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THE HISTORY
OF THE KU KLUX KLAN IN MAINE, 1922-1931

by

Lawrence Wayne Moores, Jr.

"

B. A., University of Maine, 1949

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A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
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THE FIERY CROSS

Behold, the Fiery Cross still brilliant!
 Combined efforts to defame
And all the calumny of history
 Fail to quench its hallowed flame.

It shall burn bright as the morning
 For all decades yet to be
Held by hearts and hands of manhood
 It shall light from sea to sea.

We rally around this ancient symbol
 Precious heritage of the past
And swear our all to home and country
 And to each other to the last.

In the Fiery Cross I glory
 'Neath its glow my oath was made
It shall live in song and story
 I swear its light shall never fade.

CHAPTER I

FIFTEEN YEARS OF KLANISM

"Every war ever fought has had its inevitable aftermath of readjustment."¹ After the Civil War had been won by the Union armies, the problems of reconstruction became the significant issue for the next decade. The program of reconstruction, legislated by the Radical Republicans, had not been acclaimed by the Southern whites. Generally, the plan had been invidious and repugnant to the people of the South.

In May, 1866, six young men had organized a social "Kuklos"² in the town of Pulaski, Tennessee. The members accidentally discovered that their strange uniforms "had a great influence over the lawless but superstitious blacks."³ The absence of stable government encouraged the "kuklos" members to re-organize into a "regulative and protective

1 Henry P. Fry, The Modern Ku Klux Klan, (Boston, 1922), p. 122.

2 New York Times, September 23, 1937. The name, "Kuklos", was derived from the Greek word "kuklos" which means a band or a circle.

3 Julia E. Johnsen, Ku Klux Klan, (New York, 1923), p. 20.

organization."⁴ The purposes of the new organization or rather the Invisible Empire were

to protect and succor the weak and unfortunate, especially the widows and orphans of Confederate soldiers; to protect members of the white race in life, honor and property from the encroachments of the blacks; to oppose the Radical Republican party and Union League....⁵

The philosophy of this organization attracted "old" Confederates and within a year thousands of people were seeking membership. Resultingly, the Invisible Empire spread to all Southern states. Under the superb leadership of former Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest the Ku Klux Klan became the foremost instrument in suppressing the negroes and in vanquishing the "carpetbaggers" and "scalaways". The Ku Klux Klan

actively existed as a cohesive organization until about the year Eighteen Hundred and Seventy-Two (1872) at which time it voluntarily disbanded in pursuance of an order issued by its Grand Wizard General Nathan B. Forrest.⁶

Although the Invisible Empire had been officially declared non-existent, the local "dens"⁷ continued to congregate and to enforce their will upon the negroes and

⁴ Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (Atlanta, 1921), p. 90.

⁵ Johnsen, op. cit., p. 21.

⁶ Constitution and Laws, op. cit., p. 90.

⁷ A "den" referred to a local organization or unit.

"lawbreakers". The Klan remained in this "inactive" condition for an inestimable number of years, but "its spirit and traditions remained to serve as a model for the second Ku Klux Klan."⁸

"Forty-three years after the disbanding of the original Klan",⁹ "Colonel"¹⁰ William Joseph Simmons and thirty-three associates "resurrected, reconstructed and remodeled into its present incorporated form and character"¹¹ the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Atlanta, Georgia in the month of October, 1915. In a statement to the New York Times Simmons implied categorically that the Klan in its organizational stage did not entertain any thoughts concerning the Catholics, Jews or other religious sects. Simmons declared:

There was no prejudice, but there was pride. There would not have been a white race on earth if man had not been proud. God established the races, and he intended them to remain separate, and intermixing them will wreck them.

⁸ Gustavus Myers, History of Bigotry in the United States, (New York, 1943), p. 272.

⁹ Kendrick Lee, "Ku Klux Klan", Editorial Research Report, (Washington, 1946), Vol. II, p. 454.

¹⁰ Simmons explained his title of "Colonel" as an appellation of dignity. It seems that all lawyers of distinction are given the honorary title of "Colonel" in Georgia.

¹¹ Constitution and Laws, op. cit., p. 90.

In 1915 I started checking on my motives and saw that I was right. My study had proved that the time was ripe.¹²

For a number of years "Colonel" Simmons had envisioned "the creation of an order standing for a comprehensive Americanism that would blot out Mason and Dixon's Line."¹³ He had been inherently motivated by an insatiable desire to cultivate Protestant nationalism or Protestant Americanism.¹⁴ It is apparent that the Ku Klux Klan of the Reconstruction period had served as the schema for the new Klan. The constitution and laws, the ritual, and the titles of the Klan officials were compiled with a direct relationship with the "old" Klan. When Emperor Simmons was interrogated by the New York Times correspondent, he admitted and explained the consanguinity.

I contacted men who had served in the first Ku Klux Klan and Negroes who had seen the Klan work and I got all the information I could. I talked to Northern men who had been sent South to spy on the original Klan and who had resigned their union jobs to join the Klan.

If it was not for that first organization, God knows what would have happened in AmericaThe Klan saved all America after the war.

The soul of the organization was re-incarnated in the new Klan.¹⁵

¹² New York Times, September 23, 1937.

¹³ John Moffatt Mecklin, The Ku Klux Klan, (New York, 1924), p. 4.

¹⁴ Leroy Percy, "The Modern Ku Klux Klan," Atlantic Monthly, Vol. CXXX (July 1922), p. 122.

¹⁵ New York Times, September 23, 1937.

From the burning of the first fiery cross on the summit of Stone Mountain, near Atlanta, Georgia, Thanksgiving night of 1915, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan had become a reality. It was, in the words of a contemporary writer, "an anomaly in American life."¹⁶ The emergence of the Invisible Empire was undoubtedly "the clearest manifestation of the popular belief that Americanism was no longer."¹⁷ The Klan, however, made an uneventful impression upon the people in its primordial days. The fundamental reason for this apathetic regard for the Klan may be alleged to the international crisis which was fermenting in Europe. A more plausible explanation would be the ineffective and inadequate leadership. Although Simmons had experience as an itinerant Congregationalist minister and as an organizer for the Modern Woodmen of the World,¹⁸ he did not have the talent to promote the Klan. By the spring of 1919 the Invisible Empire was represented only in the Southern states, particularly concentrated in Georgia and Alabama. Its total membership for the first five years has been estimated to have been four or five thousand devotees.

¹⁶ Johnsen, op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁷ Preston William Slosson, The Great Crusade and After, 1914-1928, (New York, 1930), p. 307.

¹⁸ Myers, op. cit., p. 273.

The early years (1915-1920) were tedious and discouraging for the newly-organized Klan. The "Knights" had directed their activities against immoral women, idlers, and strike leaders, but seldom did they ever receive recognition or support from the public. More often than not, the Klan became the target for ridicule and asinine insinuations. This situation can well be explained in the words of Imperial Wizard Simmons who said: "We had a regular nightmare - no funds, plenty of sneers. But we won every fight...."¹⁹

Simmons had proved to be a professional in formulating fraternal orders, but he was notoriously incompetent as an organizer and promoter. This observation is well-founded, as the Klan had continually been plagued with a monetary deficiency. The financial situation was so bad in 1920 that the Klan bordered on insolvency. It was at this juncture that the Imperial Wizard was accosted by Edward Young Clarke and Mrs. Elizabeth Tyler, who jointly owned and operated the Southern Publicity Association of Atlanta, Georgia. This agency had conducted successfully numerous campaigns "for the Salvation Army, the Y. M. C. A., the Red Cross, and other organizations."²⁰ Clarke and Mrs. Tyler had recognized the possibilities of accumulating

¹⁹ New York Times, September 23, 1937.

²⁰ Myers, op. cit., p. 274.

pecuniary rewards from the movement. They realized the value of the publicity that could be blandished through a revival of the name - Ku Klux Klan.

Simmons understood that if his organization were to continue, an effective promotional campaign would have to be instituted. In lieu of seeing his Order pass into oblivion Simmons affixed his signature to a contract in June, 1920, by which Clarke was authorized to assume complete control over the membership promotion phase. Aided by Mrs. Tyler, an expert promoter in her own right, the propaganda department was organized strictly upon a business basis. The simplicity of the promotional scheme was "almost scientifically perfect and far beyond any similar system."²¹ There remains, nevertheless, little doubt that the commercial motive was the fundamental determinant governing its success. The "kluxing"²² system was elemental in design, but its effectiveness could not be surpassed.

The sales division was directed by the Imperial Kleagle who controlled the Klan movements throughout the United States. The country was divided into eight "domains"

²¹ Stanley Frost, The Challenge of the Klan, (Indianapolis, 1924), p. 116.

²² A campaign for Klan membership was known as a "sales promotion" or "kluxing."

and a Grand Goblin was responsible for Klan activities in his "domain." The New England states, for example, constituted a "domain." To assist the Grand Goblin each "domain" was subdivided into "realms" or states which were controlled by King Kleagles. The King Kleagle or state manager further divided his "realm" into local districts, and he appointed a Kleagle to serve as the local organizer or field worker.

The Imperial Government provided qualified speakers who received their remuneration from the "front" office. The King Kleagles and the lesser Kleagles paid their own expenses once they had obtained a foothold in the "realm."²³ Their pay was derived principally from the "kleektoken" or initiation fee.²⁴ The "kleektoken" required of every candidate amounted to ten dollars (\$10.00), and this contribution was distributed among the Kleagles of various ranks. Four dollars (\$4.00) was retained by the local organizer; the balance of six dollars (\$6.00) was remitted to the King Kleagle who was authorized to withhold

²³ A local organizer informed this student that the King Kleagle received \$75.00 plus expenses per week until he had established himself.

²⁴ The Ku Klux Klan authorities preferred to have the initiation fee referred to as a "donation."

one dollar (\$1.00); he, in turn, forwarded the remaining five dollars (\$5.00) to his superior, the Grand Goblin, who rewarded himself fifty cents (\$.50); the Imperial Klabee²⁵ received the balance of four dollars and fifty cents (\$4.50) and was required to imburse Clarke two dollars and a half (\$2.50) as a commission. It can be mathematically deduced that the Imperial Palace did not receive too great a percentage of the original "donation". The fact should not be overlooked, however, that the Imperial Treasury had other sources of revenue. The most lucrative source was the profit derived from the sale of Klan robes²⁶ which were manufactured by Clarke's Gate City Manufacturing Company.²⁷ Another method of acquiring funds was through the assessment of

25 The Imperial Klabee was the Supreme Treasurer of the Ku Klux Klan.

26 The price of a hooded gown was \$6.50 at that time. The cost of the garment was determined by the quality of the cloth used.

27 Constitution and Laws, op. cit., p. 27. "He (Simmons) shall manufacture, or cause to be manufactured, all paraphernalia, regalia, uniforms, costumes, emblems, insignia, flags, banners, jewelry for individual wear, jewels for official use, clerical forms, books, pamphlets, etc....."

a per capita tax, which shall be known as the Imperial Tax; which shall be a sum of money not to exceed fifteen (15¢) cents per capita per month....²⁸

The final revenue for the Invisible Empire was obtained from "all interest accruing in investments made by this Order."²⁹ With respect to the different revenues which the Klan collected, there can be no doubt that the Invisible Empire was Big Business. In the light of Simmon's statement made years later the magnitude of the Klan's financial position may be more easily visualized. He declared:

In 1922 our average increase in membership was 3,500 a day and we took in 1,200,000 members. Our daily income was \$45,000 from members and sale of paraphernalia.³⁰

Without doubt the Klan had lodged itself in American society, and it "flourished like the green bay tree."³¹

But how did the Ku Klux Klan propagate to such unprecedented proportions? It has been stated that Clarke's

²⁸ Ibid., p. 43.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 43

³⁰ New York Times, September 23, 1937.

³¹ Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, (New York, 1942), p. 31.

promotional system had been the basic factor, but the Ku Klux Klan ideology should not be disregarded. As Simmons reverently asserted:

There was never an organization projected among men that had higher or nobler principles based on patriotism and honor.³²

The "Imperial Proclamation" will afford a more enlightening portrayal of Klan purposes. It reads:

To the lovers of Law, Order, Peace and Justice of all nations, People, Tribes and Tongues of the whole earth, Greetings:

I, and the citizens of the Invisible Empire through me, make declaration to you:

We, the members of this Order, desiring to promote patriotism toward our Civil Government; honorable peace among men and nations; protection for and happiness in the homes of our people; manhood, brotherhood, and love among ourselves, and liberty, justice and fraternity among all mankind; believing we can best accomplish these noble purposes through a mystic social, patriotic, benevolent association, having a perfected lodge system, with an exalted ritualistic form of work and an effective form of government, not for selfish profit, but for the mutual betterment, benefit and protection of our oath-bound associates, and their loved ones; do physically, socially, morally and vocationally

Proclaim to the World

That we are dedicated to the sublime duty of providing generous aid, tender sympathy and fraternal assistance amid fortune and misfortune in the effulgent light of life and amid the sable shadows of death; and to the exalted privilege of demonstrating the practical utility

³² New York Times, September 23, 1937.

of the great (yet most neglected), doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man as a vital force in the lives and affairs of men.

We invite all men who can qualify to become citizens of the Invisible Empire to approach the portal of our beneficent domain, join us in our noble work of extending its boundaries, and in disseminating the gospel of "Klankraft", thereby encouraging, conserving, protecting and making vital the fraternal relationship in the practice of an honorable clannishness; to share with us the glory of performing the sacred duty of protecting womanhood; to maintain forever the God-given supremacy of the white race; to commemorate the holy and chivalric achievements of our fathers; to safeguard the sacred rights, privileges and institutions of our Civil Government; to bless mankind and to keep eternally ablaze the sacred fire of a fervent devotion to a pure Americanism.

The Invisible Empire is founded on sterling character, and immutable principles based upon sacred sentiment and cemented by noble purposes. It is promoted by a sincere, unselfish devotion of the souls of men, and is governed by their consecrated intelligence. It is the soul of chivalry, virtue's impenetrable shield; and the devout impulse of an unconquered race....³³

The Klan's persistent appeal for "better government, better citizenship, patriotism and religion in general, and native, white, Protestant supremacy"³⁴ inevitably found attentive and sympathetic listeners. It is certain that the ideals of Klanism were efficacious, if not humanitarian, as expressed by the constitution. It became the objective of the New York World to prove that the Klan represented

33 Constitution and Laws, op. cit., p. 4.

34 Frost, op. cit., p. 127.

"perverted Americanism",³⁵ and its reporters were extremely energetic in their pursuit for evidence. Their reports of Klan activities had so seriously discredited the Order that Imperial Wizard Simmons was forced to write a defense. His denunciation of the World read as follows:

I hereby declare and pronounce the present attempt to fasten upon this organization acts of lawlessness to be the attempt of our enemies to discredit the organization, and further our investigation goes into every particular incident of lawlessness which has been charged against us the more convinced I am that the present wave of criticism passing through the press is a concerted move on the part of our enemies in an attempt to prejudice the public in regard to our work.

The Knights of Ku Klux Klan is a law-abiding, legally chartered, standard fraternal order, designed to teach and inculcate the purest ideals of American citizenship with malice toward none and justice to every citizen regardless of race, color, or creed.³⁶

This newspaper was responsible for a series of exposes which inflamed the normally lethargic congressmen. The officials of the Klan lamented that the World had been inconsiderate in publishing the Klan lodge work and prejudiced in their unauthenticated exposures. One fact was quite evident from the World's investigation of the Klan.

35 R. A. Patton, "A Ku Klux Klan Reign of Terror", Current History, Vol. XXVIII (April, 1928), p. 51.

36 "Reign of the Tarbucket", Literary Digest, Vol. LXX, (August, 1921), p. 13.

In no other nation in the world is public curiosity keener or the machinery for gratifying that curiosity developed to such perfection.³⁷

For nearly a year (1920-1921) the World had been engaged in this project, and their protestations finally reached Congress. In October, 1921, a resolution was introduced by Representative Peter F. Tague of Massachusetts³⁸ to appoint a congressional investigation committee to inquire into Klan activities. Since all resolutions were forwarded to the Rules committee of the House for preliminary examination, the Rules committee examined witnesses and Klan documents to ascertain the advisability of appointing a special committee. The Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, represented by William J. Burns,³⁹ was not able to submit evidence of any nature at that time. Several "former" King Kleagles were questioned by the committee, but their statements were valueless. Perhaps the most spectacular witness to take the stand was Imperial Wizard Simmons. Mr. Fry has colorfully described Simmons' appearance at the committee hearing.

³⁷ Mecklin, op. cit., p. 11.

³⁸ Fry, op. cit., p. 234.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 242.

Having a good conception of the theatrical, he had arranged to be introduced to the committee by Congressman W. D. Upshaw, of Georgia. In spite of the remark from Chairman Campbell that Simmons did not need an introduction to the committee, the "Cracker" Congressman cleared his throat and delivered his "spread-eagle" speech.⁴⁰

The Imperial Wizard had expected a grand ovation to follow this introduction, but the committee members greeted him instead with silence. Upon the stand Simmons, armed with unfailing good humor, an unlimited supply of spellbinding rhetoric, perfect self-possession, and a ready and specious reply to every question,⁴¹

was equal to the severe ordeal of congressional interrogation. "Never was such melodrama enacted in Congress."⁴² At the conclusion of his testimony "the Imperial Wizard called on 'the Father to forgive those who persecuted the Klan.'"⁴³ The committee had tried to connect the Klan directly with the violations of law which the World had attributed to it. Simmons had defeated their attempt to defame the Klan by "keeping before the investigators his early and idealistic conception of the Klan."⁴⁴ The com-

40 Ibid., p. 243.

41 Mecklin, op. cit., p. 21.

42 "A Bizarre Affair", The Independent, Vol. CVII (October 22, 1921), p. 99.

43 Ibid., p. 78.

44 Patton, op. cit., p. 51.

mittee, subsequently, had no documentary proof that the Klan had violated the laws of the nation; further action against the Klan was not recommended by the committee.

It was generally concluded that the investigations by the New York World, its associated newspapers, and the congressional committee would retard the growth of the Ku Klux Klan. This supposition was far from correct, for the Klan not only spread to all states in the Union, but its membership reached the million mark. The Invisible Empire, however, was not restricted to the continental limits of the United States, for there were Klansmen in Alaska as well as in the Panama Canal Zone. Simmons even announced that "appeals were coming in from every white nation on earth for the establishment of the order in their countries."⁴⁵

The movement of the Klan toward the west coast encountered astonishing success. The states which were situated west of the Mississippi river gradually supplanted the South as the stronghold of Klanism. As the Ku Klux Klan was alluring the western people into its society, the precepts of the Invisible Empire were being introduced to the people of the north eastern states. In Texas, however, the Klan made swift advancements, for "the Texas Senatorial campaign of 1922 was a straight contest between Klan and

⁴⁵ New York Times, September 23, 1937.

anti-Klan."⁴⁶ There were five candidates seeking the senatorial office, but with the assistance of Edward Young Clarke and the Cyclops of the Dallas Klan, Earl B. Mayfield was elected to the United States Senate "by the people of Texas."⁴⁷ The Klan did not concern itself only with the congressional campaigns, for

in the lesser races the Klan either had its own ticket or gave its endorsement, from governor down to constable, in nearly every precinct of Texas.⁴⁸

Although the Klan was identified in different areas with specific objectives, the principles and purposes of Klanism remained the most persuasive instrument in attracting new members. In Oregon, the Klan was first organized in Medford, Jackson County, January, 1921.⁴⁹ The Invisible Empire attracted and enrolled hundreds of men, because they believed the Klan could aid the police in enforcing the law. "Racial and religious antagonisms seem to have played no part at the birth of the Klan in Oregon."⁵⁰ In 1922, a series of outrages in Medford caused

46 Dearborn Independent, January 26, 1924.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Mecklin, op. cit., p. 43.

50 Ibid., p. 44.

Governor Olcott to denounce the Klan for its alleged connection, but it had never been proved that the Klan was responsible. During the ensuing gubernatorial campaign the Klan had its revenge against the "candidate whose every recent act has borne the indelible stamp of the Catholic Pope in Rome,"⁵¹ since Governor Olcott was not re-elected.

The activities of the Klan were equally vigorous in other sections of the country. In some regions, however, the puissance of the Klansmen was even more positive. Perhaps the most notorious example of nescient behavior by the Ku Klux Klan took place in Oklahoma, when that state was governed by John Calloway Walton. Walton had announced in a detailed statement to the New York World on October 6, 1923, that:

I have determined that the Klan, invisible government, must unmask and give way to visible government or leave the State, or I must seek habitation elsewhere.⁵²

This announcement involved more than a dispute between the governor and the Ku Klux Klan. It inferred an eruption from within the state government, for the majority of the State legislators were ardent Klansmen. The whole nation followed this affray with the greatest concern. One

51 Ibid., p. 46.

52 "'Jack, the Klan-Fighter,' in Oklahoma," Literary Digest, Vol. LXXIX (October 21, 1923), p. 44.

anonymous writer adequately summarized the incident as "a drama....which is being watched by an audience consisting of the population of the other forty-seven States of the Union."⁵³

The Klan disturbances in Oklahoma were exaggerated and over-emphasized, but their problems were not unlike those existing in the neighboring states. "Night riders in costumes resembling the Ku Klux Klan" had too liberally applied the "tar brush, particularly in Tulsa County."⁵⁴ The Klan disclaimed responsibility for the disorders, but Walton decreed it necessary to declare Tulsa County under martial law. The outlawry continued and resultingly, the whole state was subjected to martial control. The members of the legislature decided to call a special session with the specific intention of impeaching Governor Walton. The Governor obligingly responded "with a threat to put the members in jail if they met."⁵⁵ The legislature defied Walton's warning and "undertook to meet in special session,"⁵⁶ but the state militia forbade their entrance into

⁵³ Ibid., p. 38.

⁵⁴ "American Civil Liberties", New Republic, Vol. XXXVI (September 19, 1923), p. 86.

⁵⁵ "Oklahoma and the K. K. K.", New Republic, Vol. XXXVI (September 26, 1923), p. 112.

⁵⁶ "Governor Walton", New Republic, Vol. XXXVI (October 10, 1923), p. 163.

the legislative chambers. The legislature then decided to have a special election "for the purpose of voting upon an initiated measure to legalize special sessions of the legislature on the call of a majority of the members without the governor's signature."⁵⁷

The State Supreme Court declared the election would be legal; the legislature won its case by an overwhelming majority. Governor Walton "tried to bargain with the leaders of the opposition, offering his resignation as the price of passing the anti-Klan laws. The legislature, however, refused to deal with him."⁵⁸

The Oklahoma Senate presented twenty-two impeachment charges against Governor Walton. "He was found guilty on eleven....acquitted of five, and six were dismissed by the prosecution."⁵⁹ On November 19, 1923, Governor Walton was convicted by the Oklahoma Senate and forced to surrender his office. Walton believed that his trial had not been judiciously conducted, and in this

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 164.

⁵⁸ "Oklahoma", New Republic, Vol. XXXVI (October 24, 1923), p. 213.

⁵⁹ "Oklahoma Kingless, not Klanless", Literary Digest, Vol. LXXIX (December 8, 1923), p. 9.

declaration he had a multitude of supporters. "Papers like the New Orleans Times-Picayune, Salt Lake Telegram, Buffalo Express, and the weekly Nation of New York, are convinced that Governor Walton did not have a fair trial."⁶⁰

Whatever the verdict should have been it is not for us to decide. It is apparent, nevertheless, that the political influence of the Invisible Empire in Oklahoma was indeed great. The Ku Klux Klan in that state operated in an equivalent capacity in many others, but there were areas where the Klan organizations functioned as a benevolent and philanthropic institution.

Meanwhile the Imperial Treasury was receiving greater revenues, and the Imperial officials were imbibed with their self-importance. The program of Klanishness had progressed with such success that Simmons, in March, 1923, organized the "Knights Kamelia", a woman's order, which would "function alongside the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan."⁶¹ For several years women had been clamoring to join the Klan, and subsequently, the Kamelia was immediately and enthusiastically acclaimed. Since the women's society had been organized by Simmons under a separate charter, it was legally independent of Imperial control.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 9.

⁶¹ Bangor Daily News, March 23, 1923.

The Imperial officers, not to be outdone, approved the organization of a "Junior Knights of the Ku Klux Klan."⁶² The plans for the "Junior Klan" were authorized in August, 1923, and within a year the youth organization had grown to such an extent that the Junior Klansmen held a parade in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The Fellowship Forum reported the incident:

Junior Klansmen, 2,500 sturdy and serious minded young men, marched through Johnstown recently, and after naturalizing a large class, burned a fiery cross on Berkebile Hill. As the cross burst into flames the boys sang 'America'. Boys came from all sections of Western Pennsylvania.⁶³

Within the Imperial government, however, relations were not as harmonious as they should have been. A struggle for control of the Klan was being waged between two principals, Imperial Wizard Simmons and Dr. Hiram Evans, during the winter, 1922-1923. Since Simmons had founded the Invisible Empire, it was agreed that Simmons should be entitled "Emperor" and that Dr. Evans would become the Imperial Wizard. This arrangement did not prove to be satisfactory, for Simmons stated rather unhappily

62 Bangor Commercial, August 1, 1923.

63 Fellowship Forum, August 2, 1924.

that

subordinates gained full control under a shading or interpretation of the charter.

The men, however, who ruthlessly took charge did not even know the principles or ritualism. They were moved by selfish aggrandizement, a desire for graft. They created a condition I could not endorse.⁶⁴

Finally, the dissension within the Klan came to a dramatic climax. Dr. Evans through the Imperial Klonsel,⁶⁵ Paul S. Etherridge,⁶⁶ purchased the rights to and control of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan from William Joseph Simmons "for a cash consideration of \$145,500".⁶⁷ Simmons, in an interview by the New York Times years later, declared that he had "left the Klan under an agreement whereby he received \$90,000. 'But I put every cent of it back into the fight for my original purpose through the Knights of the Flaming Sword'".⁶⁸

At any rate, Dr. Evans had acquired full authority to dictate the policies of the Klan. The organization under

64 New York Times, September 23, 1937.

65 Constitution and Laws, op. cit., p. 32.

66 "Colonel Simmons, and \$146,500, From K.K.K. to K.F.S.", Literary Digest, Vol. LXXX (March 8, 1924), p. 36.

67 Ibid., p. 36.

68 New York Times, September 23, 1937.

Evans leadership attained its greatest enrollment,⁶⁹ but its significance as an altruistic order was superceded by political motives and practices. It was true that the Ku Klux Klan continued many programs which the Simmons element had instituted, but from 1923 until 1929 "the story of the Klan was one of political intrigue."⁷⁰ The Klan's influence in politics was evident in practically every state from Maine to California. The Klan in its final appearance as a political machine of national importance performed with remarkable efficiency by causing Alfred Smith's defeat in 1928. Its strength was exhausted after the 1928 election, and it gradually disappeared from American society (except in the South), although it made several feeble but futile attempts to survive. "An anomaly in American life;⁷¹ indeed, it was.

69 See enrollment chart at end of chapter.

70 Slosson, op. cit., p. 314.

71 Johnsen, op. cit., p. 1.

STATISTICAL TABLE SHOWING AUTHENTIC RISE AND FALL
OF THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE

State	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
Alabama	115,910	94,310	10,431	5,524	3,213	1,349
Alaska		31	64	103	23	17
Arizona	5,001	2,231	916	310	73	31
Arkansas	150,000	72,436	1,139	50	198	83
California	350,000	122,324	7,467	4,334	2,732	1,148
Canal Zone			187	148	108	46
Colorado	126,930	63,214	16,430	2,304	993	417
Connecticut	65,590	21,347	2,144	1,666	1,077	453
Delaware	20,000	9,413	3,146	493	415	194
District of Columbia	15,133	4,324	922	371	294	124
Florida	391,040	142,314	11,349	4,640	2,014	1,224
Georgia	156,010	46,016	7,442	4,600	3,490	1,466
Idaho	30,000	17,111	352			
Illinois	300,324	114,327	21,433	8,816	4,300	1,806
Indiana	200,000	97,433	12,444	3,504	1,437	604
Iowa	250,021	111,621	9,679	4,101	2,745	1,152
Kansas	150,000	43,363	5,898	1,824	2,341	983
Kentucky	441,560	110,321	16,477	1,911	1,110	466
Louisiana	50,000	6,439	1,123	886	635	256
Maine	150,141	61,136	3,168	933	537	226
Maryland	53,190	27,464	2,211	1,114	1,227	516
Massachusetts	130,780	91,324	11,345	3,324	1,711	720
Michigan	875,130	191,469	31,435	5,943	2,887	1,213
Minnesota	65,000	22,466	3,767	1,582	755	317
Mississippi	93,040	11,000	1,915	538	48	21
Missouri	175,000	60,997	4,441	2,129	1,393	585
Montana	40,100	9,548	1,984	894	316	133
Nebraska	352,110	11,156	8,144	7,135	4,521	1,899

State	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
Nevada	1,003	322	105	67	23	10
New Hampshire	75,000	2,101	439	95	296	124
New Jersey	720,220	61,546	14,554	7,134	4,160	1,747
New Mexico	5,311	944	933	298	236	101
New York	300,429	44,449	16,873	13,881	6,819	2,760
North Carolina	129,410	12,595	3,188	1,912	270	107
North Dakota	50,000	9,420	1,191	334	197	83
Ohio	400,000	33,666	3,993	10,114	5,629	2,464
Oklahoma	289,550	11,678	4,662	1,987	1,152	480
Oregon	150,000	9,997	1,115	581	204	86
Pennsylvania	300,000	71,117	31,099	11,976	10,428	4,279
Rhode Island	21,321	4,666	2,121	593	415	174
South Carolina	200,611	21,445	4,454	990	359	151
South Dakota	54,329	9,111	1,179	417	265	111
Tennessee	163,980	11,887	1,915	305	223	94
Texas	450,000	79,878	11,891	2,487	1,620	780
Utah	20,000	1,187	837	16	10	
Vermont	80,301	2,982	2,176	405	332	140
Virginia	169,630	15,881	8,996	6,226	3,793	1,593
Washington	150,000	11,790	3,139	2,332	1,117	469
West Virginia	75,903	6,798	4,136	3,818	2,082	874
Wisconsin	220,850	16,986	3,483	2,236	1,372	576
Wyoming	24,989	1,114	986	287	99	42
Totals	8,904,871	2,006,181	321,411	145,469	82,602	34,694

The figure for 1925 shows the total number of members admitted to the klan from its formation to that date. The figures for 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1930 show the actual membership in good standing for each of those years.

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CHAPTER II

ENTRANCE INTO MAINE

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan "crossed Mason and Dixon's line in the winter of 1920-1921."¹ Its penetration of the Atlantic coastal states was not viewed with alarm or consternation by the citizenry, for the attitude of the populace in general was one of apathy and disregard. The first years of the Klan's growth, principally in 1921 and 1922, had been guided by the professional expertness of Edward Y. Clarke and Mrs. Elizabeth Tyler who were the owners of the Southern Publicity Association of Atlanta, Georgia. These two publicists had recognized the commercial benefits which could be harvested, if the mystical Ku Klux Klan order were properly organized and propagated on a nation-wide basis. Under the guise of an idealistic organization Clarke and Mrs. Tyler were successful in inaugurating a program of publicity which appealed to average Americans. Membership in the Ku Klux Klan spread with amazing rapidity during 1921 throughout the United States, and subsequently, the doctrines of Klanism trespassed the boundaries of the

¹ Frank Parker Stockbridge, "The Ku Klux Klan Revival", Current History, Vol. XIV (April - September, 1921), p. 19.

State of Maine.

The Knights of the Invisible Empire "first appeared in Maine late in the Fall of 1921."² The Maine Klansmen who were known to have been bona fide members were small in number, but as it will be noted, they were of sufficient potency to form a nucleus for an indomitable organization.³ The influx of the Ku Klux Klan into Maine was moderate, reserved, and secretive.⁴ The propaganda which was unceasingly issued from Klan headquarters found natural channels of dissemination. The principal medium for dispersing information to the public was through the unsuspecting and innocent press, which extended free as well as front-page publicity to the Klan. In addition to the press the published literature of the Ku Klux Klan was distributed

2 Portland Sunday Telegram, November 16, 1930.

3 The first Klansmen to have come to this State and to have influenced the natives were three World War I veterans, who had pledged their devotion to the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan while they had been serving military duty in the South. Discussion of the Ku Klux Klan led to interest in the organization, whereupon local citizens of Bangor and Brewer wrote to Atlanta, Georgia for information.

4 See Bangor Commercial, October 4, 1922. The Ku Klux Klan invasion of all New England states was made public at a Klan assembly in Boston on October 3, 1922.

purposefully and freely throughout the towns and cities of Maine. No area in the State escaped the attention of the Invisible Empire.

The newspapers and Klan literature, however, were not the only media to have given the Invisible Empire statewide publicity. In a statement to a newspaper reporter Governor Percival P. Baxter declared that he had observed the growth of the Invisible Empire in other states and that he could not believe that "level-headed citizens of Mainewill allow themselves to be influenced by such an organization."⁵ Excerpts from the Governor's announcement indicated his animosity toward the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, although within a year Mr. Baxter will have publicly announced his approval or at least his sanction of the Invisible Knights upon the basis that it had committed no indiscretions. Mr. Baxter's declaration was published in the Bangor Commercial:

Secrecy is dangerous and those who practice it seek to escape legal and personal responsibility for their actions....

For men to mask and robe themselves and gather by night moving about mysteriously as though possessed of hidden power resembles the mockery of the Middle Ages. It is all a sham. Mystery and secrecy can very soon degenerate into terror and lawlessness. No good can come out of such methods, and decent citizens will shun them. I have the Ku Klux Klan literature, some of which came anonymously from Portland,

⁵ Bangor Commercial, November 1, 1922.

but those who sent it are known to me. Its declaration of principles are couched in high-sounding phrases and it makes a hollow pretense of loyalty and patriotism....

The Ku Klux Klan seeks to divide our people by drawing religious lines. Maine is not a state in which such organizations can flourish. There is no place here for anti-Protestant, anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, or any other organization that seeks to split the community in groups and create conflict between them....

Maine of all the states is the first to greet the morning sun, and our people love the light that overcomes the darkness and those who flourish in its shadows. They fought for it and will fight for it again if need be. In Maine men meet face to face and sheets and pillow cases are not used as masks and robes for secret orders.

Law-abiding citizens who believe in fair and open play will stand firmly against the Ku Klux Klan. Our people abhor those who are ashamed to show themselves in the open. The Klan is an insult and an affront to American citizens. It seeks to array class against class, sect against sect, religion against religion. Such an organization must not and never will get a foothold in this state.⁶

Why the Governor should have stated so vehement an opinion is not readily comprehensible. His second term of office had not yet begun, and serious repercussions could have developed which would have impaired the relations between the Governor and the Legislature. It is granted that Mr. Baxter was entitled to his opinion, but how strange it was to have included within his Inaugural Address a denunciation of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The Legislative Record of the eighty-First Legislature has

6 Bangor Commercial, November 1, 1922.

included Governor Baxter's address concerning Secret Orders:

The secret order that has obtained a foothold in neighboring states has yet made but little headway here. Our people respect our constitution and what it stands for and believe in government by law. They are accustomed to talking and acting in the open, where they can be heard and seen. I may find it necessary to ask for legislation to curb those who seek to set up an invisible government in our midst but whatever happens the dignity of the State will be maintained regardless of cost.⁷

Although Governor Baxter rendered an adverse description of the Invisible Empire, his address was directed to an audience which contained representatives from all points of the State. At the time of this address Governor Baxter had probably deemed it the opportune time to induce the legislature to take restrictive measures for the Klan's advancement. The Governor's views were confirmed, for during the Eighty-First Legislature several bills were introduced to restrain Klan activity.⁸

This defiant attitude of Mr. Baxter was not singular, for many Maine folk vociferously disapproved of this clandestine organization. Ironical as it may seem hundreds of citizens who at first condemned the Ku Klux Klan later became the most ardent followers. Hysteria and fear continually plagued the advancement of the Invisible Empire.

⁷ Legislative Record, Eighty-First Legislature, State of Maine, 1923, p. 36.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 63, 69, 81, 780. Bangor Daily News, January 18, 1923.

This condition was caused chiefly by misunderstanding of the principles and purposes of the society, and it cannot be ignored that much anti-Klan propaganda preceded the Klan literature. Once the citizens had overcome their fear, prejudice, and wariness the barriers against the new society were gradually destroyed until these identical persons were susceptible to the charms of the "Kleagles" of the Invisible Empire.

If one reads the constitution of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan diligently, he will realize that the document embodies principles which are categorical.⁹ In no instance will evidence be found that a religion, a sect, or a group of people are to be subjected to discrimination, persecution, or vilification. Within the constitution of the society there are criteria for membership, requisites for allegiance, and principles and purposes which have an altruistic intent.¹⁰ Those persons who have examined the constitution and who have written malevolent reports about the Order, basing their conclusions upon the Klan constitution, have been malicious.

If, however, those writers have written their

⁹ Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (Atlanta, Georgia, 1921).

¹⁰ Ibid., Article II, pp. 10, 11.

theses with the activities and practices of various "Klans"¹¹ as their proof, they were perhaps justified and their works are useful. It is with these thoughts in mind that we turn our attention again to the Maine scene.

Why should a social order such as the Invisible Empire captivate the interest of Maine citizens? What did this organization offer its members that would enable the society to enlarge from a mediocre Order, consisting of 23,000 members in the Spring of 1923,¹² to a formidable 61,436 members in 1928?¹³ There were many and diverse reasons for this growth.

The King Kleagle of the Realm of Maine was responsible for the astounding growth of the Ku Klux Klan. His name was F. Eugene Farnsworth and as far as the practice of "Klankraft"¹⁴ is concerned, Mr. Farnsworth was practically a savior or a messiah to the disciples of the Invisible

¹¹ Ibid., Article III, p. 13.

"Section 2. In a material sense, the territorial division of the Invisible Empire into a subordinate jurisdiction shall be known as a "Realm"....

Section 3. A territorial division of a Realm shall be known as a "Province"....

Section 4. A "Klan" is the unit of this Order; it is the local or subordinate body, lodge, or organization...."

¹² Boston Herald, September 6, 1923. See article written by A. J. Gordon.

¹³ Washington Post, November 2, 1930.

¹⁴ "Klankraft" is the practice of fulfilling the principles, purposes and objectives of the Invisible Empire.

Empire. When King Kleagle Farnsworth¹⁵ first assumed his role as "organizer" in Maine, there was a dearth of Klansmen. No one had been concerned with the Klan until January 22, 1923, when Farnsworth presented his first lecture to the citizens of Portland. With the leadership of dynamic personalities any organization can probably flourish. Such happened to be one of the qualifications of Mr. Farnsworth - dynamic personality!

Without procrastination Kleagle Farnsworth engaged himself in a public appearance and lecture tour throughout every hamlet, village, town, and city in Maine. No locality apparently was too large or too small for his electrifying oratory. In the beginning of the campaign for membership the Ku Klux Klan encountered great opposition. Many pre-arranged meetings were cancelled in the more cosmopolitan cities, because the city officials had refused to allow lectures on Klanishness to be given in the public auditoriums. Through the efforts of the local organizers, however, the issue was generally presented to the city council for consideration. In the city of Brewer where Klansmen had a large representation, the Klan had been refused the use of City Hall. The situation in Brewer

¹⁵ King Kleagle Farnsworth represented the ultimate in the governmental control of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine. A chapter will be devoted to Mr. Farnsworth in this thesis.

relative to the disposition of the City Hall for Klan meetings was similarly encountered by the "town fathers" in most localities. After accusations and threats had been cast between the Klan supporters and the anti-Klan element, the town officials were usually persuaded to award permits for the local meetings. To have refused the local halls for Klan meetings would have been discriminatory, yet in such places as Biddeford, Lewiston, and Old Town the city halls were not available for lectures on "Americanism". The Catholic element in those cities constitutes the majority of the local population and the Catholic attitude toward the Klan was far from sympathetic since they regarded themselves as a target of Klanism.

The local Klan sympathizers, once they had secured the rights for a mass meeting, would invite Farnsworth and his aides to present an address. The subject which appealed to audiences everywhere was "Americanism" and its ramifications. Naturally, Mr. Farnsworth not only lectured on the principles of "Americanism", for he frequently interjected the tenets of Klankraft. The audience would be so entranced with Farnsworth's allocution that it would not detect his evasion of the actual subject. At the completion of the lecture Klansman Farnsworth would obligingly answer inquiries from the people in the audience. In most instances the audience contained only prospective candidates, for admission to the meeting was gained by a

"complimentary" ticket.¹⁶

The first lecture constituted a major part of the program for the acquisition of new converts. Although the address was based on broad and nationalistic questions, the audience nevertheless was touched; the seeds of Klankraft had been imbedded in fertile ground. Several weeks would then pass without a public meeting. In the ensuing period, however, Ku Klux Klan agents would have ferreted out "all the information concerning a city, political and otherwise worth having".¹⁷ The work of the agents did not stop with the accumulation of local materials. The salesman or agent¹⁸

would establish contact with a "brother" and through him gain introduction to others. As soon as might be the salesman would commend himself to a clergyman, a Methodist or a Baptist for choice. To all he would descant upon the "One hundred per cent Americanism" of the Klan....¹⁹

It was phenomenal how the Invisible Empire

16 A local organizer or kleagle would distribute tickets a day or two previous to the meeting to Protestant Americans. Many Catholic and Jewish people attended these public meetings from curiosity.

17 Lewiston Sun, March 22, 1923.

18 W. P. Beazell, "The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan", World Tomorrow, Vol. VII (March 1924), p. 72. "Most of the salesmen were demobilized soldiers, a majority of them officers, either out of employment or inclined toward something that promised novelty."

19 Ibid., p. 72.

acquired the allegiance of the Protestant clergy. With complete disregard for the decree circulated by the Federal Council of Churches²⁰ Maine ministers swore their devotion to the principles espoused by the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Their church services were colored thereafter with Klan ideology. The influence of the clergy was undeniable, and as a functioning unit of the Invisible Empire these men of religion were very instrumental in enticing their parishioners into the local Klan organizations.

The Kleagles, assured of moral support from the clergymen and the several Klan members within the town, would prepare themselves for the second visitation. When the final preparations had been completed, Mr. Farnsworth with other prominent personalities would re-visit the city. His purpose this second time would be the enrollment of members.

Maine people have been noted for their sincerity, integrity, and "level-headedness",²¹ but a trait not as highly publicized is their yearning to be a "joiner". It appeared that the average citizen could hardly restrain

20 Bangor Commercial, October 16, 1922. "The Administrative Council of the Churches is opposed to any movement which overrides the processes of law and order, and which tends to complicate and make more difficult the work of cooperation between the various political, racial and religious groups in the Republic."

21 Bangor Commercial, November 1, 1922.

himself from being an "insider" immediately. Although the "klecktoken"²² required by all initiates was ten dollars (\$10.00), it did not obstruct the flow of candidates who were aroused by the eloquence of Farnsworth's addresses. When he spoke to them concerning the law breakers, the moral condition of the town, or the cheap political machines, pandemonium would break forth.

Excerpts from a series of Farnsworth's speeches will exemplify the premises that enraptured audiences everywhere.

The cheapest thing on sale in New England today is a politician....and you can tell that to your governor (meaning Baxter).²³

When I get the Bangor City Hall, I will read the names of those people who run the speak easy joints.²⁴

I can show you the tombstones of the murderers of our Presidents - and they're not in Protestant cemeteries.²⁵

This is not an Italian nation, this is not an Irish nation, and this is not a Catholic nation, it has always been and always will be a Protestant nation.²⁶

I wasn't aware that Governor...owned the State - I thought the people did.²⁷

²² Constitution and Laws, op. cit., Article IV, p. 15. Section 3, The "Klecktoken" (initiation fee) is given by an applicant and accepted by this Order as a donation.

²³ Bangor Daily News, January 23, 1923.

²⁴ Portland Press Herald, March 8, 1923.

²⁵ Lewiston Sun, April 19, 1923.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Rockland Courier-Gazette, July 7, 1923.

We are just working for a clean, wholesome political administration.²⁸

That Guinea over in Rome.²⁹

No other State in the Union has such a blot upon its history as Maine in regard to the booze situation.³⁰

These quotations were published in the local newspapers; they may be distorted impressions. Evidence has indicated, however, that such subjects were appropriate and timely for this decade. With these topics at "Professor" Farnsworth's disposition the philosophy of the original Ku Klux Klan Society was drastically metamorphosed. Regardless of the import of these "Godly messages" many prominent as well as ordinary Maine people acclaimed the "refinements" of the Invisible Empire. Not only were business men, ministers and politicians involved in the membership drives conducted by Farnsworth, but also theology students³¹ and university professors³² were lured into the periphery of Klan ideology.

When the clientage had been thoroughly orientated to Klan dogma, "Professor" Farnsworth³³ would iterate his

28 Kennebec Journal, September 8, 1923.

29 Bar Harbor Times, February 13, 1924.

30 Portland Press Herald, April 20, 1923.

31 Bangor Daily News, January 23, 1923.

32 Kennebec Journal, January 23, 1923.

33 The title, "Professor", was a non-professional honor bestowed upon Mr. Farnsworth by his colleagues.

favorite expression. It was language that was hypnotic and euphuistic, intended to arouse the innate exhibitionism which abounds in all prospective victims.

This country has been awakened to a need for such an organization as the Ku Klux Klan and it will not be checked until the dawn of that day when the lion and the lamb will lie down together and the bickering of the foreign born and those who swear allegiance to foreign potentates have been banished from our midst.³⁴

If the Klan is all that I have said it is, and stands for the principles that I have said it does, how many of you want it in Maine?³⁵

Generally, the Ku Klux Klan represented precisely the principles which the audience wanted most to endorse. At the conclusion of the address by the King Kleagle questionnaires were circulated among the Klan adherents. If the prospective candidate answered the questions satisfactorily, he would have completed the first requirement towards becoming a Klansman or an "American on Guard."³⁶ A representative questionnaire contained the following questions:

1. Is the motive prompting your inquiry serious?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your occupation?
4. Where were you born?

34 Biddeford Weekly Record, October 26, 1923.

35 Bangor Daily News, January 23, 1923.

36 Klansmen considered themselves "guardians of American principles". As an acquaintance of this student expressed his definition of a Klansman, he said "he was an American on Guard". (Name withheld upon request.)

5. How long have you resided in your present locality?
6. Are you married, single or widower?
7. Were your parents born in the United States of America?
8. Are you a gentile or Jew?
9. Are you of the white race or of a colored race?
10. What educational advantages have you?
11. Color of eyes? Hair? Weight? Height?
12. Do you believe in the principles of Pure Americanism?
13. Do you believe in white supremacy?
14. What is your politics?
15. What is your religious faith?
16. Of what church are you a member?
17. Of what religious faith are your parents?
18. What secret, fraternal orders are you a member of (if any)?
19. Do you honestly believe in the practice of Real fraternity?
20. Do you owe any kind of allegiance to any foreign nation, government, institution, sect, people, ruler or person?

I most solemnly assert and affirm that each question above is truthfully answered by me and in my own handwriting and that below is my real signature.

Signed
 Inquirer.

Business Address.....
 Telephone No.....
 Date.....
 Residence Address.....
 Telephone No.....³⁷

The questionnaire was sedulously scrutinized that only those applicants with high moral standards could partake of the "Qualifying Interrogatives."³⁸ The qualifi-

³⁷ Ku Klux Klan Exposed, (Racine, nd), p. 31.

³⁸ Kloran, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (Atlanta, Ga.). p. 25.

cations for membership in the Order were liberal as stipulated by the Constitution, but more rigid requirements were established and enforced by the local Klans.³⁹ For Klansmen in Maine the Kleagles preferred men who were members of a Protestant society, such as the Masons, the Odd Fellows or Knights of Pythias. The Klan felt that if a man were already a member of another society, he would probably become a good Klansman. The "naturalization" ceremony,⁴⁰ however, was uniform and consistent, as it was an integral part of the ritual or Kloran.⁴¹ The ceremony could be held either in the Klavern⁴² or it could be negotiated

under the starry canopy of the sky with the immediate scene of action in a great open field, lighted by the flare of the legendary Fiery Cross.⁴²

The open-air demonstrations were frequently held, because they served two purposes: (1) new members were naturalized,

39 Local Klans deviated from the Constitution in many respects. This practice culminated in the condemnation of the Ku Klux Klan as an entity, but the basic principles of the Invisible Empire were founded on humanitarian ideals. It was not until after the local Klans came into control of their own affairs that notoreity put in its appearance.

40 The Kloran is the Ku Klux Klan ritual.

41 A Klavern is the site of a Klan meeting; the official form of the Klavern is a perfect quadrate.

42 Kennebec Journal, June 30, 1923.

and (2) the ceremony attracted hundreds of curious and sympathetic followers.

Each candidate who had been duly and properly processed and who had been deemed eligible for membership in the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan had to emphatically and affirmatively answer these questions:

1. Is the motive prompting your ambition to be a Klansman serious and unselfish?
2. Are you a native-born white, Gentile American citizen?
3. Are you absolutely opposed to and free of any allegiance of any nature to any cause, government, people, sect or ruler that is foreign to the United States of America?
4. Do you believe in the tenets of the Christian religion?
5. Do you esteem the United States of America and its institutions above any other government, civil, political or ecclesiastical, in the whole world?
6. Will you, without mental reservation, take a solemn oath to defend, preserve and enforce same?
7. Do you believe in clanishness and will you faithfully practice same towards klansmen?
8. Do you believe in and will you faithfully strive for the eternal maintenance of white supremacy?
9. Will you faithfully obey our constitution and laws, and conform willingly to all our usages, requirements and regulations?
10. Can you always be depended on?⁴³

When the candidate had responded properly to the above "Interrogatives", the "Klokard"⁴⁴ would administer the Oath. The privileged candidate, thereupon, became a

⁴³ Kloran, op. cit., p. 26.

⁴⁴ The "Klokard" is an officer of the Klan; he is the official Lecturer.

well-qualified and respectable citizen of the Invisible Empire. He was an American who solemnly promised to uphold the positive program of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which avowed

To honor the one Flag
 To promote the Public School
 To serve the Protestant Church
 To fight for the sanctity of the home
 To promote respect for law.⁴⁵

It has been unofficially stated that twenty thousand "level-headed" Maine citizens had become Knights of the Invisible Empire in 1923. This phenomenal condition can largely be accounted for by the personalities and promotional processes of Klan organizers. It must be remembered, however, that the Ku Klux Klan was slow in reaching Maine. Equally true was the difficulty "in obtaining members in the industrial center of the state", although the small towns, "where fraternalism means a great deal socially and in business ways",⁴⁶ contributed a great number of Klansmen to the Invisible Empire. The entry of the Ku Klux Klan into the State of Maine has been adroitly described by A. J. Gordon of the Boston Herald.

The Ku Klux Klan has come North to stay.
 it has obtained a foothold in New England. It

45 H. W. Evans, The Klan of Tomorrow and the Klan Spiritual, Second Imperial Klonvocation, September 23, 1924.

46 Boston Herald, September 6, 1923.

has a stronghold in Maine. With masks and fiery crosses, picturesque initiations and flowing robes....it has concentrated on that state under King Kleagle F. Eugene Farnsworth.⁴⁷

"Non Silba Sed Anthar"⁴⁸



Independence Day Parade, Brewer, Maine, 1924.

⁴⁷ Boston Herald, September 5, 1923.

⁴⁸ Not for self but for others.



Independence Day Parade, Brewer, Maine, 1924.

CHAPTER III

THE KLAN IN MAINE POLITICS

The Ku Klux Klan participated in the political activities of Maine, because "Americans have neglected their public duty."¹ The officials of the Klan "purposed to take a hand in politics"² that the Maine people could benefit from "a clean wholesome, political administration."³ The Invisible Empire solemnly declared that "the day of political parties in America is over;....the expulsion of the professional political boss from public office"⁴ was mandatory. The Klan decreed that "in the future the sole qualification for election to office will be true Americanism."⁵

Governor Baxter was the first to publicly attack the "secret order" in his address to the 81st Legislature, but his opinion was not acceptable to the politically-

1 Rockland Courier-Gazette, February 23, 1926.

2 Belfast Republican Journal, May 3, 1923.

3 Kennebec Journal, September 8, 1923.

4 Grand Dragon, Realm of Colorado, "A Klansman's Obligation as a Patriot to his God, His country, His Home, and His Fellowmen," First Annual Meeting, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (Atlanta, 1923), p. 62.

5 Ibid.

minded editor of the Union-Republican who capriciously editorialized the following:

Did you read the Governor's message? It was filled with a lot of common sense wasn't it? No party lines there, no siree, not for Percy, everyone looks alike to him, Democrats or Republicans, before election or after, the Governor seems to have worries over the Ku Klux Klan, but I should think he would worry about that, no danger of anyone parading around at night with a pillow slip and sheet on in the State of Maine, leastwise not at present writing; the folks wear something heavier than a sheet and pillow slip on cold nights in this state; God help 'em if they don't, the 81st Legislature isn't going to.⁶

In 1921 certain progressive citizens had attempted to change the charter of Portland which would have provided for a council-manager type of government in lieu of the mayor, aldermen, and councilmen form. This movement met with complete failure, but the supporters of progressive government remained undaunted. A committee of fifteen Portland citizens under the leadership of State Senator Ralph O. Brewster were appointed "to circulate a petition to the Legislature urging the establishment of a city manager form of government for Portland."⁷ The committee was, subsequently, authorized to arrange a special election, and the election date was scheduled for September 10, 1923.

⁶ Machias Union-Republican, January 25, 1923.

⁷ Kennebec Journal, January 13, 1923.

In the meantime a Committee of One Hundred⁸ was organized to promote the council-manager campaign. It received an unexpected ally in the form of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Many Portland people were suspicious of this organization which had only recently infiltrated into the Maine communities. It was believed that the Klan was merely "jumping on the bandwagon when the city council-manager form of government would inevitably be adopted."⁹

More than any other personality, F. Eugene Farnsworth was responsible for the Klan's entrance into Maine politics. With his "eloquent pleas for a clean State, a clean home and clean politics - to serve our Master and our country - to be 100 per cent Americans"¹⁰ Farnsworth was able to coordinate Klan activities with political affairs. His manner of public speech was rhetorical, although his logic was definitely not of intellectual caliber. Generally, the text of his lectures would be based on Americanism, but he would not restrict himself to this topic. Unfortunately, he cast asinine reflections upon the city of Boston, and immediately Mayor Curley retaliated with a defamatory declaration against Farnsworth. Mayor Curley, certainly no

8 New York Times, September 11, 1923.

9 Bangor Daily News, September 17, 1923.

10 Belfast Republican Journal, July 26, 1923

one to pass judgement upon another's character, stated to the press:

The cure for Farnsworth and his Ku Klux Klan is a stout boot and a pint of disinfectant. I personally believe Kleagle Farnsworth is a mountebank of the lowest order.

And now the New Brunswick barber, mesmerist, stock peddler, lecturer, pseudo-patriot and bogus American is recruiting sergeant for the Ku Klux Klan, filling the ears of rural Maine with slanders of the good citizens of the Pine Tree State, bringing the blush of shame to the face of decent Protestantism, vilifying the officials and Government of the State, and its cities, and doing his pestilential best to control elections and foment civil war.¹¹

This verbal attack against Farnsworth contained untruths, but Farnsworth had no grounds for complaint. He had never been hesitant to ridicule or chastise an innocent man whenever the occasion furthered the Klan program. However, it should be remembered that Kleagle Farnsworth sincerely believed his destiny lay in cultivating this program of "Americanism." It is true that he could perform like a "tearjerker" and a "spellbinder", but Farnsworth inherently was a true disciple of the Invisible Empire.

Throughout the summer the citizens of Portland were urged "to go to the polls and vote for the clean, progressive government every American wants."¹² On the eve of the election in Portland the Kennebec Journal

¹¹ Kennebec Journal, September 10, 1923.

¹² Bangor Commercial, September 10, 1923.

predicted: "The Ku Klux Klan...is to be a factor in this election. There are 23,000 polls in Portland, and the Klan claims to control 14,000 votes."¹³ The Klan was "invisibly" campaigning to effect a change in the government, and as A. J. Gordon of the Boston Herald rationalized: "If the change advocated by the Klan is made, the moral effect throughout the state will be tremendous."¹⁴ The results of the election would indicate the political power of the Klan. This special election in Portland was "the Klan's first venture in the political field in New England",¹⁵ and the outcome was anxiously awaited by Americans in all states of the Union. Portland had never before been represented at the polls in such strength. The citizenry were exuberant in their enthusiasm to participate in the election to such an extent that when State Senator Brewster "visited the ward rooms", he was "pelted with rotten eggs by a turbulent throng of four hundred. The police were summoned on a riot call, but by the time they arrived the trouble was over and innocent bystanders were busy removing debris from their clothing."¹⁶

13 Kennebec Journal, September 10, 1923.

14 Boston Herald, September 5, 1923.

15 New York Times, September 11, 1923.

16 Ibid.

At the conclusion of the voting the tabulations of the special election were announced. The newspaper caption read: "Portland Will Have New Government".¹⁷ When the reports had been verified, the anti-Klan element was baffled to find that "no claims of victory or other statements had been made by the Klan officials but it was known that the Klansmen who had been partisans of the council-manager plan were highly elated".¹⁸

Two months after the special election the polls were re-opened for the election of five councilmen. In this campaign the Klan once more endorsed the program proposed by the Committee of One Hundred. The headlines in the Bangor Daily News were: "Klan Candidates Win in Portland Election".¹⁹

The Klan had been extremely influential in both Portland elections; there seemed to be no question that the Klan had made a successful debut into the political affairs of the State. There were, however, many people who felt that the potency of the Klan had been overemphasized. For example, in an article appearing in the Biddeford Weekly

17 Bangor Commercial, September 11, 1923.

18 Ibid.

19 Bangor Daily News, December 5, 1923.

Journal one citizen opined that "the Klan was not a pre-dominating factor in Portland politics as yet, but that it may hold the balance of power".²⁰ This supposition was based upon the defeat of Albion L. Chapman who had been supported by the Portland Klan. Other than this one exception all candidates who had been endorsed by the Klan had been elected to the council.

The Klan had been expected to dominate the mayoralty elections in Auburn and Gardiner in November, 1923, but the Klan's strength had been exaggerated. The anti-Klan candidates in these cities were elected to office. The Lewiston Sun, reporting the Gardiner election, stated:

In a hotly contested election....the Ku Klux Klan was defeated. The supporters of Mayor Dr. Bert E. Lamb....regarded as the Klan candidateexpressed much surprise at his defeat as they had felt the Klan held the balance of power here and that their voting strength would count in his behalf.²¹

Obviously, the influence of the Klan in most Maine communities was not of sufficient power to be regarded as a political entity. The town meetings during March, 1924, however, effected a complete reversal in the political scene. Farnsworth had commented that "the Klan had no connection with any political party, but would give its support

20 Biddeford Weekly Journal, December 14, 1923.

21 Lewiston Sun, November 28, 1923.

to worthy candidates regardless of political affiliations."²² This statement was generally true in local politics, because the endorsement of candidates depended principally upon personal attributes and qualifications.

"There was political discontent in Maine,"²³ and the Klan developed its political potential to maximum efficiency to meet this crisis. In Sanford the Klan arranged a pre-election caucus to determine a "party" ticket. "The heavy hand of the Ku Klux Klan could be plainly seen in the results,"²⁴ because "the successful candidates for the offices....had been selected and elected by the Klan."²⁵ The members of the local Klan, when the results were posted, "smiled wise and satisfied smiles and said, in effect, that at last Sanford was a town governed by 100 per cent Americans."²⁶ The political situation in Sanford was not singular, since Ku Klux Klan "influence was also exerted in Saco and Rockland on the winning side."²⁷ The election results in Saco were exceptionally notable, for "the vote

²² Belfast Republican Journal, February 28, 1924.

²³ Elizabeth Ring, The Progressive Movement of 1912 and Third Party Movement of 1924 in Maine, (Orono, 1933), p. 69.

²⁴ Sanford Tribune, March 6, 1924.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Bangor Daily News, March 4, 1924.

was the heaviest polled since 1867."²⁸ Yet the Rockland election was far from being eclipsed in making political history, for the Klan-supported "Republican victory followed ten consecutive defeats for that party."²⁹ Even the "little New England town of Dexter" had "the heaviest vote....in this contest....in the history of the town."³⁰ Without doubt the Invisible Empire had attained a prominent position in Maine politics, but its optimum effectiveness was not attained until the gubernatorial campaign.

In an address at Clark Memorial Church³¹ Farnsworth definitely outlined the position the Ku Klux Klan would take in Maine politics. He asserted:

We will not organize into one party nor will we expend money for political purposes. When the time comes to nominate the next Governor of Maine we will merely investigate each nominee's past life and his parent's lives and when we find a man with a heart like Abraham Lincoln's, a true American, we will vote for him to the last member of our organization whether he be Democrat, Republican or what not. If there are 20,000 members of the Klan in Maine the entire membership will vote for that candidate, but when he is elected there will be no political plums expected or accepted.³²

28 Ibid.

29 New York Times, March 4, 1924.

30 Kennebec Journal

31 Portland Press Herald, March 16, 1923.
Clarke Memorial Church is located in Portland, Maine.

32 Ibid.

In a lecture at Lewiston's Odd Fellows Hall Farnsworth was more positive of the Klan's political influence, for he confidently prophesied:

We are going to elect a Governor who will serve humanity, and to find such a man we are going to look into the heart. We want a man who does not want to be Governor. Mayor Day of Bangor can't be Governor, because he would not let us have City Hall. But we are going to elect our next Governor.³³

It was generally believed in political circles that the "Governor (Baxter) alone couldn't beat Day in a year of Sundays,"³⁴ but Brewster could succeed with the support of Baxter.³⁵ Governor Baxter, however, who was believed to have had "a klan of his own....composed of office holders whose political comfort....depend very much....upon their loyalty to the Baxter crown" and identified poetically as "Baxter's Bound Brigade"³⁶ had no intentions of supporting Brewster. When it had been publicized that Farnsworth had remarked in a Bar Harbor address that "the man who is going to be your next Governor is named Ralph O. Brewster,"³⁷ the normally staid Republicans turned pale with disgust. The Republican party leaders realized that Brewster would

³³ Lewiston Sun, March 22, 1923.

³⁴ Bangor Daily News, November 30, 1923.

³⁵ Ibid. Mayor Day passed away before the primaries.

³⁶ Ibid., September 12, 1923.

³⁷ Bar Harbor Times, February 13, 1924.

campaign as a Republican candidate, although his support would be derived from a secret organization.

The Republican State committee conducted a meeting in January, 1924, and at the women's committee caucus the question was asked: "Where does Brewster stand?"³⁸ Their opinions were explicit and definitive, if not humorous and facetious, when they decided that Brewster was

by the side of the fiery cross. He is against niggers, P. I's and Catholics. He is white, native-born and Protestant. If he is elected he is going to appoint Farnsworth State Treasurer and Conant Highway Commissioner, close the parochial schools, develop the water powers with Ku Klux Klan initiation fees, abolish taxes except on Church property and stop spending money on hospitals.

I don't know whether he is a great man or not, but he is a real man. A Clean Young Man, as we used to say about Milliken and Baxter and will be saying about whoever we nominate unless he is along in years and then we will call him a Grand Old Man.³⁹

The campaign for the Republican nomination was strictly a contest between State Senator Brewster and Frank G. Farrington. The Republican party firmly advocated Farrington's nomination, whereas Brewster discovered it necessary to court the favor of the Klan.

Brewster's career as a politician had originated in Portland where he was respected for his aggressiveness and attentiveness to duty. The Klan was in want of such a

³⁸ Machias Union-Republican, January 31, 1924.

³⁹ Ibid.

person who could represent their policies. Brewster realized the political value of the Klan as a supporting organization, therefore, he was not hesitant to cultivate relationships. Farnsworth was Brewster's sponsor and through him the Klan attempted "to exhibit Brewster as a poor struggling boy who worked his way through Harvard Law School."⁴⁰ Actually, Brewster had been more privileged than the ordinary youth and had enjoyed a respectable college career completely devoid of financial handicaps. This idea of introducing Brewster as a "Carpenter in overalls" was an effective propaganda instrument, for the Maine people loved the "rags to riches" story.

Farnsworth was his most energetic and resourceful campaigner, but on April 10, 1924, Farnsworth was "accused of treason"⁴¹ by the Klan officials. When the Klan forced Farnsworth to resign as King Kleagle of the Maine Realm,⁴² Brewster's opportunity for the gubernatorial nomination seemed hopeless. The Klan, however, did not alienate itself from Brewster's campaign, although the organization had suffered internal dissension. Brewster continued, therefore, to be a tenacious contender for nomination. The editor of the Lewiston Sun was far from enthusiastic over the prospective candidacy of Brewster, for he warned:

⁴⁰ New York Times, August 31, 1924.

⁴¹ Bangor Daily News, April 10, 1924.

If the Republican party dares to nominate KKK Brewster for Governor, it ought to kill the Republican party in Maine for a generation. Maine needs a more decent administration of the prohibitory laws. Maine needs better use of her education money. Maine needs tax reform. But Maine ought to put off those necessary steps forward, to get busy cleaning herself of KKK politics.⁴³

Governor Baxter also expressed fear that the Klan might wreck the Republican party in Maine, when at the Lincoln Day banquet he stated:

If we Republicans are to win in the coming campaign, the people of Maine must be given to understand that the Republican party is not under the domination of any group or influence.

The most uncertain element in Maine politics today is the Ku Klux Klan. This organization is growing daily and opposition seems to strengthen it. Its program is well defined, its leaders aggressive.

I plead for the restoration of harmony within the Republican ranks; for old time Republicanism where no distinction of Catholics, Protestants, Hebrews or Klansmen ever was thought of. The time has not arrived when the Republican party in Maine needs the lesson of defeat.⁴⁴

The Democratic State convention gathered in Lewiston on March 12, 1924, and an anti-Klan platform was proposed. William R. Pattangall announced his candidacy

42 Ibid. "The action comes as a culmination to several weeks of investigation within the Klan conducted by secret operatives from National Klan headquarters. The charges against Farnsworth were based upon his creation of a Klanswomen's organization in Maine, known as the Secret Circle, which was independent of the National Klan!"

43 Lewiston Sun, January 15, 1924.

44 Bangor Daily News, February 13, 1924.

for re-nomination and declared antipathy toward the Ku Klux Klan. While many delegates had been indifferent to the party platform in the past, the denunciation of the Klan did not encounter unanimity at this convention. Since Pattangall was "the most vigorous Democratic personality in the State, an able lawyer and an effective speaker",⁴⁵ he was well assured of the Democratic nomination which inferred that the Democratic platform would be based on anti-Klanism.

Patangall had been a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, and he had been accredited with making "the strongest and the soundest speech"⁴⁶ against the Ku Klux Klan. The Ellsworth American, nevertheless, had a question for Patangall upon his return, which queried:

After making a speech in favor of condemning the Klan by name in the national platform, why did he sneak out of the convention and allow his wife to cast his vote against his argument?⁴⁷

Although this inference was never denied or corroborated by Patangall, it can be reasonably concluded that the Maine Democrats solicited a pledge of silence from its members that the Republicans could not harvest political hay from this sole inconsistency.

⁴⁵ New York Times, July 22, 1924.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ellsworth American, July 2, 1924.

The primary elections were held in June, 1924. The nomination of Pattangall had been merely a formality, but "the interest in the fight for the Republican nomination was the keenest of the primaries due....to the participation of the Ku Klux Klan on the side of Brewster."⁴⁸ The Bangor Daily News reported that "the aggregate vote was the largest ever cast in a Maine primary election."⁴⁹ Brewster had campaigned principally on his proposal that "state funds for sectarian schools be prohibited," while Farrington had emphasized the platform of the Republican party. Farrington was nominated for the gubernatorial office by a majority of 315 votes, having received 47,568 votes to Brewster's 47,253. Since Farrington had won the nomination by a small margin of votes, Brewster's constituents deemed it advisable to re-examine the ballots cast in "twenty cities, towns and plantations."⁵⁰ It was agreed that "should evidence of irregularities appear from the examination....a recount would be asked."⁵¹ The investigating committee under Brewster's direction submitted a

48 Bangor Daily News, June 19, 1924.

49 Ibid., June 20, 1924.

50 Ibid., June 25, 1924. The localities in question were Portland, Lewiston, Augusta, Bangor, Brewer, Old Town, Farmington, Eastport, Calais, Ft. Kent, Van Buren, Grand Isle, Madawaska, St. Agatha, and Wallagrass.

51 Bangor Daily News, June 25, 1924.

request for a recount, when they discovered

the use of illegal ballots running into the hundreds, allowing of many persons to vote illegally in the cities, disfranchisement of several hundred voters by shortage of ballots, and a general discrepancy in the actual count at the inspection and in the official returns.⁵²

Governor Baxter ordered a recount of the ballots cast in the primary election, and when the decision was publicly announced on August 7, "State Senator Brewster was nominatedas the Republican candidate"⁵³ by a 581 plurality. The total vote ascertained by the examiners was 47,284 to 46,703.

"Maine, naturally a Republican stronghold, endorsed and favored the candidacy of President Coolidge."⁵⁴ The Republican party in Maine decided to capitalize on Coolidge's magnetic name, and they adopted the campaign slogan: "A vote for Brewster is a vote for Coolidge."⁵⁵ The Democratic State committee asserted that this slogan was a misrepresentation of the facts, and in turn they suggested a more appropriate Republican slogan: "A vote for Brewster is a vote for the Klan."⁵⁶ The Democratic committee further intimated that "there is just one issue

52 Ibid., July 2, 1924.

53 Ibid., August 8, 1924.

54 Ring, op. cit., p. 72.

55 Bangor Daily News, August 25, 1924.

56 Ibid.

in this campaign so far as the State of Maine is concerned. It is the Klan."⁵⁷ In his speeches the eloquent Pattangall charged that "Senator Brewster is definitely connected with the Ku Klux Klan."⁵⁸ To these accusations Brewster did not remain silent, for he stated that Pattangall "would inevitably receive the support of an organization which had threatened his (Brewster's) political death."⁵⁹ The Republican nominee was referring, of course, to the Knights of Columbus, because the Knights of Columbus opposed "the constitutional amendment prohibiting the diversion of public funds to parochial schools."⁶⁰

It is noticeable that throughout this political contest Brewster was invariably in a defensive position. Pattangall had asked "repeatedly from the public platform and in newspaper columns what his attitude was on the Ku Klux Klan,"⁶¹ but Senator Brewster would never reply. The Sanford Tribune and Advocate reasoned that Brewster could not afford to denounce the Invisible Empire. They claimed;

He is known to have the backing of the Klan solidly, as an organization. He is a Klan-nominated, Klan-supported candidate, which no doubt is why he will not repudiate the Klan by name.⁶²

57 Biddeford Weekly Journal, August 22, 1924.

58 Eastport Sentinel, August 13, 1924.

59 Lewiston Sun, January 18, 1924.

60 Ibid., April 15, 1924.

61 Sanford Tribune and Advocate, August 28, 1924.

62 Ibid.

Brewster did, however, maintain that "his election as Governor on September 8, would be a Republican victory in the State of Maine - nothing more and nothing less, and would not be the victory of any group or organization."⁶³ His election campaign had been made on national issues, and the outcome of the Maine gubernatorial election, "the first test of Klan strength in the North,"⁶⁴ would have a terrific import on the national election.

The "Maine voters were ready for a vigorous battle"⁶⁵ between Brewster and Pattangall. "The largest vote in the history of Maine elections"⁶⁶ was cast on September 8, and Brewster was "elected Governor by a rousing majority."⁶⁷ The chairman of the Democratic committee attributed the Republican victory "to the fact there were more members of the Ku Klux Klan in the Democratic party than we realized."⁶⁸ Pattangall's statement to the press was more explicit, when he said;

63 Bangor Daily News, September 2, 1924.

64 New York Times, September 8, 1924.

65 Bangor Daily News, September 7, 1924.

66 Ibid., September 10, 1924.

67 Houlton Times, September 10, 1924.

68 Ellsworth American, September 10, 1924.

The victory is distinctly a victory for the Klan....We are temporarily defeated by a combination of religious intolerance and blind partisanship that Maine will not long endure - the rule of the Klan - and the Republican organization will find it a difficult partner with which to do business.⁶⁹

The New York Times adequately summarized the Maine election when it reported: "The Ku Klux Klan has upset things in Maine."⁷⁰ The citizens of Maine, however, viewed the results with customary optimism, for it was generally believed that "the state's business would go on as usual."⁷¹ The prediction was valid, as Governor Brewster energetically initiated a program which was intended to foster and encourage Maine industry. His progressive policies won for him the admiration and respect of Democrats and Republicans alike.

The activities of the Ku Klux Klan after the election were confined to parades, public gatherings, lodge-work, and "invisible" law enforcement. Knights of the Invisible Empire did not emerge again as a political force until the election in 1926. Governor Brewster was renominated by the Republican party, and for his opponent the Democrats had selected E. P. McLean. The Republicans were seeking Brewster's re-election "upon the efforts made by

⁶⁹ Bangor Daily News, September 10, 1924.

⁷⁰ New York Times, September 5, 1924.

⁷¹ Lubec Herald, September 11, 1924.

him for the industrial development of the State and his economical administration of the State's finances."⁷² McLean's campaign was merely a refutation of Brewster's platform and a promise "to promote the interests of agriculture in Maine."⁷³ The Democratic committee attempted unsuccessfully to foment political discord by publicizing

the appointment of Klansmen to public office by the Brewster administration, the removal of the sheriff of Kennebec County for malfeasance in office, and the Klan-inspired investigation of the Maine State Prison.⁷⁴

When the gubernatorial election was held in September, 1926, the Klan was not recognized as the determining element. Governor Brewster was re-elected by a 21,703 vote plurality, having "carried every county except Androscoggin and Kennebec."⁷⁵ Brewster carried "all the cities except Augusta, Biddeford, Lewiston, Old Town, and Waterville,"⁷⁶ which indicated that the anti-Klan sections continued to associate Brewster with the Klan.

Another primary election was scheduled for November, 1926, to elect nominees for the United States Senate,

72 New York Times, September 12, 1926.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Houlton Times, September 15, 1926.

76 Ibid.

since the Senatorial office was made vacant by the death of Senator Bert M. Fernald. The Republican nomination was sought by four candidates; Arthur R. Gould, Percival P. Baxter, Louis A. Jack, and Hodgdon C. Buzzell.⁷⁷ "Buzzell was reputed to have the support of the Ku Klux Klan, which was understood to be particularly opposed to Gould."⁷⁸ Fulton J. Redman had no opposition in the Democratic primary, and although Baxter was favored in Republican contest, Gould was nominated in spite of Klan opposition. "His nomination was attributed largely to the feeling that Portland ought not to have both the Maine Senators."⁷⁹

The Maine Klansmen, nevertheless, were not to be rebuked by this "Aroostook capitalist". Through Rev. Arthur F. Leigh the Klan charged Gould "with expending more than the legal \$1500. in the primary election."⁸⁰ Governor Brewster refused to support Gould, because he sincerely believed Gould had violated the Maine statute concerning primary expenditures. Coincident with these complaints Redman⁸¹ accused Gould of having bribed several New Brunswick legislators that Gould's corporation might procure a

77 New York Times, October 31, 1926.

78 Ibid., November 2, 1926.

79 Ibid., November 3, 1926.

80 Bangor Daily News, November 22, 1926.

81 New York Times, November 22, 1926.

franchise to construct the St. John and Quebec Railway. A hearing was ordered by the Secretary of State, and at its conclusion Gould was exonerated of all charges. In the meantime the Klan had divorced its Republican affiliations and had allied itself with Redman's campaign. In one respect the Klan was adhering to its principle of having no definite party relationship. Gould observed the disunity prevalent in the Klan organization and asserted: "I do not believe the Ku Klux Klan controls the Republican party in Maine....With their vote for Redman, I shall win by a very substantial majority."⁸² His prediction might have been a theoretical assumption, but it could not have been truer; Gould won the Senatorial seat by 50,000 votes. Chairman Field stated that the results of the election were indicative of three things:

First; that the good sense of the voters of Maine cannot be overcome by unfounded slander;
Second; that the sinister influence of an oath-bound organization no longer threatens the welfare of Maine;
Third; that Mr. Gould stands vindicated, as his friends were sure he would.⁸³

One decisive conclusion can be made: the Klan was on the wane in Maine in 1926. Its political influence, however, had not been completely destroyed, for the Klan was to

⁸² Bangor Daily News, November 27, 1926.

⁸³ Ibid., November 30, 1926.

become a predominant force in the elections of 1928.

Governor Brewster was the first man to become a Senatorial candidate "while occupying the office of Governor in 50 years or more."⁸⁴ Rev. Lawrence Walker enthusiastically emphasized Brewster's qualifications by declaring from the pulpit:

Governor Brewster's phenomenal success has been due to his own inherent ability, to his intensity of life, to the force of his personality and to his innate ability as a leader.

Unfettered by burdensome traditions, unhampered by the dictatorship of corporations and 'special interests', he has been able to serve the interests of his state as it seemed wise to do. Maine should be proud of her governor and Maine will be justly proud with Ralph Brewster as her Senator.⁸⁵

The Governor promised to secure relief for the unemployed, and he promised the Grange that he would try to have a higher tariff placed on foreign potatoes. These promises were never fulfilled, because Senator Hale defeated "the general-in-chief of the forces of righteousness"⁸⁶ in the primary election by a vote of 77,830 to 44,524. The Klan had not reunited for the election of candidates, which can be basically ascribed as the cause for Brewster's defeat. It was apparent, too, that the Republican party had once more become a bona fide political organization.

84 Ibid., December 29, 1927.

85 Bangor Daily News, February 27, 1928.

86 New York Times, June 20, 1928.

A revival of the Ku Klux Klan was created in Maine, when Alfred Smith became the Democratic candidate for President of the United States. Although Maine people had been apathetic concerning the State campaigns, the nomination of a Catholic and a "wet" for the presidency stirred every Klansman in Maine. Perhaps their dues were in arrears, but there was no reason why they could not unite once more and defeat this "un-American" candidate. It was indeed a strenuous campaign in Maine. Klansmen thoroughly posted anti-Smith and anti-Catholic literature throughout the State. A Klan leader in Brewer recalled that Klansmen tacked their posters to telephone poles at one o'clock in the morning and that they repeated this process every other night. The strength of the Klan in 1928 consisted of a mere 933 members,⁸⁶ but they had the sworn allegiance of more than 80,000 former Klansmen. It is unnecessary to state the actual results of the presidential election, but it is mandatory that the Klan is accredited with making a "glorious last stand." After this final display of unparalleled unanimity the Ku Klux Klan disappeared forever from Maine politics, but its political principles remained in the minds of its faithful representatives.

⁸⁷ Washington Post, November 2, 1930.

CHAPTER IV

CATHOLICS, PROTESTANTS, AND THE KLAN

"Patriotism and Christianity are pre-eminently the moving principles of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan."¹ It was an inherent objective of the Invisible Empire "to preserve the United States as a Protestant Christian nation."² The Klan did not intend to substitute its society for the American church, but the Klan was desirous of becoming a "powerful adjunct to the Protestant church."³ In the capacity of a religious organization the Klan found thousands of congenial disciples throughout the country. As a Klan advertisement announced to Maine people: "Joining the Klan is like joining the Church. It is only a beginning. It shows what a man believes in and what he intends to do."⁴

The Invisible Empire had formulated the principles for its religious conduct from the Holy Bible. The reading

1 Exalted Cyclops, Monroe Klan No. 4, Realm of Louisiana, Principles and Purposes of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (pamphlet), p. 2.

2 Ibid., p. 2.

3 Ibid.

4 Rockland Courier-Gazette, October 1, 1925.

of passages from the Holy Scriptures was an integral part of the opening ceremony and "at every meeting of the Ku Klux Klan the Bible was opened at the twelfth chapter of Romans."⁵ Several ideals in which the Invisible Empire firmly believed were:

We magnify the Bible - as the basis of our constitution, the foundation of our government, the source of our laws, the sheet-anchor of our liberties, the most practical guide of right living, and the source of all true wisdom.

We teach the worship of God. For we have in mind the divine command, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God."

We honor the Christ, as the Klansman's only criterion of character. And we seek at His hands that cleansing from sin and impurity, which only He can give.

We believe that the highest expression of life is in service and in sacrifice for that which is right; that selfishness can have no place in a true Klansman's life and character; but that he must be moved by unselfish motives, such as characterized our Lord and Christ and moved Him to the highest service and the supreme sacrifice for that which was right.⁶

The spiritual phase of the Klan society was considered to be the most valuable, not only for Klansmen but for the citizens of America. The Invisible Empire attempted to combine the different Protestant denominations into one faith. The Klan accomplished its objective of enticing Klansmen to join the church. There were many methods to enlighten and encourage the Klansman to become a better

⁵ Zion's Herald, May 12, 1926.

⁶ Ideals of the Ku Klux Klan, (undocumented pamphlet), p. 8.

Christian and thereby a better Klansman. The process of constructing the Invisible Empire upon Protestantism was as ingenious as it was rudimental. How did the Klan achieve this aim?

First: by making a supreme effort to interest all protestant ministers who can qualify, in our organization, with the ultimate view of taking them into the order.

Second: by encouraging these ministers to deliver in the pulpit and in the Klavern, sermons which deal with the great principles of our order, ever standing ready to assist them in gathering necessary data to drive home their arguments, and in voicing our appreciation of their efforts by representation, financial and moral support in all their legitimate undertakings.

Third: by insisting that the Kludd of all Klans, shall at all times, be an ordained minister of the gospel, and not some Klansman elected to that office as a mere honor; by insisting that all prayers offered in the Klavern be not the regular cut and dried Klaranic prayers as are usually offered, but that they be individual, set for the occasion and embodying certain personal features pertaining to individual Klan as well as the Klan in general.

Fourth: by the constant encouragement on the part of officers of Klans to their membership, calling their attention to the fact that they must of necessity affiliate with the church, if they are imbued with the true Klan spirit, and have the desire to practice the great teachings of the order.

Fifth: by encouraging good, wholesome athletic tournaments between members of different protestant churches, such as golf, bowling, tennis and many minor sports, which will have the tendency to awaken interest, not only in the church but in the Klan as well.⁷

⁷ Grand Dragon of the Realm of Oklahoma, First Annual Meeting of Grand Dragons of the KKK, "The Definition of Klankraft and How to Disseminate It", Asheville, North Carolina, July 1923, p. 46-47.

The Klan was extremely successful in uniting the Protestant churches to be subservient to the Invisible Empire, but the plan to eradicate the Protestant denominations was not accepted. The possibility of confederating the Protestant churches under the Klan banner created a tumultuous disturbance within the hierarchy of the Catholic church.

It was not the intention of the Invisible Empire to begrudge other religious organizations the right to worship, for freedom of religion was a Constitutional right and this privilege was religiously respected by the Klan. Neither was the Ku Klux Klan primarily an anti-Catholic or an anti-Jew organization, although the Invisible Empire represented "Protestant Christianity first, last and all the time."⁸ Since the Klan constitution stipulated that no person "who owes....allegiance or any nature or degree whatsoever to any foreign government, nation, institution, sect, ruler, prince, potentate, people or person"⁹ could qualify for membership, the Roman Catholic consequently excluded himself from the Order. The Klan contended that Roman Catholics were not one hundred per cent Americans, considering their affiliation with a foreign potentate.

⁸ Exalted Cyclops, op. cit., p. 4.

⁹ Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (Atlanta, 1921), p. 14.

Why, then, were the Ku Klux Klan and the Roman Catholics so antagonistic? The Klan had professed its affinity to the Protestant church, but there were more tangible motives for this relationship than pure Christianity. The Invisible Empire "most strenuously objected to any church used as a political machine...."¹⁰ The Roman Catholic church was immeasurably more efficient and effective than any similar organization in the world. It was natural for Klansmen to view this sect with suspicion and trepidation. "The fear that the Roman Catholic machine may be manipulated for political ends is deepened by the knowledge that it has often been so manipulated in Europe."¹¹ For this reason the Invisible Empire combatted the autocratic demands of the Catholic church in America. In pursuance of this policy the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan made

this solemn pronouncement that until such time as the Roman Catholic hierarchy announced Christ's doctrine of supremacy of State over Church in governmental affairs, we shall steadfastly oppose the political interference of Roman Catholic organizations in political

¹⁰ Exalted Cyclops, op. cit., p. 6.

¹¹ Charles E. Jefferson, "Catholicism and Ku Klux Klan", (New York, 1925), p. 151.

matters in America. If this is to bring upon us the heavyweight of Catholic persecution it is a cross which we will bear.¹²

In 1914, an oath of the Knights of Columbus was published in California which was vehemently denounced by the Roman Catholics as a fabrication. Unfortunately, this fraudulent oath re-appeared at a time when the Ku Klux Klan was plying the American people with the principles of its order. It was not definitely established that the Klan was responsible for the publication and distribution of this Knights of Columbus oath, but the important fact remained that the public was educated to this document. The following excerpts from this oath will suffice to indicate the priceless propaganda value of the document.

I do now denounce and disown any allegiance as due to any heretical King, Prince, or state, named Protestant or liberals, or obedience to any of their laws, Magistrates, or officers.

I do further declare that the doctrine of the Churches of England and Scotland, of the Calvinists, Huguenots and others of the name of Protestants or Masons to be damnable, and they themselves to be damned who will not forsake the same.

I do further declare that I will help, assist and advise all or any of His Holiness' agents, in any place where I should be, in Switzerland, Holland, Ireland or America, or in any other kingdom or territory I shall come to, and do my utmost to extirpate the heretical Protestant or Masonic doctrines and to destroy all their pretended powers, legal or otherwise.

¹² Hiram W. Evans, "The Attitude of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan Toward the Roman Catholic Hierarchy", First Annual Meeting, Asheville, North Carolina, p. 115.

I do further promise and declare that I will have no opinion or will of my own or any mental reservation whatsoever, even as a corpse or cadaver (perinde ac cadaver), but will unhesitatingly obey each and every command that I may receive from my superiors in the militia of the Pope and of Jesus Christ.

I do further promise and declare that I will, when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly and openly, against all heretics, Protestants and Masons, as I am directed to do, to extirpate them from the face of the whole earth; and that I will spare neither age, sex or condition, and that I will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle, and bury alive these infamous heretics; rip up the stomachs and wombs of their women and crash their infants' heads against the walls in order to annihilate their execrable race.

That I will in voting always vote for a K. of C. in preference to a Protestant, especially a Mason, and that I will leave my party so to do; that if two Catholics are on the ticket I will satisfy myself which is the better supporter of Mother Church and vote accordingly.

That I will not deal with or employ a Protestant if in my power to deal with or employ a Catholic. That I will place Catholic girls in Protestant families, that a weekly report may be made of the inner movements of the heretics.

That I will provide myself with arms and ammunition that I may be in readiness when the word is passed or I am commanded to defend the church, either as an individual or with the militia of the Pope.

All of which I, _____, do swear by the blessed Trinity and blessed sacrament which I am now to receive to perform and on my part to keep this, my oath.¹³

Whether or not this oath was valid was not the concern of most people. It had ridiculed American traditions and had undermined democratic principles; Protestant

¹³ Ku Klux Klan Exposed, p. 47-50.

groups were inflamed with indignation. In Maine, this oath proved to be an extremely valuable instrument in recruiting Klansmen. The Maine Klan was accused by Sherwood Eddy, "an internationally famous Christian worker," of circulating propaganda "through the Protestant Sunday school children, concerning a bogus oath that is supposed to be taken by men joining the Knights of Columbus."¹⁴

The animosity which arose between the Klan and the Roman Catholics in Maine was intense. The King Kleagle had not even arrived in Maine when the newspapers reported that the Klan had threatened to burn the Waterville Catholic church. Father Kalem of Waterville denied receiving any threats or warnings, although the citizens of Waterville believed

the rumor to be true as some of the school children who attended the Convent on the plains said that Father Orioux came into the school on Tuesday afternoon crying and wanted the scholars to all pray that their church might be spared.¹⁵

The Maine Realm of the Ku Klux Klan did not hesitate to incur the wrath of the Catholic element. No sooner had King Kleagle Farnsworth established his headquarters in Portland than friction developed between the two organizations. During a lecture on "Americanism" at

14 Kennebec Journal, March 17, 1924.

15 Kennebec Journal, January 11, 1923.

Bangor City Hall, William H. Kelley was reported to have said;

We are not here to incite religious hatred. We are after them politically because they are a great big political machine. Unless we fight for our rights, eventually we will have to get ourselves a little island outside the three mile limit to live on.¹⁶

But the Catholic church and its political influence were not the only problems confronting the Klan. Kelley continued his analysis of the deplorable Catholic quandary, but he focused his attack upon the Bangor police department. He affirmed that

in my city there are only six Protestants on the police force. The Chief, who is not a Protestant, wanted two of the Protestant members to join the Klan, so that they could get the list of members, and he was going to try to drive them all out of town.¹⁷

Needless to say, nothing constructive ever developed from this situation; it only added to the growing tension.

In reiteration, one of the aims of the Klan organizers was to court the interest of clergymen. At first the **Maine** ministers remained aloof, but gradually they, too, were persuaded to join. They did not, however, yield until they had been indoctrinated to Klan purposes. It was "at

16 Bangor Daily News, January 23, 1923.

17 Ibid.

the request of the Bangor Ministers Association"¹⁸ that Farnsworth participated in a conference at the Bangor House "to explain the aims and methods of the Klan."¹⁹ "The gathering was not at all a love feast," for several clergymen "sharply criticized Klan methods."²⁰ Ironically, within a year the members of the ministerial profession had attained influential positions in the Klan. Rev. E. V. Allen of Rockland²¹ perhaps serves as the best example of the ministers who were prominent in the Ku Klux Klan. Rev. Allen had been one of the first to join the Rockland Klan, and in respect for his diligent service the Klan officials elevated him to the office of Grand Klaliff, Realm of Maine.²²

The Ku Klux Klan in Randolph, Brewer and Bangor was exceptionally religious, to the extent that clergymen were full-time employees of the Order. In conducting its drive for members, the Bangor Klan had encountered opposition from the city officials. It had been practically impossible to arrange a meeting in the local halls. The

18 Portland Press Herald, April 5, 1923.

19 Bangor Daily News, April 11, 1923.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., December 16, 1925.

22 Constitution and Laws, op. cit., p. 46. A Grand Klaliff is the second highest officer of a Realm.

solution of this problem called for extreme measures, but the Klan desired above everything to accomplish their objectives in a peaceful manner. Farnsworth proposed building a "Hall of Freedom"²³ which would be financed by subscription or donation. As one Klansman in Brewer reflected: "In order to satisfy Farnsworth we obtained a six month lease with an option to buy on several acres of land in Veazie. We had really no intention of locating a klavern on the outskirts of town."²⁴ However, the Eastern Maine Realty Company, Inc.²⁵ was formed to serve as the initiating agent for this project. Although stock was issued, the Eastern Maine Realty Co., Inc. never financed the Veazie project.

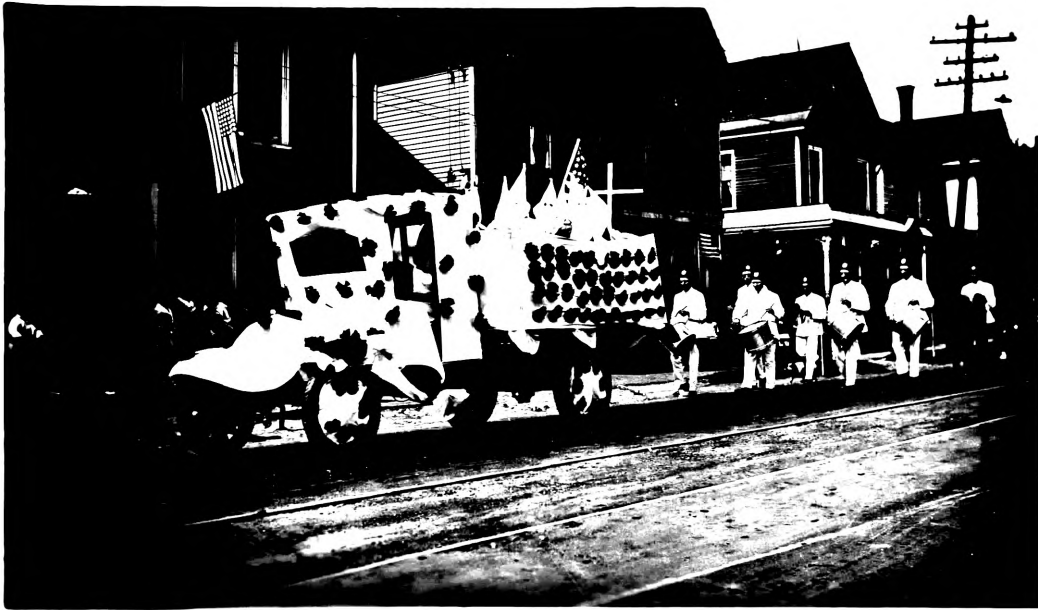
On November 5, 1923, a permit was issued to Klan representatives for the erection of a building to be 70' by 35' by 13' at 39 North Street, Bangor. The Klavern was completed in February, 1924, and it was announced that "religious services were to be held every Sunday."²⁶

23 Portland Press Herald, July 14, 1923.

24 Name withheld upon request.

25 Portland Press Herald, September 7, 1923.

26 Ibid., March 5, 1924.



Independence Day Parade, Brewer, Maine, 1924.



Labor Day Parade, Lincoln, Maine, 1924.

These religious services were not conducted by visiting clergymen, for the Klan contracted Rev. Milton C. Bennett, a blind minister, to assume the spiritual responsibilities of the Klan. Rev. Bennett's duties and other stipulations were outlined in a letter, which read:

Rev. Milton C. Bennett
190 Church Street
Oakland, Maine

Dear Mr. Bennett,

We, the Klansmen of Bangor and Brewer, have heard you speak several times in different towns and have admired greatly your Christian sincerity and your earnest belief in a Protestant America. It is our unanimous desire that you come here and serve as pastor of our Klan church in the new hall we are building, which is 100' by 35', capable of seating approximately eight hundred people. There are more than twice this amount of Klansmen in Bangor and Brewer and we will have to hold several meetings a week so that we and our families will have the opportunity of hearing you.

We want you to come for eighteen months at \$45.00 a week and your house rent. We feel that no man can fill this position except yourself and if you feel that this is a call from God to serve Christianity and your country we hope that you will accept it and be with us the middle of January.

Enclosed find a check to cover moving expenses. Should there be no snow we will send trucks and a sedan to carry you and your family here.

Hoping that you will consider this offer and consent to come to us, we are

Very sincerely yours,

F. Herbert Hathorn, Brewer
D. D. Terrill, Bangor 27

27 Bangor Daily News, May 22, 1925. Rev. Bennett resided at 46 West Street, Bangor.

Rev. Bennett fulfilled his obligations without incident until the spring of 1925, when he sued

F. Herbert Hathorn of Brewer and Daniel D. Terrill of Bangor to recover the sum of \$2,090.00 alleged to be due plaintiff on an unexpired contract of 18 months as minister of the Klan congregation in Bangor and Brewer, and damages set at \$4,000.00. Pattangall, Locke, and Perkins of Augusta represent the plaintiff.²⁸

Hathorn and Terrill testified at the trial, claiming the Klan minister had tendered his resignation as chaplain that he could be appointed Kleagle of the local Klan. They further stipulated that the Klan had requested Bennett's resignation from the ministerial post, if he decided to become Kleagle. Bennett denied having ever resigned, but he could not produce any corroborating witnesses. The defendants appeared to have been cleared of Bennett's accusations, but Mrs. Royce E. Lord, an employee of the Hathorn Manufacturing Co., caused the trial to assume a different import. Hathorn had disclaimed any connection with the letter which Bennett had produced as being his contract. It was Mrs. Lord's testimony which won the case for the blind minister, when she stated that she had typed the letter at Hathorn's direction. The defendants attempted to appeal their case, but the court overruled their request.

The problem of not having a suitable meeting place distressed the Klansmen. Wherever Klan representatives were refused local accommodations, the Catholics were accused of instigating partisan relationship with the local government. In such predicaments the Exalted Cyclops would more likely than not declare: "If we cannot get a hall....large enough to accommodate several thousand, we shall build a tabernacle."²⁹ This situation arose in a number of cities, and the Klan responded by either purchasing properties already constructed or by erecting new buildings. The Witham Klavern of Portland purchased the Rollins estate, located on Forest avenue, for the fabulous price of \$75,000. The Klan constructed an enormous hall adjacent to the estate buildings which had a seating capacity of approximately 7000 people. Unfortunately, this hall was completely devastated by fire, "burning to the ground in less than an hour,"³⁰ only ten months after its dedication. The Rockland Klan, operating under the pseudonym of the Akia Society, became the owners of a large house situated on the corner of Brewster and Cedar streets.³¹ The Klansmen of the Lewiston area had planned to purchase the "Shiloh"

²⁹ Lewiston Journal, April 21, 1923.

³⁰ Ibid., December 17, 1924.

³¹ Record of Deeds, Knox County, Vol. III, Certificate of Corporation, p. 320.

properties, "the once famous citadel of Elijah Frank W. Sandford, and headquarters of his 'Holy Ghost and Us' Society," but the \$200,000. price tag evidently was too great. The Lewiston Klansmen instead satisfied themselves with the Malta Hall. The most unusual proposal was announced by the Saco Klan which indicated their interest in the Maine Street Baptist church.³² If this church had united with the Cutts Avenue church, the Saco Klan would have held their meetings in the most picturesque klavern in Maine.

The question may be asked: Did the Klan itself purchase these properties or did some agency or person act as liaison? The explanation involves a series of incidents, but to observe simplicity and to avoid duplication it is desirable to select one Klan as representative of most Klans and render an explicit summation.

The Rockland Klan was not incorporated under the corporation statutes of Maine. In order to hold property the Klan had to appoint a committee to form a corporation, either a corporation with capital stock or a corporation without stock. For clarification, the Loyal Realty Company, representatives of the Portland Klan, was a private corporation with eleemosynary intentions and was, therefore,

³² Portland Press Herald, May 23, 1924.

registered without capital stock. The certificate of corporation issued to the Akia Society read:

STATE OF MAINE

Certificate of Organization of a Corporation,
under Chapter 62 of the Revised Statutes, and
Amendments thereto.

The name of the said corporation is The Akia Society

The purposes of said corporation are to cultivate and promote patriotism toward our Civil Government; to exemplify a practical benevolence, to teach and faithfully inculcate a high spiritual philosophy and protect and maintain the distinctive institutions, rights, privileges, principles, traditions and ideals of the founders of Our Nation.

This Society embodies in its principles all that is chivalric in conduct, noble in sentiment, generous in manhood, and patriotic in purpose. It pledges its aid and assistance in the execution of all constitutional laws and stands for a fearless and faithful administration of justice through due process of law; and to meet promptly and properly every behest of Duty without fear and without reproach.

Said corporation is located in the town of Rockland, County of Knox, State of Maine.

The number of officers is four and their names are as follows:

President	George H. Starrett
Vice President	Luie E. Blackington
Secretary or Clerk	Alfred P. Chapman
Treasurer	Henry M. deRochmont

Paul Sawyer	
Alvra W. Gregory	
Luie E. Blackington	Directors
Henry M. deRochmont	or
Alfred P. Chapman	Trustees
Eugene V. Allen	
George H. Starrett	

Witness our hands this 24th day of December,
A.D. 1924.

33

These corporations served the interests of the Ku Klux Klan and without them the Invisible Empire could not have grown "as rapidly as potato vines in the dark."³⁴ The importance of these corporations should not be underestimated, not only because the Klans could not have had suitable klaverns without their assistance but because these corporations were the legal and duly constituted emissaries of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine. Neither should the fact be ignored that in a remote way the Catholic people in Maine were responsible for the formation of these corporations and societies by exercising an unwillingness for the Ku Klux Klan to engage the city halls for their "klonklaves".³⁵

The Roman Catholic population of Maine was approximately 155,000;³⁶ this constituted nearly twenty per cent of the total population of the State. The Klan was maddened by this condition and they hoped to rectify it. The educational system was attacked by the Klan leaders, because it was believed the schools had been purposely

³³ Record of Deeds, Knox County, op. cit., p. 320-321.

³⁴ Belfast Republican Journal, December 13, 1923.

³⁵ Kloran, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, (Atlanta, 1916), p. 52.

³⁶ Fellowship Forum, September 6, 1924.

infiltrated with Catholic teachers who had not themselves attended public schools. The Klan had a strong argument and they intended to capitalize upon this situation. The incursion of these Catholic teachers was vehemently opposed by the older inhabitants of Maine, and these people were naturally ardent sympathizers of the Klan. "Professor" Farnsworth in one of his speeches in Auburn assailed the Lewiston Public School Board for allowing the control of the school system to be placed "under the care of those who seek to build up the parochial school system."³⁷ The Kleagle had directed his assault against Herbert E. Holmes,³⁸ a member of the Lewiston school board, because Holmes had enrolled his own children in the parochial schools. Rev. A. C. Goddard of Portland supported Farnsworth's opinions on the parochial school question, and in an address delivered in Portland on March 2, 1924, he made the following pronouncement.

During the last Legislature, when the proposed constitutional amendment was being discussed, a Senator secured from the Department of Education the official report of children in the parochial schools in the state of Maine. This report showed 12,166. In the annual reference book and directory of the Roman Catholic Clergymen of New England, for the year 1923, the number of children in the parochial schools in the state of Maine is given at 18,751. There is a difference of 6,585 pupils, which is no

³⁷ Portland Press Herald, March 20, 1924.

³⁸ Ibid.

doubt due to the fact that in northern Aroostook County these pupils are considered by the state Department of Education as public school pupils receiving public funds, but they are also counted by the Roman Catholic church as parochial schools and the public schools in northern Aroostook. This condition has been defended on the grounds that 95% of the population are French Catholics, but such defense is very flimsy and un-American.

When Roman Catholic nuns are employed as public school teachers with a large percentage of the population Roman Catholic and with religious instruction in the Roman Catholic faith given to the pupils in the same room by the same teacher, immediately following the secular instruction, as is now the arrangement in northern Aroostook, any fairminded person will say that the parochial school system and the public school system are merged. Such a condition is extremely dangerous to the welfare of the American nation.³⁹

The Klan and the Catholic church argued and quarreled over this problem, but no adequate solution was ever presented. Even in 1931, the Maine Klan was desirous of instituting a thorough policing of the public school system. The animosity which was created during those years lingers today as a heritage of the past.

It would seem that the Klan had taken the initiative or the Klan had been responsible for the troubles which had arisen between Klansmen and Catholics. This inference is not true, because upon innumerable occasions the Catholic people were guilty of nefarious conduct against innocent citizens. For instance, there is the newspaper

³⁹ Rev. A. C. Goddard, Religious Intolerance: What it is and what it is not, (Portland, March 2, 1924).

account of an assault upon a newsboy who distributed K.K.K. papers in Lewiston. The dispatch to the Portland Evening Express reported that

for a long time he has been annoyed and insulted as he sold his papers, but has not been struck until this time. He was struck in the jaw, kicked and called vile names by his assailant, who after he had satisfied himself walked calmly away....⁴⁰

It was unfortunate that a boy had been subjected to such inhuman treatment. The incident becomes more barbaric when it is recalled that "a large crowd gathered, but no one interceded for the boy," and that "no officers were in sight at the time."⁴¹

The Industrial Workers of the World were considered to be a detriment to American society by the Invisible Empire. There were several I.W.W. organizations of considerable strength located in the Moosehead Lake region and their presence was not appreciated by the people of this region. For the most part the members of the I.W.W. were of foreign descent, they did not contribute to the betterment of the town, and they were inclined to disturb

⁴⁰ Portland Evening Express, October 20, 1924.

⁴¹ Ibid.

the customary peacefulness of the communities in question. When two I.W.W. organizers visited Greenville in February, 1924, they were "ordered by the selectmen of Greenville.... to leave town," but the selectmen were informed "that as they were not transgressing the laws they would remain."⁴² On February 5, 1924, "with the thermometer hovering around the zero mark, about 175 members of the Industrial Workers of the World walked the streets....as a result of a clash with local members of the K.K.K."⁴³

The strength of the Klan in Greenville was indeed forceful for the Portland Press Herald reported on February 7, that

most of the members (of the I.W.W.) have left town, and it is said they are headed South, as the lumber companies around Greenville are not hiring any of them, and they are not able to get lodgings in any of the local boarding houses....Bob Pease of Bangor, leader of the I.W.W. organization....said many of the men in his organization were French Catholics.⁴⁴

The I.W.W. organization received even worse treatment several weeks later in Dover-Foxcroft, when its leaders were indicted and arrested for circulating boycott notices. The boycott notice read:

42 Bangor Commercial, February 4, 1924.

43 Portland Press Herald, February 5, 1924.

44 Ibid., February 7, 1924.

Boycott, Crofts general merchandise store, the Lumberman's Y.M.C.A., Moosehead Clothing Store, D. M. Ward drugs and soft drinks. They have discriminated against members of the I.W.W. and advocated violence to drive working men out of here. Workers - spend your money elsewhere.

L. W. I. U. No. 120
Greenville Jct., Me. 45

In the subsequent trial of the "State versus Robert Pease, William Parent, and John Lucelle"⁴⁶ the jury returned a verdict of guilty. The three men were sentenced by Judge Morrill of Auburn⁴⁷ to terms varying from one year to two years. Thus the career of an aggressive labor union⁴⁸ was expeditiously thwarted by the Knights of the Invisible Empire.

To illustrate the Ku Klux Klan influence in a small town, we have but to refer to the town of Dexter where there was a "religious war between the Protestants and Catholics."⁴⁹ The village was unceremoniously "thrown

45 Kennebec Journal, March 21, 1924.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Old Town Enterprise, March 27, 1924. The general opinion of Maine people toward the I.W.W. was candidly published in the Old Town Enterprise. It read: "We are glad to see the I.W.W.'s get prison sentences. The only trouble is the terms of imprisonment were not long enough. Men that will not work themselves or let other men work in peace, if at all, do not deserve anything but the severest punishment. We have been too patient with these pests of society."

49 Portland Press Herald, December 16, 1923.

into a state of excitement such as it has never known before."⁵⁰ "The usually complacent breasts of the citizens of Dexter" were "wrought to the highest pitch, all because the King Kleagle of the Invisible Empire chose to establish here a branch of the Ku Klux Klan."⁵¹ Kleagle Farnsworth had "secretly" distributed tickets to a lecture, and one evening an audience "made up largely of the curious and credulous"⁵² attended the speech on "Americanism".

The next day came the first defensive blow by the Catholics. A clerk in one of the local banks had attended the meeting on the previous evening. The local priest demanded his discharge on pain of the withdrawal of all the deposits of his parishioners. The bank President in Bangor ordered the clerk discharged.

The Protestants....arose en masse and, through the offices of two of the leading manufacturers who were large depositors of the bank, demanded the reinstatement of the clerk. The man was reinstated and went back to work.⁵³

The Catholics, although they had been chastised and embarrassed by the Klan sympathizers, were eager to retaliate. Subsequently, the Catholics attempted a more practical scheme.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

The priest announced that the stores of all Klan sympathizers would be boycotted by his parishioners. The boycott proved to a boomerang. It united the Protestants, Klan and anti-Klan in one camp. The Catholic merchants rely to a large extent upon Protestant trade and with this cut off were struck a severe financial blow.⁵⁴

There were innumerable accounts of Klan and Catholic differences of opinion but the results of these quarrels were never as serious as the Dexter incident. Generally, the Klan rendered its services to the law enforcement agencies in reporting "bootleggers", prostitutes, and other law violators. In certain instances the Klan and the Catholics disputed violently over the educational problem, but the relations between the two societies in Maine were for the most part quite friendly. It is significant, however, that the Klan united the Protestant people and molded them into an influential and clandestine Order.

54 Ibid.

CHAPTER V

THE KLAN IN RETROSPECT

The Ku Klux Klan developed in Maine during the 1920's ostensibly to solve certain social and political problems, such as bootlegging, juvenile delinquency, and political corruption. However, there existed the urge to join the Klan principally for social and fraternal relations. The support of businessmen's groups in most cities made it an influential organization. Large numbers of people in Maine gave the Klan their support, because they believed it represented ideals and principles which they favored.

The Maine Klan differed in many respects from the national organization, as was the case in other states. Emperor Simmons had created a fraternal institution, but the Klan ideology was modified to satisfy regional and sectional demands. On a nationwide basis the Klan directed hate campaigns against the Jews, the Catholics, the Negroes, and the Orientals. The Klan in Maine, however, did not vigorously support this type of activity.

The Maine Klan supported Brewster's proposed amendment which would have forbidden the diversion of public funds to parochial and private institutions. The

Catholics vigorously opposed this amendment. This question was a paramount issue in the elections of 1923 and 1924. It was this problem above any other that aroused resentments between the Catholics and the Ku Klux Klan.

In Maine, the Klan demonstrated its value to the communities in a number of ways, many former Klansmen believe. The primary services which it is said to have rendered were: aiding the law enforcement agencies in curtailing the rum traffic, in reducing juvenile delinquency, and in enforcing the laws in general; supporting progressive government; fostering state-controlled education; supporting the Protestant churches; helping the destitute and the needy; and sponsoring drives for clean cities and towns.

Some rumors in circulation have tended to discredit the Klan in Maine. Part of them were well-founded, but there were many which were plainly false. There are no documented evidences of acts of violence committed by the Ku Klux Klan in Maine. It is true that the Klan and the Catholic church were adversaries; each organization propagandized against the other with considerable vigor. However, Klan organizations were never too successful in towns where a predominantly Catholic population opposed it.

The Klan penetrated every town in Maine where

there was sufficient population to maintain it. There were local Klan organizations ranging from Kittery to Fort Fairfield to Eastport. Why, then, did the Klan disappear from Maine society, if the Klan truly possessed a huge enrollment?

The causes for the Klan's decline and ultimate disbandment were partly internal. At the beginning the kleagles were generally efficient and respectable, but as the Klan grew, the kleagles were distracted by iniquitous schemes. Although dozens of kleagles absconded funds from the Klan, these men were never brought before the Maine courts, for the Klan believed that the curse of being denied the rights and benefits of Klanishness was sufficient punishment. Knowledge of these dishonest acts retarded the growth of the Klan. But the greatest shock was the "act of treason" charge against Farnsworth. Literally, thousands of Maine Klansmen had joined the order because they respected and appreciated Farnsworth. His indictment disillusioned them, and many Klansmen never again demonstrated the old enthusiasm for Klanism.¹ When he was

¹ The group of people who were the most enthusiastic over the Ku Klux Klan were for the most part middle aged. They took their Klan seriously, and any evidence of dishonesty was a blow to their pride.

forced to resign from the Klan, Farnsworth aligned himself with the Crusaders, Inc. which was a similar fraternal order. Between the Secret Circle and the Crusaders, the Maine Klan had been critically affected.

There were other reasons for the organization's disintegration. Since the war hysteria had subsided and conditions had once more returned to normal, the Klansmen of Maine developed an apathetic regard for the Klan. Their disinterest became noticeable when Klansmen began defaulting in their payment of the Imperial tax. Some Klans could not even meet the assessments against their properties in some cities. In brief, the Klan was forced gradually into retirement in part because of financial reverses.

The fact cannot be overlooked that the activities of the Klan nationally had their adverse effects upon the Maine Klan. When Hiram Wesley Evans became Imperial Wizard, the Klan entered politics, instituted vigorous hate campaigns, and established monopolistic enterprises. Many Klan officials were indicted for violations of the Mann Act, bribery, embezzlement, and even murder, which tended to create a distrust of the organization. Maine Klansmen felt a growing antipathy, and in many cases were inclined to drop their membership and disclaim any connection with the organization, either national or local.

Generally, the Klan in Maine might well have become a respectable Order, as much appreciated as the

Masons, Odd Fellows, or the Knights of Columbus, but the discreditable behavior of some kleagles, the character of the national Klan under Evans, and probably the uniform with its mask, caused the Klan in Maine to be subjected to ridicule. For the most part, Maine Klansmen delighted in parading on holidays, they enjoyed open-air ceremonies,² and they highly favored outdoor suppers and baked bean dinners. There was a genuine affection for the Klan among its members during its strongest period. As a fraternal organization, the Klan had many ingredients making for continuance as an active organization, but unfortunate circumstances and adverse public opinion forced its dissolution in Maine.

² The last public meeting of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine was held at Camp Benton, Newport, August 30, 1931. It was a very unsuccessful affair as there were only 188 Klansmen in attendance.

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