

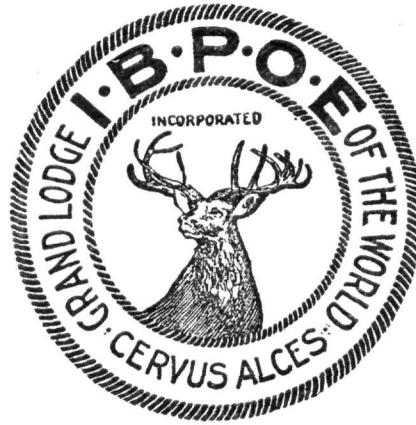
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OFFICE OF
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
907 YOU STREET, N. W.
TELEPHONE NORTH 1686
WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 8, 1931.

Hon. Albert B. Ritchie,
Governor of Maryland,
Annapolis, Md.

Dear Sir:

At the direction of J. Finley Wilson, grand exalted ruler of this organization I went to Salisbury, Md. last Sunday to investigate the lynching of Matthew Williams on December 4th.

It was brought to my attention that Williams was feeble-minded and had, prior to his alleged shooting of Mr. Elliott, been a peaceable, hard working man.

The lynching and burning of Williams by the mob placed a blot on the fair name of Maryland placing her in a class of such lawless states as Mississippi, Georgia, Florida and others of the south where human life is held cheaply. I know mob law in your state is repugnant to you and I am calling on you in the name of the 250,000 members of this organization to use all the power of your great office to bring the criminals who were engaged in the lynching of Williams to justice. My visit to Salisbury disclosed that the sheriff, the chief of police and the superintendent of the hospital, where Williams was placed as a patient, must certainly know the leaders of the mob that lynched and burned Williams. If the States Attorney at Salisbury exercises ordinary diligence he should be able to bring the leaders of the mob to justice.

Knowing your high regard for law and order we feel that you will do all in your power to see that the lawless mob is punished in such manner as will act as a deterrent in the future.

Yours respectfully,

Robert J. Nelson
Executive Director.