

In time, of course, with convicts wandering around freely, the villagers began to take notice. One of the first was a lawyer who, presenting himself at the prison to confer with a convict client, was told by a guard, "Just a moment, I'll see if he's in." (He wasn't.) Why, then, during the nearly four years that this happy state of affairs went on, did nobody squeal?

The villagers didn't squeal because, as they explained later, it was none of their business; it was the business of "the magistrates." Besides, they felt sorry for Billa. "He was so *gentil*!" they told me. "He wouldn't hurt a fly." And as for Grainville, they were rather more proud of him than disapproving: he was a local boy making good. Moreover, many of the villagers supplied the prison with produce, fuel and luxuries. If a scandal broke, the prison might be closed down and so would its trade. It was the same with Pont-l'Évêque's lawyers: the convicts were their clients—and their fees.

Surprisingly, Grainville himself quite clearly turned no profit from the whole affair. For all the artistry with which he embellished his fellow prisoners' police records—and a good-conduct notation was as easy to get as a three-day pass—he at no time touched his own. And for all the time he whittled off the others' sentences, he served out his own term to the minute. The blissful satisfaction of having for so long hoodwinked the authorities was evident-

ly enough reward for him. His only regret seems to be that it didn't go on forever.

Why didn't it? The Ministry of Justice, understandably sensitive about the whole affair, is not too definite. But it is known that in January of 1950 Billa was fired and the prison closed down. And in 1952 Georges the Shark, drunk and talkative in a Paris bar, got to bragging about beating a prison sentence in Pont-l'Évêque. A police inspector overheard him, and an investigation finally got under way.

So poor old Billa had to be tried, in October 1955, and condemned to three years for "negligence."* Then, shortly afterward, eight members of the inside gang had to be tried—for "falsification of government documents."

The latter trial was sheer vaudeville, with Grainville, of course, heading the bill. In his role as "philanthropist," as he called himself, he politely elaborated his theories of prison reform for the judge. When the judge accused him of forging Billa's signature more than 300 times, he nodded, smiled his pixie smile and explained blandly, "I have always endeavored to give satisfaction to my employers."

The jury, seven good Normans and true, roared with laughter, and at the trial's end returned a verdict of acquittal. And that night the little village of Pont-l'Évêque celebrated the victory.

*He was amnestied recently as an ex-prisoner of war and a first offender.

The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi

In the long history of man's inhumanity to man, racial conflict has produced some of the most horrible examples of brutality. Consider here the facts of the recent slaying of Emmett Till—facts the jury never heard and no newspaper reader ever saw

Condensed from Look

William Bradford Huie

THIS is the true account of the slaying in Mississippi of a Negro youth named Emmett Till.

Last September in Sumner, Miss., a petit jury found the youth's admitted abductors not guilty of murder. In November, in Greenwood, a grand jury declined to indict them for kidnapping.

Of the murder trial, the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* said: "Evidence necessary for convicting on a murder charge was lacking." But with truth absent, hypocrisy and myth

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have flourished. Now hypocrisy can be exposed, myth dispelled.

CAROLYN Holloway Bryant is 21. She is a small-farmer's daughter who at 17 quit high school to marry a soldier, Roy Bryant, now 24. The couple have two boys, three and two. They operate a store at a crossroads called Money. This community, consisting of a post office, filling station, three stores, a school and a cotton gin, is set in the vast, lonely cotton patch that is the Mississippi Delta.

The Bryants are poor: no car, no TV. They live in the back of the store which Roy's brothers helped set up when he got out of the 82nd Airborne in 1953. They sell "snuff-and-fatback" to Negro field hands on credit. They earn little because,