Governor Martineau, called by telephone in Van Buren, ordered him to use the guardsmen.

A conference from which a Gazette man was barred, took place in the chief's office after Governor Martineau's order was received.

Prosecuting Attorney Boyd Cypert refused to announce his intentions, indicating that he will leave action up to the Grand Jury, which met yesterday, when Foreman Gordon N. Peay issued a statement, saying that rioting will be investigated and the violaters [sic] indicted when they are identified. Mr. Peay said last night the Grand Jury will meet today or tomorrow, probably to investigate last night's affair.