

White Mob Violence and the Terror Killings of
Two African-American Veterans of WWI

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The post-Reconstruction era was a violent chapter in American history. Between 1877 and 1950, white mobs hanged, shot, beat, castrated, cut to pieces, and set on fire over 4,000 African-American men, women, and children. The history of lynching within the US has been forgotten by mainstream America because mob participants were dismissed as radicals. However, the lynching photography taken by local townspeople, who participated in black death and torture, disprove this misconception. To remedy the legacy of national forgetting, the Montgomery-based Equal Justice Initiative erected the first national lynching memorial in 2018.ⁱ

While they lived under the threat of racial violence, African Americans were not passive victims. Ministers, historians, teachers, veterans, women's clubs, and community leaders banded together to protect their own communities, held protest meetings, and demanded justice for the lynching victims and their families.ⁱⁱ Through their activism, American blacks celebrated their lives as citizens and human beings. They rejected the presumption of racist whites that they were the walking dead. Their faith in God, confidence in their own self-worth, and love for each other allowed them to forge ahead despite the overwhelming odds.

This chapter revolves around the lynchings of Relious Fifer and Robert Crosky on September 29, 1919 in Montgomery, Alabama. They were abducted from the custody of three deputies and murdered by a band of white men. Black ex-soldiers were targeted for racial violence because they threatened the white supremacy maintained through Jim Crow laws. After serving overseas in France, WWI veterans demanded respect and equality at home. Although Fifer's and Crosky's killers were never arrested, this was a significant event because the Alabama governor was pressured by black activists to conduct a murder investigation.ⁱⁱⁱ

While we do not possess the actual words of Fifer and Crosky, we can still honor their memories as husbands, sons, brothers, and comrades-in-arms. Military, census and genealogical records can help to partially reconstruct their stories. There are few records that reveal the details of Relious Fifer's background. He was born in Fort Deposit, Alabama in 1893. His father's name was Robert but, his mother's name is unknown. Relious Fifer was drafted into the American Army in 1917. He was healthy, without disabilities and literate. At age 23, he may have been excited to travel outside of Alabama and to fight for his country. At the time of his enlistment, Fifer was gainfully employed as a laborer at the Kentucky-based Louisville and Nashville Railroad, that extended through Mobile. As a soldier, Fifer was assigned to the 92nd Infantry Division, one of only two black combat units that served overseas in France.^{iv}

Before Fifer was released from the military, he married Sallie Jackson and shared her residence. After only seven months of marriage, unfortunately, Sallie became a young widow. The trauma of her husband's murder might account for her decision not to remarry. She worked as a laundress and maid until her death in 1937. Fifer's burial site in Lincoln Cemetery, designated for African Americans, is probably unmarked because the property has been abandoned for years.^v

Robert Crosky was born on March 20, 1884 to Robert, Sr., a laborer, and Eliza, a laundress. They were married for about thirty years and had nine children. Robert Sr. was illiterate but, Eliza could read. Around 1880, Robert Sr. sustained a work-related injury that left him unemployed for five months or more. While Crosky and his

siblings never attended school, they could all read and write. By 1910, Crosky's father was dead. He shared the family home on Columbia Ave with his widowed mother, his two widowed sisters, their children, and his teen-aged brother. The women took in laundry and the men performed manual labor. The next generation of Crosky's family became more educated. Lula, Crosky's nine-year-old niece, attended a segregated public school.^{vi}

Crosky was drafted into the American Army in 1918. His unit was transferred to a training camp in the North. Crosky would have been assigned menial tasks to perform for the duration of the war. At the time of his enlistment, he was gainfully employed as a janitor. At age 34, he was still unmarried and living in his family's home. The monthly military pay of thirty dollars gave Crosky the financial means to marry Annie Effrige and establish his own household. Annie was of mixed-race and literate. After Crosky's murder, Annie moved in with her sister, brother-in-law, and nephew. Crosky's body was buried within the segregated section of the Oakwood Cemetery.^{vii}

As you read the documents below, ponder the following questions:

1. Why has mainstream America forgotten the history of racial violence during the post-Reconstruction era?
2. Why do Americans persist in believing that the white mobs were only composed of KKK members?
3. How did the 'black beast rapist' myth help to rebuild the structures of white supremacy after emancipation?
4. How can citizens encourage their local officials to acknowledge and engage with this difficult history?^{viii}
5. Should reparations be made to the descendants of lynching victims and what might that look like?^{ix}

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1. Relious Fifer: WWI Draft Registration Card / Order to Report List

Relious Fifer was drafted into the American military in 1917. He reported to Camp Sheridan on September 1, 1918. Registration Card: Front (Left) and Back (Right).

<p>Form 1 2400 REGISTRATION CARD No. 34</p> <p>1. Name in Full: Relious Fifer. Age in Years: 23. 2. Home Address: Notifly L&N RR Co. 3. Date of Birth: 1893. 4. Are you: a natural born C[itizen] 5. Where were you born: Fort deposit, Ala. USA, 6. If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject? Citizen 7. What is your present trade, employment, or office? 23 Extra Gang # 6 8. By whom employed? L&N RR Co. Where employed? S[illegible] N.A. Division 9. Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? None. 10. Married or single (which)? Single. Race (specify which)? Negro. 11. What military service have you had? Rank --; branch --; years --; Nation or State--. 12. Do you claim exception from draft (specify grounds)? None. I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true. 6121. Signature or mark: Relious [illegible] Fife</p>	<p>1. Tall, Medium or short (specify which)? Tall. Slender, medium, or stout (which?) Stout. 2. Color of eyes? Black. Color of hair? Black. Bald. No. 3. Has person lost arm, leg, hand, (set, or both eyes, or is he otherwise disabled (specify)? No. I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows: Signature of registrar: W. L. Roy Precinct: 41 City or County: Jefferson. State: Alabama Date of registration: June [illegible] 1917¹</p>
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¹ *WWI Draft Registration Cards*, Pub, No. M1509, Fold3 Job No. 16-021, NARA Catalog Id 572850, in Fold3, <https://www.fold3.com/image/547839109?terms=250,relious,fifer> (accessed on October 31, 2019).

Form 1029 PMGO. Duplicate.

When completed to be mailed by Military Authorities to the local Board who stamp appears in this space:

LOCAL BOARD FOR DIVISION NO. 1 FOR THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON,
STATE OF ALABAMA. BESSEMER, ALA.

SHEET NO. 1. Date, Sept 1st, 1918. 3610047

The selected men herein described, having been inducted into military service on Sept 1st, 1918 have this date been entrained for Camp Sheridan, Alabama (In Custody). This statement consists of 1. Sheets.

1. Order No. 6421
2. Serial No. 2400
3. Name. Class of 1917. Fifer, Relious (Col)
(Inducted under Section 140, S.S.R.)
4. Call No. 1225.
5. Primary Industry. Laborer.
6. Classification. I: H.²

² *Lists of Men Ordered to Report to Local Board for Military Duty in the District of Columbia*, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on October 31, 2019).

2. Robert Crosky: WWI Draft Registration Card

Robert Crosky was drafted into the American military in 1918. He did not attempt to avoid fulfilling his patriotic duty. Front (Left) and Back (Right) of Card.

<p>REGISTRATION CARD SERIAL NUMBER: 3700. ORDER NUMBER: 3015 1. First and last Name: Robert R. Crosky. 2. PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS: 321 Columbia Montgomery Ala. 3. Age in Years: 34. Date of Birth: March 20, 1884. 6. Race: Negro. 10. U.S. CITIZEN or ALIEN: Native Born. 15. If not a citizen of the U.S., of what nation are you a citizen or subject? [blank] 16. PRESENT OCCUPATION: Janitor 17. EMPLOYER'S NAME: Lou Bell [illegible] 18. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT ADDRESS: 18 Washington Montgomery Ala. NEAREST RELATIVE Name. 19. Eliza Crosky Address. 20. 321 Columbia Montgomery Ala. I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE. P.M.G.O. Form No. 1 (Red) Registrant's Signature or Mark: Robert [illegible] (Crosky) (OVER)</p>	<p>REGISTRAR'S REPORT DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT HEIGHT: 21. Tall. BUILD. 26. Stout. COLOR OF EYES: 27. Blk. COLOR OF HAIR: 28. Blk. 29. Has person lost arm, leg, hand, eye, or is he obviously physically disqualified? (Specify.) NO. 30. I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read or had read to him his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature or mark, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows: None. Signature of registrar: ER[illegible] Holt Date of Registration: 9/12/18 THE LOCAL BOARD FOR THE CITY OF MONTGOMERY. STATE OF ALABAMA. CITY HALL, MONTGOMERY, ALA. (STAMP OF LOCAL BOARD) The stamp of the Local Board jurisdiction of the area in which the registrant has his permanent home shall be placed in this box. C3-6171. (OVER)³</p>
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³ *WWI Draft Registration Cards*, Pub, No. M1509, Fold3 Job No. 16-021, NARA Catalog Id 572850, in Fold3, <https://www.fold3.com/image/547839109?terms=crosky,250,robert> (accessed on October 31, 2019).

3. Relious and Sallie Fifer

On January 20, 1919, Relious Fifer married Sallie Jackson. The young couple was only married for seven months before the white mob murdered Fifer. Trauma and grief may have factored into Mrs. Fifer's decision not to remarry and start a family with another man. She died at the relatively young age of forty.

Name: Relius Phifer
Birth Date: abt 1893
Birth Place: Montgomery, Alabama
Death Date: 29 Sep 1919
Death Place: Montgomery, Montgomery, Alabama
Cemetery Name: Lincoln
Death Age: 26
Race: Black
Marital status: Married
Gender: Male
Street Address: 10 Miles Lower Wetumpka Road
Residence: 60...OK St
Father Name: Robert Phifer
FHL Film Number: 1908212⁴

Name: Sallie Jackson
Gender: Female
Age: 22
Birth Date: abt 1897
Marriage Date: 20 Jan 1919
Marriage Place: Montgomery, Alabama, USA
Spouse: Relius Phifer
Film Number: 001535178⁵

Name: Sallie Fiffer [Sallie Jackson]
Birth Date: abt 1902
Death Date: 30 Nov 1937
Death Place: Birmingham, Jefferson, Alabama
Death Age: 35
Marital Status: Female
Father Name: Hamp Jackson
Mother Name: Vinia
Spouse Name: Relius Fifer
FHL Film Number: 1908559⁶

⁴ *Alabama, Deaths and Burials Index, 1881-1852*, Film Number 1908212, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019). These are several alternate spellings of the Fifer name. It is assumed that the correct spelling appears on Fifer's military record.

⁵ *Alabama, County Marriage Records, 1805-1967*, Film Number 001535178, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019).

⁶ *Alabama, Deaths and Burials Index, 1881-1974*, Film Number 1908559, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019). It is more likely that Sallie Jackson was born in 1897. The earlier birth date would place her death age at forty.

4. Robert and Annie Crosky

On September 14, 1918, Robert Crosky married Annie Effrige. Although she was much younger than Crosky, they seemed to be well-matched. They were both literate and shared close ties with their families. Crosky's induction into the military gave them the financial means to set up their own separate household.

Name: Annie Effrige
 Gender: Female
 Age: 21
 Birth Date: abt 1897
 Marriage Date: 14 Sep 1918
 Marriage Place: Montgomery, Alabama USA
 Spouse: Robert Crosky
 Film Number: 001535178⁷

Name: Robert Crosky
 Birth Date: abt 1891
 Death Date: 29 Sept 1919
 Cemetery Name: Oakwood
 Death Age: 28
 Race: Black
 Marital Status: Married
 Gender: Male
 Street Address: Miles Lower Met...Road
 Residence: 65 S Hall St
 FHL Film Number: 1908212⁸

<p>Name: Robert Crosky Age in 1910: 19 Birth Year: 1891 Birthplace: Alabama Home in 1910: Montgomery Ward 2, Montgomery, Alabama Street: Columbia Ave. Race: Black Gender: Male Relation to Head of House: Son Marital Status: Single Father's Birthplace: Alabama Mother's Name: Eliza Crosky Native Tongue: English Occupation: Brickmason Industry: House Employer, Employee, or Other: Wage Earner Attended School: No Able to Read: Yes Able to Write: Yes Out of Work: N Number of Weeks Out of Work: 15</p>	<p>Household Members Eliza Crosky, Age 51 Lula Chillus, Age 34 Carrie Hooper, Age 31 Robert Crosky, Age 19 Joseph Chillus, Age 18 Henry Chillus, Age 17 Charlie Crosky, Age 17 Lula Chillus, Age 9 Hillery Craig, Age 5 Anna Eliza Chillus, Age 3⁹</p>
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⁷ *Alabama, County Marriage Records, 1805-1967*, Film Number 001535178, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019).

⁸ *Alabama, Deaths and Burials Index, 1881-1974*, Film Number 1908212, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019). The listed age for Crosky is incorrect. He would have been thirty-five years old at the time of his death.

⁹ *1910 United States Federal Census*, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019).

5. Details of the Lynching Incident

Published in a mainstream city paper. Fifer and Crosky were assumed guilty because they were African-American veterans. When Fifer wore his military uniform in public, marking his manhood, citizenship, and patriotism, this was an affront to the local whites' sense of racial superiority. (Italics are mine.)

Three Negroes Lynched in Montgomery in 12 Hours.

Two Taken from the Deputies – One Shot in the Hospital.

CULMINATION OF ATTACKS.

(The Associated Press)...

Late yesterday Miles Phifer and Robert Crosky, accused of attacking white women, were lynched a short distance from the city.

Montgomery, Sept. 30. – Within a stone's throw of the state convict farm where negro prisoners were being worked by guards, Relious Phifer and Robert Croskey, negro ex-soldiers, were taken from three deputies by a small band of masked men and lynched at 4 o'clock Monday afternoon about four miles from Montgomery. Crosky lived about fifteen times [minutes,] was severely bruised by clubbing while held by the mob members.

He was treated at an infirmary, and died at the county jail, to which place he was removed when a report was circulated the mob was headed for the hospital last night.

Phiifer was dressed in the regulation uniform of the United States army.

Thirty minutes after the mob disbanded Crosky was taken to a hospital for treatment, but the name of the hospital was kept secret as the report was circulated the mob would take him from the operating room to complete the job.

The lynching and shooting was the culmination of a series of attacks negroes have made on white women in Montgomery in the past month. Phifer assaulted a white girl about a month ago, according to a confession he made from the witness chair in the Montgomery circuit court on Monday, when he was arraigned after being brought from the county jail at Mobile at 2 o'clock in the morning.

Makes Confession.

Crosky, whose body was riddled with bullets and whose skull was fractured by the mob, also is said to have confessed to attacking an aged white woman a month ago.

Montgomery never before has witnessed such sensational happenings as those of the past week, when a telephone operator was attacked as she went to her work. The negro who is alleged to have attacked her is now said to be in the penitentiary for safe keeping. Street corner indignation meetings were held during the week and the newspapers received many calls from persons claiming to know that "there would be a lynching or two during the night."

Phifer and Crosky were arr[a]igned in court Monday. Twenty special deputies guarded the courtroom while the trial was in progress. At 3:30 o'clock, when it was announced the negroes would be held for section by the grand jury, Governor Kilby was asked over the telephone what should be done with them.

Deputies Hear Shots

He is said to have advised that they be taken to the penitentiary, about 12 miles from Montgomery. Deputies were carrying out the instructions of the chief executive when the masked band, at the point of pistols and shotguns, demanded the negroes. While the deputies were covered with the guns other members of the masked band dragged the negroes into a ravine about 100 feet away. The deputies could hear the pistol shots and the disorder as the mob clubbed the negroes with pieces of wood.

The negroes were in the charge of Deputies Keating, Rizzie and Tucker, in an automobile. Deputy Tucker has been protecting the discharged soldiers for a week, having spirited them away from Montgomery to the Mobile jail, returning with them at 3 o'clock Monday morning.

Phifer was dressed in the full uniform of the army. He is said to have served overseas. Crosky recently was released from service, having been in a training camp in the north.

Reports that a mob would stop the deputies came to the newspaper offices 15 minutes after the automobile, with the prisoners, left the courthouse. The newspaper men reached the scene shortly after the mob disbanded.

Scores Visit Scene

Within 30 minutes the report was circulated over the city and scores of automobiles were soon on the road leading to the scene, only a few miles from the city.

Crosky was taken in an automobile to a Montgomery hospital for treatment. He was shot through the head and other parts of the body. He regained consciousness long enough to ask that his shoes be taken off, saying he did not wish to die with them on.

Before the body of Phifer had been taken from the ravine where the lynching occurred, a coroner's jury, hurriedly organized in Montgomery, found he had come to death by being shot and clubbed by persons unidentified.

Frightened negroes living on the road leading to the penitentiary stopped their work in the corn fields, barricaded the doors to their homes, and during the early hours of the night they went to their homes, fearing other trouble would break out.

*During the past month four white women in Montgomery have been attacked, and in one case, it is alleged a negro ex-soldier was the guilty person.*¹⁰

6. Black Press Challenges Pro-Lynching Rhetoric of Government Officials

Published in an African-American newspaper in Savannah, Georgia, the article condemned local and federal officials who advocated lynching African Americans as a punishment for crimes.

The Mob Unlashed

Like a span of horses, once they grip the bits between their teeth, the American mob is running wild throughout the country. Last week and this Negroes were taken out of the hands of the law and the courts and lynched. In Alabama, three were taken from officers on the highway; In Jacksonville, the mob went into the jail and took two out and lynched them. (1 rumor says the men were dead before they left their cells); In Omaha, the jail was set on fire, the sheriff beaten, the mayor strung up until unconscious, and a Negro taken and lynched.

Like wildfire, the mob spirit is spreading over the land, devouring and consuming the civilization. The fake cry of "Assault" only, is necessary to defend and justify.

Governors, Senators and Congressmen make this pretext a justification for lawlessness and lynching.

John Sharp Williams of Mississippi cries out in the United States Congress that "protection to womanhood is higher than any law, human or divine," and further that he (in spite of his oath) would deliver up a victim to the mob.

U.S. Senator Borah, of Idaho, replies to the champion of lawlessness,

"If lynchings were confined, the Idaho Senator contended, to those incidents mentioned by the Senator from Mississippi, the human race might be disposed to pass them by on that reason.

"But the disease spreads, and men are lynched for the most trivial causes he added. "The record shows 218 Negroes lost their lives the first year of the war, a time when Negro boys were giving their lives to the republic and displaying great heroism overseas. There was intimation that they had been guilty of the particular crime on which men seek to justify lynching.

¹⁰ *The Tuscaloosa News and Times-Gazette*, "Three Negroes Lynched in Montgomery in 12 hours," (September 30, 1919), in Newspapers.com, <https://www.newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/323345472> (accessed on October 31, 2019).

“I want to say, considering the ultimate welfare of the human family there can be no justification for the lynching of any persons, and the man who preaches it is sowing the wind that reaps the whirlwind, no matter how black the skin of the victim may be. If the republic does not protect the lives of its people the seeds are planted that ultimately will lead to its disintegration.

Russia looks on with supreme delight. Germany is chuckling with glee. All Europe is doubtless interested.¹¹

¹¹ *The Savannah Tribune*, “The Mob Unlashed,” (October 4, 1919), in African American Newspapers, series 1, <https://www.iw-newsbank-com.libdata.lib.ua.edu> (accessed on October 29, 2019).

7. Governor Pressured to Prosecute Lynch Mob

Extracted from a mainstream city newspaper, the first article provides the grand jury's request to have Fifer's and Crosky's murder cases closed. The second document is a letter written to Alabama Governor informing him about the first successful prosecution of a white mob involved in a separate lynching incident.

No Indictment is Returned in Lynching Case

No Evidence Against Montgomery Lynchers Found By Grand Jury.

Montgomery, Ala., Oct. 4 – (Special.) – The final chapter in the lynching of three negroes in Montgomery last Monday and Tuesday was written Friday when members of the special grand jury were discharged from further consideration of the cases after they had reported to Judge McCord of the Circuit court they could find no evidence to justify indictments...

The report of the special grand jury was brief. It follows:

“The grand jury organized and empaneled on the second day of October, 1919, have compiled with Your Honor's charge which was thorough and complete in every respect.

“We have examined diligently and carefully every witness brought us and we have worked with the sole idea of ascertaining some information that would establish the identity of the parties engaged in the killing of Robert Crosky, Reidous Phifer and also the negro, Will Temple, at Hale's Infirmary.

“We beg to report that we can secure no information whatever to establish the identity of any of the parties engaged in these killings.

“We, therefore, ask to be discharged.

“F.G. SALTER, Foreman.”¹²

State of Alabama, Office of Attorney General, Montgomery

J.O. Smith, Attorney General, Lawrence E. Brown, Richard Evans, Horace C. Wilkinson, Assistant Attorneys General

July 22d, 1919.

Hon. Thomas E. Kilby, Governor, Capitol.

Dear Sir:--

I beg leave to hand you, herewith, a full and complete report submitted to this office by Hon. Horace C. Wilkinson, Assistant Attorney General, who was assigned by me to take charge and prosecute members of the mob who shot Frank Foukel to death in the Baldwin County jail at Minette, Alabama on the night of June 22d, 1919.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for these most valuable services rendered to the State of Alabama by Mr. Wilkinson in carrying out this assignment of duty.

This is the only case of its kind in the United States where every single member of the mob has been apprehended and punished, all within the space of thirty days after the commission of said crime.

These prosecutions and convictions should be an object lesson to all future mobs in Alabama, and I assure you that all such cases in the future will be speedily and diligently prosecuted by this Department.

JOS/F. Very truly,

J.O. Smith

Attorney General¹³

¹² *The Anniston Star*, “No Indictment is Returned in Lynching Case,” (October 1, 1919), in Newspapers.com, <https://www.newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/101480315> (accessed on October 29, 2019).

¹³ Letter from J.O. Smith to Thomas E. Kilby, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Alabama Governor (1919-1923: Kilby) administrative files, SG031372, R021.

8. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice

The lengthwise photo below of the pillar memorializes Relious Fifer and Robert Crosky as lynching victims. There are alternate spellings of the victims' last names listed. Miles was either a nickname or middle name of Relious Fifer.

TRANSCRIPTIONS--Picture 1: [Text] Montgomery County Alabama. Ike Cook 08.10.1890; Oliver Jackson 03.29.1896; Robert Williams 02.15.1896; John Dell 10.07.1910; Harry Russell 08.18.1915; Kit Jackson 08.18.1915; Miles Phifer 09.29.1919; Robert Croskey 09.29.1919; John Temple 09.30.1919; Wilbur Smith 03.11.1920; Grant Cole 12.16.1925; Otis Parham 06.17.1934. Picture 2:[Text] Monument Park. In this park rest duplicate monuments for each county in America where a racial terror lynching occurred. The Equal Justice Initiative is inviting counties across the country to claim their monument and erect it within the county represented. Acknowledging our collective history must be both national and local. Eventually, we hope these monuments will change the landscape of America to more honestly reflect our history. Picture 3: [Text] Montgomery County Alabama.



Collage of Photos Taken at Monument Park, Montgomery, Alabama, on November 23, 2019.

ⁱ Jennie Lightweis-Goff, *Blood at the Root: Lynching as American Cultural Nucleus* (New York: State University of New York, 2011), 10; *Crisis*, “The Lynching Industry, 1919,” (February 1, 1920), in African American Periodicals, 1825-1995, <https://www.iw-newsbank-com.libdata.lib.ua.edu>; Equal Justice Initiative, <https://www.eji.org/videos> (accessed December 5, 2019); Amy Louise Wood, “Lynching Photography and the Visual Reproduction of White Supremacy” in *Lynching Reconsidered: New Perspectives in the Study of Mob Violence*, ed., William D. Carrigan (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 147-173.

ⁱⁱ Carole Emberton, “The Freedwoman’s Tale: Reconstruction Remembered in the Federal Writers’ Project Ex-Slave Narratives” in *Remembering Reconstruction: Struggles over the Meaning of America’s Most Turbulent Era* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017), 128-131; Mihir Zaveri, “Senate Passes Bill Making Lynching a Federal Crime” (December 20, 2018), in *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com>, (accessed on December 10, 2019).

ⁱⁱⁱ Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 225-231; Equal Justice Initiative, *Lynching in America: Targeting Black Veterans*, <https://www.eji.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/lynching-in-america-targeting-black-veterans-web.pdf> (accessed on November 14, 2019); *The Anniston Star*, “No Indictment is Returned in Lynching Case” (October 1, 1919), in Newspapers.com, <https://www.newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/101480315> (accessed on October 29, 2019). The murders of Fifer and Crosky coincided with the rising tide in racial violence during ‘The Red Summer of 1919.’ Black veterans represented the “New Negro,” who was combat ready, literate, unfit for farm work, and experienced in interracial sexual relations. The heightened visibility of black soldiers, who were returning from WWI, allowed for the wider dissemination of ‘black beast rapist’ myth. The rape of a white woman by a black man was typical of the type of false allegations lodged against black men during this period.

^{iv} *WWI Draft Registration Cards*, Pub. No. M1509, Fold3 Job No. 16-021, NARA Catalog Id 572850, in Fold3, <https://www.fold3.com/image/547839109?terms=250,relious,fifer> (accessed on October 31, 2019); “J. Lawrence Lee, “Alabama Road, National Park Service, in *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2390.

^v Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 141; *Alabama, Deaths and Burials Index, 1881-1852*, Film Number 1908212, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019); Maggie Martin, “Uncovering Secrets Buried At a Neglected Cemetery,” (August 9, 2012) in *NPR*, <https://www.npr.org/2012/08/09/158428314/uncovering-secrets-buried-at-a-neglected-cemetery> (accessed on December 11, 2019); *US City Directories, 1822-1995*, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 6, 2019). These city directories cover Sallie Fifer’s work history for the years 1934, 1935, and 1937.

^{vi} *1880 United States Federal Census*, Roll 26, Page 94C, Enumeration District 127, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on November 19, 2019); *1910 United States Federal Census*, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 5, 2019).

^{vii} Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 40; *WWI Draft Registration Cards*, Pub. No. M1509, Fold3 Job No. 16-021, NARA Catalog Id 572850, in Fold3, <https://fold3.com/image/547839109?terms=crosky,250,robert> (accessed on October 31, 2019); *1920 United States Federal Census*, Roll: T625_37, Page 35B, Enumeration District 133, in Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/inst/discoveries> (accessed on December 6, 2019); Teri Greene, “Oakwood Cemetery: Tales to Be Told,” (March 10, 2014) in *Montgomery Advertiser*, <https://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/story/news/local/2014/03/10/oakwood-cemetery-tales-to-be-told/6249027/> (accessed on December 11, 2019). Although the birth date listed is a bit too early, the other details match Annie Croskey’s vital statistics.

^{viii} Jesse Remedios, “Honoring Alexandria’s Two Lynching Victims,” (January 8, 2019), in Weta, <https://www.blogs.weta.org> (accessed on December 9, 2019).

^{ix} Letter to the Editor, “We need reparations to being making amends,” (June 30, 2019), in *The Washington Post*, <https://www.washingtonpost.com> (accessed on December 9, 2019); Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” (June 2014), in *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com> (accessed on December 9, 2019).