

WALKER AWARDED \$800,000 IN LIBEL

A.P. Found Guilty of Malice in Mississippi Riot Stories

FORT WORTH, June 19 (AP) — Former Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker won an \$800,000 libel judgment today against The Associated Press, for stories about his activities during the segregation riot at the University of Mississippi in 1962. He had asked damages of \$2 million.

A state district court jury found the A.P. guilty of falsely describing Mr. Walker as the leader of student rioters who charged United States marshals on the Mississippi campus Sept. 30, 1962.

The A.P.'s general manager, Wes Gallagher, said in a statement after the verdict:

"The Associated Press will appeal the verdict of the jury in this case. In the light of the evidence presented by both sides, The Associated Press is confident that the verdict will not be upheld on appeal."

Mr. Walker said the jury verdict justified his position. He has filed more than \$20 million in libel suits against the A.P. and various newspapers as an outgrowth of the rioting, which was touched off when the university admitted James H. Meredith, a Negro.

Two persons were killed in the campus disorders.

The Fort Worth suit was the first to come to trial.

Mr. Walker, in his complaint, asked \$1 million for damage to his reputation because of the A.P. dispatches and an additional \$1 million in punitive damages against the news association.

The trial began June 8. The jury of four women and eight men received the case yesterday and then adjourned until 9 A.M. today.

In a verdict returned at 11:15 A.M., the jury held that an A.P. statement that Mr. Walker "led a charge of students against Federal marshals on the Ole Miss campus" was false. The jury said it did not constitute fair comment, was not made in good faith and was actuated by malice.

Judge Charles Murray, in his charge to the jury, defined malice as "ill will, bad or evil motive, or that entire want of care which would raise the belief that the act or omission complained of was the result of a conscious indifference to the right and welfare of the person to be affected by it."

The jury then made a similar finding on a statement by the

putation and for mental anguish. It added \$300,000 as punishment for the malice it held was inflicted upon Mr. Walker.