

May 27, 1929.

HOUSTON NEGRO HOSPITAL

Judge W. W. Moore,  
Petroleum Building,  
Houston, Texas.

Dear Sir:

Immediately on receipt of copy of Mr. Cullinan's letter on Saturday, I proceeded to look into the complaint of inhumane treatment at the Houston Negro Hospital.

We first communicated with Mrs. M. Currie, 4802 Austin St. who stated that the patient, Hazel Nichols was the wife of her cook Author Nichols. Her principal complaint was regarding the visiting hours, as they were hurried to finish dinner so Author could reach the hospital in time. A further complaint was that he had not been allowed to remain at the hospital during the night his wife died.

We then communicated with Author Nichols who repeated the above and added that on one occasion he had found no ice available for an ice cap used in connection with the sore on his wife's body.

Questioned regarding the death of his wife he stated that he had not requested permission to remain that night and that the doctor had not said that his wife was likely at that time to die.

We then questioned Dr. Lee the attending physician who stated that he could not remember having ordered an ice cap for this case, and that if it had been ordered it was for intermittent use only. He considered that there had been no neglect of any kind in connection with this patient.

We then called the Superintendent of the Hospital, who produced the medical record which showed no order for an ice cap.

Questioned regarding the ice supply, the Superintendent replied that with the on set of warm weather, the supply kept in a small box on the third floor had not been sufficient. She had thereupon applied for another box which I authorized her to purchase on April 30th. The patient was admitted on April 23rd.

With regard to these complaints the husband admitted that there was no ground of complaint regarding his being present on the night his wife died. As to the visiting hours this is always a cause of come friction, but a hospital is under the necessity of starting the night routine and settling the patients for the night. This is a matter of considerably more importance than the dinner hour of families in which visitors work. If this were not a negro hospital, and therefore supposed to relax all standards and regulations on demand, I doubt if this complaint would have been made. It has exactly the same ground as in every other hospital in Houston.

In regard to the ice the Superintendent admits herself in error in not having made sure of an adequate supply. It happens however that in this particular case the use of the ice cap was not considered important, or ordered by the attending physician.

I am sending copies of this letter to Mr. Cullinan, Mrs. Cullinan, Mrs. Currie, Dr. Lee, J. B. Grigsby, Chairman of the Board and the Superintendent of the Hospital.

Yours very truly,

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J. W. Slaughter.

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