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Annotated article by Fleming to Query Editor, Newsweek, 20 September 1962

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NATION (~~the~~ meredith, fourth take): It might have been a typical fall saturday football afternoon on any southern college campus. A bright sun sparkled out of a crystal-blue sky and warmed the crisp fall air.

cigarette-littered
On the asphalt drive-way fronting the red-brick, doric-columned Lyceum on the University of Mississippi campus at Oxford, ~~about~~ students milled about, shouting to each other, reading newspapers, sipping cokes with peanuts in them.

In "The grove" fronting the lyceum, a wide mall of water oaks, pin oaks, ~~magnolias~~ magnolias, ^{and gum trees} and pines, students lolled on the grass talking. Some were holding hands ~~with~~ with their girl-friends. Some were reading "The Mississippian," the college paper.

It was a pep-rally atmosphere. But it was no football afternoon. The students, 1,000 or so strong, were crowded in front of the building awaiting the arrival of James Howard Meredith, the elfin ^{thinly-mustached} Negro air force veteran expected to arrive ~~there~~ become the first negro ever to register at the university.

A little after noon (many of the students had been there all day), a crowd of from ~~200~~ ² 200 to 300 suddenly shouted ~~approval~~ approval when a TV cameraman dropped a piece of equipment onto the pavement. This set the students off. They began singing "Glory, Glory, Segregation," and chanted ^{ing} "Two, four, six, eight, we don't want to integrate." Cheers rang out, and a small knot of the students rushed to the tall ^{Silver} metal flagpole on the mall, began hauling down the american flag. Somebody dragged out a confederate banner, and the students were set to hoist it when the vice president of the student body came along, ~~taked~~ took them out of it.

Then the students returned to their vigil

"I don't don't think the ~~son-of-a-bitch~~ ^{Son-of-A-Bitch} is going to get in ~~at~~ at

all," said one student. The collegians were dressed in open-collared white shirts, sports shirts, bermuda shorts. The girls wore blouses and ~~skirts~~ ^{COLORFUL} cullottes, short "knee ticker" skirts.

One long-tressed blonde ^D girl sat on the sidewalk, filling out registration papers. Many of the students had transistor radios, huddled together to hear progress reports on Meredith's arrival. Some were stationed on the roof of the nearby ^{Chemistry and} Pharmacy building with binoculars. ~~There was~~ A steady stream of cars came up the circular drive from the entrance to the college. Every parking place was filled.

Two couples got out into the street and began twisting to the music of a transistor radio. The crowd booed them down. "We'll put you in there with Meredith," an onlooker shouted.

A light aircraft began circling overhead. "I wish the governor would come on," one tired student said.

"I wonder what the athletic department thinks about all this," said another. "They stand to lose \$500,000 in game guarantees if we get closed up."

Rumor chased rumor. Meredith was expected at any minute, all day long, and the students, who had no classes, decided to wait him out.

~~At 2:30 p.m., the college board of trustees met in the state capital at Jackson, and then resumed Thursday, announced at about 2:30 p.m. that it had appointed Gov. Ross Robert Barnett as the college registrar, replacing Robert D. Ellis. (One board member had a heart attack during the Wednesday night session, was rushed to the hospital).~~

The students didn't know it, but they waited at the wrong spot.

In the state capital at Jackson, The 13-man college board of trustees, which had met six hours Wednesday night, and then resumed Thursday, announced at about 2:30 ^{p.m.} that it had appointed Gov. Ross Robert Barnett as the college registrar, replacing Robert D. Ellis. (One board member had a heart attack during the Wednesday night session, was rushed to the hospital).

Barnett mounted a white and yellow state highway department beechcraft bonanza, along with lt. gov. paul b. johnson, rushed from Jackson to

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to Oxford, LANDED at 2:45 P.M.

While the students waited at the Lyceum, Barnett was driven ^{to the campus} via a back entrance in a white Rambler station wagon, immediately went into a huddle with Ellis, state attorneys, other officials, ^{ivy-strung} in the long, one-story, brick Mississippi Center for Continuation Study. A blue-shirted policeman stood guard at the locked glass doors and view from the outside was obstructed by brown striped drapes.

Dozens of newsmen rushed this way and that, trying to guess when, and if, Meredith would come. "Are there any late rumors?" one asked frantically. (C.I.S.T.)

At 4:02 p. m., ^{POURING} cream-colored Mississippi state highway patrol cars began ~~coming~~ across the steel-railed road overpass at the college ~~entrance~~ entrance, turned right, went fifty feet and parked beside the building. Seventy-five patrolman, wearing short-sleeved gray shirts, blue pants and ~~a~~ 357 magnum ~~px~~ pistols at their sides, ^{TUMBLING} poured out of the cars, formed a ^{straight} ~~strait~~ line down the drive ~~in front~~ (grove loop) in front of the building, driving the growing crowd behind a ~~small black chain-link iron fence~~ small black rope of chain-iron.

"What fraternity is this?" asked a student, viewing the police. In addition to the patrolmen, dozens of plainclothesmen milled around as tension mounted and students began pouring down through the ~~oak~~ grove from the Lyceum building.

About five students climbed a small oak tree in front of the low-slung building, which had four white concrete columns at the entrance. "My God, you'd think they never seen a nigger before," somebody said. *The afternoon sun streamed brightly through the trees*

Suddenly at 4:26 p. m., a cream-colored automobile came out of nowhere, carrying two U.S. marshalls, ^{and} Behind it came ^{IN} a 1962 green plymouth. ~~It~~ ^{IN} it ~~was~~ were chief U.S. marshall James

McShane, St. John Barrett, ^{second} assistant attorney general for civil rights, another U.S. Marshall, and James Meredith, dressed in a dark brown suit, a white shirt, a dark tie.

A great "boo" went up from the swelling crowd as Meredith alighted from the car, walked around, went ^{firmly on light steps} up the concrete walkway and into the ~~hall~~ building.

Suddenly, a college yell started at one end of the huge lined-up crowd, swelled into a roar: "Hoddy-Totty, Christ almighty, who in the hell are we? Whim, Wham, Bim, Bam, Ole Miss, By Damn!"

Then another football yell started: "Push 'em back! push 'em back!"

At 4:51, a guard inside the door of the building parted the drapes, looked out, then opened the door. Meredith emerged, flanked by the Marshalls. A nervous, tight lipped little smile played momentarily on his mouth, but it disappeared when a shout came out of the crowd: "Go home, nigger!" Another great, long-sustained boo went up, interspersed with loud, almost hysterical cries. "Go, Nigger." "Get him! get him! get him!" "Boo, nigger, boo," came the cries as the crowd surged against the chain. The police pressed back. Meredith disappeared into the car and it sped off, led by its escort. The crowd suddenly broke, ran in pursuit, yelling rebel cries, epithets as the car headed toward the railroad bridge, turned right, then left and out Fraternity Row. A cloud

of dust went up as the crowd (now numbering some two thousand) surged, broke, and ran madly across the grove to the other side. ^{as the car went out of sight, the crowd dispersed} ^{in pursuit} "That Takes Care of The Nigger," a student ^{quietly}

Almost sharply at five o'clock, the curtains on the Mississippi center parted again, then Gov. Barnett emerged, wearing a black suit, a black tie, a black homburg, He was flanked by Lt. Gov. Johnson, ^{and} an assistant attorney general Dugas Shands, his legal adviser on segregation. A great cheer went up from what was

left of the crowd.

As people surged around, Barnett was stopped, asked to make a statement. "The only statement I have to make is this: the application of James Meredith was refused," he said in a raspy voice.

Many students pressed forward to shake his hand, congratulate him, as he stepped into a patrol car, left for the airport.

The press was barred from the meeting, indeed was kept behind the chains along with the mob, but here is an account of the inside proceedings from someone who was there.

~~When~~ When Meredith walked in, Barnett was seated alone at a long table below a raised stage in the small auditorium. Meredith and his attendants sat on a row of wooden chairs directly in front of ^{Barnett} him. First, the registrar, Robert D. Ellis, stood up, ^{Solemnly} read the announcement of the college board, relieving him as registrar, empowering the governor "to act in all matters pertaining to the registration or non-registration, the admission or non-admission, the attendance or non-attendance of James H. Meredith."

~~Thereafter the registrar read the following statement:~~
This having been established, Barnett looked directly at Meredith, said "Why have you come here?"

Rising to his feet, Meredith said: "Sir, I have come to register."

"Your application has been refused," the governor said.

Whereupon, Barrett arose, asked the governor if he knew he (the governor), all the officials of the school, and the school board, were in contempt.

"Are you telling me I am in contempt, or is that a decision for a federal judge?" the governor asked.

"That would be a decision for a federal judge," Barrett is reported to have said.

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The sheriff of Hinds County (jackson) was on hand, said he had come down to arrest Meredith, but that the governor had decided against it when he arrived.

Meredith returned to Memphis, to await further action. The governor went back to Jackson.

A contempt proceeding by the government was anticipated momentarily. (will update as necessary).

fleming

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