



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Crisis, Vol. 16, No. 2

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numbered in its ranks over ten thousand people, men, women and children, which evidenced one hundred per cent loyalty to the country and nation, of which those people are a part, won round after round of spontaneous applause from the thousands who lined the streets...

Our colored citizens who have gone and are yet to go are enlisted in the same cause that the rest of us support. The flag they are under is their flag. Nobody has challenged their loyalty or patriotism, and nobody is going to.

Let's make all the service flags big enough to hold all the stars.

NORTH CAROLINA

THERE has been an astonishing occurrence in Wilson, N.C. A colored teacher, Miss M. C. Euell, says:

"On the morning of Monday, April 1, I with some of the other teachers observed the new time and was at the school by 8:30 and began our day's work, and at time to close, by the new time, closed the day's work. Principal Reid did not begin until the usual hour by the old time, and, therefore, objected to my closing before he ordered it. We could not, however, come to a satisfactory agreement. So he ordered me to meet him at the superintendent's office at 5 o'clock the same day. I agreed to do so and went. Principal Reid was there when I reached the office and no doubt had prejudiced the superintendent's mind against me. I was asked by the superintendent to explain myself, and so proceeded to do so. Principal Reid disputed all I said. I insisted that I had told only the truth. Superintendent Coon then asked if I wanted to make Principal Reid a liar. I said I only want to speak the truth for myself. The superintendent ordered me to 'shut up,' saying that he would kick me out of his office. I told him that I would go out.

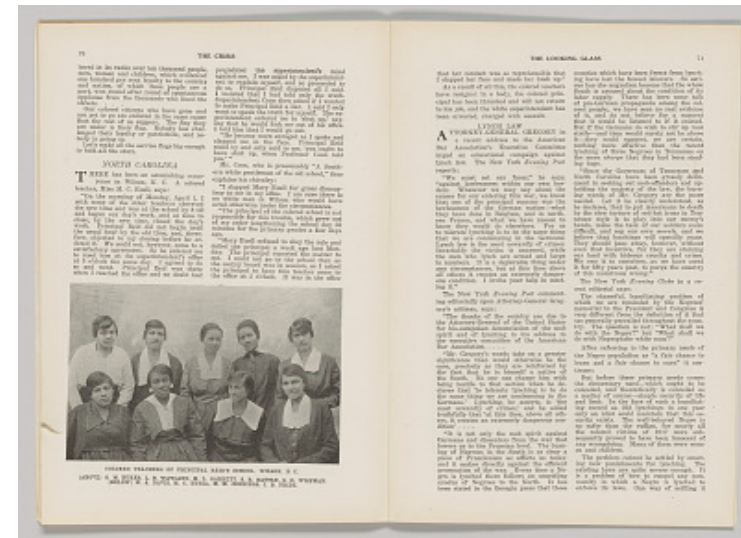
"He became more enraged as I spoke and slapped me in the face. Principal Reid stood by and only said to me, 'you ought to have shut up, when Professor Coon told you.'"

Mr. Coon, who is presumably "A Southern white gentleman of the old school," thus explains his chivalry:

"I slapped Mary Euell for gross discourtesy to me in my office. I am sure there is no white man in Wilson who would have acted otherwise under the circumstances.

"The principal of the colored school is not responsible for this trouble, which grew out of my order lengthening the school day 30 minutes for the primary grades a few days ago.

"Mary Euell refused to obey the rule and defied the principal a week ago last Monday. The principal reported the matter to me. I could not go to the school then as the county board was in session, so I asked the principal to have this teacher come to the office at 5 o'clock. It was in the office



[[image]]
[[caption]] COLORED TEACHERS OF PRINCIPAL REID'S SCHOOL,
WILSON, N.C.
(ABOVE) G.M. BURKS, L.B. WAYLAND, M.L. GARRETT, S.R.
BATTLE, S.D. WISEMAN (BELOW) M.A. DAVIS, M.C. EUELL, M.M.
JENNINGS, J.B. PRIDE [[/caption]]

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that her conduct was so reprehensible that I slapped her face and made her hush up."

As a result of all this, the colored principal has been thrashed and will not return to his job, and the white superintendent has been arrested, charged with assault.

LYNCH LAW

ATTORNEY-GENERAL GREGORY in a recent address to the American Bar Association's Executive Committee urged an educational campaign against lynch law. The New York Evening Post reports:

"We must set our faces," he says, "against lawlessness within our own borders. Whatever we may say about the causes for our entering this war, we know that one of the principal reasons was the lawlessness of the German nation - what they have done in Belgium, and in northern France, and what we have reason to know they would do elsewhere. For us to tolerate lynching is to do the same thing that we are condemning in the Germans. Lynch law is the most cowardly of crimes. Invariable the victim is unarmed, while the men who lynch are armed and large in numbers. It is a deplorable thing under any circumstances, but at this time above all others it creates an extremely dangerous condition. I invite your help in meeting it."

The New York Evening Post commenting editorially upon Attorney-General Gregory's address, says:

"The thanks of the country are due to the Attorney-General of the United States for his outspoken denunciation of the mob spirit and of lynching in his address to the executive committee of the American Bar Association. . . .

"Mr. Gregory's words take on a greater significance than would otherwise be the case, precisely as they are reinforced by the fact that he is himself a native of the South. No one can charge him with being hostile to that section when he declares that 'to tolerate lynching is to do the same thing we are condemning in the Germans.' Lynching, he asserts, is 'the most cowardly of crimes,' and he added truthfully that 'at this time, above all others, it creates an extremely dangerous condition' . . .

"It is not only the mob spirit against Germans and dissenters from the war that lowers us to the Prussian level. The burning of Negroes in the South is as clear a piece of Prussianism as afflicts us today, and it makes directly against the efficient prosecution of the war. Every time a

Negro is lynched there follows an unsettling exodus of Negroes to the North. It has been stated in the Georgia press that those counties which have been freest from lynching have lost the fewest laborers. So serious has the migration become that the whole South is aroused about the condition of its labor supply. There has been some talk of pro-German propaganda among the colored people; we have seen no real evidence of it, and do not believe for a moment that it would be listened to if it existed. But if the Germans do wish to stir up race strife—and they would surely not be above it—they would surely not be above it—they could suggest, we are certain, nothing more effective than the recent lynching of three Negroes in Tennessee on the mere charge that they had been stealing hogs.

"Since the Governors of Tennessee and North Carolina have been grossly delinquent in seeking out mob-offenders and upholding the majesty of the law, the burning words of Mr. Gregory are the more needed. Let it be clearly understood, as he declares, that to put Americans to death by the slow torture of red-hot irons in Tennessee style is to play into our enemy's hands, make the task of our soldiers more difficult, and sap our own morale, and we believe that lynchings will speedily cease. They should pass away, however, without even that incentive, for they are staining our land with hideous cruelty and crime. We owe it to ourselves, as we have owed it for fifty years past, to purge the country of the monstrous wrong."

The New York Evening Globe in a recent editorial says:

The shameful, humiliating of which we are reminded by the Negroes' memorial to the President and Congress is very different from the definition of it that has generally prevailed throughout the country. The question is not: "What shall we do with the Negro?" but "What shall we do with the Negrophobe white man?"

After referring to the primary needs of the Negro population as "a fair chance to learn and a fair chance to earn" it continues:

But before these primary needs comes the elementary need—which ought to be conceded, and theoretically is conceded as a matter of course—simple security of life and limb. In the face of such a humiliating record as 222 lynchings in one year only an idiot could maintain that this security exists. The well-behaved Negro is no safer than the ruffian, for nearly all the colored victims of 1917 were subsequently proved to have been innocent of any wrongdoing. Many of them were women and children. The problem cannot be settled by enacting new punishments for lynching. The existing laws are quite severe enough. It is a problem of how to compel any community in which a Negro is lynched to enforce its laws. One way of settling it

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