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THE KU KLUX KLAN AND FREEMASONRY IN 1920S AMERICA

FIGHTING FRATERNITIES

Miguel Hernandez



ROUTLEDGE

The Ku Klux Klan and Freemasonry in 1920s America

The Second Ku Klux Klan's success in the 1920s remains one of the order's most enduring mysteries. Emerging first as a brotherhood dedicated to paying tribute to the original Southern organization of the Reconstruction period, the Second Invisible Empire developed into a mass movement with millions of members that influenced politics and culture throughout the early 1920s. This study explores the nature of fraternities, especially the overlap between the Klan and Freemasonry. Drawing on many previously untouched archival resources, it presents a detailed and nuanced analysis of the development and later decline of the Klan and the complex nature of its relationship with the traditions of American fraternalism.

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Dedicado a mis padres, por todo su apoyo.

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Abbreviations

GAF	Great American Fraternity
JOUAM	Junior Order of United American Mechanics
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
MSA	Masonic Service Association
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NPC	National Patriotic Council
SPA	Southern Publicity Association
SRSJ	Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction
WKKK	Women of the Ku Klux Klan

Introduction

In 1921 William McAdoo, a former Congressman for New Jersey and a chief magistrate of New York City, was asked to publish his thoughts in the *New York World* on the emergence of a new yet familiar organization in American society: the Ku Klux Klan. Like many of his contemporaries, McAdoo believed this order's resurgence to be a result of the latent patriotism of the war years, and that its nativist message was entirely opposed to the country's history and values. "Let us hope," wrote McAdoo, "that it is only a sort of temporary insanity." He also relayed his opinion on what was attracting so many Americans to the ranks of this Second "Invisible Empire". McAdoo observed that:

I cannot believe that the Klan numbers anything like the figures given. On the other hand, the largest sect in this country is that of the 'Joiners.' They will join anything that is mystic, secret and somewhat occult, especially if it gives them the right to wear badges and decorate themselves with insignia equal to a Major General's. When to all this is added a uniform, mask and visions of taking terrible oaths in sub-cellars and having something on the outside fellow of advantage to them or a chance to vent their malice or prejudice, you can see them standing in line a hundred deep with their money in their hands, anxious to join.¹

Over the course of the 1920s many would provide similar explanations for the brief but impressive resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. The "joiners" McAdoo referred to were those millions of Americans who had enlisted in the country's many clubs and fraternities, and who now seemed to be first in line to become Klansmen. With its iconic ceremonies and plethora of bizarre titles – Exalted Cyclops, Grand Dragon or Imperial Wizard to name but a few – the Invisible Empire's fraternalism and rituals were at the heart of the order's appeal. Brotherhood, racial unity and aggressive patriotism were all wrapped up in sombre ceremonies and distinctive regalia, furnishing members with a sense of purpose and fraternal solidarity in the uncertainty of the dawning Jazz Age.

The Second Ku Klux Klan promised to provide members with a unique fraternal experience by offering Americans the opportunity to become Knights of the Invisible Empire. This was not a conventional fraternity. According to its

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own founder, Imperial Wizard William Joseph Simmons, his new Klan was “the original genuine Ku Klux Klan organized in the year 1866, and active during the Reconstruction period”, but “revived, reconstructed, remodeled, refined and expanded into a fraternal, patriotic, ritualistic society of national scope ...”.² Imperial Wizard Simmons hoped to form a new generation of Klansmen in his own time, men inspired by the legends of the Reconstruction order and willing to commit themselves to this fraternity as followers of the Invisible Empire.

By 1915, when Simmons first chartered his new fraternity, many Americans had come to admire and romanticize the original Ku Klux Klan of the Reconstruction era. Formed in 1866 during the chaos and confusion of the post-Civil War years, this group was first established as a fraternity in Pulaski, Tennessee by six former Confederate officers who were bored with life in the rural South. Although the order’s main purpose was originally to entertain its members by organizing elaborate ceremonies and playing pranks on each other, the Ku Klux Klan quickly degenerated into a terrorist vigilante group intent on enforcing *antebellum* social norms.³ Present throughout the former Confederacy, this organization initiated a sustained campaign of violence and intimidation, targeting newly emancipated slaves and anyone else who dared challenge their way of life. The former Confederate states had been forced to undergo several political and social reforms to re-join the Union, and many white Southerners refused to accept the rule of their former enemies. The name Ku Klux Klan quickly became a byword for several almost interchangeable organizations that sought to control the newly freed slaves and overturn the Northern institutions that enabled them to exercise their rights. Although warnings and whippings were the most common practices employed by Reconstruction Klansmen to achieve their goals, cases of rape, assault, arson and murder were also common.

For nearly six years, the First Invisible Empire fought to overturn the government’s attempts to incorporate the freed slaves into society. This vigilante group was composed of men of all classes, and bound Southerners of different backgrounds together in the fight for white supremacy and regional autonomy. Federal judge Hugh Lennox Bond provided a concise summary of this organization’s heinous activities and the unrepentant attitude of its members. In 1872 he was charged with prosecuting several Klansmen from South Carolina, and after having reviewed the facts of the case, he maintained that:

Evidence of nightly raids by bands of disguised men, who broke into the houses of negroes and dragged them from their beds – parents and children – and, tying them to trees, unmercifully beat them, is exhibited in every case. Murder and rape are not [infrequent] accompaniments, the story of which is too indecent for public mention....⁴

The Ku Klux Klan had largely disappeared by the time the federal government decided to intervene in the matter, but the order’s memory lived on in folktales and accounts that were transmitted in Southern culture. Although historically the

Ku Klux Klan was a violent and dangerous group, subsequent generations of white Americans would remember the order rather fondly.

The country's public perception of the Reconstruction Klan underwent a radical transformation in the decades since its dissolution as part of the broader mythology of the "Lost Cause". The brutal vigilantes would be refashioned in the nation's consciousness into honourable patriots fighting for their homeland, brave white men who had rallied to defend the South and reclaim their sovereignty from foolhardy Northerners. Any acts of violence they committed were justified in the face of such intolerable oppression. This narrative emerged first among Southerners, but was later propagated in works of fiction that became popular throughout the rest of the country. Thomas Dixon, a preacher from North Carolina, was the first to capture and broadcast these myths to audiences outside of the South. His best-selling 1902 romance, *The Leopard's Spots*, presented Klansmen as noble knights who rode out in defence of white womanhood and against Northern outrages during Reconstruction. This novel was followed by two equally successful sequels: *The Clansman* (1905) and *The Traitor* (1907), both of which featured equally unambiguous plots and heroic Southern Klansmen.⁵ Such accounts severely distorted the public's view of the organization. His work even influenced William Joseph Simmons, who would incorporate Dixon's ceremony of the fiery cross, a tradition that Reconstruction Klansmen never practised, into the rituals and customs of his own revived fraternity.

Dixon's novels helped to whitewash the Reconstruction Klan's legacy, but the Invisible Empire would receive its ultimate redemption less than a decade later on the silver screen with the release of *Birth of a Nation* (1915). D.W. Griffith's classic silent film transformed Dixon's novel *The Clansman* into an awe-inspiring visual experience that established the imagery and character of the "noble" Klansman in American culture as a national icon. The film is considered Hollywood's first blockbuster, reaching audiences across the country and disseminating fanciful narratives about the KKK and Reconstruction. Cinematically, this silent film was outstanding for its time, lasting three hours and employing impressive and complex action shots of battlefields and charging Klansmen. The plot of the film was an amalgamation of Dixon's novels and retold the story of the war and Reconstruction using the same stock protagonists and villains from the books. One Baltimore review of the film lauded it as a masterpiece, saying: "It reveals truth with no attempt to distort or exaggerate conditions that actually existed, mirrors incidents that actually happened ..." and described the KKK as a "stately guard of honor of the Southern States, vivid as King Arthur's knights of England's song and story".⁶ The striking power of the film as well as its claims of historical accuracy reinvigorated the audience's passion for the mythology of the Ku Klux Klan and Reconstruction.

It would be a mistake to assume that this motion picture was universally praised. There was considerable opposition to its display from groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), who attempted to have the film censored in various cities for clearly misrepresenting historical events. The organization's future director, Walter White, wrote in a

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letter to the censors' board of Columbus, Ohio that: "By idealizing the Ku Klux Klan which is the spirit of lynching organized, and by painting the Negro as a vicious, lustful brute, the 'Birth of a Nation' had done irreparable harm." White's warning was remarkably prophetic. The film sparked a national debate concerning the truth about the KKK, and forced Americans to examine their own dark past. Though many continued to argue that the Reconstruction Klan was a vigilante force that terrorized the South, much of the nation came to see the organization as Griffiths and others had intended. As one 1925 writer concluded, "D.W. Griffith has made the Ku Klux as noble as Lee."⁷ This rehabilitation would contribute to the resurgence of the order in the 1920s, wherein millions of Americans would become initiated as Klansmen of the Second Invisible Empire.

William Joseph Simmons established his new brotherhood in Atlanta in the same year the film was released. He planned to revive his own Klan as a fraternity that would pay tribute to the original organization. Like other Southerners, Simmons was raised listening to folktales about this order from a young age. His own father had been active in the movement, and Simmons claims to have learnt of the stories of the Ku Klux Klan from his family's African-American servants. He would later insist that he had always been interested in the group and that he received a vision as a young man that had inspired him. Simmons recounted how at the age of 20 he found a book recounting the exploits of the Reconstruction order and was transfixed by their noble deeds. Later that night, he apparently saw a group of Klansmen on horseback ride across his wall and that as "the picture faded out I got down on my knees and swore that I would found a fraternal organization which would be a memorial to the Ku-klux Klan". Simmons was prone to embellishment, so it seems far more likely that he was simply trying to exploit the country's interest in Klansmen and the mysteries of the Invisible Empire. There was plenty of money to be made in fraternalism during this period, and Simmons probably believed he could become wealthy with this new venture.⁸

William Joseph Simmons had been an eager member of various fraternities for much of his life, collecting degrees from several different organizations like the Freemasons or the Knights Templar. He was also quite experienced in the business of fraternalism. Simmons had moved to Atlanta before the First World War to take up work as a salesman for the Woodmen of the World, a mutual insurance fraternity where members could enjoy the benefits of both brotherhood and cheap life insurance. The job appears to have been rather lucrative for him, and he earned the honorary title of "Colonel" while working for this organization. Simmons' fascination with the alluring power of fraternalism and the myths of the First Ku Klux Klan eventually led him to found his own Invisible Empire as a fraternity in 1915. He organized a ceremony on Stone Mountain in Atlanta on Thanksgiving night that year to celebrate the emergence of his new order. He was careful to invite three veterans of the First Invisible Empire to attend and join his brotherhood, and to borrow extensively from the Reconstruction Klan's original ghostly jargon to award his own group a mantle of legitimacy. One of the organization's earliest pamphlets even declared all other Klans to be

fraudulent and that theirs was “the only legitimate successor of the ‘original, genuine’ Ku Klux Klan ... of the Reconstruction Period”.⁹ Simmons was clearly trying to ensure that his organization was perceived as the only authentic revival of the movement, and that people would flock to his fraternity as they had to go and see the exploits of the Klan in the cinema.

Simmons believed that his new brotherhood would become a resounding success. The nation had displayed a remarkable interest in and attraction to the legends of the Reconstruction Klan in the early twentieth century and Americans continued to be fascinated by the mysteries of fraternalism. His organization – with its bizarre titles, enigmatic rituals and moral lessons on brotherhood and manhood – was designed to appeal to the nation’s many “joiners”. But the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan was not the overnight sensation that Imperial Wizard Simmons had expected it would be, and chapters of the order known as “klaverns” were only established in a handful of cities in Alabama and Georgia. The organization had been weakened by the betrayal of one of its chief officers, Jonathan Frost, who had absconded with \$5,000 from the treasury and founded a rival order called the Columbian Union. The lack of growth was also due to Simmons’ own reluctance to market his order to the masses. He had wanted to keep his brotherhood as a mysterious and exclusive organization, and added: “I was afraid somebody else would take my idea and prostitute it; make it commercial.”¹⁰ Although his organization mixed fraternalism with the legends of the Reconstruction Klan, a tempting combination for many Americans during this period, Simmons’ brotherhood would have to undergo a number of changes in order to become the mass movement he had envisioned.

The advent of the First World War and the hyper-patriotism of the American home front would fundamentally transform this new fraternity. It was during these years that Simmons instituted a number of changes to his order that would revamp the organization from an ordinary fraternity into a politically active brotherhood that would police its neighbours and assist the nation with the war effort. Unlike the Woodmen of the World and most other fraternal orders, Simmons’ new fraternity now had secret membership rolls, and initiates were discouraged from readily advertising their affiliation to outsiders. Simmons explained that he had wanted to set up a system of “Klan agents” that would “make their reports secretly concerning law violators, immorality, law evasion, non-Americanism, etc. ...”.¹¹ In the heated jingoistic atmosphere of American wartime society, this sort of activity had not only become acceptable, but had even become a vital demonstration of loyal citizenship. The young Klan relished the conformity of the war years, and became engrossed in the “100% Americanism” movement that was sweeping the country. His group now had a clear purpose and the moral authority to regulate the behaviour of others. Simmons’ Invisible Empire was slowly evolving, expanding the scope of their obligations to the world beyond the klavern. It was also distinguishing itself from traditional fraternalism by becoming more militant and politically aggressive. The membership of the order, however, remained at a paltry 2,000 members by the time of Germany’s surrender in 1918.

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In 1925, one commentator would later describe the incredible growth of the movement after the war, noting that:

Never in the annals of this country has any organization become so widespread nationally, and in having acquired such astonishing volume of membership in the communities of the nation in such a brief interval of time as has the order of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

This phenomenal expansion of the order and its wonderful membership growth constitute an event in our National life certain to be chronicled by the future historian.¹²

Researchers still struggle to explain how such a minor organization became the dominant fraternity of the early 1920s. The growth of the movement following the start of the “Roaring Twenties” is truly astounding. The Second Klan itself claimed it had around six million members, though most historians place the figure somewhere between two to four million. Sociologist Rory McVeigh has suggested that a number of structural social changes, especially the post-war economic slump, threatened the dominant political and economic position of America’s white Protestant class, motivating them to join a reactionary movement like the KKK. Alternatively, historian Wyn Craig Wade has proposed that “available evidence suggests that most of these people were led into the Invisible Empire primarily by spiritual needs”.¹³ The historiography of the subject continues to debate what motivated so many Americans to join the Ku Klux Klan and there seems to be no simple explanation for the rise of this phenomenon.

Most historians point to the drastic changes in the political, social and cultural landscape of the post-war era as fundamental forces that contributed to the growing popularity of the Klan. The rise of Bolshevism in Europe, coupled with signs of radical agitation within their own country, troubled many Americans. The prospect of renewed immigration from the war-torn and impoverished nations of Europe was another concern. White Protestant Americans had grown increasingly worried about the lack of integration of European minorities into mainstream society, fearing the growing power of an un-American “immigrant bloc” in national life. The internal migration of African-Americans from the rural South to the cities and factories in the North had also made many who were not used to their presence quite anxious. Some Americans were also concerned with the perceived wave of lawlessness and immorality that afflicted the country, as well as the emergence of the “new woman”. The dawn of the Jazz Age was proving to be a radical departure from the relative security of the preceding decade.¹⁴

However, the vital role that fraternalism played in the rise of the 1920s Invisible Empire has been largely overlooked by most historians. Americans had a variety of existing organizations to choose from to address their growing concerns about the threat of Catholicism or the rise of bootlegging, and yet millions of them chose to join the Ku Klux Klan, an organization that was intrinsically fraternal. The Second Klan was defined as a “high class secret, social, patriotic,

fraternal, benevolent association, having a perfected lodge system, with an exalted ritualistic form of work” according to one of Simmons’ first pamphlets.¹⁵ The Invisible Empire was not a purely political organization. Its members were initiated into the order in elaborate ceremonies and were taught to embrace their fellow Klansmen as brothers. New recruits were supposed to exemplify the very best of white manhood and fraternal values such as duty, honour and patriotism, aspiring to become like the Klansmen of the old South. Some of the order’s most iconic customs, such as the lighting of the fiery cross or the organization’s wearing of white robes and masks, are derived from their fraternal traditions. The order’s fraternalism and rituals remained one of its most distinctive and engaging features, providing purpose and coherence for many American men and women throughout the 1920s. The culture of brotherhood and devotion to the nation instilled in the rituals of this movement was essential for the rise of the Invisible Empire.

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan managed to rise to power on a wave of patriotism and nativism that the white Protestant population experienced as a reaction to the historical developments of the period. The order’s fraternal rituals imparted the Klan’s values and taught initiates to embrace and defend their new brothers. But this new order still needed to reach the masses. It was not Simmons who realized this goal of creating a new and vigorous Invisible Empire, but the Southern Publicity Association (SPA), a marketing firm set up by two promoters, Edward Young Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler. On 7 June 1920, as his organization struggled to keep its head above water, Simmons signed a contract that appointed Clarke as Imperial Kleagle, or head salesman of the order. This placed Clarke, and by extension his business partner Tyler, in charge of the duty of promoting the order and selling membership. It also entitled the pair to a hefty commission for their services, eight dollars out of each ten-dollar “klectoken”, the Klan’s joining fee.¹⁶ The meteoric rise of the KKK was largely due to their shrewd management of the order’s distribution. Clarke and Tyler devised an inventive pyramid scheme where they would hire various salesmen who would take a share of this new Propagation Department’s fee for their work. They divided the nation into sales districts and appointed hundreds of salesmen known as “kleagles” to sell membership for them for a tempting four-dollar commission.

The system proved to be productive. Enthusiastic and ambitious salesmen quickly realized how easy it was to make a fortune selling membership in the order. America’s renewed affection for the Reconstruction Klan, along with the various social shifts taking place in the post-war twenties, had laid the groundwork for the impressive rise of the new Invisible Empire. The effective management of the Klan’s marketing and recruitment was also vital for the success of the movement. Even Clarke was surprised at their achievements a year into their contract. Writing to Simmons on 2 July 1921 he said:

In the last three or four months we have added to our membership a little more than 48,000 members. In all my years of experience in organization

work I have never seen anything to equal the clamor throughout the nation for the Klan. The headquarters of the domain chiefs are located in New York, Washington, Indianapolis, Denver, Dallas, Houston and Los Angeles. In all these cities our kleagles are working eighteen hours a day, and in most instances are three and four months behind their list of applicants.¹⁷

The order enticed Americans by deploying a diverse ideology that could appeal to a wide range of white citizens. Although the Invisible Empire's core tenets of white supremacy, Protestantism and 100 per cent Americanism were cornerstones of the movement, they campaigned on a number of issues. The Catholic threat was probably the organization's primary concern nationwide, as this religion was regarded with suspicion as a foreign movement that appeared determined to undermine American culture and take over the country. Many also found the Invisible Empire's promises to fight for law enforcement and public morality very appealing. Others joined the order because the Klan supported a strict reform of the country's immigration laws and advocated the introduction of Americanization measures, such as mandatory public school attendance and a more patriotic national curriculum. The Invisible Empire's commitment to halting the promotion of racial equality and their pledge to protect the nation from Jewish interests also proved to be popular selling points. In essence, the Invisible Empire rose to prominence with a varied platform that was rooted in popular religion and established conservative American culture and politics, wrapped in the trappings of ritualistic fraternalism.

The appearance of klaverns and Klansmen across the country did not go unnoticed. The peculiar fraternity was a favourite topic for journalists, whose broadcasts about the movement became increasingly common. The pieces that garnered the most attention were the alarming reports of vigilante attacks and race-baiting by Klansmen, as well as the news of corruption within the organization's leadership. For example, several newspapers released articles detailing the shocking case of Reverend Phillip S. Irwin, a white British minister from south Florida who worked primarily at the local African-American Episcopalian church. Irwin was abducted in July 1921 by a gang of suspected Klansmen near Miami for "preaching social equality to the negroes". They advised Irwin that "this was the south, this doctrine was not tolerated and any person who preached it is threatened with death". He was whipped, tarred-and-feathered and warned to leave the city immediately.¹⁸ Unsettling news such as this made many Americans feel nervous. Nearly every other day politicians, editors and religious leaders released statements to the public condemning the Invisible Empire and demanding that action be taken to curb its growth.

In September 1921 the *New York World* published a month-long indictment of the Ku Klux Klan in their newspaper, using information from former members and victims from around the country. The exposé included damning revelations such as the shocking amount of graft taking place within the organization, the high-pressure sales tactics used by the organization's kleagles, and an appalling list of violent crimes carried out by Klansmen. The articles were

syndicated in several influential newspapers from across America, and the topic of the Klan and the dangers it posed quickly became everyday conversation. Pressure from the public forced Congress to hold an inquiry into the affairs of the order in November 1921, to ascertain whether the serious allegations made by the *World* and others were true. After several days of questioning though, the panel was unable to find sufficient evidence of pervasive corruption within the fraternity's leadership or of widespread violence committed by members of the Invisible Empire. These hearings somewhat absolved Simmons and his Klansmen from most of the accusations that had been made against them in recent months in the national press. Throughout the inquiry Simmons presented his Knights of the Ku Klux Klan simply as "a fraternal, patriotic, secret order for the purpose of memorializing the great heroes of our national history". The Imperial Wizard gave an exemplary performance before the committee, masterfully countering the evidence and denying the accusations made against his order. He managed to partially clean his order's name and provide it with nationwide publicity, all in one fell swoop. Although the *World's* exposé damaged the order's image nationwide, the Ku Klux Klan was quick to try to control the narrative and demonstrated that they were able to effectively deal with their opponents.¹⁹

Years later Imperial Wizard Simmons would recall how during those hearings:

I had those congressmen jumping in every direction because if they reported on the Klan they would have had to investigate and report every other lodge in America.... Things began to happen as soon as I got back to my little office in Atlanta. Calls began pouring in from lodge organizers and others all over America for the right to organize Klans.²⁰

The result was that in some ways the Ku Klux Klan emerged from the political and media offensive in 1922 strengthened and reinvigorated. The order had been particularly strong in Southwestern states like Texas and Oklahoma, but after 1921 it became a truly national order, proving to be especially popular in Midwestern states like Indiana and Ohio. The Invisible Empire seemed to be growing by leaps and bounds.

This success naturally bred a lot of envy and unease. The Klan's militaristic structure had ensured that Simmons and his inner circle remained firmly in power, and that the majority of the profits ended up in the hands of the officials of the organization's headquarters – the Imperial Palace – in Atlanta. There were several attempts amongst the membership to oust the fraternity's leaders or to share power more evenly across different cities; a number of Klansmen even tried to break away and form a more democratic Invisible Empire. The bulk of the uproar was directed at Edward Young Clarke, who had temporarily been placed in charge of the order while Simmons was on holiday after May 1922, and who it was believed was defrauding the order and having an extramarital affair with his business partner Elizabeth Tyler.²¹

By the time of the first Imperial Klönvokation, the Ku Klux Klan's annual convention, in late November 1922 this bubbling ferment finally reached a climax when Simmons was deposed as the head of the fraternity. A democratic coup was arranged by several high-ranking officials who were tired with the inept and greedy Atlanta leadership. They were led by the Invisible Empire's national secretary, Imperial Kligrapp Hiram Wesley Evans, who convinced Simmons to dedicate himself exclusively to the spiritual and fraternal leadership of the organization as its "Emperor" and to relinquish the executive office of Imperial Wizard to him. This peaceful transition was short-lived. Clarke and Simmons soon realized that the second Imperial Wizard was trying to institute fundamental changes to their organization and they no longer held the executive authority to question him. Simmons began a national campaign to reclaim his mandate, asserting his rights as the father and founder of the movement. The matter was eventually settled out of court in 1923 with a generous compensation for the first Imperial Wizard, but not before the order had been irrevocably damaged by a very public internecine squabble that delighted their opponents.²²

The second Imperial Wizard, Hiram Wesley Evans, was an Alabama-born dentist who had moved to Texas with his father when he was young. In Dallas he built up a lucrative practice and became a prominent local citizen. Like Simmons, the second Imperial Wizard had been a devoted member of the Freemasons and an enthusiastic fraternalist. In fact it was his good-standing among the members of this well-known fraternity that had precipitated his ascension to the office of Imperial Kligrapp. Evans was one of the earliest members and the Exalted Cyclops, or head, of the notorious Dallas klavern. He managed to quell an anti-Klan faction within the Masonic lodges of this city, a deed which the Atlanta leadership rewarded with his promotion and an impressive \$2,500 bonus. Evans was different to the established officials of the Imperial Palace. He represented those fervent Klansmen who had narrowly missed out on being part of Simmons' clique because they did not join before the SPA takeover. Klan expert Stanley Frost described Evans in 1925 as "a man of strong common sense ... a practical idealist ... very largely a personification of the common people".²³ He seemed far more in touch with the needs of the new Ku Klux Klan's membership, and was intent on reforming the organization for their benefit, as well as his own and that of his closest allies.

The new Imperial Wizard was very aware of the negative public perception of his order's ill-famed Propagation Department, and his first step in reorganizing the sales force was to clean house. "The first thing I did was to cancel E.Y. Clarke's contract as organizer," Evans would later recall about the start of his mandate as Imperial Wizard, justifying his dismissal with allegations of corruption. Evans explained that, some weeks, the Imperial Kleagle "took in as much as \$30,000. He made a gold mine ...". He also fired Clarke's closest associates, the regional sales officers known as Grand Goblins.²⁴ Some of the other reforms included banning masked public parades and opening membership to women and to foreign-born white Protestants by founding the Women of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Crusaders respectively. In addition, the order formed the

Junior Ku Klux Klan and the Tri-K Club to prepare young boys and girls for future membership in this Invisible Empire.

Of these new ancillary groups, the Women of the Ku Klux Klan (WKKK) was the most important. The men's order had already depended on women to help develop their organization, as they performed valuable labour by assisting with the organization of public events and the promotion of the group through social channels. Furthermore, as fundamental symbols of the purity of white supremacy, womanhood was a critical aspect of the male Klan's ideology, while its protection was an intrinsic duty of any good Klansman. Yet women were not simply passive assistants or symbols to the male Klan. During 1922, many women had begun organizing or joining informal female Klan groups such as the Queens of the Golden Mask in Indiana or the Ladies of the Invisible Empire. After the coup against Simmons, Evans attempted to consolidate power and reform the movement to appeal to a broader segment of the population, forming the only officially recognized women's group, the WKKK, in June 1923 with headquarters in Little Rock, Arkansas and chapters across the country.²⁵

The men's Klan saw a great opportunity to exploit the eagerness of conservative white Protestant American women, particularly since the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment had awarded them full suffrage. Just one month after the establishment of the WKKK, during a meeting of the order's leadership, Arkansas Grand Dragon James C. Comer asked his colleagues to welcome this valuable help to their struggle, arguing that:

The power of the ballot now granted to women is a challenge to our real one hundred per cent American women to join the men of the nation in laying the axe of the ballot at the root of every American tree which does not bring forth American fruit.²⁶

Of course, the leadership of the Klan also recognized that new members would also bring in further profits for the order. Despite this, the WKKK emerged not as an auxiliary to be exploited by their male counterparts, but as an independent group with its own priorities. In fact, as Linda Gordon has illustrated, the women who joined this sisterhood both upheld and challenged the gender norms of white Protestant America and the attitudes of their male counterparts.²⁷

Evans' reforms in 1923 introduced much-needed adjustments to the Ku Klux Klan's overall structure, but they were primarily a facelift, intended to make the organization more media-friendly and accessible to the public. Evans' true intention was actually to move away from the fraternal origins of the organization and create a modern and aggressive political juggernaut. In this regard, the formation of such ancillary groups as the WKKK and the *Krusaders* was meant to reinforce the order's voting power and political strength. Simmons' Invisible Empire had played a part in elections in the past, but they had always been uncoordinated efforts to elect individual candidates without a real national policy. Under Evans, the Klan began to push for a national strategy that involved lobbying and pressuring politicians to support the interests of their members and the order's

leadership. One of the second Imperial Wizard's pet projects was immigration reform, and in 1923 he rallied Klansmen and Klanswomen to support the Johnson-Reed Act that would dramatically reduce the number of southern and eastern Europeans who were allowed into the country. One journalist explained that the Invisible Empire's emergence into politics was a "new phase in the life of the Klan" and that their new national political platform "puts the Klan frankly into the political field".²⁸ The new Ku Klux Klan that appeared under Evans' control seemed ready to take the country by storm in late 1924 with its platform of unabashed white supremacy, strict 100 per cent Americanism and aggressive Protestantism.

But just as suddenly as the Ku Klux Klan appeared, by 1925 it seemed to have disappeared. Historians are still debating why the order seems to have collapsed so abruptly. Stanley Coben argues that this decline was due to three factors: the "inability of the order to achieve its promises, the demoralization of its members because of scandals ... and counterattacks by ethnic and religious groups ... and [by] business elites which held political control of the nation's major cities."²⁹ Others maintain that there is no single answer to this question, and that we must focus on individual klaverns to understand why members stopped attending. The fact of the matter is that although the timeline and evolution of the organization and its leadership is relatively clear, the KKK has long been intrinsically misunderstood as a movement. For close to a century historians and others have been debating the most basic characteristics of the movement, trying to comprehend who was joining the Invisible Empire and what was motivating them.

The first wave of historians to investigate the Ku Klux Klan characterized the movement as an expression of small-town irrationality, a violent and reactionary manifestation of conservative America's inability to cope with the radical changes of the modern 1920s. These accounts were mostly informed by partisan newspaper reports and impressionistic assessments from contemporary observers during the Jazz Age, and routinely neglected to engage with the wealth of evidence from the Klan or the experiences and opinions of its members. Sociologist John Moffatt Mecklin was one of the leading exponents of this school of thought, and his 1924 study came to encapsulate academic attitudes towards the Second Invisible Empire during this period. He categorized the Klan as an essentially Southern and rural organization that initiated a campaign of violence and intimidation against African-Americans, Jews, Catholics and European immigrant groups. He believed that these fanatical Klansmen were driven by hysterical suspicions about these "un-American" minorities, and even described members, saying: "A child whipping its contumacious dolly is hardly more irrational." This interpretation was very influential and was echoed by respected historians of the 1950s and 1960s such as John Higham, Richard Hofstadter and William Leuchtenburg.³⁰

At the same time there were a number of more specialized studies that also appeared in the 1950s and 1960s which overturned many of these arguably superficial assumptions. Charles Alexander's and Norman Weaver's regional

studies of the Invisible Empire began to emphasize the local nature of the movement; Kenneth Jackson's insightful analysis of the Klan in the city disputed the characterization of the Invisible Empire as a fundamentally rural movement.³¹ These revisionist historians were challenging established interpretations of the Klan, arguing that the movement was also Northern, urban and even mainstream. This revisionist school of thought began to question many accepted theories about the movement, and increasingly engaged with Klansmen as rational people who were part of a popular, and even mainstream, political movement.

This trend was taken even further in the following decades by a group of historians who would become known as the "post-revisionists". This school of thought based its work on documents preserved from individual klaverns, arguing that local history would allow for a more accurate picture of the Invisible Empire to emerge. The work of Robert Goldberg, Leonard Moore, Shawn Lay, and Craig Fox have fundamentally challenged the dominant narrative, arguing that the Invisible Empire was not an aberration at all, that violence was rare in most regions, and that the Klan ultimately responded to the needs of individual communities.³² Rather than simply trying to define the Klan based on their ideology and literature, the post-revisionists carried out exhaustive demographic surveys of groups of Klansmen and the communities they inhabited, and have demonstrated that the order recruited from all classes in society. Their work showed that the social composition of the Second Ku Klux Klan was practically a mirror of the communities they were built on. These post-revisionists have also argued that each individual klavern adapted to suit the needs of its community, which finally explained the colourful array of different causes the Klan stood for across the country. This influential approach to the study of the Invisible Empire has defined the field for the past 30 years, establishing the organization as a localized movement of reactionary reformers.

The post-revisionist interpretation has become the standard narrative of the Ku Klux Klan, and while it may have drastically improved our understanding of the movement, it still presents some issues. The focus on local history has made the historiography overly concerned with the role of the KKK in a handful of communities. This artificial restriction of the scope of historical inquiry limits our analysis of the Invisible Empire. The Klansmen of the 1920s interacted with each other in this national movement, and historians should take the opportunity to re-examine this fraternity not as a collection of isolated pockets of followers, but as a great mass movement of shared interests. Furthermore, the role of the Invisible Empire's leadership and the national network of officers needs to be emphasized. Although they exercised little influence over individual klaverns, the order's leadership at the national and regional level helped to bolster the growth of the movement and defended it from external attacks. The marketing and recruitment of the fraternity were directed by the Klan's managers and leaders and are a critical aspect of the success of the overall movement. Most accounts of the KKK also neglect to examine how people outside of the order viewed and responded to their expansion and do not always evaluate how the fraternity's growth affected others. This study hopes to address these problems

by offering a different interpretation of the Second Ku Klux Klan that centres on exploring how the Invisible Empire grew across America and how the nation's citizens reacted to this development.

The interest in the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan has surged since the 1980s, and the historiography of the subject has remained vibrant and energetic. This is because although historians and analysts have gained a clearer understanding of this organization, there are still facets of this mass movement that remain unexplored. The presence of the Invisible Empire affected practically everything in the communities where it established itself, from church attendance to shop sales, making it a vital subject for anyone trying to understand the social and political history of the "Roaring Twenties". The Klan has been studied as a political and nativist organization, as an anti-Catholic movement, as a Prohibition lobbying group and as a vigilante unit. But even the less obvious features of the Invisible Empire have been covered by researchers. The Second Klan has been studied as a business venture, as an electoral movement, as a retail combination to fight competitors, as a religious revival and as a Progressive and socialist organization. Recently, Thomas Pegram has researched the complex relationship between the Second Klan and trades unions, demonstrating that contrary to popular perceptions, the order did not always oppose such groups and often formed alliances with the white working classes. In addition, Felix Harcourt's book explores the pervasiveness of the Klan in American culture, and how the popularity of the movement led to the proliferation of Klan-themed music, radio stations, and even sports teams. Amid the bitter contemporary debates about the emergence of the so-called alt-right and the "America First" doctrine of President Donald Trump, new books such as Linda Gordon's *The Second Coming of the Ku Klux Klan* seek to explore and examine the precursors to such phenomena and to highlight how mainstream the Invisible Empire truly was. Gordon's work effectively captures how truly American the Ku Klux Klan was and reminds us that racism and violence are not aberrant themes in the nation's history.³³ The historiography of the movement has undoubtedly been spurred by the re-emergence of the American far-right in popular culture, mainstream media and political rhetoric in the last few years as readers seek to understand the origins of groups like the Klan that once again march down the nation's streets.

Yet there is one feature of this fascinating organization that has mostly been overlooked: its fraternalism and its relationship with other fraternities. Most studies of the movement briefly discuss the order's peculiar ceremonies but have generally neglected the central role that this aspect of the organization played in its development.³⁴ Shawn Lay has even called for a new study of the Ku Klux Klan centred entirely on this very topic, remarking that: "Beyond its political and social activism, other aspects of the second Klan merit extensive examination. The Klan's role as a fraternal group needs additional investigation, particularly in light of the new and provocative scholarship on secret men's societies."³⁵ In the past, attempts to investigate the Invisible Empire's fraternalism and its relation with other fraternities have been hindered by the inherent difficulties of trying to examine this secret and sometimes criminal organization.

The clandestine nature of the Second Klan's activities, as well as the unsavoury reputation it earned in subsequent years, has made finding material relating to the order rather complicated. The Klan was not only a secretive organization during its active years; members also frequently destroyed any written materials left when the hundreds of klaverns across the country were closed. Furthermore, although oral interviews have previously been deployed effectively by researchers to try to recover some information, the historical window where such techniques could be used has unfortunately closed.³⁶ Because of these issues, there are significant obstacles to overcome when making certain conclusions regarding the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

This inherent complication has not deterred researchers. In fact, the organization's secrecy has aroused curiosity and many determined historians have offered their own perspective on the mysterious Invisible Empire. This study will continue this trend and contribute to the historiography by carrying out a comprehensive analysis of the Ku Klux Klan's role as a fraternity. This account will question the significance of this brotherhood's fraternal traditions and evaluate how the Klan managed to become both an aggressive political movement and a spiritual fraternal organization. But, more importantly, this research will examine the Ku Klux Klan in the context of the period, placing it alongside the other fraternities and secret societies of the time and exploring the relationship between the orders. It is not enough to investigate the Invisible Empire in isolation, because, as one Klan critic explained in 1924:

One factor in [the Klan's] growth, however, is often overlooked, and that is the saturation of the United States with innumerable organizations, associations, societies, sects, fraternities and whatnots, which, in their use of ritual, their artificial loyalties, their exclusive and arbitrary homogeneity, are not so alien as might at first thought to be supposed.³⁷

William Joseph Simmons founded his order based on the various different fraternities he belonged to and his own brotherhood was shaped by these experiences. These influences would prove fundamental to its success. The Invisible Empire managed to selectively incorporate the most popular features of America's beloved brotherhoods and soon became one of the nation's largest fraternal orders. It led one Klansman to proudly declare:

I think more of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan than any other secret fraternity in which I have any membership. I am a Shriner, a thirty-second degree Scottish Rite Mason, an Elk, Odd Fellow, and a Knight of Pythias, but I love the Klan better than any of them.³⁸

Because of this it is entirely necessary to discuss the Klan's fraternalism in the general context of American secret societies.

The Ku Klux Klan attempted to associate with and recruit members from almost all of the country's prominent fraternities, but seemed particularly

obsessed with Freemasonry and its appendant orders. The Invisible Empire's dogged determination to enlist and relate to Freemasonry has repeatedly been noted by historians of both fraternities ever since the 1920s, yet none of these have fully investigated the matter.³⁹ Although the Odd Fellows were the country's largest fraternity in terms of numbers during the 1920s, the Freemasons remained the most exclusive and desirable brotherhood in America. Freemasonry was everything the Ku Klux Klan aspired to be, and Klan salesmen actively pursued members of this fraternity for recruitment into their own organization. One former officer of the Invisible Empire's Propagation Department would later recall that:

The Klan makes a tremendous appeal to Masons when it pretends to take the fine principles and splendid ideals of the Masonic fraternity and to translate them into service. The Klan everywhere declares that Masonry is passive in its faith, but that the Klan puts its creed to work.⁴⁰

The Invisible Empire went to great lengths to make it appear as if the two orders were connected, and repeatedly advertised this claim across the country. Much to the dismay of several members of that fraternity, many Freemasons did in fact become Klansmen. These intrusive campaigns would be loudly denounced by Freemasonry's leaders and the two organizations would come to share a turbulent relationship. By examining the relation between these two fraternities we can identify how the Ku Klux Klan marketed itself to the American public and became the most important political and social organization of the early Jazz Age.

Freemasonry, also known as the "Craft" or the "Blue Lodge", is one of the world's most well known fraternities. The group's origins lie in the medieval masonry guilds of Britain and France, wherein members would be taught the secret geometrical and architectural techniques of this trade within the lodge. At some point after the English Civil War, some lodges began to allow non-professional stonemasons to join them, and the club became quite fashionable among gentlemen and freethinkers of the time. The three degrees of the Masonic lodge taught lessons of virtue based on the symbols of that trade, and many men came to admire the ideas of self-improvement, equality and enlightenment that the ceremonies advocated. The first modern lodges were officially founded in Scotland at the turn of the seventeenth century, when William Schaw reordered the organization; he established formal rules for their governance and formed various new chapters. This was followed by the union of four London lodges in 1717 that would form the Grand Lodge of England. This Grand Lodge established the rituals and regulations that many continue to follow in contemporary Freemasonry.⁴¹ The order spread throughout Europe and soon found its way to Colonial America, where it also proved popular among the British settlers. Although their contribution has sometimes been exaggerated in the past, Freemasonry would play an influential role during the American Revolution. Celebrated figures of this period such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and

Paul Revere were all initiates of the Masonic lodge. Not only were a notable proportion of the intellectual and military leadership of the nascent American nation members of the "Craft", but the fraternity also helped shape the future of the nation by promoting ideas of democracy, liberalism and individualism among ordinary male citizens.⁴²

As the country grew and Americans settled new territories following independence, they took Freemasonry with them. Bodies known as Grand Lodges were set up in each state, each working independently in their respective jurisdictions, and headed by a Grand Master who was elected at the annual state convention. The fraternity also expanded with the creation of appendant bodies such as the York and Scottish Rites. These popular orders offered additional degrees to those who had already completed the initial three and awarded impressive titles such as "Master of the Royal Secret" or "Knight Templar". Freemasonry also suffered some setbacks during this period. In 1826 in western New York, a man named William Morgan disappeared after threatening to publish the secrets of the Masonic ritual. It was believed by many that he had been murdered by over-zealous Freemasons. The public outcry that followed the events of the "Morgan Affair" created an anti-Masonic sentiment that enveloped the young country during the 1830s and nearly destroyed the fraternity.

In the decades following their persecution, the Masonic fraternity managed to reclaim its position as an American institution, and membership in the order once again became an exclusive and desirable commodity. Historian Mark Tabbert has highlighted the order's growth in numbers and estimation, explaining that by 1900 at least 5 per cent of the adult male population of the country were Freemasons and that: "After the church and the school, the Masonic lodge was often the most important institution established in a new town." Following the Civil War, membership in this fraternity became almost indispensable for the aspiring middle classes because of the recognition that being accepted by the Craft awarded. Sociologist Max Weber famously commented that membership in exclusive brotherhoods functioned as a way of demonstrating social standing, observing that "the badge in the buttonhole meant 'I am a gentleman patented after investigation and probation and guaranteed by my membership'".⁴³ Because Freemasonry had such stringent entry requirements and elevated fees, membership in the order became a valuable demonstration of respectability when meeting strangers. Belonging to the Craft almost became a prerequisite for politicians and businessmen in the period between 1890 and 1930 as the Masonic ring or lapel pin proved that the wearer was a dependable and upstanding man.

It was precisely this desirability and the order's historical reputation as an honourable and progressive men's order that fuelled the Ku Klux Klan's drive to appear as a Masonic affiliate. By tying themselves to Freemasonry, they were imbuing their own organization with the Craft's respectability as well as their prestigious heritage as the shapers and defenders of American liberalism and democracy. Nevertheless, the historiography of the subject has not given this relationship sufficient attention or credit.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the bulk of the material written on the relationship between the two fraternities has originated

from the minds of conspiracy theorists. One bizarre website accused Freemasonry and the Klan of being linked with the mysterious New World Order, and stated: “Whether it be the Mormon Church, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Wicca Witchcraft, Scientology or the Ku Klux Klan – we find demonic Freemasonry as the common denominator.” Other, more seemingly professional treatises have presented different though equally outlandish theories about the connection between the Klan and the Craft.⁴⁵ Freemasonry has been the object of many suspected international conspiracies, so it is no surprise that many opponents of the order are keen to emphasize its close ties with the notorious Ku Klux Klan. The truth of the matter is that the two fraternities shared a much more complex relationship of both occasional cooperation and conflict.

Though this subject is vital to understanding the growth of the Ku Klux Klan, it has proven complicated for historians to adequately investigate the fraternity’s association with Freemasonry. This is partly due to the reticence of many Grand Lodges to allow researchers access to their material. As historian David Stevenson noted in 1988:

Some Masons regard their history as virtually the property of their members ... and are unhappy at outsiders working in the field – a response obviously conditioned by the periodic publication of lurid attacks on the Craft, for such ‘exposures’ lead to fear that any outsider taking an interest in Freemasonry might really be seeking material for a scandalous instant best-seller.⁴⁶

In recent years historians have started to recognize the valuable contributions made by the Craft to various political, social, intellectual and artistic developments of the past three centuries, and the field has become far more accepted by mainstream academics. Furthermore, Freemasonry has become an increasingly public order that does not shy away from the outside world and even welcomes historians. Although some members are still cautious with research inquiries, this general shift has made the task of analysing the exact nature of the links between the Invisible Empire and the Freemasons finally possible.

For decades historians have been debating why Americans joined the Second Ku Klux Klan, offering different explanations for the meteoric rise of William Joseph Simmons’ little Southern brotherhood. This book will offer an entirely new perspective on an almost exhausted subject by focusing on a neglected feature of this organization: its fraternalism. In the past, fraternalism has been a theme of various academic studies regarding the KKK, but has never been the focus. This piece of work aims to assess its role within the movement and evaluate just how vital the Invisible Empire’s fraternal functions were. To do so, it is essential to see how the Ku Klux Klan interacted and recruited members from fraternities like the Freemasons, and how Masonic members and leaders reacted to this invasion.

This study will begin by evaluating the Ku Klux Klan’s role as a fraternity, debating whether it qualifies as one and asking what significance this function played in the movement’s rise. The first chapter will assess the Invisible Empire

by comparing it with various other fraternities, teasing out the subtle differences that make this hooded brotherhood unique. The second chapter will focus on Freemasonry itself and will try to answer why it was that members of this fraternity were joining the new Ku Klux Klan. It will discuss a number of Masonic organizations that tried to fulfil the same role as the Klan, before concluding that the Invisible Empire offered a more flexible and innovative form of fraternalism that addressed the needs of its members, particularly the growing demand to act more aggressively in political matters. We will then move on and explore the Ku Klux Klan's remarkable marketing strategies, investigating how the order's determined efforts to appear as both a sensible fraternity and an order closely related to the Craft helped to boost this organization's reputation in the eyes of the public. The fourth chapter will concentrate on the Invisible Empire's kleagles, and assess how they employed the latest modern sales techniques to infiltrate Masonic lodges and sell the Klan to America and to Freemasonry. Chapter 5 will try to tackle the complex task of estimating just how successful the Ku Klux Klan was at recruiting Freemasons. By investigating the relationship between the two organizations in various individual locales, this chapter hopes to make an informed estimate for the proportion of Freemasons who became Klansmen. The sixth chapter will turn its attention to two cities in particular – Dallas and Anaheim – which will offer an in-depth view of the Klan's effect in local communities. The next chapter will contrast the responses of differing Masonic Grand Masters to the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, and will examine why individual Freemasons' reactions to the order varied so much. Finally, the last chapter of this book will examine how and why the Invisible Empire appeared to collapse so suddenly by the middle of the 1920s.

The subtitle of this book – *Fighting Fraternities* – highlights how Klansmen viewed their order, but also how they related to the Freemasons. The Invisible Empire saw itself as a militant and politically aggressive brotherhood for true white men, a fraternity that practised its ideals and fought to defend American values. The term “fighting fraternity” may seem like a contradiction, but this unconventional approach is precisely what made the Klan unique and so attractive to many. This radical departure shook the fraternal world, and dragged other organizations into conflict with the Invisible Empire. The Freemasons soon found themselves fighting as well, fighting against Klansmen in their order and sometimes fighting alongside the Invisible Empire against their common enemies. The members of the Craft even fought among themselves over the matter of how to deal with the KKK. This case illustrates some of the basic tensions of the early 1920s. As America began to change ever more dramatically – modern technology, radical new social fashions, demographic shifts, political and economic upheavals – the underlying tensions of these developments began to express themselves in conflicts across the country. The rise of the Ku Klux Klan, this new fighting fraternity, is just one illustration of the wave of unease that swept the country as Americans tried to adjust to their new environment.

The Invisible Empire's new form of fraternalism caught the attention of many Americans during the 1920s. The Ku Klux Klan offered members the

opportunity to feel patriotic, to fulfil their duty as good Americans, to celebrate their white masculinity, to defend their heritage and future from institutions and people they considered to be alien, and even to acquire respectability and climb the social ladder. At the same time though, this organization's ritualism and fraternalism provided a unifying experience that helped to bond thousands of strangers and convert them into brothers and knights of the Invisible Empire. This organization's fraternal customs and its connection with other similar secret societies helped to establish their status in American society and to attract new followers to their remarkable mass movement.

Notes

- 1 "U.S. Must Get Rid of Ku Klux, Leaders in Nation's Life Insist", *New York World*, 9 September 1921.
- 2 William Joseph Simmons, *The A.B.C. of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan* (Atlanta, GA, 1917).
- 3 Though, as Elaine Frantz Parsons has noted, this account of the group's origins as a fraternity was disseminated by its founders and there are reasons to question this narrative. See Elaine Frantz Parsons, *Ku-Klux: The Birth of the Klan During Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2015), p. 32.
- 4 *Testimony Taken By The Joint Select Committee To Inquire Into The Condition of Affairs In the Late Insurrectionary States: South Carolina Volume 3* (Washington D.C., 1872), p. 1983.
- 5 See James Vincent Lowery, "Reconstructing the Reign of Terror: Popular Memories of the Ku Klux Klan, 1877–1921" (University of Mississippi, 2008) for a full examination of the changing perceptions of the Reconstruction Klan in subsequent decades.
- 6 "Birth of a Nation", *Baltimore Sun*, 6 February 1917; Melvyn Stokes, *D.W. Griffith's the Birth of a Nation: A History of the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time* (Oxford, 2008).
- 7 "Letter from Walter White to Evelyn P. Snow", 12 July 1921, NAACP Papers, Library of Congress; Ward Greene, "Notes For a History of the Klan", *American Mercury*, February 1925, pp. 241–242.
- 8 "An 'Imperial Wizard' and His 'Klan'", *The Literary Digest*, 5 February 1921, p. 44; William Joseph Simmons, *The Ku Klux Klan: Yesterday, Today and Forever* (Atlanta, GA, 1921), p. 3; William G. Shepherd, "How I Put Over the Klan", *Collier's National Weekly*, 14 July 1928, p. 35.
- 9 William Joseph Simmons, *The Practice of Klanishness* (Atlanta, GA, 1917), p. 2.
- 10 "Why the Ku Klux Klan Has Been Revived", *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 October 1921.
- 11 William G. Shepherd, "Ku Klux Koin", *Collier's National Weekly*, 21 July 1928, p. 9; For an analysis of the American home front during the First World War, see Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford, 2008).
- 12 *Many are the Virtues of the Ku Klux Klan* (Flint, MI, 1925), p. 5.
- 13 Different Klan sources made varying claims about the number of members, see Ku Klux Klan, *K.K.K. Katechism and Song Book* (Columbus, OH, 1924), p. 18 for just one figure; Rory McVeigh, "Structural Incentives for Conservative Mobilization: Power Devaluation and the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan, 1915–1925", *Social Forces* 77, no. 4 (1999); Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York, 1987), p. 183.
- 14 A few studies that illustrate these changes include David J. Goldberg, *Discontented America: The United States in the 1920s* (Baltimore, MA, 1999); Niall A. Palmer, *The Twenties in America: Politics and History* (Edinburgh, 2006).

- 15 William Joseph Simmons, *Imperial Proclamation of the Imperial Wizard*, (Atlanta, GA, 1917).
- 16 A copy of this contract was published in House of Representatives, Committee on Rules, *Hearings on the Ku Klux Klan Before the Committee on Rules* (Washington D.C., 1921), p. 32.
- 17 “Ku Klux Klan Brewing Racial and Religious Hate”, *Evening Public Ledger*, 12 September 1921.
- 18 “The Ku Klux Klan”, *Cleveland Gazette*, 23 July 1921; “Tar and Feather English Arch-Deacon Who Favors Inter-Racial Marriages”, *Kalamazoo Gazette*, 18 July 1921.
- 19 U.S. House of Representatives, *Hearings on the Ku*, p. 69; See John T. Kneebone, “Publicity and Prejudice: The New York World’s Exposé of 1921 and the History of the Second Ku Klux Klan”, *VCU Scholars Compass* (2015).
- 20 Shepherd, “Ku Klux Koin”, p. 38.
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- 45 "Freemasonry and the Ku Klux Klan", www.jesus-is-savior.com/False%20Religions/Freemasonry/ku_klux_klan.htm; Paul A. Fisher, *Behind the Lodge Door: Church, State and Freemasonry*, 2nd edn (Rockford, IL, 1994), pp. 87–102.
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