Doing Digital Black History: Cape Fear Museum’s 1898 Story Map

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Wilmingon Massacre and Coup d'état of 1898 - Timeline of Events

In 1897, North Carolina's Democratic Party decided to embark on a white supremacy campaign to try to drive Populist and Republican politicians out of office during the 1898 election. The campaign used speeches, propaganda cartoons, and the threat of violence to create support for white supremacy.

On November 8, 1898, New Hanover County's Democrats used threats and intimidation to stop African Americans from voting. Pro-Democratic Party election officials tampered with the returns. Because of these tactics, Democrats swept the election. On November 10, 1898, two days after the contested election, a mob of armed white men marched to the office of The Daily Record, the local African American newspaper, and set it on fire.
Story Map came out of a New Hanover County Library-IT collaboration, created in ArcGis, with the help of New Hanover County IT person, Tyler Lockamy.
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• Wilmington After Emancipation
• Post war political context
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North Carolina’s Republicans and Populists Gain Power, beginning in 1894

White Democrats lose control of the North Carolina General Assembly in 1894 when a coalition of Populists and Republicans win power. This "fusion" government is more supportive of popular democracy, and works to pass policies that help ordinary people, rather than members of the elite.

Momentum continues to swing in the Fusionists’ favor in 1896. Daniel L. Russell becomes Governor of North Carolina, the first Republican to win the governorship since the 1870s.
The *Daily Record's* Editorial Rebuttal, August 18, 1898

Wilmington's African American newspaper, *The Daily Record*, publishes an editorial that counters the claims that Mrs. Felton’s speech makes. *The Daily Record* editorial, which was likely written by the paper’s editor Alexander Manly, suggests that some sexual relationships between white women and black men were based on mutual consent. The editorial uses the words “fall in love” to characterize white women's feelings towards black men. This is an incendiary sentiment in an era where mixed-race marriages were illegal.

The Wilmington newspaper’s editorial fuels white supremacists’ fears of consensual interracial relationships.
A Story Map:

Wilmington Massacre and Coup d'état of 1898 - Timeline of Events

Alfred Moore Waddell Speaks at the Opera House (Thalian Hall), October 24, 1898

Speakers around the state give rabble-rousing speeches in support of the white supremacy campaign.

In Wilmington, local lawyer, Democrat, and former Confederate officer Alfred Moore Waddell addresses a large crowd and declares “Negro domination shall henceforth be only a shameful memory to us, and an everlasting warning to those who shall ever again seek to revive it.” Waddell asserts he is willing to “choke the current of the Cape Fear with carcasses” if that is necessary to ensure white men once again rule the state.
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Election Day, November 8, 1898

On November 8, 1898, in a tense and corrupt election, Democratic candidates are elected in the Republican city of Wilmington.

The next day, November 9, The Wilmington Messenger says “Yesterday was a glorious day for white supremacy in New Hanover county.”
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Burning *The Daily Record* Office, 9 AM, November 10, 1898

The mob ransacks *The Daily Record* office, which is located in the Love and Charity Hall, an African American community center. The crowd burns down the building.

Love and Charity Hall, after *The Daily Record's* offices were burned, 1898,Courtesy of New Hanover County Public Library
Wilmington Massacre and Coup d'état of 1898 - Timeline of Events

The Banishment Begins, 7:15 PM, November 10, 1898

Deposed white deputy sheriff George Z. French and African American lawyer Armond Scott board the Northbound train, escaping the city with their lives.
The Fire Department Purge, November 17, 1898

The White Declaration signers demand that white men be hired instead of African Americans. The Fire Department quickly moves to get rid of all the Black men who work in the department. As *The Semi-Weekly Messenger* put it, "Yesterday afternoon the new board of aldermen replaced the negroes in the department and substituted seventeen white men in their place."

Black police officers are also fired from their jobs.
A Disenfranchisement Amendment Passes, August 2, 1900

North Carolina's General Assembly passes laws that segregate Blacks and whites. The legislature also takes some control over local government away from 13 Black-majority counties, including New Hanover County.

In 1899, the General Assembly puts forward a suffrage amendment that disenfranchises African American men who had gained the right to vote after the Civil War. The Amendment effectively eradicates the African American vote, and decreases the numbers of eligible white voters.
Decades Without Representation End, December 12, 1972

Over the first six decades of the 20th century, many of the restrictive provisions of the 1900 Suffrage Amendment like the grandfather clause, poll tax, and literacy tests, are repealed, or they become obsolete or unlawful.

African Americans go to the polls in increasing numbers, especially after 1965’s Voting Rights Act passes. It takes seven more years for a Black person to serve in local government.

In 1972, after more than seventy years without a Black City Council member, Kenneth J. McLaurin is appointed to the council.

New city councilman
Wilkinson Massacre and Coup d'état of 1898 - Timeline of Events

To Learn More

To learn more, please follow these links:

Cape Fear Museum's digitized Daily Record collection.

This Month in History on the Daily Record of October 20, 1898

Link to Museum's Highlighting History page, which includes a video about the Daily Record and a pdf about the history of 1898.

C-span's coverage of the Daily Record

David Cecelski's blog posts about 1898

The State of North Carolina's 1898 Report

Vox's piece on 1898

The main map for this project was created from data available in the State of North Carolina's 1898 report.

The mapped data sets include:
- Some key participants in the events
- Known sites where people were killed and injured
- The route of the mob who marched from the Wilmington Light Infantry building to The Daily Records offices
- Machine gun wagon route
- Locations such as City Hall and David Jacobs' barber shop
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Historic Map Overlay:
Map of Wilmington, N.C., 1901
Courtesy of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
Map available at https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ncmaps/id/1088

Story map written by Dr. Jan Davidson, Cape Fear Museum of History and Science

Special thanks to Tyler Lockamy, New Hanover County Geographic Systems and Business Intelligence Solutions Engineer, for all his work on the mapping portions of this Story Map.
The Cape Fear Museum is bringing history to your fingertips

The Cape Fear Museum Unveils Interactive Map Of 1898 Coup D'Etat
Today marks the anniversary of the 1898 election. Learn more about the White Supremacy campaign and the Wilmington Massacre and Coup d'état of 1898 with our Story Map and timeline: https://bit.ly/NHC1898MapTimeline

Today, we launched a Story Map exploring the history of the @CityofWilm’s white supremacist massacre & coup of 1898. The project grew out of a collaboration with @NHCLibrary and @NewHanoverCo’s IT department. #HistoryMatters #MuseumFromHome

Wilmington Massacre and Coup d'état of 1898 - Tim...
In 1897, North Carolina’s Democratic Party decided to embark on a white supremacy campaign to try to dr...
🔗 capefearmuseum.com

@iamjohnoliver, our director told us to tag you! We watched your segment that included 1898. Here’s how we try to teach U.S. history...
🔗
This feud ended with the unfortunate arson of Manly's property and business, this was only the beginning of the bloody day that would be falsely be labeled as a race riot, November 10th, 1898 was far from a race riot, but a massacre; one that was planned and executed publicly by the democratic party and their militiamen the "red shirts". The angry mob moved on to the town hall next, the mob of white supremacists grew to 2,000 men by the time they began to wreak havoc all over the city, including burning down unarmed as few as 60 African Americans and disposing their bodies into the Cape Fear River or just leaving them lying dead in the streets. Others were forced to flee in fear or to other surrounding areas if they were well off enough to take the train, while others had to hide out in the swamp behind the colored cemetery without protection from the weather or nourishment to avoid being slaughtered.

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Here is an interactive map, created by the Cape Fear Museum of History and Science and the Public Library and Information Technology Department, detailing the events from November 9–November 10, 1898. This article begins by stating that White Supremacists used campaign tactics such as speeches, propaganda cartoons, threats, and violence to deter Black voters from voting. A story map depicts the known/recorded lynchings sites, the burning of the
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