

August 20, 1965
Hayneville, Alabama
(Lowndes County)

(FIRST REPORT ON SHOOTING FROM LOWNDES COUNTY)

Willie Vaughn, Ruby Sales, Rev. ^{Jonathan M.} John Daniels and Richard Morrisroe were released today. They had been arrested last week in Fort Deposit. Instead of returning to Selma, they went into a Cash store, white owned, on Hwy. 97. As they walked into the store, a man Vaughn thinks was the owner, shot John in the stomach with a shotgun. John was in front of the four people. He was knocked back about seven feet through the door. Vaughn ran. The man shot at him, but he was able to get away. He thinks that John is dead. Richard was lying on the street rolling over. Can't find Ruby. Feels that she has definitely been shot also.

(LATER REPORT)

The shooting was done by a Mr. Coleman of Haynesville, Alabama. He is supposedly the owner of the cash store.

His sister is the Supt. of Schools in Lowndes County and he has a son who is a highway patrolman.

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Telephone number of the Baptist Hospital is 205-288-2100 in Montgomery, Ala. I called at 8:30 this morning and spoke to Nurse Harbin. She said his condition (Rev. Morrisroe) is critical. Told to call back in an hour and she would be able to give more information since she just came on duty and does ^{not} know anymore at the present time.

Tom Coleman has been charged with murder. He is 52 years of age.

Both victims were white and one was a catholic priest.

Jonathan M. Daniels from Keen, New Hampshire (earlier

Rev. Richard Morrisroe/priest/ wounded by buckshot from shotgun/critical

Carlton L. Perdew: (County Solicitor)

"Tom Coleman has admitted the murder but has signed no confession. We are not going to pre-try this man. We have our stomachs full of what the president tried to do to the three men accused of killing Mrs. Liuzze."
(Misquote above)

Correction from UPI: *Carlton L. Perdew (County Solicitor)*

"Coleman has admitted the murder but has signed no confession. We are not going to pre-try this man. We have our stomachs full of how the president tried to pre-try these other three men."

August 20, 1965
Hayneville, Alabama

Tom Coleman admitted the shooting and pleas self-defense. He states that Rev. ~~John~~ Daniels had a knife.

~~Jonathan N.~~

5:00 a.m. report:

Rev. Richard Morrisroe has now been in surgery for about six hours.

First degree murder charges were officially filed by authorities against Deputy Sheriff Coleman late Friday evening. Coleman says he was acting in his official capacity.

A story appeared in the Montgomery Advertiser today (August 21):
written by Bob Ingram and Ralph Holmes.

Hayneville, Alabama - A civil rights worker was shot to death here Friday afternoon and another critically wounded, as they picketed a store in this racially tense town....

Lownes County Sheriff.....Ryals said that Coleman, assistant deputy sheriff, had gone to the store, which was being picketed after the sheriff's office had received a complaint that the pickets were disturbing the peace.

"He was acting in an official capacity as a peace officer" sheriff Ryals said.

The two ministers and several Negroes had been released from Lowndes County jail here only a few hours before the shooting.

Daniels, alias ~~John~~ ^{Jonathan N.} Daniels and Morrisrow, alias Richard Morrisson, had been arrested in Fort Deposit last Saturday along with a group of Negroes during a racial demonstration.

The two men had refused to post the bond of \$100 set in their cases, but Friday noon, officials in Fort Deposit notified the sherrif's office in Hayneville to release the men.

The ministers and Negroes were released about 1:00 p.m. and the fatal shooting occured at approximately 3:40 p.m.

Lowndes County officials said they could not explain why the two ministers were using aliases.

STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE
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F I R
August 21, 1965

HAYNEVILLE, ALA. - August 20, 1965 - Tom Coleman, 52, a part-time deputy sheriff shot and killed Jonathan Daniels and critically wounded Rev. Morrisroe, both white. Coleman was being held Saturday/for the slaying of Daniels. ~~on a murder charge~~

Rev. Morrisroe was taken to the Baptist Hospital in Montgomery where he is still in critical condition. Doctors operated on him for more than five hours in an attempt to save his life.

On August 14, 27 people were arrested on charges of disturbing the peace and parading without a permit as they picketed white-owned stores in Fort Deposit. They had been held in jail under \$100 bond for a week and were suddenly told, -on the afternoon of August 20th- by the jailer to get out. They still had not posted bond.

They walked out of the Hayneville courthouse together and as no one had been notified ~~that~~ they were going to be released, there was no one present to carry them home. All but six decided to walk home. These six included Willie Vaughn, Rev. Richard Morrisroe, Ruby Sales, ~~of~~ Jonathan Daniels, Gloria Larry and Joyce Bailey.

They decided to stop at a small store about 500 yards from the courthouse to purchase food. No one felt any threat of danger, having traded at this store on previous occasions.

~~As/they~~As they entered the store, a white man with a shotgun in his hand cursed them and told them to get out of his store. Before they could turn around to leave he began to shoot. Ruby Sales was in front and she was pushed to the ground by ~~her~~ Daniels. He was shot in the stomach and died immediately. Joyce Bailey was pushed down by Rev. Morrisroe just before he was shot. ~~of~~

When everything quieted down, Ruby called "John" but there was no answer. Ruby says "I tried to push him out of the doorway but he was too heavy."

Joyce and Gleria began to ask if everyone was o.k. but no answer from Daniels or Rev. Morrisree. Panic stricken they began to run.

A friend of Joyce Bailey's drove by the courthouse to see if anyone had been released. They got into his car and he drove them to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating ~~Office~~/Committee Office in Selma.

A mob of local white people gathered outside of the office at 2:00 a.m. this morning, but the civil rights workers were able to make it to their cars and leave without incident.

Stokeley C. Carmichael, Lowndes County project director, says "people are very tense in Hayneville and Selma."

Jonathan Daniels, 27 year old seminarian at the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Cambridge, Mass. was in Alabama working with the ~~Episcopal~~ Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity which has its headquarters in Atlanta. He had completed two years of study in the three-year course toward a bachelor of divinity degree.

Father ~~Rev.~~ Morrisree, 26, assistant pastor at St. Columbanus church in Chicago. ~~He~~ had come to Alabama to help in the civil rights struggle.

Tom Coleman often works as a part-time deputy sheriff. He is the father of two children, one of them Tom Coleman Jr., is a state patrolman. His brother, ~~His brother,~~ Joe L. Coleman, is chairman of the Montgomery city water works. and sister, Helda Coleman is superintendent of Lowndes County Schools.

Haynesville is the county seat of Lowndes and is 40 miles southeast of Selma.

Mrs. Liuzze, a white civil rights worker was killed near here last march.

Carlton L. Perdue, county solicitor says "tom Coleman has admitted the shooting but has signed no confession. We are not going to pre-try this man. We have our stomachs full of how the president tried to pre-try these other three men."

The four witnesses have gone into hiding because they fear for their lives.

Detailed report on Lowndes County killing:

AUGUST 20, 1965
HAYNEVILLE, ALABAMA

On August 14, 1965, one week ago, 27 people who were picketing stores in Fort Deposit were arrested on charges of disturbing the peace and parading without a permit. This afternoon, August 20, they ^{were} told suddenly by the person in charge of the jail to get out, so they left.

They walked out of the Haynesville Courthouse together. No one had been notified that they were to be released, therefore, no cars were there to carry them home. All but six decided to walk home. These six which included Willie Vaughn, Rev. Richard Morrisree, Ruby Sales, John Daniels, Joyce Bailey from Fort Deposit, Gloria Larry from California, stopped at a store about 500 yards from the county jail to purchase food. They felt there was no threat of danger, having traded at this store on previous occasions.

As the small group approached the store, a white man assumed to be the proprietor met them at the door with a two barrel shotgun ~~under his arm~~ in his hands and shouted "get off my property you goddamn bastards. Before they could turn around to go out the door he began to shoot. Ruby Sales was in front and was pushed to the ground by who she thinks was John Daniels. He was shot in the stomach. Another girl Joyce Bailey was also pushed to the ground by Richard Morrisree of Chicago. When everything quieted down, Ruby called John but received no answer. She then tried to push him out of the doorway, but was unable to do so. Joyce Bailey and Gloria Larry from Calif. began to ask whether people were o.k. but receiving no answer from Richard and John they began to push Ruby Sales away from the doorway. They managed to get her on her feet and panic stricken, all three ran. Willie Vaughn ran when the shooting first began.

The boyfriend of Joyce Bailey drove by the courthouse to see if they had been released and he took them to Selma SNCC office. As they drove past the Cash Store on Hwy. 97, they could see the man with the shotgun under his arm, standing ~~in the~~ over the two bodies.

Rev. Morrisree was taken to the Baptist Hospital in Montgomery. At 5:00 a.m. this morning he was still in surgery. He was shot in the stomach; is in critical condition.

Rev. John Daniels is in Montgomery at the White Chapel Funeral Home (white) and SNCC workers in Selma are trying to contact his closest kin so that he can be moved to the Miller Funeral home in Selma.

Rev. Daniels was ^a second year seminary student at an episcopal seminary in Cambridge, Mass.

August 20, 1965

Statement by John Lewis, Chairman of
the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

Fred Lee Thomas is dead in Mississippi. John Daniels is dead in Alabama. The ink was barely dry on the latest civil rights law, when these two were added to the lengthening list of murders committed by southern racist. Of what use is it to guarantee a man the right to vote, when there is no guarantee that he will not be murdered before he can get to the courthouse.

These last two murders only emphasize the questions that are daily growing in the minds of Negroes all over America. What is the use of a Government which guarantees the inviolability of human life or do we not? From the point of view of the Southern Negro, the answer on the facts, must be..No. For there have occurred at least 11 murders in the past three years in Ala.

racial
alone. And there are ten murderers going free today because of police who wouldn't convict them.

President Johnson has spoken often eloquently of his concern for the rights of Negroes. However, words, no matter how eloquent, or often spoken, will not deter the murderous racist of the South. President Johnson took occasion only a few days ago to remind American Negroes "terror and violence" would not bring them freedom. But American Negroes know only too well that terror and violence are the means by which they have been kept the subjects of the whites of the South.

If President Johnson believes, as he said in his statement to Los Angeles in "the essential right of every citizen to be secure in...the streets of his town," he must see to it that the legal machinery of the U.S. Government find the killers of Fred Lee Thomas and John Daniels, arrest them, charge them, try them, convict them and punish them.

If we are to have law and order, we are blessed.

If we are not to have law and order, then so be it.