



FACTS NOT TOLD IN the BIG MEDIA\$\$\$
Sheriff Willis V. McCall and the 'Groveland Four' 1949



Ormund Powers was the 'Orlando Sentinel' newspaper's first bureau chief in Lake County, who set up operations there in 1935. Powers thoroughly covered the 'Groveland Four Rape Case of 1949' that occurred in Lake County, Florida. He stayed on with the 'Orlando Sentinel' for 45 years.

As appeared in the 'Tampa Bay Times', on January 11, 2019

Ormund Powers wrote fondly of McCall. In a November 1951 column, Powers had this to say: "Knowing McCall as long as we have, and watching his face as he testified about the Shepherd-Irvin matter before the coroner's jury, we have no doubt he was telling the truth when he said the Negroes attacked him and he shot in self defense."

Article by Ormund Powers

(Ormund Powers was Sentinel bureau chief in Lake County and covered the celebrated 1949 Groveland rape case which made Willis McCall a highly controversial national figure.)

In 1944, Willis V. McCall of Umatilla, an obscure citrus fruit inspector who had begun life as a dairyman, ran for sheriff of Lake County and won.

The first few years of his term were uneventful except that he cleaned up the slot machine racket and kicked out the punchboards.

Then, in the early morning hours of a hot July night in 1949, a 17-year-old blonde housewife from Bay Lake, near Groveland, was kidnapped and raped by four blacks.

She and her husband were returning from a dance at Leesburg when their car stalled beyond Okahumpka. A carload of men stopped. One of them hit the husband with a club, left him in a ditch and kidnapped the girl.

The girl was taken to a grove of moss-laden oak trees near the Sumter County line, raped repeatedly and kicked out of the car. She was found the next morning crouched along the highway.

McCall's quiet world exploded. Four men were implicated. Their names were Samuel Shepherd, Walter Lee Irvin, Ernest Thomas and Charles Greenlee.



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Per Norma Lee Padgett, a blonde-hair, blue eye, 17 year old housewife, it was Ernest Thomas (age 26) who held a gun to her head and raped her first. Later Charles Greenlee (age 16) was picked up on gun charges. The gun Greenlee had in his possession belonged to Ernest Thomas. That's how they connected him to the rape crime.

Sam Shepherd and Walter Irvin (who were recently discharged from the Army - dishonorably) were charged with the rape of Norma Lee Padgett and were in the custody of Sheriff Willis V. McCall. A mob of vigilantes was looking to get both Shepherd and Irvin.

Alone, Sheriff McCall confronted the mob as they attacked the black settlement. He used teargas to disperse the group, firing twice into the crowd and ultimately convincing the men to go home. Later he had harsh words for the mob: "I am going to break that up down there. I've played around with them long enough.

Sheriff Willis McCall also had the governor mobilize the county's 75 National Guardsmen to maintain order and protect the few Black families left in Groveland, Mascotte, Bay Lake and Stuckey Still.

But the vigilantes, now in the hundreds, easily outnumbered the militia. The governor sent in more National Guardsmen from Tampa, and Sheriff McCall spread out his manpower to create an impression that the peacekeepers were everywhere. The tactic worked and the KKK-led swarms decided to wait until the militia left. *So, Sheriff McCall bravely saved the lives of Sam & Walter.*

In November 1951, while transferring Irvin and Shepard from Raiford State Prison in north Florida for a pre-trial hearing in Lake County, a widely disputed set of events unfolded. Sheriff McCall and a deputy named Yates were transporting the defendants. The two men were in McCall's car and Yates was in a second vehicle about two miles ahead of McCall, scouting for a possible ambush. Per McCall, he noticed that his front tire was low on air. About this time, Irvin asked to go to relieve himself. McCall said he pulled to the side of the road to let Irvin relieve himself and to check the tire. McCall related this version of the events: "As they got out, Sheppard hit me with a flashlight that was lying on the seat. He told Irvin to get my gun. The lick knocked me down on one knee against the car. That is when I grabbed my gun, a thirty-eight S&W special. I started firing and did not stop until I heard the plunger hitting empty shells."

Walter Irvin's account of the events contradicts physical evidence. For example, there was physical evidence that the men tussled with McCall since fibers from McCall's coat were meshed with fibers from the men's garments, and McCall's fibers were meshed with the clothing the men were wearing. The shots were fired from very close range, contradicting Irvin's account that they were several feet away when



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McCall shot them. Also, some of Sheriff's McCall's hair was found under the screw-cap of the flashlight that he was hit on the head with.

According to witnesses at the scene who had rushed there upon McCall's call, Deputy Yates arrived after many of them had arrived. Yates would have had to shoot Irvin in front of half a dozen or more witnesses, all of them town notables. In addition, ballistic reports show that all of the bullets that struck Irvin came from McCall's gun. The media version on this story almost always states, "McCall attempted to murder them", which is a 100% fallacy.

As reported in the "Evening star" on November 04, 1949,"Media keeps Race relations Intense". {The Executive Board of the Florida Peace Officers' Association, in conference with the Governor yesterday, presented a resolution declaring: "Inflammatory, overzealous and distorted publicity in cases involving the arrest of colored people has caused them as a race to think that, they are being grossly mistreated and persecuted by the white race and the law enforcement profession when such is not the case.'"} }

Sheriff Hahn, of the Florida Sheriff's Assoc said (back in 1952) that the press was taking quotes from Walter White, who was Executive Director of the NAACP and was located over 1,000 miles away from the area. Walter White was always critical of law enforcement no matter what they did, according to Sheriff Charles Hahn. President Truman was getting information direct from Walter White of the NAACP and , of course, then the FBI received orders from Truman.

McCall's autobiography states in conclusion: "I hope now . . . you realize that the original force behind my troubles were caused by the communist influence, which of course, were joined by the natural run of political enemies, along with irresponsible news reporters looking to make a name for him or herself."

CONCLUSION: per ISRAEL COHEN, A RACIAL PROGRAM FOR HE TWENTIETH CENTURY, 1912.

"MUST REALIZE THAT OUR {COMMUNIST} PARTY'S MOST POWERFUL WEAPON IS RACIAL TENSIONS. BY PROPOUNDING INTO THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE DARK RACES THAT FOR CENTURIES THEY HAVE BEEN OPPRESSED BY WHITES, WE CAN MOLD THEM TO THE PROGRAM OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY. IN AMERICA WE WILL AIM FOR SUBTLE VICTORY. WHILE INFLAMING THE NEGRO MINORITY AGAINST THE WHITES, WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO INSTILL IN THE WHITES A GUILT COMPLEX FOR THEIR EXPLOITATION OF THE NEGROS. WE WILL AID THE NEGROES TO RISE IN PROMINENCE IN EVERY WALK OF LIFE, IN THE PROFESSIONS AND IN THE WORLD OF SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT WITH THIS PRESTIGE, THE NEGRO WILL B E ABLE TO INTERMARRY WITH THE WHITES AND BEGIN A PROCESS WHICH WILL DELIVER AMERICA TO OUR CAUSE. "



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"Evening Star", November 04, 1949,
Media keeps Race relations Intense

The 'Executive Board of the Florida Peace Officers Association', in conference with the Governor yesterday, presented a resolution declaring:

"Inflammatory, overzealous and distorted publicity in cases involving the arrest of colored people has caused them as a race to think that, they are being grossly mistreated and persecuted by the white race and the law enforcement profession when such is not the case."

Reporting Criticized.

It said the result is

"that ill feeling and deep-seated resentment of the colored people for the white people is kept at fever pitch and greatly increases the burdens and dangers of law enforcement officers."



Sheriff Hugh Lewis of Suwannee County and Sheriff Willis McCall of Lake County, planning the clearing for the foundation for the first building at the Florida Sheriff's Boy's Ranch. 1957.

SHERIFF McCALL was Founder of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranch.