

Boyd, William

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Desperate Riot

Brutal Assault upon Negroes by Soldiers!!

Houses Quitted and Property Destroyed!!

Dr. Wm. Boyd Assailed and Terribly Injured by the Rioters!!

Between 11 and 12 o'clock today a desperate disturbance occurred in the shape of a murderous assault by a number of soldiers said to belong to one of the brigades of the 20th corps upon a number of inoffending colored people of the Seventh Ward. From the best data that can be obtained, it appears that this brigade were this morning on the east side of the canal between the bridges of Maryland and Virginia avenues, awaiting a conveyance train en route to Louisville, and that during the morning a number of the men visited the disreputable houses and tippling houses (occupied by white and colored) in Pear Tree Alley and adjacent places, where they indiscriminately attacked the inmates, driving them from their houses, breaking up their furniture, and helping themselves to liquor and edibles. The crowd numbered from 150 to 200 and they commenced to knock in the doors of houses as they proceeded in their riotous course, some twenty or more having provided themselves with axes, breaking up the furniture, etc.

In Chinch Row, situated in the square between 1st and 2d streets and Virginia avenue and D street, every door and window was broken, the terrified inmates barely getting away in time to save themselves. The rioters showed particular animosity against the colored people, and the sight of one of them was the signal for a rush at him, and when unfortunately any fell into their hands they did not escape without being robbed of what money they had, and they were besides badly beaten in almost every case. This crowd went through 2d and 3d streets, taking in their range the alleys near by, beating all colored folks they met and helping themselves to what they wished in the houses, particularly those occupied by people of color, who, at last having borne with their treatment until forbearances ceased to be a virtue, they resisted, when a fight occurred, the soldiers using revolvers as also did the colored people in self defense, for a time the reports being so quick that they sounded as if a battle was going on.

The soldiers stopped at the saloon of Ben Bowzer, colored, at the corner of Virginia avenue and 1st street, and while some of them robbed him of his watch and money and beat him, others helped themselves to his ice cream, cakes, etc. Here it was that the biggest fight took place, a number of the negroes going to the protection of Bowzer, and bricks, stones and balls flew thick and fast.

Dr. Wm. Boyd, living near, went out with a revolver in hand, and commanded peace, when a soldier struck him in the face with a brick, fracturing the cheek and jaw bones in a terrible manner, and also destroying the sight of one eye. Others of the soldiers made a rush for him, and one was in the act of cleaving his head open with an ax, when a number of women stepped in and succeeded in persuading them to spare his life.

The soldiers and the colored people fought for some time in F street, first one party being victorious and then the other until the guard stationed on 4 1/2 street (Hancock's 5th regiment) made their appearance, and soon restored order.

Sergeant Hepburn, of the tenth precinct police, was on the ground promptly with officers Weeden, Walsh, and others, but they were unable, outnumbered as they were, to do anything effectual to restore peace.

A messenger was at once dispatched to Col. Ingraham, Provost Marshal, who promptly sent a guard to the scene of the disturbance, and set about arresting the rioters.

It is impossible at this time to tell how many and who have been injured besides Dr. Boyd.

It is said that one of the soldiers had his bowels ripped open and that two or three others were shot. It is also reported that 7 or 8 colored people who were attacked in their houses were very badly hurt.

Dr. C.M. McCoy was in attendance on Dr. Boyd, and expresses the opinion that it may be necessary to remove most of the bones on the injured side of the face.

The Evening Star, June 12, 1865

The Riot on Saturday

On Saturday afternoon, the force of Veteran Reserves, under the command of Captain Bush, which was dispatched to the scene of the riotous proceedings in the Seventh Ward by Col. Ingraham, Provost Marshal, at the request of Superintendent Richards, aided by a detachment of Hancock's 5th regiment and the police of the tenth precinct, in charge of Sergeant Hepburn, succeeded in restoring quiet. A strong guard was posted throughout that section of the city, and all soldiers without passes or other authority were arrested or taken to their camps. The place, when the guard arrived, was filled with loitering gangs of soldiers, some of whom gave the guards to understand that they intended to clean and burn out Pear Tree, Fighting and other noted alleys in that locality that night, but the transportation being ready for them before night, they left, and thus any renewal of the disturbance was avoided.

Capt. Bush, with the reserves, and Sergt. Hepburn, with the police, while taking measures to prevent a repetition of the disorderly scenes, made an investigation as to the origin of the affair in the morning. It is alleged that it originated from some of the prostitutes of that locality blackguarding some soldiers, who becoming enraged attacked the houses, drove out the inmates and smashed up the furniture. The disturbance would have perhaps stopped here, but for the instigation of some of the notorious "bummers," of Georgia renown, who joined the soldiers and pointed out to them the houses of the colored people as objects to be attacked, and forthwith all such were broken into and pillaged. The names of some of these parties are in the possession of the police and the officers will bring them up to answer for their rascally deeds.

During the afternoon officers Weeden, Sessford, James, Barker, and Wallingsford, aided by the military, arrested the following persons and took them to the station where yesterday Justice Roswell disposed of their cases: Mary Jane Taylor, Till Light, Cornelia Tyler, Caroline Snyder, and Julia Fleet, keepers of the notorious ranches; jail for a hearing. Margaret Kennedy, Sarah Stephens, Kate Light, Maria Woodbeck, Mary Whitaker, Ellen Geissett, Mary J. Carr, Susan Richardson, Sarah Brown, Mary Stephens, drunk and disorderly; fined \$10.90 each. Ellen Kavanaugh, Jenny Lee, Margaret Russell, Nelly Kittier, and Jane Clark, do.; fined \$6.90 each. While at the station Maria Woodbeck required the services of a mid-wife, and during the night she gave birth to a stillborn child.

Dr. Boyd, whose injuries we noticed on Saturday, lies in a critical condition, there being but little hopes

of his recovery, and yesterday, anticipating his death, he took an affecting leave of his family. There are none others very seriously injured in the row, although a number were bruised by stones etc.