

# The Ku Klux Klan in Lancaster County: 1923-1924

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## Preface

"The Two-Year Reign of the Invisible Empire in Lancaster County" concerns the historical heritage and trails which the Ku Klux Klan burned into the soils of the Conestoga Valley between 1923 and 1925. It took the movement of "hatred" five years to creep across the Mason and Dixon Line, and two more years to become a "watchword" in the conservative daily life of the Lancaster Countian.

Historically, the research of this paper has taken its writer through a multitude of pages in an effort to look at the local Klan's efforts through the eyes of the county seat's news writers. As one glances at a County map, the city of Lancaster takes on the image of the hub of a wheel with its spokes being the villages around it. This geographical position is important in the influence which Lancaster exerts upon her "serfs." The local newspapers, too, exert their influence in the life of each county citizen.

The attempt to "analyze" today just what the local citizenry remembers and feels about the Klan represents this paper's second purpose. Thus interviewing became a tool with the results being written in the "Aftermath" portion of this work. It is safe to say Lancastrians are not sure that this movement is at all dead today, but they still regard it as a part of their life in which they [the K.K.K. Members] are a maladjusted lot.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE FIRST YEARS OF THE KLAN IN AMERICA AND LANCASTER COUNTY

The incident which provided the genesis of an extremist movement which was to create fear in the human life of all races and creeds inhabiting North America occurred innocently enough as a Georgian named William Joseph Simmons inquired of a friend about the possibility of a new locker club, such as the "Golden Age" in which both were members, be organized and called the "Knights of the Ku Klux Klan." After viewing the basic plans for the new "club," Simmons' friend responded favorably to the idea, which Simmons claimed in a folder circulating in 1921, entitled

“The K.K.K.—Who-Why-What,” was in the making for twenty years.<sup>2</sup> The many affirmative replies given by these friends to Simmons’ query in early 1915 led to the recognized “reorganizational” meeting of the Klan on October 26 of that year.<sup>3</sup> While the rest of America was celebrating Thanksgiving, Colonel Simmons and thirty-four other stout-hearted individuals climbed up snow-covered Stone Mountain that wintry evening, and revived a ceremony—the burning of an erected cross—which had been dormant for some fifty years, but would be repeated countless times during the next decade.<sup>4</sup> The reason for this writer stamping this as “reorganizational” in nature is that:<sup>5</sup> (1) the original Klan had been born as a social club of young men in Tennessee, and it was this group which accidentally discovered that the fear of their club held great influence over the superstitious negroid race; and (2) three people on this “mountain climb” were members of the original Klan of the Reconstruction days which the United States Congress broke up with its “Force Laws” in 1871-72.

For five years,<sup>6</sup> after the Klan had been chartered as a legitimate fraternal organization of the State of Georgia,<sup>7</sup> the new movement struggled for its survival. Even though Colonel Simmons, now the organization’s “Imperial Wizard,” its highest ranking officer,<sup>8</sup> openly said, “It is set forth in the Klan’s requirements that no man shall become a member of the Klan who does not believe in the tenets of the Christian religion,”<sup>9</sup> it was not so. Thus, on the surface it would appear that most people were welcome into the new fraternity, but within the group, it was known that five classes of persons were barred membership:<sup>10</sup> (1) Negroes; (2) Japanese and other Orientals; (3) Roman Catholics; (4) Jews; and (5) all foreign born persons. Then, the “savior” of the Klan appeared on earth in the personage of Edward Y. Clarke, a publicist in the truest sense of the word.<sup>11</sup> This public relations genius quickly brought the Klan into the national spotlight by gaining much space on the newspapers’ front pages; by placing much advertising in these same national newspapers; by establishing membership dues at four dollars per head plus a ten-dollar “donation;”<sup>12</sup> by selecting Mrs. Elizabeth Tyler to establish a Ladies Auxiliary who were admitted as “sisters” for a ten-dollar fee;<sup>13</sup> by establishing the former history professor, Simmons, as the new president of Lanier University in Atlanta; by building the Klan’s own regalia company which sold to members the organization’s regulation garb for \$6.50, while the actual cost of manufacture was only \$1.25;<sup>14</sup> and by building an impressive one-block national headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.<sup>15</sup> It seems to this writer that Clarke has to be recognized as the catalyst to the “All-American” movement because, after his entrance upon the scene, the Klan gained nearly 500,000 members,<sup>16</sup> and was spreading more than twice as fast in the North and West than in the South.<sup>17</sup> This movement finally crossed the Mason and Dixon Line, which serves as the southern boundary of Lancaster County as well as the division line between the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania, in the winter of 1920-21.<sup>18</sup> An Eastern newspaper in 1921 made reference to the Klan as “A Nightgown Tyranny” in its headline.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, on August 21, 1922, a Lancaster newspaper—the morning **Examiner-New Era**—printed the first words locally about the Klan’s existence. Although the story was placed on the front page, it contained only

two paragraphs.<sup>20</sup> Not another word appeared in this publication for the rest of the year concerning the Klan, and in its New Year's Day edition, there was listed by the Associated Press the "Fifty Most Important Events of 1922," which did not even mention the Mer Rouge, Louisiana, kidnapping which occurred on August 24, 1922.<sup>21</sup> But, it is worthy to note that the rival paper, the **News Journal**, in its initial 1923 edition greeted its readers with the latest details in a front page story on the kidnapping of five Mer Rouge men by a masked and hooded group (at this time, it was presumed that the "group" was the Klan).<sup>22</sup> To find the same story in the **Examiner** (the colloquial title of the paper, and in which manner it shall be referred to it from this point on), the reader had to turn to page twelve where the story was given prominence by three accompanying photos.<sup>23</sup>

It appears that both editors—Wallace Robinson of the **Journal** and Oliver Keller of the **Examiner**—were thinking along parallel lines because on January 3, they penned the first local "editorials" to appear on the Klan subject. Robinson's writing carried the more "sting" as it informed the local readers: "Disrespect for and violation of law are initial steps to anarchy. Outbreaks like those . . . of Ku Klux Klansmen shock the country by reason of their extremity, but the Eighteenth Amendment may be violated by hundreds of thousands and the Nation smiles."<sup>24</sup> Managing editor Robinson followed this up with another editorial on January 16 which pleaded: "Means should be provided for breaking and dissolving the organization [meaning the Klan]."<sup>25</sup>

Then, three days later, the **News Journal** broke a front-page story about the first local activity of the Klan.<sup>26</sup> During the early weeks in January, a dozen or more letters written on Klan stationery, and reported to be the work of Klan members, were sent to various Quarryville residents. The letters warned the recipients to do three things:<sup>27</sup>

Drink three glasses of water per day;  
Retire every evening at six o'clock;  
and arise before daybreak.

Also mentioned in the story was the town of Strasburg because there were reports that a single Klan of Knights were to be formed from the two towns. The membership of Quarryville (a southern Lancaster County village) was claimed to be sixty.<sup>28</sup> An interesting note to the story is the "head" of the version appearing in the **Examiner** when the headwriter, inexperienced at writing "Ku Klux Klan," wrote KLU Klux Klan—an oft-made error by people in writing or pronouncing the organization's title.<sup>29</sup>

From this time on, the readers of Lancaster's two newspapers saw more and more national stories on the Klan's activities such as the headquarters staff of the Klan, led by the new Imperial Wizard Dr. Hiram W. Evans, in Chicago protesting the exclusion of its members from the city's payrolls;<sup>30</sup> the Bound Brook, New Jersey, Holy Roller's pillar of fire incident when a speaker extolled the Klan and the town people "rushed" the church;<sup>31</sup> the riot following the Klan parade through Carnegie, Pennsylvania, on July 24 when one man was killed;<sup>32</sup> and then, in the fall of 1923, came the Klan problems of Governor J. C. Walton in Oklahoma. The Governor declared war on Tulsa County which was supposedly controlled

by the Klan, but in the end, the state officer was impeached and removed from office because of Klan influence on charges of corruption and unconstitutional use of power.<sup>33</sup> It is also worthy of mention that Lancaster's first Sunday newspaper—the **Sunday News**—on September 16, 1923, the Oklahoma Ku Klux Klan fight made the paper's first printed headline.<sup>34</sup>

Tuesday, October 9, 1923, marked the second local active Klan movement when the "Hatred" group held a public celebration in Columbia, located on the Susquehanna River side of western Lancaster County. The town was in the midst of its fourth annual Harvest Home celebration, and the town's citizens, when they saw crosses burning along the edge of the river, thought this part of the celebration. However, the Klansmen soon began parading through the streets in autos, and the people became aware that this was an "added" attraction. Columbia's officials claimed the Klansmen came from Lancaster because they had been observed entering town on the Lancaster Pike.<sup>35</sup> The more active Klan, three nights later (October 11), opened operations in the southern end of the County with a meeting in the American Mechanics Hall in Quarryville. The 175 people in attendance had been invited, and no one was admitted without a card which gave the time and place of the meeting. There were no crosses or white garb present at the orderly gathering, except for a hooded guard at the hall's entrance. According to news sources, there were no members there from the Quarryville area, but all from a distance. The meeting's lecturers were a Reverend Doctor Hanson, a Kentucky Baptist minister, and his wife.<sup>36</sup>

The stepping stones of Klan activity can be mapped in three "Big Stories" in the local papers. The first occurred on a Monday night, October 29, 1923, with the initial public demonstration of the Klan in Lancaster being an open air ceremony held at the local fairgrounds. The affair, under the auspices of Lancaster Klan No. One, could be attended by the public inasmuch as grandstand tickets were put on sale. The purpose of the ceremony was the initiation of about 700 Eastern Pennsylvania candidates with Klansmen from all over the State attending.<sup>37</sup> A veteran journalist who was invited personally to the affair wrote:<sup>38</sup>

. . . . The lights were kept off on the heavily guarded field. The spectators, some of whom poured in at 7 o'clock, were kept several hundred yards distance from the ceremonial site which lasted for an hour and ended with fireworks and the burning of four immense crosses . . . . the initiation ceremony was to begin at 7 o'clock, but did not start until 10 p.m. when the singing of "Onward Christian Soldiers" started the weird ceremony. Pittsburgh furnished the speakers who were introduced as Protestant ministers . . . . An unmasked speaker told the candidates and the estimated 10,000 spectators, "Jesus Christ is a Klansman of the first criterion . . . the only two symbols of the Klan are the cross and the American flag." . . . . The singing of "America" by the Ladies Auxiliary closed the evening and upon leaving, each man was given a card which explained the purpose of the Klan and also provided space for a name and address. [accompanying this story were the first pictures—three—ever taken of local Klansmen in action]

Another news reporter, who was not on duty that night, also went unin-

vited to the ceremony. He told this writer that upon reaching the fairgrounds, he was asked by a masked guard, "Are you a member?" This reporter replied in the affirmative, and was admitted to the grounds. It is questionable as to what action might have occurred if the reporter answered "no," but the reporter involved has the impression today of the affair as being a flop!"<sup>39</sup> The local Klansmen initiated at the ceremony paid a membership fee of fifteen dollars, also called an initiation fee, with the Kleagle keeping four dollars of it in order to pay for a meeting place and the current expenses, the Atlanta authorities receiving four dollars, and the State hierarchy getting two dollars. The remaining five dollars were not allocated,<sup>40</sup> but this amount happens to be the difference between the generally recognized initiation fee and the amount required in Lancaster County.

Election Day, November 6, 1923, did not pass by unnoticed by the local Klan, since its national organization was already embroiled in politics, as they dressed in their regalia and patrolled the Lancaster streets in autos which glided slowly past the polling places. This action followed closely the wide distribution of threatening posters bearing the initials "KKK" and a "hideous" conception of a skull and cross bones, which were hanging all over town.<sup>41</sup>

The month of November (1923) also brought forth the first two "Letters to the Editor" concerning the Klan which appeared in the *New Era*. The first one was printed publicly on November 8 as an open letter to Messrs. Marvin Bushong and Jacob Seldomridge, and the writer, Marianna G. Brubaker, admonished these two men for renting the fairgrounds to the Klan; she wrote, "To permit the Ku Klux to meet and hold ceremonies here was simply an insult to Jews and Roman Catholics."<sup>42</sup> The second letter, appearing sixteen days later, also pertained to the October ceremony. It was written by a Middletown minister, the Reverend George H. Brown, who took exception to the Klan's statement at the fairgrounds that "Christ was a Klan supporter."<sup>43</sup>

The second "Big Story" hit the local papers on Monday, November 12, 1923.<sup>44</sup> Armistice Day came on a Sunday, thus Monday was set aside as the day for its commemoration. This usually solemn patriotic occasion turned into a near clash between the Lancaster Post American Legion and the local Klan because, in the early morning hours, the "Invisible Empire" placed a floral wreath on the Lancaster County Court House Plaza in memory of Armistice Day. Shortly before the Legion ceremony in the afternoon, for which permission had been granted, county district attorney (Major) William C. Rehm ripped off the "KKK" letters adorning the Klan's wreath. But the Klan returned to replace the letters which greeted the Legionnaires upon their arrival. A Lancaster veteran named Clarence J. Stein, who had lost an arm in World War I, supposedly "kicked" over the Klan's wreath in the confusion of the two groups, and he was arrested for disorderly conduct by a police officer who said he had received a complaint against Stein. However, Stein was released later from the charges when the complainant failed to appear at Police Court. Also, later in the afternoon, city police and Legion Commander Walter Foust<sup>45</sup> met and the decision was made to have the Klan remove their floral tribute

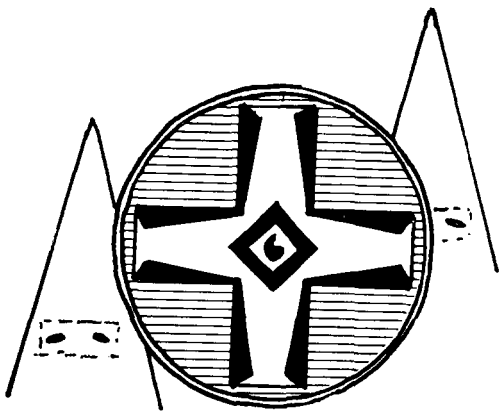
which they did. The Klansmen took it by auto to the Lancaster Cemetery where they placed it on the grave of General John Fulton Reynolds, and it remained there for several days.<sup>46</sup>

This incident caused varied types of reaction about the community: (1) In an editorial, the *New Era* editor called the incident a "little fuss . . . since the Legion in its national convention formally opposed the Klan, then when the Klan decided also to present its cross, trouble would follow;"<sup>47</sup> (2) the Klan demanded an apology, a public one, from Major Rehm;<sup>48</sup> (3) the local veteran groups discussed the possibility of censuring the Klan for the wreath placement, and particularly were concerned about the reason for the selection of General Reynolds' grave as the final resting place for the bouquet;<sup>49</sup> and (4) two other Lancaster fraternal organizations, namely the Inland City Council, No. 998, Order of Independent Americans; and the Lady Franklin Council, No. 85, Sons and Daughters of Liberty, also requested Rehm's public apology to the Klan.<sup>50</sup> But the apology was never forthcoming.

The final event in 1923 involving the Klan was given small notice in the press on November 26 which simply read:<sup>51</sup>

*Mr. Truman, one of the national lecturers of the Klan, addressed about 300 persons at Malta Temple in the nature of an educational lecture and no members were solicited.*

This first year of an activated local Klan organization kept the citizenry on the alert, but of all the activities, the one to affect the Klan to the greatest degree can be analyzed today as the Armistice Day episode. This incident started an internal crumbling within the local Klan movement which would fester into a mortal wound in 1924.



## THE LOCAL KLANS' FINAL YEAR OF ACTIVITY

The County was quiet in the first month of 1924 as far as the Klan external was concerned, but on Sunday evening, February 10, a large delegation of klansmen attended a service in the Cookman Methodist Church in full regalia and presented an envelope containing fifty dollars in gold and a letter to the Reverend C. F. Kulp.<sup>52</sup> They then left orderly in what seems to be the first reported act of charity in which the local Klan participated. Then, in the March 24th issue of the **New Era**, there appeared the first Klan group photographed during a funeral ceremony in Lancaster County. The deceased was klansman Harry Elmer, who had died of scarlet fever and was buried near Christiana.<sup>53</sup> In latter March, the local press reported of an "effort" to fight the Klan through a National Vigilance Association. There was a movement for a Lancaster branch, with Thomas Culhane as regional director, as a part of the desired 50,000 membership of the state operation whose purpose was to pass an anti-mob and anti-masking bill.<sup>54</sup>

The second week in April produced news that Columbia Klan No. One had formed in the past year and progress was reported such as welfare work among the needy, and the number of members attending church.<sup>55</sup> This report was followed by the burning of a twenty-foot cross on Quarry Hill near the borough line of Quarryville on April 14.<sup>56</sup> Nothing about the Klan appeared in the local press in May, but on June 4, more than 500 people assembled on the Gorsuch farm in Fairfield, Drumore Township (southern Lancaster County) to witness an initiation ceremony. The address was by the Reverend B. Morris Postens of the Methodist Church.<sup>57</sup> A big delegation was reported to be present from the northern end of the county to witness the burning of several large crosses.<sup>58</sup>

On June 18, 1924, the third "Big Story" involving the Klan on the **New Era's** front page hit the newstands. "The County Klan," the Wednesday paper reported, "will split into two groups on June 20 (Friday)." The old order of Klan remained under the leadership of Kleagle H. R. Snavely (this edition marks the first this officer was publicly identified), and the Reverend Mr. Postens; while the second group formed the "Reformed Order of Klansmen." The date of June 20 slated two separate Klan meetings—the original Klan met at the Gast farm near Millersville where the Kleagle ordered all Klansmen to be present, and the Reformers met at the Eagle Hall in Lancaster. Actually, this division began on April 6 when the Reformed group received a charter from a New Jersey incorporation of eleven other states. The new local, as well as this national organization, was set up by old Klan members who were dissatisfied with the undemocratic organization of the Klan. The local Reformers' dis-

satisfaction rested on three factors:<sup>60</sup> (1) They felt Snavelly was acting as a "czar" and had received his office in a mysterious manner. Until October, 1923, they had been under another Kleagle, but then Snavelly went to Pittsburgh to see Sam Rich and when he returned Snavelly had the authority of "Kleagle"; (2) They were upset about the manner in which the position of Kleagle operated on such a lucrative basis where he received a certain sum per head for new members; (3) They were also upset about the occurrence of the Annistice Day incident. The Reformers said action was discussed as for gaining permission to place their tribute but the Klan's treasurer who was also a Legionnaire, said he would take care of everything.

The story's revelations about the Klan contained much dynamite because it listed six klansmen who were banished by Kleagle Snavelly by their numbers (Klansmen were known by numbers like the old Chinese spy system as under Sun Yet-Sen) and these appeared in newsprint—"21, 156, 94, 36, 163, and 523."<sup>61</sup> Also appearing was the statement that twenty-three others were suspended. The news story further disclosed the "truth" on the location of the Lancaster Klan No. One headquarters, and this office was on the second floor of the Appel Office Building, 33 North Duke Street, with the office going under the name of Sam D. Rich Publishing Company (Rich of Pittsburgh was former King Kleagle of Pennsylvania, but at this time ruled Pennsylvania west of the Susquehanna, while Norris Freeman of Philadelphia controlled Eastern Pennsylvania, plus New Jersey and Delaware).<sup>62</sup> When one reads the story, it seems as though the Fourth of July is present with firecrackers bursting all over—especially in the portion where Snavelly's crackling pen "kicks out" the Columbia Klan from the County organization. A portion of the letter, dated April 3, 1924, is printed below:<sup>63</sup>

Klansman:

This is to notify you that the entire membership of the Columbia Klan is suspended from the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

The charges are dissention, indifference to orders received from national headquarters, lack of co-operation given to the Kleagle, disrespect to the position of the King Kleagle, and the divulging of secrets of this order, wholesale.

From this date there are no klansmen in Columbia.

Any former member of the former Columbia Klan, who wishes to reaffiliate himself with the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan can do so by seeing me by appointment only, and retake his oath of allegiance to the Invisible Empire, he then will sign a new charter sheet on the Lancaster County charter. There will be only one charter granted in Lancaster County and that one will be a county charter.

The new password will be given you at that time. All property that you have of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan must be turned over to me in Lancaster, within 48 hours. This does not mean your robe at this time. "Disregarding this order will mean banishment from this order for direct violation of your oaths . . . ."



The paper also estimated in the same story that the old Klans in Pennsylvania numbered about 50, and Lancaster County's original organization's stronghold was at Ephrata. As for Reformed membership, it is worthy to note that Columbia already was listed as a member of the "new" order.

The Reformed group in Lancaster County, named F. C. Cody, Pennbrook, as its official representative to its national convention at Harrisburg (July 1-3, 1924) and also as the group's advisor, not an organizer in the local group<sup>64</sup> Also, the organizers of the "new" Klan were to be on a salary basis in order to eliminate the financial ills which had plagued the "old" order. This group also abolished the use of masks unless for initiation purposes. They, too, promised not to hold raids themselves, but to turn the evidence over to the proper authorities.<sup>65</sup>

When Friday evening rolled around, nearly 450 Klansmen were in attendance at a meeting in an orchard near Millersville with Kleagle Snavelly presiding. The Reformers' meeting—this was actually their third chronologically with two earlier ones at Columbia—had about 400 members present. This new group claimed a membership of 100 in the city and about 300 in the county (about 200 of these from the disbanded Columbia Klan).<sup>66</sup> The Reformers also held a parade along center city streets in Lancaster prior to the meeting, and local observers have long remembered this event, but regard it pretty much as a "farce."<sup>67</sup>

The Democratic Convention at Madison Square Garden, New York City, in June, 1924, has long been remembered as a moment when the words, "Ku Klux Klan" spelled D-E-F-E-A-T for the Democrats who failed to mention this group by name as an extremist plank in their party platform. But, in Lancaster County, the citizens did not publicize their reaction via letters to the papers, even though their State delegate, Mrs. Carroll Miller, begged the women present, "If the men are afraid to force this issue, do not flinch now. If we do, we leave our children a tarnished heritage."<sup>68</sup>

Now that the local Klan organization was divided, July 13, 1924, marks the next public exposure of the Klan. That Sunday evening, a hundred Klansmen garbed in full regalia (thus they were representatives of the original Klan) visited the Laurel Street Mission in Lancaster during the services. The Reverend J. K. Bowermaster, whose text was from Revelation—"Be Thou Faithful Unto Death"—told the press that the orderly "visitors" took no part in the actual service, but when the offering was being taken, they staged their "bell-ringing ceremony."<sup>69</sup> After the service which had an offering of several hundred dollars, the Klan left.

The original Klan continues to be active as it again made the front pages when they met in a Convention Hall, West Orange and Pine Streets, on July 24, 1924. The meeting had been originally scheduled for the fairgrounds, but this time the directors refused permission. It was for this former planning that 10,000 invitations had been mailed around the state, and the meeting had been advertised as the "largest Klan meeting ever held in Eastern Pennsylvania."<sup>70</sup> Attending the session which lasted from 12 noon until midnight were about 600 Klansmen.<sup>71</sup> It was this writer's observation that the tide of local Klan interest was at an all-time

# CHAPTER III

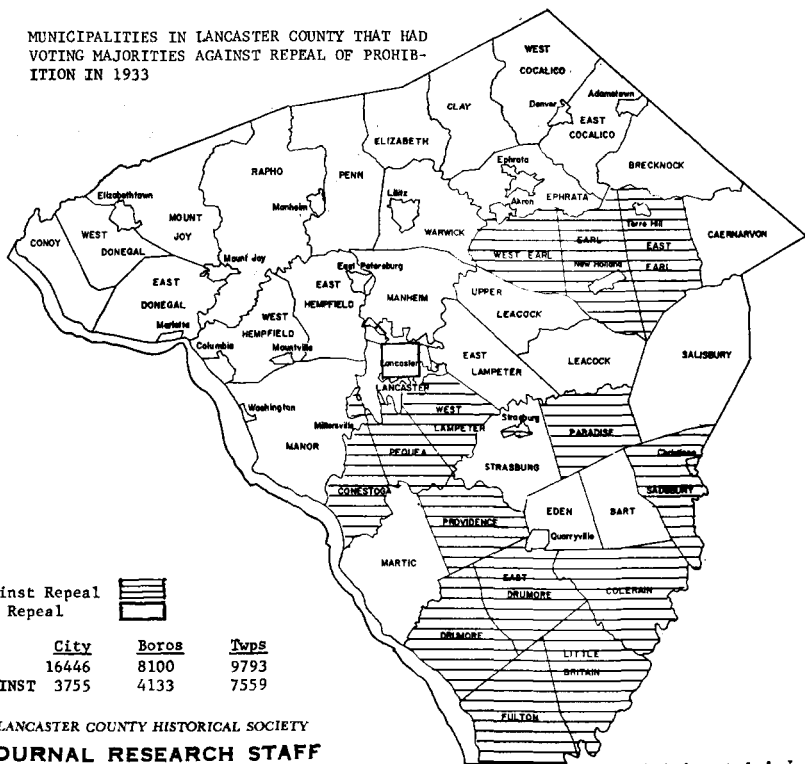
## THE LOCAL MOVEMENT'S AFTERMATH

In an attempt to somewhat analyze the two-year operation of the Klan in Lancaster County, the writer encounters many facets:

First, one cannot believe that this was a political movement in the sense that one local political party was pushing the movement. Lancaster County's Republican Party has long had its own "speaker"—The *New Era* which was hitting the Klan more than any other local paper. (For this reason, many of the news sources contained in this work represent this publication). The *News Journal*, today known as the *Intelligencer Journal*, at this period of time was fighting in headlines and editorials the Republican machine in Lancaster city government, and was not paying too much attention to the Klan.

Second, it appears Lancaster County found itself in the same furrow as many other agrarian areas of the country, such as Indiana and Marion County, Ohio. It was in a study connected with this latter area that Frank

MUNICIPALITIES IN LANCASTER COUNTY THAT HAD VOTING MAJORITIES AGAINST REPEAL OF PROHIBITION IN 1933



low during this period of much activity because the **New Era** included with the convention story, the facts that on July 23, nearly 500 Klansmen burned two crosses at Fairfield during a meeting at which Kleagle H. R. Snavely presided.

On July 26, the **Era** printed a letter from Jacob G. Brown, Mount Joy, who owned the athletic field and ball grounds there. It seems Brown rented his property for what he believed was to be an agricultural meeting, and the short letter which follows explains the rest of the story:<sup>72</sup>

To Editor of New Era:

Dear Sir — The Ku Klux Klan, through the misrepresentation of its agents, secured my ball park for holding services on Monday evening, July 28. As soon as I learned their identity and purpose, I gave notice that they cannot have my field for that purpose.

The final two meetings appearing in print in 1924, one per each organization, stated that the Reformed group heard the Reverend Mr. Strine at Columbia, while the original Klan met at a farm near Columbia. (this small paragraph was "buried on page 18 of the August 11 **New Era**). It seems unbelievable that the Klan movement which had been active for two years should suddenly "burst into nothing"—which is the way the native of Lancaster County appears to best remember it. In a **New Era** editorial printed on September 3, 1924, editor Keller informs his readers that he had received a letter from the Kleagle (Snavely) disavowing that the Klan had anything to do with threatening letters sent to local people and signed with "KKK". Is it not ironical that not quite two years previous, the people of Quarryville and Lancaster County were introduced to the Klan's operations as letters were being sent from this same "Empire" to citizens in the southern portion of the county. Thus, here was the starting point just two years ago from the time of this informative editorial.

Bohn interpreted the presence of the hooded figures as an expression of pain, sorrow and solemn warning with the Klan's methods arising from anger and fear.<sup>73</sup> The agrarian society with its simple, fundamental understanding of life proved quite susceptible to these offerings from the Klan.

Third, local feeling is that the rise here in Lancaster County was due more to prohibition, than to "anti" anything else. But, one interview with an alleged member of the Klan supplied me evidence that they, too, were somewhat racist. It is an established fact that Cecil County, Maryland was a "booze" source, and officials who had worked in Maryland were of the opinion that Lancaster County was the outlet to the North.<sup>74</sup> Whenever this writer talked with local people about the movement, they expressed their personal belief that it was an anti-bootlegger movement, although the local newspapers contain no printed reports that the Klan burned any stills of which there were many in southern Lancaster County. Another interesting observation is that of Ward Green<sup>75</sup> who claims that the rebirth of the Klan on a national level was a direct result of prohibition, and had liquor not been banned in Georgia, "the white hood would have remained in the grave of Reconstruction."<sup>76</sup>

Fourth, Green also gives much credit to the life of the Klan to the anti-Klan movement of the *New York World*; however, this is not the case in Lancaster County. It does amaze this writer as to how the *New Era* always seemed to get the "inside" story—especially the "split" story—during this period without even a member of their staff being in the Klan proper—or were there members on the *Era* staff?

Fifth, Lancaster County was no different from any other area in that the least suspected people were members—ministers, city officials, policemen, journalists, doctors and so on down the line. The alleged last surviving officer of the Lancaster Klan is a person quite respected in the community. And another "interested" person met during this research is presently in a very reputable station in life.

Sixth, the involvement of local ministers in the movement, especially the Methodists, leads one to believe that the Klan had religious endorsement, but the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is quoted in the *Literary Digest*: "Any organization whose membership is secret, oath-bound and disguised and which tends to foster racial or class prejudice has no right to speak in the name of the Protestant Church."<sup>77</sup>

Seventh, the reaction of the local citizens is quite amusing and informative: (1) One citizen interviewed admitted that he broke into the Appel Building office of the Klan and stole a number of its regalia (hoods and sheets). But he got a surprise when he got inside the office to find his name chalked on the board," - - - -: "On Duty Tonight," however, the name was misspelled by a letter. (2) Another citizen interviewed said that in the parade there was a tall masked rider on a beautiful white horse. And, until this interview, the identity of the rider has remained a secret. "Well," the interviewed person said, "this mystery rider was a Lancaster Newspaper employee (not editorial, though) who bragged that he was going to lead the parade, even though he was NOT a Klansman. "In other words," he continued, "just for hellishness." (3) As reported

in the November 19, 1923 **New Era**, there was a Christian H. Harnish of New Danville who attempted to blackmail Martin Good, Willow Street, for \$15,000 by posing as a member of the Klan. The 23-year-old Harnish, definitely not a Klansman, needed the money to pay his father a debt. He was arrested on the 19th in the local post office.

Eighth, as one reads the data on the origin of the Klan, he cannot help but notice that the "reborn" movement does not follow the lines from the original Klan. Robert Duffus writes that this 1920 movement appears to have strains of the old "Know-Nothing" Party, who like the Klan did their political work "surreptitiously" in the 1840's, and 50's; and the American Protective Association, which operated in the late 1880's and early 90's with its anti-Catholic and anti-foreign spirit.<sup>78</sup>

Ninth, it is interesting to witness that the rise and fall of the local Klan reflects the same "disease"—rivalries, jealousies, and charges of financial irregularity—as viewed on the national scene, and by 1927, just three years after the local demise, this national organization was crumbling.

Tenth, the **New Republic** in its November 30, 1927 issue lists the "historical accidents" which caused people everywhere to join the Klan:<sup>79</sup>

- (1) People were frightened, minds were unsettled by a great war which they never really understood or believed in;
- (2) Prohibition began when the famous "wildness of youth" was at its peak;
- (3) There was a general disbelief in the honesty of the press;
- (4) The anti-foreign aspect caused by the war made people conscious of the large mass of foreigners within our midst; and
- (5) To the class of potential Klan members, the whole present day civilization seemed undesirable.

In closing, a perspective observation of the Klan reveals that this definitely was an extremist movement which was not organized to get things done, but only intent in preserving the **status quo** which seemed in danger of disappearing. Groups in our society today have this same basic concept of existence, thus the challenge to the level-headed American is ever present.

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## NOTES

### CHAPTER I

1. Ward Green, "Notes for a History on the Klan," **American Mercury**, June, 1925, p. 240.
2. Albert De Silver, "KKK: Soul of Chivalry," **The Nation**, September 14, 1921, p. 285.
3. Angus Perkinson, "Imperial Wizard and His Klan," **Literary Digest**, February 5, 1921, p. 42.
4. **Ibid.**
5. **Ibid.**

6. Oscar Theodore Barck, Jr. and Nelson Manfred Blake, *Since 1900*, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 367.
7. Frank Parker Stockbridge, "KKK Revival," *Current History*, April, 1921 p. 24.
8. Perkinson, *loc. cit.*
9. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
10. Stockbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
11. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 241.
12. "For and Against the Klan," *Literary Digest*, September 24, 1921, p. 34.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. De Silver, *op. cit.*, p. 286.
16. "For and Against the Klan," *loc. cit.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Stockbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
19. "For and Against the Klan," *loc. cit.*
20. The Klan donated \$1200 to the Chicago Immanuel Baptist Church. *Examiner-New Era*, August 21, 1922, p. 1.
21. *Examiner-New Era*, January 1, 1923, p. 2.
22. *News Journal*, January 1, 1923, p. 1.
23. *Examiner-New Era*, January 1, 1923, p. 12.
24. *News Journal*, January 3, 1923, p. 4.
25. *News Journal*, January 16, 1923, p. 4.
26. *News Journal*, January 19, 1923, p. 1.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Examiner-New Era*, January 19, 1923, p. 1.
30. *News Journal*, February 2, 1923, p. 1.
31. *New Era*, May 2, 1923, p. 1 (Note: The *Examiner* now becomes known as the *New Era*.)
32. *New Era*, August 27, 1923, p. 1.
33. "Klan As An Issue," *Outlook*, September 3, 1924, p. 5.
34. *Sunday News*, September 16, 1923, p. 1.
35. *New Era*, October 9, 1923, p. 1.
36. *New Era*, October 12, 1923, p. 1.
37. *New Era*, October 30, 1923, p. 1.
38. The writer of this front page story claimed his paper was "personally" invited because it had attacked the Klan in print. *Ibid.*
39. Interview former *Intell Journal* reporter, conducted via the telephone on July 11, 1964.
40. *New Era*, June 18, 1924, p. 2.
41. *New Era*, November 6, 1923, p. 1.
42. *New Era*, November 8, 1923, p. 6.
43. *New Era*, November 24, 1923, p. 6.
44. *New Era*, November 12, 1923, p. 1.
45. *Ibid.*
46. General Reynolds, a Lancaster lad, was the only commanding officer slain in the first day's battle at Gettysburg, July 1, 1863. *Ibid.*
47. *New Era*, November 13, 1923, p. 6.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
50. *New Era*, November 15, 1923, p. 3.
51. *New Era*, November 26, 1923, p. 5.

## CHAPTER II

52. *New Era*, February 11, 1924, p. 3.
53. *New Era*, March 24, 1924, p. 1.
54. *New Era*, March 27, 1924, p. 1.
55. *New Era*, April 11, 1924, p. 3.
56. *New Era*, April 15, 1924, p. 1.
57. Postens, whose residence was in Lancaster, was a national lecturer for the Klan, a part-time reporter for the *Examiner*, and a pastor of a Methodist Church, located in southern Lancaster County.

58. *New Era*, June 4, 1924, p. 1.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
63. *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*
66. *New Era*, June 21, 1924, p. 2.
67. Lancasterian interviews, *Ibid.*
68. "Klan Enters the Campaign," *Literary Digest*, July 12, 1924, p. 10.
69. As offering plates are passing by each hooded man, he tosses into the plate a silver dollar causing a jingling sound to be heard as the piece of silver hits the plate. *New Era*, July 14, 1924, p. 1.
70. *New Era*, July 24, 1924, p. 1.
71. *Ibid.*
72. *New Era*, July 26, 1924, p. 2.

### CHAPTER III

73. Frank Bohn, "Ku Klux Klan Interpreted," *American Journal of Sociology*, January, 1925, p. 385.
74. *New Era*, July 25, 1924, p. 2.
75. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 240.
76. *Ibid.*
77. "Protestants Disowning the Klan," *Literary Digest*, November 25, 1922, p. 33.
78. Robert L. Duffus, "Ancestry and End of KKK," *World's Work*, September, 1923, p. 531.
79. "Rise and Fall of the KKK," *New Republic*, November 30, 1927, p. 33.

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