

Negro Stoically Awaits His Death In State's Chair

**17 Year Old Negro to Pay
Penalty for Crime Next
Tuesday; Alachua County
Sheriff to Send Man
Into Eternity.**

GAINESVILLE, Fla., Sept. 17. — Fortune Ferguson, alias Jew Ferguson, 17 years old negro youth convicted of criminal assault on an eight year old white girl near Alachua in this county, at the June term of circuit court here, and sentenced to die in the electric chair, was today delivered to the state penitentiary at Raiford to await the day of execution, which has been officially set as Tuesday, September 23.

Sheriff P. G. Ramsey of Alachua county, who delivered Ferguson to the prison farm, will be the executioner, according to Supt. J. S. Blitch, of the state farm, who, according to law must carry out the death sentence or designate another to turn the switch that sends into eternity the convicted criminal. Sheriff Ramsey, who during his 16 years in office has sprung the trigger that meant death to 10 criminals, will at 2.30 next Tuesday afternoon, execute his first man by electricity.

Ferguson, who is the first man to die by electrocution in the state of Florida, seems to accept his fate stoically. He says he has made peace with God and is ready to go. He laughed and seemed perfectly satisfied to change his civilian clothes for the regulation stripes of the state penitentiary. A guard armed with a rifle was placed immediately outside his cell, and day and night between now and next Tuesday morning he will be under the watchful eye of a prison guard. The death cell, which is immediately adjoining the death chamber is spotlessly white. Ferguson is the first prisoner who ever entered its doors, aside from the inmates of the farm who only went to prepare it for its victim. He seemed not a bit worried or uneasy, any more than had he been entering his bedroom at his mother's home.

So far as it is known he has never confessed his guilt, but according to court records there is no doubt in local circles but that he is guilty of the crime with which he is accused.