Tune: "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag"

Pack up your troubles with your childish toys,
And kluck, girls, kluck!
Look to the Fiery Cross and keep your poise,
Kluck, girls, thro your struck!
"Not for self but others" girls, You never will get stuck IF
You pack up your troubles with your broken toys, And kluck, girls kluck.

Tune: The Long, Long Trail

Its a short, short while we live here,
So let us smile while we may;
With a song for every moment
Of the whole bright day.
What's the use of looking gloomy,
Or what's the use of our tears?
When we know a mummy's had no fun
For about three thousand years.

THERE'S A LONG, LONG, TRAIL

There's a long long trail a-winding into the land of my dreams,
Where friendship's fires are glowing and the Rugged Cross gleams,
There's a long, long line a-marching beneath a bright flag unfurled,
For the Klansmen of our country saves the manhood of the world.

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R-8—"Since Jesus Came Into My Heart"*
R-9—"Uncle Sammy's Melting Pot"
R-10—"You're a Grand Old Flag"
R-11—"The March of the Klansmen"
R-12—"Our Mothers of Liberty"
R-13—"Ku Klux Steppin Blues"
R-14—"Kluxer Blues"
R-15—"Carry Your Cross With a Smile"*
R-16—"Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me"*
R-17—"The Old Rugged Cross"*
R-18—"Where the Gates Swing Outward Never"*
R-19—"I Walk With the King"*
R-20—"The Great Judgment Morning"*

Roll marked (*) are not K. K. K. Rolls

1001—Safe In The Arms of Jesus—Homer Rodeheaver, (with Piano.)
I Walk With the King—Homer Rodeheaver, Baritone, (with Orchestra.)

1002—Hallelujah Chorus—Salvation Army Territorial Staff Band.
Jesus Is Mighty To Save—Salvation Army Territorial Staff Band.

1003—Carry Your Cross With a Smile—Homer Rodeheaver.
Life's Railway To Heaven—Homer Rodeheaver.

1004—He Knows The Way—Homer Rodeheaver, Baritone, (with Orchestra.)
An Evening Prayer—Homer Rodeheaver, Baritone, (with Orchestra.)

1005—Standing In The Need of Prayer—(Negro Spiritual)—Mrs. Asher, Homer Rodeheaver and Bob Matthews.
Heab'n—(Negro Spiritual)—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver.

1007—When I Look In His Face—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver. (Contralto and Baritone with Orchestra.)
Can The World See Jesus in You—Homer Rodeheaver. (Baritone with Orchestra.)

1010—Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me—Homer Rodeheaver
Me, An' Pap An' Mother—Homer Rodeheaver, (Recitation.)

1011—How Tedious and Tasteless the Hours—Homer Rodeheaver.
In The Garden—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver.

1013—Hallelujah! What a Saviour!—(Cincinnati Chorus 2,000 voices.)
Sail On—Cincinnati Chorus, 2,000 Voices.

1015—The Half Has Never Yet Been Told—Homer Rodeheaver.
The Old Rugged Cross—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver.

1016—The Church in the Wildwood—Homer Rodeheaver, (Quartet.)
Just Outside the Door—(Rainbow Quartet.)

1018—I Will Sing Of My Redeemer—Perry Kim and Einar Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)
Keep Me On the Firing Line—Perry Kim and Einar Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)

1033—City Unseen—Rodeheaver and Beddoe. (Baritone and Tenor.)
Closer to Jesus—Rodeheaver and Beddoe. (Baritone and Tenor.)

1040—Since Jesus Came Into My Heart—Homer Rodeheaver, Baritone.
Is My Name Written There?—Homer Rodeheaver, Baritone.

1044—Great Day—(Negro Spiritual) Homer Rodeheaver and Quartet.
Down By The Riverside—(Negro Spiritual)—Homer Rodeheaver and Quartet.

1047—All the Way to Calvary—Homer Rodeheaver.
Calling Thee—(Crosby-Gabriel)—Homer Rodeheaver and Mrs. Asher.

1059—Sweeter As The Years Go By—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver.
Transformed—(Burroghs-Ackley)—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver.

1060—Ninety and Nine—Homer Rodeheaver and Quartet.
When They Ring Those Golden Bells—Homer Rodeheaver (with Orchestra.)

1061—Brighten the Corner Where You Are—Homer Rodeheaver.
If Your Heart Keeps Right—Homer Rodeheaver (with Orchestra.)

1065—Speak My Lord—Kim and Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)
He Touched Me and Made Me Whole—Kim and Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)

1066—He Keeps Me Singing—Perry Kim and Einar Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)
No Disappointment in Heaven—Perry Kim and Einar Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)

1073—No Disappointment in Heaven—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver. (Contralto and Baritone with Orchestra.)
Take Up Thy Cross—Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver. (Contralto and Baritone with Orchestra.)

1097—Heaven In My Soul—Kim and Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)
I Was There When It Happened—Kim and Nyland (with Mandolin and Guitar.)

1110—The End Of The Road—Homer Rodeheaver and E. M. Roth (Duet.)
I'll Go Where You Want Me To Go—Homer Rodeheaver (Baritone.)

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S-11—"Our Mothers of Liberty"
S-12—"Kluxer Blues"
S-13—"Ku Klux Steppin' Blues"
S-14—"The March of the Klansmen"
S-15—"All Hail White Hooded Knight" (25c)
S-16—"He's a Knight of the Ku Klux Klan" (25c)
S-17—"Daddy Swiped the Last Clean Sheet and Joined the Ku Klux Klan"
S-18—"That's Why I'm a Klansman"
S-19—"The Honor of a Klansman"
S-20—"The City of Klan Faith"
S-21—"The Coming of the Klan"
S-22—"The Prayer of a Klansman"
S-23—"The U. S. Flag"
S-24—"Your a Grand Old Flag"
S-25—"The Call of a Klansman"
S-26—"The Ku Klux Klan and the Pope"
S-27—"Take Up Thy Cross"
S-28—"There's a Klansman Watching You"
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K-4—"The Way of the Cross" (Male Quartet)
Tune: "The Wayside Cross"
"Arouse, Oh Klansmen True" (Male Quartet)
K-5—"Welcome the Klan" (Male Quartet)
"Let Fiery Cross Be Burning" (Male Quartet)
Lights Be Burning"
K-6—"You're a Grand Old Flag" (Vocal)
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75002—"My Own United States"
"Patriotic Medley"
75003—"The Cross in the Wildwood"
"Why I Am a Klansman"
75004—"America's Task", by Dr. H. W. Evans.
"America, Our Noble Land"
75005—"Battle Hymn of Republic"
"Midnight Roll Call"
75006—"Daddy Swiped the Last Clean Sheet"
"The Gathering Klan"
75007—"Keep Cool With Coolidge"
"President Coolidge March"
75008—"Onward Valiant Klansmen"—Tune: "Onward Christian Soldiers"
"The Klan is Coming"—Tune: Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching"
75009—"Come Join the K. K. K. in the Old Town Tonight"
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35—"Klansmen Keep the Cross Burning"
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20081—"Johnny Join the Klan"
"I Want to be a Klansman"
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WHITE HOODS UNDER THE BIG SKY:

MONTANANS EMBRACE THE KU KLUX KLAN

Anne Sturdevant

KLANSMEN STAGE NIGHT SPECTACLE

Thousands of visitors to the Midland Empire Fair were treated tonight to a spectacle not advertised on the Governor's Day program.

At 10:00 sharp, the city was aroused by a continuous bursting of air bombs over the high rimrocks that surround the northern part of the city. This was followed a little later by the bursting into flames of a cross nearly 50 feet in height, the "fiery cross of the K.K.K."

As the cross blazed, lighting the entire top of the hills for miles around, hundreds of red flares were touched off. And, on the edge of the hills 300 yards above the city, marched hundreds of white-robed members of the organization, carrying red and green flaming torches....

According to officials of the Klan, the meeting held tonight was a statewide gathering, nearly 2,000 members being present.

Billings Gazette, September 21, 1923

Most Montanans are justly horrified when they learn that the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) gained widespread popularity in the

state during the 1920s. In this current era of the Montana Militia, the Aryan Nations, and the Freemen--all involving relatively small numbers of participants--it seems illogical that the Klan once established chapters from Plentywood to Hamilton and from Miles City to Thompson Falls.

Yet from 1923 to 1931, the KKK functioned as a vibrant political, social, and fraternal organization under the Big Sky. The Realm of Montana became a component in Nathan Bedford Forrest's astounding 1915 revival of the Ku Klux Klan. By the mid-1920s, the organization boasted more than 5,000,000 registered members nationwide. Membership was restricted to white, Protestant males, born in the United States.

At its height in 1924, the Montana Klan boasted more than 40 Klaverns and a dues-paying membership of almost 5,200 men. Since the state's population at the time was about 540,000, the total KKK membership remained less than one percent of the population.

However, the group's influence far exceeded its membership base. In addition to the KKK proper, sympathizers could join: the Royal Riders of the Red Robe, for foreign-born Klansmen; the Junior KKK program, for boys under 18 years of age; the Women of the Ku Klux Klan, an auxiliary whose numbers frequently exceeded the membership of the local chapter itself. The Klan also received silent support from

those Montanans who feared formal membership in such a radical group--regardless of its famed secrecy.

On September 16, 1923, the national Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans chartered the Invisible Realm of Montana. In theory the Montana realm reflected its parent, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. A full-page ad in the *Billings Gazette* (September 30, 1923), listed the "cardinal principles" of the organization:

1. The Tenets of the Christian Religion.
2. Upholding the Constitution of the United States.
3. The Sovereignty of our States Rights.
4. The Separation of Church and State.
5. Religious Liberty.
6. Freedom of Speech and Press.
7. Compulsory Education in Free Public Schools.
8. Protection of our Pure Womanhood.
9. White Supremacy.
10. Limitation of Foreign Immigration.
11. Closer Relationship between Capital and American Labor.
12. Just Laws and Liberty.

Critics would find it difficult to argue in the abstract with these principles. In reality, however, the KKK advocated the suppression of Catholic schools, the elimination of "non-white immigrants," Jews, and Blacks from business and politics, and the severe restriction of immigration--in addition to its standard white-supremacy plank.

In truth, the Klan found itself caught in a paradox: while ostensibly supporting the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, it worked to target its four enemies: immigrants;

Jews; Catholics; Blacks. Further, in pursuit of its goals, the KKK easily justified violence--symbolized by its hoods and masks, swords, and burning crosses. In at least one case, that violence wrote an ugly chapter in the Montana chronicle.

The KKK sprouted and thrived in Montana during the 1920s because residents faced both a society in flux and an uncertain economy, and they succumbed to fear. That society was proportionately heavy in foreign-born residents, and it still suffered from the anti-German hysteria promoted during World War I. Further, the state's economy remained unstable--particularly its mining and timber industries suffered post-war busts. Through the 1910s, tens of thousands of foreign-born homesteaders had arrived to file on dryland farms. When the drought hit Montana's high plains (1916-1919), prairie society unraveled. For example, 435 banks operated in the state in 1921; by 1926, 220 of those institutions had failed.

Thousands of white Montanans, faced with this confusing situation, found the Ku Klux Klan ready to salve their wounds and to identify the supposed annihilators of their traditional lifestyle: immigrants; Jews; Catholics; Blacks. The Klan proved particularly appealing because of its "secret" membership and covert activities--best represented by the hoods and the robes.

The organization masterfully built secrecy upon its

special lexicon of terms, its mysterious rituals, and its use of violence. To a young, white Montana man who wanted to "belong" and needed to blame others for what he did not understand, the Invisible Empire offered an appealing solution. Nevertheless, the KKK suffered some real problems in the state.

Despite the focus of the hate literature that poured out of the KKK national office in Atlanta, Montanans found it difficult to generate a concerted hatred of Jews and Blacks--when so few Jews and Blacks resided in the state. Thus the Realm of Montana concentrated its hatred on the state's Catholics.

And there were plenty of Catholics here! A 1920 federal religious census noted that a full *65 per cent* of Montanans who declared a religion were Catholic. Butte alone reported 25,000 registered Catholics. The Realm of Montana's newsletter, the *Official Circular,* quoted Grand Dragon Lewis Terwilliger: "Butte is the worst place in the State of Montana, so far as alienism and Catholicism are concerned."

Throughout the Montana Realm's existence (1923-1931), Terwilliger led Montana Klansmen. He had arrived in the state from Michigan as a teacher in 1895 and served as a principal in Butte and Townsend. He then became the principal of Park County High School in Livingston (1903-1913), where he also

started a real-estate/ abstracting business and ran a 640-acre ranch outside town. Terwilliger was a strong Methodist, an avowed Republican, and a 33rd-degree Mason. Residents attested to his popularity by electing him the mayor of Livingston for two terms (1919-1923).

Terwilliger had been a member of the national Ku Klux Klan since its revival in the mid-1910s. Delegates elected him the Grand Dragon of the Realm of Montana at their organizational convention in Livingston in 1923. As Grand Dragon, Terwilliger received an annual salary of $1,150--at a time when the average American wage was $680 a year, and the typical American farmer's wage was $275!

The Grand Dragon's salary derived from the dues of Montana Klansmen, $5 per year. Other KKK expenses included a $10 initiation fee, $5 for the hood and robe, and $1 a year for the national KKK publication, the *Kourier.* The Klan also performed the rituals expected of a fraternal organization: it collected special assessments to aid afflicted members; it buried its dead; it supported with donations those causes and organizations that it liked. The Montana KKK particularly liked the Salvation Army, the Methodist Church, the Protestant orphanage in Helena, the Deaconess Hospital in Havre, and Inter-Mountain Union College in Helena.

Also, *unlike* other fraternal organizations, the Klan

publicly burned crosses in the dark of night--as a weapon of intimidation. For example, the *Laurel Outlook* noted (September 16, 1925):

> From out of the gloom, a flaming cross bloomed forth on top of Square Butte, four miles west of Laurel, on Thursday night! A Ku Klux Klan meeting was in process, at which it was estimated that 2,500 were in attendance and some 100 or more candidates were initiated. The customary white-robed figures, bearing torches, were to be seen moving about and, at one time, a number of bombs and sky rockets were set off....
>
> Not since the days when the Indians held ceremonies on the Butte has there been the spectacle of burning fires and moving figures such as were seen Thursday night.

In addition to this type of dramatic intimidation, the Klan used outright threats in pursuit of its goals. One instance involved the Black wife of an Anaconda pastor. The *Anaconda Standard* reported (February 6, 1923):

> Mysterious letters, written over the signature of crossed bones and signed "Ku Klux," are spreading terror in Anaconda homes....
>
> Mrs. M. A. Clements, the colored wife of the pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, yesterday received the following anonymous letter, printed in pencil and enclosed in a pink envelope, ordering her to leave town:
>
> "Mrs. Clements: Your tongue has trapped you with your race and the white race. You had better leave town or we will tar and feather you. Beware. --Ku Klux."
>
> Anacondans are very much alarmed over the entire proceedings.

The most violent incident involving the Montana KKK occurred at Crow Agency, 11 miles southeast of Hardin. In

late October, 1926, a Black man named James Belden--mistakenly suspected of petty theft--had been told by a few local whites to "get out of town or suffer the consequences." Two years earlier, Belden had moved from Butte to Crow Agency, where he repaired shoes and did odd jobs around the community.

When Belden refused to abandon his home, the locals contacted Big Horn County Sheriff Robert P. Gilmore in Hardin. At the time, Gilmore was running for another term as sheriff in the up-coming November election; he was widely known as an official in Hardin's Klan #35. Gilmore promised that he "would rid the town of that nigger Belden."

On October 29, Gilmore and Undersheriff Andy L. Dornberger drove to Crow Agency on a "campaign trip." When the two lawmen approached Belden's shack, the Black man opened fire, killing Gilmore and wounding his deputy. Quickly lawmen, volunteers, and sightseers surrounded the cabin and began firing fusillades at Belden. The *Billings Gazette* estimated that, within an hour, more than 200 men had encircled the shack.

In the exchange of gunfire, Belden also killed John MacLeod, who for four years had served as a special officer for the Office of Indian Affairs on the Crow Reservation. MacLeod was attempting to skirt the shack to reach an adjacent barn, to set it afire. Shortly thereafter the barn was

torched (*Billings Gazette*, October 30, 1926):

> A. C. Cole and John Lawrence, employees of the Big Horn Garage, risked death by throwing gasoline on the barn and setting it afire, after they had recovered MacLeod's apparently lifeless body. Indian youths had prepared arrows and flaming excelsior to fire the structure from behind beet wagons and the Catholic Church, when Cole and Lawrence accomplished the task.

After a short time, the burning barn ignited Belden's shack (*Hardin Tribune-Herald*, October 29, 1926).

> The building burned like tinder, and soon the flames forced the negro to come out. In the yard, he was riddled with bullets from upwards of a hundred guns. After he had been brought down, he fired three more shots as he lay on the ground.
>
> The crowd rushed up to him and picked up his body while he was still gasping. There was talk of a "neck tie party," but instead the crowd threw him into his cabin, where he soon was consumed by the flames.

Authorities filed no charges as a result of this two-hour confrontation. The next week hundreds of sympathizers--including "ten Crow Indian chiefs in full regalia"--attended the funerals of Gilmore and MacLeod in Hardin. Among the dignitaries at Gilmore's service appeared Lewis Terwilliger, the Imperial Wizard of the Realm of Montana.

Most local Klan activity in Montana assumed a less physically violent character. For example, a visit to Montana by the Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans in August, 1926, combined business with pleasure (*Livingston Enterprise*, August 6, 1926):

> A state-wide meeting of the Montana Ku Klux Klan closed here tonight with a lecture by Dr. H. W. Evans, head of the national organization. It is said that many of the more important cities and towns of the state were represented.
>
> The Strand Theater was used for the day session. A parade of nearly 400 robed marchers passed through the streets of the city. This number included 50 to 60 women members of the auxiliary branch. It is estimated that upwards of 2,000 Livingston people assembled along the streets to witness the parade.
>
> Friday the members and their families will leave for a tour through Yellowstone National Park.

Evans also had made an earlier appearance in Montana. On November 15, 1924, he spoke in Billings at the Methodist Church and at the Coliseum Theater, to standing-room-only crowds. Evans addressed the issues of restricted immigration, racial purity, and political tactics.

In fact, Klan activity in Montana consistently displayed a strong political bent. The KKK routinely backed Republican candidates, particularly if they were Masons or held Klan membership. For example, in the 1924 race for Montana's U.S. Senate seat, incumbent Democrat Thomas J. Walsh encountered an unexpectedly tough opponent in Republican challenger Frank Linderman, the noted Montana author. A newspaperman and an insurance salesman, Linderman received enthusiastic Klan endorsements and substantial Klan financial support. This assistance proved revealing, as Terwilliger identified Linderman as "a present or former Klansman." Walsh barely survived with 52 per cent of the total vote.

Terwilliger's *Official Circular* regularly previewed county and state elections, and used a "secret code" to identify candidates both acceptable and unacceptable to the Klan. The code noted, for instance:

B. Branded by our Imperial Office as having an undesirable record in regard to Klan principles. They recommend that this candidate be defeated.
C. Considered a candidate of the A.C.M. [Anaconda Copper Mining] Company.
D. Dry [in favor of Prohibition].
F. Favorable to the Klan and Klan principles.
H. Wife is a Roman Catholic.
M. Mason.
O. Opposed to the Klan.
P. Protestant.
R. Roman Catholic.
U. Unworthy of the support of Klansmen, because he is opposed to our principles.
W. Wet [in favor of the repeal of Prohibition].
* Present or former Klansman.

KKK fervor built inexorably toward the 1928 Presidential election, because it offered such a clear-cut choice between candidates. The Democrats nominated Al Smith, a Catholic urban-dweller who favored the repeal of Prohibition. The Republicans, on the other hand, nominated "country boy" Herbert Hoover, a Protestant who favored strongly-enforced Prohibition. During the summer of 1928, Lewis Terwilliger worked himself into a frenzy in his newsletters, rallying Montana Klansmen to work against Al Smith.

Hoover won the election with 58.2 per cent of the national vote. He also carried Montana by about 34,000 votes

(113,000 to 79,000). No one can say to what extent Klan work assisted Hoover in Montana, but Smith carried only Butte, Anaconda, and Glacier County.

Membership in the Realm of Montana declined after the 1928 election for several reasons. The strident nativism that had begun with World War I German-bashing finally ran its course. In addition to this waning hatred of immigrants, Montanan Klansmen always had found it difficult to focus on Jews and Blacks--regardless of the Klan's national policy--when the state offered so few of either minority.

Further, all fraternal organizations lost membership during the late 1920s. They became the victims of such other leisure-time attractions as talking movies, radio, sports, and automobile travel to nearby towns on improved roads. The young Montana workman suddenly faced either a Tuesday evening Klan meeting at the local Klavern or a date with Sweet Nell at the Roxy Theater--and he opted for a talking movie and Nell.

Then, when adultery, drunkenness, and embezzlement scandals rocked the national KKK leadership, Klansmen who had joined to support "moral purity" abandoned the organization. Finally, as economic uncertainty and dislocation became truly severe in the early 1930s, the dues and costs of holding a KKK membership became luxuries to many Montana Klansmen.

So, in the early 1930s, the Montana Klan movement

withered and died for lack of viable targets, for lack of enthusiasm, for lack of relative excitement. In 1931 the state's surviving membership--consolidated in "the Grand Klan of Montana"--numbered less than 100 stalwarts.

In retrospect, if the Ku Klux Klan were to forge solid inroads in 1920s Montana, it needed to establish a beachhead in Butte--that bastion of Catholicism. Yet, throughout its existence (1923-1928), members of Butte's Kontinental Klan #30 lived in abject fear and proved wholly ineffective.

In response to reports that the KKK was recruiting in Butte, Silver Bow County Sheriff Larry Duggan said (*Butte Miner*, July 22, 1921), "My deputies have orders to shoot any Ku Kluxers on sight--shoot them down like wolves." Imperial Wizard Lewis Terwilliger noted the dire situation in a 1924 letter to Butte's Exalted Cyclops Albert W. Jones: "I know that you are involved in the most difficult, the most dangerous situation in Montana. It is nothing short of a war zone."

In the face of Catholic opposition, Kontinental Klan #30 ran scared. For instance, its officials published their meeting announcements under spurious names, rather than identify themselves as Klansmen. For a time, the Butte Klan called itself "the Butte Men's Literary Society." It also hid behind the names "Protestant Men's Welfare Council" and

"Krishna Improvement Association."

At one point, Exalted Cyclops Jones complained to Terwilliger that he thought Butte's Irish Catholic postmen were intercepting his KKK mail from the Atlanta headquarters. Before the Imperial Wizard could reply, Jones seemingly solved his own problem. He informed Terwilliger that he had "changed his name to Knute Karl Knutson [KKK] and rented a new post-office box." Within weeks, however, Jones was forced to admit that the Irish Catholic postmen had figured out his ruse--and he still was receiving no official mail from Atlanta.

Ultimately the Ku Klux Klan sustained only a short, eight-year run in Montana. Its influence proved modest in Montana politics, less strong in the arena of social reform, and ultimately ineffective in targeting with violence its enemies: immigrants, Jews, Catholics, and Blacks.

Nevertheless, present-day Montanans should learn a lesson from the KKK's remarkable popularity in the state during the 1920s: Given the right set of circumstances, this type of despicable racism again could gain a foothold under the Big Sky. Constant vigilance and vocal opposition--the kind that recently fostered the "Not in Our Town!" response in Billings--are required to combat similarly covert radical cells.

The admonition of German anti-Nazi theologian Martin Niemoller speaks directly to the current situation in Montana

and the Northwest:

> In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up.

****

SOURCES

The primary archival source for research in Montana's Ku Klux Klan movement is *Manuscript Collection 236: Knights of the Ku Klux Klan--Kontinental Klan No. 30 (Butte, Montana) Records, 1916, 1921-1931*, held by the Archives of the Cheney-Cowles Museum in Spokane, Washington. This collection, while focusing on the Butte klan, includes important materials from the Realm of Montana and from the national organization. The collection's many publications of the KKK's own press in Atlanta, Georgia, are important to an understanding of the entire movement.

The Montana Historical Society Library/Archives holds the Cheney-Cowles collection on microfilm (*MF 457*); microfilm copies are also available at the Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives and the Butte Public Library. A thorough inventory

accompanies this material, both in hard copy and on microfilm.

Two unpublished works provide the best overview of the KKK in Montana: Anne Sturdevant, "The Ku Klux Klan in Montana during the 1920s," Honors Paper, Carroll College, 1991; Christine K. Erickson, "The Boys in Butte: the Ku Klux Klan Confronts the Catholics, 1923-1929," M.A. thesis, University of Montana, 1991.

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See also the following volumes: Shawn Lay, ed., *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical*

Appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1992); Nancy Maclean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: the Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Michael and Judy Ann Newton, *The Ku Klux Klan: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 1990); Richard K. Tucker, *The Dragon and the Cross: the Rise and Fall of the Ku Klux Klan in Middle America* (North Haven, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1991).

Of particular interest to the Montana KKK experience are the following periodical pieces and theses: Robert Alan Goldberg, "Hooded Empire: the Ku Klux Klan in Colorado," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977; Arthur M. Schlessinger, Jr., "Biography of a Nation of Joiners," *American Historical Review*, v. 50 (1944), 1-25; Benjamin H. Avin, "The Ku Klux Klan, 1915-1925: A Study in Religious Intolerance," Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1952; Robert Neymeyer, "The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s in the Midwest and West: A Review Essay," *Annals of Iowa*, v. 51, #6 (1992), 625-633; Michael Morris Jessup, "The Decline of the 1920's Ku Klux Klan: A Sociological Analysis," Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 1992.

See also the following periodical pieces: Jeff LaLande, "Beneath the Hooded Robe: Newspapermen, Local Politics, and

the Ku Klux Klan in Jackson County, Oregon, 1921-1923," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, v. 83, #2 (1992), 45-52; Leonard J. Moore, "Historical Interpretations of the 1920's Klan: the Traditional View and the Populist Revision," *Journal of Social History*, v. 24, #2 (1990), 341-357; Kathleen M. Blee, "Women of the 1920s' Ku Klux Klan Movement," *Feminist Studies*, v. 17, #1 (1991), 57-77; David A. Horowitz, "The Klansman as Outsider: Ethnocultural Solidarity and Anti-elitism in the Oregon Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, v. 80, #1 (1989), 12-20; Horowitz, "Social Morality and Personal Revitalization: Oregon's Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, v. 90, #4 (Winter, 1989), 365-384; Gerald Lynn Marriner, "Klan Politics in Colorado," *Journal of the West*, v. 15, #1 (January, 1976), 76-101.

Supplemental related material can be found in several oral-history interviews conducted by the Montana Historical Society's oral historian Laurie Mercier and held by the MHS Archives. See also: Craig Holstine, "Marching as to War: the Ku Klux Klan in Eastern Washington in the 1920s," paper presented at the Pacific Northwest Historical Conference, Helena, Montana, May 17, 1985.

One of the most fruitful sources for the continued study of the KKK in Montana would be the wealth of the state's daily

and weekly newspapers. Largely untapped for KKK material, the 1920s microfilmed newspaper collection held by the Montana Historical Society Library will prove rich in KKK information.

Photocopied from record in the Montana Historical Society Archives (MC 169 - Anaconda Copper Mining Company Rec

Form K-102—50M—6-18-23

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD

Name S. J. Alexander #22

Res. Adr's Harlowton, Montana,

Bus. " " "

Occupation Telegrapher

Mail to Address. Phone

Klan No. 29, Realm of Montana, Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Located at Harlowton, State Montana

Naturalized 8-29 19 23

Age 32 Yrs.

Color Hair Brown

Eyes Brown

Height 5 ft. 6 in.

Weight 138 lbs.

Single / Married / Widower

Transferred from Klan No. ____ Realm of ____ 19 ____	1923	1924	
	JAN. $	JAN. $ 1	1st Qr.
	FEB. $	FEB. $	
	MCH. $	MCH. $ 1	
	APR. $	APR. $ 1	2nd Qr.
	MAY $	MAY $ 1	
	JUNE $	JUNE $ 1	
	JULY $	JULY $ 6 1/3	3rd Qr.
	AUG. $	AUG. $ 6 1/3	
	SEPT. $ 1	SEPT. $ 6 1/3	
	OCT. $ 5 00-1	OCT. $	4th Qr.
	NOV. $ 1	NOV. $	
	DEC. $ 30-1	DEC. $	

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died
19	19	19	19	19

NOTE: Write ALL REMARKS on other side.

Form K-102

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD

Name S. J. Alexander, #22

Res. Adr's Harlowton, Montana.

Bus. " " "

Occupation Telegrapher.

Mail to Address. Phone

Klan No. 29, Realm of Montana, Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Located at Harlowton, State Montana

Naturalized 8-29 19 23

Age 32 Yrs.

Color Hair Brown

Eyes Brown

Height 5 ft. 6 in.

Weight 138 lbs.

Single / Married / Widower

Transferred from Klan No. ____ Realm of ____ 19 ____	1925	1926	
	JAN. $	JAN. $	1st Qr.
	FEB. $	FEB. $	
	MCH. $	MCH. $	
	APR. $	APR. $	2nd Qr.
	MAY $	MAY $	
	JUNE $	JUNE $	
	JULY $	JULY $	3rd Qr.
	AUG. $	AUG. $	
	SEPT. $	SEPT. $	
	OCT. $	OCT. $	4th Qr.
	NOV. $	NOV. $	
	DEC. $	DEC. $	

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died
19	19	19	19	19

NOTE: Write ALL REMARKS on other side.

191 members, Wheatland County, 1923-28

occupations on other membership:

division lineman
Water inspector GF N Ry Co
ranch hand
(H'ton) chief of police (Ben R. Britzius)
rancher (Geo W. ")
" (W. A. ")
railway mail clerk
(H'ton) sheriff (L. W. Clark)
(H'ton) roundhouse foreman
undersheriff (J. A. Ehlen)
locomotive engineer
RR conductor

switchman
county treasurer (F. P. Grove)
yardmaster CCM+StP RR
county clerk & recorder
switchman
yardmaster
county surveyor
telegraph operator
Ry boiler maker
switchman
rancher (G. K. Robertson, Twodot) (C. F. Williams, Twodot)
→ Thos. A. Thompson, Ringling

printer-publisher, Judith Gap (C. A. Wallin)

Loaned for copying by the Upper Musselshell Historical Society, Harlowton, Montana, June 1997

Form K-102 50M 10-14-22

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD

Name Thos. A. Thomson 126

Res. Adr's Rolw

Bus. " Ringling, Montana,

Occupation

Mail to Address. Phone

Klan No. Realm of Located at State

Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

	19	19 24	
Transferred from Klan No.	JAN. $	JAN. $ 300 1	1st Qr.
Realm of 19	FEB. $	FEB. $ 1	
Naturalized 1-11 19 24	MCH. $	MCH. $ 1	
	APR. $	APR. $ 1	2nd Qr.
Age Yrs.	MAY $	MAY $ 1	
	JUNE $	JUNE $ 1	
Color Hair	JULY $	JULY $ 66 2/3	3rd Qr.
Eyes	AUG. $	AUG. $ 33 1/3	
Height ft. in.	SEPT. $	SEPT. $ 1	
Weight lbs.	OCT. $	OCT. $ 66 2/3	4th Qr.
Single Married Widower	NOV. $	NOV. $ 66 2/3	
	DEC. $	DEC. $ 66 2/3	

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died
19 9/23	19	19	19	19

NOTE: Write ALL REMARKS on other side.

Form K-102

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD

Name Thos. A. Thompson, #126.

Res. Adr's

Bus. " Ringling, Montana.

Occupation

Mail to Address. Phone

Klan No. Realm of Located at State

Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

	19 25	19 26	
Transferred from Klan No.	JAN. $ 66 2/3	JAN. $	1st Qr.
Realm of 19	FEB. $ 66 2/3	FEB. $	
Naturalized 1-11 19 24	MCH. $ 66 2/3	MCH. $	
	APR. $ 66 2/3	APR. $	2nd Qr.
Age Yrs.	MAY $ 66 2/3	MAY $	
	JUNE $ 66 2/3	JUNE $	
Color Hair	JULY $ 66 2/3	JULY $	3rd Qr.
Eyes	AUG. $ 66 2/3	AUG. $	
Height ft. in.	SEPT. $ 66 2/3	SEPT. $	
Weight lbs.	OCT. $ 66 2/3	OCT. $	4th Qr.
Single Married Widower	NOV. $ 66 2/3	NOV. $	
	DEC. $ 66 2/3	DEC. $	

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died
19	19	19	19	19

NOTE: Write ALL REMARKS on other side.

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Photocopied from records in the Montana Historical Society Archives (MC 169 - Anaconda Copper Mining Company Records)

FORM K-116

This is to certify that Kl. Verner L. Herbert

is a member in good standing of Wheatland Klan No. 29

Realm of Montana, with all dues paid to date and is hereby

recommended for fellowship in Columbus Klan No. 3

Realm of Montana

(Signed) H. L. Seubaeed
Kligrapp

Certified to by A. T. Anderson
Exalted Cyclops

(Local Klan Seal)

This is to certify that the Klansman named above has been accepted by

Columbus Klan No. 3, Realm of Montana

(Signed) T. J. Sayles
Kligrapp

Certified to by A. J. T. Sayles
Exalted Cyclops

(Local Klan Seal.)

MONTANA
MAGAZINE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1998 NO. 147



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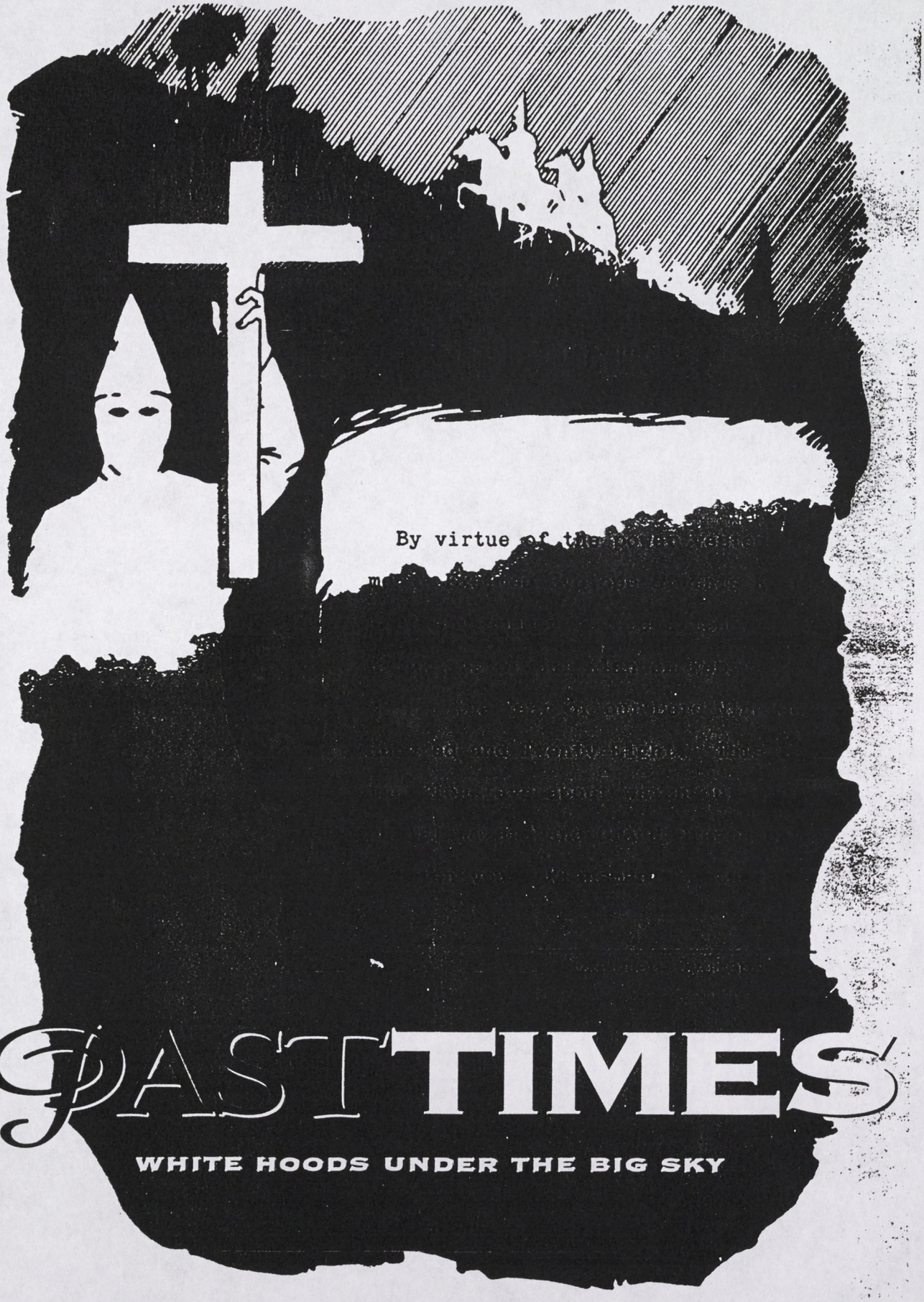
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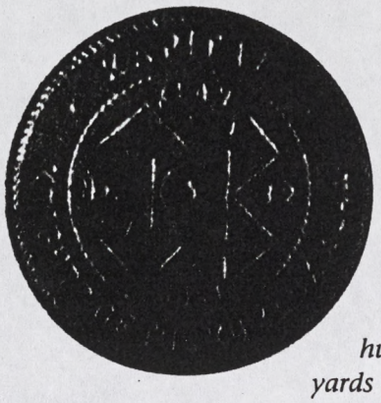
COVER: *Immature male pine grosbeak* PINICOLA ENUCLEATOR *eating snowberries* SYMPHORICARPOS ALBUS IN TROY DONALD M. JONES PHOTO

THIS PAGE: *The Mission Range* RICK & SUSIE GRAETZ PHOTO



PAST TIMES

WHITE HOODS UNDER THE BIG SKY



KLANSMEN STAGE NIGHT SPECTACLE

Thousands of visitors to the Midland Empire Fair were treated tonight to a spectacle not advertised on the Governor's Day program. At 10:00 sharp, the city was aroused by a continuous bursting of air bombs over the high rimrocks that surrounded the northern part of the city. This was followed a little later by the bursting into flames of a cross nearly 50 feet in height, the "fiery cross of the K.K.K."

As the cross blazed, lighting the entire top of the hills for miles around, hundreds of red flares were touched off. And, on the edge of the hills 300 yards above the city, marched hundreds of white-robed members of the organization, carrying red and green flaming torches....

According to officials of the Klan, the meeting held tonight was a statewide gathering, nearly 2,000 members being present.

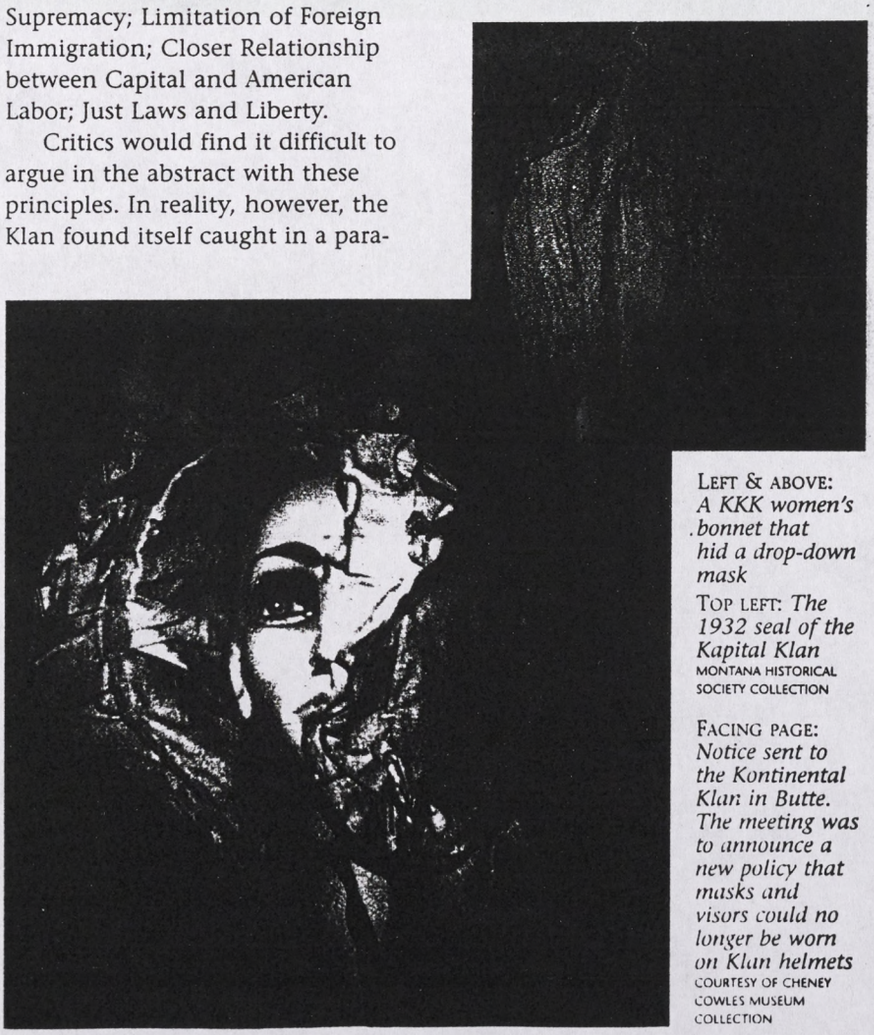
—*Billings Gazette,* September 21, 1923

Most Montanans are justly horrified when they learn that the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) gained widespread popularity in the state during the 1920s. In this present-day era of the Montana Militia, the Aryan Nations, and the Freemen—all involving small numbers of participants—it seems incomprehensible that the Klan once established chapters from Plentywood to Hamilton and from Miles City to Thompson Falls.

Yet from 1923 to 1931, the KKK functioned as a vibrant political, social, and fraternal organization under the Big Sky. The Realm of Montana became a component in Nathan Bedford Forrest's astounding 1915 revival of the Ku Klux Klan, which, by the mid-1920s, boasted more than five million registered members nationwide. Membership was restricted to white Protestant males born in the United States. At its height in 1924, the Montana Klan boasted more than 40 Klaverns and a dues-paying membership of almost 5,200 men.

On September 16, 1923, the national Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans chartered the Invisible Realm of Montana. In theory the Montana realm reflected its parent headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. A full-page ad in the *Billings Gazette* (September 30, 1923), listed the twelve "cardinal principles" of the organization: The Tenets of the Christian Religion; Upholding the Constitution of the United States; The Sovereignty of our States Rights; The Separation of Church and State; Religious Liberty; Freedom of Speech and Press; Compulsory Education in Free Public Schools; Protection of our Pure Womanhood; White Supremacy; Limitation of Foreign Immigration; Closer Relationship between Capital and American Labor; Just Laws and Liberty.

Critics would find it difficult to argue in the abstract with these principles. In reality, however, the Klan found itself caught in a paradox: while ostensibly supporting the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, it worked to target its four enemies: immigrants; Jews; Catholics; blacks. Further, in pursuit of its goals, the KKK justified violence—symbolized

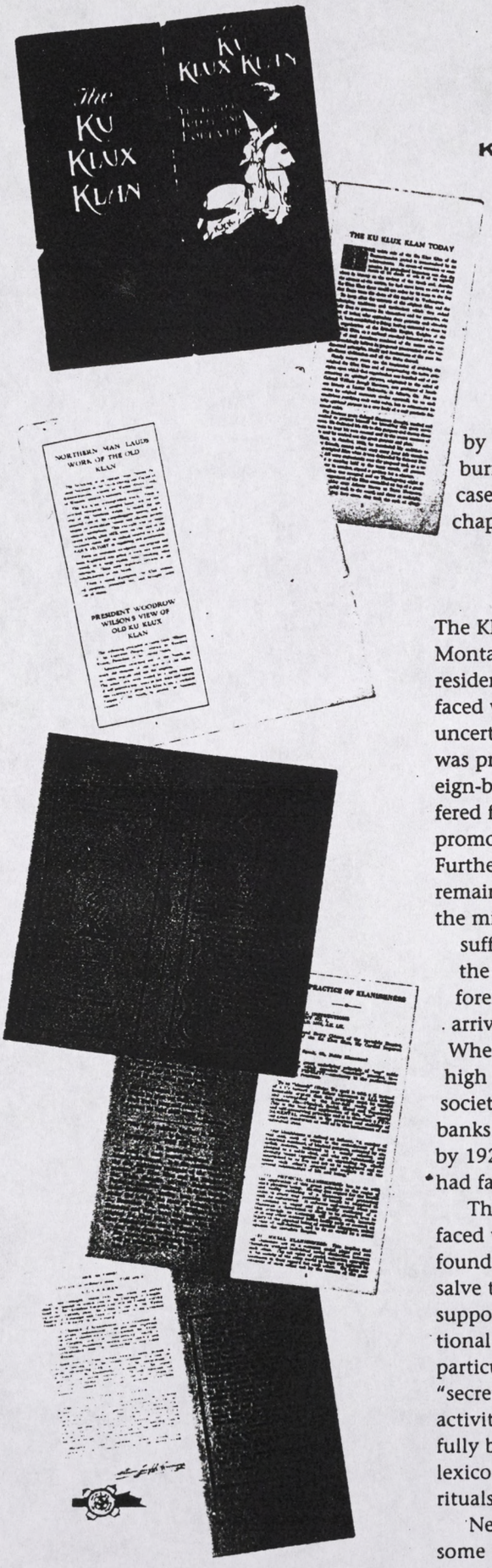


PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHNNIE LOCKETT THOMAS

LEFT & ABOVE: *A KKK women's bonnet that hid a drop-down mask*

TOP LEFT: *The 1932 seal of the Kapital Klan*
MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

FACING PAGE: *Notice sent to the Kontinental Klan in Butte. The meeting was to announce a new policy that masks and visors could no longer be worn on Klan helmets*
COURTESY OF CHENEY COWLES MUSEUM COLLECTION



KU KLUX KLAN HYMN
"THE MYSTIC CITY"

KLANSMAN, KLANSMAN, OF THE KU KLUX KLAN,
PROTESTANT, GENTILE, NATIVE-BORN MAN,
HOODED, KNIGHTED, ROBED, AND TRUE,
ROYAL SONS OF THE RED, WHITE, AND BLUE.
OWING NO ALLEGIANCE, WE ARE BORN FREE,
TO GOD AND OLD GLORY WE BEND OUR KNEE,
SUBLIME LINEAGE WRITTEN IN HISTORY STANDS,
WEIRD, MYSTERIOUS KU KLUX KLAN.

by hoods and masks, swords, and burning crosses. In at least one case, that violence wrote an ugly chapter in the Montana chronicle.

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

The KKK sprouted and thrived in Montana during the 1920s because residents succumbed to fear when faced with a society in flux and an uncertain economy. That society was proportionately heavy in foreign-born residents, and it still suffered from the anti-German hysteria promoted during World War I. Further, the state's economy remained unstable. In particular, the mining and timber industries suffered post-war busts. Through the 1910s, tens of thousands of foreign-born homesteaders had arrived to file on dryland farms. When the drought hit Montana's high plains (1916-1919), prairie society unraveled. For example, 435 banks operated in the state in 1921; by 1926, 220 of those institutions had failed.

Thousands of white Montanans, faced with this confusing situation, found the Ku Klux Klan ready to salve their wounds and identify the supposed annihilators of their traditional lifestyle. The Klan proved particularly appealing because of its "secret" membership and covert activities. The organization masterfully built secrecy upon its special lexicon of terms, its mysterious rituals, and its use of violence.

Nevertheless, the KKK suffered some real problems in the state. Despite the focus of the hate literature that poured out of the KKK national office in Atlanta, Montanans found it difficult to generate a concerted hatred of Jews and blacks when so few resided in the state. Thus, the Realm of Montana had to concentrate its hatred on the state's Catholics. And there were plenty of Catholics here! A 1920 federal religious census noted that a full sixty-five percent of Montanans who declared a religion were Catholic. Butte alone reported 25,000 registered Catholics. The Realm of Montana's newsletter, the *Official Circular,* quoted Grand Dragon Lewis Terwilliger: *Butte is the worst place in the State of Montana, so far as alienism and Catholicism are concerned.*

Throughout the Montana Realm's existence (1923-1931), Terwilliger led Montana's Klansmen. He had arrived in the state from Michigan as a teacher in 1895 and served as a principal in Butte and Townsend. He then became the principal of Park County High School in Livingston (1903-1913), where he also started a real-estate/abstracting business and ran a 640-acre ranch outside town. Terwilliger was a strong Methodist, an avowed Republican, and a 33rd-degree Mason. Livingston residents attested to his popularity by electing him mayor for two terms (1919-1923).

As elected grand dragon, Terwilliger received an annual salary of $1,150—at a time when the average

American wage was $680 a year, and the typical American farmer's wage was $275! The grand dragon's salary derived from the dues of each Montana Klansmen, $5 per year. Other expenses involved with joining the KKK included a $10 initiation fee, $5 for the hood and robe, and $1 a year for the national KKK publication, the *Kourier.* The Klan also performed the rituals expected of a fraternal organization: it collected special assessments to aid afflicted members; it buried its dead; it supported with donations those causes and organizations that it liked. The Montana KKK particularly liked the Salvation Army, the Methodist Church, the Protestant orphanage in Helena, the Deaconess Hospital in Havre, and Inter-Mountain Union College in Helena.

Klan activity in Montana consistently displayed a strong political bent. The KKK routinely backed Republican candidates, particularly if they were Masons or held Klan membership. For example, in the 1924 race for Montana's U.S. Senate seat, incumbent Democrat Thomas J. Walsh encountered an unexpectedly tough opponent in Republican challenger Frank Linderman, the noted Montana author. A newspaperman and an insurance salesman, Linderman received enthusiastic Klan endorsements and substantial Klan financial support. This assistance proved revealing, as Terwilliger identified Linderman as "a present or former Klansman." Walsh barely survived with fifty-two percent of the total vote.

Terwilliger's *Official Circular* regularly previewed county and state elections, and used a "secret code" to identify candidates both acceptable and unacceptable to the Klan.

TURNING UGLY

Unlike other fraternal organizations, the Klan publicly burned crosses in the dark of night—as a weapon of intimidation. In addition, the Klan used outright threats in pursuit of its goals. One instance involved the black wife of an Anaconda pastor. The *Anaconda Standard* reported (February 6, 1923): *Mysterious letters, written over the signature of crossed bones and signed "Ku Klux," are spreading terror in Anaconda homes...Mrs. M. A. Clements, the colored wife of the pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, yesterday received the following anonymous letter, printed in pencil and enclosed in a pink envelope, ordering her to leave town: "Mrs. Clements: Your tongue has trapped you with your race and the white race. You had better leave town or we will tar and feather you. Beware.—Ku Klux."*

Anacondans are very much alarmed over the entire proceedings.

The most violent incident involving the Montana KKK occurred at Crow Agency. In late October, 1926, a black man named



Ad in the Butte Miner, July 17, 1921
MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

LEST WE FORGET

Montanans should not consider the state's 1920s Ku Klux Klan episode simply a "quaint, harmless timepiece." Although that phase of the Klan died out, its successor emerged during the national civil-rights movement of the 1960s. Remnants of this radical fringe still survive in the Northwest in the 1990s.

For example, in 1994 the state was flooded with a brochure entitled *Montana Quest—A New Beginning.* This pamphlet sought new membership, while attacking the Lee newspaper chain, the Montana Association of Churches, and the Montana Human Rights Network. It listed post office boxes in Harrison, Arkansas; Tacoma, Washington; and Billings, Montana.

Another covert group currently operating in Montana is the Northwest Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which has been linked to the white-supremacy Aryan Nations movement. This group also uses a Tacoma, Washington, post office box.

Even more recently—in June, 1997—another wave of Klan literature appeared, urging Montanans to boycott a gay-rights rally in Bozeman. Again, the "Realm of Montana" sought membership, and this time it listed a Great Falls post office box as its contact.

At present, the Ku Klux Klan is **not** a dead issue in Montana. Residents can keep abreast of Klan activity through the Montana Human Rights Network, P.O. Box 1222, Helena, Montana 59624; phone 442-5506.

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Alder, MT 59710

James Belden—mistakenly suspected of petty theft—had been told by a few local whites to "get out of town or suffer the consequences." (Two years earlier, Belden had moved from Butte to Crow Agency, where he repaired shoes and did odd jobs around the community.) When Belden refused to abandon his home, the locals contacted Big Horn County Sheriff Robert P. Gilmore in Hardin. At the time, Gilmore was running for another term as sheriff in the upcoming November election; he was widely known as an official in Hardin's Klan #35. Gilmore promised that he "would rid the town of that nigger Belden."

On October 29, Gilmore and Undersheriff Andy L. Dornberger drove to Crow Agency on a "campaign trip." When the two lawmen approached Belden's shack, the black man opened fire, killing Gilmore and wounding his deputy. Quickly lawmen, volunteers, and sightseers surrounded the cabin and began firing fusillades at Belden. The *Billings Gazette* estimated that, within an hour, more than 200 men had encircled the shack.

In the exchange of gunfire, Belden also killed John MacLeod, who for four years had served as a special officer for the Office of Indian Affairs on the Crow Reservation. MacLeod was attempting to skirt the shack to reach an adjacent barn, to set it afire. Shortly thereafter the barn was torched (*Billings Gazette*, October 30, 1926): *A.C. Cole and John Lawrence, employees of the Big Horn Garage, risked death by throwing gasoline on the barn and setting it afire, after they had recovered MacLeod's apparently lifeless body. Indian youths had prepared arrows and flaming excelsior to fire the structure from behind beet wagons and the Catholic Church, when Cole and Lawrence accomplished the task.*

After a short time, the burning barn ignited Belden's shack (*Hardin Tribune-Herald*, October 29, 1926): *The building burned like tinder, and soon the flames forced the negro to come out. In the yard, he was riddled with bullets from upwards of a hundred guns. After he had been brought down, he fired three more shots as he lay on the ground.*

The crowd rushed up to him and picked up his body while he was still gasping. There was talk of a "necktie party," but instead the crowd threw him into his cabin, where he soon was consumed by the flames.

Authorities filed no charges as a result of this two-hour confrontation. The next week hundreds—including "ten Crow Indian chiefs in full regalia"—attended the funerals of Gilmore and MacLeod in Hardin. Among the dignitaries at Gilmore's service appeared Imperial Wizard of the Realm of Montana Lewis Terwilliger.

BEGINNING OF THE END

Membership in the Realm of Montana declined in the late 1920s for several reasons. The strident nativism that had begun with World War I German-bashing finally ran its course. Further, all fraternal organizations lost membership during the late 1920s. They became the victims of other leisure-time attractions such as talking movies, radio, sports, and automobile travel to nearby towns on improved roads. Then, when adultery, drunkenness, and embezzlement scandals rocked the national KKK leadership, Klansmen who had joined to support "moral purity" abandoned the organization. Finally, as economic uncertainty and dislocation became truly severe in the early 1930s, the dues and costs of holding a KKK membership became luxuries to many Montana Klansmen.

So, in the early 1930s, the Montana Klan movement withered and died for lack of viable targets, for lack of enthusiasm, and, frankly, for lack of relative excitement. In 1931 the state's surviving membership—consolidated in "the Grand Klan of Montana"—numbered less than a hundred.

A CRITICAL GAP

In retrospect, if the Ku Klux Klan were to forge solid inroads in 1920s Montana, it needed to have established a beachhead in Butte—that bastion of Catholicism. Yet, throughout its existence (1923-1928), members of Butte's Kontinental Klan #30 lived in abject fear and proved wholly ineffective. For instance, in response to reports that the KKK was recruiting in Butte, Silver Bow County Sheriff Larry Duggan said (*Butte Miner*, July 22, 1921), *My deputies have orders to shoot any Ku Kluxers on sight—shoot them down like wolves.* Imperial Wizard Lewis Terwilliger noted the dire situation in a 1924 letter to Butte's Exalted Cyclops Albert W. Jones: "I know that you are involved in the most difficult, the most dangerous situation in Montana. It is nothing short of a war zone."

In the face of Catholic opposition, Kontinental Klan #30 ran scared. For instance, its officials published their meeting announcements under spurious names, rather than identify themselves as Klansmen. For a time, the Butte

KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN "SECRET" LEXICON

ALIEN: non-KKK person
EXALTED CYCLOPS: chapter/klavern president
GRAND-: prefix denoting the state/realm KKK organization
GRAND DRAGON: state/realm's chief executive
GREAT TITAN: director of a state/realm province
IMPERIAL-: prefix denoting the national KKK organization
IMPERIAL WIZARD: supreme ruler of the KKK
INVISIBLE EMPIRE: KKK administrative structure; the entire membership; the spiritual character of the order
JUNIOR KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN: affiliate program for boys under 18 years of age
KLABEE: chapter treasurer
KLADD: ritual sponsor of new members; "conductor"
KLALIFF: chapter vice-president
KLANKRAFT: KKK ritualistic practices and concepts
KLAROGO: chapter's inner guard
KLAVERN: indoor meeting location; local chapter
KLEAGLE: field organizer
KLECTOKEN: membership initiation fee ($10)
KLIGRAPP: chapter secretary
KLODE: KKK song
KLOKARD: lecturer; ritual instructor
KLONVERSATION: a KKK exchange of greetings, using acronyms
KLORAN: KKK ritual book
KLORERO: annual, statewide, two-day convention
KLUDD: chaplain
KLUXING: to propagandize; to promote; to recruit
KNIGHT: ordinary member of the KKK
KONKLAVE: regular chapter meeting
KOURIER: official monthly publication of the KKK
NIGHTHAWK: KKK investigator of prospective members and of Klansmen's conduct
PROVINCE: district within a state/realm, composed of counties (the Realm of Montana had four Provinces)
REALM: KKK organizational unit, corresponding to a state
ROYAL RIDERS OF THE RED ROBE: affiliate organization for foreign-born, Protestant white males
WOMEN OF THE KU KLUX KLAN: chapter women's auxiliary

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Klan called itself "the Butte Men's Literary Society." It also hid behind the names "Protestant Men's Welfare Council" and "Krishna Improvement Association." At one point, Exalted Cyclops Jones complained to Terwilliger that he thought Butte's Irish Catholic postmen were intercepting his KKK mail from the Atlanta headquarters. Before the Imperial Wizard could reply, Jones seemingly solved his own problem. He informed Terwilliger that he had "changed his name to Knute Karl Knutson . [KKK] and rented a new post-office box." Within weeks, however, Jones was forced to admit that the Irish Catholic postmen had figured out his ruse—and he still was not receiving official mail from Atlanta.

Ultimately the Ku Klux Klan sustained only a short, eight-year run in Montana. Its influence proved modest in Montana politics, less strong in the arena of social reform, and ultimately ineffective in targeting with violence its enemies: immigrants, Jews, Catholics, and blacks.

Nevertheless, present-day Montanans should learn a lesson from the KKK's remarkable popularity in the state during the 1920s: Given the right set of circumstances, this type of despicable racism again could gain a foothold under the Big Sky. Constant vigilance and vocal opposition—the kind that recently fostered the very effective "Not in Our Town!" response in Billings—are required to combat similarly covert radical cells. **M**

DAVE WALTER *is the research historian at the Montana Historical Society in Helena.*

This topic is part of Dave's "JERKS IN MONTANA" speech for the Committee for the Humanities Speaker's Bureau. If you have leads for KKK paraphernalia, such as robes, literature, or stories, please contact him at the Montana Historical Society (phone 444-4015).

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Dave Walter's notes - Klan in MT, 1923-31

-'24, almost 5,200 MT men became dues-paying members
- 40+ chapters
- fly anti-Catholic
- cross-burnings

Kleagle: fld organ
Klabee: treasurer
Klaraqo: inner guard

women's auxiliary in some Klaverns exceeded male ch. mem'p

Helena Record-Herald, Nov 6, '21
- Klan is in MT: Hobson stickup (?)
7/10/22 1st appear in Missoula

Rouette
Wilder
363-5313

NOTES

1. Chapter title is from a song in American Hymns, (Buffalo, New York: International Music Co., n.d.), Box 5 File 16, KKK, EWHS.

2. Lewis Terwilliger, Official Circular, December 3, 1928, Box 5 File 5, KKK, EWHS.

3. Percentages and averages for both attendance and members in good standing were taken from the Kligrapp's quarterly reports.

4. The Kligrapp usually noted the attendance at each meeting, but only by the number attending and not a specific list.

5. Charter membership list, 1924; Transfer membership list, 1929. Box 1 File 24, KKK, EWHS.

6. See Noel P. Gist, "Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the United States," University of Missouri Studies, XV (October 1940): 129-131; Mary Ann Clawson, Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender and Fraternalism, (Princeton University Press, 1989), 131-132.

7. For a few months in late summer, the cost of a robe was added on to the Klectoken totalling fifteen dollars. The Imperial Palace may have decreed this new law with Montana in mind considering that only 11.2 percent of all new citizens purchased robes for third quarter 1924. Lewis Terwilliger, Official Circular, November 11, 1924, Box 5 File 1; June 24, 1927, Box 5 File 3, KKK, EWHS. See By-Laws of Kontinental Klan No. 30, December 26, 1923, Box 1 File 35. See "Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan," (Atlanta, Georgia, 1926), Box 4 File 1, KKK, EWHS, Article XVIII, Section 19, p. 34.

8. See Charles C. Alexander, "Kleagles and Cash: The Ku Klux Klan As a Business Organization, 1915-1930," Bus Hist Rev 39 (1965): 360-361. By-Laws of Kontinental Klan No. 30, December 26, 1923, KKK, EWHS.

9. Ibid.; Minutes, March 21, 1924, Box 3 File 6, KKK, EWHS.

10. See Chapter three, p. 67 for examples.

11. K-Duo minutes, April 8, 1925, Box 3 File 5, KKK, EWHS. At a later meeting however, Kontinental Klansmen did not shirk from paying a fellow member's K-Duo fee. K-Duo minutes, May 14, 1925, Box 3 File 5, KKK, EWHS.

12. Charles Steele to Albert Jones, October 17, 1927, Box 2 File 15, KKK, EWHS.

13. J.A. Orrell to Albert Jones, December 17, 1927, Box 1 File 26, KKK, EWHS. At the time, Orrell was on a business trip in California.

14. Minutes of Klorero, October 20, 1929, Box 4 File 29, KKK, EWHS.

15. Publicity may have helped the Klan in its beginning when Simmons, Clark, and Tyler were trying to branch out from the South, particularly when the New York World came out with its series of expose's in 1921. Simmons stated that the added publicity greatly aided the Klan's growth, especially when Congress reacted by launching an investigation of the Klan that resulted in nothing more than added exposure. Simmons recognized this. "Certain newspapers also aided us by inducing Congress to investigate us. The result was that Congress gave us the best advertising we ever got. Congress made us." Quoted in David M. Chalmers, Hooded Americanism: The First Century of the Ku Klux Klan 1865-1965, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), 38.

16. Butte Miner, December 2, 1923; January 13, 1924.

17. Butte Miner, November 23, 1923.

18. Butte Miner, September 7, 1922.

19. Billings Gazette, 9-2-23, 10. The boys were discovered after purchasing a motorcycle at a local dealership. Both pleaded guilty and the money was returned to a relieved Mrs. Bennets.

20. Butte Miner, March 18, 1924.

21. Minutes, Korero, 1928, Box 4 File 29, KKK, EWHS.

22. Charles C. Alexander, Crusade for Conformity: The Ku Klux Klan in Texas, 1920-1930 (Texas Gulf Coast Historical

Association, pub. series, Vol VI, No. 1, 1962), 79; Gist, "Secret Societies," 41-43.

23. Butte Miner, May 13, 1928.

24. Butte Miner, May 15, 1928.

25. For examples, see the Butte Miner for May, 1928.

26. Most secret fraternities realized they were losing current and potential members to the temptations of modernity. The Nebraska Fraternal Congress considered modernizing and shortening the rituals in 1932 in an effort to boost sagging membership. By 1940, the Knights of Pythias admitted that the days of secret drama, symbolism and mystery no longer served a purpose--autos, movies, and service organizations had taken their place. Noel P. Gist, "Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the United States," University of Missouri Studies XV (October 1940): 43. The International Order of Odd Fellows also pondered the effects of modernity as a cause of slipping membership. See Charles W. Ferguson, Fifty Million Brothers, (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1937), 232-233.

27. Most secret orders established boys orders for the very purpose of grooming young people to carry on the traditional ceremonies--witness the De Molays for the Masons and the Junior Ku Klux Klan. See Mark C. Carnes, Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 151-156 for secret fraternalism's decline.

28. See Carnes, Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America, 151 and Clawson, Constructing Brotherhood, 260.

29. Ibid., 151-155.

30. Ages for Klansmen were derived from cemetery records from the Butte Silver Bow Archives (N=37) and membership receipts from the Ku Klux Klan Files in Spokane, Washington, Box 2, (N=28). Ages were available for 65 members. For ages from the cemetery figures the year of birth was subtracted from the arbitrary year of 1925. Average age = 39.2; median = 37.5; range = 23-77.

31. Jones to Terwilliger, February 14, 1931, Box 1 File 27, KKK, EWHS.

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Butte Daily Post

Butte Evening News

Butte Miner

Daily Intermountain (Butte)

Examiner (Butte)

Jefferson Valley News

Montana Standard (Butte)

Park County News

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Ku Klux Klan files, Small Collections 236, Eastern Washington Historical Society, Spokane, Washington. (509) 456-3931

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Silver Bow Archives, Butte, Montana.

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Form K-102—50M—6-18-23

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD

Name S. J. Alexander #22

Res. Adr's Harlowton, Montana,

Bus. " " "

Occupation Telegrapher

Mail to Address. Phone

Klan No. 29 Realm of Montana, Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Located at Harlowton, State Montana

Transferred from Klan No. ____ Realm of ____ 19____

Naturalized 8-29 19 23

Age 22 Yrs.

Color Hair Brown

Eyes Brown

Height 5 ft. 6 in.

Weight 138 lbs.

Single Married Widower

	1923	1924	
	JAN. $	JAN. $ 1	1st Qr.
	FEB. $	FEB. $	
	MCH. $	MCH. $ 1	
	APR. $	APR. $ 1	2nd Qr.
	MAY $	MAY $ 1	
	JUNE $	JUNE $ 1	
	JULY $	JULY $ 66 2/3	3rd Qr.
	AUG. $	AUG. $ 66 2/3	
	SEPT. $ 1	SEPT. $ 66 2/3	
	OCT. $ 50 1	OCT. $	4th Qr.
	NOV. $ 1	NOV. $	
	DEC. $ 50 1	DEC. $	

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died
19____	19____	19____	19____	19____

NOTE: Write ALL REMARKS on other side.

Form K-102

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD

Name S. J. Alexander, #22 Italic

Res. Adr's Harlowton, Montana.

Bus. " " "

Occupation Telegrapher.

Mail to Address. Phone

Klan No. 29 Realm of Montana, Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Located at Harlowton, State Montana

Transferred from Klan No. ____ Realm of ____ 19____

Naturalized 8-29 19 23

Age 32 Yrs.

Color Hair Brown

Eyes Brown

Height 5 ft. 6 in.

Weight 138 lbs.

Single Married Widower

	1925	1926	
	JAN. $	JAN. $	1st Qr.
	FEB. $	FEB. $	
	MCH. $	MCH. $	
	APR. $	APR. $	2nd Qr.
	MAY $	MAY $	
	JUNE $	JUNE $	
	JULY $	JULY $	3rd Qr.
	AUG. $	AUG. $	
	SEPT. $	SEPT. $	
	OCT. $	OCT. $	4th Qr.
	NOV. $	NOV. $	
	DEC. $	DEC. $	

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died
19____	19____	19____	19____	19____

NOTE: Write ALL REMARKS on other side.

191 members, Wheatland County, 1923-28

occupations on other mem'ships:

division lineman
Water inspector G.F.N Ry Co
ranch hand
(H'ton) chief of police (Ben R. Britzius)
rancher (Geo W. ")
" (W. A. ")
railway mail clerk
(H'ton) sheriff (L.W. Clark)
roundhouse foreman
(H'ton) undersheriff (J. A. Ehler)
locomotive engineer
RR conductor
switchman
county treasurer (F.P. Grove
yardmaster C.M.&St.P.R.R.
county clerk & recorder
switchman
yardmaster
county surveyor
telegraph operator
Ry boiler maker
switchman
rancher (G.K. Robertson, Twodot) (C.F. Williams, Twodot
→ Thos. A. Thompson, Ringling

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one-page FAX to Rayette Wilder, Archives Librarian, MAC

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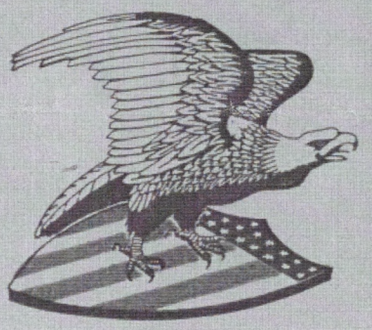
Thanks immensely for providing me the photocopied info I requested from your KKK ms collection. It serves my purpose, so I won't request further research at this time. On some future trip to Spokane, I hope to come by the Museum and acquaint myself better with the library and archives.

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November 27, 2002

Dear Mr. Doig,

Thank you for your interest in the collections of the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society. Per our phone conversation I am sending you the information on the "Kluxer Blues" from the publication *American Hymns* from the Montana Ku Klux Klan manuscript collection(MS 131). Although the publication contains music for other Klan hymns only the order information for "Kluxer Blues" is in the collection. I can research this piece further if you desire. Research fees apply for in depth investigations requiring staff time. For your convenience I am including a research request form as well as a fee schedule. The Library and Research Archives are open to the public Tuesday – Friday 11a.m. – 5 p.m. We also take appointments Wednesday 5 – 8 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Best of luck with your research.

Regards,

Rayette Wilder

Rayette Wilder
Archives Librarian