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FILED FOR RECORD at <u>1:30</u> o'clock <u>P</u> M
JUN 23 2026
RECKY LANDRUM County Clerk, Hunt County, Tex. by 

REMEMBERING
TED SMITH

Greenville, Hunt County, Texas ---- July 28, 1908

What Happened

On July 28, 1908, an 18 year old, African American male, **TED SMITH**, was abducted from the Hunt County Jail on Jordan Street in downtown Greenville, Texas by a mob of over 1,000 White residents. They dragged young **TED** by a rope around his neck the three blocks to the south side of the County Courthouse on Washington Street where he was tortured and burned alive as the crowd stood by and watched.

The Lynching

TED SMITH had been arrested at the home of another Black resident and taken to the Hunt County Jail after having been accused of sexually assaulting a young female in the rural Clinton Community southwest of Greenville. **TED** denied the charges. As word got out of the arrest a mob began to form outside the County Jail demanding "justice" and that he be turned over to them. Eventually the Sheriff agreed to take him to the home of the girl who was claiming to have been assaulted. She continued her accusations of assault and **TED** was returned to the jail. Upon arrival at the jail the mob, which had grown to over 1,000 people, was now gathered *{some accounts place the number at over 2,000 at the time of the lynching}*. The mob seized control of him as he was returned to the jail whereupon a rope was placed around his neck, he was beaten and tortured and dragged through the streets to the public square where wood was piled upon him, he was saturated with coal oil and a match applied. **TED SMITH** gave a final yell of agony as he perished in the flames. A black resident cried out in protest of what was happening and he also was beaten by the crowd.

The Injustice

TED SMITH was killed in a public spectacle lynching that demonstrated the racial hierarchy upheld by the White community that viewed Black lives as beneath and inferior to White lives. The local sheriff and public officials failed to prevent him from being seized from the county's custody by the mob. No one was ever held accountable for the lynching or the denial of due process. Years later the sheriff expressed the opinion that based on his investigation at the time he doubted that an assault had ever occurred.

Terror and Impunity

Most leading White figures in Hunt County failed to condemn the lynching of **TED SMITH**, the mayor of Greenville excused the mobs actions the following day in the press. The sole White voice to speak out against the murder in the press was W.T. Hilton pastor of Central Christian Church in Greenville. Reporters often wrote about public lynching with headlines that referred to it as an "*occasion*", which emboldened the lynch mobs to kill with impunity.

Remembrance

This soil represents a life taken without justice and a history that must be remembered.

Soil collected in partnership with the *Equal Justice Initiative Lynching in America: The Soil Collection Project*

REMEMBERING GEORGE LINDLEY

Wolfe City, Hunt County, Texas -----July 26, 1889

WHAT HAPPENED

The killing of George Lindley. Six defendants were charged with Grotge Lindley's death because he was among a group of Black workers who "displaced the white laborers on the brickyards in Wolfe City, Texas. The Company hired an increased number of black employees, white residents became enraged by the additional employment of black workers and responded with brutal violence.

THE CRIME

On July 26, 1889. in an attempt to frighten off black workers, six white men found Mr. Lindley sleeping in a tent, they entered the tent, kidnapped him, took him to the woods to whip and castrate him, but during the attempted castration, Mr. Lindley broke away in an attempt to escape, while running he was shot in the back of his head and killed. Five days later six men "all white and well known in Hunt County" were arrested, charged with murder; they were later released on bail. There are no known records that indicated anyone was ever convicted of the murder of Mr. Lindley.

THE INJUSTICE

George Lindley a victim of racial violence was murdered in Wolfe City, Texas July 26, 1889. During the Examining Trial, two of the men testified the mob targeted Mr. Lindley to undermine black economic autonomy and self-determination through violence. A documented fact, Black Americans faced exploitation, discrimination, unequal pay, brutal violence and a struggled to survive in the decades following emancipation with few opportunities to truly realize the promise of freedom.

TERROR AND IMPUNITY

During this area, it was not uncommon for white people to attempt and deny black people economic advancement often used violence to enforce racial hierarchy with expectation of impunity. As one newspaper article stated, the men said "their goal was to threaten the balance with like treatment if they did not leave the brickyard and find employment elsewhere". Ultimately, Mr. Lindley was murdered because he had a job that white community members did not think black people should have.

REMEMBRANCE

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Remembering Thomas Peddy

Greenville, Hunt County, Texas - January 11, 1885

What Happened

On January 11, 1885, Thomas Peddy, an African American man, was accused of assaulting a white woman - an allegation commonly used during this era to justify violence against Black men.

Before any trial or investigation could take place, a mob of over 100 masked men armed with guns and pistols forcibly removed Mr. Peddy from the Greenville jail at night. Law enforcement officers surrendered him to the mob.

The Lynching

The mob dragged Mr. Peddy from the jail and took him to outside of town near the Sabine River. Nearly 100 spectators joined the mob of 100 masked men. There, in a public act of racial terror, he was hanged from a bois'd arc tree.

Injustice

Thomas Peddy was denied due process and the protection of the legal system. His murder was not the act of a few individuals - it was a public act of violence that reflected a broader system of racial injustice. No one was held accountable.

Historical Context

Between 1877 and 1950, thousands of African Americans were lynched across the United States. Thomas Peddy was one of at least three known victims of racial terror lynching in Hunt County, Texas.

Remembrance

This soil represents a life taken without justice and a history that must be acknowledged.

Soil collection ceremony performed by the Corporation for Cultural Diversity for Greenville, Texas, Inc., in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative. "Lynching in America: The Soil Collection Project."