

GRAND JURY FAILS TO FIND EVIDENCE

No Indictments Returned In Lynching Probe And The Grand Inquest Further Reported That It Found No Evidence Of Communist Organizations In Wicomico County.

Salisbury, Md., Mar. 19 (AP)—Bringing its four-day investigation of the lynching of Matthew Williams, negro the Wicomico grand jury reported "we find that there is absolutely no evidence that can remotely connect anyone with the instigation or perpetration of the murder."

No indictments were returned and the grand inquest further reported it found no evidence of communist organizations in Wicomico county.

Brought together almost exactly 100 days after Williams had been dragged from a bed in the Peninsula General Hospital here, hustled across the street to the green in front of the courthouse and hanged in the presence of 2,000 persons, the grand jury heard the story from the lips of peace officers, doctors, nurses, business men and members of the negro section of Salisbury. One hundred and twenty two witnesses were examined.

He was lynched for the murder earlier that day December 4, of Daniel J. Elliott, his employer with whom he had argued over a question of wages Elliott was a lumber dealer and was shot in his office, in the heart of the community.

In his instructions to the jury Judge Joseph L. Bailey urged that inquiry be made not only into the lynching, but into events leading up to the shooting, with reference to activities of "outside organizations." In the report made public late yesterday afternoon, Levin C. Bailey, State's Attorney, the grand jury said:

"After a through and complete investigation of all the evidence, direct and indirect, resented to us by Attorney-General William Preston Lane Jr., and assistant attorney general G. C. A. Anderson in reference to communistic activities, we find that while such organizations do exist in other parts of the state there is no evidence to justify the belief that such organizations exists in Wicomico county.

"After a thoroughly energetic and complete investigation of all the evidence, direct and indirect, rumors and every lead indicated by the evidence given by more than 100 witnesses produced to us by the attorney-general, the assistant attorney-general the state's attorney for Wicomico county and members of this grand jury, we find that there is absolutely no evidence that can remotely connect anyone with the instigation or perpetration of the murder of Matthew Williams."

The actual taking of testimony was ~~completed early in the day yesterday~~ and a short recess taken. The jury reassembling later and arriving at its conclusions.

Few people were in the courtroom when the report was delivered to the bench. Judge Robert F. Duer thanked the jurors on behalf of the bench and the people of Wicomico county for their "prompt and energetic action during the session."

He then warned the members they still comprised the county's grand jury until their successors were named in the fall and permitted them to go home.