

Louis Dondino: Case No. 6614.

Case Files. 1921-1923.

Interview with Louis Dondino, February 25, 1922.

State Agent's interview with Louis Dondino- 6614 2-25-22

40 years old, a widower, has one child, a boy, 14 years old living with his parents at Bennett, Wis. Has four brothers, two living at Bennett and one in Detroit, Mich and the other in California. Says he had a good home on a farm with his people, stayed there until about 15 since which time he has worked for others. For some years has worked as a transfer or drayman in Duluth and when this affair occurred he owned and was operating a truck in Duluth.

The crime charged in this case was riot and was in connection with the lynching of 3 colored men in Duluth and of it says he was living in West Duluth and on the evening in question had heard something of this trouble and started from West Duluth to the city with his truck, 6 or 8 others riding with him. Says these other fellows got quite noisy but as they passed different policemen on the street they made no effort to stop them and even when he got as far as 2nd Ave W & Superior he stopped and talked with a police officer but the officer made no effort and did not suggest that they keep away from the mob which had gathered in the vicinity of the police station. When they arrived he says the crowd was so large he could hardly get thru but drove by the station several times. Finally parked his car between Michigan and Superior streets and went up on to Superior street on which the police station is located. There met a friend and they went to the theater. This was about 8:30. Came out once, went back and was there until 10:45. When they again came out the crowd was still gathered about and it was difficult to get thru. His friend went home and he went down on Michigan street watched the crowd, got as far as the jail door and seeing water on the floor turned and came ut and at that time the crowd was very noisy and moving toward Superior st. Claims he followed but got no nearer the men that were hanged than half a block. The hanging was on 2nd Ave E and 4th street. Claims he got only to the alley between these streets. Afterwards walked down the hill with a police officer to his truck, started it and went home. Says there was no premeditation or thought on his part of stirring up any trouble, that he simply allowed himself to be yielded under this excitement. The police attempted to use fire hose on the crowd but this was forcibly taken from them and turned on the officers themselves. It was claimed at the trial that he helped to do this but says he was still in the show house when this occurred. He had just gotten well started in business and was in a fair way to make money, was living with his boy and they had comfortable rooms. Says he still owns the truck and that the Union Match Co with whom he had a contract to do their hauling are still holding their contract open for him. When released wants and expects to return to Duluth where he will again start in where he left off.

This fellow is well spoken of and evidently a man of good habits and stood well in the community where he is known. When released I would expect him to do well.


State Parole Agent.

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