



The Hayneville Story



Inside the Lowndes County Jail, Hayneville, Alabama.

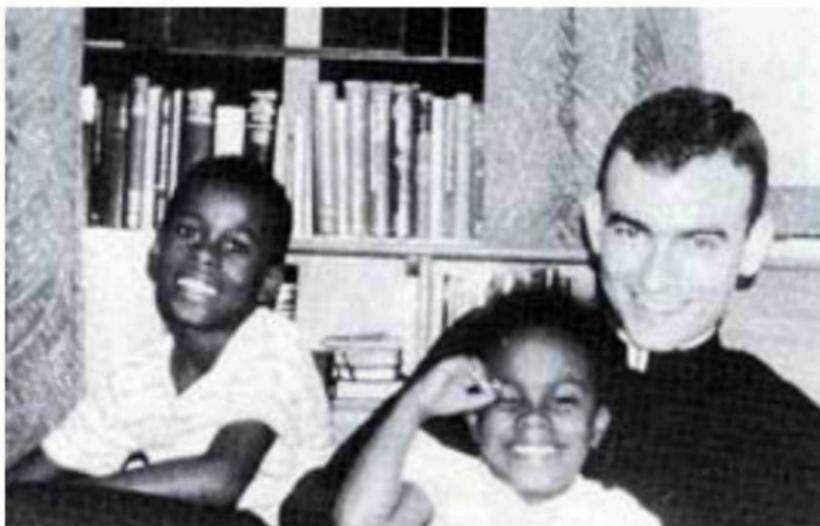
Hayneville, Alabama, the county seat of Lowndes County, Alabama was a hotbed of opposition to voting rights in the early months of 1965. Consequently, Hayneville became a magnet for a variety of progressive activities besides voter registration. The “Freedom School” concept in alternative education was also being exercised in the rural areas of the county.

Voter registration

A confrontation between forces of opposition generally represented by Ku Klux Klan, and those determined to achieve the right to vote for all citizens, became inevitable. On March 1, 1965, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. arrived in Hayneville as part of a four-county mission in support of local voting rights initiatives. In Hayneville that day, thirty-seven African Americans had attempted to register to vote when Dr. King confronted the county registrar, Carl Golson, on the issue of black voter registration. Golson refused to allow the applicants to register at the county jail. Though the voucher requirement for registration was eliminated, only 2 of 17 applicants were registered. Recognizing the need for

more direct action in Lowndes County, residents in support of voting rights formed the Lowndes County Christian Movement on March 19, 1965, with future County Sheriff John Hulett as the first chairman.

The making of a martyr



Jonathan Daniels holds Rachel West who later co-authored *Selma, Lord Selma* with Sheyenne Webb. Daniels often stayed at the West's home when he was in Selma.

Jonathan "Jon" Myrick Daniels, a student at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Mass., participated in the Selma-to-Montgomery march and then returned to school to finish his studies for the year. That summer, he made his way back to Selma to work with the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity. This work led to the fateful day when he was killed in Hayneville, after having spent a week in the Lowndes County Jail for protesting for voting rights, as he placed himself between Ruby Sales and the shotgun of 55-year old Tom Coleman, a state highway engineer and part-time deputy sheriff. Daniels, who died instantly, is a martyr in the Episcopal Church.

Lowndes County African Americans organize for change

During the ensuing campaign for land reform and voter registration for African Americans, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO) was also founded in 1965 by the late Kwame Touré, known then as Stokely Carmichael. This organization adopted as its symbol the "Black Panther." In November 1966, the LCFO sponsored seven African-American candidates for office. Though this slate was unsuccessful, their pioneering effort led to the election of many African Americans in the decades to follow.