The Legacy of a Lynching: Community and Familial Adaptation in the Wake of Racial Trauma

Morgan Vickers

Senior Honors Thesis
The Department of American Studies
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2018

Approved:

__________________
Seth Kotch (Thesis Advisor)
Department of American Studies

__________________
Danielle Christmas
Department of English

__________________
William Sturkey
Department of History
# Table of Contents

Abstract.......................................................................................................................... 2

Acknowledgements......................................................................................................... 3

Chapter One: Introduction.............................................................................................. 5

Chapter Two: The Conditions Surrounding the Lynching of Eugene Daniel............... 17

Chapter Three: Uniting and Dividing New Hope Township........................................... 32

Chapter Four: Daniel Family, Stone Family, and Community Diaspora...................... 49

Chapter Five: Conclusion............................................................................................... 62

Bibliography..................................................................................................................... 67
Abstract

The Legacy of a Lynching:
Community and Familial Adaptation in the Wake of Racial Trauma

Morgan Vickers

Faculty Advisor: Seth Kotch

The history of lynching in America has been shaped by statistics, trends, and characterizations of the mobs involved in the murder of an accused individual. But, few have studied the lives and the communities of the victims of the lynchings, and even fewer have sought to recreate the circumstances in which the lynchings took place by means of digital resources and tools. As a result, the memory of a lynching is often defined by purported criminality, angry mobs, and an eventual death, rather than by the community conditions that precipitated the lynching, the life lost during the murder, and the community condition thereafter. In this thesis, I introduce the notion of personhood in lynching victims through the case study of a single victim: Eugene Daniel from New Hope Township, North Carolina, who was murdered just six days after his sixteenth birthday in 1921. This thesis argues that one cannot separate people from the context in which they live; acts of racial violence, like lynchings, neither exist in a vacuum nor solely affect the murdered individual. I further argue that modern digital tools allow historians to gain a better understanding of the circumstances that perpetuated lynchings, the communities in which lynchings occurred, and the contemporary implications of historic acts of violence.

Keywords: lynching, community relations, memory, racial violence, digital humanities, relational mapping, personhood, humanity, anti-black violence
Acknowledgements

Seth Kotch spent the past year with me, acting as my coach, my mentor, my advocate, and a deeply empathetic listener. This work would be impossible without his expertise and support, and I am eternally grateful for the agency and reassurance he has granted me.

Seth was joined on my thesis committee by Danielle Christmas and William Sturkey, two scholars who encouraged me to critically engage with source material, explore the lives of living descendants, and contemplate my own place in my work.

Thank you to the Community Histories Workshop team for your advice, your expertise, and your humor. It is rare that a research team entrusts an undergraduate student with so much historical authority and experience, and the work I have done with each of you has directly informed my thesis, my methodologies, and my future.

Thank you to Glenn Hinson for your Descendants Project, for your patient listening, and for your enthusiasm. Thank you to Stephanie Elizondo Griest, whose creative perspectives and full life inspire me to think big and write often. Thank you to Will Bosley for patiently spending hours teaching me how to use the Prospect Data Visualization tool. Thank you to Frank Allison, Dean Blackburn, and the Carolina Recovery Program, whose faith in and love for me represents the source of any and all success I have had in the past several years.

Thank you to my parents, Desmond and Linda Vickers, and my siblings, Jessica, Chelsea, and Reese, for acting as my greatest advocates, patiently serving as my sounding boards, and for trusting me as I continue to dive headfirst into the unknown. Thank you to Maria Rojas, who reminds me everyday to think critically, to exude empathy, and to pursue a big life. Thank you to my dear friends for being excited for me, for asking many questions, and for forgiving me for missing many social outings so that I could spend an extra hour in the archives.

Finally, thank you Bobby Allen for introducing me to the worlds of American Studies, community history, and digital humanities. Thank you for supporting me, providing me with endless opportunities, and reminding me of the pure joy of discovery. This project is an evolution of a research project advised by Dr. Allen, and funded by the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) and the William W. and Ida W. Taylor and James S. Gold Faculty-Mentored Research Fellowship, housed in the Honors Carolina Program.
“The very frequent inquiry made after my lectures by interested friends is, ‘What can I do to help the cause?’ The answer always is: ‘Tell the world the facts.’”

— Ida B. Wells-Barnett, ‘On Lynching’
Chapter One

Introduction

On September 12, 1921, a young African American boy named Eugene Daniel turned sixteen. Although he didn’t attend school, his days were full, as he spent his hours working on his father’s farm on Farrington Road in New Hope Township, North Carolina. He was never alone at home; the eighth born out of thirteen children — five boys and eight girls — Daniel worked on the farm alongside his parents and siblings, and helped to raise the younger members of the family. Though large and labor-oriented, the family was close-knit and “fun-loving.” They were largely independent, as the father, John Daniel, owned his own farm, but they still connected with members of the larger New Hope community when they ventured into town, visited the county seat of Pittsboro, or took their produce to market.

The population of New Hope Township in April of 1920, just 17 months before Daniel’s sixteenth birthday, totaled 1,497 people, the majority of whom were farmers or mill laborers. Of the 1,497 people living in New Hope Township in 1920, 333 people, or about 22 percent of the population, was either Black or mixed race according to the United States Census. This number was more than double the African American and mixed race population of the state as a whole, which totaled 9.9 percent. Census tracts reveal that members of both races lived amongst each

---

1 1920 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: 10-11, family 115, dwelling 113, lines 100-11; March 1, 1920.
2 Ibid. ; Glenn Hinson. An oral history with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode/Interviewers: Alex Wordell, Kate Soliman, and Tara May. The Descendants Project: Interviews with Descendants of Eugene Daniel, Lynching Victim, 2016, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
3 1920 United States Census, 10-11.
other, often as next-door neighbors to one another, without any distinct black neighborhood or white neighborhood. They even occupied the same industries.  

The Daniel family was no exception in this regard. Just next door lived Gertrude Stone, a seventeen-year-old white female. Despite living yards away from Daniel, she lived a different life than him; she attended school every day and grew up in a small family of four, with only one sibling, a twelve-year-old brother named Ernest. Gertrude and Eugene lived on the same street, both came from farming families, and grew up alongside each other. But, just six days after his sixteenth birthday, Eugene Daniel was lynched. The reported reason: for entering the bedroom of “a sleeping white girl” — his neighbor, Gertrude Stone.

According to newspaper accounts, Stone said she “found a negro leaning over her bed,” and at first thought it was her younger brother, Ernest, before realizing it was an “intruder.”

According to newspaper accounts, the reported intruder — assumed to be Daniel — entered his neighbor’s house quietly and easily, and an account by The Charlotte News states,

It is not known whether the girl personally recognized the man in her room or not. It is possible that she knew Daniels previously, as the negro lived near her home in New Hope [T]ownship. It is evident that the intruder was well acquainted with the household and the movements of the people who lived there. This assertion is borne out by the fact that he

---

7 1920 United States Census, 10.
chose a time when the head of the house would be absent and went direct[ly] to the girl’s room without disturbing other members of the family.10

Upon discovering Daniel in her room, Stone screamed, and woke her mother and brother in the process. Daniel fled.11

It was not until later that evening when Stone’s father, Walter, returned from his hunting trip that the family notified the deputies. The deputies, thereafter, began a two-day manhunt, and finally located Daniel with the assistance of bloodhounds on Sunday morning, several miles away, on a road outside of New Hope Township. When discovered by the police, Daniel confessed that “he was the man wanted,” and the officers proceeded to transport him to the county jail in Pittsboro.12

In the early hours of the morning on September 18th, 1921, a mob of men from New Hope Township took Daniel from his jail cell in Pittsboro, North Carolina. They wrapped an automobile tire chain around his neck, and hoisted him over the branch of a tree.13 As Daniel struggled, several feel off the ground, the mob riddled his body with bullets, killing him. They left him hanging there, where local residents discovered him at ten o’clock the following morning.14 It is estimated that over a thousand people came to see the body of Daniel, venturing to the site by automobile, by horse, and by foot, “all striving to reach the scene in time to view the body before it could be taken down.”15

10 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3. The Daniel family was often called the “Daniels” family in newspaper accounts, and Eugene was, at times, referred to as “Ernest Daniels.”
11 Ibid.
13 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
15 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
The lynching of Eugene Daniel was not the first lynching to occur in Chatham County. In September of 1885, thirty-six years before Daniel’s death, three African American men, Jerry Fisch, Lee Tyson, and John Pattishall, and one African American woman, Fisch’s wife, Harriet, from nearby Moncure, North Carolina, were lynched in Pittsboro. The reported catalyst for the lynching was an unsolved axe murder in 1883, and a separate axe murder in the county in 1885. According to *The Charlotte Observer*, the lynchings came as a “sequel to the murder of the Finch family, on the night of the 4th of last July, and of the murder of the Gunter family near the same spot some 18 months ago.” There was no definite connection between the murder of 1883 and that of 1885, but because the former was left unsolved for years and because the latter followed a similar pattern, the community accused and killed the four African Americans in response to the crimes.

Like these murders decades earlier, observers understood Daniel’s lynching as “the climax of several violent crimes recently committed in this county, which had worked the people up to a high pitch of excitement.” Daniel was the victim not merely of a crime he was accused of committing alone, but also of the overarching discontent, distrust, and anger of the white community of New Hope Township. Daniel, to the white population of New Hope Township, was a symbol of the supposed injustices and poor behavior of the black population of the community.

After the lynching, Daniel’s lifeless body remained dangling for over ten hours after the murder, the symbol of a successful black suppression at the hands of the white community, and a

19 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
warning sign to the black community. Scholar Amy Louise Wood describes hangings, such as Daniel’s, as ritualistic demonstrations of power and hierarchy for the white community, as after the lynching and the viewing of the body occurred, newspapers reported “there [was] no reason to believe that there will be other attempts at violence” thereafter.20

Prior to the advent of digital archives and tools, it was difficult to either connect community members to the lynchings of individuals or to learn the whole story about a lynching. But, the digitization of hundreds of thousands of paper records allow historians to use formerly disparate sources, including census records, newspaper accounts, death certificates, and other public records, to restructure a narrative of racialized violence from one dominated by those who participated in, or perpetuated social conditions surrounding the lynching, to one that provides voices to the victims who were often silenced in the process of accusation, arrest, and mob justice.

This thesis pairs traditional analysis in the thesis form with the use of the Prospect Data Visualization tool to visualize the events of the lynching, the social conditions of New Hope leading up to the lynching, and the community following the lynching of Eugene Daniel. The Prospect Data Visualization tool is a WordPress plugin that allows users to collect, curate, and visualize large data sets in the forms of visual representations, maps, and images.21 This thesis will make use of 1920 and 1930 census enumerations for New Hope Township as the primary data sources, with supplementary connections supported by and emphasized through the use of newspaper records, death certificates, government records, and oral history accounts performed by a class of undergraduate students led by ethnographer Glenn Hinson in 2016 and 2017 with

living descendants of Eugene Daniel. The third chapter of this thesis will highlight the data and relationships uncovered in the Prospect visualization, and utilize the information to contextualize the demographic shifts in New Hope Township following the lynching.

This thesis seeks to uncover the ways in which lynchings both were precipitated by community relations and influenced them thereafter. In looking at the lynching of Eugene Daniel — a lynching that occurred in a rural North Carolina town in the early 20th century following “much indignation... expressed by residents of the county” over local crimes attributed to African Americans — one can learn much about other, similar lynchings in the state. Lynchings did not exist in isolation, nor did they briefly appear in the lives of residents on the pages of newspapers only on the day before or the day after the murder. The story of a lynching is neither merely a statistic nor a singular event; it has ripple effects in the lives of the families and communities in which that lynching occurred. Moreover, acts of racial violence, such as lynchings neither existed in a vacuum, nor did they happen to nameless, independent individuals. As we learn from the whole story of Eugene Daniel’s death, lynchings were community events with generational resonance. They cannot be understood in isolation.

Literature Review

Scholars of lynchings have focused primarily on three aspects of the memory of lynching: the definition and understanding of the practice of lynching, the community relations and social conditions surrounding lynchings, and the shadowed memory following the lynchings of individuals or groups of people.

The seminal works of early lynching scholars, including Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Jessie Daniel Ames, and Arthur F. Raper, provide initial definitions and understandings of the practices

22 “Negro Found in Young Lady's Room is Lynched,” 3.
and precipitants of lynchings. Wells-Barnett’s text *On Lynchings*, originally published in 1892, defined “The Offense” of lynching and its racially-based rationales. Wells-Barnett was an anti-lynching activist and journalist who sought to undermine lynchers’ rationale for the murders they committed by defining lynching, naming the conditions which precipitated such lynchings, and advocating for the end of such killings. Wells-Barnett revealed that the reasons mob members and their enablers used to explain their actions often acted as a smokescreen for ulterior motives, such as attempts to incite fear and efforts to assert racial superiority.

In *Revolt Against Chivalry* (1979), historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall pieces together the various primary source documents produced by Ames, an anti-lynching activist of the 1930s who, like Wells-Barnett, sought to undermine the rationale of lynching. A white woman, Ames was among those white men often claimed they were protecting, and used her activism to reject their violence in her name. Hall’s biography of Ames paints a portrait of the organization she founded in 1930, the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, through which Ames worked to define lynching as “an indefensible crime, destructive of all principles of government, hateful and hostile to every ideal of religion and humanity, debasing and degrading to every person involved.”

Raper’s 1933 text, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, provides both a definition and historical perspective of lynching, discussing the murders from the point of view of someone living while they were frequent occurrences. Unlike Wells-Barnett and Ames, Raper was an academic, working in the same time period as Ames was campaigning against lynching. He worked with interracial groups and was mentored by Howard Odum, the scholar credited creating the academic field of sociology, and who sought to understand the sociogenesis of lynching. The

---

third chapter of *The Tragedy of Lynching*, entitled “The Tragedy of the Mob,” specifically illuminates conditions that contributed to the formation and actions of a mob, arguing, “In a very real sense a lynching is but a product of community standards, and consequently will not be condemned by that community.”

More recent work has built upon Raper’s sociological work. Allen E. Liska, in *Social Threat and Social Control* (1992), provides a sociological perspective of lynchings, defining both why lynchings occurred and the effects thereafter. Liska introduces the notion of “threat explanations” for black lynchings, that being the idea that white populations lynched black people because they perceived them as being a social threat. As the community of New Hope Township claimed the lynching of Daniel was “the climax of several violent crimes recently committed in this county,” the rationale behind the murder aligns with the theory of threat explanation, in that Daniel was reportedly murdered in response to the supposed threat of the greater black community of Chatham County.

The second category of literature addresses community relations and social conditions of communities in which lynchings occur. In *Lynching in the New South* (1994), historian W. Fitzhugh Brundage focuses on the “great variations in the form and the ebb and flow of lynching across space and time,” specifically in Georgia and Virginia between the years 1880 and 1930. Brundage emphasizes that lynchings were not merely a spatial crime in that they occurred largely in the South, but they were also spatial in the ways in which mobs selected the sites of the lynching to communicate messages, in the ways in which neighbors and geographically close persons in communities defended one another, and in the ways in which white women existed

---

25 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3
within boundaries that black men were not allowed to cross. *Lynching in the New South* introduces the connections between space, race, community, and personhood in order to paint a better picture of lynchings in the South.

In “Vicarious Violence” (1996), Stuart E. Tolnay, G. Deane, and E.M. Beck highlight the geographical and spatial components of lynchings. Through a sociological lens, these scholars provide three models to explain trends behind lynchings, including the Contagion Model in which lynchings and acts of racial tensions and violence spread like illnesses, which relates most closely to the lynching of Eugene Daniel. Similarly, Amy Louise Wood’s *Lynching and Spectacle* (2011) studies the symbolic power of the act of lynching in the Jim Crow South. The text highlights the cultural forces that precipitated lynchings and the community impact, or the ways in which the community responded to the violence and social relations thereafter. Wood breaks down the symbolism into several forms: cultural force, the mob, frequency of violence, and community impact. This thesis will most directly engage with Wood’s research on the circumstances that lead to lynchings and the and the aftermath of racial violence.

Recently, scholars have turned their attention in two directions: toward the personhood of victims of lynching, and to how lynchings fit into a broader system of coercion. *Lynched: The Victims of Southern Mob Violence* (2015), by Tolnay and Amy K. Bailey, aims to present a comprehensive study of the victims of mob violence by looking at lynchings not merely as statistics, but rather as case studies of the violent loss of the lives of individuals with thoughts, feelings, connections, and much more. Bailey and Tolnay provide information on the factors that made such people vulnerable to being targeted by mobs, such as age, occupation, place of birth, and connections within the community.
Claude A. Clegg’s *Troubled Ground* (2010) acts as a case study for the conditions surrounding a lynching in Salisbury, North Carolina, a small town in the central part of the state. *Troubled Ground* provides a look into the lives of both those in the mob and those who were killed or affected by these violent acts, connecting lives outside of the crimes to the events that took place within the criminal killings.

The final category of literature describes the conditions in the days, weeks, months, and years following lynchings. Alfred Frankowski, in “Sorrow as the Longest Memory of Neglect” (2014), discusses the nature of “intentional forgetting,” wherein entire communities block out memories of instances of community violence, such as lynchings, as a result of fear, shame, or trauma. Frankowski explains why black community members fled areas after lynching, and why such memories prevented them from staying in the place in which they could see or feel the violence occurring over and over again, either by seeing the site of the violence, or by interacting with those who perpetrated the violence. Similarly, in *Beyond the Rope* (2016), historian Karlos K. Hill discusses the memory of lynchings within the black community, and how black communities, newly diasporic in the wake of lynchings, could never forget the memory of what happened to their friends, family members, neighbors, and others. Kidada E. Williams echoes Frankowski and Hill in “Regarding the Aftermaths of Lynching” (2014), wherein she seeks to discuss how lynchings affected the families of the victims by highlighting the lived experiences of those victims and providing “substantive analysis of how victims' families had their lives transformed by [the lynching of their loved one].”

---

Chronology

I came across Eugene Daniel as a result of my own digital research, through work with the Community Histories Workshop, and at the 2017 Lynching in the American South Conference. So much of the violence discussed in a contemporary context, whether that violence is historicized or occurring in our streets in present-day, is reduced to statistics. The deaths of individuals are put into the context of the deaths of many others, reducing an individual life to a number. But this methodology has limitations, as humans are complicated, full of contradictions, and made up of connections: to people, to places, to institutions, and to disparate parts of their communities and worlds. The lynching of a person like Daniel didn’t merely end that individual life; it influenced the lives, perspectives, and trajectories of people connected to that individual, both explicitly through actions like moving away or changing jobs, and also implicitly, through silence and a lack of familial storytelling. I decided to pursue this thesis because I wanted to better understand the ways in which acts of traumatic violence influenced communities, particularly communities directly connected to the perpetrators and victims of the same act of violence.

This paper is divided into three primary body chapters, with a final conclusion chapter at the end. The first chapter, entitled “The Conditions Surrounding the Lynching of Eugene Daniel,” focuses on the demographics, inhabitants, and historic events of New Hope Township. A significant portion of the chapter focuses on recounting the narrative of the lynching from start to finish, with added analysis regarding the role of the mob, the racial tensions of the community, and the role of scapegoating in acts of racial violence.

The second chapter, entitled “Uniting and Dividing New Hope Township,” focuses on the ways in which the lynching of Eugene Daniel influenced the lives and paths of New Hope
Township, the Daniel family, and the Stone family. In focusing on the United States Census records of the years 1920 and 1930, the chapter illustrates the shifts in demographics, connections, and population following the lynching of Daniel. By incorporating newspaper accounts of the town’s history in the decade following the lynching, as well as oral history interviews performed under the supervision of Professor Glenn Hinson at UNC-Chapel Hill, the chapter unearths the sentiments, anxieties, and changing perspectives of New Hope Township in the wake of the murder.

The third chapter, entitled “Daniel Family, Stone Family, and Community Diaspora,” focuses on the effects of the lynching and the later generations of the Daniel and Stone families. Utilizing digitized public records and oral history interviews with Daniel family descendants, this chapter traces the descendants of both sides of the lynching and highlights the ways in which the lynching permeated lives of those beyond simply the generation that was immediately present at the time of the lynching.

Within each chapter, this thesis combines facets of data collection and visual representation, understanding personhood and social relations in the context of traumatic violence, and the impact that racial violence has on communities and social memory. This thesis argues that the lynching of Eugene Daniel was not only a product of community standards and relations, but also influenced their lives thereafter. The white community that lynched Daniel produced a climate of racial violence that suppressed a supposedly problematized African American population. In response to the lynching, the communities of both races were plagued with silences, tensions, and traumas that affected New Hope Township for generations to come.
Chapter Two

The Conditions Surrounding the Lynching of Eugene Daniel

“The account, filtered through the kaleidoscope of race and power perceptions, many years of telling, and the versions that appeared in the nearby city newspapers of the time, is as follows.”

— Charlotte Wolf, _Constructions of a Lynching_

Eugene Daniel was born into the community and the social context that eventually killed him.

New Hope Township, a 52-square mile tract of land in eastern Chatham County, was first settled by Europeans in the mid-1700s, but was not officially defined as a township until over a century later. Chatham County was established in a portion of what once was Orange County, and was created because it was “too difficult and expensive for... residents to travel to the Orange County government seat (Hillsborough) to conduct business.” In 1868, following the Civil War and the advent of a new state constitution, the newly established five-member board of county commissioners divided the formerly unified Chatham County into twelve distinct townships. Among these was New Hope Township.

---

The weeks leading up to the lynching of Daniel were dry, resulting in a poor cotton harvest across Chatham County. But, the week leading up to the lynching, through the fifteenth of September, was “blessed with bountiful showers of rain,” which produced a large corn harvest. The farmers of New Hope Township spent the week “gathering in feed” and wishing for larger cotton crop.31

But all was not well. According to newspaper accounts, “Several crimes have been committed in this county recently and… [a] feeling of anger… had been engendered” as a result.32 But there was little evidence in local newspapers to suggest that such alleged violence was occurring at the hands of African Americans in Chatham County. The largest recorded crime in the two years leading up to the lynching of Daniel was a crime committed in February of 1920, when “Leon Kornegay, a young negro man, was shot and instantly killed in New Hope Township, this county, by John H. Williams, well-to-do negro farmer, who previously had three times warned the Kornegay negro to stay away from his home.” But, although the crime was committed by a black man in New Hope Township, the crime was committed against another black man, and not against a member of the white population of the township. Thus, “a coroner’s jury… exonerated Williams from all blame for the killing.”33

Daniel’s reported crime was different, though, because it was a crime by a black man against a white woman. The patterns of his reported crime and subsequent lynching existed within a larger national narrative of an “unwritten law,” which Ida B. Wells-Barnett described as being a means by which communities justified the lynchings of African Americans who they

32 “Negro is Lynched by Mob at Pittsboro Early on Sunday.” 1.
believed to be a threat to white communities, and specifically to white women.\textsuperscript{34} Daniel entering Stone’s room was thus “sufficient to ignite the spark of mob violence,” both because there was already a sense of tension and excitement in the community leading up to the lynching, and because it dealt with a question of the violation of a white woman and the honor of a white family.\textsuperscript{35} According to Brundage, “The ideology of white supremacy and the pervasive belief in black criminality among whites did not invest every black-white dispute with the full force of community outrage... Whites took into account not only the nature of the offense itself, but also who did what to whom.”\textsuperscript{36} And, in the case of Daniel entering the room of Stone, “evidently with evil intent,” it was no longer a minor racial infraction, but a supposed crime motivated by an intent to violate.\textsuperscript{37}

This chapter chronicles and contextualizes the lynching of Eugene Daniel. It covers the time period between the late 19th century, at the origins of the Daniel and Stone families, and September 19, 1921, the day Eugene Daniel was lynched. The chapter begins by introducing the families, and their subsequent relations to both the county and to each other. Focusing primarily on dozens of newspaper articles about the lynching and oral history accounts from Daniel’s descendants, this chapter chronicles what happened during, what community members felt about, and who participated in the lynching of Eugene Daniel.

This chapter argues that the communities of New Hope Township and Chatham County both implicitly produced conditions that precipitated the lynching of Eugene Daniel, and explicitly killed Daniel because they believed he breached community standards. Despite the fact that the Daniel family and the Stone family lived alongside each other for years as neighbors in

\textsuperscript{35} "Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob," 3.
\textsuperscript{37} "Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob," 3.
an interracial community, the Stone family’s commitment to the honor and protection of their race and of their daughter outweighed any congeniality they shared with their black neighbors. Subsequently, dozens of white members of the community quickly and easily joined together to defend such honor, and hundreds more eagerly came to witness the dead body of a black boy who reportedly symbolized all of the crimes within the community. As suggested by historian Charlotte Wolf, “Groups under emotional tension, like individuals under strain, act in conformity to local attitudes and practices... They are seemingly without capacity or inclination to take any deliberate steps either to learn the truth of the accusations or the identity of the accused.” Thus, the guilt of Eugene Daniel did not matter to the community and the mob that sought to find him and kill him; rather, in murdering Daniel, the white community of New Hope Township used the boy as a symbol of what could happen to other members of the community, particularly black community members, if they stepped out of line.

The Daniel Family

The Daniel family — sometimes noted in newspaper, census, marriage, and death records as the ‘Daniels’ family — was an African American family that can be traced back to Durham County, North Carolina. Father John Daniel was born in January of 1873 in Durham, North Carolina. John was always a farmer, and spent much of his early life working on rented land. In 1893, at the age of twenty, John married Ida Mary Rogers, an eighteen year old black woman from Oak Grove Township in Durham, North Carolina. The couple moved into a home they rented together in Oak Grove Township, and begun to tend their land.39

39 1900 United States Census (Free Schedule), Oak Grove Township, Durham County, North Carolina: p. 6, family 53, dwelling 52, lines 74-80; June 6, 1900.
Over a span of twenty years, Ida gave birth to thirteen children — five boys and eight girls. The first child was a daughter, Penelope Daniel, born in 1891. The second child was a daughter, Pauline Daniel, born in 1893. The third child was a daughter, Estella Daniel — sometimes listed in census records as Ethel — born in 1896. The fourth child was a daughter, Aldora Daniel, born in 1901. The fifth child was a son, John T. Daniel Jr., born in 1902. The sixth child was John’s twin, a daughter named Fannie O. Daniel, born in 1902. The seventh child was a daughter, Odel Daniel, born in 1904. The eighth child was a son, Eugene Daniel, born in 1905. The ninth child was a daughter, Alpha Omega Daniel, born in 1908. The tenth child was a son, Otis Lassie Daniel, born in 1910. The eleventh child was a daughter, Lusette Daniel, born in 1914. The twelfth child was a son, William T. Daniel, born in 1916. And the thirteenth child was a son, Charlie Henry Daniel, born in 1918.40

In 1910, the family lived in a home they rented on Raleigh Road in New Hope Township. All of the children above the age of eight worked on the farm; the women performed “home” duties, and the men performed “general farm” labor. None of the children attended school, but all of the children over the age of ten, with the exception of John Jr., knew how to read and write.41

In 1920, just one year before the lynching, the family lived on Farrington Road in New Hope Township. It is unclear what year the family moved to this property, but by 1920, John Daniel Sr. owned his own farm and worked on his own accord. The children assisted their father in farm labor, with the exception of the few older daughters who moved out to start their own families.42

41 1910 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 9, family 148, dwelling 146, lines 74-83; April 22, 1910.
Though it is unclear what crops the Daniel family farmed, the eldest Daniel child, Penelope Daniel, had recently left the house to work on a tobacco farm with her new husband, Peter James Holland, so the family likely farmed similar crops. According to Daniel family descendant, Michael Holland,

It was very hard work, and I remember thinking this is something I didn’t want to do for a living. It was very hot but it was a lesson in perseverance and strength and endurance... [T]hat was their primary source of income. They were pretty well off and had a big house. They grew everything themselves. They had hogs, cows and horses. They were a really self-sustaining family and they went to the market for some things and they made their own clothes.\footnote{Glenn Hinson. An oral history with Michael Holland/Interviewers: Gabrielle D’Astoli, Afi Apefa Bello, Hong Fan Wang, Houston Clements, and Mashallah Salaam. \textit{The Descendants Project: Interviews with Descendants of Eugene Daniel, Lynching Victim}, 2016, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.}

The family worked the farm every single day, particularly in the summer, leading up to harvest time in late September.\footnote{Ibid.}

**The Stone Family**

The Stone family was a white family that can be traced back several generations in North Carolina. Father Walter Robert Stone was born on October 15, 1880. For as far back as he can be traced in census records — that is, as early as 1910 — Walter Stone lived in Chatham County, North Carolina.\footnote{1910 United States Census, p. 9.} On February 9, 1902 in Chatham County, when Walter was twenty-one, he
married Minnie Moore, a twenty-year-old woman from New Hope Township.\textsuperscript{46} The couple moved into a home together in New Hope Township, where they ran and operated their own farm.\textsuperscript{47} On April 15, 1904, Minnie gave birth to Gertrude Stone. Three years later, on November 12, 1906, Minnie gave birth to her son, Ernest Stone. According to census records, Minnie gave birth to three children, but only two survived.\textsuperscript{48}

In 1910, the Stone family lived on Pittsboro Road in New Hope Township. Walter was twenty-nine years old, Minnie was twenty-seven, Gertrude was six, and Ernest was three. The family housed a boarder named Bert Foster, a white field hand who worked outside on the family farm.\textsuperscript{49} In 1920, just one year before the lynching, the family lived on a long gravel road, Farrington Road in New Hope Township, right next to the Daniel family. It is unclear when the family moved from Pittsboro Road, but Walter continued farming on this new property.\textsuperscript{50} The family owned both a car and animals on their farm.\textsuperscript{51} At this time, Walter was thirty-nine years old, Minnie was thirty-seven, Gertrude was sixteen, and Ernest was thirteen.\textsuperscript{52} Both children attended school in Pittsboro, with Gertrude at Pittsboro High School. There, in May of 1921, she played a piano solo entitled “Over the Top” by J. Rolfe.\textsuperscript{53}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[48] Ibid.
\item[49] Ibid.
\item[50] 1920 United States Census, p. 10.
\item[52] 1920 United States Census, p. 10.
\end{footnotes}
The Night of the Incident

On September 12, 1921, Eugene Daniel turned sixteen.54 The week of his birthday was like any other: Daniel likely spent the his daytime hours tending his family’s crops, socializing with his siblings, and working alongside his father. Because the Daniel family likely farmed tobacco, the family would have spent their week in the fields preparing for the annual harvest, which took place around September 25 of each year.55 According to social scientist John Dollard, “If the summer is hot, expectant, and marked by steady work for both whites and Negroes, the fall is the season of intense activity. It is the time of the settlement on the plantations when the Negro cropper becomes an independent buyer.”56

On that Friday, September 16, 1921, Walter Stone went “coon hunting” with several other men from New Hope Township.57 It was a Friday, the end of a long work week for Walter, and the end of a long week of school for Gertrude and Ernest. Thus, Walter left his family at home to relax, while he enjoyed a leisurely afternoon of hunting.

That night, the sun set at 6:06 PM.58 As rural Chatham County didn’t acquire “electric light wires” until April of 1922, the Daniel family and the Stone family likely retired with the sun, eating dinner and going to sleep shortly after sunset.59 When the Stone family went to sleep, Walter had not yet returned from his hunting trip.60

54 1920 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 10-11, family 115, dwelling 113, lines 100-11; March 1, 1920.
60 “Negro Found in Young Lady's Room is Lynched,” 3.
That evening, it is alleged that Daniel “chose a time when the head of the house would be absent,” entered the Stone family home, and “went direct[ly] to [Gertrude’s] room without disturbing other members of the family.” Newspaper accounts claim that Gertrude woke up in the middle of the night after hearing a noise in her room. Upon waking, she noticed someone leaning over her bed, and “thinking at first that it was her brother, she called to him.” She then realized it was a “negro” standing over her. Some newspaper accounts report that it was this calling-out that frightened the African American boy away, while others report that upon realizing it wasn’t her brother, Stone screamed, thus scaring Daniel away and waking her mother and brother.

Because of the lack of historical record and because neither parties are alive to tell their account of the events, it is unclear what truly happened in Stone’s room that evening. There is evidence to suggest that Daniel and Stone might have had a relationship with one another, either platonic or romantic, as they were around the same age and Daniel knew much about both the the Stone home and family. Alternatively, the existing mythology around the Daniel lynching states that community members believed Daniel was going to visit his reported girlfriend, the African American maid of the Stone family, but when he entered the bedroom she typically occupied, he inadvertently found himself before a sleeping Stone. Or, perhaps he did intend to

---

63 Ibid. ; "Negro Found in Young Lady's Room is Lynched." 3.
64 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob," 3.
harm Stone that night. According to newspaper accounts, Daniel never touched Stone, and she escaped unharmed.  

It is unclear what time Walter returned home from his hunting trip, but the Stone family, without the protection of the father, didn’t make any efforts to chase the perpetrator or inform anyone of the incident on their own. The newspapers report that when the father returned to his family, they told him about the incident, and he immediately left home once again to inform community police officers. New Hope Township was a small hamlet in Chatham County and thus did not have its own police force. Therefore, Walter had to travel to the county seat of Pittsboro, five miles away, in order to seek the help of law enforcement officials.  

The Chase  

After being notified by Walter Stone, the police in Pittsboro set out to find the reported intruder. None of the newspaper accounts reveal whether or not the police officer knew Daniel was the suspect in question, but rather that they were looking for a black man. The police officers searched New Hope Township and the surrounding areas all Saturday morning “without any results.” By Saturday afternoon, bloodhounds arrived from Raeford, North Carolina, a town over 70 miles from New Hope Township, to help with the search.  

Several hours later, the dogs “were placed on the tracks left by the negro as he left the Stone residence.” The bloodhounds led the officers, as well as an accumulated mob of

---

67 Ibid.  
69 “Negro Found in Young Lady's Room is Lynched,” 3.  
70 “Negro Found in Young Lady's Room is Lynched,” 3.
“indignant citizens,” along the foot tracks reportedly left by Daniel.\textsuperscript{71} After trailing him for some distance,” the police cornered Daniel and captured him.\textsuperscript{72}

Upon being discovered, and in the face of a mob of angry citizens, police dogs, and officers, Daniel reportedly made a confession. Some newspapers reported that Daniel confessed that “he was the man wanted,” while others stated that he directly “confessed to be[ing] the intruder at the Stone home,” and others stated that he, more specifically, “confessed to officers at the time of his arrest... that he was the negro who was found leaning over the bed in which Miss Gertrude Stone... was sleeping.”\textsuperscript{73} Daniel was arrested immediately following this confession, and taken directly to jail in Pittsboro thereafter.\textsuperscript{74} His reported arrest charge was that he entered the Stone home with the intention of “criminally assaulting” a white girl.\textsuperscript{75}

\textbf{The Lynching}

On Sunday, September 18, 1921 at 2 o’clock in the morning, a group of about 50 men of New Hope Township silently walked to Pittsboro and surrounded the jail.\textsuperscript{76} After three unsuccessful attempts to force the jail open on their own, they walked over to the home of the jailor, W.H. Taylor, woke him, and demanded the keys.\textsuperscript{77} Taylor, who was reported as being “deaf and dumb,” refused to give the keys over to the mob and attempted to hide them by “slipping them out of his window.” The mob found the keys immediately, and made their way

\textsuperscript{72} “Negro Found in Young Lady's Room is Lynched,” 3.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.; “The Old North State,” 3.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
back to the jail.78 With the turn of the key, dozens of men filed into the small jail house, and found their way to Daniel’s cell. They unlocked his cell door and quickly overpowered the boy, shoving him out into the open air of night.79

As the mob took Daniel out of Pittsboro, they marched him past the courthouse. Just in front of the courthouse stood a 27-foot Confederate monument boasting a life-sized bronze Confederate Soldier atop a pedestal. When it was dedicated on August 23, 1907 — when Eugene was just under two years old — Chief Justice Walter Clark, of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, stated that the memory enshrined in the Confederate Monument in Pittsboro “is a rich legacy for your children’s children and the whole race wears the honor you have conferred upon it.” He continued, “In the long centuries that are to come, legend and song in this fair Southland will keep bright the story of the Confederate Soldier.”80 Under the light of the moon and the gaze of that bronze Confederate soldier, Daniel was dragged out of Pittsboro.

The mob, wielding guns and revolvers, took Daniel five miles down the unpaved old Raleigh Road eastward toward New Hope Township.81 The mob “hurr[ied] to the neighborhood of the attempted crime.”82 Brundage describes mobs like one in the Daniel lynching as being a private mob. Such a mob enacts “private vengeance;” they are “relatives, friends, and neighbors of the victim of the alleged crime,... [who] were bound together by a shared sense of personal injury.”83 If this was indeed a private mob seeking their private vengeance, and if this mob was

78 “Lynching at Pittsboro,” 4.
81 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Co. Mob.” The Robesonian, September 19, 1921, accessed November 9, 2017, https://www.newspapers.com/image/?spot=13957527#spot=13957527. Raleigh Road eventually became part of US-64, and is represented on maps as such.
82 “Lynching at Pittsboro,” 4.
83 Brundage, Lynching in the New South, 29-30.
local to New Hope Township, it is reasonable to infer that Walter Stone was among their number.

Upon finding a suitable tree with “a convenient limb” on the side of the road near Moore’s bridge, the men fastened an automobile tire chain around the neck of Daniel. In one swift motion, they swung the other end of the chain over the limb of the tree and hoisted the boy. It was not the chain around his neck that strangled the life out of him, however; the mob of men fired round after round at Daniel, “fill[ing] his body” with bullets until he died.

**Conclusion**

The body of Daniel, “still dangling from the end of the chain,” was discovered by members of the greater community at about 10 o’clock in the morning. Newspaper accounts report that over a span of two hours, between several hundred and several thousand people visited the scene of the lynching. They all ventured to the body “in automobiles and other conveyances and even on foot, all striving to reach the scene in time to view the body before it could be taken down.” According to Brundage, “The spectacle of the dangling corpse... and sterns signs of warning invariably attracted spectators. Local authorities routinely allowed bodies to remain on display for at least several hours and sometimes for days.” Indeed, Pittsboro police officers did not arrive until noon, and thereby dispersed the accumulated crowd.

The county coroner, George H. Brooks, called an inquest Sunday morning, which was adjourned after a perfunctory hearing “for further investigation after the jury had viewed the

---

84 “Negro Lynched,” 6.
85 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Co. Mob,” 1.
86 “The Old North State,” 3.
87 “Chatham Mob Lynches Negro with Tire Chain,” 1.
88 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.; “Negro Lynched by Mob at Pittsboro Early on Sunday,” 1.
89 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
91 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
According to newspaper accounts, “the negro apparently was not taken before his intended victim for identification,” but it is unclear whether this was because Stone was “considerably upset” or because the coroner believed he had enough evidence without her statement. Still Daniel’s “alleged confession to officers had become public property in Pittsboro [and t]he fact that the hounds followed the trail straight to the negro without hesitation was also taken as satisfactory evidence of the guilt of the negro.”

The coroner and the jury were certain of the guilt of Eugene Daniel, but, despite the fact that the newspapers reported more than 50 men from New Hope Township were in the mob, the jury did not name a single member of the mob in their findings. According to Brundage, “The juries had little difficulty in finding witnesses who could describe events [of the lynching] in detail. But even when the witnesses mentioned specific names, juries… either exonerated the community of all involvement in the lynching or else openly applauded mob violence.” Thus, on Daniel’s death certificate, the listed cause of death is “Hanging and Gun Shot (sic) wound, Lynched by mob.” No guilty parties are named. Although the lynching was enacted by 50 people, the spectacle of the dangling body and community justice turned it into a community affair. Yet, despite the fact that the community committed the killing, no community members were held responsible.

Daniel’s death was not random; community members of New Hope Township made a calculated decision to kill him in hopes of making an example out of individuals, particularly black individuals, who violated the law and the community’s social codes. The killing was

92 “Negro is Lynched by Mob At Pittsboro Early on Sunday,” 1.
93 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
94 Ibid.
95 Brundage, Lynching in the New South, 44.
personal, in that the community members on both sides of the murder knew one another, but it was also symbolic, in that it represented the sentiments, intentions, and desires of members of the greater New Hope Township community.
Chapter Three
Uniting and Dividing New Hope Township

“The experiences of this small town underscore that violence against racial minorities and the shadows cast by such social control measures linger long after the immediate effect and through the filter of group construction force their imprint onto the meanings of group life.”

— Charlotte Wolf, “Constructions of a Lynching”

On September 23, 1921, five days after the lynching of Eugene Daniel, The Daily Times, a Wilson, North Carolina newspaper, published the final newspaper account about the murder; there was no further mention in public records, either local or regional, about the lynching or about Daniel. Though Daniel’s name disappeared from the lexicon of public newspapers and public records following this date, the lingering memory of his lynching began to reshape the town and the Daniel family over the decade that followed. The Daniel kin largely stayed put in New Hope Township in this time frame, and grew to be self-sufficient and interdependent. The family’s resilience in the wake of the lynching reveals the path of one post-lynching family in the Jim Crow South.
In the nine years following Daniel’s murder, the non-white population of the township decreased 36 percent and the community population as a whole decreased 17 percent.\(^{100}\) And, despite the fact that the community justified the lynching of Daniel as means to prevent any future crimes from being committed, neither criminal acts nor community hysteria about crime subsided following the lynching; rather, the community leaders brought attention to continued criminality and lawlessness in the courts, in the newspapers, and in public policy.\(^{101}\) In this decade of heightened stress and tension, community members of New Hope Township followed well-established patterns of human responses to traumatic events, and either adapted their lives to their present situations, or left town altogether. Those two primary community attributes of New Hope Township between 1921 and 1930 reveal the ways in which the community conditions that precipitated the lynching continued to sow fear in both the white and black communities of New Hope Township in the decade following Daniel’s death.

This chapter depicts the immediate influences that the lynching of Eugene Daniel had in the lives of the Daniel family and within the New Hope Township Community. It covers the time period spanning from September 19, 1921, the day after the lynching, until approximately 1930, the year the federal government collected the subsequent census records. Focusing primarily on the 1920 and 1930 census enumerations, Chatham County newspaper articles, and oral history accounts from Daniel’s descendants, this chapter chronicles what happened to the Daniel family, the Stone family, and citizens of New Hope Township in the years immediately following the murder of a community member.

\(^{100}\) 1920 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 1-30; March 1, 1920. ; 1930 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 1-25; March 10, 1930.

The immediate ramifications of the lynching were not always public or dramatic; survivors’ responses to trauma did not necessarily involve running away or demanding justice. Instead, Chatham County newspaper accounts and census records reveal that many community members responded to the lynching by going about their long-held ways of life, while others changed careers, moved houses locally, and began to invest energy into changing their family’s perspectives, rather than attempting to change their community. As the lynching reshaped the culture of the county, New Hope Township participated in what historian Charlotte Wolf called a “dialectic,” wherein the community shifted the lynching from a narrative of what happened to a black boy, to a symbolic sentiment that could be used to keep the community in line, and prevent future crimes from occurring. Community members thus reshaped the narrative of the Daniel lynching to align with their own respective goals and understandings of community organization, discipline, and reunification.102

The lynching profoundly influenced in the lives of both the Daniel family, who responded to the lynching of their kin by encouraging hope and hard work, and the Stone family, who responded to the lynching with anxiety and shock. In the ten years following the lynching of Eugene Daniel, the lingering memory of the murder thus contributed to the reshaping of the Daniel family, New Hope Township, and the greater Chatham County demographically, institutionally, and, perhaps most significantly, ideologically.

The Aftermath of the Lynching

In the days following the lynching, The Charlotte News reported, “The tragedy has been the general subject of conversation in [New Hope Township] but there is no excitement apparent,

and there is no reason to believe that there will be other attempts at violence.”¹⁰³ The News explained its optimism by pointing to the effectiveness of the threat of retribution levied by Daniel’s murder: “a determination had been reached to make an example of the next law violator caught against whom there might be little reason for doubt of guilt.”¹⁰⁴ In his influential work, Caste and Class in a Southern Town, Dollard argued, “white-caste members justify the measures they take against Negroes on the familiar principle of ‘safety first…’ The white group, intrenched (sic) in its caste position, attempts to... discourage the Negro and thereby to mute pressure for status advancement from his side.”¹⁰⁵ In this way, members of the New Hope Township community utilized Eugene Daniel and his alleged crime to keep black people in their social and economic place. In dying, Daniel served as the icon of the frustrations and feelings of anger of the hostile white population in New Hope Township.

The white community members of New Hope Township who were involved in the lynching, and who came to view the body, were satisfied by the murder of Daniel because it served as a warning sign, and, according to newspaper accounts, served to prevent any further crimes from being perpetrated.¹⁰⁶ According to Raper, who wrote an early scholarly treatment of lynching, “[The] very presence [of mob members and onlookers] directly complicated the task of the peace officers, and emboldened the active lynchers by reflecting to them the community’s general approval.”¹⁰⁷ Consequently, in listing Eugene Daniel as being killed at the hands of “parties unknown” — despite the fact that newspapers explicitly recognized that the mob included 50 men from New Hope Township — the Chatham County police and coroner

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
¹⁰⁶ “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob," 3.
condoned the murder of a black teenager, and were complicit in inciting fear amongst the black population that survived Daniel. 108

Whatever the satisfaction of the mob, at least one paper showed its disapproval. According to Brundage in his seminal book, *Lynching in the New South*, “In exercises of tortured logic, local newspaper editors and residents drew distinctions between those crimes that warranted lynching and those offenses that did not. Often, private mobs were perceived to have resorted to extralegal means to punish offenses that should have been left to the legal courts.” 109 Such is true with *The Chatham Record*, the local county newspaper, that presented an editorial in response to the lynching, in which they attempted to bring context to the lynching and reunify the community members:

> Several crimes having been committed in rapid rotation here had worked the people into a frenzy and the folks that carried out these plans allowed the head to run away with the heart, and while it is a bad reputation for any town or county to acquire, it is too late to counsel in the matter. Our appeal to all would be to love mankind. Do noble things and make life and that vast forever one grand sweet song. 110

The *Record* thus claimed to disavow the way in which the mob handled justice, as it created a bad reputation for the town, but did not disavow the result, as it was a justified consequence of the increased frequency of crimes in Chatham County. 111

---

110 “Lynched Sunday,” 1.
111 Ibid.
In the month following the lynching, crime did not disappear from Chatham County. Just two weeks after the murder, on October 6, in an editorial entitled “Exercise Power,” the editors of the Record wrote,

Don’t wait for the court to summon you, if you have information worth the attention, volunteer your services and let it be known. If the people of the county will furnish the evidence, the jury will find a verdict and you may depend upon Judge Cranmer to do his duty in the matter. Wake up to the needs, we must convict guilty persons regardless of who they may be, old or young, white or black, rich or poor. The sooner everyone comes to the front, the sooner we will eliminate criminal acts in the county.112

The editors of The Chatham Record thus no longer desired that community members love only one another; rather, they wanted community members to love the county and the law enough to turn against their neighbors and friends who were committing criminal acts. And, in accordance with Brundage’s analysis, in the wake of the lynching, the editors of the Record sought for the community to “punish offenses that should have been left to the legal courts” by actively turning those offenders into the court system.113

Despite the mob’s rationale, criminal acts did not subside following the lynching of Daniel. Rather, they appeared to be more prominent in the minds of community members and of editorialists, particularly crimes related to “cases of selling liquor, transporting, or manufacturing” alcohol.114 According to Wells-Barnett, the persistent awareness of criminality in Southern towns like New Hope Township “closed the heart, stifled the conscience, warped the

112 “Exercise Power,” 2.
113 Brundage, Lynching in the New South, 31.
114 Ibid.
judgment, and hushed the voice of the Press and Pulpit on the subject of lynching throughout this 'land of liberty.'”

The writers of The Chatham Record lost their hopeful perspective, and rather began to take a pro-criminalization stance. Despite the fact that the lynching was reportedly intended to appease the populations of New Hope Township and greater Chatham County communities, members of the public — both black and white — were under the influence of an anxious editorial board, and a community reportedly rife with crime.

The Reshaping of New Hope Township

Between 1920 and 1930, the population of New Hope Township decreased from 1,497 to 1,248 people. As the township-wide population decreased, so did the non-white population, which, over a decade, fell from 333 to 249 people. Proportionally, however, the percentage of African Americans and mixed-race persons in New Hope Township stayed relatively the same, dipping only slightly from 22 percent black, mixed-race, and Mexican in 1920 to 22 percent African American in 1930. Whereas the black population in New Hope Township decreased 36 percent between 1920 and 1930, the black population of North Carolina decreased only 2.6 percent over the same time period, according to a 1976 study by historian Robert Higgs.

In November of 1922, the editors of The Chatham Record stated, “[T]he agricultural and industrial conditions following the [First World W]ar have immeasurably suffered by reason of closed foreign markets and strained international relationships.” As 382 of the 408 working people in New Hope Township worked on a farm, in the saw mill, or for the railroad, according

---

116 “Exercise Power,” 2.
to the 1920 census, decreased opportunity in the agricultural and industrial fields likely drove farmers to leave their farms for urban opportunities.\textsuperscript{120} According to sociologist Carole Marks, in the 1910s and the early 1920s, “there occurred a complex movement of rural Blacks to southern cities and a significant movement of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled laborers and their families to northern cities.”\textsuperscript{121} Although many of the African Americans who left New Hope Township in this time frame contributed to Great Migration trends, many likely participated in what Marks called “step-migration,” wherein they left their rural homes to live in southern urban centers, such as Durham or Raleigh, rather than transitioning directly from a small township to a northern metropolis.\textsuperscript{122}

Just as New Hope Township was socially split in the wake the lynching of Daniel, the voting-eligible white population of men and women in the town was also divided along political lines.\textsuperscript{123} In the 1922 elections, one year following the lynching, New Hope Township was nearly evenly split between Democrats and Republicans. For the congressional candidates, 220 people voted for the Democratic candidate, and 216 voted for the Republican candidate. For the senatorial candidates, 218 people voted for the Democratic candidate, and 217 voted for the Republican candidate. Likewise in the Sheriff election, 217 people voted for the Democratic candidate and 218 voted for the Republican candidate.\textsuperscript{124} According to sociologists Tolnay, Deane, and Beck, “[R]acial violence was one mechanism used by the white population to

\textsuperscript{120} 1920 United States Census, New Hope Township, 1-30.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} “Lynched Sunday,” 1.
perpetuate its social, economic, and political domination of southern society.”

But, despite the fact that the white population of New Hope Township held socio-political hegemony over the black population in the wake of the lynching, the white population was still disjointed and divided ideologically; they were united against purported black criminality, but were divided on other issues.

Yet, an editorial in *The Chatham Record* following the 1922 election preached unity in Chatham County and read, “People in this county, as well as elsewhere, will stand four-square and demand their rights as American citizens, and debt, accommodation, friendship, relationship, association and all the other binding posts will be severed when the polls are approached; each individual will be a live motor... and no man will dare intimidate or offend.”

The editors thus challenged anyone who stood as a threat to cohesion, harmony, and lawfulness Chatham County.

In the moment of the lynching and in the months and years thereafter, community members of Chatham County sought to uphold honor and punish those, like Daniel, who challenged such honor. According to Brundage, “Honor demanded that a person always see himself through the eyes of others because personal worth was determined not by self-appraisal but by the worth of others conferred.” Such a sentiment was an extension of the community mentality in the moment of the lynching; the people of New Hope Township wanted order, unity, and honor in their community, and, when people strayed from that standard, community members thus struck down the people who represented the disruption of such peace.

Yet, as Brundage concludes, “[I]n societies where honor is pronounced, dishonor is also

---

126 “Our Say about the Election,” 2.
127 Brundage, 50.
128 “Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob,” 3.
In their attempts to maintain order and keep community members in line, frustrated citizens perpetuated the unease and disorder in Chatham County.

According to Tolnay et al., in the aftermath of a lynching, communities such as New Hope Township possessed “a poisoned atmosphere, one that permeated life far beyond those [spaces] where a lynching had actually taken place, one that pervaded all the dealings each race had with the other.” In response to a court case in which an African American man was set to be tried in Pittsboro in December of 1921, the Record stated, “We do not concur in the claim that the negro could not have gotten a fair trial in Chatham, because we do not know of a county wherein resides a more intelligent, law-abiding, and sincere citizenship.” Still the editorialists agreed that “public sentiment was thoroughly crystallized against the negro.” Similarly, in August of 1922, the editors of The Chatham Record further called for the reinstitution of the whipping post, stating,

"[I]f the whipping post was again put back in use, and the men who are loafing about towns and cities, committing all manner of crimes, were given a taste of the whipping post, with their backs bared of clothing, so much of the thieving now going on would cease..."

Consequently, the community unification under the guise of making “an example out of the next law violator” perpetuated the pre-existing beliefs of community members.

---

129 Brundage, 52.
130 Tolnay et al., "Vicarious Violence" 790.
133 "Negro Lynched by Chatham Mob," 3.
According to Dollard, “It must not be supposed that the major or perhaps even the significant part of white aggression against Negroes consists of the few dramatic acts of lynching featured in the newspapers.”\(^{134}\) The lynching of Daniel was merely an outcropping of community anxieties and frustrations towards criminality, specifically black criminality. Consequently, the lynching may have served as an initial catalyst for the decrease in the black population of New Hope Township, the call for unity and protection by the white newspaper editors, and the political schism in the township. But, in the years following the lynching, the continued lack of opportunity for community members — black and white — coupled with an increasingly fearmongering local press produced an environment in which it became particularly difficult for African Americans to continue to exist.

**The Reshaping of the Daniel Family**

In the decade following the lynching of Eugene Daniel, the Daniel family stayed within miles of the site of the crime. By 1930, the family had moved from the house where Eugene grew up, and lived on a farm near Chapel Hill Road, a dirt road on the east side of town, a few miles west of the Wake County border.\(^{135}\) It is unclear when they moved from their old home on Farrington Road, but by 1930, the Daniel family owned their new property and earned a livelihood off of farming. Their new property, like their property on Farrington Road, was located directly between the properties of two white farming families, the Sexton family from Virginia on one side, and the Farrington family, who had lived in New Hope Township at the time of the lynching, on the other.\(^{136}\)

\(^{134}\) Dollard, *Caste and class in a southern town*, 316.
\(^{135}\) 1930 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10.
\(^{136}\) 1920 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10; 1930 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10.
By 1930, only nine of the Daniel family members lived together, including parents John and Ida, who were 58 and 55 respectively. Aldora, the fourth-oldest sibling at age 25, lived at home. Alpha, the younger sibling closest in age to Eugene, was 21, and also lived at home. The remaining siblings at home were teenagers — Otis was 19, Lusetta was 16, William T. was 14, and Charlie H. was 13. After John Sr.’s mother, Edna, passed away, his father, Iverson, moved in with the family. Penelope Daniel, the eldest sister, lived eight houses away from her parents and siblings in 1930. Penelope lived with her husband, Pete Holland, with whom she would have nine children. The second eldest daughter, Ethel, lived in William Township, directly north of New Hope Township, with her husband, Walker Owens. They had no children. First son John T. Daniel and third daughter Pauline Daniel could neither be located in the 1930 United States Federal Census, nor in any subsequent censuses.

Before they married and moved out of the family home, the Daniel family lived under the guidance of their mother, Ida, in the years following Eugene’s death. According to Daniel’s nephew, “[There was] probably a 20 year time frame from the first [child] being born and the last... [S]he did [everything], and back then you got three or four meals a day — and they were full fledged meals.” Because of the ways in which Ida supported the family, Daniel’s niece, Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode, said every member of the Daniel family owned a photograph of Ida because, “they respected her quite a bit... They always spoke very highly of her, but they were very modest and humble people.”

137 1930 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10.
138 Ibid; 1910 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: 16, family 144, dwelling 142, lines 55-60; April 22, 1910.
139 1930 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10-11.
140 1930 United States Census (Free Schedule), William Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: 19, family 184, dwelling 179, lines 42-43; March 1, 1920.
141 Interview with Michael Holland [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 21).
142 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 12).
After losing a child to a gruesome murder, Ida and John taught their children and grandchildren to remain grateful about the present, and not dwell on the past. According to Holland, “[H]onesty and integrity were important to them. [They told us,] ‘Don’t be too bitter about the past and treat people how you want to be treated. Reach back and help other people and pull them along.’”

In using their past traumas to instill hope in their children and grandchildren, John and Ida participated a “dialectic,” wherein the family shifted the lynching from a narrative of what happened to their son, to their family, and to their community, to a symbolic sentiment that could be used to keep the family in line, and prevent future harm from being done to them. Wolf argues,

The meaning and value of what occurred in the past is shaped to make sense of the present, and thus can lose, to some extent, its original construction. It should be emphasized that for blacks it is in this process of defining, of naming, of shaping the symbolic value of what happened that the black community has taken possession of the [lynching], has asserted a power over it that they did not have when it occurred.

For the Daniel family, the lynching of Eugene transformed from a tangible loss of life to a symbolic representation of the family’s ability to adapt and survive.

This dialectic was effective in maintaining the matriarchal structure of the family and in influencing the lives of the Daniel sons, because Daniel’s younger brothers — Otis, William T., and Charlie H. — were nine, four, and three, respectively, at the time of the lynching, and

---

143 Ibid.
144 Wolf, "Constructions of a Lynching." 96.
therefore were barely able to understand what happened or the implications of their brother’s murder.\footnote{1920 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10.\footnote{Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 12).\footnote{Ibid.}} According to Daniels Goode, “[I]t was very interesting for [the sons]... [because] they never knew [about lynchings]... they just read about it in history. And not even thinking that it was that close to their family that this occurred.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Thus, by 1930, when the sons went to their parents for guidance, particularly as they inched closer to the age at which their older brother was killed, the advice their mother gave to them was based on their own family narrative, and not an empty warning.\footnote{Ibid.}

### The Reshaping of the Stone Family

Along the route between the home of the Daniel family and the home of eldest daughter Pauline lived the Stone family. Though the Daniel family moved away from their 1920 property, they remained within four properties of the Stone family, even a decade following the accusation by the Stone family and the murder of their kin.\footnote{Ibid, 10-11.}


In 1930, Walter and Minnie Stone lived in the same house with their daughter Gertrude, who was then 25 years old.\footnote{Ibid.} She likely continued to work on the farm with her father and
mother. Gertrude was neither married nor formally employed.\textsuperscript{151} She also stopped attending
school in 1921, the year she completed the tenth grade, and the year Eugene Daniel was
lynched.\textsuperscript{152}

Gertrude’s younger brother, Ernest, was 23, and no longer lived with the family. He
moved from Chatham County to Guthrie Avenue in East Durham, where he lived as a boarder
with the Rigsbee family.\textsuperscript{153} Despite the fact that he left his home in Chatham County, Ernest
worked for the Chatham Furniture Company as a salesman, and thus likely remained connected
with his family and his hometown through his business.\textsuperscript{154}

Despite the fact that Gertrude received no injury when Daniel reportedly entered her
room, she was “considerably upset” and dealt with “extreme fright and nervousness” following
the lynching.\textsuperscript{155} If Daniel and Stone were indeed close with one another before Daniel’s death,
Stone might not have recovered from the loss of her loved one. Or, alternatively, if he did enter
her room with intent to assault her, she might have been left traumatized. Such nerves and
anxiety may have contributed to the fact that Gertrude left school early, lived at home with her
parents nearly a decade following the accusation and lynching, and was not married at an age
where most of her peers were already wed.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{151} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{153} 1930 United States Census (Free Schedule), Durham, Durham County, North Carolina: 3; April 2, 1930.
\textsuperscript{156} 1930 United States Census, New Hope Township, 10-11.
Conclusion

In the wake of Daniel’s death, the residents of New Hope Township, the Daniel family, and the Stone family fought against community fracture and the destruction of the legacy of cohesion of their township by constructing a dialectic, wherein they kept the memory and implications of Daniel’s death in public circulation in order to revitalize the already polarized community. For the white population, the public officials, and the editorialists of New Hope Township, the key to revitalization and reunification was in ending criminal acts and the achievement of mutual respect and honor. For the Daniel family, the capacity to overcome was contingent upon their own trust in one another and in the guidance of the family narrative. For the Stone family, New Hope Township served as a source of anxiety, and a reminder of the people and the conditions that led to the traumatic events of their past. For each group, the memory and the residual effects of the lynching worked to redefine their interactions amongst their demographic groups, with the greater community, and with their perceptions of the past.

The public discourse surrounding the lynching and the subsequent community understanding of criminality and victimhood in the nine years following the lynching forced each individual to negotiate their own place within both New Hope Township and Chatham County. The dialectic that occurred both in editorials of The Chatham Record and within individual households produced an alarmist environment, in which every reported crime represented the collective destruction of community standards. Consequently, community members were compelled to either comply with monitoring the actions and lawfulness of their own neighbors, as they did in the process of accusing and lynching Daniel, or, if they opposed such means, leave the community.

157 “Exercise Power,” 2.
Such standards worked to reshape the demographics and the culture of the community in the decade between the lynching and the 1930 census, but were not exclusive to this time frame. Even when Daniel’s name was not explicitly mentioned in conversation, his death and the implications therein were pervasive in the lives of the individuals alive at the time of the murder, and the dialectic of the lynching continued to influence their lives and their relationships for years to follow.
Chapter Four

Daniel Family, Stone Family, and Community Diaspora

“The person you are studying [Eugene Daniel] was lynched when my father was three years old, so he didn’t know much about him. To be honest, the family is very quiet and private.”

- Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode, niece of Eugene Daniel

Nearly all of the descendants of Eugene Daniel live in either Washington, D.C. or in Trenton, New Jersey. This was not an accidental shift in the geographic core of the family. As early as the 1920s, portions of the Daniel family — or the Daniels family, as some kin began to call themselves — left the familiar fields and dirt roads of central North Carolina in order to find themselves better industry and better lives in urbanized areas of the mid-Atlantic region.158 Their geographic shift was a part of the larger trend of the Great Migration that occurred within the United States between approximately 1915 and 1970.159

According to Stewart E. Tolnay, “Common to [participants in the Great Migration]... was a desire to achieve a better life in a new place—a new region, a new city, or a new neighborhood — and a willingness to uproot themselves in search of that opportunity.”160 Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode, a surviving niece of Eugene Daniel, explained, “[It] was not uncommon for people to migrate North. Living conditions were better, opportunities were better, jobs and so

---

158 Glenn Hinson. An oral history with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode/Interviewers: Alex Wordell, Kate Soliman, and Tara May. The Descendants Project: Interviews with Descendants of Eugene Daniel, Lynching Victim, 12 April 2016, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
forth, and they felt they weren’t discriminated as much [there].” Such successes came in the form of educational and professional accomplishments, the births of children and grandchildren, and strong family ties.

Yet, despite all of the successes the Daniel family achieved over subsequent generations across disparate geographic locations, the various branches of the family tree were all united by one common trend: silence. Some members of the Daniel family knew about the murder of their kin and explicitly chose not to speak about it. Others were informed, but did not think it was their place to discuss it. Many never knew the lynching occurred. When ethnographer Glenn Hinson from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill reached out to descendants of Eugene Daniel for oral history interviews with his course, “Southern Legacies: The Descendants Project,” many did not respond, some declined upon request, and one individual accepted an interview, only to change their mind. The individual stated that because their father intentionally did not tell them about the lynching, there was probably a reason for doing so, and they did not feel it was their place to share the story deliberately erased from their family narrative.

This chapter focuses on the long term trajectory of the Daniel descendants, spanning from approximately 1930 to the present. Using public records, newspaper accounts, and oral histories, the chapter both chronicles the lives of those who survived Eugene Daniel, and parallels them with the lives of those who accused him: the Stone family, particularly Gertrude Stone. This chapter argues that one cannot separate the lynching of Eugene Daniel from the ways in which the Daniel family chose to live on following his death. As Wolf suggests, “A past never was in

---

161 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
162 Ibid.
the form in which it appears as a past. Its reality is in its interpretation of the present.” The Daniel family, even in the 21st century, was and is marked by deeply intertwined silences and successes.

The Daniel Family: Why they Left

According to census records and death certificates, members of the Daniel family remained in New Hope Township until at least 1935, when patriarch John Daniel passed away. At some point following the death of her husband, Ida Mary Rodgers Daniel moved to Durham, just one county northeast, where she lived out the rest of her life until her death in 1949.

Eugene’s siblings can each be broken into one of two groups: those who stayed — largely those who were older than Eugene, with more established lives in Chatham County — and those who went — largely those younger than Eugene, who were more loosely connected to their hometown. Many of Eugene’s older siblings, particularly those who married other members of the Chatham County community remained in the vicinity for decades following Eugene’s death. Eldest sister, Penelope, who twenty-eight at the time of her brother’s lynching, remained in New Hope Township until at least 1940. Older sister Ethel, who was twenty-five at the time of Eugene’s death, married a man from Chatham County and remained there with him. The older siblings appeared to be more connected to their community and to their parents, and therefore had a more difficult time leaving.

The two younger siblings closest in age to Eugene, however, left sooner and with more ease. Younger sister Alpha Omega, who was just thirteen when Eugene died, lived in New Hope Township until the 1930s, when she moved a county north to Orange County, where she got married and resided until she moved to Trenton, New Jersey. Younger brother Otis, who was eleven when Eugene died, followed Alpha’s path, and perhaps moved with her, as he too lived the remainder of his life in Trenton, New Jersey. It was not until the subsequent generation was born and aged into adulthood that many began to leave for Washington, D.C.

Though scholars argue over the role of lynchings within the context of the Great Migration, historian Isabel Wilkerson suggests that “blacks might have found it more daunting or were not in a position to leave in the immediate aftermath of a lynching but that such violence might have planted the seeds of a departure that may have taken months to actually pull off.” This could explain why it took several members of the Daniel family, such as Alpha and Otis, years to leave New Hope Township before starting lives in new places. Though Daniels Goode said she is not positive that her family left because of the lynching of one of their kin, she did say that New Jersey and Washington provided better opportunities to the Daniel family than Chatham County did in the early years of the 20th century. “[They] probably wanted to leave from the South.”

The community of New Hope Township helped to mold the Daniel family, but it also began to shake them and break them. For this reason, members of the Daniel family, in Eugene’s

171 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
172 Wilkerson, The Warmth of Other Suns, 533.
173 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
generation and thereafter, eventually “left and discovered more things, [were] more adventurous, and,“ according to Daniels Goode, “sometimes that makes a difference.” These new geographic centers and new interactions, including interactions with members of the white community, set the Daniel family on a new trajectory, into lifestyles perhaps unimaginable by Eugene in his lifetime.

The Daniel Family: Life after Eugene

Eugene’s descendants lived lives not only dissimilar from that which he was deprived of, but far from what he might have experienced had he lived: educated, white-collar, urban-dwelling, long, and durable. Despite the fact that Eugene’s life was traumatically cut short, his siblings went on to live long, full lives. “Several lived to be over a hundred,” Daniels Goode said. “They’re rather healthy individuals as I remember, very fun loving.”

In 1920, most of the children in the Daniel family knew how to read and write, but did not attend school at that point in time, as education was not an accessible reality for young African Americans in New Hope Township prior to the lynching. But, education quickly came to take over the lives of the Daniel descendants in the years that followed. According to the 1930 Census, following the death of Eugene, most of the six children living at home with the parents — including Aldora, who was 25, and Alpha, Eugene’s closest sibling in age, who was 21 — attended school.

Although John and Ida Daniel did not have any formal education themselves, they encouraged their children to pursue educational involvement, such as “[activities] at school, like

174 Ibid.
175 Ibid.
clubs, the newspaper staff, writing articles,” as well as getting involved in the church.\textsuperscript{178} Some of Eugene’s siblings, such as John T. who was nineteen years old when his brother was killed, later sent their children to boarding schools across North Carolina when they reached middle school and high school. Others enrolled their children in segregated public schools and encouraged participation in extracurricular activities.\textsuperscript{179}

Daniels Goode believes many of her cousins received some sort of higher education. “Uncle John” — or John T. Daniel Sr., the elder brother of Eugene — was “the first one who went [to college],” according to Daniels Goode. “He was just motivated that way because his parents were not college educated.”\textsuperscript{180}

And John T. was more than committed to the educational system. He attended local public schools for his primary education, graduated from the Palmer Memorial Institute in Sedalia, North Carolina, and then went on to receive his Bachelor of Science and his Doctor of Medicine degree from Howard University. He was also the first African American to serve as the President of the Board of Medical Examiners.\textsuperscript{181} Likewise, his son, John T. Jr. served more than 30 years as the principal for the Pender County Training School in Rocky Point, North Carolina, founded the Southeastern School Masters Club, and was a member of the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Teachers Association.\textsuperscript{182}

Not everyone in the Daniel family achieved what John T. and his children did. Each faction of the larger Daniel family was “raised different,” and, education and professional success were more important for some members than for others.\textsuperscript{183} But, Daniels Goode

\textsuperscript{178} Interview with Michael Holland [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 21).
\textsuperscript{179} Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
\textsuperscript{180} “Rites Wed. for John Daniel, Raleigh Educator.” The Carolina Times (Durham), August 26, 1961.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{183} Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
explained, regardless of the path that each member of the family took, “it was just assumed they were going to... get an education because that was the way to survive and accomplish.”

This was because, as Ritterhouse argues, families like the Daniel family believed that “respectability was the key to their children’s survival and success,” and that “hard work, upright behavior, and a commitment to education... could build useful and prosperous lives.”

Such motivation and attainment complicates assumptions about what families looked like and how they behaved following a lynching of their kin. Wolf argues, “The violence and the lynchings, highly visible aspects of the underlying structure of racial domination, created a climate of fear and intimidation, reinforcing the boundaries of the color line. The present-day meanings that the lynchings hold for blacks continue to reflect that repression.” But, the lynching of Eugene did not preoccupy or suppress the Daniel family, at least not in their active consciousness and in their active lives over the next many decades. Rather, the family appeared to succeed in terms of conventional markers of success — marriage, children, degrees, careers — because of the racial violence that plagued their family history, rather than in spite of it. They did not immediately flee or fight back, but instead they equipped themselves with the educational, social, and economic foundations upon which they could step out of the town that killed their kin.

---

184 Hinson, Glenn. An oral history with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode/Interviewers: Alex Wordell, Kate Soliman, Nneka Molokwu and Tara May. The Descendants Project: Interviews with Descendants of Eugene Daniel, Lynching Victim, 29 March 2016, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.


186 Wolf, “Constructions of a Lynching,” 94.

187 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (March 29, 2016).
The Stone Family

Gertrude Stone lived in and around Chatham County for her entire life, often nearby families of color.\(^{188}\) Even as late as 1940, Gertrude lived next door to a large African American family, the Liester family.\(^ {189}\) In 1933, she married Andrew Jackson Mills, a farmer from William Township, the township directly north of New Hope Township.\(^ {190}\) Despite being married for over thirty years, Gertrude and Andrew never had any children.\(^ {191}\) Andrew died in 1966 at the age of 66 due to coronary thrombosis, or a major blood clot.\(^ {192}\)

Like Gertrude, Ernest Stone lived the majority of his life in and around New Hope Township as a farmer until he passed away in 1968 due to heart failure. Also like Gertrude, he married but did not have any children.\(^ {193}\) Gertrude buried both her husband and her brother in the Bell’s Baptist Church Cemetery, just eight miles away from the New Hope Baptist Church cemetery where Eugene Daniel was buried.\(^ {194}\) In the case of Daniel, the family of a victim of a lynching enjoyed a rich legacy; the white family at the center of the event did not.


\(^{189}\) 1940 United States Census (Free Schedule), William Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 10, family 65, dwelling 65, lines 68-69; March 1, 1920.


\(^{191}\) "United States Social Security Death Index" for Gertrude Stone.


Education did not become the center of Gertrude’s life. Gertrude stopped attending school in the same year that Eugene was found in her room and was lynched.\(^{195}\) For as long as her husband Andrew was alive, she worked alongside him on his farm where they worked about 60 hours a week, every single week of the year.\(^{196}\) After her husband’s death, she lived out her life in a nursing home in Durham.\(^{197}\) Gertrude Stone lived to be 94 years old. Her death was natural, caused by a secondary malignant neoplasm, a cancerous tumor in her old age.\(^{198}\)

Despite the fact that the familial, racial, and social origins of Gertrude and Eugene were different — Gertrude from a small, white, lower middle-class family of four, and Eugene from a large, black, lower-class family of twelve — and the fact that Gertrude outlived Eugene by 78 years, their stories are similar. The lives of both individuals were inextricably tied to New Hope Township and Chatham County, in that these places created them, molded them, and, ultimately, lead to their demise. Yet, Gertrude had an adult life, even if it was one of struggle. Eugene was not afforded that opportunity.

Still, as neither Gertrude nor Ernest had any children, there is no one left from the family to share their side of the story, and to articulate how the family felt after the lynching.\(^{199}\) One can only speculate how the accusation and lynching of Eugene Daniel may have pervaded the lives of the Stone family members, even long after Eugene’s death.

**Legacy**

The lynching resulted in changes in the social realities of the surviving members of the Daniel family. The memory of Daniel’s death infiltrated the lives of the his family and rested

---

\(^{195}\) “United States Social Security Death Index” for Gertrude Stone.
\(^{196}\) 1940 United States Census.
\(^{197}\) “United States Social Security Death Index” for Gertrude Stone.
\(^{198}\) Ibid.
\(^{199}\) 1940 United States Census.
therein for generations not through explicit fear mongering or domination, but by inspiring motivation and agitation. For example, nearly all of the Daniel children attended in school following the lynching of their brother, despite not attending at the time of his death, and later they further encouraged their own children to pursue educational success. The Daniel descendants aspired to ensure their own safety and survival through geographic shifts like moving out of the South, educational and professional advancement, and tight-knit kinship bonds.  

Still, there was one area in which fear and apprehension appeared to be present in the Daniel family: within the Daniel men. “[T]he women were very engaging and warm but maybe... a lot more overt than the men,” Daniels Goode recalled. “Because [the men] were very quiet.” Daniels Goode said the men of the family existed with either a silent presence or, at times, an absence. And, at the same time that the men were quiet and took a step backward in the family setting, the women stepped up and both led and protected their family. “The Daniel [family was] more matriarchal,” Daniels Goode said. “[There were] more females there and I think they took on the leadership role of what the mother started and looking after each other and so forth. And not all of them had children. But they modeled that behavior.”

Daniels Goode also recalled that she was not allowed to claim that any discrimination against her or anyone in her family was racially motivated unless she had concrete proof it was so: “That’s something that was taught by my parents. My sister and I were... never allowed to say that anything was racially related, even back then. Unless we could provide proof that it

---

200 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
201 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (March 29, 2016).
202 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
was.” She said to blame mistreatment or a lack of advancement upon race or racism was “just making excuses and enabling.”

Michael Holland, Daniel’s nephew, recalls his parents preaching “[p]atience, all things have a time and season. The patience in thinking before you act. Once you do something you can’t undo it. Quick to firing off your mouth can get you in trouble — we never tried to do that with our parents. They were disciplinarians. Grandparents did too. Today you can’t do that or you would be in Jail. We got paddled, time out.”

Holland and Daniels Goode’s parents thus aligned with the respectability politics of the early twentieth century, wherein blacks “dealt with the assault [of whites] by turning inward.” According to Ritterhouse, “[T]heir parents admonished them to maintain their dignity and rise above the racism they faced... [and] were doing their best to provide a sheltered childhood in much the same way they were using respectability as a shield for the race as a whole.”

Daniel’s descendants, aware of what could happen to a black person at the hands of a mob, likely wanted to protect their children from such fear and hatred.

Conclusion

In an interview with historian Karlos K. Hill, Willye B. White, a black Olympian, called the era of black migration “the apartheid days of America,” an era “that [people] never talked about.” Hill elaborated, “The remembrance of a lynching ensured that the trauma would be a recurring phenomenon. Memories of lynchings or near lynchings could be so traumatic that

---

203 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
204 Interview with Michael Holland [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 21).
206 Ibid.
207 Karlos K. Hill, Beyond the Rope: The Impact of Lynching on Black Culture and Memory, 105.
black Southerners sometimes chose not to talk about them.”\textsuperscript{208} Such was true in the Daniel family.

After Daniels Goode asked her father about Eugene — a man who she called “Uncle Eugene,” despite never knowing him — she recalled, “He didn’t have a lot to know to be telling [us about Eugene]. Not to mention [silence and privacy are] characteristic of the family anyway, that’s their personality. But because others weren’t talking, he didn’t really have anything to share.”\textsuperscript{209}

Even the generations closest to Eugene and his death did not speak about it. Daniels Goode said when her family spoke about lynching, they discussed it in the context of history. According to Daniels Goode, they were “a generation of people who just read about it. They don’t know a lot about it, they just read about it in history. And not even thinking that it was that close to their family that this occurred.”\textsuperscript{210} For the Daniel family, lynching was an anonymous crime that happened to someone else, not anyone in their family. It was a taboo topic, one that was rarely discussed. Daniels Goode said, “they never would have discussed that, anyway, you know. Not from the family.”

According to sociologist Charlotte Wolf, such silences following the lynching of a family member were not unique to the Daniel family:

Within communities the story [of a lynching] has been transmitted from older members to younger, the sharpness of memory varying with age cohort: the farther the age group from the event, the more attenuated the description. Older blacks remember the emotions and the complex particulars surrounding the event as their parents told them. For younger

\textsuperscript{208} Ibid, 104.
\textsuperscript{209} Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (April 12, 2016).
\textsuperscript{210} Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode (March 29, 2016).
blacks, the intensity and fear-producing qualities have been lost. Older blacks think lynchings could happen again; younger blacks do not.\footnote{Wolf, “Constructions of a Lynching,” 95.}

Because Daniels Goode and her family members believed lynching to be a distant, historicized occurrence prior to reading newspaper article about the lynching of Eugene, the fear, the narrative, and the emotions surrounding the lynching of their kin had all but disappeared.

Wolf illuminates the lasting traumas of racial violence when she states, “The experiences of this small town underscore that violence against racial minorities and the shadows cast by such social control measures linger long after the immediate effect and through the filter of group construction force their imprint onto the meanings of group life.”\footnote{Ibid, 96.} Despite the fact that no living members of the Daniel family were alive at the time of Daniel’s death, and very few knew about the lynching, his death implicitly influenced the trajectory of their lives, the ways in which their parents chose to raise them, and the places they were eventually able to call home.
Chapter Five

Conclusion

In September of 1945, twenty-four years after Eugene Daniel’s lynching, the Homestead Hurricane struck North Carolina, flooding the banks of the Cape Fear River. Despite the fact that New Hope Township survived the hurricane with little injury, Fayetteville, home to a downstream military base, suffered $2 million in damages. As a result, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers established plans to construct a reservoir upstream in Chatham County to prevent such damage and flooding from happening again, and to save Fayetteville.213

Between 1945 and 1962, the Army Corps of Engineers negotiated with landowners in Chatham County, including New Hope Township residents, and eventually seized all the land in the prospective reservoir area under eminent domain. The majority of community members who had stayed following the lynching of Eugene Daniel were likely forced off of their properties, or relocated to disparate parts of Chatham County, in order for the Army Corps of Engineers to build New Hope Lake. The lake, which was eventually renamed to B. Everett Jordan Lake, was completed in 1982.214 The geographic core that once was New Hope Township was bisected by a body of water that takes up 22% of the township’s total land area.215

The site of Eugene Daniel’s lynching, at what was then the side of the road near Moore’s Bridge, is now underwater.216 The material memory of New Hope Township as it was at the time

214 Ibid.
of Daniel’s death was destroyed, and was replaced by a space where people can now camp, swim, boat, and play. Until the recent advent of digital archival tools and the acquisition of oral histories with living Daniel family descendants, the narrative of the life and death of Eugene Daniel remained similarly obscured.

In 2002, an individual using the online handle ‘LivingHistory’ turned the narrative of the lynching of Eugene Daniel into a historical geocache, or a recreational activity defined by hunting or finding hidden objects using a GPS. According to the Geocaching website, “This is a multipart [geo]cache which explores the places and events relating to the lynching of Eugene Daniel near Pittsboro in 1921.” The GPS treasure hunt navigates users from the assumed former property of John and Ida Daniel, to the jail from which the mob took Eugene, and finally to the site of the lynching itself, which requires the use of a kayak to access, since it is now under the lake. Since 2002, dozens of people have ventured to the sites to geocache, and at least 59 have successfully located the surviving chimney on the former Daniel property.

Despite the fact that the Geocaching user turned the narrative of the lynching into a game, they also allowed users to engage with the complex material memory of the lynching, and to place themselves in the footsteps of Eugene Daniel and his last days. The geocache has provided a physical space at which visitors could leave a memorial for Daniel — a metal cross hammered into a tree where the Daniel family property reportedly once stood — and a digital space where visitors can learn about both his life and death. As one commenter noted, “There was a calm in the area [at the reported site of the lynching] so we sat down for a while to rest. I couldn't

79.0917819,2986m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x89acbeea325f4b23:0x6110cec5c005dccc4!8m2!3d35.7054266!4d79.0844577.
imagine that day, how dark and evil that place became when the ignorant and impulsive thought their form of ‘justice’ was served. Makes one contemplate just how close we are to such a dark history."²¹⁹ Still, this version of reviving the physical path to Daniel’s death and allowing people to walk through his final moments is voyeuristic, and sensationalizes his lynching rather than giving it appropriate context and memorialization. This begs one to ask: how do we mark the history of this trauma and the physical site of this violence, if at all?

It is only through the pairing of historic records and modern digital tools that historians can fully excavate lost communities as they were geographically, demographically, and socially. Traditional research methods allow historians to perform primary source, archival and oral history research that serves as the backbone of any historic project; but modern tools, including digital mapping software, global positioning devices, and digital archives allow modern researchers to gain a fuller, more interactive picture that would otherwise be missed by searching only in two dimensions.

If one were to only research Eugene Daniel in the context of physical newspaper accounts and census records, his entire familial narrative would encompass forty-eight hours. It would begin with reported criminality and end with his murder, as there are few other public mentions of Daniel or his family beyond the accounts of the lynching. But, the combination of traditional research methods, such as oral history and archival research, and modern digital tools and repositories, such as the Prospect Data Visualization tool and digital archives, allowed for the excavation and reexamination of both Daniel’s life and his community. Historians should thus pursue interdisciplinary, interactive methodologies and establish public-facing narratives, in order to garner multidimensional histories, recreate the circumstances that precipitated historical events, and gain a better understanding of the present implications of former circumstances.

²¹⁹ Ibid.
The Legacy of Racial Violence

Eugene Daniel’s tombstone, located in the New Hope Church Cemetery next to the headstones of his mother and father, reads, “May the resurrection find thee on the bosom of thy God.” Daniel’s death was not merely a gruesome closure to a life, but rather the beginning of a new reality for dozens, wherein an entire family and an entire community had to learn to adapt in the wake of trauma and loss. And, despite the fact that his family members were never able to resurrect Daniel, they continued, and still continue, to keep his narrative alive in ways both conscious and unspoken. Even the silence around his death is a silence full of meaning.

Many of Daniel’s nieces and nephews and their children grew up to be surgeons and academics and educators. They were were raised by parents who pushed them to both succeed and to look beyond racial bias in order to live up to their own potential. They were taught to use the past to sustain themselves, rather than to hold themselves back. They were raised to always help others, regardless of their own present circumstances and their own problems.

Today, the Daniel family is geographically dispersed, with ties to New Jersey, North Carolina, Washington, D.C., and other parts of the country. But they are connected through shared upbringings, family reunions, and a greater family narrative. Daniel’s surviving nephew, Michael Holland, learned when he was growing up that “[n]othing [is] more important than family. They will sustain you through a lot of hard times... [T]hey will be there to give you a sense of purpose and accomplishment.” The Daniel family held each other close in the wake

---

220 Ibid.
221 Hinson, Glenn. An oral history with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode/Interviewers: Alex Wordell, Kate Soliman, Nneka Molokwu and Tara May. The Descendants Project: Interviews with Descendants of Eugene Daniel, Lynching Victim, 29 March 2016, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
223 Interview with Marjorie Ann Daniels Goode [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 12).
224 Interview with Michael Holland [Telephone interview]. (2016, April 21).
of the lynching of their brother and son, and now, nearly a century later, continue to sustain
closeness, interdependence, and fellowship.

Such narratives of intergenerational trauma and recovery are not merely historical.
Contemporary communities and families suffer from the loss of loved ones to modern-day acts
of racial violence, and, in the wake of the murders, are forced to learn how to grieve, to adapt,
and to recover. Such is the case in the 2014 shootings of 18-year-old Michael Brown, 12-year-
old Tamir Rice, and 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, among hundreds of young men and women
lost to extralegal violence perpetrated by self-proclaimed agents of justice, just like those in the
mob that killed Eugene Daniel in 1921.\textsuperscript{225} Surviving family members and community members
of contemporary victims must participate in a larger historical dialectic of racial violence,
wherein communities look towards the narratives of struggle and survival from the past, like that
of Eugene Daniel and his surviving kin, in order to re-contextualize, recover, and reform in the
present.\textsuperscript{226}

While it appears unlikely that such acts of violence will ever cease to exist, historians and
individuals can amplify the historically silenced voices, memories, and legacies of the
communities left behind in the wake of lynchings and other acts of racial violence. Historically,
no lynching existed in a vacuum; each murdered individual had thoughts, feelings, relationships,
dreams, and roles in the communities in which they lived. Contemporary acts of racial violence
can neither be understood outside of the context their physical and social community, nor be
understood outside of the greater historical arc of fear, violence, and their legacies.


Bibliography

Books


Journal Articles


Newspaper Records


**Census Enumerations**

1900 United States Census (Free Schedule), Oak Grove Township, Durham County, North Carolina: p. 6, family 53, dwelling 52, lines 74-80; June 6, 1900.

1910 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 9, family 148, dwelling 146, lines 74-83; April 22, 1910.

1920 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 1-30; March 1, 1920.

1930 United States Census (Free Schedule), Durham, Durham County, North Carolina: 3; April 2, 1930.

1930 United States Census (Free Schedule), New Hope Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 1-25; March 10, 1930.

1930 United States Census (Free Schedule), William Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: 19, family 184, dwelling 179, lines 42-43; March 1, 1920.

1940 United States Census (Free Schedule), William Township, Chatham County, North Carolina: p. 10, family 65, dwelling 65, lines 68-69; March 1, 1920.
Oral History Transcripts


Marriage Certificates and Indexes


Death Certificates and Indexes


Other Primary Source Records


https://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC37F1_the-lynching-of-eugene-daniel?guid=113bb504-9c91-49f1-88b0-0d0ce568796d.


**Other Secondary Source Records**


