THE 1904, 1906, AND 1921 RACE RIOTS IN SPRINGFIELD, OHIO
AND THE HOODLUM THEORY

A Thesis

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PUBLICATIONS

"Three Clark Countians Won Highest Military Honor," Springfield News-Sun, May
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"The Constitution: Is It Economic or Democratic," Springfield News-Sun, September
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"North Didn't Play Role in Ending Slavery Most Think It Did," Springfield News-Sun,
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"History - Link to Reality or Escape From It," Springfield News-Sun, February 23,
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"Racism Will Continue Until Black History is Understood," Springfield News-Sun,
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INTRODUCTION

Understanding of the economic, political, and social environment in which the Springfield riots of the early 20th century occurred is enhanced by initially considering the racial history of Ohio and the Springfield community prior to the first riot in 1904. As a northern state, Ohio's 19th century race relations did not develop from the circumstances of slavery, but from issues dealing more with economic and political opportunity.

The Ordinance of 1787, which affected lands that would later become Ohio, prohibited slavery. In 1803 when Ohio was granted statehood, 337 free blacks were counted as residents. The following year, the Ohio legislature enacted laws prohibiting blacks from settling in Ohio without papers attesting their freedom. Members of the small free black population were required to register with the county clerk at a fee, and fines were imposed upon whites assisting fugitive slaves.

In 1807, Ohio lawmakers, seeking to further restrict the movement about Ohio by blacks, mandated that each black post a $500 bond to guarantee his good behavior when entering the state. In addition, blacks were prohibited from testifying in court against a white person. This legal disability resulted in an environment where blacks were helpless against white criminality or civil encroachment, unless such acts were witnessed by a white person.

The Ohio legislature passed Ohio's "Black Laws" in 1829 which barred blacks from pauper homes, asylums, public schools, bearing arms, and service in the state.
militia. Subsequently, blacks were declared ineligible for jury service.⁴ If legislative intent is considered a theoretical reflection of public sentiment, it can be concluded that a strong climate of racial animosity was directed in Ohio against blacks. The result of these laws was that Ohio's black population was relegated to subservience, poverty, and political impotence.

Despite the negative attitude of white Ohioans before slavery was abolished in 1863, actual incidents of violence were rare until the late 1820's. This was largely due to the fact that not only were blacks a small percentage of the Ohio population, they lived mostly in remote areas to themselves on land requisitioned to them by their former masters in the South.⁵ However, as the free black population grew, so did hostile confrontations with whites.

The steady growth of the black population was not only because of the arithmetical reality of births exceeding deaths, but the emigration of former slaves who were either fugitives, had purchased their freedom, or were manumitted by their masters. The black population in Ohio grew from the 337 original freedmen in 1803 to 17,345 by 1840, and to 36,673 in 1860, the year before the start of the Civil War.⁶ This dramatic increase in numbers made free blacks a substantial entity in Ohio and more difficult for whites to ignore.

The whites that had settled in Ohio when statehood was achieved were mostly English stock, New Englanders. They were soon followed by Scotch-Irish from Virginia and the Carolinas. The westward migration that occurred after the War of 1812 brought increased numbers of German-Americans.⁷ This ethnic mix brought with it the origins of political and philosophical conflict. The anti-slavery clause of the Ordinance of 1787 attracted New Englanders, Quakers, and others opposed to slavery and racial oppression, while land and economic opportunity lured settlers from Southern slave states who were often opposed to the notion of black rights.
Instances of racial attacks on blacks began in 1829. That year in Cincinnati city authorities gave black citizens 30 days to comply with the 1807 bond law. The blacks requested a 30 day extension while an emissary was sent to Canada to find a location for them to settle. The extension period expired before the emissary returned and a mob of whites burned the black section of town. Approximately 1200 blacks left Cincinnati in the aftermath. There were many other such incidents and increased racial tension as large numbers of Irish immigrants arrived in Ohio during the 1830's to work in the canal systems and the early railroads.

Although Ohio's largest black population was in the Cincinnati area, there were many settlements around the state. 70 miles north of Cincinnati, black communities began to develop in the Springfield and Dayton, Ohio area. These towns located in Clark and Montgomery Counties, respectively, attracted many free blacks because of the tone of racial tolerance set by the many local Presbyterians and Quakers. Combined with the black settlements of Tawana Springs and Wilberforce in bordering Greene County, this pocket boasted the third largest concentration of black persons in Ohio at that time.

Supposedly the first black person in Springfield was called "Tony" and he operated a tavern in the business district, at the present day intersection of Fountain and Main Streets. According to accounts, the earliest black residents had earned their freedom through Revolutionary War service, and had received grants of land in the Northwest Territory. Although confirming records could not be found in Springfield or Clark County, this supposition is corroborated by the circumstances of Richard Stanhope, George Washington's personal servant. After Washington's death in 1799, Stanhope was freed and deeded a tract of land in Champaign County, about 13 miles north of Springfield.
By 1824, there were about 50 blacks living in Springfield and the African Methodist Episcopal denomination established a church.\textsuperscript{14} The presence and status of free blacks in the Springfield area was a matter of concern to the white citizens. This was evidenced in 1826 by the establishing of a Colonization Society chapter. This organization, with branches throughout the free states, supported the deportation of blacks to Africa or the Caribbean. Support for this project fluctuated in fervor for a number of years.\textsuperscript{15}

To debate the more encompassing issue of abolition, whites formed the Clark County Anti-Slavery Society in 1842. But whites that supported abolition were a minority in the Springfield area and were sometimes even objects of physical attack.\textsuperscript{16}

Although white Springfielders shared a certain intolerance of the black population with most Ohioans, the circumstances at Wilberforce in nearby Greene County offered support and hope for the freedmen of southwest Ohio. Even during the early years of this settlement, it was considered by blacks as a refuge from the pervasive racial intolerance of the times. In 1844, the Ohio Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church selected the Wilberforce and Tawawa Springs area for an institution dedicated to the higher education of black people. Finally, in 1856, Wilberforce College was founded.\textsuperscript{17}

Meanwhile, by 1850, the black population of Springfield had grown to 212. The first known city directory published in 1852 lists most of the black residents as laborers, farmers, and draymen. Several barbers were listed. Most lived in the southwest part of the city.\textsuperscript{18} In 1855 a planter in Cynthiana, Kentucky freed his slaves, a family named Basey, who then journeyed with an attorney to Springfield to acquire land for a new home. The purchase of real estate by one of these former slaves represents the earliest record of black land ownership in Springfield.\textsuperscript{19}
As the free black population grew in Springfield and other parts of Ohio, their presence was the touchstone of intense white political speculation and controversy as a corollary to the slavery question. Routinely the objects of random white violence, blacks became even more vulnerable when the slavery issue became more heated after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law Compromise in 1850. Although those in favor of the abolition of slavery in Springfield and Clark County were a decided minority, there were influential anti-slavery factions, and a decade before the Civil War local white citizens formed the interracial Springfield Underground Railroad Association. Springfield became a station for the lodging of fugitive slaves.20

Springfield and Clark County became heavily Republican government subdivisions as the slavery issue battle lines were drawn in the 1850's. The issue of emancipation had been publicized in Ohio throughout most of the 1800's by abolitionists that were centered in the Reserve area of northeastern Ohio. Abolitionist Republican politicians such as Samuel P. Chase and Joshua Giddings advocated emancipation of the slaves before the Civil War, so abolition was considered in Ohio as an exclusive Republican goal, while Democrats championed the preservation of the Union and white supremacy.21 However, the Republican platform was not inconsistent with the widespread disdain of abolitionists and blacks. Even Chase, the founder of the Liberty and Free-Soil parties believed, along with Abraham Lincoln, that freed black slaves should be deported to South America or the Caribbean. There were few Ohioans, even among the most ardent abolitionists, that believed in equal rights for blacks.22

This split personality displayed by white Ohioans on matters of race was illustrated in 1857 during the case of Addison White, a runaway slave captured just north of Springfield in Champaign County. When whites accused of sheltering White were arrested, a group of Springfielders apprehended the federal marshals as they
transported the prisoners to Cincinnati. Many Springfields were angered about the enforcement of laws recognizing the rights of southern slaveholders on Ohio soil, yet were strongly opposed to racial equality.23

In the presidential election of 1860, Abraham Lincoln defeated Stephen A. Douglas, a Democrat. In Ohio, Lincoln won by an overwhelming margin. The platform espoused by the Republicans did not offend the traditional racialanimosity towards blacks in Ohio. In fact the ability of the Republicans to attack slavery as a moral evil, while suggesting free western territories for white men and advocating white supremacy, proved a winning formula in Ohio and the other Northern states.24

The Civil War began in 1861. By that time Springfield had grown to 7,002, including 276 black residents. At that time many more people were engaged in farming and lived outside of the city limits in rural Clark County. The population of the entire county was 25,300, with an additional 216 blacks living outside of Springfield.25

Springfield was strongly in agreement with Lincoln's call for troops and eligible men enlisted in droves. During the course of the war Clark Countians formed thirty-four companies of soldiers. County blacks were mustered and formed the Fifth United States Colored Regiment and the Duquesne Blue which were not numerically identified.26

After the Civil War came to an end, the Springfield community was poised for an unprecedented spurt in population and economic growth. Many Springfield companies had converted to war munitions during the conflict, increasing manufacturing capabilities. As the Industrial Revolution began to transform the American economy in the 1870's, Springfield became one of the nation's largest manufacturers of farm machinery.27
Industrialists William Foos, Phineas Mast, William Whitely, Asa Bushnell, and O. S. Kelly cooperated with each other to achieve prosperity for Springfield through industry. These businessmen formed the Champion Companies and the Springfield Machine Tool Company. By 1877 Springfield had become the largest maker of farm implements in the world.28

The economic opportunities that followed this rapid economic growth saw Springfield's population double in size from the end of the Civil War to 1880.29 Although the local census did not index the number of blacks in 1870 or 1880 and the Springfield City Directory stopped making racial distinctions, the steady growth of the black population was easily detected by the burgeoning number of householders in the black sections of town.30

Although the black populations of Northern cities was growing throughout the Midwest, blacks were particularly attracted to Springfield because of unique situations in metal and machine industries due to Asa Bushnell's opening the Champion Companies to black workers in the late 1870's. The demand for both skilled and unskilled labor was so great that white businessmen began to consider the recently emancipated blacks as an important source of cheap labor.31

There was intense opposition to the hiring of black workers from the all-white Iron Molder's Union, who were an affiliate of the Knights of Labor. The union was successful in limiting the number of blacks in the Springfield factories until an 1886 labor dispute, when the Champion Company discharged all union affiliated workers. During a lockout that lasted for weeks, company owners hired local blacks and blacks from Kentucky and Tennessee to man the foundries. When the strike ended, the power of the union had been diminished and even more blacks were hired in Springfield factories.32
Although economic opportunities were growing for Springfield blacks, conditions were far from enviable. Those who found employment in the factories were placed in segregated groups or assigned the most arduous and distasteful tasks, and chances for advancement were absolutely nil. Most other blacks in the work force were day laborers and domestics. There was complete segregation in housing, public accommodations, and nearly as much in social interaction. Although given the vote in 1869, there were segregation laws in Ohio codifying white hostilities, requiring separate schools and many public accommodations until 1887.\textsuperscript{33} Black economic growth and progress had to be outside of the mainstream.

During the 1870's the black community of Springfield first asserted itself in order to shed second class status. On February 6, 1872 black Springfielders met at the Asbury Chapel and drafted a petition for submission to the Springfield Board of Education requesting the admission of "colored children" into the public schools. Although the petition was rejected and the Board responded by building an all black school on Pleasant Street, this began a tradition of black community activism.\textsuperscript{34}

Encouraged by prominent Springfielders like Asa Bushnell, Congressman Warren J. Kiefer, and prominent attorney Oscar Martin, blacks became active in Republican Party politics. The Republican Party saw the black vote as useful in counterbalancing the growing Democratic Party faction in the city. Blacks were more than willing to accommodate because racist labor unions and German and Irish ethnics were seen as using the Democratic Party as a vehicle for white supremacy.\textsuperscript{35} Black support of the Republican Party was instrumental in the repeal of Ohio's last segregation law in 1887, and keeping the interest of blacks on the table in matters relevant to race. A growing black middle-class, led by Frederick Dent, George Reynolds, and AME minister John Gazaway, and others, gave leadership and interdenominational continuity to the black community.\textsuperscript{36}
The benefits of political participation reached fruition as black Springfielders began securing jobs that hereunto had been the exclusive domain of whites. With the Republicans representing a traditional electoral majority, the "to the victor goes the spoils" system began to benefit black Springfielders. In 1885 William A. Gregory was appointed a patrolman with the Springfield Police Department. He was followed on the force by Lisbon Basey, while Alonzo Morgan was appointed the superintendent of the city prison chain gang. W. Forest Speaks became a deputy clerk in the Common Pleas Court, and Miss Mattie Quisenberry was appointed a clerk in the County Recorder's Office.37 On the federal level, Aivah Calinas, George Holland, and John Rudd were hired as letter carriers for the post office. Though a meager olive branch if measured by modern standards, these positions were accepted by the black community with pride and were the source of considerable optimism.38

The black population in Springfield had grown to 3,549 by 1890, constituting about 11% of the total population and was beginning to thrive within limited parameters.39 With the Wilberforce College community providing leadership, black Springfielders had reasonable access to culture, interracial interaction, and the inspiration derived from educated, prominent black industrialists. Nationally known scholars such as Wilberforce College President William Sanders Scarborough, elocutionist Hallie Quinn Brown, and poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar lived in the area. The convenient proximity of Wilberforce College, the only black college in the North, offered the opportunity for many black Springfielders to attend college and to aspire to an improved set of racial norms.40

By the turn of the century, 4,253 blacks lived in Springfield. Although most were unskilled laborers and domestics, there was at least token representation in some of the government offices. There was a visible professional class made up of several doctors, clergymen and merchants. Black Springfielders were served by three Baptist
and three African Methodist Episcopal Churches. Black men and women supported about a dozen secret Masonic and Knights of Pythias societies and a Young Men's Christian Association. There were several black baseball teams, and numerous bands and vocal groups that were well known in the area. Excluded from white social, cultural, and athletic activities, black Springfield developed a cohesiveness born out of necessity.

However, the cohesion of black social life was not reflected in residential patterns. The earliest black settlers in Springfield lived in the southwest section of Springfield, about one half mile from the downtown business district. As Springfield grew in every direction, blacks seeking homes could not invade white neighborhoods, but acquired homes in sections adjacent to the white subdivisions as they were built. This allowed whites acceptable distance while granting blacks convenience since many of them worked for the whites. As the city grew these black residential areas became islands as the white population expanded and established new corporation limits. Thus there were black neighborhoods in every section of town, although the lions share of blacks continued to live in the southwest quadrant.

A black amusement district evolved on the south side of the downtown commercial area on East Washington Streets, running east and west between Center and Fountain Streets. Here a string of dive bars and cheap ill-kept apartments flourished due to the largesse of cheap liquor, gambling and prostitution. The pursuit of vice was interracial as gamblers, prostitutes, and their customers of both races congregated. This red light district was commonly referred to as the "Levee." Another resort of similar stripe was situated on East Columbia about 5 blocks east of the "Levee." Known as the "Jungles," it was also supported by the criminal elements of the community.
In spite of the fact that the real estate and buildings of both the "Levee" and "Jungles" were owned by whites, most of the barkeepers were black.\textsuperscript{45} The close proximity of these vice retreats to the downtown business center made them impossible to ignore. The legal technicality of white ownership did not prevent white Springfielders from giving the local crime and vice problems a black face. The opportunity to associate blacks with moral decadence provided whites an even wider basis for racial bitterness.

The racial climate immediately preceding the 1904 and 1906 riots was tense, as a result of deep rooted white racial frustration. Since 1886 there was smoldering resentment against blacks because of their role as strikebreakers in the Champion Company labor dispute. Most white factory workers viewed black workers as a bargaining chip for management to use to place white workers at a disadvantage. The black workers represented not just competition for a given job, but potentially lower wages for white workers because of the union's weakened position. Furthermore, many whites continued to hold grudges from the school integration fights that were never resolved locally, but were quieted by state legislation. The fact that their children were compelled to attend school with blacks was irritating to many local whites.\textsuperscript{46}

In his turn of the century sociological study of Springfield, Professor Edwin S. Todd wrote, "This animosity on the part of whites towards black is strong growing." He submitted that crime and poor law enforcement exacerbated the racial bitterness. In particular, the failure of local politicians to enforce ordinances regulating saloons and gambling houses allowed blacks to turn Springfield into a wide open city where gambling and prostitution flourished. Todd concluded that the general public believed that law enforcement was compromised for financial profit of corrupt politicians and blacks who allegedly sold their votes.\textsuperscript{47}
Local vice was one reason or excuse for deteriorating race relations in Springfield. The steady migration of southern blacks to northern cities meant a rapid increase in the black population. Springfield, like many other midwestern cities, experienced increased racial confrontations as competition for jobs and housing were played out on a stage of pervasive racial prejudice and beliefs in white supremacy. The particulars of the political corruption problem were Springfield's own, the migration of southern blacks was a sociological problem being experienced throughout the North.48

As in other northern cities, the black community in Springfield, Ohio, at the turn of the century, operated in an environment confined by racist folkways, social ostracization, and an economic caste system that restricted blacks to the lowest occupational strata. And yet, though racial tensions were undeniable, the races seemed to have achieved a state of peaceful co-existence. There were no cases of white mob violence against blacks in Springfield, Ohio before the turn of the century.49

The racial circumstances in Springfield, Ohio were not dissimilar to other northern cities with growing black populations nor the entire country for that matter. Despite lynchings in the South, large scale random attacks on the blacks and their property in urban settings were rare. But during the first quarter of this century, the United States experienced destructive race rioting that was unparalleled until the 1960’s.50

In addition to the Springfield, Ohio riots, there were major episodes of urban racial violence in Springfield, Illinois, Atlanta, Georgia (1906), East St. Louis, Illinois (1917), Chicago and Omaha, Nebraska (1919), and Tulsa, Oklahoma (1921). Numerous other riots in smaller cities also occurred during this era. As a consequence, racial violence became the subject of considerable media and scholarly speculation out of which emerged the "hoodlum theory" or the belief that the participants in race riots were young, unattached, unemployed, uprooted and, in general terms, criminals.51
The purpose of this paper is twofold. The first objective is to examine the race riots of Springfield, Ohio that broke out in 1904, 1906, and 1921. The second objective is to demonstrate that the 1921 riot, with black middle-class participants, reached a different conclusion than the two earlier riots and somewhat discredits the hoodlum theory.

A race riot is best defined as an unofficial, extra-legal act of group violence directed against persons or property of a certain race. In the United States, race riots can be classified into three basic types: the white riot, the white-black riot, and the black riot. A white riot is the physical attack on blacks or their property by a group of whites. Black resistance is minimal. The Atlanta, Georgia (1904), Springfield, Ohio (1904 and 1906), Springfield, Illinois (1908), and the East St. Louis, Illinois (1917) riots fit this category.52

The white-black riot finds both races armed and engaging in a series of battles. The Chicago riot (1919) and Springfield, Ohio (1921) riots are examples of this type of conflict. The black riot, which was the last to evolve, is largely confined to the ghettos and is characterized by the destruction of mostly white owned property and businesses. Emerging in the 1930's, the black riot is anachronistic to this study.53

The hoodlum theory developed over the years ancillary to the strain of American historiography concerned with urban racial violence. In 1908, muckraker Ray Stannard Baker in Following the Color Line concluded that racial repulsion, a growing black population, increased crime, political corruption, and job competition, produced white animosity toward blacks that led to racial violence in northern cities. He submitted that the "better class" of blacks did not engender ill-will to the extent of other blacks.54 Baker's archaic book shows that the seeds of the hoodlum theory were sown early and suggests the tendency of whites to differentiate acceptable blacks by certain behavior. If one is to reasonably suppose that Baker's definition of "better
class" was those law-abiding and decent, then the implication here is clearly that the blacks not in the better class have criminal tendencies. It should be noted that in the context of attitudes held by the whites interviewed by Baker, blacks who resisted subordinate status and mistreatment did not fit the definition of better class blacks.

Five years later, in 1913, Frank V. Quillin released The Color Line in Ohio, a history of race prejudice in Ohio, with critiques of numerous cities within the state. Quillin laid another brick upon the structure of the hoodlum theory. While referring to the causes and effects of the 1904 and 1906 Springfield riots, he pointed to the large number of "insolent Negroes" that had recently migrated from the South. He opined that the newly arrived blacks were unwelcome by both whites and the "old Negroes" who had lived in the community for a spell and knew their proper role. Quillin proposed that the more established and respected blacks distanced themselves from the newly migrated blacks who caused the situations that led to the race riots.

Some black leaders, perhaps unwittingly, made repeated contributions to the hoodlum theory, preaching that the "better class" of black citizens did not participate in or condone riotous behavior. This posture was evident even during the rash of riots in 1919 where white mob violence was directed often randomly against blacks. So irritating were the instructions of some black spokesmen to refrain from self-defense that they were sometimes chastised by the black press.

In 1922, the Chicago Commission on Race Relations published The Negro in Chicago. This was the first thorough sociohistorical analysis of a northern twentieth century race riot. Citing a failure to reconcile white race prejudice with the increase in the black population as the cause of the 1919 Chicago riot, this study placed a large amount of blame on marauding gangs. This conclusion gave persuasive corroboration to the belief that respectable, solid citizens, did not become involved in
this type of behavior, except as victims. This study was often relied upon in
subsequent examinations of the urban riot problem.

In 1927, Edward Bryan Reuter concluded in *The American Race Problem* that,
although economic competition between the races in northern cities stirred latent racial
prejudices, post World War I race relations were exacerbated by "rude and offensive
behavior of certain migrant Negroes." 59 Although a liberal, Reuter submitted that
these transplants from the South, feeling the oats of their new found liberties, were a
prime accessory to the epidemic of riots.

Drawing liberally from the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, Gunnar
Myrdal's famous 1944 sociohistory *An American Dilemma*, listed the economic
insecurity of whites, white underclass boredom, and the improvement of black
economics and political status as the factors that precipitated northern urban racial
violence. Myrdal did not comment on the social status of black rioters, but he
bestowed upon white rioters the hoodlum mantel. 60 Myrdal's failure to speculate on
probable status of the black participants was perhaps due to an assumption that blacks
were chosen at random as victims, and, regardless of class, their participation was
limited to putting up whatever defense that they could muster.

The momentum of the aforementioned studies deeply entrenched the hoodlum
theory as an unquestioned concept and fact of life. After a considerable lull, race riots
again came under extensive scholarly scrutiny mostly as a result of the social turmoil of
the 1960's. In 1970 Leonard L. Richards released *Gentlemen of Property and
Standing*, a study of the social status of men comprising anti-abolition mobs before the
Civil War. Finding that majority of the identified participants were professional and
highly skilled craftsmen, Richards shot an arrow at the heart of the general assumption
that mobs are comprised of the sweepings of society. 61 Although Richards' subject
matter precedes twentieth century rioting, his thesis drew attention to the hoodlum theory as possibly misleading.

In 1971, Robert M. Fogelson in *A Study of Riots and Ghettos*, criticized the hoodlum theory, and, although he did not effectively discredit it, he suggested that it should at least be subject to question. Fogelson submitted that for most whites, the hoodlum theory is reassuring. This was because if black rioters were believed to be a small fraction of the black population, comprised of hoodlums, and their actions were opposed by the large majority of "respectable" blacks, then race riots were not caused by any significant societal defect.

Nonetheless, historical and sociological studies concerning northern race riots tend to accept the hoodlum theory as axiomatic. Sufficient evidence exists to allow rational concurrence with this theory because urban racial violence is usually considered apart from the community sentiment that might support rioting and there are few identifiable participants to investigate. In this spirit, the Springfield riots should be examined.
INTRODUCTION

NOTES

1. The Ordinance of 1787 - No. 32, Article VI. However, the Ordinance provided that ...any person escaping into the same from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed in one of the original states, each fugitive may be lawfully claimed and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labor or service as aforesaid.

2. Betty Culpepper, "The Negro and the Black Laws of Ohio 1803-1860" (Master's thesis, Kent State University, 1965) pgs. 6-17

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.


11. The tavern was at the northeast corner of Fountain and Main Streets. In 1904 Richard Dixon's body was hanged at this intersection on the southeast corner. Dr. Benjamin F. Prince, A Standard History of Springfield and Clark County, Ohio (Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, 1922), p. 375

13. Ibid.


15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.; Chaucey Paul, an abolitionist, allowed a black lecturer to use a building on his farm to speak on the evils of slavery. Upon hearing the news some white Springfields went to Paul's farm where they tarred and feathered him. Springfield Republic, September 13, 1844.

17. Washington, "A Negro College Town," p. 9364-65. The black community at Wilberforce was founded in 1822 when Reverend Godfrey Brown of Virginia paid $5,650 for the freedom of his wife and 12 children and moved to Ohio. Brown and his sons built the Middle Run Baptist Church there, probably the oldest black church in Ohio. A small school for black children was established, starting in the Wilberforce area, a tradition of black education.


19. Filed on April 20, 1861, a deed records a real estate transfer of Lot #269, at the corner of Shaffer and Cedar Streets from John and Permelia Kost to Yearly and Betsy Basye. This is the first known real estate purchase by blacks in Springfield, Ohio. Ernestine Garrett Lucas, *From Paris to Springfield* (Decorah, Iowa: Amundsen Publishing Co., 1983) p. 166

20. The original members of the Springfield Underground Railroad were Ann Warder, wife of industrialist Jeremiah Warder; John D. Nichols; E. A. Neff; Alex Cole, railroad conductor; George W. Cheney, railroad conductor; Samuel Smith, a tanner; Christopher Thompson, a stonemason; M. S. Steele, a grocer; Rev. Joshua Boucher; and O. S. Morrow, a businessman. Blacks who joined were Robert Piles, a barber; Harry Washington, a bricklayer; and George Durgan, a hotel porter. This information is from a letter written by O. S. Morrow in 1851 and published in *Yester-Year in Clark County* Vol. 6 (Clark County Historical Society, 1972), p. 7


24. Voegeli, *Free But NOT Equal*, p. 4

25. Todd, *A Sociological Study of Clark County* p. 46


28. Ibid.

29. Todd, *A Sociological Study of Clark County, Ohio*, p. 46

30. Williams' *Springfield City Directory* (Williams and Company Compilers and Publishers, 1880)


32. Ibid.

33. Rodabaugh, "The Negro in Ohio" p. 20


36. Gerber, *Black Ohio and the Color Line*

38. Ibid., p. 21

39. Todd, *Sociological Study of Clark County*, p. 46


43. Rockel, *History of Springfield and Clark County*, pgs. 137-38

44. Ibid.


46. When Quillin visited Springfield, Ohio while researching racism in Ohio, he asked white Springfielders about the areas of their resentment towards the blacks in the community that had fueled the first two riots. School integration was still a major sore spot in 1904 and 1906, years after it had been required in 1887. Frank U. Quillin, *The Color Line in Ohio: A History of Race Prejudice in a Typical Northern State* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Historical Society, 1913), p. 141


49. It should be noted that on June 4, 1897, Chick Mitchell, a young black man was taken from the jail in Urbana, Ohio, 11 miles north of Springfield, and lynched for an alleged assault on a white woman. Ralph Ginzberg, *100 Years of Lynching* (Baltimore, MD: Black Classic Press, 1962)


51. The definition of the hoodlum theory for the purpose of this study was partially derived from the three-pronged definition set forth in Robert M. Fogelson's *Violence as Protest: A Study of Riots and Ghettos*, (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971), p. 39


54. Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line: American Negro Citizenship in the Progressive Era* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1908), p. 17. Baker wrote, "The poor white hated the Negro, and the Negro hates the poor white. It is in these lower strata of society, where the races rule together in unclean street, that the fire is generated...The ignorant Negro and the uneducated white; there lies the trouble!"

55. Quillin, *The Color Line in Ohio* p. 142

56. Ibid.

57. "Negro Leaders Compromise as Usual," *The Messenger*, (September 1919) *The Messenger*, a black journal, was furious at hearing black leaders scold blacks for having fought in Chicago and Washington in 1919.


60. Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, p. 569


62. Fogelson, *Violence as Protest*, p. 28

63. Ibid. Fogelson believes that for most whites, the hoodlum theory is very reassuring. If the black rioters were a tiny fraction of the black population, comprised of hoodlums and outside agitators, and opposed by a large majority of respectable blacks, then riots were less ominous.
Chapter I

THE LYNCHING OF RICHARD DIXON AND THE 1904 RACE RIOT

Since the school integration and labor strike controversies of the 1880's, race relations in Springfield, Ohio had deteriorated, seeming at a rate that was in proportion to black population growth. Whites in the city popularly believed that blacks sold their votes to the political faction with the highest pitch, and that corrupt politicians owed their positions to this electoral maneuvering. These elected officials supposedly intervened when black criminals were arrested and prevented the prosecution of vice in the "Levee." Not only was the "Levee" considered the sanctuary of the black criminal element but its proximity to the picturesque town square esplanade, was thought by many white Springfields to be a moral and cosmetic blight.

It should be noted that the frustrations felt by white Springfields concerning law and order was not entirely racially based. There was considerable discontent with the way that the local justice system was dealing with all serious crime. Twelve murders occurred between 1902 and 1904, and although six were committed by blacks, the loudest objections were directed towards the lenience enjoyed by white defendants.\(^1\)

This two year period was labeled as a 'reign of murder' in a local police department history in which the light sentences meted out were said to be the subject of great public discontent.\(^2\) No one in the history of Clark County had ever been sentenced to death and local popular folklore claimed that there was a covenant reverting the real estate upon which the courthouse stood back to the original owners
heirs, if anyone was sentenced to die in the building. By March, 1904, Springfield had become a powder keg of racial and political tension awaiting a match.

The Springfield police station was located near the corner of Center and Washington Street, just west of the business district and a stone throw from the "Levee." The Jones Hotel at 45 Washington Street, was the residence of an unmarried black couple, Mamie Corbin and Richard Dixon. They had an eight year old son who also lived there. The couple had moved to Springfield two years earlier from Cynthiana, Kentucky. Their relationship was a rocky one with Corbin frequently asking Dixon to move out. Dixon, listed in the city directory as a carpenter, worked irregularly and spent most of his time at Hurley Saloon at 25 W. Washington.

Finally Corbin concluded that the best way to rid herself of Dixon was to see him incarcerated. She filed fornication charges against him alleging that they were unmarried and living in a common abode, and on September 9, 1903 he was arrested. During the October session of the Clark County grand jury, Dixon was indicted and plead guilty before Common Pleas Judge Jacob K. Mower. Dixon was fined five dollars and given a suspended six month jail sentence conditioned on his good behavior.

On the evening of his release, the police again arrested Dixon for drunk and disorderly conduct and his jail sentence was reimposed. After serving two months and three days, he was released. However, he failed to pay a fifty dollar fine, and so he was again placed in jail and was finally released on February 27, 1904. Now a free man, he attempted to resume residence with Corbin at the Jones Hotel, but she refused him, causing a considerable commotion. The police were called and Dixon was ordered away from the hotel. It is not known where Dixon stayed the following week, but he was seen regularly in the Hurley's Saloon.

On Sunday morning, March 6, 1904, at about 8:30 a.m., Dixon wanted to visit his former apartment to obtain some belongings that he had left. To avoid trouble,
Dixon decided to have a policeman escort him. He walked to the police station and asked Officer Charles Collis to escort him to the Jones Hotel. Upon their arrival Corbin refused to allow Dixon and Collis in the apartment. Corbin and Dixon began to quarrel and Dixon pushed the door open, pulled a .38 caliber Smith & Wesson revolver and shot Corbin. Collis grabbed at the gun in an attempt to disarm Dixon, but Dixon maintained possession and shot Collis twice.9

After shooting Corbin and Collis, Dixon ran from the hotel into the street and hurried into the nearby police station with a severely injured Collis in pursuit. Once inside, Dixon surrendered to Police Sergeant William E. Johnson. Collis collapsed in the street before he could make the police station.10 Both shooting victims were removed to City Hospital for treatment. Corbin was shot through the breast, but the wound did not involve any vital organs and was not life-threatening. Collis was not so fortunate. Dr. Harry L. Miller, while examining Collis, discovered that Collis' gunshot wound to the abdomen was practically identical to the fatal wound suffered by President William McKinley three years earlier.11

Meanwhile, an interracial crowd gathered around the police station and began asking that Dixon be turned over to them for punishment. The blacks undoubtedly were angry with Dixon for having shot the Corbin woman. Dixon was soon transported from the police station to the county jail, located six blocks away, next to the courthouse on East Columbia Street.12 Word of the shooting spread fast, creating an excited tension throughout the city. On Monday morning, local newspapers basically convicted Dixon of premeditated murder. Beginning with the headline, "CHARLES COLLIS SHOT AND MORTALLY WOUNDED BY RICHARD DIXON, A NEGRO," the Springfield Press-Republic printed that Dixon was heard to say by an unidentified source, "I will kill a white man within an hour." After his surrender to Sergeant Johnson, Dixon reportedly said, "Oh, I ain't got no more (guns)."
I done all the dirt I want to now." The paper editorialized "that Dixon was bent on committing murder is almost certain." The Press-Republic also attacked Dixon's integrity by calling him a liar. This label was based on his alleged statement at the police station that he did not know who shot Collis. Also reported was that when Dixon was told that Mamie Corbin's wounds were not fatal, an expression of disgust settled over his face.14

The Springfield press also focused on the mortally wounded Collis. Collis was forty-five years old and lived at 107 Edwards Avenue on the east side of town with his wife Annie and their two young daughters. He had been on the police force for twelve years and was also a court bailiff. Both the Press-Republic and Sun gave poignant accounts of Collis awaiting his demise surrounded by his loved ones. He was in great pain, but was conscious and was able to make out his last will and testament and a dying declaration to the police concerning the facts of his shooting. Dr. Miller provided the press with Collis' pulse, body temperature and respiratory rates and these were printed.15

Dr. Miller also provided the Springfield newspapers with a quote by Collis, that was given to him two days before the shooting. Collis supposedly said, "that if Springfield had the money which had been spent in its murder cases, there would be more than enough to pave the entire city of Springfield."16 This is an interesting statement in the context of this situation, because it could be reasonably taken as encouragement to lynch a murder suspect to avoid the time and expense of a trial.

At any rate, Collis expired at about eleven o'clock Monday morning, on March 7. By the time many Springfielders read the accounts of the shootings and Collis' pathetic state, he was already dead. The feeling that Collis' homicide might ignite civil disobedience was evidenced by the fact that an impromptu meeting was held by County Prosecutor John McGrew, Police Prosecutor John Cole, Mayor Charles Bowlus, Police
Court Judge Joseph J. Miller, and Police Chief Richard O'Brien. They decided that some of the more disreputable bars should be closed by court order.17

As early evening arrived, a white crowd began gathering at the jail on Columbia Street. Rumors that Dixon was to be lynched circulated freely. Sheriff Floyd Routzhan became concerned when by eight o'clock the crowd had grown to several hundred and the chant "kill the nigger" could be heard.18 Believing that the sheriff's department possessed insufficient manpower to repel a large mob and protect Dixon, Sheriff Routzhan telephoned Mayor Bowlus requesting additional manpower and possible assistance from the Ohio National Guard. Mayor Bowlus contacted Major T. V. Kirkpatrick of the Ohio National Guard to mobilize local units for a possible defense of the jail. Kirkpatrick told him he would have to wire Governor Myron T. Herrick for permission. The governor was in Cleveland and could not be immediately reached.19

By ten o'clock the crowd had grown to over a thousand and Sheriff Routzhan went out to address them. He informed the throng that a special grand jury would hasten the trial of Dixon and that it was his duty to protect his prisoner. Someone in the crowd reportedly responded, "He'll get $5.00 and costs if we don't get to him." Two men named Knobloch and Hill then led a small group of men rushing the door. The police drove them back and took Knobloch and Hill into custody. This seemed to take some of the starch out of the crowd and, at around ten-thirty, it began to disperse.20

This respite was short-lived. Fifteen minutes later a reinforcing contingent of about seventy men arrived and began battering the east door of the jail with a railroad tie. As the door gave in about 250 men forced their way into the building. They then battered down the lattice inner iron doors. As yells of "smash the door" and "lynch the
nigger" ran through the building, the electric light wire leading to the sheriff's residence and the jail was cut, leaving both dark.21

Sheriff Routzhan stepped out on the jail steps and begged the crowd to disperse. The crowd ignored his requests as it pushed past him and his deputies and began battering the iron turnstile leading to the cells. When the battering failed to rupture the turnstile, chisels and sledge hammers were produced and soon the turnstile was broken open. The crowd surged forward to the cells and confronted the last line of defense, Sherman Gregory, the black turnkey. A gun was put to Gregory's head and he was threatened with death if he didn't produce the keys to Dixon's cell. He handed the keys over.22

Dixon was then pulled from his cell, dragged into the jail yard and shot a number of times. The mob then carried the body from Columbia Street, and up Fountain Avenue to the southeast corner of Fountain and Main Street. Already dead, nonetheless, a rope was tied around Dixon's neck and the body was hoisted on a telephone pole eighteen feet from the ground. As the body swung from the pole, members of the mob fired bullets into it. After the body was stripped for souvenirs, the crowd gradually dispersed.23

At about 2:30 on Tuesday morning, Coroner J. D. Thomas, arriving with a wagon and a group of assistants, cut Dixon's body down and removed it to the Gross & Jackson Funeral Parlor at 83 West Main. After examining the body, Thomas stated that there were two bullet holes in the left arm, six in the left side, one in the right thigh, one in the left thigh, four in the breast and one in the forehead. He ruled Dixon's death as a homicide at the hands of persons unknown.24

When his autopsy was complete, Coroner Thomas departed, leaving the body in the custody of the parlor proprietors, William Gross, T. A. Gross, and Charles F. Jackson. The funeral parlor put Dixon's body on display for the public Tuesday
morning. Thousands filed through and viewed the corpse before Coroner Thomas got wind of it and ordered the body taken from display. During the course of the day, rumors began to brew in the white population that the black Springfields were upset by the murder of Dixon, and were planning to burn the County Courthouse and the jail. There was additional rumors that the "Levee" was going to be burned by a group of whites that evening.25

The lynching of Dixon was basically excused by the Springfield newspapers as reasonable response to the failure of the Clark County courts to impose adequate punishment to criminals. The lynching would both serve the courts with notice of public frustration with judicial leniency and act as a deterrent to additional murders. The headline of the Tuesday morning Sun announced Dixon’s lynching as "AWFUL REBUKE TO COURTS - THAT HAVE TEMPORIZED WITH THE CRIMINAL CLASSES UNTIL PATIENCE WAS EXHAUSTED."26 The Press-Republic released in the afternoon featured two headlines, "MOB AVENGES DEATH OF CHARLES COLLIS THE MURDERED POLICEMAN," and "IF THERE COULD BE AN ORDERLY MOB, THIS WAS SURELY ONE."27

The tenor of the Springfield newspapers, of course, did not have a chilling effect on the segment of the white community bent on directing more aggression towards local blacks. The mood of the white community compelled Mayor Bowlus to telegraph Governor Herrick and request that Ohio National Guard Units be sent to Springfield. Bowlus’ request was granted, but there was no way of knowing when the guardsmen would arrive.28

By ten o’clock on Tuesday evening, a crowd of several thousand white people had gathered in downtown Springfield. As the crowd moved toward the "Levee", the police tried to disperse it, but the crowd had grown very large and there were too few police. The crowd advanced east on High Street to Spring near St. Raphael Catholic
Church. As the crowd surged past the church and neared the "Levee," Reverend Father Coogan, the assistant pastor of St. Raphael, came out and begged the crowd to return home and avoid further trouble. He was ignored and a mass of humanity marched down Spring to Washington Street. As the mob approached the six buildings making up the "Levee," shots were fired into the buildings. There was no response or action to the gunfire and it became obvious that the inhabitants of the "Levee" had vacated the premises. With that, the mob looted and set fire to the buildings. When members of the Springfield Fire Department arrived at the scene, the crowd physically prevented it from attempting to extinguish the flames.

As the targeted buildings reached a furious blaze, containing the fire became a problem. One of the "Levee" buildings, Jerry Murphy's Place, on the corner of Spring and Washington, stood very close to 104 E. Washington, a home occupied by two white elderly Catholic widows, Margaret Sullivan and Mary O'Brien. The flames from Murphy's place spread to their residence as well as the 102 E. Washington home of another white widow, Catherine Flaherty. The mob allowed the fire department to attempt salvation of the houses of these white women and assisted them in their efforts. However, their homes were destroyed along with the "Levee" buildings.

By eleven o'clock, with the "Levee" irreversibly aflame, the first National Guard units under the command of Colonel H. E. Mead of the Third Regiment began to arrive. The Guard's primary concern was to quiet and disband the mob and protect the Honky Tonk black saloon owned by George Hurley, which seemed to be the next logical target, located two blocks west of the "Levee." Tuesday evening passed without further incident, but the guardsmen were strategically posted in the event of further hostilities. Most were assigned to the esplanade, or city square just north of Washington Street, and adjacent to the Honky Tonk. Another company was stationed on Winter Street where rumor had it that blacks were going to attack. Another
company was stationed at Fair Street and Miami alley, located in the heart of the largest black neighborhood.\(^3\)

By Wednesday, Mayor Bowlus and Police Chief O'Brien concluded that the surviving black Washington Street saloons should be closed. O'Brien put the order in effect and Bowlus placed the city under martial law, thus relieving the harried police department from a responsibility that they had not been able to handle.\(^3\)

The black saloon keepers did not appear to object to being temporarily closed, as eight of them appeared at the office of Clark County Auditor Albert K. Hahn for refunds of their Dow Taxes, a deposit required of those operating liquor businesses. Among them were Hurley and Robert Custar of the Honky Tonk, William Clark, Emanuel Toler, Leslie Thomas, Howard Jenkins, Clarence Jones, William Smith, and Melville Jackson. Clark, Toler, and Thomas had their establishments burned on Tuesday evening, while the others were responding to the police notice to shut down. It was speculated that the haste in which the saloon keepers left business was demanded by the Gambrinuis and Wiedeman breweries. These breweries had lost valuable inventory and fixtures the previous night and sought to cut their losses in the event of further racial violence.\(^\)\(^4\)

Obviously the entire black population of Springfield was concerned about the racial situation. The fact that the wrath of the local whites was not limited to the murder suspect Dixon was unsettling. Throughout the day unassuming blacks simply going about their daily affairs had been chased and many black citizens had heard threatening comments at work in the integrated shops.\(^\)\(^5\)

Reverend Boston J. Prince, pastor of the black Second Baptist Church, contacted Sheriff Routzhan and conferred with him about what law enforcement officials would and could do to protect the black community. Many blacks were concerned about whether Springfield was a safe place for them to be, even if their
actual behavior was good. Detective John T. Norris of the Springfield Police Department gave a statement to local papers to quash rumors that the black community was planning an uprising. Norris announced that the "Negroes said they are going to be quiet. The colored people are scared to death. I have told them to get out of town for a few days." Evidently, some took his advice. Many blacks from Springfield were reported to be arriving in Dayton, Columbus, and Cincinnati.36

An almost forgotten problem remained as to the disposition of Richard Dixon's body. On Wednesday, Dixon's brother-in-law, Reverend J. H. Frazier arrived from Kentucky to make arrangements. While discussing the release of Dixon's body with Coroner Thomas, Frazier informed him that he planned on holding Clark County liable for Dixon's death pursuant to the Ohio civil lynching statute. The Coroner replied that he would never release the body, unless Frazier agreed not to sue. Dixon's corpse would instead be given to the Columbus Medical College. Frazier agreed not to file suit. Coroner Thomas then released the body to Frazier, who hired the black undertaking firm of Roller and Wilborn to bury Dixon. The body was buried in an unmarked grave in Ferncliff Cemetery.37

By the evening of Wednesday, March 9, although large white crowds were still milling about downtown, the mob spirit had subsided. By now Springfield was occupied by seventeen companies of Ohio National Guardsmen and the unruly locals seemed content with what they had accomplished. There was no further violence or destruction and on the following Monday, martial law was lifted and the guardsmen withdrawn. However, the Springfield community was left with the aftermath.38

During the lynching and riot, Springfield was featured in newspapers across the country. In 1904, the lynching of a black person was not a particularly significant event in the South. But when it occurred in the North, it was a huge story. The Dixon
lynching was one of only nine that occurred in the entire North between 1904 and 1908 and was Ohio's only lynching of the twentieth century. 39

The New York Times was highly critical of Springfield law enforcement officials and the white citizens of Springfield. The Times editors wrote:

The brutal and cowardly murder of a Negro prisoner in Springfield, Ohio permitted by a pusillanimous Sheriff and an inefficient or faithless police force, might well be compared with the recent treatment in Mississippi to the sore discredit of the Northern community...The prisoner Dixon would not have been slaughtered as he was had he not been a Negro. His crime was a savage one...but far less barbarian, heinous, and disgusting than the crime of his slayers, which was the act of cowards as well as murderers. 40

Many Southern newspapers used the Springfield lynching and riot to chide the North for what they considered a holier-than-thou attitude on racial matters. For example, the Atlanta Constitution, in an article titled, "WHILE OHIO IS MOBBING NEGROES, GEORGIA BUILDS ONE A MONUMENT," contrasted the Springfield riot with the dedication of a monument in Columbia, Georgia to Bragg Smith, a black man who died in a fruitless effort to rescue the city engineer from a cave-in. 41

And some of Springfield's sister cities in Ohio were even more unkind. The Dayton Daily Journal printed the headline, "SHAMELESS MOB DISGRACES SPRINGFIELD RIVALING THE SOUTHERN BLACK BELT - NEGRO LYNCHED ON FOUNTAIN SQUARE," followed by the subtitle "Without Earthly Excuse Crowd Joined in Target Practice on Swinging Corpse." The text of the article was just as scathing. 42

However, the tenor of the Cincinnati Enquirer was a lot more sympathetic to the mob. It provided the following perspective:

There is no denying the fact that light sentences made the criminal classes bold and reckless. Negroes have been frequently
heard to say that even if they did kill a white man, they would only get about six months in the work house. During the last two years, eleven homicides in Springfield and no one has been condemned to die. People are afraid to venture into the street. Five of the murders have been Negroes imported from the South and the colored people born and raised there do not hesitate to say that they have been disgraced and humiliated by the importation.43

But Springfield itself, had additional problems to face. Governor Herrick was determined that those responsible for the storming of the jail and the lynching of Dixon be punished for "the good name of the state must be protected."44 As a result of the governor's commitment to see the responsible prosecuted, Court Prosecutor John B. McGrew called a special grand jury into session on March 14, 1904, to investigate the mob incident and identify and charge participants.45

For the next three weeks, the grand jury examined approximately four hundred fifty witnesses. Interest was indeed high because of the potential indictments and was further enhanced by speculation caused by police statements that none of the principle members of the lynch mob were from Springfield. Some Springfield officers had claimed that the ringleaders were from Urbana, Ohio, where there had been a lynching of a black man several years before.46

On May 1, 1904, the grand jury made its final report to the Clark County Common Pleas Court after being in session for seventeen days and examining five hundred fifty-four witnesses. Indictments for participating in a riot and breaking into a jail were returned against Earl Sulkens, molder; James O'Brien, bartender; Walter Hill, photographer; Walter Powers, molder; and William Lobeck, a butcher. This was a felony offense, punishable by 1 to 10 years in penitentiary.47

Further findings of the grand jury report were:

1. It does not appear that as has been circulated abroad that any prominent and influential citizens of Springfield were active participants in the riot, the reverse seems to be true. At the same
time, we deprecate and condemn them present on the scene of disorder, thus giving countenance to the mob proper, or a large number of persons in the capacity of speculation. Such assemblage was improper, unlawful, and in a sense, productive of evil.

2. A proper display of firearms and determination at the right moment by the officers of the law, even with the force at hand, would have suppressed the mob spirit and saved the city the disgrace that has been cast upon it and its loss of reputation as a law abiding community.

- There seems to have been very little in their conduct (police) that is worthy of anything else than the severest condemnation. Failure on the part of the proper officials to lead and divert the police at the critical moment was failed.

3. The crime of perjury is so prevalent that the oath taken by the interviewee before jurors is often so lightly regarded as to be cause of deep concern in all thinking men.

- It is in evidence before the grand jury that rumors were freely circulated Tuesday, March 8, that the "Levee" was to be fired that night, and that those in authority took no steps whatever to prevent the firing of the "Levee" district, and also that no effort was made to extinguish the flame.48

The black community had been terrified by the race riot and angered, but not surprised, by the grand jury findings with so few indictments. Samuel Huffman, an officer of the local Anti-Mob and Lynch Law Association wrote a letter to the editor of the Press-Republic. His rebuke was gentle, because it would have been foolish to risk further agitation. He maintained the lawfulness of the majority of blacks, and explained that their lack of action during the riots was a result of their respect of law and order and their being caught unaware and not because they were cowards.49

None of the indicted white men accused of rioting and jail breaking were convicted. Two of them, James O'Brien and William Lobeck were tried, resulting in a hung jury. Prosecutor McGrew believed that the State held the strongest evidence against O'Brien and Lobeck. Rather than try them again, on January 3, 1905. McGrew
dismissed the charges against O'Brien, Lobeck, Walter Hill, Walter Powers and Earl Sulkens.50

The notion that the lynching of Richard Dixon and the subsequent burning of the "Levee" were the actions of lawless criminals and hoodlums cannot be reasonably supported. Of the identified white participants, none had criminal records and all had steady employment.51 But, more importantly, the riot of 1904 was consistent with acceptable community standards of the day. Evidence for this is found in the police and sheriff's department granting Dixon only symbolic protection as the jail was stormed. Furthermore, the Springfield newspapers incited the community to action after the shooting of Collis, and defended the mob after the lynching and burning was complete.

Obviously the 1904 riot consisted of criminal acts committed by a white mob. But the hoodlum theory assumes that and submits that the criminal acts were committed by outlaws, acting against community standards of acceptable behavior. This was not the case. Mob action was supported, sanctioned, and justified in every white reflection of the event that has been recorded. Even the placing of Dixon's body on public display and the failure to convict any white participants implied a community animus in support of the lynching.

The Dixon lynching followed a tired script to a patent in the elements of a white riot, and especially the Urbana riot of 1897. Ignited by the criminal act of an individual black, the mob's response was excessive, affecting innocent blacks. In order to justify the subsequent violence, the media focused upon disreputable black criminals and the virtues of the victim. Blame for an event that came so directly from the heart of Springfield's white community cannot seriously be placed on hoodlums unless the entire community is so indicted.
CHAPTER I
NOTES


3. Dayton *Daily Journal*, March 8, 1904


5. Ibid.

6. Clark County, Ohio Common Pleas Court, Appearance Docket, State Action, V, 4765

7. Springfield *Press-Republic*, March 7, 1904

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, March 7, 1904


14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.


20. Ibid.

21. It was reported that during the course of the evening, street cars brought in a steady stream of men from Lagonda, a subdivision where the shops of the Champion Division of International Harvester were situated, and where Collis was an employee when former Ohio Governor Asa Bushnell was owner. Many of these men had been fellow shopmen with Collis. It is believed that these men separated into small groups and perpetrated a ruse which sent the police to the south jail door, while their comrades battered down the east door. Dayton *Daily Journal*, March 8, 1904

22. Cincinnati *Enquirer*, March 8 and 9, 1904; Cleveland *Gazette*, April 2, 1904. Sherman Gregory, the black jail turnkey, was highly criticized by local blacks for his failure to identify members of the lynch mob. As a result of this pressure, Gregory and his family moved to Columbus for about a year.

23. Dayton *Daily Journal*, March 8, 1904


25. Ibid.

26. Springfield *Sun*, March 8, 1904

27. Springfield *Press-Republic*, March 8, 1904

28. Ibid. Mayor Bowlus contacted Major T. J. Kirkpatrick of the Ohio National Guard to mobilize local units for possible mob control. Kirkpatrick told him that he would have to wire Governor Herrick. The governor was in Cleveland and could not be immediately reached.

29. Springfield *Sun*, March 9, 1904

31. Springfield Sun, March 9, 1904

32. Springfield Press-Republican, March 9, 1904

33. Ibid.

34. Cleveland Gazette, March 12, 1904

35. Prince, A Standard History of Springfield and Clark County, p. 374

36. Columbus Daily Dispatch, March 10, 1904; Cincinnati Enquirer, March 10, 11, 1904

37. Springfield Sun, March 10, 1904; Springfield Press-Republican, March 10, 1904. Although the Springfield Press-Republican and Sun reported that Frazier had agreed not to sue after a conversation with Coroner Thomas, and that the body was released to Frazier and Roller and Wilborn Funeral directors, the black Cleveland Gazette had the story differently. In the March 12, 1904 Gazette, it was reported that Frazier made the discovery that A. Gross, a white embalmer, had manufactured a twenty dollar lien against the remains. He had secured Undertaker Dave Wilborn to take charge of the remains and prepare them for burial. Wilborn urged Frazier not to settle with Gross. Coroner Thomas refused to allow the remains to go out of his possession, unless the bill was settled as he had contracted it. The Gazette reported that Reverend Frazier finally settled and the remains were privately buried in Ferncliff Cemetery, with only relatives present. The law that Frazier was referring to was Ohio Code Section 6278. This was the anti-lynching statute enacted in 1899, holding counties liable for the injury or death of prisoners in custody.

38. Ibid.


40. New York Times, March 9, 1904

41. Atlanta Constitution, March 10, 1904

42. Dayton Daily Journal, March 8, 1904

43. Cincinnati Enquirer, March 9, 1904
44. Springfield Sun, March 12, 1904

45. Ibid.

46. Listed in the Press-Republic, on March 15, 1904 as grand jurors were local industrialists F. M. Bookwalter, Newton Fairbanks, and William Foos. Also a member was Charles Folger, the associate editor of the Press-Republic. One black man, James Chapman, a janitor, was a member. On June 4, 1897, Chick Mitchell, a young black man was taken from Champaign County Jail, 11 miles north of Springfield and lynched for an alleged assault on a white woman. Ginzberg, 100 Years of Lynching, p. 266

47. Springfield Press-Republic, May 1, 1904

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., March 11, 1904

50. Springfield Daily News, January 3, 1905

51. A search of the Clark County Common Pleas Court records found no previous arrests of the riot defendants.
Chapter II

THE RACE RIOT OF 1906

For two years, Springfield enjoyed relative quiet and freedom from documented racial incidents. The black community was cautiously optimistic particularly when two blacks, Matthew Taylor and Albert Yates, were added to the Springfield Police Department after the riot. This increased the number of black police officers to five. But the 1904 riot had done nothing to reconcile the racial bitterness of Springfield whites toward the local black community. This uneasy time ended on February 28, 1906.

Between 10:30 and 11:00 Monday evening, February 26, 1906, two black men, Edward Dean and Preston Ladd entered Gardner's Saloon on the corner of Columbia and Water Streets, just two blocks east of downtown Springfield. About twelve white and black men were drinking. Gardner's was part of a stretch of Columbia Street bars referred to as the "Jungles." Dean supposedly asked for a drink of whiskey and shortly was involved in an argument with a white man named Shine Lysaght. According to Gardner's statement, someone in the bar said that they did not have to stand for that "black face trying to run things." Dean replied, "Come outside and I'll show you who the black face is." Lysaght, Earl Sulkens (who was a riot defendant in 1904), and a man named Shutes, went outside, and a fight commenced. Sulkens was cut with a knife by Dean, and Shutes was cut by Ladd.2

Springfield patrolmen H. Lemuel Keesecker and Albert Yates, one of the recently hired black policemen, soon arrived. After being told that Dean was in on the
cutting, the police, led by Yates, began searching for him. They followed Dean's tracks to the back of Gardner's Saloon, spotted Dean who ran down an alley and disappeared. The police fired at him as he fled.

While the police were still searching the "Jungles" for Dean and his companion, a report came into police headquarters that Martin Davis, a brakeman with the railroad, had been shot at the East End railroad yards. A description of the assailants was given to the police by Jefferson Turner, Davis' co-worker who had escaped injury but saw the men that did it. Turner gave this account to the police:

Davis and I were on train number 69 making up to go to Delaware, when two colored men approached me and one of them, the darker of the two, asked me where he could get a train to Columbus. I told him I did not know and that I was too busy to answer him. The black fellow retorted to my answer, 'Go to Hell' calling me a vile name and they went around to the caboose to talk to Davis.

I heard him say something to Davis and then the report of the gun and Davis cried, 'Jeff, I'm shot!' The fellow with the gun in his hand came around toward me again and one of the crew in the caboose warned me that he was after me now. The two fellows then started to run, Dean saying, 'I guess we had better dig, they're after us' and then they ran. We notified the police, and some of the men followed the Negroes down to Main Street, but they got away.3

Around two o'clock that morning, Preston Ladd was found lying in the Big Four railroad yard by railroad detective Snyder. He was weak, apparently from loss of blood from a head injury. Ladd gave the authorities his proper name, and then was taken to the police station for interrogation.

At first, Ladd would admit nothing, but when confronted by witness descriptions of him, he owned up to having been in the fight at Gardner's Saloon. He
claimed that his head injury was sustained when he was struck by a train and did not incriminate himself in the shooting of Davis. Ladd did venture, however, that if any shooting had been done, it was by Dean, who had taken a revolver with him early in the evening. It was not thought at this time that Davis' wounds were mortal.4

By Tuesday late morning, Dean had not yet been apprehended and Davis had taken a turn for the worse. The Springfield Daily News stated flat out that Davis would die. Davis, 34, was a Columbus resident, and was under the care of Dr. B. W. Beatty at City Hospital. In describing Davis' condition, Beatty said, "He is bearing his pain and suffering with great fortitude. He is still able to talk, but has not much to say because of the great pain."5

At around four o'clock that afternoon, Edward Dean turned himself in to Patrolman Yates, and was quickly transported to Dayton, Ohio at four-thirty and incarcerated there. Police Chief O'Brien and Clark County Sheriff William Almoney decided that Dayton would also be the best place for Ladd. After his injuries were treated at the City Hospital, he too was taken to Dayton for holding. By eight o'clock in the evening, a white mob of several thousand had formed at the intersection of Limestone and Main Streets. Moments later, it was learned that Dean and Ladd were not in the Clark County jail, but had been incarcerated in Dayton. The crowd, presumably gathered to storm the jail, became belligerent. Several lone blacks walking near the intersection were chased.6

At this point, it was obvious to Mayor James M. Todd that the potential for trouble was extreme, so he, along with Police Chief Richard O'Brien and City Solicitor Stewart L. Tatum, issued a proclamation to close all saloons and taverns until further notice. By eight-thirty, the mob seemed to be looking for direction when members of the throng began to shout, "To the Jungle, we'll burn them out!" The mob continued to swell, and started to move west on Main to Fountain; and gathered in front of City
Hall. Mob members brandished revolvers and fired into the air. With that, the mob marched east to Limestone and north to Columbia and east on Columbia to the Jungle, located in the one hundred block of Columbia. 7

An advanced guard of men armed with pistols began firing into white barkeeper Joe Kempler's saloon. This excited the crowd hanging back, and the entire mob surged forward. More shots were fired into the Kempler barroom, which was in front of Kempler's house, and the doors and windows were smashed. Kempler and his wife ran out the back door, leaving their three children asleep upstairs. At this moment, the first policeman, Officer Phillip Gonder appeared on the scene. Mrs. Kempler ran to him, begging his assistance in getting the children out of the house. The assault on the building ceased and the crowd moved back. Accompanied by Gonder, Mrs. Kempler entered the house and retrieved two children, aged 2 1/2 and 4 years old. The third child, age 6, was found later at a neighbors. The mob then ransacked Kempler's saloon, and carried out a large quantity of liquor, and set fire to a two story frame house, next to Kempler's lot that was occupied by Bessie Sales, a black woman. 8

The fire department was called, and Fire Chief Samuel F. Hunter soon arrived with three fire details. As they attempted to extinguish the flames on the house, the fire hoses were cut and the water pressure disappeared. The mob then set fire to seven more houses on the south side of Columbia Street. Detective Harry Long and Patrolman Patrick Olive arrived to assist the firemen, pulled their weapons and ordered the crowd to move back. Six more policemen tried to clear Columbia Street while the firemen tried to get a new hose and resume fighting the fires. 9

As the electric street lights were being broken out by hurled stones, Detective Long arrested a young man named Charles Beltz. The crowd screamed for him to be released and directed stones toward the officers holding Beltz. Beltz and Sergeant Joseph Creager were struck by the missiles. Beltz suffered a damaged eye while
Creager's jaw was broken. Beltz was released from custody and friends transported him home.\textsuperscript{10}

With the fire department's efforts effectively checked, eight black occupied houses were set on fire and six burned to the ground. All of the inhabitants of the burned houses vacated them and no one was injured, but about fifty people were left homeless. Practically the entire block was destroyed. Only one of the buildings was owned by a black person, yet this strip of buildings was considered black and the center of interracial vice and gambling activities.\textsuperscript{11}

At midnight, with the buildings ablaze and the mob beginning to thin out, the first company of National Guardsmen arrived. The local companies B and E of the Third Regiment, totaling about sixty men, approached the crowd under the command of Captains Bradburry and Fulmer. They moved the crowd east to Water Street and secured the burning city block. Shortly after one o'clock, Company I from Xenia arrived.\textsuperscript{12}

Bradburry commented that it was nine o'clock in the evening when he received Mayor Todd's order for militia. He excused the guardsmen's late arrival by claiming that although he and his officers started immediately to organize the unit, many of the men could not be found, so their mobilization was considerably delayed. Mayor Todd replied that he and his advisers believed that the transfer of Ladd and Dean to Dayton would be sufficient to prevent local mob activity. Therefore, he saw no need to request the militia, until it was too late to control the mob.\textsuperscript{13}

By Wednesday morning, the situation had quieted, but there remained a tension in the downtown area where the militia were stationed. Mayor Todd and Police Chief O'Brien were concerned that George Hurley's saloon, a black resort that had survived the 1904 riot, was a potential target if trouble resumed that evening. At eleven in the
morning, City Solicitor Tatum telephoned Adjutant General Hughes in Columbus and asked Hughes to have two companies of militia ready.\footnote{14}

The local Springfield papers reported on Wednesday that Martin Davis was holding on to life, but his condition had not improved and his death was practically certain. Earl Sulkens, who had been cut in the bar fight, was not seriously injured. It was further printed that Dean had denied that he had shot Martin Davis when he turned himself into Patrolman Albert Yates, Tuesday afternoon. Dean supposedly told Springfield Police that after the trouble at Gardner's saloon, he went to the house of Clint Harris in an alley off of West High Street. He claimed that after he read in the Sun that he was a suspect in the shooting, he turned himself in.\footnote{15}

Early Wednesday evening, a crowd again began to accumulate in the downtown area. By seven o'clock, it had grown to more than a thousand, and began jeering at blacks that passed within sight. Four companies of Ohio National Guardsmen from Columbus, under the command of Colonel C. S. Ammel, arrived at 7:45 p.m., and formed on the esplanade. This contingent featured four machine guns and their crews.

Members of the mob began to yell, 'On to Hurley's,' the black saloon on the south side of the town square, and the crowd began to drone in that direction. At this time, Colonel Ammel ordered the militia to clear the esplanade. The growing mob, confronted with the troops advancing with fixed bayonets, scattered. One segment of the mob swung north to Main Street and headed east towards the black residential neighborhood south of the "Jungles." Upon their arrival, the mob attacked the homes of working-class blacks at random, holding safe the homes of whites as they advanced.

George and Lillie Miller, a black couple residing at 122 Harrison, were sitting in their home, when it was set on fire by the mob. The couple were able to escape the mob as they ran barefoot out the rear door. They then hurried to City Hall, where they were protected by the militia. Coal oil was doused on their home and it, with all of the
Miller's belongings, was burned. From Millers', the mob went to the home of John Logan and Noah and Ella Ingram at 175 York Street, near the corner of York and Harrison. The occupants fled shortly before a torch was applied. The house burned until it was unsalvageable.

The militia were hot on the trail of some of the rioters and at Central Avenue chased out some of the black section. Even while this was going on, some of the members of the mob, who were at a safe distance from the soldiers, continued to stone the houses of blacks. The house of Reverend John Scurry, assistant pastor of Wiley AME Church, located at 165 Central Avenue was then attacked. Scurry’s house, situated across the street from St. Joseph's Catholic Church was fired into, then torched. However, Scurry, a cripple, and his wife Juliette had departed before the mob's arrival.

When the mob turned from Central on to Summer Street, the rioters began shooting into the homes of Charles Fillmore and Rueben Campbell, who with their wives and families lived at 30 and 32 Summer Street, respectively. Fillmore appeared on his porch with his shotgun and told the mob that if it did not move on, he would fire. The mob obliged.

It was never determined why certain black residences warranted more attention than others. The selection process was likely dictated by the impulsive whim of the mob. After confronting Fillmore, this segment of the mob lost vigor, and no further black homes were assaulted. The militia were then successful in clearing the area of disorderlies. The Wednesday night festivities sputtered to an end.

At daybreak on Thursday morning, March 1, the damage of the previous night was assessed. In addition to the eastside homes that were burned, the home of Fannie Foster, a black widow, at 51 Sycamore and that of Pearl Howard, on Section Street were damaged by fire. In addition, the windows were broken out at Roller and
Wilborn Funeral Home at 108 W. Main Street. It was speculated that some whites were angry because Paul Roller and David Wilborn had had charges of carrying concealed weapons dropped a few weeks before. The total damage to black owned or occupied property was estimated at approximately six thousand dollars.

The police department had been concerned about their case against Dean and Ladd suffering from an evidentiary standpoint, if there was no attempt to give Martin Davis an opportunity to identify them. This was indeed a dilemma, because Davis, it seemed, might die at any time, while the suspects might be lynched if brought back to Springfield with inadequate security. But with Davis slipping, they had to make a move.

At 12:30 on Thursday afternoon, Dean and Ladd arrived at the City Hospital, in the legal custody of Sheriff Almoney and two companies of the Third Regiment of the Ohio National Guard, armed with machine guns. Four black men were walked past Davis, and the wounded man picked Dean out of the group. He could not positively identify Ladd.

While the identification of the suspects was being perfected, the white men arrested by the Springfield Police and the National Guard, were brought before Police Judge Miller for arraignment and hearing. Thirty-five men and boys were brought in and the courtroom was filled with spectators, including prominent citizens such as Newton H. Fairbanks, President of the Commercial Club, and Father Buckley of St. Raphael Catholic Church. Harry Garber, a machinist; Thomas Dee, a molder; Roscoe Ridgeway and Edward Kennedy were quickly tried for carrying concealed weapons. None had previous criminal records. Ridgeway and Dee were sentenced to 30 days in the Dayton workhouse and fined $200.00 and costs. Harry Garber, also charged with the weapon offense, moved for a continuance through his attorney, Clem
V. Collins. John Essig and Fred Dooley both pled guilty to disorderly conduct and Judge Miller fined them both $50.00 and ordered them to pay court costs.

Ridgeway, Garber, John Higgins, John Pierpoint, John McCutcheon, Frank Young, Martin Falbrath, George Epright, Carl Wise, Charles Kloepfer, Roy Molton, William Detrich, John Lightle, Davis Johnson and Glenn Johnson were arraigned for rioting and their cases were set for trial. These young men, whose ages ranged from fifteen to twenty years of age, had their cases consolidated and were ordered to stand trial at the same time. Two local attorneys, Clem V. Collins and Judge W. R. Horner, who were in the courtroom at the time, volunteered to defend the young men free of charge. Attorney James Stewart was retained to defend McCutcheon. The trial was scheduled to commence on Monday March 5, 1906.24

The Springfield business and professional community was almost in a state of shock, in the wake of the race riot. Newton Fairbanks, a local manufacturer, called a special meeting of the Commercial Club, an organization made up of most of Clark County’s influential business and political leaders, to adopt a resolution aimed at preventing future racial outbreaks. The Commercial Club resolved:

That we recognize the injury that is done to any community by mob law and arson and other similar attacks, and we demand that every proper and legal step be taken to apprehend and punish all offenders and the proper authorities are requested to offer suitable rewards to that end.

That while we appreciate and feel keenly the injury to our city in the acts referred to, we protest against gross exaggeration in the newspaper accounts given of these unfortunate occurrences by sensational reports published in other cities throughout the country, and we appeal to the sense of fairness of all in that matter.25

The attitude of many white Springfielders towards the recent race riot was in great contrast to the 1904 riot and lynching. Both the Sun and the Press-Republic
ranged between applauding the lynching of Dixon to, at the very least, calling the riot a logical reaction to conditions in Springfield that begged for reform. Dixon was an undesirable with a considerable criminal record, who had shot and killed a local public servant in the performance of his duties. The "Levee" was a morally reprobate vice center, that housed Dixon. A substantial part of the black community shed no tears for neither Dixon nor the "Levee." Few law-abiding blacks were affected.

A factually dissimilar scenario troubled Springfield in the wake of the 1906 riot. The victim was not a member of the community. His being white was apparent justification to attack not only the black saloons in the "Jungle," but make indiscriminate attacks on the homes and persons of innocent blacks, without provocation. This blind hostility toward anyone with a black skin obviously entertained by many white Springfielders was creating a schism between public officials and many members of the community. Thus, the Springfield newspapers, and the most influential citizens of the community condemned the riot, and supported enforcement of the laws against the participants if not too severely.26

As was alluded by Newton Fairbank's Commercial Club's resolution, Springfield was again the subject of written newspaper coverage from across the country. And as claimed by the Commercial Club, there were some exaggerations. For example, the Chicago Tribune reported that an Ohio National Guardsman had been fatally injured; and it was printed by the Cincinnati Enquirer that a 15 year old white boy had been shot and seriously injured by a shotgun blast, fired by a black man.27 Neither of these stories was true. With the exception of Martin Davis, no one was seriously injured during the disturbances. But the damage to the image of Springfield was done.

Springfield again was the subject of a New York Times editorial on March 3, titled "Rioting - Made Too Safe." The Times editors found it curious that "in spite of
receiving daily wires of race violence from Springfield, there was never any mention made of any injuries suffered by the rioters, at the hands of the police or militia." The eastern paper quipped that apparently Springfield had a disorderly quarter and knew of no better way to reform it than by turning "loose a mob inspired by a desire to avenge the shooting of a brakeman...apparently this is what Springfield wanted." But without a lynching the Springfield bashing was not nearly as replete as it was two years earlier.

On Saturday, March 3rd, the shooting victim, Martin Davis, died. There was no violent reaction to his death because it had been expected and the high level of emotion that attended the earlier vandalism had subsided. His body was transported from City Hospital to Columbus for burial without fanfare.

The rioting trial for the thirteen defendants began on Monday, March 5. They were tried jointly, and the state's case was presented by Police Prosecutor John Cole. The jury was made up of mostly prominent citizens, including Newton Fairbanks, of the Commercial Club.28 The trial lasted five days. In review of the trial, although they had supported enforcement of the law against the rioters, the Springfield newspapers ran editorials claiming that to punish a boy too harshly will destroy his character and there will be no lessons learned. The NEWS ran a particularly touching editorial on Tuesday, March 6th, after the first day of trial was complete. The article whined:

"Perhaps few spectacles are more pitiable, more infinitely sad than that boy who is brought a prisoner, for the first time before a tribunal of justice, because youth is always full of hope and generally full of promise...Few children are so hardened that Justice must apply her lash on their tender backs until her arm falls exhausted. No child, not even the child of the savage in the Jungles, much less a child who has been taught through its first budding years to trust in the American sense of right should be thrown a victim to be consumed in the flames of passion."
This editorial was not simply a sickening sweet example of misplaced sympathy by the fourth estate, but a reflection of the consensus opinion held by the local white community. That opinion was that no white person should suffer substantial penalty for unlawful acts directed at blacks. To question the objective of the article was to influence the decision of the jury. In 1906 Ohio juries were not prohibited from reading newspaper articles about their cases during the course of the trial.

While the trial was getting underway, the state militia, which had been on duty for six days, left the city. It was arranged, before Colonel Ammel left, that the soldiers who were witnesses against the arrested rioters would return to Springfield to testify against them. Also, the saloons, which had been closed since Tuesday night at 9:30 by proclamation of the mayor, were allowed to re-open for business. The authorities made the request of the saloonkeepers that they allow no unseemly discussion of the recent rioting in their place of business.29

The jury returned with a verdict on the afternoon of Friday, March 9. John Pierpoint, Harry Garber, George Epprecht, Kemp Reeder, Carl Wise, Carl Kloepfer, Glen Johnson, and Frank Young were found guilty. However, in step with the spirit of the News article, the jury recommended leniency for all. John Higgins, Martin Falbrath, Roy Molton, William Detrich, and John McCutcheon were found not guilty. Judge Miller followed the recommendations of the jury and was indeed lenient. They were sentenced to pay a fine of one dollar plus court costs. The fine was suspended conditioned upon good behavior.30

The disposition of the case was not taken well by the black community. In a resolution passed by the Springfield Business and Industrial League, the middle-class black community spoke out against the light sentence handed out to the rioters, suggesting that such offenses should be punished to the full extent of the law. Harry
Smith, the editor of the *Cleveland Gazette*, wrote that "With the jury recommendations, Springfield's best citizens had shown their hand."31

In a scathing article titled "Travesty on Justice," the *Outlook* magazine, after alleging that some of the jurors even offered to pay the fines, commented that "Springfield, Ohio has no cause for complaint...if known as a lawless community. It is disgraceful beyond words for the community, acting in its corporate capacity as a dispenser of justice to treat such an occurrence flippantly."32

In April, Prosecutor John B. McGrew called a session of the grand jury to examine evidence surrounding the death of Martin Davis and the subsequent race riot. Three white men were indicted and convicted for alleged criminality during the burning of the "Jungle."33 Charles Beltz was convicted for destroying public property and received thirty days in the workhouse and a two hundred dollar fine. Daniel Simpson was sentenced to thirty days and fined one hundred dollars for attempted arson for trying to set fire to Kempler's Saloon. Charles Roth was sentenced to three years in the Ohio State Penitentiary for arson.34

The grand jury further rendered a scathing report criticizing local public officials. Thirteen policemen were recommended for a reduction in rank because their efforts to control the mob were found to be half-hearted. Sheriff Almoney was characterized as an incompetent "who rendered his office utterly ridiculous" in the estimation of the grand jury. The grand jury considered Police Chief O'Brien "deserving of the severest censure for remarkable inability and an apparent lack of interest." Mayor James M. Todd was found to be as "equally culpable and entitled to censure with the (police) Chief for his inexcusable tardiness in making any attempt towards preventing riots on the strength of advance information."35

The reaction of the grand jury to the behavior of certain public officials and police officers during the riot seems inconsistent with the desire for leniency for the
accused white rioters that was expressed by the trial jury, Judge Miller, and the Springfield newspapers. It should be understood that the grand jury only hears evidence adduced on the part of the state and the point of view of the prosecution. When this is considered, along with the fact that grand jurors are instructed that their duty is only to decide whether there should be a trial, it is realized that grand jury reports that sometimes fly in the face of public opinion are the nature of the beast.

Furthermore, this particular grand jury must have realized that after the Springfield community was lambasted by the national media in the wake of the riots, that their report would be strictly scrutinized. Also the presence of Lewis A. Quisenberry, a black carpenter, on the grand jury panel might have prevented the deliberations from taking a racist bent. Thus, grand jury reports are not a reliable barometer with which to gauge community sentiment.

The grand jury, of course, was presented the cases of Edward Dean and Preston Ladd. Dean was indicted for murder in the first degree, while Ladd was indicted for cutting to kill or wound. Preston Ladd entered a guilty plea to the charge of cutting to wound, and his disposition was set for November 12, 1906. Edward Dean entered a not guilty plea to his charge of first degree murder and his jury trial was set for July 2, 1906.36

The Dean murder trial attracted great community interest, particularly in the black population. In his opening argument, Dean's lawyer, Sully Jaynes, proclaimed that not only was Dean innocent, he would prove who actually killed Davis. During the presentation of the State's case, which lasted for a week, Prosecutor McGrew presented witnesses who observed Dean in the vicinity of the shooting, the dying statement of Davis, identifying Dean, and the testimony of Preston Ladd.37

The defense was centered around the testimony of Mrs. Anna Dale, a black woman that lived at 60 S. Factory Street. She testified that Robert "Goat" Payne and
Harvey Tucker came to her house on the night of the shooting. Payne flashed a revolver and an empty cartridge fell to the floor. According to Dale, Payne then told her that he "had fixed Davis."38

After eleven days of trial, the jury received the case on July 13, deliberated for six hours and returned with a verdict of guilty of first degree murder, with a recommendation of mercy. Attorney Jaymes immediately moved for a new trial on the grounds that an earlier change of venue motion should have been granted. This motion was also denied. Judge Albert H. Kunkle sentenced Dean to life without parole.

The impact that the 1906 white riot had on the local black community was a conclusive verdict that not only were all blacks potential victims but the decent white citizens could not be relied upon if push came to shove. Many of the blacks were caught off guard because they did not believe that the wrath of the mob would extend beyond the "Jungles." Pastor Thomas L. Ferguson of Wiley AME Church delivered a message concerning the white riot to a packed house March 4, 1906. He urged Springfield blacks to set good examples but added, "There comes a time in case of emergency if you defend your wife, children, and home, it will meet the sanction of God and man."39

The failure of the police and the active National Guard to protect the unoffending black citizens, made self defense an absolute necessity. In both 1904 and 1906 the Springfield police department had ranged from suspected allegiance with the white mobs to being inadequate to control them. The National Guard had seemed, to Springfield blacks, reluctant to use force in subduing and dispensing the rioters.40

This concern was deeply felt by Sully Jaymes, the only black attorney in Springfield. A native of Virginia, and a graduate of the University of Michigan Law School, he set up practice in Springfield in 1903.41 Jaymes advised Richard Dixon before he was lynched and defended Preston Ladd and Edward Dean. Jaymes
concluded that no official law enforcement or military entity, composed almost totally of whites would whole-heartedly defend black lives and property. Blacks must arm themselves and plan for an organized defense against future white riots.42

Meetings to this effect had been held since after the 1904 riot, but gained more support after the 1906 conflict. Under Jaymes' guidance, guns were purchased and black men and women were drilled in the use of them. Paul Roller, the undertaker and a Spanish-American war veteran, was a primary assistant of Jaymes, who helped to instruct blacks on the use of firearms and to maneuver with military fundamentals. Black men and women were drilled in basic gunmanship in Perrin Woods, a forest just south of Springfield's largest black neighborhood in the southwest quadrant.43

In 1908, the first of two primary histories of Springfield and Clark County was completed by Common Pleas Judge William A. Rockel with the financial backing of the Clark County Historical Society. As he recounted the 1904 riot the hoodlum explanation was dearly embraced. Rockel explained that mob was composed of "a set of hoodlums who had a natural antipathy to the colored man."44

And as he disclaimed the participants of "citizens of the better type" Rockel detailed how law and order had broken down with more blacks arriving from Kentucky and unpunished homicides had pushed some whites to take the law into their own hands. In this history, the hoodlum theory is a useful scapegoat sparing the white community of blame.

Rockel continued his apologies as he recorded the 1906 riot focusing on the "disreputable buildings" of the "Jungles" and submitting that outside newspapers had exaggerated the magnitude of the situation. Yet when stating that never was the life of a "reputable citizen" in danger and that was never a "general disposition on the part of the people to violate the law," he pays sleight-of-hand homage to the hoodlum theory.
If the "general disposition" of white Springfielders was legal adherence, who set the fires?

Rockel's hoodlum theory explanation for the 1904 riot is not as well taken as his indirect application of the theory to the second riot. In the 1906 riot a greater segment of the white community objected to the actions of the mob. The hoodlum theory is more believable if the resulting carnage is not justified and applauded.

A relevant question would be whether the majority of the white community was in support of the riot in spite of the public objection voiced by the Springfield newspapers and business leaders? Strong arguments could be made that with the exception of white real estate owners who lost property, there was considerable support for the rioters. One need only cite the impotence of the police force, the sympathy for the accused rioters requested by the newspapers, and the sentences meted to the convicted rioters to argue a clear climate of support.

The white community did not react to the rioters as hoodlums. And again none of the identified participants had previous criminal histories. The application of the hoodlum theory to the 1906 riot is misleading and contrary to the manifest weight of the evidence.
CHAPTER II
NOTES


2. Springfield *Sun*, February 28, 1906

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.


6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.


9. Roberts. *150 Years: From Buckets to Diesels* p. 104

10. Springfield *Daily News*

11. Arladna Huffman, the wife of Sam Huffman, an officer of the Springfield Anti-mob and Lynch Law Association, owned the one story frame home at 177 East Columbia Street. This was the only black-owned building destroyed. W. F. Foos, vice president of the Foos Manufacturing Company owned 171 East Columbia while 173 was owned by Bridget Doyle. A double, 178 and 180 East Columbia was owned by Mary Brown of Dayton and 179 was owned by Asa Davis. Another double, 183 and 185 East Columbia was owned by the estate of Lewis Merriman of Kenton, Ohio, along with a one story frame house located in the rear. A two story frame situated in the rear of 178 and 180 East Columbia was owned by the estate of Mrs. Catherine Russell. Springfield *Daily News*, March 8, 1906

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Springfield Sun, March 1, 1906


17. The building occupied by John Logan and Noah and Ella Ingram was owned by Henry Broom, a white machinist that lived at 363 South Center Street. Springfield Daily News, March 8, 1906


19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Springfield Sun, March 8, 1906

23. Springfield Daily News

24. Ibid.

25. Springfield Sun, March 2, 1906

26. Editorials, including one entitled "Springfield's Problem", which appeared in the Daily News on March 1, 1906 offers a different flavor than the newspapers presented during the 1904 lynching and riot. The editorial comment finds the riot unacceptable.

27. Chicago Tribune, March 1, 1906; Cincinnati Enquirer, March 1, 1906

28. It is clear from the number of prominent citizens on the panel and the near mathematical impossibility that they could have been drawn from a random venire, that this is a "special jury." In the years before World War I it was a common practice to call in a special or blue ribbon jury from a list of presumably more intelligent prospective jurors for cases involving complicated issues of fact or matters of great public concern. These jurors included Newton Fairbanks, president of

29. Springfield Daily News and Springfield Sun, March 10, 1906

30. Ibid.

31. Harry Smith, Cleveland Gazette, April 6, 1906

32. The Outlook magazine, April 7, 1906. This article was followed by another entitled "Public Responsibility for Mob Violence", which appeared in Outlook's April 28, 1906 issue. This article was a response to a letter from Charles S. Kay, one of the jurors in the March trial of the young white rioters, defending conduct and the recommendations of the jury. The Outlook answered in part, "either the boys were guilty of rioting or they were not. If they were guilty, the community could not release them from punishment without sharing in their crime and abetting their lawlessness...no explanation can change the fact that Springfield, Ohio has twice suffered a mob to destroy property and menace the safety of citizens, and has twice allowed the mob to go unpunished. That community is in a sorry state of intellectual and moral confusion which first permits within its borders a vicious quarter to flourish, and then acquiesces in attacks on that quarter by an irresponsible mob."

33. Springfield Daily News, April 29, 1906. The grand jury, which consisted of fifteen members, selected Theodore Troupe, a druggist, as foreman. Two years earlier, Richard Dixon had been shot and his body hanged from the utility pole in front of Troupe's Drug Store. Charles L. Bauer, clerk of City Council and Lewis A. Quisenberry, a black carpenter, were also members.

34. Beltz; disposition can be found at Clark County Common Pleas Court, Appearance Docket, V, 5164; Simpson's at Clark County Common Pleas Court, Appearance Docket, V, 5161; and Roth's at Clark County Common Pleas Court, Appearance Docket, V, 5180.

35. In addition to recommending the reduction in rank of Police Sergeant Joseph Creager, the grand jury recommended the dismissal of the following police officers: Sergeant Johnson, Sergeant Boswell, Detective Jones and Patrolmen Henry, Spichty, Gonder, Bradford, Keesecker, O'Brien, Dunigan, Giblin and Bishop. Springfield Daily News, April 29, 1906.

36. Ibid.
37. Springfield Daily News, July 2, 1906; Springfield Sun, July 9, 1906


39. Springfield Daily News, March 5, 1906. It should be noted that both
grand juries commenced in 1904 and 1906 to investigate the riots, found that the police
were inadequate in their performance to quell the riots.

40. This attitude was widely held. The National Guard had fired upon a
lynch mob in Urbana, Ohio, during the lynching of Chick Mitchell in 1897. Three
members of the mob were killed. The National Guard exercise of force in the
Springfield riots fell quite short of that. Their performance was considered shameful
by some, including Edward L. Buchwalter, the wealthy Springfield industrialist who
refused to renew his honorary membership in the Ohio National Guard. Cleveland
Gazette, April 9, 1904.

41. Sully Jaymes was born in Campbell County, Virginia, on March 13,
1880. He graduated from English High School in Boston in 1896 and Boston
University in 1898. Jaymes entered Boston University Law School in 1899 and
graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1901. For a short time he
practiced in Columbus, but he came to Springfield and set up practice in 1903. He
became a member of the North Street AME Church and was active in the Knights of
Pythias. Jaymes was president of the Springfield N.A.A.C.P. during the 1921 race

42. Most of the information regarding the inside leadership of the black
community as it related to the defense of black Springfield came from interviews with
Lee Miller and Maceo Burns. Miller was born in 1902 and lived in Springfield until
1937, when he went to Chicago. He returned to Springfield in the 1950's. Although
younger than Jaymes and Patterson, he was a personal friend to both and was in
Springfield at the time of the 1921 riot. He was interviewed on March 13, 1991.

43. The primary source of information concerning riot preparations of black
Springfielders before and after World War I and the support provided by the black
World War I veterans was provided by Maceo Burns. The only living black World
War I veteran in Clark County, Burns was interviewed on Saturday, March 16, 1991 at
the Bristol House Nursing Home in Springfield, Ohio. Also the oldest living member
of the Antonio Bailey American Legion Post, he was a member of the 372 Infantry and
saw action at Meuse-Argonne. He was honorably discharged on March 4, 1919.

44. William A. Rockel, 20th Century History of Springfield and Clark
County and Representative Citizens (Chicago, Illinois: Ohio Archaeological and
Chapter III

THE 1921 RACE RIOT

The decade following the 1906 riot were years of growth for Springfield. By 1910, the population of the city had increased to 46,921, the black population to 7,483.¹ In 1913, the state legislature passed Home Rule, which authorized twenty-five cities to function under city charter. Springfield voters, weary of the mayor-council form of government, voted it out in 1914 and adopted the commission-manager plan. Under the new system, the city commission was made up of five local residents, who hired a professional manager to preside over city operations.²

Springfield businesses and industry flourished under the Home Rule system. Many of the communities prominent businessmen served on the commission with an eye on increasing present business growth and attracting new enterprise to the city. They were successful in doing this and more unskilled laborers, black and white, were finding employment in Springfield.³

With the outbreak of World War I, the local economy was given a boost as war contracts were received by Springfield factories for the construction of Allied war munitions. Even more black laborers from the South came to Springfield to take advantage of these opportunities.

The United States entered the war in April, 1917, and some 3,300 men from Clark County entered the armed forces. About 550 of these men were black. Some of the blacks from Springfield were placed in the 371 and 372 regiments attached to the 157 Division.⁴ These regiments were sent to France as the nucleus of the 93 Division,
but were attached to the French army and served overseas under the command of the French. The 371st became part of the famous "Red Hands" division of the French Army.

Being assigned to the French, however, proved to be a blessing in disguise for the black combat soldiers, in terms of military recognition. They were the first American troops to move up to the fighting front and the first of all Allied forces to set foot on enemy territory. On the negative side however, these black units suffered heavy casualties. The 371st lost one thousand, sixty-five of its two thousand, three hundred eighty-four men.\(^5\) Antonio Bailey, Richard A. Gazeway, and other Springfield blacks were killed. Paul Roller, Jr., the son of the undertaker, was severely wounded in the Argonne-Meuse battle.\(^6\)

World War I ended on November 11, 1918. The American expeditionary forces, including two hundred thousand black servicemen, was gradually demobilized and returned home. The black veterans returned home to Springfield, and hundreds of other cities and towns across the country, as changed men. They had seen a new world in Europe that was not as overtly laden with the racism as the United States. Many had been made to feel like equals for the first time in their lives by their French allies and the test of combat. They returned home, determined that their lives would change.

Much of white America resented the returning black veterans. Some whites were determined that despite the triumph of the war, black Americans must be reminded of their place, violently if necessary. During the war, racial violence had erupted several times as a reaction to black men in uniform. In 1917, thirteen black servicemen were hanged in Houston, Texas after a riot with urban whites. The Ku Klux Klan had grown during the war and by 1919, Klan membership was larger in Indiana and Ohio than in some southern states.\(^7\)
Springfield was not spared these feelings. As white and black servicemen returned, Springfield faced the problem of providing jobs for the veterans in a scaled down post-war economy. Aggravated by the continuous arrival of migrating southern blacks and whites looking for work, racial tension began to grow.

Complicating matters was International Harvester being forced to reduce its labor force because of an antitrust suit filed by the United States government. The charge filed in 1912 accused International of being a monopoly. The operation of the Springfield plant was threatened, but in 1918, the company entered into a consent agreement with the government allowing the Springfield plant to operate, provided that it did not make harvesters. The local plant, which had manufactured both harvesters and trucks was now permitted only to make trucks.8 This move eliminated jobs and made the search for employment more difficult.

Springfield’s black veterans, disillusioned with the conditions at home, desired an organization for both social camaraderie and unity to face their problems. They established the Antonio Bailey Chapter of the American Legion. Named for one of the black Springfield men killed in the war, it had 15 original charter members.9

The post World War I era brought with it the largest nativism movement in American history. White native born Americans openly demonstrated resentment towards Jews, Catholics, immigrants, and blacks. During the summer of 1919, America experienced the worst wave of race violence in its history. From June through December 1919, seventy-six blacks were lynched and there were twenty-five riots. Among those lynched were ten black soldiers, some still wearing their uniforms.10 During the summer of 1919, there were race riots in many cities across the country including Chicago, Illinois; Washington, D.C.; Omaha, Nebraska; Longview, Texas; and Elaine, Arkansas. The Longview, Washington and Chicago riots introduced a new dimension to American racial violence. In earlier conflicts,
whites killed, burned, and pillaged pretty much at will. Now blacks were retaliating, even at the cost of lost lives and property.\textsuperscript{11}

Observing these national tragedies along with the growing racial strife in Springfield was Chatman M. Patterson, a young black mortician and budding community leader. Patterson, a 1911 graduate of the Clark School of Embalming in Cincinnati opened a funeral parlor at 614 S. Center Street in Springfield.\textsuperscript{12}

As Patterson studied the national racial climate, he concluded that there was nothing to indicate that Springfield would be spared a white uprising against local blacks. He believed that if this occurred, black Springfelders should be prepared to fight. Patterson met with Attorney Sully Jaymes, fellow undertakers Paul Roller, Sr. and George Ewing, and Melville Jackson, owner of the Metropolitan Hotel on Washington Street who previously was one of the saloonkeepers that was forced out of business after the 1904 race riot. These men decided to raise money for weapons that would be distributed among the blacks and to train them in their use.\textsuperscript{13}

This was hardly a novel idea with Springfield blacks. After both the 1904 and 1906 race riots blacks had purchased guns to enable themselves to protect their lives and property.\textsuperscript{14} But this marked the first time that there was any significant organization to this end with leadership and guidance coming from Springfield's most well-to-do and influential black citizens.

In the fall of 1919, after sufficient monies had been raised, Patterson, who could pass for white, was sent to the Army depot and purchased about two hundred surplus, outmoded Springfield rifles that the military had rejected. He transported these weapons back to Springfield in his hearse and stored them in the cellar of his funeral parlor.\textsuperscript{15} War veterans, including members of the Bailey American Legion post, trained those men willing to volunteer in defending black Springfield in the use of these weapons.\textsuperscript{16}
1920 passed without major incident, but racial tension continued to increase. The nativism movement continued to pick up momentum with increasing levels of sentiment against blacks and Catholics. And wearing the black comfort zone even thinner was the animosity held against the growing black community by Springfield's Irish-Catholics, as they competed for unskilled jobs in a market that was becoming sluggish.¹⁷

By 1920, the population of Springfield had reached 60,840 with 9,460 blacks.¹⁸ Had the local economy not experienced economic reverses, the population probably would have been greater. With the black population growing at a faster rate than the white population, the problems that ignited the earlier riots were again being realized. In late 1920 and early 1921, the national and local economy took a turn for the worse. Springfield's reliance on the farm equipment industry became disastrous when American farm prices fell. This resulted in farm foreclosures and many white farmers came to Springfield looking for jobs.¹⁹ The already fermenting racial tension combined with an uncertain economy, formed an accelerant to potential violence. The time that C. M. Patterson feared, had arrived.

According to information submitted to the Springfield Daily News, on Monday evening, March 7, 1921, eleven year old Marge Ferneau, a white girl, and several of her friends were playing at the corner of East Main and Florence Streets in Springfield's east side. A black man, according to police reports, approached the children and asked the way to Hillside Avenue in the Warder Park subdivision. He offered two dollars to anyone who would show him to the street, which was about five blocks away.

The Ferneau girl agreed to help the man find Hillside and walked away with him. The other children went home without much thought to the incident. When Marge did not return home on time, her father, Samuel, a widower, called the police.
Soon after Patrolman Elmer Roberts arrived at the Ferneau home at 1714 East Main Street, a neighbor arrived with Marge, who appeared severely injured. Before she was taken to City Hospital by Doctor James Poulton, the girl claimed that a black man who had asked for directions had forced her into the cellar of an empty house and threatened her with death if she made any noise. After her statement, she was taken to the hospital, where surgery was performed.

In spite of being devoid of specifics, on Tuesday afternoon, March 8, the Springfield News printed the story along with Dr. Poulton’s diagnosis that there were grave doubts for the little girl’s recovery. The paper further reported that several people in the vicinity had seen the girl and a black man walking toward the Warder Park area, but none could give a very helpful description of the man. By the end of the day, there were no further leads in the case disclosed by police.

By Wednesday, March 9, rumors were flying all over the city that the assailant of Marge Ferneau had been captured and was being held at the Clark County Jail. Around midnight, a crowd of several hundred men gathered around the Clark County jail, woke up Sheriff David Jones and demanded the prisoner that was suspected of the assault. Jones responded that no such suspect was incarcerated. The crowd informed Jones that they would not leave without proof, so Jones advised that they select a committee of men from the crowd to enter the jail and see for themselves that the Ferneau assailant was not there. Arthur Elliot of 501 Hubert, Clarence Timmons of 515 Linwood, and Roger Chapman of 1830 East Harrison entered the jail. After looking through the cell blocks and talking to the prisoner housed there, they emerged and told the crowd that Sheriff Jones spoke the truth. The crowd then dispersed.

The search for the suspect continued on Thursday, March 10, without success. Following a consultation with Mayor Burton J. Westcott and City Manager Edgar
Parsons, the County Commissioners offered a reward of one thousand dollars to anyone providing satisfactory information that led to the arrest of the Ferneau assailant.23

By Friday, the emotions of many white citizens reached a boiling point. They were frustrated in the failure to apprehend the Ferneau suspect. Many suspected that the culprit was known by the black community. On Friday evening, a mob of white man gathered at Cliff Park, just north of downtown Springfield. Before the crowd began to move south toward the black neighborhoods, Melville Jackson, a prominent black businessman, received word at the Metropolitan, his Washington Street hotel. He then sent a runner to the Center Street YMCA, located a block away, to alert the blacks there of impending trouble.24

That evening, the Center Street YMCA basketball team was playing the team from the black Wabash Street YMCA in Chicago. After receiving the message from Jackson, the game stopped and the men poured out of the YMCA gymnasium and went to the Metropolitan to meet Jackson. As the black men poured into the hotel, Jackson ordered that pool sticks, brooms, baseball bats, and whatever else convertible for use as a weapon, be passed out to them. They then followed Jackson and George Ewing down Washington Street to Fountain Avenue, and north on Fountain, one block from the esplanade. There they observed the mob of white men heading toward them, accompanied by several Springfield police officers.25

The two crowds of men moved closer and stopped just a few feet apart. Some of the white men asked for the man who had hurt the little girl. Jackson replied, "We don't know who did it and you had better not start anything." Police Chief R. E. O'Brien arrived with several more officers and attempted to disperse both crowds. After about ten minutes of negotiations, the crowd moved back to the esplanade and waited, while Jackson led the blacks back to Washington Street, where they were reinforced by fifty men carrying Springfield rifles. Some of the armed black men were
stationed in the black businesses on Washington Street, while the majority were deployed on Center Street at the Jefferson Street intersection, one block south of Washington.

With some of the police assigned to control the white mob on the esplanade, others were ordered to disperse the blacks that were securing Center Street, which was the primary gateway to the main black residential area. 26 There were no longer any black police officers on the force in 1921, so all of the policemen mobilized were white. 27

At eleven that night, police officers approached the line of black men stationed at Jefferson and Center Streets and ordered them to disperse. When the orders of the police were refused, the officers moved in and the black men opened fire. Patrolman John Ryan was struck in the abdomen and jaw. The police immediately retreated back to headquarters to regroup. 28

News of the Ryan shooting quickly spread over the city and hundreds of white men began forming in groups and moving in the direction of police headquarters where Ryan had been assisted. The crowd grew to close to a thousand. A rumor was circulated that the police had arrested the man who shot the officer and the crowd moved toward the jail. After learning that rumor to be false and believing that Center Street was too well guarded, the huge crowd of white men walked west to Yellow Springs Street, and headed south toward the black residential section, which began at the intersection of Yellow Springs and Pleasant Streets. 29

Lying in wait along Pleasant Street was a line of black men, some wearing army uniforms, armed with Springfield rifles. The mob was ordered to stop and a volley was fired over their heads. The mob made a wild retreat back down Yellow Springs Street. Moments later, a cordon of policemen, led by Detectives Cody and Gray, approached the line of black gunmen, telling them to disperse and go home. The
blacks shouted, "We are going to protect our homes" and fired another volley, deliberately not hitting any of the officers. The policemen withdrew and notified Mayor Westcott of the situation.30

After midnight, Mayor Westcott, City Manager Parsons, and City Attorney Robert Flack arrived at the scene with a police escort. They exited their vehicle and called to the blacks to retire to their homes. Their requests were also answered with gunfire. The automobile in which they were riding was riddled with bullets, but all three escaped injury. However, they were able to observe flashes of gunfire coming not only from the street, but from houses and from behind trees lining Yellow Springs Street.31

One police car that inadvertently crossed Pleasant Street was stopped by a crowd of black men carrying rifles. According to Patrolman Harry Jackson, one black man put a rifle muzzle into his stomach and said, "You turn that machine around and get out of here. We will take care of this end of town." In fact, no vehicle containing white occupants was permitted to proceed into the black section, including a white cabby, driving for the Best Taxi Cab Company, was held up on Yellow Springs Street and was ordered to turn his vehicle around and leave.32

At two o'clock on Saturday morning, Mayor Westcott issued the following proclamation:

> Following developments of Friday night, it has been deemed to be in the best interests of the citizens to call in State troops, and in order that their presence may be effective, it is necessary that the city be placed under martial law, which has been requested.33

Westcott had earlier put in a call to the Adjutant General's office. Colonel Harry Horner, Assistant Adjutant General, arrived in Springfield and quickly mobilized the local white National Guard companies, and summoned the London, Ohio Company to head for Springfield. By 2:30 Saturday morning, sixty guardsmen with eight machine
guns were placed on trucks, so that they could be used in answering riot alarms. When the guard units arrived, the officers talked with the blacks stationed on Center and Yellow Springs Streets, who then agreed to retire to their homes, after it was confirmed that the white mob has dispersed.34

Tension continued to grip the city on Saturday morning as the Ohio National Guardsmen patrolled to prevent further mob congregation and violence. Springfield police officers told local reporters that they knew the name of the man that had shot Patrolman Ryan. It was also disclosed that Ryan had claimed before he was taken to the hospital that he could identify his assailant.35

At 11:55 Saturday morning, James White, a seventeen year old black youth, while in the custody of Sheriff Jones, admitted to the shooting of Ryan. White, who resided at 705 Montgomery Avenue with his parents, was arraigned before Judge Frank W. Geiger in juvenile court at 3:00 p.m. He pled guilty to shooting to kill, and was sentenced to an indeterminate term in the Mansfield reformatory. White was immediately transported to Mansfield.36

Meanwhile, as an insurance measure against further rioting, Colonel Robert Haubrick, to whom Colonel Horner had turned over leadership of the guardsmen early Saturday morning, ordered Ohio National Guard companies B and I to Springfield from Columbus. To augment this strategy and inhibit further trouble, Sheriff Jones issued an order forbidding all public gatherings and ordering all stores to close by six o'clock Saturday evening. The order also prohibited anyone on the streets and the use of automobiles after 7:00 p.m.37

Others joined in the effort to avoid further hostilities. Both the white and black local American Legion posts joined in a combined proclamation for law and order at three o'clock Saturday afternoon. The white George Cultice Post Number 6, commanded by Dr. Joseph Rinehart, and the black Antonio Bailey Post Number 143,
commanded by Robert Allen announced that "we..., representing both white and colored posts...urge that the people of Springfield cooperate with the authorities in maintaining order." 38

Fate even became an ally for a peaceful Springfield when City Hospital released, on Saturday afternoon, the news that Marge Ferneau's condition had improved to "fairly good." Hospital officials further reported that Patrolman Ryan was improving and that his injuries were not going to be fatal. 39

By four o'clock Saturday afternoon, National Guard companies B of Columbus, C of London, I of Columbus, M of Marysville, the Supply and Headquarters Companies of Columbus, two machine gun companies of Springfield and a sanitary detachment from Delaware, occupied the city under the command of Colonel Haubrick. Saturday evening and Sunday both passed without further incident. On Monday, March 14, the troops were evacuated. 40

County Prosecutor John B. McGrew ordered a special grand jury to commence investigation of the racial disturbance on Tuesday March 15. The body was composed of 12 white and 3 black jurors. After nearly three weeks of deliberation, the grand jury returned indictments against four white men, Crilet Dean, Mike Hauke, William Lytle, and Harland Waltman for carrying concealed weapons. Four black men, Elijah Bird, Sandy Doughitt, Melville "Fatty" Jackson, and Hobart Johnson were indicted for assembling to do an unlawful act under the riot section. Carrying concealed weapons was a penitentiary offense punishable by a minimum of one year incarceration, while assembly to do an unlawful act had a maximum penalty of 30 days and a five hundred dollar fine. 41

The white men, Dean, Hauke, Lytle, and Waltman were charged with being out on the streets contrary to the sheriff's order. They were searched by law enforcement officers and guns were found in their possession. As for the blacks, Jackson's charges
stemmed from the Friday night confrontation with the white crowd and the police officers. Bird, Doughitt, and Johnson were allegedly among the group of armed black men that had stopped a cruiser of policemen and ordered them out of the black neighborhood on Yellow Springs Street.42

In addition to the indictments, the grand jury issued an official criticism of the Springfield Police Department. This portion of the grand jury report stated, in part:

This long delay and the apparent inefficiency on the part of the police department no doubt allowed conditions to develop that contributed largely to bring about the disturbance which occurred late. Concerning the unfortunate incident and disturbance that occurred in Springfield on the nights of March 9th, 10th, and 11th, leading to race prejudice and making possible riotous conditions that cast another blot on the fair name of the city of Springfield, the grand jury finds that much just criticism should rest on the police department.43

All four black men retained Sully Jaymes, the black attorney who had helped organize the defense of black Springfield. On April 13, Jaymes filed a motion to change venue on behalf of Jackson, claiming that a fair and impartial trial would be impossible in Clark County. Affidavits in support of this claim were submitted by a number of prominent black citizens including C. M. Patterson, Woodford S. Smith, secretary of the Center Street YMCA, Edward Daniels, head waiter at the Bancroft Hotel, Charles Green, mail carrier, Charles L. Johnson, a superintendent at Champion Chemical, and Doctors Sherman Jordan and Roscoe Vaughan.44

Judge F. W. Geiger overruled the change of venue motion and on April 28, the morning of his jury trial, Jackson pled guilty to his charge and Geiger sentenced him to thirty days in the Dayton workhouse. He was also fined three hundred dollars on each of his two counts. As he sentenced Jackson, Geiger lamented that the penalty for the offense was not severe enough.45 But on May 2, Jackson was released from the workhouse on a fifteen hundred dollar bond following the allowance of a writ of habeas
corpus by Judge R. C. Patterson of the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court. To permit his return to Clark County, Jackson posted a one thousand dollar bond in the Clark County Common Pleas Court to keep the peace for one year. C. M. Patterson and Phillip M. Hatcher acted as sureties on the bond.46

Meanwhile on May 4, the jury trial of Elijah Bird, Sandy Doughitt, and Hobart Johnson commenced. Attorney Jaymes argued that the police officers that identified his clients as being part of a group of armed blacks were mistaken. Jaymes submitted that Bird and Doughitt were at home when city officials were fired upon and no witness testified that Johnson was wearing an army uniform, which he claimed to be wearing that day. On May 5, after deliberating for an hour and forty minutes, the jury acquitted all three defendants. Jaymes issued a written statement that was printed in local papers the following day, thanking the jurors and the system for a fair trial, when the charges centered around such a divisive event.47

The acquittal of Bird, Doughitt, and Johnson is incredible, considering the racial climate of the times. But at second glance the State’s key witness, Patrolman Harry Jackson, put the defendants in the crowd, but failed to attribute any specific acts to them. Furthermore, two of the jurors, Charles D. Swayne and Pearl Winslow were black. This element of representation might have given the deliberation a tone of balance that might have contributed to the acquittals.48

The four white defendants all pled not guilty to their carrying concealed weapons charges at their arraignments on April 5, but all later changed their pleas to guilty and were given minimal sentences. Crilet Dean, Mike Hauke, and Harland Waltman entered guilty pleas on April 25. Dean was sentenced to thirty days in the county jail, while Hauke and Waltman had fines of one hundred dollars imposed. William Lytle entered a guilty plea on April 26 and also was fined one hundred dollars.49
Although Policeman Ryan and Shirley Shaffer, a black man who was slightly injured, were the only shooting victims, national newspaper coverage of the 1921 riot was considerable and often exaggerated. The Chicago Tribune headline was "RACE RIOT IN OHIO; 18 SHOT", and reported that sixteen Negroes and two policemen had been shot during race rioting in Springfield, Ohio. The remaining text of the article was similar to that found in Springfield local papers. The New York Times reported a mere fourteen Negroes shot and only one policeman, Joseph Ryan.

Some black newspapers parroted the exaggerated casualty reports of the white tabloids. The Baltimore Afro-American offered on March 18, the headline "DRUNKEN COP CAUSED RIOT IN OHIO; 1 KILLED 18 WOUNDED". "The attempt of a drunken policeman to maltreat a Negro who did not get out of the way quick enough...caused the (sic) death of the policeman and about eighteen other black and white citizens."  

The Cleveland Gazette, a black weekly, had probably the most accurate non-local account of the incident. It, however, had the advantage of going to print on March 26, long enough after the riot to have statistics verified and rumors discredited. After the headline "RACE READY TO SHOOT TO KILL", was the subhead "Veterans of the World War were 'on the job' and our People were ready - Chicago and Washington their Precedent." The Gazette account corroborated the Springfield papers and added that "former soldiers of the World War were of especial service in forming the backbone of the various organizations."

The Gazette also took a pot shot at some of the newspapers across the country that had reported inaccurately. It was submitted:

The report sent the daily papers of the Country that 'Negroes are fleeing' and that '14 or 15 Negroes were injured by the Springfield mob' was simply another of those 'Associated Press lies' that always follow such demonstration, especially since our people of those
cities, 'put the stopper' on mob violence here in the North, at Chicago and Washington, many months ago.\textsuperscript{53}

Crediting the black citizens of Washington and Chicago for "putting the stopper" on mob violence was over complimentary, but the point was made. The blacks in Springfield had turned back the forces of white mob violence by employing an organized armed front.
CHAPTER III
NOTES

1. Ohio Census Clark County, 1910, Roll No. T624-1158


3. Workers of the Writer's Program of the Work Projects Administration, Springfield and Clark County, (Springfield, Ohio: Springfield Tribune Printing Co., 1941), p. 34

4. Clark County Veterans Administration Records; Ohio Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, World War, 1917-18 (Veterans Administration of the United States), p. 4387


6. Ohio Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, World War, 1917-18, p. 14519

7. Ebony, Pictorial History of Black America, p. 123

8. Kinnison, Springfield and Clark County, p. 73

9. The original members of the chapter were Deaton A. Jackson, Dr. Russell M. Swayne, Charles G. Swanson, Guy Emmons, William Patton, Lamar Roller, Thomas D. Walker, Clifford Cunningham, Freeman Lee, Eugene White, Arthur Bowers, Thomas A. Keller, James W. Mack, Harry T. Jackson, and James Perkins. This information was provided by Dale Henry, Commander of the Bailey-Frey Post, April 19, 1991.


11. Upton, A Social History of 20th Century Urban Riots, p. 11
12.  Patterson opened his funeral parlor in 1916. He lived at 1627 North Limestone Street and was the only black to reside in that neighborhood. He, like Sully Jaymes, was active in the Knights of Pythias and N.A.A.C.P. He died in 1949 at Springfield.

13.  Interview with Lee Miller, March 15, 1991. He was a personal friend of both Jaymes and Patterson and they often discussed what had happened leading up to the 1921 racial confrontation. Paul Roller was the business partner of David Wilborn. They had taken and conducted the final disposition on the remains of Richard Dixon in 1904. George W. Ewing had originally been connected with Roller and Wilborn, but in 1906, at the age of 21, he went into business for himself. He died October 11, 1941. Jackson was born in 1875, in Springfield and managed the Metropolitan Hotel for years. He died on April 18, 1933.

14.  Thomas Keller, who was interviewed on December 4, 1969, stated that a decision to buy guns was made at a meeting at St. John’s Baptist Church after the 1904 riot. Ida L. Williams, *175 Years of Struggle* (Springfield, Ohio: Project SPICE, 1976); Frank Quillin, *The Color Line In Ohio, A History of Race Prejudice in a Typical Northern State*, (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Historical Society, 1913), p. 143

15.  Lee Miller, interview

16.  The primary source of information concerning the support provided by the black World War I veterans was provided by Maceo Burns, the only living World War I veteran in Clark county in an interview conducted on Saturday, March 16, 1991 at the Bristol House Nursing Home. Also the oldest living member of the Antonio Bailey American Legion Post, he was a member of the 372 Infantry and saw action at Meuse-Argonne. He was honorably discharged on March 4, 1919. According to Burns, Jaymes asked black veterans to help train civilians in rifle use and regimentation.

17.  Kinnison, *Springfield and Clark County*, p. 75

18.  Federal Census Clark County, 1920 T625-1353 (74-81)

19.  Kinnison, *Springfield and Clark County*

20.  Springfield *Daily News*, March 8, 1921

21.  Ibid.
22. Springfield Sun, March 10, 1921


24. Maceo Burns interview. In a version that appeared in Newsweek Magazine's Fiftieth Anniversary Issue, it was claimed that a black youth, fair enough to pass for white, observed the mob forming, and forewarned black Springfields. Newsweek Magazine Fiftieth Anniversary Issue, "The American Dream," Spring 1983, p. 34

25. Maceo Burns interview. Burns played on the Center Street YMCA Basketball team and he stated that they were playing the Wabash Avenue YMCA from Chicago. Burns' recollection was corroborated by the Cleveland Gazette riot article. According to the Gazette, between 500 and 600 had assembled to watch a basketball game between a Chicago team led by the famous Sol Butler, and a local five.

26. Ibid.

27. Personnel Records from the Springfield Police Dept. Records Librarian 1920-22


29. Ibid.

30. Springfield Sun, March 21, 1921

31. Burns interview; Springfield Daily News, March 11, 1921

32. Ibid., May 4, 1921

33. Maceo Burns interview

34. Springfield Daily News, March 13, 1921

35. Springfield Daily News, March 12, 1921

36. Ibid.

37. Springfield Sun, March 13, 1921

38. Springfield Daily News, March 13, 1921
39. Ibid. Marge Ferneau recovered from her injuries, yet still died prematurely. On February 26, 1926, a gas heater exploded in the Ferneau home as Marge attempted to light it. Flames ignited her dress and she was horribly burned. She died later that evening at City Hospital at the age of sixteen.

40. Springfield Daily News, March 14, 1921

41. Rev. Ted Scott of North Street A.M.E. Church, Aaron Portis, and George Elliot were the blacks on the grand jury. Springfield Sun, April 3, 1921; Springfield Daily News, March 15, 1921

42. Springfield Daily News, April 3, 1921

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., April 13, 1921

45. Ibid., April 28, 1921

46. Ibid., May 6, 1921

47. Hobart Johnson was a combat veteran serving with Maceo Burns in the 372 Infantry Division and was a participant in the Meuse-Argonne campaign. He was honorably discharged on March 5, 1919. Ohio Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, World War, 1917-1918, p. 8523; Springfield Sun, May 6, 1921

48. The other jurors were Arthur Worthington, John Connor, Kemp Coffey, Mrs. Martha Minear, J. S. Nicklin, Mrs. Amy Collins, Walter Beard, Mrs. Lenora Patterson, Paul Troxell, and James Brown. Springfield Daily News, May 6, 1921

49. Dean, Clark County Common Pleas Appearance State Action Docket 7, 6408; Hauke, Appearance Docket State Action 7, 6405; Lytle, Appearance Docket State Action 7, 6407; Waltman, Appearance Docket State Action 7, 6409

50. Chicago Daily Tribune, March 12, 1921

51. New York Times, March 12, 1921

52. Baltimore Afro-American, March 18, 1921

53. Cleveland Weekly Gazette, March 26, 1921
CONCLUSION

Media coverage and historical comment concerning all three Springfield riots made liberal application of the hoodlum theory to explain the dynamics of these incidents. As stated earlier, the hoodlum theory holds that the incitement and subsequent violence of race riots are the creation of the young, unemployed, lawless, criminal, vagrant and irresponsible elements of the community. These hoodlums exploit racial situations as an opportunity for criminal acts that they are predisposed to commit. This theory depending on the circumstances, was directed towards both black and white rioters.

As far as the white participants in the Springfield riots, there are legitimate questions as to substance of the hoodlum theory. In the case of the 1904 lynching of Richard Dixon, there was evidence tending to indicate that the men who spearheaded the storming of the jail were from slain police officer Charles Collis' neighborhood and former co-workers at International Harvester. Without saying that a factory worker cannot be a hoodlum, it is submitted that steadily employed company workers are neither vagrant and rootless, nor hardly the career criminals that the hoodlum theory blames.

There were also suggestions that day after the lynching of Richard Dixon, factory administration closed the Harvester plant early to allow employees to prepare for the second night of rioting during which the "Levee" was burned. If true, the spirit of the rioting is the product of a group animus involving whites from every rung of the
hierarchy. Comments from the scene of the lynching that were quoted in the Springfield papers like, "Thank God, we can live in a town for a few years that will be peaceful." are not the responses of a chronic criminal element. And the Springfield Police Department's neglect to inhibit the rioters' activity was so gross, it resulted in grand jury findings that were to its detriment. White approval of the riot was widespread.

The 1906 riot received nearly as much support from the white community despite the alligator tears shed by the Springfield newspapers and the laments of prominent businessmen, probably concerned more with the impact that random arson has on investment real estate values. Once again, relatively few arrests were made considering the blatant openess of the carnage and the police were found derelict by the grand jury. The adult white defendants charged for their participation had no previous criminal records and most had steady jobs. The local media implored the jury to go easy. This wish was granted.

Both earlier riots shared a vast degree of support from a racist white community so the behavior of the rioters did not cut against the grain of local sentiment. The identified rioters were members of white work force, permanent residents, with no previous criminal histories. The hoodlum theory, as earlier defined, is not a satisfactory explanation for either riot.

The behavior of the white mob in the Dixon lynching and "Levee" burning was arguably incited by the local press and the results applauded. Headlines such as, "BAILIFF COLLIS MUST DIE BECAUSE OF ACT BY COWARDLY NEGRO" and "MOB AVENGES DEATH OF CHARLES COLLIS, THE MURDERED POLICEMAN," appeared on the front page of the Press-Republic.¹ Such coverage, augmented by the criminal justice system's failure to convict one person from a crowd of perhaps hundreds of unmasked men that participated in the festivities, would seem to
confirm the notion that the mob carried out the will of the white community regardless of class. And yet, in his 1908 History of Clark County, William A. Rockel references the 1904 lynching and arsons by stating:

None or scarcely none of the citizens of the better type were engaged in its work. It was composed of mechanics and a set of hoodlums who had a natural antipathy to the colored man, together with a desire to be mixed up in a rumpus should one occur. At no time was there any danger to the ordinary citizen, except such as might result from fire caused by some hoodlums.²

Here Rockel utilizes the hoodlum theory as a balm for white and black sensibilities. For many commentators of both races, there is a need to avoid the unadulterated reality that naked racial hostility was at the heart of the white riot. It is more comfortable to believe that white criminals are reacting to the behavior of ignorant, obnoxious blacks, most of whom are recent migrants from the South. It is characteristic of the American psyche to avoid the admission of racism as a motivation for violence or anti-social behavior. Thus, it is useful to assert that race is secondary to obnoxious and rude behavior, even in the decision of hoodlums to employ violence towards a racially distinct group.

In his History of Springfield and Clark County, published in 1921, Benjamin F. Prince held to the hoodlum theory, even at the expense of seeming confused. He first submits that "a Negro attorney, Sully Jaymes, led the Negroes in an uprising..." as part of his discussion of the 1921 riot. A few sentences later, he reports that "...the riots in Springfield have not been incited by the better class of Negroes" and among the rioters were many highly respected citizens.³ One must ask how would Prince classify Jaymes, for only the most tortured of definitions would designate Jaymes a hoodlum. The powerful need to ignore participation of prominent citizens of either race is indeed evident.
Even in his 1908 book, *Following the Color Line*, which is commendable in many areas, Ray Stannard Baker writes, while analyzing the 1904 Springfield riot, "a mob is a method by which good citizens turn the law and the government to the criminal or irresponsible classes." Although here Baker adopts the hoodlum theory, he has stumbled across the truth which discredits the theory. By sanctioning acts of violence that they would not personally commit, the respectable citizen is a prime accessory and just as culpable as the usually nameless hoodlum who receives the blame. But the hoodlum explanation provides a reliable alibi in the face of potential indictment.

Even when theorists have admitted that there is participation by more than the criminal element, the hoodlum theory is kept intact by offering justification for mob violence. Like the *Press-Republic* and Prince, Edwin Todd, in his 1904 study, *A Sociological Study of Clark County*, also defends mob action as understandable. In regard to the 1904 lynching, he writes:

"The mob was headed by the rougher element of the city, although in the ranks there were said to have been many generally quiet and respectable working men. Such were the leaders who were determined to 'uphold the majesty of the law.'...Clark County has never sentenced any criminal to death, and it has been a common remark that it would be impossible to find any criminal guilty of murder in the first degree."  

After the 1906 riot, the hoodlum theory took a new turn. In order to again absolve the mainstream white community from guilt, the destruction of black property was attributed to irresponsible, mischievous young boys. This community ritual of denial was made possible because the only lawbreakers that were arrested were mostly young men between the ages of fourteen and twenty. In what could be called the juvenile hoodlum theory, the segments of the white community most responsible again are held blameless. The Springfield *Sun* editorialized while the young men were
awaiting trial "now that it has developed that the riots were in reality due to a lot of mischievous boys...the juvenile court idea is gaining ground."  

The Springfield Daily News, however, stuck with the old reliable unabashed hoodlum theory writing that "the members of the late mob were certainly very largely of the criminal class...the same bunch that the better class of citizens has demanded be punished."  

The public support of the criminally charged white rioters and their lenient sentences do not corroborate this claim.

The local papers were not the only publications to embrace the idea that mobs in racial violence are not made up of otherwise law abiding citizens. The Independent magazine in reporting the 1906 Springfield riot offered that Springfield "had a dark record for a previous lynching, so that the unruly and vagrant element knew how to flaunt the law."  

This habitual approach to explaining race riots permeated the reporting and commentary on the subject across America during the first quarter of the century. To not see mainstream participation in the white riot defies reason.

The black press also adopted the hoodlum theory, but with different motivation. The writers for the black press were largely Northern residents of duration. They were, to a great extent, conservative, religious, and strait-laced. Many did not scorn the favor of the white establishment upon which most blacks, either directly or indirectly, depended. Many established blacks had been marginally accepted into a racially defined niche in predominately white communities. The ingress of what they considered ignorant, ill-mannered, and trifling blacks from the South seemed to disrupt what racial harmony that had been achieved.

Illustrative of this attitude is a Cleveland Gazette editorial that appeared shortly after the 1921 Springfield riot:

The coming into the North of so many very ignorant members of the race has raised a problem which the North has never met. It should be counseled to have patience, while the unprepared
Afro-American immigrant should be taught to prepare himself for Northern civilization. Too often is the attempt being made to introduce into the North, the policies and plans our people pursued in the South. The North is no place for them. We stand in great danger of having too large an ignorant population of our people in the North which is averse to becoming intelligent. The Southern Church with its noise and ignorant preacher has no place in the North. The ignorant "colored" today has no place here. Give an ignorant people every right and privilege that an intelligent one has and the ignorant one, as a rule, will greatly abuse his. The coming of the Southern Afro-American to the North will be the undoing of the race if someone does not proceed and that quickly to prepare him for this civilization.9

If some of the lines in this editorial were deleted, it would be sporting to guess whether the source newspaper was white or black. Be that as it may, many established blacks desired to distance themselves from the blacks most distasteful to the whites from whom they sought acceptance. Thus the hoodlum theory was compatible with this attitude when applied to black criminals and "ignorant" inciters that triggered destructive white riots. But the black press only took the hoodlum theory so far. Regularly supportive of racial self-defense in their coverage of the Chicago and Washington D.C. riots, armed racial confrontation was applauded when the "ignorant" black agitator was factored out of the equation. In the case of the 1921 Springfield riot, the Cleveland Gazette cheered the performance of World War I veterans and counted the incident a source of race pride.10

It is doubtful that northern blacks accepted the hoodlum theory as an excuse for white rioting. The black American experienced racial hatred, rejection, and prejudice from every socioeconomic strata of white society. White supremacy was a rarely challenged attitude, and biased law enforcement agencies and courts of law were a reality of black life.

It can be reasonably concluded that the hoodlum theory as it relates to the white rioter is at worst wrong, and at best, misleading. In the 1904 riot, Dixon was lynched
with minimal resistance by Clark County law officers. Not a shot was fired into the
mob as it stormed the jail. Working men participated, as women and children watched.
In 1906, the court refused to punish the convicted youths, and jurors even offered to
pay their fines. This is evidence of community support for their behavior.

This is not to say that the lawless element did not participate. It is to say, that
the white rioters that physically participated came from all walks of life and many that
were not present on the scene approved their deeds.

The black rioters that appeared in Springfield during the 1921 riot did not fit the
hoodlum mold attempted by Prince and others. The leaders of the black mob that
invaded the downtown area were prominent businessmen, Melville Jackson, and
George Ewing. Their strategies had been authored by Sully Jaymes and C. M.
Patterson, considered two of the most influential black men in Springfield. But the
custom of dismissing rioters as irresponsible hoodlums tended to prevent this fact from
being acknowledged. This custom grew because it was more comfortable to consider
the behavior of rioters not as a reflection of social problems, but a manifestation of the
shortcomings of the rioters themselves. History itself is the big loser in the use of the
hoodlum theory. The acceptance of this theory undoubtedly prevented the close
scrutiny of the participants in early century riots and their place in society.

The tendency to blame hoodlums has led historians away from the idea of
considering middleclass involvement. Richards and Fogelson did relevant studies of
ante-bellum and 1960's riots, respectively. However the hoodlum theory probably
dverted historians from gathering information about the individual participants in the
riot epidemic of the early 1900's.

As noted previously, the years 1917-1921 involved perhaps the worst wave of
racial violence in American history. The Washington, D.C. and the Chicago riots of
1919 brought forth a new dimension to American racial violence. Where in the past
whites had largely been free to attack as they pleased, blacks began to fight back. Historians like R. H. Brisbane attributed this willingness to fight as a contribution of the great migration and the entrance of the United States into World War I. The simple growth of the black population in most northern cities made a difference in terms of confidence and a posture of self-defense. With the influence of black combat veterans and the realization of a much larger world, blacks were less intimidated by white mobs.

This resolve to fight was probably enhanced by the knowledge that they could not rely on the local, state or federal government for protections. In Springfield, Ohio and countless other American cities and towns, blacks had observed law enforcement agents passively observe or even lend a hand in lynchings and mass arson.

The middle-class black in the North could not easily separate himself from the black criminal who was punished by a white mob for his singular act because retaliation did not seem to distinguish the guilty from the innocent. The patterns of northern white violence against blacks were directed against practically anyone with a black skin. The indiscriminate attacks on the person and property of black Springfielders in 1906 had to have driven home some unforgettable lessons. Shortly thereafter, hard-working and established blacks began to arm themselves.

Of course, this was not a phenomenon unique to Springfield, Ohio. Nationally, blacks had recognized the need for self-defense. However, of the documented incidents of racial violence, the Springfield, Ohio riot of 1921 is the only episode wherein blacks were completely successful in defending their lives and property against a white mob. Not one black home or business was damaged, nor were there any black lives lost. This is in distinct contrast with the Washington, D. C. and Chicago riots of 1919 and the Tulsa, Oklahoma riot that occurred in 1921 shortly after the Springfield riot.
In order to understand why the Springfield situation was different, it is probative to compare and contrast the circumstances in Springfield with those existing in Chicago two years earlier, where blacks fought back, but suffered greatly in lives and property. Chicago, a much larger city, had experienced the same sociological effects of the black migration as Springfield with the attendant worsening of race relations. To a greater degree than Springfield, the racial ills involved the need for additional living quarters to accommodate the growing black population. The consequent economic competition and the invasion of previously white residential areas caused continuous race conflict.13

Chicago also had black professional leaders that urged blacks to arm themselves. For example, in a mass meeting in Chicago in July, 1917, black attorney Ferdinand L. Barnett and A. H. Roberts, a black State Senator, advised Chicago blacks to "arm yourselves now with guns and pistols." This was in response to the bloody race riot in East St. Louis, Illinois that summer.14

Not only was Chicago placed on notice by East St. Louis, but the Chicago riot of 1919 was preceded by two years of residential violence in which more than 27 black occupied dwellings were bombed.15 This gradual building of violence in Chicago that preceded the 1919 riot differs from Springfield where the most recent racial violence had been the 1906 riot. In addition to a situation that clearly indicated that an explosion of racial violence was imminent, the Chicago black population included many black World War I veterans. In fact, the 8th Illinois was the only regiment commanded wholly by blacks for much of the war. Officered and manned primarily by Chicagoans, it was one of the most decorated American units in the war.16

Although differing greatly in size, the black populations of Chicago and Springfield had several elements in common. Both had influential leaders that advocated the arming of the black community. Both cities had a significant number of
World War I veterans. Both cities had experienced an influx of migrant blacks from the South.

The Chicago riot erupted on July 27, 1919 when a black youth drowned in Lake Michigan, after being stoned by whites. Chicago blacks retaliated by directing violence towards whites found in black neighborhoods. Most of the incidences of sniping, burning, and looting took place in black sections of the city and blacks bore the brunt of most of the destruction. White gangs roamed the black neighborhoods with lethal results. Although fatalities were comparable between the races, that is where the similarities ended. After over a week of violence, twenty-three blacks and fifteen whites were dead. Three hundred fifty-nine blacks and one hundred seventy-eight whites were wounded and over one thousand families, nearly all black, were homeless.

Of course, the Chicago and Springfield riots cannot be neatly compared because of the great differences in population, ethnicity, and demographics. But the question must be raised about the factors, if any, that contributed to the vastly different conclusions of these incidents. Here, it is alleged that the active participation of the black middle or professional class resulted in an organized front of community self-defense that presented a resolve, and a credibility that intimidated the white mob, was able to draw definite lines of defense, and cordon off areas where black homes were located. Prominent blacks were identified as the leaders of this resistance.

In contrast, young adult males provided most of the self-defense activity and black violence during the Chicago riot, which is the case in most race riots. According to William M. Tuttle, Jr., in his history of the 1919 Chicago riot, this was the case because, being unattached, living in boarding houses, and not feeling the restraints of family responsibilities, these black men were free to participate. The voluminous character of the Chicago riot shows that there were a large number of black
men intent upon exchanging violence for violence. However, this intent was expressed in a disorganized, impulsive, and random fashion.

In the Chicago riots, the whites dominated the role of aggressor, and organized white gangs, like the "Ragen Colts" and the "Dirty Dozen," were not prevented from wreaking havoc in the black neighborhoods after the riot commenced. The Chicago Commission of Race Relations later wrote that, but for the activities of these white gangs, "it is doubtful if the riot would have gone beyond the first clash." There were no gang organizations among the blacks to challenge these structured white clubs. Therefore, it can be concluded from the available evidence that, although wholehearted, the self-defense efforts of black Chicago were led and manned by a contingent of disorganized, unattached, young black men without a preconceived strategy.

In Springfield, the middle-class blacks incorporated young unattached black men and gave them duties to perform within a structured defensive blueprint. James White, the young man that shot Officer Ryan was seventeen years old and lived with his parents. He was arrested with Melville Jackson, a middle-class black hotel owner, and Hobart Johnson, a World War I veteran, employed as a laborer. Active black participants in Springfield do not appear to be as class distinct as in the Chicago riot, which was characterized by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, as a war between black and white hoodlums. Although the Chicago Commission gave great academic momentum to the hoodlum theory, and some truth should be conceded to it, the Chicago and Springfield riots do not share this common denominator.

Frank Quillin was unable to identify by name black professionals such as Sully Jaymes, Melville Jackson, and George Ewing as the architects of a black defense program when he visited Springfield, Ohio to research his 1913 book, The Color Line
in Ohio. But after paying homage to the hoodlum theory while discussing the Springfield riots of 1904 and 1906, Quillin wrote:

From absolutely reliable sources, from the editor of one of Springfield's largest daily papers, from Negroes themselves, I have information that a secret organization was formed among the colored people soon after the riot of 1906, and the objects of the members of this organization were to procure firearms, to drill themselves in the use of them and to prepare themselves in every possible way for self-defense in the riot. Bombs were secured and many colored homes were converted into small arsenals. Colored men and colored women have gone on the outskirts of the city and practiced shooting. These facts have not been published in the city papers. The editor told me that these items have been suppressed by all the papers in the city as they would only incite both factions on to conflict...A colored man said...'If another riot starts, there will be such trouble as will make this old town shake'.

Quillin wrote of this aggressive preparatory mood among Springfield blacks, several years before World War I, and the subsequent injection of the black war veteran into the American scene. Although the fighting expertise and undocile attitude probably assisted in the 1921 confrontation with the white mob, their role should not be exaggerated. The active involvement of Springfield's black middle-class in all phases of the conflict distinguished Springfield from other cities that experienced race riots during the World War I era.

The most important factor of middle-class involvement was that of organization. The post World War I black American was psychologically prepared to offer some resistance to white violence. But there are few examples of this attitude being harnessed for organized defense. As Lee Miller indicated, only the comfortable blacks had the economic resources, knowledge, and influence to solidify the black community. But so often did these blacks hold themselves apart from the blacks in the lower strata, both physically, socially, and politically. The black community of Springfield, Ohio
benefited from this classless coalition authored by some of the more privileged black citizens. Had they not, the events of March, 1921, would have been quite different.
CONCLUSION

NOTES

1. Springfield Press-Republic, March 8, 1904


5. Edwin J. Todd, A Sociological Study of Clark County, Ohio (Springfield, Ohio: Clark County Historical Society, 1904), p. 112


8. The Independent, Volume 60: 582-4, March 8, 1906

9. The Cleveland Gazette, April 9, 1921

10. Ibid., March 26, 1921


14. Chicago Defender, July 7, 14, and 21, 1917


17. The Chicago Commission of Race Relations reported that "in only two cases were Negroes aggressively rioting outside the "Black Belt." Negro in Chicago, p. 18

18. Tuttle, Race Riot p. 215


20. Tuttle, Race Riot, p. 33

21. Ibid.


23. Williams, Springfield, Ohio City Directory for 1921


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