

Looking back 50 years at two UGA students who changed history and state

2:34 pm February 28, 2011, by Maureen Downey, AJC

When the University of Georgia admissions office interviewed Turner High School graduate Hamilton Holmes in 1961, the college staff asked the valedictorian, senior class president and co-captain of the Turner football team several shocking questions. They asked if he had frequented prostitutes, and if he'd been arrested. And though Holmes answered truthfully "no" to all those insulting questions, UGA noted on his application that he was "evasive" in his responses. And that was enough to reject a student for whom UGA would have rolled a red carpet from Athens to Atlanta had he had been white.

UGA didn't suggest that Holmes' high-achieving classmate, Charlayne Hunter, was evasive, although the admissions staff kept her waiting for her interview while taking white students at regular seven to 10 minute intervals. When they finally invited Hunter into the office for her session, they grilled her for an hour. And then they denied Hunter—who was ranked third in her high school school class - admission to UGA because the college lacked dorm space.

Judge William Bootle's ruling on Jan. 6, 1961, ended 176 years of segregation at UGA. In his decision, he noted that Holmes and Hunter "would have already been admitted had it not been for their race and color." Prior to his death, Bootle talked about the UGA desegregation case, saying, "Someone asked me the other day, 'Wasn't it hard to make the decision to let blacks in?' I said it wasn't hard at all. Once you decide what's right, the making of it is easy. Right is right."

The judge ordered immediate admission of the pair, who, a few days later, had to be spirited off the campus because a mob of students threw bricks at Hunter's dormitory. Her windows were shattered, and she and Holmes were temporarily suspended by the school for "safety reasons." Both students returned to campus two days after the riot and stayed until they earned their degrees in 1963.

Holmes and Hunter turned out to be among UGA's most successful graduates. In 1963, Holmes became the first black student admitted to the Emory University School of Medicine. Holmes, who died in 1995 after a coronary bypass operation, became the the head of orthopedic surgery at Grady Memorial Hospital and an assistant professor at Emory School of Medicine.

Hunter-Gault wrote for the New Yorker and The New York Times and spent 20 years on the MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour, before moving to South Africa in 1997 with her husband Ronald Gault. She now divides her time between Martha's Vineyard and South Africa.

about a month, I went out to see this lady in the country, and she had a baby and the placenta, the afterbirth, didn't come down. Two weeks of that. That damn thing got infected, and she had septicemia. She had it so bad she had abscesses in her eyes. I got it out, but it was too late because she died.

Of course, all the landowners around here had sharecroppers. Very few blacks owned their own home farms. One man who had several farms in this area, he had overseers to watch over, you know, manage the farms. One of the overseers called me in the middle of the night and said, "Doc, got a lady out here. One of the tenant's wives is having a baby, and she's in trouble. She's bleeding like everything. Will you go see about her? I'll see that you get your money." I went out there, and I saved her. Everybody was enthused about it. So the landowner called me and said, "Just go out and see my tenants and come back at the end of the year. I'll pay you just the one time every year. In October." I saw these patients out there, coming in here, out in the woods and everything until October. I had a bill of over \$900. I took it to the landowner. He said, "Well, Doc, my son looks after these things. Just take it over there and see him. He'll take care of you." But, in the meantime, another white man in town knew I was coming along. In fact, I had bought a house from him. He said, "Doc, I want to tell you something about some of these folks here. I like you, and I'm trying to help you, but everybody's not in your corner. See, now certain people around here, they'll have you work on their tenants, and then when you take the bill, they want to try to Jew you down." He said, "Don't you let them do it. Don't you let them intimidate you like that. It's all right to give them 10 percent but don't let them go any more than that." So sure enough, when I took this bill over to this guy, he said, "My son takes care of that." [I] took it to his son. He said, "Well, Doc, you got a big bill here. It's over \$900." He said, "Well, you know, we're giving it in one piece so listen, can't we sort of knock this down to about \$700?" Then it came back to me about what this other man had said. I said, "Look, there it is. Give me any damn thing you want. I don't give a damn. Just whatever you want to do. If you don't want to give me nothing, just tell me. I'll get out of here and won't bother you anymore." "Oh no, Doc. It isn't anything like that." So he paid me my money less 10 percent.

That's the way they got everything. They charged the tenants 25 percent for lending them money, and [when they made someone wait for payment for services rendered to tenants] they charged them 10 percent. That'd be 35 percent on every dollar they loaned a tenant. See what I mean? That's the way they got all these damn farms.

to white oppression while simultaneously promoting black liberation. Schools endeavored to teach African Americans how to negotiate their harsh and oppressive reality, even as they caught a glimpse of how to overcome second-class citizenship.

ANN POINTER

During the era of legal segregation, African American children rarely had access to public transportation to and from school. To make matters worse, black children frequently had to walk past white schools on the way to the more distant, segregated institution.

As they trudged long distances to school, African American children often experienced harassment at the hands of white children, as Ann Pointer, a native of Macon County, Alabama, relates.

I tell you, I had to walk to school every day and back no matter if it was storming. We could not ride the buses although we were paying taxes. But we couldn't ride those buses. Nothing rode the bus but the whites. And they would ride and throw trash, throw rocks and everything at us on the road and hoop and holler, "nigger, nigger, nigger," all up and down the road. We weren't allowed to say one word to them or throw back or nothing, because if you threw back at them you was going to jail. Now that's one of the things, that's the only bitter spot in my heart, and I shouldn't have it, but you know, you can't keep from thinking. We were paying tax, but yet we could not ride those buses; our school was the only [school for blacks]. We didn't have nothing at our school. They give the teachers some chalk and a couple of erasers for the board, but no kind of supplies. Not even heat. If your father didn't bring two loads of wood to that school, then they made you go to the woods and gather wood and you, you were not going to sit by the other children's fire. We were told, "All who ain't brought your wood, go to the woods." We had to go out there and walk up in water trying to find wood to help heat the school.

THOMAS FRANKLIN VAUGHN

Thomas Vaughn of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, shares a remembrance that adds a nuance to our understanding of how plantation owners controlled

GOVERNOR BLAMES THE NEGROES. SAYS THEY MUST PROTECT THE WHITES IF THEY EXPECT PROTECTION.

ATLANTA, Ga., April 23.—Gov. Candler to-night made the following statement on the burning of Sam Hose, near Newnan: "The whole thing is deplorable, and Hose's crime, the horrid details of which have been published and are too horrible for publication, is the most diabolical in the annals of crime. The negroes of that community lost the best opportunity they will ever have to elevate themselves in the estimation of their white neighbors. The diabolical nature of the double crime was well known to every one of them; the perpetrators was well known, and they owed it to their race to exhaust every means of bringing Hose to justice.

"This course would have done more to elevate them in the estimation of good people and to protect their race against the mob than all the rewards and proclamations of all the Governors for the next fifty years. But they lost the opportunity, and it is a deplorable fact that, while scores of intelligent negroes, leaders of their race, have talked to me about the Palmetto lynching, not one of them has ever in the remotest way alluded to either the burning of Palmetto, which provoked the lynching, nor to the diabolical crime of Hose.

"I do not believe these men sympathized with Hose or the Palmetto incendiaries, but they are blinded by race prejudice and can see but one side of the question. This is unfortunate. They must learn to look at both sides. I want to protect them in every legal right and against mob violence, and I stand ready to employ every resource of the State in doing so, but they must realize that in order to merit and receive the protection of the community they must show a willingness to at least aid in protecting the community against the lawless element of their own race.

"The good and law-abiding negroes must separate themselves from the lawless and criminal element. They must denounce crime and aid in bringing criminals to justice, whether they be black or white. In this way, they can do more to protect themselves than all the courts and juries in the States can do for them. To secure protection against lawless whites they must show a disposition to protect the white people against lawless blacks."

One special and two regular trains carried nearly 4,000 people to Newnan to witness the burning of Sam Hose or to visit the scene of the horrible affair. The excursionists returning to-night were loaded down with ghastly reminders of the affair in the shape of bones, pieces of flesh, and parts of the wood which was placed at the negro's feet. One of the trains as it passed through Fort McPherson, four miles out of Atlanta, was stoned, presumably by negroes. A number of windows were broken and two passengers were painfully injured.

AN ANTI-LYNCHING LAW

A bill requiring persons charged with taking part in a lynching to be tried in the United States courts instead of the local court, and holding every person found guilty to be guilty of murder, has been introduced in Congress. Probably the influence of the representatives from the South, which clings to its own Prussian way of dealing with the Race problem, will be enough to prevent the bill from getting very far. It is recognition of a pretty serious state of affairs that such a measure should even be thought necessary. There is nothing sacred about a lynching, which makes it legally necessary to pass a special law about it. Murder is murder, no matter what it is called, and lynching is murder. Lynching has flourished in the South, and is creeping into the North, simply because public sentiment has approved, or tolerated, this form of murder. Whatever it is tolerated it must either breed a contempt for law, or be the result of a contempt for justice and for civilization. The lynchers might at least be logical. They might be wretches without being snakes. If they believe that it is right to torture criminals to death they should pass laws providing for it. If they believe that for certain kinds of crime it is not necessary to prove the prisoner guilty they should procure laws or constitutional amendments dispensing with the formality of trial. But none of the lynching committees has done this and their criminal procedure is consequently rank hypocrisy. Everybody knows that a man of a certain race or color charged with almost any offense is likely to be deprived, without redress or appeal, of the protection of the formal law.

So far lynching has been confined almost entirely to one unfortunate race of men, but there are indications that this will not always be so. Those who are capable of torturing Negroes, whether guilty or not, will be found capable of torturing suspected Protestants, whether guilty or not, and eventually of torturing anybody with whom they happen violently to disagree. It is not possible to be a completely civilized man the rest of the time. A federal law cannot reform an out-law community, but one man brave enough to defy a majority of which is probably more often the truth—a howling minority, might do a good deal for America needs brave men, at home as well as abroad, more than she needs new laws.—San Francisco Bulletin, April 10.

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Body Found Hanging to a Tree On Roswell Road Two Miles from Marietta. Body Not Mutilated.

Leo M. Frank was taken from the jail Friday night by a well-armed mob, he was taken within 100 miles of Marietta on Roswell road and shortly after the occurrence he was attacked on his life was in Marietta.

The Grand Commission, which was formed for the purpose of investigating the case of Leo M. Frank, has been informed of what had happened. It is reported that the body was found hanging to a tree on Roswell road, two miles from Marietta. The body was not mutilated.

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WILL LEAVE FOR MASONIC CONVENTION

Mr. J. M. Bell will leave Friday for a masonic convention at Marietta. He will be accompanied by his wife and children.

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 WILLOGBEVILLE, GEORGIA, AUGUST 17 (1915)
 PUBLISHED EVERY WEEK
 LEO M. FRANK TAKEN FROM STATE FARM AND LYNCHED
 A. B. SMITH AND HIS ASSOCIATES IN CHARGE OF INVESTIGATION

Harris is Urged not to Call for Prohibition in Call

Valter and Stanley, have a well-known honor and his in the past of the prohibition movement. Harris is urged not to call for prohibition in the call.

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HEAT ON BABIES

These, terribly hot days, cause heat to break out on infants all over their bodies and cause them to fret. The Grand Commission, which was formed for the purpose of investigating the case of Leo M. Frank, has been informed of what had happened. It is reported that the body was found hanging to a tree on Roswell road, two miles from Marietta. The body was not mutilated.

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RIOTOUS SCENES IN ATLANTA.

The People in Highest Pitch of Excitement Kill Numbers of Negroes.

Atlanta, Sept. 25.—Rioting of alarming proportions began here last night. Through the night it raged with varying tides, and when morning dawned to-day it found the downtown streets in possession of eight companies of the Fifth Georgia Infantry, with a battery of light artillery in reserve. Through the day little of importance had occurred. The police claimed with the aid of the military, to have the situation under control.

This condition came as the result of unprovoked and repeated assaults of attempted assaults upon white women by negroes. The list of an even dozen of such assaults within the limits of Fulton county within the last nine weeks came yesterday, when four attempts at assault were reported.

Flaring headlines in the special editions of the afternoon papers wrought the populace to a high pitch of excitement. The small lightning night crowds were largely increased by men and boys, who thronged the downtown streets.

WHEN THE MOB TURNED.

There was no leader and no overt act until late in the evening. About 10 o'clock a negro man seized a white woman from the sidewalk on Whitehall street in the center of the town. Almost simultaneously a negro woman made an insulting remark to a white man on an adjoining street, and he administered what he considered due punishment.

From this start the excited crowd, which had become a mob, began its work of destruction. Five thousand men and boys thronged the downtown streets looking for negroes.

News that a riot had started brought thousands more from their homes in the suburbs and residence districts, until fully 10,000 men thronged the downtown section.

They made attacks on the incoming street cars. Each car was seized for negroes. The trolleys were pulled from the wires and in the semi-darkness of the midnight car negroes were boarded, cut and stung upon in an unprovoked and brutal way. If a negro resisted or complained it meant practically sure death.

One car half filled with negroes approached from an outside rail. The mob dashed for the car. Resistance was made by the negroes, who had not been apprised of trouble. Three negroes lay dead on the floor of the car when it was permitted to move on, and two more were seriously beaten and mangled.

TRIED THE MOB BY FORCE.

When the crowd seemed to be getting beyond control, at about 10 o'clock, Mayor Woodward mounted a car platform on Peachtree and Marietta streets and urged the crowd to disperse, declaring that the assaults of the white women would be adequately and promptly punished by due process of law.

Mayor Woodward was given a respectful hearing, but when he finished the work of destruction was resumed. He made another appeal a few moments later, but without result. Then he turned to a general fire alarm, calling the fire department to the scene. The Chief James called the militia which "cleared the streets."

The result was to stop the mob in its work in that immediate section and to drive it to other streets. The situation became so threatening at 11 o'clock that Gov. Terrell was appealed to order out the state troops. Although no request had come from the sheriff, Gov. Terrell gave the order, mobilizing the local eight infantry companies at once. Previously a police riot call had been sounded, summoning all police reserves to headquarters.

THROU ALLOW IN REPROBATION.

With the caution to call out the troops, the big fire bell sounded once more, this time the call for every member of the militia to report forthwith at his armory. It was almost 2 o'clock this morning before the first squad appeared on the streets, and at 3 o'clock six companies were under arms.

The attacks on negroes had the effect of clearing the streets of blacks. Street hacks were abandoned at curbs. Another knocked the hat of a passenger, but they packed the city without a fatality.

It was at about this hour, 3 o'clock, that Mayor Woodward gave his order for the clearing of the streets. The Mayor issued an order requiring all the saloons in the city to remain closed tomorrow and until further orders. The

Unprovoked Saturday night, is considered to have had much to do with the violence of the mob.

Some citizens called on Gov. Terrell today and urged him to issue a proclamation declaring martial law. When he showed them the writings of the proclamation and told them what martial law was, they withdrew the request. They didn't want it. The Governor said he would issue the proclamation of his own motion if the disorder continued.

INFLAMMATORY PAPERS CONDEMNED.

At a meeting of prominent citizens held today the extra newspapers, and not by certain afternoon papers, detailing under flaring headlines the stories of attempted outrages by negroes, were severely condemned, the belief being expressed that these served more than anything else to excite the passion of the people. This meeting also requested the Mayor to close the taverns tomorrow, which he decided at once to do.

Citizens living at any distance from the center of the city are armed to the teeth when they go about the streets. Few have been shot without picking up their pockets.

To-night an automobile left the city with four citizens of West End, two males and two females, carrying a down White-churcher rifle and plenty of ammunition.

The armed automobile was a familiar sight on the streets today, Sheriff Helms among others, occupying one with a deputy and two soldiers, armed for any emergency. He went specially to all sections of the city wherever there were reports of disorders.

READY WITH THEIR WEAPONS.

Citizens living on the outskirts, seated on their porches or in doors with shot-guns or rifles across their laps, were a familiar sight this afternoon.

There was a mob of nearly 500 collected on Peachtree street about noon today, and some of them began taunting the militia and pushing them about street. Finally the soldiers turned their backs on them, and the crowd let them alone, turning on down the street.

In several instances negroes were chased by small crowds, but in only one case mentioned has any killing been reported to-day.

Only three of the dead negroes have been identified. They are William H. Welch, a barber; Frank Smith, and Amos L. Shepard, a woman. The names of the other dead are as yet unknown.

The men composing the mobs, which have created the disorder, are principally of the hoodlum class. The better element of the city is indignant and outraged over the rioting, and has joined in calling on the authorities to use every possible effort to restore order.

It was thought Monday that the rioting was over, but today's Atlanta Constitution contained an account of the shooting down of three county policemen by negroes. A telegram received in this city to-day stated that the militia had killed forty negroes and arrested a large number.

CASHING
In the City of Atlanta
Just because a man gives up a dollar to hear a lecture down-town it doesn't signify that he cares for free lectures at home.

OPERA HOUSE

Thursday Night September 27

The Wills Musical Comedy Co.

PRESENTING

At Atlantic City

20 People—Mostly Girls.
Prices 25c, 50c, 75c.
Tickets on Sale at Vaughan & Moore Shoe Co's.

SAM HOSE BURNED AT THE STAKE.

Crime Revolting in Its Details.

Mob Transformed Into Inhuman Fiends by Sight of Victim Long Thought—Ears and Fingers Cut Off, Body Mutilated and Oil Poured Over His Bleeding Body Which Was Set on Fire.

Newnan, Ga., April 28.—In the presence of nearly two thousand people who sent aloft yells of defiance and shouts of joy, Sam Hose, a negro who committed two of the basest acts known to crime, was burned at the stake in a public road one and one half miles from here this afternoon. Before the torch was applied to the pyre, the negro was deprived of his ears, fingers and other portions of his anatomy. The negro pined pitifully for his life while the mutilation was going on, but stood the ordeal of fire with surprising fortitude. Before the body was cool, it was cut to pieces, the bones were crushed into small bits and even the tree upon which the wretch met his fate, was torn up and disposed of. An souvenir. The negro's heart was cut in several pieces as was also his liver. Those unable to obtain these ghastly relics direct, paid their more fortunate possessors extravagant sums for them. Small pieces of bone went for 25 cents and a bit of the liver, crisply cooked, sold for ten cents. One of the men who lifted the can of kerosene to the negro's head, is said to be a native of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. His name is known to those who wore with him, but they refuse to divulge it. The mob was composed of citizens of Newnan, Griffin, Palmetto and other little towns in the country round about Newnan, and of all the farmers who had received word that the burning was to take place.

Hon. W. Y. Atkinson, former governor of Georgia, met the mob as he was returning from church and appealed to them to let the law take its course. In addressing the mob he used these words: "Some of you are known to me and when this affair is finally settled in the courts you may depend upon it that I will testify against you."

A member of the mob was seen to draw a revolver and level it at Governor Atkinson, but his arm was seized and the pistol taken from him. The mob was frantic at delays and would hear to nothing but burning at the stake.

Hose confessed to killing Cranford, but denied that he had outraged Mrs. Cranford. Before being put to death the negro stated that he had been paid \$12 dollars by "Lige" Strickland, a negro preacher at Palmetto to kill Cranford. Tonight a mob of citizens is scouring the country for Strickland who has left his home and will lynch him if caught.

Sam Hose killed All Cranford, a white farmer, near Palmetto, and outraged his wife, ten days ago. Since that time the business in that part of the state has been suspended, the entire population turning out in an effort to capture Hose.