

RACE RIOT IN ELAINE

In 1917 there was a race riot in Elaine, Arkansas. It seemed that the colored people in that area were having trouble with the big land owner white men. These colored people got together and sent for a lawyer. This lawyer seemed to arouse the anger of these big land owners. He held a number of meetings, making speeches at these big land owners. He held these meetings at the Hoop-Spur church house. This church was called the Hoop-Spur church. There was a hoop mill on one side of the church and a saw mill ran on the other side. At this time Deputy Sheriff [Name] and another law officer went to [Name] a colored man who had caused a riot in Wynne, Cross County, Arkansas. They heard that this colored man was in the area. They were not sure that they could find him. They searched for the colored man on sight, so they went to [Name] who knew the accused well, and they went to pick him up. When they got to the area, a meeting of the colored people was in progress, a meeting of the [Name] at the Hoop-Spur church. The colored people placed guards all around the church to not allow anyone to come in other than the organized group. When Deputy Sheriff [Name]

came upon the scene, they were stopped by the
guards who wanted to know what they were doing there.
They got into an argument with the guards and started
shooting. This action set off the riot which began
a few days ahead of schedule. The night before the
Governor called in the militia from other parts of the
state. The militia from Wynne weren't able to take part in the fighting
although they were tight in the middle of the riot.
These colored people put up a good fight but were
beaten in couple of days. There was a lot of shoot-
ing and lots of killing taking place. The militia
would kill these colored rioters in the streets, in a
ditch, or any place they happened to be. They would
then leave the bodies lying where they had
fallen for a couple of days before they were
to be buried. They did this to show the
colored people what would happen if they
started another riot. at the same time

During all the confusion and shooting
the colored man that the officers were trying to
were trying to apprehend, escaped to a house
where he was finally located and killed.

As told by H.M. "Tip" Sullivan, Wynne,
Arkansas. (See also page 10).