

“Lynch Law Reversed: The Rape of Lula Sherman, the Lynching of Manse Waldrop, and the Debate Over Lynching in the 1880s”

This essay appeared in American Nineteenth Century History 6:3 (September 2005): 273-293. If you want to cite it, please cite it from that source.





*This study examines an 1887 lynching in Pickens County, South Carolina, in which a black mob lynched a white man for the rape and murder of a black girl. Two members of the mob, both African American, were eventually convicted, but a massive petition campaign led the goernor to pardon them. The study relies largely on coroner's inquests for the murder victim and the lynching victim, court records, and newspaper articles. It suggests that the anomalous nature of this lynching prompted many people to consider and debate exactly what justified lynching and what role race was to play in those justifications. Since the lynching occurred at the very point when lynching victims were becoming overwhelmingly African American men, the insights provided into contemporary views on lynching are all the more valuable.*

### **'Lynch Law Reversed: The Rape of Lula Sherman, the Lynching of Manse Waldrop, and the Debate Over Lynching in the 1880s'**

Around midnight on the unusually cold evening of 30 Dec. 1887, Constable David E. Garvin drove his buggy over the railroad tracks in Central, South Carolina, heading north along the hilly road to Pickens. On the seat next to him, arms tied, sat Manse Waldrop, identified that afternoon at the coroner's inquest as the man who had raped and killed Lula Sherman, the fourteen-year old daughter of a sharecropper. Before the buggy made it a mile down the road, men drifted out from the darkness, grabbing the mule's harness. Garvin tried to get the buggy turned around and moving back toward the relative safety of the hotel at Central, but it was too late. The men had grasped Waldrop and dragged him from the buggy, into the woods.

The story of the lynching of Manse Waldrop can be told in such great detail because of an unusual wealth of source material, one of several factors making this case unique and richly deserving of study. In addition to the usual newspaper stories describing the lynching, this study rests on transcriptions of the coroner's inquests of both the lynching victim and the victim of the precipitating rape and murder. The sworn testimony of over two dozen witnesses contained in

these two documents make it possible to construct a detailed timeline for the hours between the time a coroner's jury convened to determine who raped Lula Sherman and the time her father and his neighbors lynched Waldrop. These coroner's inquests were later transcribed at the request of the governor, who was reviewing the many petitions he had received requesting clemency for two of the lynchers convicted of murder. Along with the coroner's inquest transcriptions, the governor received dozens of petitions and letters bearing the signatures of thousands of citizens, overwhelmingly asking that the lynchers be pardoned for their crime. The reason this case gathered so much attention is indicated in the headline one newspaper gave the story: 'Lynch Law Reversed.' What was reversed—and what makes the lynching of Manse Waldrop such a rare opportunity for the historian interested in understanding racial violence in the New South—was the racial identities of the parties. Lula Sherman was black, Manse Waldrop was white, and the men in the mob who lynched him were black.

Historians have seldom told the story of Manse Waldrop because it can find no place within the broader narratives of the historiography of lynching. According to the best statistics on lynching available at this time, Waldrop was one of four white men lynched by black mobs between 1882 and 1940.<sup>1</sup> When George Brown Tindall briefly noted the case in his 1952 study South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900, he described it as 'one unusual case,' and the story figured as a chapter in E. Don Herd, Jr.'s The South Carolina Upcountry, where it was described as 'the most unusual lynching and resulting court trial in the history of South Carolina.' Even the most thorough student of lynching in South Carolina, Terence Finnegan, regarded it in much the same light. In a discussion of violence among white yeomen in upstate South Carolina, Stephen A.

West provided the fullest account yet of the Waldrop lynching to show that the prosecution of these lynchers occurred ‘under circumstances that were clearly exceptional.’ All these previous accounts of Manse Waldrop’s lynching treat it as an anomaly, a bizarre exception to the archetype of a white mob lynching a black man for an alleged sexual assault on a white woman.<sup>2</sup> Waldrop’s story does not fit into this historiography, and seeing why it does not can help us transcend the old tropes of lynching historiography.

Historians’ studies of lynching have followed a narrative initially set by activists concerned with ending lynching. Lynching scholarship began as an urgent attempt to come to grips with a phenomenon that was out of control, threatening law and order and claiming hundreds of victims a year. Journalists and activists such as Ida B. Wells-Barnett or scholars such as James Elbert Cutler wrote early studies of lynching around the turn of the twentieth century in order to understand lynching as it was happening and stop it. The NAACP sponsored an important survey of lynching in 1919, and sociologists used the evolving principles of social science to deal with this southern problem. Nearly all histories of lynching rely on records kept by the NAACP, the Tuskegee Institute, and the Chicago Tribune—all institutions which hoped that publicity could help end lynching. When historians began to give sustained attention to lynching, the works they were building upon all came out of the antilynching movement.<sup>3</sup>

As useful as the work of Ida B. Wells-Barnett or Arthur F. Raper may be in understanding contemporary responses to lynching, the antilynching perspective of all early studies of lynching prioritized certain ways of analyzing lynching over others. In the early 1890s, the nature of lynching did change and a phenomenon that had once targeted both white and black victims was reoriented into the most extreme means of enforcing the laws and customs

of segregation against African American victims. As historian Christopher Waldrep has recently demonstrated, an archetypal lynching narrative emerged, telling a simple story with stock characters. A bestial black man committed a sexual assault against a pure white woman, and the enraged white men who could not wait for the delays and uncertainties of judicial procedure meted out a harsh but deserved penalty. Activists starting with Wells-Barnett went to great lengths to point out that this story served as a cover for many more complicated situations. White men, Wells-Barnett argued, actually lynched black men for many reasons besides allegations of rape, and even in those cases, the rape allegations remained unproven since no trial was ever held to establish the truth. When Wells-Barnett set out to explain how lynching worked, she sought to get behind the ‘black beast rapist’ myth that most whites used to justify lynching, but in arguing against this myth, she still took it as the center of her analysis. If white people could see past the lies, reasoned antilynching activists, then even the ones who might approve of lynching black rapists would oppose most lynchings since most lynchings did not actually involve rape. A little later, sociologists worked to find scientific principles that would explain lynching. The most successful sociological explanation of lynching would be the one that could be applied successfully to the largest number of lynchings. Competition for resources, the educational level of a population, or even the season of the year might be a generalizable explanation for why lynchings happened when and where they did.<sup>4</sup>

While the work of antilynching activists and sociologists may have helped understand the dynamics of why lynchings occurred and how they might be stopped, it simultaneously impeded a solid historical understanding of lynching by essentializing the phenomenon and failing to account for its development and change over time. Antilynching activists determined to get to

the ‘real’ reasons for lynchings had to get past the smokescreens that southern whites threw up to justify the practice, but one effect of this was that scholars of lynching have not looked carefully enough at these justifications, assuming they were universally disingenuous. For example, one of the first modern histories of lynching was Jacquelyn Dowd Hall’s 1979 Revolt Against Chivalry, which argued that lynching was a means for white men to control not just black men and women, but white women as well. While Hall’s insight is certainly correct and has served to inspire much further work on the subject, it still fits in the narrative established by Wells-Barnett and other early antilynching activists: though white men may have claimed that they lynched black men as retaliation for sexual assaults, those claims are only a distraction from the real reasons for lynching.<sup>5</sup>

Another effect of the antilynching roots of lynching scholarship is that historians have never quite known what to do with lynchings that do not fit into the archetypal pattern. Studies of lynching nearly always segregate their analysis of non-white mobs and non-black and non-male victims. W. Fitzhugh Brundage’s study of lynching in Virginia and Georgia devoted a separate chapter to situations ‘when white men merit lynching.’ Crystal Feimster’s study of women and lynching worries at the edges of the archetype by considering white women participating in the lynching of black men and white men who lynched black women, but even Feimster focuses on ‘the rape myth [that] shaped the narrative of lynching into a cautionary tale for blacks and women, a warning that the New South could be a dangerous place when they transgressed the narrow boundaries of race and gender.’ The essentialized story of lynching and the desire to get below the surface to the deeper meaning remains intact.<sup>6</sup>

This study uses a lynching which defies the archetype in some ways yet follows it in

others to open a discussion of lynching that does not divine the deeply hidden motives for the lynching but instead dwells on the arguments over lynching this atypical event provoked. More clearly than in most cases, we know who lynched Manse Waldrop and why; what is confusing in this situation is how the lynching would be justified or condemned. No one could argue that the black men who lynched Manse Waldrop had as their hidden agenda the desire to enforce an oppressive racial hierarchy. In the debates over whether the lynching was justifiable and what should happen to the lynchers, we have the opportunity to see how people on all sides of the evolving discussion about lynching thought about the practice. Reporters and editors discussed the case in dozens of newspaper articles. Grand juries worked to decide who was to blame for what. Average citizens signed carefully argued petitions explaining how they thought the case should be handled, and more prominent citizens pondered the dilemmas in personal letters to the governor. All these opinions and ideas form a dense archive in the discourse surrounding lynching at this time. It is all the better that the lynching occurred just at the point when the practice of lynching itself was becoming more purely a means of racial control.

The unusual nature of the Waldrop lynching also encourages us to consider it within the context of other historiographies that often go overlooked in lynching studies based on the antilynching tradition. Since Waldrop was lynched because he raped a black girl, we can consider this case as one of many responses by African Americans against white violence. A generation ago, Herbert Shapiro surveyed this field and noted that some black leaders called for violent resistance to lynching, though he generalized too broadly when he claimed, ‘Blacks have fought against those who would oppress them, but they have not organized lynch mobs.’ More recent work has described a broader range of responses that included evasion and ‘everyday

resistance' as well as violence. In reconsidering black resistance to Jim Crow, Robin D. G. Kelley argued that while the black middle class might have followed the dictates of Booker T. Washington, the working class was more inclined to abandon accommodation for whatever form of resistance they could get away with. Going beyond the 'everyday resistance' Kelley documented, W. Fitzhugh Brundage suggested that historians pay more attention to the 'roar on the other side of silence,' the ever-present possibility that white violence against African Americans could be met with violence. Even scholars of the Civil Rights Movement such as Timothy B. Tyson have argued that we need to consider the role of 'armed self-reliance' along with nonviolence in advancing civil rights.<sup>7</sup>

The fact that Lula Sherman, the rape victim in this lynching case, was black rather than white ties this case to the historiography of sexual violence, and especially sexual violence against black women, in a way that a study of an archetypal lynching usually would not. Had Lula Sherman been white, there would probably have been no debate over whether she was an innocent victim and whether her attacker deserved to be shot and hanged by the side of the road. But racist assumptions about gender, power, and sexuality guaranteed that along with discussing the finer points of justifying lynching, observers of this case would have to consider what they thought about rape. The historian thus has the advantage of gaining some insight into one of the most frustratingly dark corners of historical experience in the nineteenth-century South, the sexual assault and exploitation of black women by white men.<sup>8</sup>

'Central' might seem an unlikely name for a town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge, but that is exactly what it was, lying halfway between Charlotte and Atlanta on the Atlanta and

Richmond Air Line, a few miles from the former home of John C. Calhoun. Started in the early 1870s by Tom Scott of the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Atlanta and Richmond Air Line promised to open up South Carolina's upper piedmont to commercial development. Construction of the railroad pushed southwest from Charlotte into South Carolina, and in 1873 the track was completed and the line opened. Central provided a place for engines to be changed out and to take on coal and water. A number of houses and a post office sprang up, and a hotel opened.<sup>9</sup>

Leaving the perspective of the train tracks, Central and its railroad had an important effect on the part of Pickens County it traversed. Railroads built after the Civil War accelerated a shift to cotton production that had begun in the 1850s.<sup>10</sup> Along with quickening the agricultural economy, the railroad itself in Central provided opportunities not available in outlying towns or even in other railroad towns that lacked Central's railroad infrastructure. In particular, these railroad jobs gave local African Americans opportunities to earn cash wages and escape the tightening grip of sharecropping. In 1886, in response to a wave of railroad strikes across the country led by the Knights of Labor, the railroad decided to begin hiring black workers in preference to white workers for 'all subordinate positions in the shops and on the road.' Not only was black labor cheaper than white, but railroad managers hoped that black workers would be less likely to join strikes. The policy was rescinded in February 1887 after complaints by the local Knights of Labor and the Firemen's Brotherhood, but it seems likely that some of the lynch mob members who worked at the railroad shops got their jobs at this time.<sup>11</sup>

By the late 1880s, the practice of lynching itself was in flux. It was not until the late 1880s that lynching came to be associated in the public mind primarily with white mobs responding to sexual assaults by black men on white women, assaults that had appropriated the

term ‘outrage’ from the Reconstruction-era lynchings.<sup>12</sup> Joel Williamson has argued that this transition, which he dated quite specifically to a rape scare in 1889, was part of a broader transition in the South from a ‘Conservative’ racism associated with the aristocratic Redeemers to a ‘Radical’ racism associated with a younger generation of political insurgents who based their power on control of white labor more than control of black labor. By the early 1890s, lynching was clearly not something which could just as easily befall a white transgressor as a black transgressor.<sup>13</sup> Lynching was culturally coded by race: a weapon in the arsenal of white supremacy to be used against African Americans as necessary.

In South Carolina, lynching itself was nothing new. Lynchings had occurred during the Civil War, and Reconstruction saw dozens of attacks which should properly be categorized as lynchings. In 1871, a group of Ku Klux Klansmen lynched a dozen African American members of the state militia who had been arrested in Union County on suspicion of murder. In nearby York County, Klansmen lynched Tom Roundtree and Jim Williams, both leaders in their communities.<sup>14</sup> In the years between 1882 and 1887, there were at least fifteen lynchings, and nearly all the victims had been black men killed for rape or murder.<sup>15</sup>

The lynching of Manse Waldrop came at a time of transition in South Carolina and in the South as a whole. The debate that swirled around this puzzling situation showed the inner workings of some minds as they struggled to explain an anomalous situation in terms that would clarify for themselves and for the future exactly what the practice of lynching was all about. Was it an equal-opportunity sanction that a community might use against the worst offenders without regard to the colors of the parties involved? Or was it a quasi-legal means of enforcing white supremacy and thus off-limits to African Americans, no matter how heinous the crime they

sought to avenge? The answers blacks and whites would suggest to these questions are revealing. I do not mean to argue that the Waldrop case was particularly influential. I have no evidence that it shaped larger debates on lynching or made a particularly wide impression in its time or later. What the Waldrop case does is raise questions about race and violence that remain as vexing to historians in the twenty-first century as they were to South Carolinians in the nineteenth.

Lula Sherman sat alone at home on the morning after Christmas, minding her younger sister. When she heard the footsteps in the yard and the knock on the door, she probably thought it was a neighbor, or perhaps the landlord, Mr. Miller. She was a bit apprehensive to find a strange white man with a dark beard asking to speak to her father. Cato Sherman was gone, though, out working or taking advantage of the lull after Christmas to visit relatives. Her mother had left that morning to attend a funeral, and when the white man insisted on waiting for her parents to return, Lula's nervousness turned to fear. And then he raped her. Afterwards, alarmed that Lula's condition would tell the tale of what had happened, he forced her to swallow some medicine. He grabbed a nearby handful of cotton and pushed it inside her to stanch the bleeding. The bearded man pulled on his jeans jacket, picked up his gun, and walked away, disappearing over the hill a few moments later.<sup>16</sup>

Three days later, Delia Sherman was in a panic as she saw her fourteen-year old daughter's condition worsen. The girl had been shaken and upset when Delia returned from the funeral on Monday, but no amount of coaxing or commanding could bring Lula to say what was wrong. Now the girl's fever increased and a series of convulsions wracked her young body. In

desperation, Delia sent one of her other children running the three miles to Central to fetch Dr. T. W. Folger. As they waited, Lula finally told her mother the whole story. By then, the shock of the assault and the infection from the dirty cotton and the dried blood inside her had done their work. When Folger arrived a quarter hour after Lula died, all he could do was determine a cause of death. After noting the damage to the girl's body, Folger concluded, 'It is probable that she was ravished and possibly this is the cause of her death.'

Black and white men crowded into Tom Watkins's store, arranging themselves around the stove and leaning on the counter. Ben Garvin, the forty-year old farmer and trial justice who was temporarily serving as coroner swore in fourteen men as a coroner's jury to account for Lula Sherman's death. Among the jurors were both white men from Central, such as Gaylord Eaton and James Rowland, and black men, including Andy Crooks and Hamp Forrester. The jury heard testimony from Lula's parents and T. W. Folger and concluded that Lula had been raped and had died as a result, but it was not clear who might have committed the crime, so the jury adjourned for the day.

The next morning brought a break in the case. Several new witnesses arrived to testify before the coroner's jury, and many of them remembered seeing the same man close to the Sherman place during the time that Lula and her sister were alone there. About eleven o'clock on Monday morning, a man that G. W. Miller, the Shermans' landlord, recognized as Manse Waldrop visited him at his house, asking about renting some of his property. He asked permission to hunt on the place, and Miller remembered being surprised that Waldrop had a gun with him, but no dog. Two black men who lived in the neighborhood also saw Waldrop and testified that they saw him leaving between noon and one o'clock. Mary Spearman, who lived

on the G. W. Miller place about a quarter mile from Cato Sherman's house, saw Waldrop cross the creek and go past her house about noon, heading toward Cato Sherman's.

Manse Waldrop was sent for and brought to Watkins' store. Although not much is known of Waldrop before the last day of his life, he appears to have been living on Francis J. Pelzer's place just across the Anderson County line. Pelzer was a Charleston merchant and a pioneering investor in upstate cotton mills, including the one on the Saluda River in Anderson County that bore his name. After that mill was up and running in 1882, Pelzer purchased Ashtabula Plantation, which lies a mile or so toward Central from the town of Pendleton.<sup>17</sup> One observer said Waldrop was 'about 35 [years old] at least.'<sup>18</sup> Waldrop got to Central in the afternoon, shortly after Lula Sherman was buried. When Lula's younger sister identified him, Manse Waldrop was charged with the rape and murder of Lula Sherman.

Plans for the lynching of Manse Waldrop began almost before the inquest for Lula Sherman was finished. Cato Sherman, Lula's father, and several other black men from the neighborhood were present. One of these men, Harrison Heyward, was apparently the first to say that Waldrop ought to be hanged. A comment like that, suggesting violence toward a white man, might have been dangerous for a black man to make, but under the circumstances, with outrage, grief, and anger running high, it passed. And it might have remained but an idle comment had Gaylord Eaton not been present. Eaton, who was white, had been a member of the coroner's jury and, according to several people present, had been drinking that Friday. David E. Garvin, the constable, asked Eaton to help transport the prisoner to Pickens. Eaton agreed readily, and as he was tying Waldrop up, he told the prisoner, 'That rope will break your neck.' Three different times he said that he would put the rope around Waldrop's neck himself 'if he

could get two or three Negroes to help him.' More than once he also stated that they were going toward the jail in Pickens, but they would never get there with the prisoner. As Eaton and Garvin left Watkins's store with Waldrop, to head toward Central, Eaton hid a rope underneath his coat.

After Waldrop was carried away, the men remaining at the store considered what to do. Harrison Heyward, Cato Sherman, and some of the other black men began to discuss lynching Waldrop. After all, Gaylord Eaton—a white man—seemed to be in favor of a lynching. Bill Williams, a black railroad worker, asked Tom Watkins what would happen to them if they hanged Waldrop. 'It would be just the same as if I were to shoot you,' Watkins replied. 'It would be taking the law in your own hands.' Such a message could be understood in several ways. It could be a warning against committing any violence. But Watkins was white and Williams was black, so it could have meant that hanging Waldrop would bring down no more harsh response than if a white man shot a black man. Heyward later testified that Watkins said 'what ever you do don't have any white men in it,' another subtle encouragement to lynching and a suggestion that local white opinion would support whatever the black men chose to do.

When Waldrop arrived in Central, Eaton and Garvin seemed to feel it was best to carry the prisoner on to Pickens that night to the safety of the jail. Rumors of the threatened lynching, however, were already circulating in Central, and at least three people tried to talk Eaton and Garvin out of taking Waldrop to Pickens. One man even offered to keep the prisoner in his home with a guard on him rather than risk the road at night. Eaton was eager to get going and declared that he was going to set out walking to Pickens with the prisoner. Garvin convinced Eaton to at least wait in the telegraph office while he got a buggy from the livery stable. Folger

suggested going by way of Symm's Mill since there was already a mob on the main road.

But mob or no mob, Eaton and Garvin set out toward Pickens on the main road with Waldrop riding in the buggy alongside them. As the trio rode north, Garvin saw a few men in the road, then a few more. He whipped the mule to outrun them and made it another few hundred yards before encountering a mob of another dozen men in the road. Realizing he could never make it to Pickens without losing Waldrop, Garvin wheeled the buggy around to return to the relative safety of Central. But he could not escape the mob, and after a few hundred yards, men caught up and stopped the buggy. They dragged Waldrop out and over the hill.

At this point, everyone heard several pistol shots. Folger and two other men had already been heading toward the scene and managed to catch up with the mob, getting between the men and Waldrop. Waldrop seemed shaken and had been shot in the head, although he was only grazed. For a moment, it appeared that the lynching had been averted, and Waldrop got up and began walking back towards town. But three or four men rushed past Folger and the others and grabbed him again, ordering Folger and the other white men, who were unarmed, to leave. The next morning Waldrop's body was found hanging from a small tree near the road.

On Saturday morning, 31 Dec. 1887, the coroner empaneled another jury, this time to find out how Manse Waldrop had died. Perhaps because the acting coroner had little experience but more likely because of the unusual and potentially inflammatory nature of the case, the solicitor for the district, James L. Orr, Jr., arrived to take charge of the investigation. Within four days, the coroner's jury had concluded that Waldrop had 'come to his death near Central in Pickens County by being hanged with a rope' and went on to name several suspects. Five black men—Harrison Heyward, Cato Sherman, Bill Williams, Henry Bolton, and John Reese—were

arrested and charged with murder. They made it safely to Pickens and took up residence in the county jail. Gaylord Eaton was also arrested, but he was charged with the lesser crime of accessory to murder before the fact. Eaton had the resources to hire two of Pickens's best attorneys, and by 7 Jan. 7, 1888, he was released on five thousand dollars bond.

The legal proceedings at the beginning of the case suggest that much more was going on than meets the eye, and we can only partially untangle the actions and motivations by reading the court journal.<sup>19</sup> The five black defendants were represented by R. W. Simpson of Pendleton, a prominent Confederate veteran and attorney. The case had made headlines around the region, and African Americans across the state did what they could to help. In Charleston, Samuel J. Lee, an African American attorney and Speaker of the House of Representatives during Reconstruction, helped raise funds for the black lynchers' defense. Lee and the Charleston group even sent a black lawyer to Pickens, but after speaking with the defendants' counsel, he concluded that outside counsel was not needed.<sup>20</sup> A grand jury convened in Pickens on 16 Jan. 1888, with Judge Joseph J. Norton presiding over the Court of General Sessions. The grand jury indicted Bill Williams, Cato Sherman, Henry Bolton, John Reese, and Harrison Heyward for murder, but they also indicted Gaylord Eaton for murder (not simply for accessory before the fact) and indicted one other African American mob member, Foster Knox. In their final presentment, the grand jury seemed to tie problems with liquor in Central to the recent violence. After presenting indictments against two Central men for retailing whiskey, the grand jury stated, 'From information derived and obtained by us we do verily believe that D. E. Garvin, T. W. Folger, Aleck Anderson, Richard McCorde and Green Roberts are accessories to the murder of Manse Waldrop alias Gooden, and we would recommend that the Solicitor exert himself—use all

his means—and exhaust every effort to secure proof against the parties named, and bring them to trial.' Judge Norton granted the defense a continuance until July to give them time to prepare their case.<sup>21</sup>

The five black lynching defendants returned to the Pickens jail to wait. Since the jail was wooden, no fire was allowed in their upstairs cell. The men stayed warm by pacing back and forth and kept their spirits up by singing 'Come to Jesus' and other hymns. When the case came to trial in July, Folger and the others against whom indictments were sought by the original grand jury were discharged.<sup>22</sup> The original six defendants all plead not guilty. The court journal lists witnesses but gives no further details of what they testified, and newspaper accounts of the trial are not extant. The State's witnesses include many of the white citizens of Central who tried to prevent the lynching, while the defense witnesses are primarily family members who could provide alibis for the defendants. Curiously, Solicitor J. L. Orr was called as a witness for the defense. The jury could not decide on a verdict, and the judge declared a mistrial. The black defendants again returned to the Pickens jail.<sup>23</sup>

The case was not heard again until March 1889. This time verdicts were reached: on 6 Mar. 1889, Eaton, Sherman, and Reese were found not guilty, but Williams, Heyward, and Bolton were convicted. Bolton requested and was granted a new trial and bail, probably because of the prejudicial effect of some hearsay evidence against him. Judge Norton sentenced Williams and Heyward to hang on 5 Apr. 1889.<sup>24</sup> As soon as the verdicts were announced, a massive clemency campaign began. Petitions poured in from across the state, prominent citizens and politicians wrote to the governor, and a group of African American ministers met with Governor John P. Richardson to ask him to grant clemency to Williams and Heyward.<sup>25</sup>

Richardson delayed the execution and eventually granted the two men full pardons.<sup>26</sup>

Richardson's pardons illustrate an important point about the timing of this case. Richardson was one of the Bourbon governors of South Carolina in the decade and a half after the end of Reconstruction. While there were steady encroachments on black political rights during this period, politicians such as Richardson countenanced black political participation, and were therefore somewhat responsive to their needs and opinions, in a way unimaginable just two years later after Ben Tillman's more virulent brand of racism had gained political supremacy in South Carolina.<sup>27</sup>

The lynching of Manse Waldrop posed a dilemma for southern whites as the fact that the mob members had been identified and arrested set two important principles in white folk justice against one another.<sup>28</sup> On the one hand, it was important not to legitimize the practice of black men killing white men. Yet, as much as whites wanted to discourage black violence directed against whites, they certainly did not want to establish the precedent that mobs who lynched to avenge sexual assaults should be brought to justice and punished. The situation posed a related set of dilemmas for African Americans. In a period when a decline in political power made African Americans increasingly vulnerable to violence of all sorts, some African Americans supported the idea that a black patriarch had as much right to defend and avenge his dependents as did a white patriarch. It was this idea of equal justice that underlay many of the appeals to spare the lynchers' lives that came from African American petitioners: it was simply wrong, they argued, to execute two black men for a crime that white men were never even brought to trial for. At the same time, it was clear that African Americans were disproportionately the victims of mob violence, and sanctioning lynching could not but strengthen the hand of the white lynching

supporters who would turn the practice against black victims.

These arguments began to emerge within hours of Waldrop's lynching. The first statement came from the doctor who had examined Lula Sherman's body. Even though T. W. Folger had every reason to be outraged at Waldrop's crime, he had been one of the voices of reason the night of the lynching, urging the constable to wait till morning before moving the prisoner to the Pickens jail. Folger even offered to help stand guard over Waldrop at the town's hotel, and when the mob seized Waldrop near Folger's house, he and another white citizen rushed out to plead with the mob to spare the man's life. Unsuccessful, Folger was one of the first on the scene the next morning to discover Waldrop's body. As deeply involved in the incident as he was, it is not surprising that Folger would have had a comment on the lynching. In a letter to a local newspaper, he argued that lynching was the only appropriate response to sexual assault. While the citizens of Central 'cannot but condemn the violence,' Folger wrote, 'still they think that if ever a case of lynching was justifiable, this is the one.' Beyond the specifics of this case, Folger hoped Waldrop's fate might quiet those who criticized lynching: 'To all thinking men, it seems to me, that this will show the 'bloody shirt' men of New England that the negro can lynch the white perpetrator of crime with as much impunity as can his Caucasian brother lynch the negro.'<sup>29</sup>

Folger was hardly alone in condoning the lynching and opposing punishment for the lynchers on the basis of equal treatment at law. Several dozen residents of Central signed a petition that argued, 'We are opposed to lynch law but it is a recognized fact that no white man has ever been convicted in South Carolina for this offence, and it would seem to us to be unfair and unjust to hang these poor negroes, even if guilty, for simply following the advice & example

of their white fellow citizens.<sup>30</sup> Another petition from Pickens County stated unequivocally that Waldrop was guilty and was rumored to have committed other rapes. It went on to argue that the testimony against the lynchers was weak, but most importantly, since whites were not convicted for lynching, Heyward and Williams should not be executed.<sup>31</sup> As the Charleston newspaper argued when the lynching trial was beginning, ‘The effect [of the lynching] cannot well be other than salutary, as one of the best ways to meet and overcome an evil is by demonstrating that it will work both ways and operate against those who have been accustomed to be judges as well as against those who have been wont to be adjudged.’<sup>32</sup>

Samuel Dibble, a white politician from Orangeburg in the South Carolina Low Country, suggested in a letter to Governor John P. Richardson that lynching to avenge rape was justifiable, whatever the racial identities of the persons involved.<sup>33</sup> Dibble began with the assumption that Waldrop was guilty of the crime with which he was charged. He argued that convicting only two of the six defendants would not send a clear message anyway. Black men and white men, argued Dibble, are equal before the law, and the courts should not discriminate ‘based on the race or color of the outraged victim, the ravisher, or the lynchers.’ Hanging Williams and Heyward would be wrong in principle, and it also ‘would be disastrous in its consequences to that race especially, which has the most to suffer, in cases of outrageous assault.’ Dibble argues, in effect, that since protecting white women from rape (presumably by black men) was so important, the judicial system should never punish men who lynched to avenge rape, even if that meant sometimes allowing black men who killed white men to go free.

Perhaps the most extreme response to the entire situation came from the judge who condemned Heyward and Williams. Joseph J. Norton was a Confederate veteran and a resident

of Walhalla in neighboring Oconee County. He had just begun his career as a judge when he found himself with the Waldrop case.<sup>34</sup> Afterwards, Norton wrote to Governor Richardson to explain that the jury may have thought that a recommendation of mercy would spare the lives of Heyward and Williams. Norton felt bound by the law to impose the death penalty after Heyward and Williams were convicted of premeditated murder, but he was willing to explain to Richardson that the jurors probably never intended for the defendants to hang and may well have rendered a different verdict had they realized their recommendation for mercy would be ignored. In an attempt to avoid this sort of conflict in the future, Norton suggested to Richardson that he recommend to the General Assembly that they make ‘lynching for rape an additional ground for declaring a homicide excusable.’<sup>35</sup> Though it seems a huge leap backwards in jurisprudence, Norton’s suggestion was in line with the responses by Folger, Dibble, and others who supported the principle of lynching in response to sexual assault and felt that race should not be an issue in such calculations. Fortunately for South Carolina, Governor Richardson and the General Assembly did not act on this suggestion.

Other observers sought to make a racial distinction in the use of lynching. A few days after the lynching, several dozen Central residents met to draft a statement opposing the lynching. They said, in part, ‘lynch law . . . in the hands of the negro race is a widely different thing from lynch law in the hands of the whites. The latter have always used it as a corrective and preventive of the highest and most revolting crimes, and even then in a decent or orderly way. The latter, once adopting it with impunity, from their nature and training, are likely to use it for revenge or a spirit of reckless lawlessness.’<sup>36</sup>

Some people commenting on the Waldrop lynching found a way to excuse the lynching

and avoid setting the precedent of executing lynchers, but to do so without supporting the idea that black men might legitimately lynch white men for victimizing black women. Writing in support of a petition prepared by some of the black citizens of the Georgetown area, state senator Richard Dozier acknowledged the assault on Lula Sherman.<sup>37</sup> Waldrop's lynchers, however, had acted 'from an ignorant zeal to imitate their white brethren in the preservation of the virtue of their women.' Dozier argues that they 'only grasp the general idea contained in the measure of redress, without ability to discriminate and differentiate according to the facts in any given case.' They were, at any rate, only following the lead of the whites since 'the public sentiment of the State as expressed through the Press, I believe without a dissenting voice, had so thoroughly approved of lynching for this particular offence up to the time of the lynching in Pickens County, that it was not at all surprising that the colored people should have felt themselves justified in resorting to the same remedy.' Although Dozier comes close to repeating the argument that blacks should be treated equally before the law, at least to the extent of not being executed for a crime whites were never indicted for, he gives it a significantly different cast by the claim that blacks did not really understand what they were doing and were simply imitating whites.

In these explanations we can see the outlines of the scientific racism that was taking shape at this time. This new view held that with the civilizing influences of slavery removed, African Americans were regressing to a state of barbarism as bad or worse than that they had left in Africa. A leading thinker in this movement was Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, who argued that the way blacks had improved under slavery was by imitating whites.<sup>38</sup> Little wonder, then, that African Americans who had become more civilized by imitating whites might indulge in one of the whites' least civilized habits by a similar process of imitation.

What the Central residents and Dozier were both at pains to make clear is that what justifies lynching is the genuine sense of uncontrollable outrage white men feel when a black man rapes a white woman. Foes of lynching and later historians have been perhaps too quick to dismiss this explanation as a disingenuous rationalization, a smokescreen for the ‘true’ motives of lynching (sheer race prejudice, controlling black labor, or controlling white women are only a few possibilities). It is crucial that we understand the argument Dozier makes on its own terms because it is precisely this argument that allows white supporters of lynching to craft a discourse justifying the practice solely as a tool of racial subordination. Lynchings, of course, would happen with or without logical defenses of the practice, but Dozier’s argument is what provided supporters of lynching with a way to justify the practice to a public—South and North—that may have balked at a raw explanation of lynching as a way to control black labor or to keep disorderly white women in their places.

Ideas about gender and race were changing in the late nineteenth century. As historian Gail Bederman argues, the nineteenth century’s ideal of ‘manliness,’ with its emphasis on self-control, was beginning to incorporate aspects of ‘masculinity,’ the qualities that all men shared as a result of their sex. Manliness was the foundation of the middle class: a manly man could exercise self-control over his natural passions in order to succeed in business and establish a tranquil home. Collectively, the qualities of manliness provided the basis for civilization. These ideals were being challenged by other kinds of men who did not rely on self-control and manliness for their sense of what a man should be. By the late nineteenth century, there were fears that the stresses of modern life were proving too much for middle-class men, leading to ‘neurasthenia.’ Less civilized men did not suffer from this condition since their very

primitiveness kept them from suffering from the strains of the modern world.<sup>39</sup>

These fears about the debilitating effects of too much civilization on the very manliness that had led to civilization were compounded by fears that primitive men (workers and anyone not white) were themselves a threat to civilization in various ways. But the discourse around the emotions of ‘outrage’ white men felt in response to the rape of white women that led them to lynch provided a way to save civilization by modifying manliness, leavening it with a healthy dose of primitive masculinity. It was precisely the white man’s ability to feel strong emotions, an effect of his greater civilization and what made him vulnerable to neurasthenia, that made it possible for feelings of outrage to overcome him when a white woman was assaulted. This emotional response could easily overpower the white man’s manly self-control and ability to abide by laws and civilized legal forms, leading to lynching as an uncontrollable result. In this scheme of things, the potential weakness brought about by the refinements of civilization had a built-in safety valve: it could trigger the latent savagery and strength lying beneath the surface of every white man’s skin. If overdeveloped emotions were an unavoidable product of increasing civilization, then the lynchings that resulted were excusable. In fact, the notion that genuinely uncontrollable outrage prompted lynchings provided a rationale to explain how lynchings could increase in frequency at the same time that the world was, presumably, becoming ever more civilized.

Finally, some white observers found a way out of the intellectual dilemma posed by the Waldrop lynching by arguing that the situation did not meet the basic requirements for a legitimate lynching. Shortly after the lynching, the Keowee Courier in the nearby town of Walhalla published an editorial that took the position that Lula Sherman did not qualify as a

victim worthy of being avenged by lynching.<sup>40</sup> Lynch law, writes the editor, is wrong in itself. However, some crimes are so revolting that vengeance cannot be stayed. ‘Of these crimes,’ the editorial continues, ‘fiendish and brutal violence to respectable women is the highest.’ Protection of such women is a hallmark of Anglo-Saxon, Christian civilization, and ‘summary punishment of a brute, black or white, who assaults a pure woman, we cannot condemn.’ Thus far, it would seem the Keowee Courier should support the Waldrop lynching. Certainly Lula Sherman, at age fourteen, if not ‘respectable,’ could certainly have qualified as ‘pure,’ and the assault on her as ‘fiendish and brutal violence.’ However, the Keowee Courier presents Waldrop in the most sympathetic possible light.

The most important shift comes when the editorial suggests that in a case such as that at Central ‘the standing of the assailed should be considered.’ The editorial claims that blacks do not value women as whites do.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the editorial reasons, an assault on a black woman cannot create the genuine feeling of outrage that an assault on a white woman creates. The distinction between genuine and false outrage is important, because lynching for rape was justified as a natural, instinctive reflex response to the sense of outrage that a man of honor felt when a woman under his protection was violated. If this bond of protection was weak or invalid, then it could not legitimately provoke the sort of outrage that would take control of an otherwise steady and stable mind and lead it to murder. Continuing to hammer the point home, the editorial closes with the claim that ‘assaults on negro women by whites have been of rare occurrence.’

An even more extreme form of this argument was made by the grand jury of Pickens County meeting on 16 Jan. 1888, after the lynching.<sup>42</sup> Their presentment claimed ‘that the death of Lula Sherman was not caused by rape or attempt to ravish, but from diseases particular to

females and a severe whipping administered by the mother of the said Lula Sherman on Monday before her death on Thursday, which will fully account for the bruises on her person.' Waldrop, or any other possible rapist, does not even enter this picture. By blaming Lula's death on 'diseases peculiar to females,' the grand jury is asserting that Lula Sherman was sexually mature and therefore, probably, sexually active as well, not a chaste girl whose rape and murder might justify lynching. If the grand jury sincerely believed that Delia Sherman's whipping contributed to the death of her daughter, it is odd that they did not issue a warrant for her arrest.

The shift of the grand jury's attention from Waldrop to his victim helps us place this case in the broader context of a debate in the South about how women would be protected, who would protect them, and which women were or were not worth protecting. When Lula Sherman was raped and Manse Waldrop was lynched, the public response to rape was in flux, and it was not entirely clear that white men would be able to direct that response. During Reconstruction, African American and poor white women had taken advantage of the new political circumstances to demand their right to protection from rape.<sup>43</sup> In 1885, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) launched a major campaign to reform rape laws directed against the actions of white men.<sup>44</sup> The WCTU's campaign worked to raise the legal 'age of consent' so that prosecutions for rape would be made easier since men could not make a woman's character an issue.<sup>45</sup> This campaign was 'part of a sweeping, nationwide sex reform campaign inaugurated in 1885 by the national WCTU.'<sup>46</sup> Although the campaign in the South did not target forcible rape as directly as it had been challenged a few years earlier in the courts on an ad hoc basis, 'challenging white men's sexual prerogatives . . . entailed confronting white men's political hegemony.'<sup>47</sup> A more vigorous attack on white rapists was deflected when white Southern men

were able to turn public attention away from white rapists and toward the specter of black men raping white women.

The antirape campaign of the mid-1880s held out the possibility of racial equality; under the laws the WCTU sought, both white and black women would be protected from both white and black men. Had such laws been passed, Lula Sherman would have been defined by law as being incapable of consenting to sex, making Waldrop's actions automatically criminal. Without such laws, a more flexible standard defined her status. As historian Martha Hodes has pointed out, the idea of 'the purity of white women was . . . dependent upon images of black women as depraved,' images that were carried over from the days of slavery, when black women had no hope of legal protection from rape.<sup>48</sup> By manipulating the ways in which different women were defined as virtuous or not, white men were able to control the consensus about which rape victims deserved to be protected or avenged. Lynching as vengeance for rape thus became an alternative to reforming rape laws. This alternative kept the control of punishment for rape in the hands of white men and kept it within the communities and households they dominated. White women were forced into what historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall has described as 'the trade-off implicit in the code of chivalry, for the right of the southern lady to protection presupposed her obligation to obey.'<sup>49</sup> The obvious exception to this was the Waldrop lynching, and it is the exceptional nature of this situation that impelled white men to turn what Martha Hodes describes as 'a convenient ideological somersault to justify their own access to black women while furiously denouncing sex between black men and white women on the grounds of racial purity.'<sup>50</sup>

The lynching of Manse Waldrop and its aftermath turned out to be much more complicated than those involved initially thought it would be. Bill Williams, Cato Sherman, Gaylord Eaton, Harrison Heyward, and the other men who dragged Waldrop into the woods to die saw what they were doing as the simple application of commensurate and certain punishment to an offender who had committed an act so terrible that the courts could not be trusted to respond adequately. They were just avenging a fourteen-year old girl. But as the editor of the Keowee Courier pointed out later, ‘the standing of the assailed’ made all the difference. This example of ‘lynch law reversed’ makes certain conclusions about lynching easier to discern than they might be in the usual configuration.

Although opposition to lynching would become a central plank of the civil rights platform in the twentieth century, it would be a mistake to read that opposition to the practice as something monolithic or inevitable. Many African Americans (and many whites, for that matter) always opposed lynching for a variety of reasons, but in the 1880s and even after, many African Americans could also support the practice. Even though they were living in a society in which laws as written and enforced operated differentially on whites and blacks, some African Americans certainly did subscribe to the same idea of retributive justice that animated whites when they chose to lynch. Lynching became a racialized phenomenon, but that was a historical, contingent development, not an inevitability. We should turn our attention to a more thorough understanding of why African Americans participated in lynchings, either alone or with whites, and set these explanations in a framework that accounts for changes in African Americans’ attitudes toward lynching.

The almost silent role of Lula Sherman in this story should also remind us that there is

still much to know about the role of African American women as the victims of sexual exploitation and violence by white men and the relationship of that experience to lynching. Recent work has begun to consider black women as the direct victims of lynching, but more work is needed to complete our picture of black women as ‘collateral victims’ of lynching as well. While in this one exceptional case, the sexual violence against a black girl led to the lynching of a white man, it was probably much more common that the result was either nothing or the death of a black man who attempted to avenge her. In a world where white men felt empowered to exercise sexual domination over black women in a last shadow of a slaveholder’s perquisites and where ideas about masculinity and race were in flux, it would be amazing had black women not found themselves caught up in the lynching of black men both directly and indirectly. As we work to hone our understanding of the rape-lynch complex, we must find a way to factor sexual violence against black women into our equations, but to do so in a way that respects contingency and developments over time. When we write histories of lynching, we need to be able to explain how a mob of mostly African American men in 1887 could feel fairly confident that they acted with the support of their community—black and white alike—when they lynched a white man for an assault on a black girl and why ten years later, this would seem unimaginable.

## NOTES

---

1. Elizabeth Hines and Eliza Steelwater, 'Project HAL (Historic American Lynching Data Collection Project,' <<http://people.uncw.edu/hinese/HAL/HAL%20Web%20Page.htm>> (26 Feb. 2004). The data collected is available for download from this website.
2. George Brown Tindall, South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1952), p.245; E. Don Herd, Jr., The South Carolina Upcountry: Historical and Biographical Sketches, vol. 2 (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic Press, 1982), pp.510-21 (quotation p.510); Terence Robert Finnegan, At the Hands of Parties Unknown: Lynching in Mississippi and South Carolina, 1881-1940 (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1993), pp.259-61; Stephen A. West, From Yeoman to Redneck in Upstate South Carolina, 1850-1915 (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1998), pp.371-73 (quotation p.371). On the notion of narrative in historiography, see Hayden V. White, The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).
3. A few key works include Ida B. Wells, Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 18902-1900, ed. Jacqueline Jones Royster (Boston: Bedord, 1997); James Elbert Cutler, Lynch-Law: An Investigation Into the History of Lynching in the United States (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905); National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918 (New York: n.p., 1919); Walter F. White, Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch (New York: Knopf, 1929); Arthur F. Raper, The Tragedy of Lynching (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933). The best summary of the historiography of lynching is W. Fitzhugh Brundage, 'Introduction' in W. Fitzhugh Brundage, ed., Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), pp.1-20.
4. Christopher Waldrep, The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp.86-97, 103-16.
5. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). Another powerful and influential interpretation of lynching was provided by Joel Williamson in The Crucible of Race: Black/White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp.183-89. For a variety of perspectives on this and subsequent historical work on lynching see 'What We See and Can't See in the Past,' Journal of American History 83:4 (March 1997), pp.1217-72.
6. Stewart E. Tolnay and E. M. Beck, A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), pp.93-98; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp.86-102; Crystal Nicole Feimster, "'Ladies and Lynching': The Gendered Discourse of Mob Violence in the New South, 1880-1930' (Ph.D. diss., Princeton

---

University, 2000), p.5.

7. Herbert Shapiro, White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp.41-44 (quotation p.xvi); Robin D. G. Kelley, ‘“We Are Not What We Seem”: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South,’ Journal of American History 80:1 (June 1993), pp.75-112; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, ‘The Roar on the Other Side of Silence: Black Resistance and White Violence in the American South, 1880-1940’ in Brundage, ed., Under Sentence of Death, p.271; Timothy B. Tyson, Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Kidada E. Williams, ‘“Pistols and Guns are the Only Weapons to Stop a Mob”: Rethinking African-American Responses to Racial Violence, 1890-1925,’ paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association, Houston, 16 November 2002; Kidada E. Williams, ‘“By Any and All Means Necessary”: Black Communities in Defense of Themselves Against Racial Terror, 1890-1925,’ paper presented at Lynching and Racial Violence in America: Histories and Legacies conference, Emory University, Atlanta, 4 October 2002.

8. The rape of black women in the postbellum South has received relatively little attention. Lisa Cardyn has discussed the rape of black women by the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction as part of their program of terrorism, and Laura F. Edwards discusses the rape of black women by white men in the postbellum South more generally in Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), pp.198-210, but she does not connect it to lynching. For general discussions of rape and black women, see Edward E. Baptist, ‘“Cuffy,” “Fancy Maids,” and “One-Eyed Men”: Rape, Commodification, and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States’ American Historical Review 106:5 (2001), pp.1619-50; Catherine Clinton, ‘Bloody Terrain: Freedwomen, Sexuality, and Violence During Reconstruction,’ Georgia Historical Quarterly 76:2 (1992), pp.313-32; Darlene Clark Hine, ‘Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West: Preliminary Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance,’ Signs 14:4 (1989), pp. 912-20. This lynching in particular suggests the need to find what Bettina Aptheker called ‘a point of view in which lynching and rape could be seen as equally atrocious and politically connected acts of terror.’ Bettina Aptheker, ‘Woman Suffrage and the Crusade Against Lynching, 1890-1920,’ in Bettina Aptheker, Woman’s Legacy: Essays on Race, Sex, and Class in American History (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), p.53.

9. On the Richmond and Atlanta Air Line, see Scott Reynolds Nelson, Iron Confederacies: Southern Railways, Klan Violence, and Reconstruction (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), pp.115-38. On the development of Pickens County and the creation of Central, see Mattie May Allen, Central Yesterday and Today (Taylors, S.C.: Faith Printing Co., 1973), pp.13-29.

10. Nelson, Iron Confederacies, pp.118-21.

- 
11. Pickens Sentinel, 18 Feb. 1887. For the presence of a Knights of Labor Local Assembly in Central at this time, see Pickens Sentinel, 20 Jan., 27 Jan., 3 Feb., 17 Mar. 1887, and Bruce E. Baker, ‘The “Hoover Scare” in South Carolina, 1887: An Attempt to Organize Black Farm Labor,’ Labor History 40:3 (August 1999), pp.261-82.
12. Waldrep, Many Faces of Judge Lynch, pp.101-10.
13. Williamson, Crucible of Race, pp.111-39.
14. Allen W. Trelease, White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp.356-68, 363-64, 367-68.
15. Hines and Steelwater, ‘Project HAL.’
16. The narrative of these events has been reconstructed from the information contained in the coroner’s inquests on the deaths of Lula Sherman and Manse Waldrop, both included with a letter from B. D. Garvin to Gov. John P. Richardson, Jan. 10, 1888, in Folder 19 (Waldrop inquest) and Folder 24 (Sherman inquest), Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Papers of Governor John P. Richardson (1886-1890), South Carolina Department of Archives and History, as well as newspaper articles: Walhalla Keowee Courier, Jan. 5 and 12, 1888; Charleston News and Courier, Jan. 3 and 5, 1888; Pickens Sentinel, Jan. 12, 1888. Unfortunately, although these sources do allow us to see the last days of Lula Sherman’s life and the response of her family to her death with surprising detail, there is less material available about her family prior to December 1887. The 1880 census indicates that the Sherman family lived near the town of Pickens, about ten miles away, and they may have been living there as late as summer 1887 since Cato Sherman led a prayer at a barbecue there. Death certificates for Cato and Delia Sherman tell us little more than the fact that the parents of both were from South Carolina and that Cato Sherman worked as a gravedigger. [GET FOLDER AND TYPE IN CITATIONS HERE].
17. Bruce E. Baker, ‘Francis J. Pelzer,’ in Walter Edgar, ed., South Carolina Encyclopedia (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, forthcoming).
18. Mary Stevenson, comp., The Diary of Clarissa Adger Bowen, Ashtabula Plantation, 1865 (Pendleton, S.C.: Foundation for Historic Preservation in Pendleton Area, 1973), p.40.
19. The next three paragraphs are based on the Court of General Sessions Journal, Pickens County, 1886-1903. When I consulted it in 1997, this volume was stored haphazardly with dozens of other volumes of court records in the basement of the courthouse in Pickens, S.C. Those records may have been moved to a new county administrative building since then.

- 
20. Walhalla Keowee Courier, 26 Jan. 1888. On Lee, see Eric Foner, Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders During Reconstruction, rev. ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), p.131.
21. Court of General Sessions Journal, Pickens County, 1886-1903, pp.63-74 (quotation p.74).
22. Court of General Sessions Journal, Pickens County, 1886-1903, p.82.
23. Court of General Sessions Journal, Pickens County, 1886-1903, pp.87-89; Charleston News and Courier, 12 July 1888. This is the only source available for the content of the trial itself since local newspapers either are not extant for the period or contained no detailed coverage. A search of the court records available at the Pickens County courthouse revealed no other sources. The Journal contains basic information on the progress of the case as well as a list of witnesses called, but it does not tell us what those witnesses said.
24. Court of General Sessions Journal, Pickens County, 1886-1903, pp.105-20.
25. These petitions are contained in Folders 19-24, Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Papers of Governor John P. Richardson (1886-1890), South Carolina Department of Archives and History.
26. Pardons for Harrison Heyward and William C. Williams, 15 Apr. 1889, pardons no. 59 and 60, Pardon and Commutation Book, 1888-1893, Richardson Papers.
27. On Richardson specifically, see William J. Cooper, Jr., The Conservative Regime: South Carolina, 1877-1890 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), \_\_\_\_\_. For South Carolina's politics and race relations during this period, see Cooper, Conservative Regime, *passim*; Tindall, South Carolina Negroes; and Stephen Kantrowitz, Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
28. I borrow the term 'folk justice' from William Lynwood Montell's study, Killings: Folk Justice in the Upper South (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986). A similar concept is central to Edward L. Ayers, Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century American South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).
29. Walhalla Keowee Courier, 12 Jan. 1888.
30. Petition from 'citizens of the town of Central' to Gov. John P. Richardson, 20 Mar. 1889, Folder 23, Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Richardson Papers.

- 
31. Petition from ‘citizens of Pickens County’ to Gov. John P. Richardson, Folder 23, Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Richardson Papers.
32. Charleston News and Courier, 11 Jul. 1888.
33. Samuel Dibble to Gov. John P. Richardson, 21 Mar. 1889, Folder 20, Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Richardson Papers.
34. On Norton, see U. R. Brooks, South Carolina Bench and Bar, vol. 1 (Columbia, S.C.: State Co., 1908), pp.267-69; and J. J. Norton to ‘My dear wife,’ 17 Jul. 1888, Folder 33, Joseph Jeptha Norton Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, and J. J. Norton to ‘My dear wife,’ 17 Mar. 1889, Folder 36, Norton Papers.
35. J. J. Norton to Gov. John P. Richardson, 3 Apr. 1889, Folder 24, Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Richardson Papers.
36. Walhalla Keowee Courier, 12 Jan. 1888.
37. R. Dozier to Gov. John P. Richardson, 19 Mar. 1889, Folder 19, Box 24, Petitions for Commutations of Sentences, Oconee-York Counties, Richardson Papers.
38. Williamson, Crucible of Race, pp.119-21.
39. Gail Bederman, Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp.10-20.
40. Walhalla Keowee Courier, 12 Jan. 1888.
41. Philip Alexander Bruce echoed these sentiments: ‘The average plantation negro does not consider rape to be a very heinous crime. He is so accustomed to the wantonness of the women of his own race that it is not strange that his intellect, having no perception of personal dignity or the pangs of outraged feeling, should be unable to gauge the terrible character of this offence against the integrity of virtuous womanhood, even apart from the cruel wrong of associating it in such a way with manhood that is most vile, brutal, and depraved. The rape of a negress by a male of her own color is almost unheard of, a fact that is a strong proof of the sexual laxness of the plantation women as a class; for if they attached any importance to sexual purity, and strenuously resisted all improper encroachment upon it, the criminal records of the negro men would contain details of many such assaults. As it is, their careers are comparatively unblemished in this respect.’ The Plantation Negro as a Freeman: Observations on His Character, Condition, and Prospects in Virginia (1889; Williamstown, Mass.: Corner House Publishers, 1970), pp.84-85.
42. Court of General Sessions Journal, 1886-1903, Pickens County, p.75.

- 
43. Edwards, Gendered Strife and Confusion, pp.199-200, 205-06.
44. Leslie K. Dunlap, 'The Reform of Rape Law and the Problem of White Men: Age-of-Consent Campaigns in the South, 1885-1910,' in Martha Hodes, ed., Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History (New York: New York University Press, 1999), pp.352-72 (quote p.356).
45. Ibid. p.355.
46. Ibid. p.355.
47. Ibid. p.353.
48. Martha Hodes, White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1997), p.198.
49. Hall, Revolt Against Chivalry, p.151.
50. Hodes, White Women, Black Men, p.199.