

fied all the virtues and all the faults of this new movement." Thurman's life itself became a symbol of the possibilities and limitations of the Harlem Renaissance.

#### REFERENCES

- HUGGINS, NATHAN I. *Harlem Renaissance*. New York, 1971.
- , ed. *Voices from The Harlem Renaissance*. New York, 1976.
- LEWIS, DAVID LEVERING. *When Harlem Was in Vogue*. New York, 1981.

MAE G. HENDERSON

**Till, Emmett Louis** (July 25, 1941–August 28, 1955). Emmett Till was born and raised in Chicago, Ill. When he was fourteen, his parents sent him to LeFlore County, Miss., to visit his uncle for the summer. That summer Till bragged to his friends about northern social freedoms and showed them pictures of a white girl he claimed was his girlfriend. His friends, schooled in the southern rules of caste based on black deference and white supremacy, were incredulous. One evening, they dared Till to enter a store and ask the white woman inside, Carolyn Bryant, for a date. Till entered the store, squeezed Bryant's hand, grabbed her around the waist, and propositioned her. When she fled and returned with a gun, he wolf-whistled at her before being hurried away by his friends.

Till's act of youthful brashness crossed southern social barriers that strictly governed contact between black men and white women. In Mississippi, where the KU KLUX KLAN was newly revived and African Americans were impoverished and disfranchised, these barriers were strictly enforced by the threat of social violence. On August 28, 1955, Carolyn Bryant's husband, Roy, and his half brother, J. W. Milam, abducted Till from his uncle's home, brutally beat him, shot him in the head, and then dumped his naked body in the Tallahatchie river. Till's mangled and decomposed body was found three days later, and his uncle named both men as the assailants. Bryant and Milam were tried for murder. Despite the fact that the two men had admitted abducting Till, they were acquitted on September 23 by an all-white jury because the body was too mangled to be definitively identified.

The verdict unleashed a storm of protest. Till's mother had insisted on an open-casket funeral, and pictures of Till's disfigured body featured in JET MAGAZINE had focused national attention on the trial. Till's age, the innocence of his act, and his killers'

immunity from retribution represented a stark and definitive expression of southern racism to many African Americans. Demonstrations were organized by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP), and the BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS and black leaders like W. E. B. DU BOIS demanded antilynching legislation and federal action on civil rights.

Emmett Till's lynching was a milestone in the emergent CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. Outrage over his death was key to mobilizing black resistance in the deep South. In addition, black protest over the lack of federal intervention in the Till case was integral to the inclusion of legal mechanisms for federal investigation of civil rights violations in the Civil Rights Act of 1957 (see CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE LAW).

In 1959, Roy and Carolyn Bryant and Milam told their stories to journalist William Bradford Huie. Only Milam spoke for the record, but what he revealed was tantamount to a confession. Huie's interviews were subsequently published in 1959 as a book entitled *Wolf Whistle*.

#### REFERENCE

- WHITFIELD, STEPHEN J. *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till*. New York, 1988.

ROBYN SPENCE

**Tindley, Charles Albert** (c. July 7, 1851–1933), gospel musician. Charles Albert Tindley was born July 7, probably in 1851, in Berlin, on Maryland's Eastern Shore, the son of Charles and Hester Miller Tindley. His father hired him out as a child. Tindley spent his adult life in South Philadelphia, Pa., where he served as minister of several Methodist Episcopal churches. In 1902 he became pastor of the Bainbridge Saint M.E. Church where by 1924 his music and dynamic preaching resulted in a church of ten thousand members; that year it was renamed Tindley Temple. Tindley was first married to Daisy Henry (d. 1924) and then in 1927 to Jenny Cotton.

As a hymn writer Tindley pioneered the song tradition that became the basis for the music of the twentieth-century African-American church. His compositions inspired the gospel songs of Thomas A. DORSEY, Lucy Campbell, Robert MARTIN, and the Rev. Herbert Brewster. Among Tindley's most popular titles are "Stand By Me," "The Storm is Passing Over," "We'll Understand It Better By and By," and "I'll Overcome Someday." In 1916 Tindley published *New Songs of Paradise*, a collection of hymns for worship. In 1921 several of his songs came to the attention of a wider audience when they were