

Grover,
Septem

To Albion W. Tourgee,
Mayville,
N.Y.

Dear Sir.

As a member
of the A. G. R. I. I write to you to
acquaint you as well as I can with a
lynching which occurred in Watertown,
this state, on the night of Tuesday
the 4th. of September.

It probably seems to you
that this duty should have been
performed before but I have waited to
see whether or not anything would be
done to bring the lynchers to account,
and to see whether there would be any
further light on the other aspects of the
affair.

On the night of Friday, August
31st, a man, apparently a tramp,

attempted to enter the residence of a Mrs. Bone, living about two miles North of Macon with the purpose of committing rape upon her.

The lady was a young woman of the best character who had been married about a year and a half, her husband was away that night and Mrs. Bone with a little girl about seven years old was alone in the house.

When the man attempted to get into the house Mrs. Bone shut up the doors as closely as possible and went up stairs, she threatened to shoot the tramp, but when she looked she found no caps for the gun.

Hearing no noise outside for a time she concluded that the tramp must have gone away, or at least intended to try some other means of entrance

She thought at least that.

she might get to a neighboring house, a distance, I believe, of about half a mile, though of this I am not certain; she got out of the second story window and had just got there when out when the man came around the corner of the house. Then there was a fight the woman it is said fought very fierce: she was beaten and bruised in the face and in places and during the fight was kicked in the side, she struck the man's face and the little girl, who fought like a man, tore his hat and hit him on the head with a stone which she picked up somewhere, at length the woman was rendered insensible, whether the villain succeeded in his purpose or not I did not learn though it was generally said that he did.

The man dragged the woman off into the weeds and

left her there, meanwhile the little girl had started off to the nearest neighbors and returned with a Mr.

The man was described as nearly as possible by Mrs. Bow who said that he wore overalls, and suspenders made of a piece of cloth twisted, and that there would be scratches on his face, and that he had a beard of about ten days growth; with these hints the search was begun, one man was caught at Clear Lake, this state, but he did not answer the description; at length on Tuesday, the 4th, a man was caught in the reeds on the edge of the Sioux River near Eastwood about 14 miles I should say south-east of Watertown, the man when caught had a trap with two ferrets in it, this he had stolen from a house where he had stolen some food shortly before; this fact would

to prove what was stated
in person. that he was not a
right person, not exactly an idiot
but one on whom sanity or cognition
was scarcely present heavily.

This is also substantiated by
the statement, the truth of which I
of course do not know, that he had
been guilty of the same crime at
least twice before and had been in
the penitentiary for the offense.

After he was found it was
noted that all the marks mentioned
by the woman were upon him and
also bruises on the back of his head,
a "bareness" made by a stone, such
marks as would be made by the
little girl.

He was brought up to Waterbury
from his hiding place and was
attended by a large crowd and
when withdrawn was released.

word came that he was bound.

When H. M. Turner was reached there was a crowd around the County Court-house, which is a strong building and which contains an iron cage which could hardly be broken open.

So, somewhat escaping the crowd, the prisoner was hurried to the city-hall the cells of which could easily be overcome were it found necessary to do so.

The fact that some means was not found of which the prisoner might have been got to the cage in the court-house between his arrival at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon and the time he was lynched, is in itself suspicious for the city officers.

I was in the city from before the lynching until after it. Being there, in fact, before the coming

the affair; on the evening of the
burning I was out buggy-riding about
dusk and saw crowds around the
city-hall and in the streets; after nine
o'clock myself and a boy chum of mine
about sixteen years old who works in a
store, Erret A. Under by name, went
around the streets and to the city
hall where a crowd was still
gathered, there were crowds along
the streets at the same time but we
did not think there was any danger
though we did note as a sign of
danger that many were going, apparently
to the saloons and were led by men
in whom no trust could be placed.

Rather late in the evening,
though it is midnight I think,
the crowd seemed to crystallize
to its purpose and tried to gain
admittance to the cell and the
marshal did not apparently offer

real resistance either the cell
unlocked or broken in the lock
exhibits no signs of being so but
will not work the prisoner gave a
terrible scream when it was done
which was heard far around and
brought out others as spectators.

He was then hurried to a
place near the Court-house yard and
in front of the N. E. Church to
which a sort of scaffold had been
brought, here he was asked if he were
guilty, but he apparently knowing
the futility of denial or incapable
in his condition of understanding
the question, would neither confess
nor deny.

He was then swung up, the
husband and brother of the woman
who was injured, pulling up the
rope so it is said though as to
this I do not know, and of course

to be minimum as well
as under the circumstances.

It is stated that he was once
let down and proving to be alive was
winded up again. It is stated that there
was used on him such as dredging, which
between the time that he was first
drawn up and the time at which
he died.

The mayor ordered the doctor
called for, which looked a little amusing
after he was practically refused to
protect the living man.

The marshal gave out that the
marshal's act had effect that no one
should ~~be~~, be allowed to be a special
police, but it was noticed that no
one but those who, it was known,
had not got, still could, I am
afraid, get away. But there
were many more of a sort
than expected.

of course the antiquated remark
of the reserve "Best citizens"
was rehearsed, but carried nothing
new here.

My brother, attracted from an
encouragement in neighboring hotel and
witnessing the first stage of the
affair, stated this to all no
minister and he is correct.

I care not, I will make
no more out of it as such, but of
a record that at one practical hearing,
no. 1 here, however, a few were
introduced while the scene was
being set.

I see no signs of any action
against any of the participants
in the mob.

The criminal complicity of
the city officers is practically
certain, but this is to be expected
in a city where forty(40) of the

Vol. (52) other ordinances are
read every day, this is in view of
the locality, and where the slate
is composed and many rules such
as ~~are~~ are violated with the consent of
the citizens election to no ordinances such
as this.

Your truly L. W. Cole, Jr.,
Judge of the U. S. District Court.

Of the local districts covering
this County, the Judge of the Sioux
City district is Sioux City,
L. W. Cole, Jr., the Sheriff is

John H. Johnson, the Mayor is
mayor, and George H. Hartman, and
I have written the Sheriff

letter should now be written long
ago but I desire to see whether
any action would be taken or not.

Taken as a whole I think
that the occurrences of this kind
are not to be relied upon.

I wish to say that there is no
doubt made it is a man
who was a murderer more than a
year ago but it is through the
fact that the man was in the
hands of the Sheriff, who dares
do his duty; owing to a notoriously
incompetent judge and a criminal
and merciful community that man,
though in jail, is still untried.

I have tried to write all
the facts so far as I could discover
them but may not have fully
succeeded, if you desire other
information I will serve you to
the best of my ability.

Yours sincerely,

Herbert F. Allen,
Grover.

Bodington Co.,
South Dakota.

P.S. I am a country school teacher &
this may not appear in the writing.