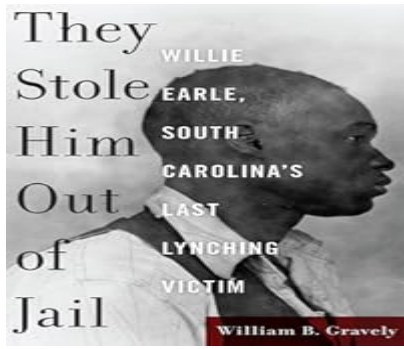


They Stole Him Out of Jail: Willie Earle, South Carolinas Last Lynching Victim By William B. Gravelly

The most comprehensive account of the horrific Earle lynching Before daybreak on February 17 1947 twenty-four-year-old Willie Earle an African American man arrested for the murder of a Greenville South Carolina taxi driver named T. Among his sources are contemporary press accounts (there was no trial transcript) extensive interviews and archival documents and the “Greenville notebook” kept by Rebecca West the well-known British writer who covered the trial for the New Yorker magazine. Although the verdict was in many ways a victory for white supremacy during the waning years of Jim Crow it still drew unprecedented public attention to the horrors of lynching and no similar event has occurred in the state since. Yet more than seventy years later the crisis in criminal justice — especially as it pertains to African Americans who are incarcerated at far higher rates than whites — remains a national challenge. I would recommend this book to those who would like to know more about South Carolina’s lynching history how biased the whole system has been against African Americans and what they can do to right these wrongs, Brown was abducted from his jail cell by a mob and then beaten stabbed and shot to death, An investigation produced thirty-one suspects most of them cabbies seeking revenge for one of their own, The police and FBI obtained twenty-six confessions but after a nine-day trial in May that attracted national press attention the defendants were acquitted by an all-white jury: Gravelly presents the most comprehensive account of the Earle lynching ever written exploring it from background to aftermath and from multiple perspectives, Gravelly meticulously re-creates the case’s details analyzing the flaws in the investigation and prosecution that led in part to the acquittals. Vivid portraits emerge of key figures in the story including both Earle and Brown Solicitor Robert T. Ashmore Governor Strom Thurmond and West whose article “Opera in Greenville” is masterful journalism but marred by errors owing to her short stay in the area. Gravelly also probes problems with memory that resulted in varying interpretations of Willie Earle’s character and conflicting narratives about the lynching itself: This book is a compelling reminder not only of past traumas but of how far South Carolina and the country has yet to go, They Stole Him Out of Jail: Willie Earle South Carolinas Last Lynching Victim This is a very deep book about a troubling subject: I think anyone who has lived in the South should read this book, Prepare to be ashamed of our past but we can learn from it and move forward, So much of it is just disgusting and made me nauseous sick to my stomach, The first few pages alone are filled with story after story of the horrible racial hate crimes that happened not so long ago in South Carolina. When you learn ‘SC History’ they don’t tell you any of this: Willie Earle died at the hands of a white mob on February 16 1947: They stole him out of Pickens jail beat mutilated and shot him. This happened in Greenville in 1947! This year Rand Paul held up the vote to pass a nationwide anti-lynching law. [#BlackLivesMatter](#) English This was a very educational read on part of South Carolina’s history of race relations. However I did not enjoy the style of writing so much as I felt the author jumped around quite a bit and added unnecessary fluff to the telling. Gravelly professor emeritus at the University of Denver is the author of *Gilbert Haven Methodist Abolitionist* as well as numerous articles on religion and social change: He is a native of Pickens County South Carolina where the murder of T. Brown occurred and where Willie Earle was jailed before his abduction. W. In *They Stole Him Out of Jail* William B. English This book was hard to read but necessary. This book tells the story of the last lynching in SC. All 31 defendants were acquitted everyone involved was white. and segregationist Strom Thurmond was governor. America you have so very far to go. English



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