



ARTIST'S SKETCH OF OLD RUSSELL COUNTY LYNCHING
A. Franco Depicts Chestnut-Tree Hanging of George Lore

No More Chestnuts April 8, 1956

Legend of Lore's Tree Based on Old Lynching

BY LEWY DORMAN
Ledger-Enquirer Correspondent, Hurtsboro

In the Old Spring Hill community of Barbour County there stood before the Civil War a huge chestnut tree which the old folks spoke of as "Lore's Chestnut Tree."

Lore's Chestnut Tree was a famous landmark. It owed its name and fame to the fact that a man named George W. Lore had been hanged from one of its limbs and to the persistent tradition that it never again bore a chestnut after being used as a gallows.

The story begins some months before the lynching of Lore when Henry Blake, a youth not yet 19 years of age, set out on horseback from Glennville, Ala., to return to his home in the state of Mississippi. Blake had been born in Glennville and carried by his parents to Mississippi years before when they migrated to that state. He had returned to visit relatives in Glennville.

SOME DAYS after Blake's departure from Glennville the dead body of a white man was found by a Negro woman a short distance from the road leading from Glennville to Old Spring Hill. The body was lying at the edge of a pit or sink formed by the uprooting of a large oak tree. It was half-submerged in water.

The woman, a slave, reported the find to her master who came to the scene. He found a copy of a newspaper, The Columbus Enquirer, lying near the body and the name of Julius C. B. Mitchell written on the paper. Mitchell was a prominent planter and lawyer of Glennville. He was the uncle of Henry Blake, and it was from his home that Blake had departed the morning of Feb. 9. The newspaper had been used to wrap a lunch which had been prepared for him.

state and that he was the tool of Northern abolitionists who sent him into the county to help slaves escape from their masters. There were whispers that he was meddling with the slaves to encourage them to rise against their white owners.

THE PEOPLE of the community became convinced that Lore had murdered Blake. He was arrested by a posse and held in an improvised jail at Glennville to await the sheriff of Barbour County to be carried to jail at Clayton. A mob was formed to lynch him, but M. M. Glenn and Professor Taylor, a teacher in the Glennville Academy, appealed to the angry men and prevented the deed. Lore was indicted for murder by the grand jury of the next circuit court which met at

(Please See 'LEGEND,' C-10)

IT IS SAID THAT
LOVETT S. SMITH
WAS A "WITNESS"
IN THIS CASE.
WHETHER HE WAS
A WITNESS IN THE
TRIAL OR A WITNESS
TO THE HANGING
HAS NOT BEEN DE-
TERMINED.
HE MAY HAVE BEEN
THE PLANTER WHOSE
SLAVE FOUND THE BODY
AND WHO SENT A
MESSENGER TO
GLENNVILLE TO IN-
FORM THE VICTIM'S
UNCLE.

THE PLANTER sent a messenger to inform Mitchell, 14 miles distant, who came and identified the body as being that of his nephew.

Blake's head was badly torn by gun shot. There was no doubt that it was murder. The whole community became greatly excited. There was no apparent motive for the murder and no clues. Then rumors began. Blake had been seen riding along the road in the company of Lore. Evidence, what there was of it, was only circumstantial and was furnished mostly by Negro slaves.

Lore was something of a mystery man in the Old Spring Hill community. He had settled on a farm there and did not talk to his neighbors about his past life. There were rumors that he had once lived in a Northern

DATE OF MURDER - FEB 9 1841
 DATE OF HANGING - NOV. 2 1842
 DATE OF THIS NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
 BY DR. LEWY DORMAN APR 8 1956

in China of missionary parents. Stuart remained in China to be- come president of Yenching Uni- versity, in Peking, and later Uni- ted States ambassador to China. My fellow student and intimate friend, the late James Livingston Stew- art, was formerly vice president of West China University. His novel, "The Laughing Bud- dha," is a deeply sympathetic story of China in transition. A Gold Medalist in philosophy of the University of Toronto, he was the author of a notable book, "Chi- nese Culture and Christianity." Such notable services are not lost to God. All devotion has its own reward. But it is a prayer- ful hope that this heritage shall not be lost to man and to China and its millions. One may well wonder whether that which is built on faith and courage is ever lost. It is not in- conceivable that in the vastness of China there might come a trans- formation as remarkable in a pos- sible way as the transformation of

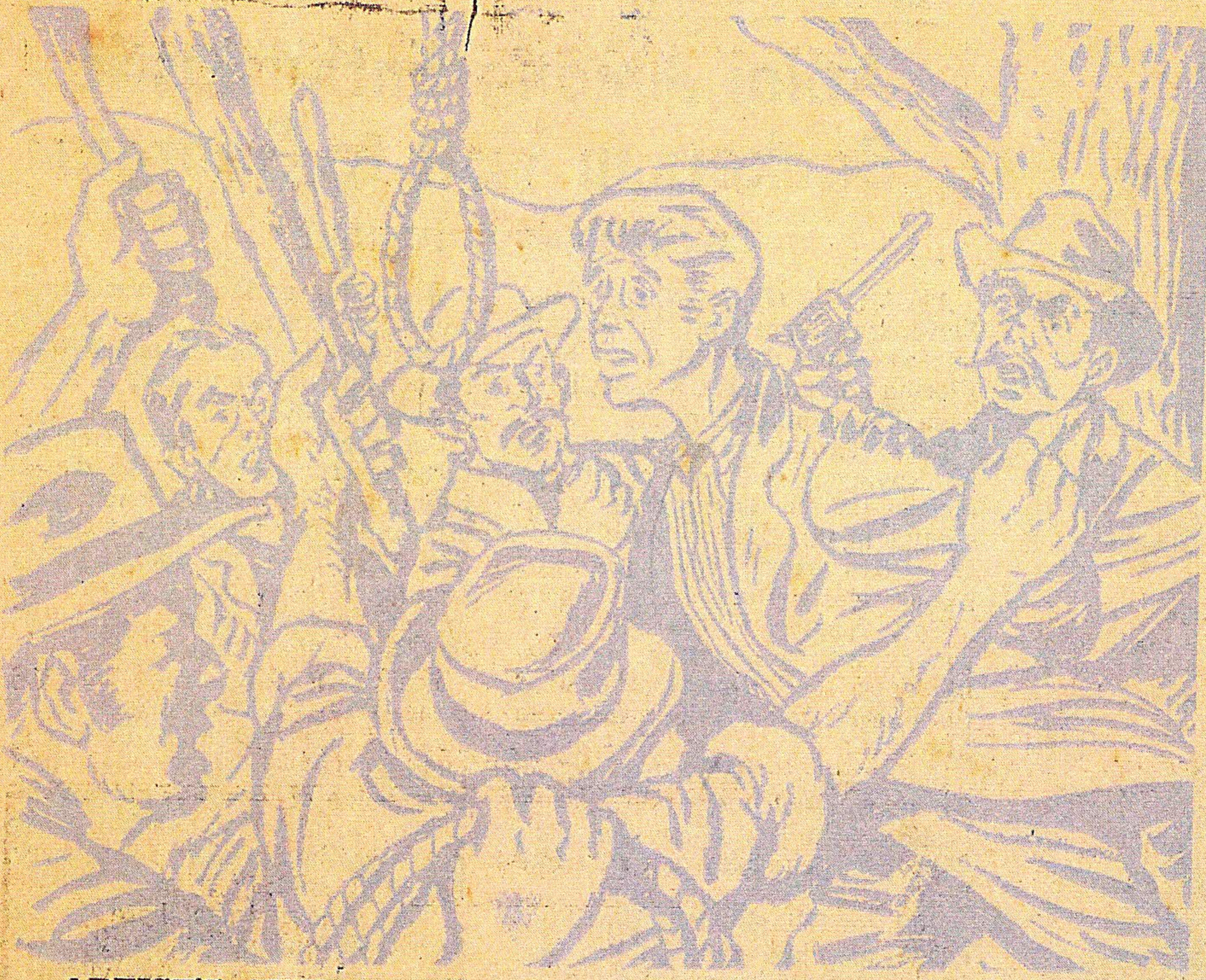


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