

EDITOR'S CHOICE

The Ku Klux Klan in 1920s Massachusetts

MARK PAUL RICHARD



Editor's Introduction: *HJM is proud to select as our Editor's Choice Award for this issue Mark Paul Richard's timely, illuminating and sobering study, Not a Catholic Nation: The Ku Klux Klan Confronts New England in the 1920s (2015) published by the University of Massachusetts Press. Richard breaks new ground in terms of both the thoroughness of his research and the arguments he makes. In the book's concluding paragraph he suggests that, in order to effectively address the resurgence of racist, nativist and anti-immigrant prejudices today, we must "recognize the importance of the Ku Klux Klan in earlier historical periods, particularly the 1920s, when so many ordinary Americans joined the organization to form one of the largest social movements the country has ever experienced." Although "the Klan's presence in New England does not currently form part of the historical memory of most Americans," Richard writes, the prejudices expressed through the KKK "continue to find expression in contemporary society, even if*

refashioned and exploited by groups who were themselves previously targeted.” He concludes that “only by understanding and acknowledging the KKK’s activities in New England . . . during the 1920s can we begin to confront the persistent cultural prejudices of modern society” (206-07).

Founded in 1866, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) extended into almost every Southern state by 1870 and became a potent vehicle for white Southern resistance to the Republican Party’s Reconstruction-era policies aimed at establishing a modicum of political and economic equality for African Americans. Its members waged an underground campaign of intimidation, terror, and violence. Although Congress passed legislation designed to curb Klan terrorism, the organization saw its primary goal—the reestablishment of white supremacy—fulfilled across the South in the 1870s.

During the early 1920s the Ku Klux Klan experienced a remarkable resurgence that brought literally millions of American men and women into its ranks. The resurrected Klan, based in white Protestant nativist groups, burned crosses and staged rallies, parades and marches denouncing immigrants, Catholics, Jews, blacks, and organized labor. Demonstrating at the height of their power, on August 8, 1925 twenty-five thousand members of the Klan marched in full regalia down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C.

In Not a Catholic Nation, Mark Paul Richard examines the KKK’s largely ignored growth in New England and details the reactions of the region’s Catholic population, the Klan’s primary target. Dr. Richard’s extensive research draws upon a wide range of previously untapped primary sources. These include French-language newspapers; KKK documents scattered in local, university, and Catholic repositories; and previously undiscovered copies of the Maine Klansmen. Richard argues that the Klan was far more active in the Northeast than previously thought. He also challenges the view that the Ku Klux Klan became a mass movement during this period largely because it functioned as a social, fraternal, or civic organization for many Protestants. Although Richard concedes that some Protestants in New England may have joined the KKK for those reasons, he shows that the politics of ethnicity and labor played a more significant role in the Klan’s growth in New England.¹

Not a Catholic Nation offers comprehensive analysis of the Ku Klux Klan’s antagonism toward Catholics in the 1920s. More importantly, perhaps, it also chronicles widespread resistance to the Klan. This resistance was particularly fierce in Massachusetts. As the author writes in Chapter Seven:

Opposition to the Ku Klux Klan in Massachusetts came from many different quarters . . . The most significant and effective anti-Klan activities in the Bay State were the grassroots efforts undertaken

by residents, many of whom were the Catholic targets of the Klan. Perhaps coming as a considerable surprise to the KKK, Catholics in over twenty communities of the Commonwealth did not hesitate to use extralegal means, including violence, in their counterattack against the hooded society. Consequently, the culture wars between the Protestant Klan and its Catholic opponents erupted into numerous riots in the Bay State in the mid-1920s (108).

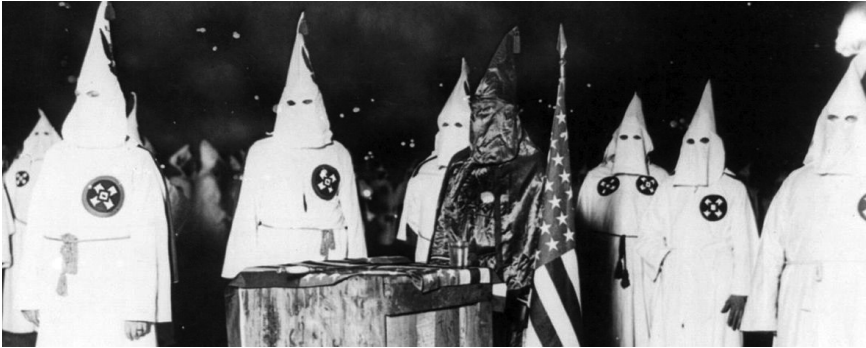
*Dr. Richard is a professor of history and Canadian studies at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. He is author of *Loyal but French: The Negotiation of Identity by French-Canadian Descendants in the United States (2008)*. This Editor's Choice selection was reproduced with permission of University of Massachusetts Press and is excerpted from pages 1-6 and 108-19 of the book.*

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INTRODUCTION

Alarmed by the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States after the Great War and concerned that it had begun organizing in his state, Rep. Peter F. Tague, a Democrat from Massachusetts, sponsored a resolution in 1921 calling on Congress to conduct an investigation into the group's activities. During the investigation, the Imperial Wizard of the Klan, William J. Simmons of Atlanta, Georgia, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Rules: "It has been charged that the klan is organized for the purpose of intimidating the Negroes in the South. It may surprise this committee to learn that the growth of the Klan in the North and East has been much larger than in the South."

Few individuals, including Tague, likely believed Simmons's statement. Fewer still would have anticipated the KKK's astounding rise in New England in the years to follow. According to the Washington Post, from the Klan's formation in each individual state until it peaked in 1925, it admitted 21,321 members in Rhode Island, 65,590 in Connecticut, 75,000 in New Hampshire, 80,301 in Vermont, 130,780 in Massachusetts, and 150,141 in Maine.² KKK membership remains difficult to determine with precision, but even if the actual numbers in the New England states were a fraction—say, one-tenth—of the Washington Post's reported figures, they would nonetheless be phenomenal for the region. Each of the six New England states had witnessed significant Catholic immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, much of it consisting of French Canadians from Québec, and the Ku Klux Klan took notice.



Klan Gathering in Worcester

At Klan rallies in the 1920s, speakers warned that "real" Americans were losing control of the country. The Klan claimed that foreigners, especially Catholics and Jews, would soon outnumber white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants. New Englanders resented the influx of French Canadians, who were not only Catholic but also willing to accept lower wages than native-born workers. Anti-Irish prejudice reappeared as Irish Americans gained political power. Anti-Italian sentiment was also prevalent. Worcester became a center of Klan activity. In 1923 the Klan had launched a major recruiting drive there. At one rally at Mechanic's Hall, the city's largest public venue, speakers inflamed the audience with claims that Catholics were overtaking the city's government, police force, and positions as public school teachers. Source: MassHumanities, www.massmoments.org

As immigrants supplied the labor to help the United States evolve from a rural agrarian to an urban industrial nation in the late 1800s and early 1900s, their religious and ethnic origins often served as grounds for division within the nation-state. Prior to the Civil War most immigrants came from northern and western Europe and, like native-born U.S. residents, were largely white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant. Catholic immigrants seeking to escape the famine in Ireland in the 1840s and 1850s were a notable exception. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, massive immigration from southern and eastern Europe, predominantly of Catholics and Jews, provided the country with a large supply of labor for its industries; during the same era, French-Canadian Catholics migrated south to work in the textile mills of New England, where, at the turn of the last century (1900), they constituted 10% of the region's population.

Between 1890 and 1925 nine million Catholics immigrated into the United States, making the Roman Catholic Church the largest religious denomination in the country. While the native-born turned against immigrants, particularly the Catholics during the economic crisis of the

1880s, nativism became even more intense in the 1890s. That decade was noted for its nationalism and jingoist sentiments, the historian John Higham points out, and anti-Catholicism was a particularly strong and central concern of nativists who pushed for immigration restrictions. In the early twentieth century the continued religious xenophobia directed against Catholics stemmed largely from the Ku Klux Klan. Because Jews were fewer in number than Catholics in the 1920s, they constituted a smaller threat to the Klan.³

During the twenties, several conditions fueled anti-immigrant sentiment. An agricultural depression began in the United States in 1920, and some felt that continued immigration was undermining the country's economic system. Immigrants who consumed alcohol during the prohibition era were viewed as lawbreakers who were challenging American mores.⁴ Additionally, immigrants who retained the languages and lifeways of their homelands were perceived as resistant to American ways of living. The Ku Klux Klan sought to confront these issues.

Unlike its earlier incarnation in the post-Civil War era, the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s expanded far beyond the southern United States, extending its reach into the northern states and into Canada. The Klan became a mass movement during the decade, attaining a membership of between three and six million women and men, thus becoming one of the largest social movements in U.S. history. The 1920s Klan generated appeal beyond the South because it had evolved into an organization that, besides promoting white supremacy, embraced such themes as Americanism, nativism, prohibition, and traditional moral and family values. According to the historian Leonard Moore, white Protestants used the Klan organization in an attempt to reassert control over their communities.⁵

The same was true in Canada. The KKK migrated north to Montréal in 1921 and allegedly burned Catholic buildings in the Province of Québec in 1922, but it did not develop into a strong organization in that province, where Catholics made up about 85% of the population. Besides Catholics, the Klan's Canadian targets included Jews, blacks, Asians, and central and eastern Europeans. The Klan spread to the Maritime provinces and to Ontario, but it drew its strength in western Canada where white Protestant majorities existed. In Alberta and Saskatchewan, for example, the Klan directed its energy against Catholic immigrants from Europe as well as French Canadians, in order to assert a Protestant and British character over the western provinces. In this task, the KKK was assisted by the Orange Order, an anti-Catholic, Protestant organization. As the journalist J. B. McGeachy explained of the Saskatchewan Klan in 1929, "Like the American

Klan, it is nativist and Protestant. While it is by no means officially allied with the Conservative party, the Klan has drawn support from those who fear Catholic ascendancy, oppose unrestricted immigration and resent the separate school privileges allowed to the religious minority in the Province.”⁶

Anglo-Canadian immigrants in the United States drew upon these homeland experiences to support the KKK movement in their adopted country. One of the unique features of this study, then, is its exploration of the history of the Canada-U.S. borderlands and particularly its consideration of the role of Canadian immigrants as both proponents and victims of the Klan’s activities in the United States.

KEY ARGUMENTS

This book contributes to the history of Catholicism in the United States, which has largely excluded French-Canadian Catholics, and to American religious history, in which Catholics have largely been viewed as outsiders. It argues for the centrality of Catholics to New England and U.S. history. What the historian R. Laurence Moore wrote of nineteenth-century Mormons, that “they aroused opposition precisely because they were so profoundly a part of the American scene,” can also be said of the New England Catholics whom the Ku Klux Klan confronted during the 1920s. Rather than being viewed as “evidence of Catholic powerlessness,” historical attacks on Catholics should instead be interpreted, Moore asserts, “as evidence of Catholic power.”⁷ This work will demonstrate the agency of New England Catholics of that era and provide evidence of their power in repelling the Klan.

Although various scholars have examined the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan during the twenties, they have all but ignored the group’s presence in New England.⁸ Even Rory McVeigh’s recent study of the Klan as a national movement implicitly suggests that the organization was insignificant in the region. McVeigh’s content analysis of the group’s activities as reported in its national weekly newspaper, the *Imperial Night-Hawk*, reveals that 40 Klan events took place in the six New England states in 1923 and 1924, peak years for the organization nationally, representing a mere 1.5 % of the 2,669 events reported throughout the country.⁹ As this study will demonstrate, the Ku Klux Klan was far more active in the northeastern reaches of the United States than previous and contemporary scholars have thought.

A comparison of the estimates of Klan membership to U.S. census figures implies that the KKK had considerable strength in New England during the 1920s. Comparing the *Washington Post’s* reported Klan numbers with state population figures from the 1920 federal census, one finds that Klan members



**New England State Banners in Washington, D.C. KKK Parade,
September 13, 1926**

Image: Library of Congress

may have constituted as much as 19.5% of the total population of Maine, 16.9% of New Hampshire's, 22.8% of Vermont's, 3.4% of Massachusetts's, 3.5% of Rhode Island's, and 4.8% of Connecticut's. The proportions are

astoundingly larger if one weighs the *Washington Post's* Klan numbers against the 1920 U.S. census figures of the “native white” population of “native parentage” (that is, cases where neither parent was foreign-born.) By this measure the Ku Klux Klan made up approximately one-third of the native-born white population of the northern New England states of Maine (30.3%), New Hampshire (33.3%), and Vermont (35.2%); and from one-sixth to one-tenth of the native white population of the southern New England states of Massachusetts (10.6%), Rhode Island (12.3%), and Connecticut (14.6%).

Because so many native-born whites who were not members of the KKK were sympathetic with its aims, even if the above representations of the group's strength are high, they help one to gauge the probable extent of Klan influence in the Northeast, an influence that far exceeded that of its dues-paying membership.¹⁰ Given the large Catholic population of New England in the 1920s, this book will challenge notions that the KKK was active in the country predominantly where white Protestant majorities existed.

This work will also challenge the historiography of the Klan in the 1920s as framed over the past several decades. Traditional interpretations have tended to emphasize the secret society's nativism and extremism.¹¹ Monographs published in the late twentieth century, however, have largely downplayed the Protestant Klan's expressions of hostility toward minority groups and focused instead on the organization's normative behavior. According to Leonard Moore, “These studies demonstrate that the Klan served different purposes in different communities, but that in general, it represented mainstream social and political concerns, not those of a disaffected fringe group.” The Klan grew dramatically during the decade, these works argue, because it offered social and fraternal outlets to ordinary citizens. These analyses also contend that the KKK provided citizens a vehicle through which to promote constructive change in their communities, particularly to deal with problems that existing governments did not resolve.¹²

The Ku Klux Klan's confrontations with Catholics in New England do not support this “populist” revision in our historical understanding of the 1920s Klan. To be sure, the organization did sponsor social events for its members. The headquarters in Portland, Maine, for example, sponsored masquerade balls, card games, Valentine's Day parties, dances, circuses, and concerts by the group's own band. In fact, the Klan of this period viewed itself as a fraternal order. A commercial fisherman from Maine named Charlie York told his biographer that the Klan's fraternal activities were what had attracted him to the organization in 1924: “I never enjoyed any Lodge so much as I did the Klan at first,” he noted. “It had the principle of brotherly love for feller members and they [*sic*] was a high moral tone to it.”¹³ Evidence of the

Klan's community activities in New England does exist, and at least some individuals did join the Klan to assist their communities. But the politics of ethnicity and labor played out differently in the northeastern borderlands than in other regions of the United States. In New England, nativism, religious prejudice, and class differences account for the Klan's remarkable growth during the twenties much more convincingly than do its functions as a social, fraternal, or civic organization.

THE KKK IN NEW ENGLAND: UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

The New England Klan differed in another respect. During the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan in the South and in most of the Southwest drew its membership from the Democratic Party. In New England, however, as in other northern states and in the West, it allied itself with the Republican Party.¹⁴ This regional difference in political party affiliation points to the chameleonic nature of the secret society.

The Ku Klux Klan as it existed elsewhere in the United States did not translate to the Northeast, and its organizers made adaptations in order to confront the supposed "enemy" of New England's large Catholic population. One result of that confrontation was to propel more of the region's ethnic Catholics into the ranks of the Democratic Party, a shift further facilitated by the 1928 presidential candidacy of the Catholic governor of New York, Alfred E. Smith, a prohibition antagonist whom the Klan vehemently opposed. This political realignment made possible the New Deal coalition that President Franklin D. Roosevelt forged during the 1930s, a coalition that helped Democrats to become the leading national party for several decades.

The New England experience during the 1920s serves as a reminder that the Ku Klux Klan's prejudice and violence did not respect state lines and were not confined to specific regions of the country. Similarly, the same forces that caused the Klan to collapse in the rest of the country led to its demise in New England. Rank-and-file Klan members in New England, as elsewhere, witnessed the hypocrisy and financial improprieties of KKK leaders and came to realize that the its law-and-order rhetoric was a facade of morality that often gave way to extralegal violence.

In short, the interactions of the Ku Klux Klan and its sympathizers with the residents of New England offer a rich, multilayered look at American society in the 1920s. In examining the conflicts between the Yankee Protestant Klan and the Catholics of French-Canadian and other ancestries, this book sheds light on religious, ethnic, and class differences that existed in the United States during the early twentieth century, differences that have shaped the

history of this nation and that resonate still in contemporary society. One of the defining characteristics of modern U. S. history can be found in the nation-state's identification of and focus on internal and external crises and enemies, such as the Great Depression of the 1930s, Fascism during the Second World War, Communism during the Cold War, and terrorism in the present day.

The central theme of this work is that, during the 1920s, many white Protestant Americans in New England joined the Ku Klux Klan to confront the "enemy" of ethnic Catholics who supplied much of the labor for the industrializing northeastern states. This book presents the most comprehensive analysis to date of the organization's antagonism toward Catholics in the United States. Chapters 1 through 10 explore how ordinary citizens acted in extreme ways to deal with a perceived internal enemy and how the Klan's Catholic targets fought back in the twenties to preserve the constitutional freedoms of their country of adoption, thus helping to rid the Northeast of right-wing extremism. Chapter 11 examines the Ku Klux Klan's return to New England more than half a century later and reveals how the metamorphosed organization pursued its primarily racist agenda by incorporating individuals and groups who had earlier been the objects of the hooded empire's fear and hatred; the chapter illustrates the mutability and the persistence of prejudice in American society over historical time. This book is a regional story of national phenomena. [The next section jumps to an excerpt from Chapter Seven.]

COUNTERATTACK BY COMMONWEALTH CATHOLICS: ELITE OPPOSITION

Opposition to the Ku Klux Klan in Massachusetts came from many different quarters, from both societies and individuals. The most significant and effective anti-Klan activities in the Bay State were the grassroots efforts undertaken by residents, many of whom were the Catholic targets of the Klan. Perhaps coming as a considerable surprise to the KKK, Catholics in over twenty communities of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts did not hesitate to use extralegal means, including violence, in their counterattack against the hooded society. Consequently, the culture wars between the Protestant Klan and its Catholic opponents erupted into numerous riots in the Bay State in the mid-1920s.

Among the societies that spoke out against the Ku Klux Klan was the Masonic order. In June 1922 Grand Master Arthur D. Prince of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge of Masons sent all of the order's state lodges a



Dudley Hays Ferrell



Arthur D. Prince

message denouncing the KKK as “an unmasonic organization.” Prince stated that the Klan’s “avowed principles violate Masonic law at every point and it would be impossible for me to conceive of a Mason who could so far forget his Masonic teachings as to affiliate with an organization which advocates taking the law into its own hands, condemning men and women in secret trials, and imposing the punishment of the whip, the tar bucket or unlawful banishment.” Prince further stated that he would not allow Masons to use the organization’s temples for KKK purposes.¹⁵

Other Masons similarly worked to oppose the Ku Klux Klan in the Bay State. In 1923 Rev. Dudley Hays Ferrell, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, condemned the Klan and asked fraternalists to keep the hooded society out of the Masonic order. As the KKK worked to recruit Masons into its organization, Frederick W. Hamilton, the supreme council deputy for the Masonic Order of Massachusetts and the head of the Scottish Rite Masons, warned in 1923 that the organization was incompatible with Klanhood. “No Scottish Rite Freemason can consistently be a Klansman,” Hamilton stated unequivocally.¹⁶

Another organization, the Executive Committee of the Massachusetts Federation of Churches, adopted a resolution in December 1922 against the KKK, a resolution it borrowed from the Federal Council of Churches of

Christ in America. “This committee records its strong conviction that the recent rise of organizations whose members are masked, oath-bound and unknown, and whose activities have the effect of arousing religious prejudice and racial antipathies is fraught with grave consequences to the church and society at large,” the resolution stated. “Any organization whose activities tend to set class against class or race against race,” it continued, “is consistent neither with ideals of the churches nor with true patriotism, however vigorous or sincere may be its profession of religion and Americanism.”¹⁷

Not only organizations but also individuals spoke out against the Ku



Rev. Henry Wilder Foote II

Klux Klan in Massachusetts. Some Protestant ministers voiced their opposition to the secret society. For example, Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, a member of the Harvard Theological School faculty, declared at a November 1922 vesper service, “Any secret organization or ‘invisible empire’ like the Ku Klux [*sic*] is a danger to the republic, since it sets in private, secret judgments above the government.” Foote expressed his concern that the KKK’s vigilantism subverted “the principle of our forefathers that we should have a ‘government of laws and not of men,’” for its practices could only result in “oppression and tyranny,” he insisted.

Other Protestant ministers from the Boston area, including Methodist Episcopal, Universalist, and Congregational churches, among others, also publicly denounced the Klan as early as 1922.¹⁸

In December of that year the *Boston Herald* editorialized against the Klan, challenging its self-appointed role as the spokesperson of white Protestants. “If it were not for the fact that, in many cases, they have actually usurped some of the functions of government, we might laugh at them or ignore them. Their pretensions are ridiculous,” the newspaper asserted. Questioning the mental stability of the Ku Klux Klan, the editor asserted, “One of the commonest forms of insanity is that of persecution. The Klanners have it in aggravated form. They think the United States is being persecuted by everybody from the Pope to [the Irish Catholic New York City] Mayor [John

F.] Hylan, and they are unable to tell the difference between themselves and the United States.” The *Herald* editor also suggested the way to deal with the Klan: “Orderly processes of law, applied with more than the customary vigor and dispatch, are the obvious remedies.” Although Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas C. O’Brien announced in October 1922 that he would prosecute members of the KKK who violated any state laws and asked citizens to notify him of any violations, Massachusetts residents, as we will see, chose instead to take the law into their own hands to meet the challenge of the KKK in the Bay State.¹⁹

In Massachusetts, as in Maine, some college presidents and state officials joined a national anti-Klan organization to try to bring about an end to the KKK. The National Vigilance Association sought to promote anti-masking legislation by state legislatures and the public filing of the membership lists of secret societies. It also advocated having the federal government assume jurisdiction over, and the prosecution of, mob action.²⁰

Opposition to the Ku Klux Klan also came from the Bay State’s political parties, which denounced the KKK at their conventions. In August 1924 the Socialist Party of Massachusetts passed a resolution condemning the society because it “raises false racial and religious issues to the end that the working class may forget its historic mission to build a new social order.”²¹

Unlike the national Democratic Party, Massachusetts Democrats at their state convention in September 1924 chose to denounce the group by name: “The Ku Klux Klan is a menace to the peace and security of the country and its free institutions. It should be driven from American public life.” Bay State Democrats went even further in their platform, criticizing Calvin Coolidge, the incumbent Republican president and former governor of Massachusetts, for his reticence in speaking out against the Klan: “We are confronted with the spectacle of the President of the United States, the leader of the Republican Party, afraid to raise his voice against a society of masked men who are striking at the constitutional guarantees of liberty and religious freedom and who will, if not checked and dispersed, prove deep disunion and disorder.” The platform lauded the Democratic presidential nominee, John W. Davis, for taking a public stand against the KKK.²²

Massachusetts Republicans were much more cautious, for the Klan’s association with the Republican Party in the northern states posed a problem for them. “The state committee took cognizance of the Ku Klux Klan issue in making up the personnel of the resolutions committee,” noted the reporter Thomas Carens, as Republicans planned their state convention. Several committee members represented groups that opposed the Klan: “Judge [R. H.] Boudreau [of Marlboro] is one of the leading Franco-



William H. Lewis

American Republicans of the state”; Joseph T. Zottoli of Boston “is a leader among the Italians”; and Matthew W. Bullock “is a prominent negro lawyer in Boston,” Carens wrote. Despite the presence of these individuals on the resolutions committee, Massachusetts Republicans only mildly and indirectly condemned the KKK at their convention in September 1924, stating in their platform merely that “we deplore any organized effort to create racial or religious prejudice.”²³

The Republican Party’s stance cost it some black voters. William H. Lewis of Boston, a former assistant attorney general of the United States, switched his party allegiance on account of the Klan issue to support Davis’s presidential bid. Lewis hoped to lead other blacks, who had largely voted with the Republican Party since the end of slavery, to back Davis. “As a colored American, I propose to vote for Mr. Davis because he is opposed to the Ku Klux Klan, the greatest menace to American democracy today,” Lewis stated.²⁴

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then, a strong anti-Klan climate existed among certain elites. But, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, state lawmakers chose not to take definitive action to proscribe the Ku Klux Klan, not even along the lines of what Massachusetts members of the National Vigilance Association were advocating throughout the country. In this political climate and social context, grassroots vigilante associations sprang up in local communities to repulse the hooded empire in the Bay State.

GRASSROOTS OPPOSITION: PROGRÈS, PROTESTATION, PUNITION (PPP)

After the KKK founded branches in Lawrence, Methuen, and Haverhill, an anti-Klan group calling itself *Les Vigilants* formed, as reported in the French-language press. The society, also known by the letters PPP for “Progrès, Protestation, Punition,” claimed to have organized four hundred members by mid-January 1923. *L’Etoile* and *Le Citoyen* indicated that they did not

know the identity of the organizers, but their coverage, along with that of *L'Impartial* and *La Tribune*, implies that many of the society's members were probably Franco-Americans from northeastern Massachusetts. Newspaper accounts in the French- and English-language press intimated that young men made up the anti-Klan group and that it recruited among Catholics, Jews, and blacks. *La Tribune* reported that Les Vigilants claimed to be protective as well as punitive in that the group planned to hinder the Klan but, if unsuccessful, would seek to avenge the acts of the hooded society.

An organizer of the group informed the *Boston Daily Advertiser* that the PPP planned to bring "to justice all persons who commit outrages against Catholics, Jews and the colored people." His rhetoric points to a level of cooperation among Franco-Americans and Jews that departed from the anti-Semitism of French-Canadian intellectuals in Québec in the 1920s. The PPP organizer further indicated that "the P.P.P. would feel justified in interfering with the Ku Klux Klan even to the extent of breaking up their meetings if possible." He stressed that the vigilante society, like the Klan, would operate under a cloak of secrecy: "Because we are fighting a secret organization we must of necessity keep our work secret." Officers also mimicked the Klan by donning robes and hoods but placed the letters "P.P.P." on their regalia. The *Imperial Night-Hawk*, a Klan newspaper published at the Imperial Palace in Atlanta, Georgia, informed its readers that "the letters stand for Progress, Protection, Punishment" and summarily dismissed one of the goals of the organization with the quip "The protection part of it presumably applies to bootleggers."²⁵

Various press reports attest to the PPP's identification of Jews, blacks, and Catholics as the intended victims of the Klan and its sympathizers in Massachusetts. In October 1922 someone threw a brick through the window of the home of Leo Simmons of Revere with a note signed "K.K.K." that read, "Jews are not wanted. Must vacate within 48 hours." When J. Levine, who operated a shoe business out of his modest home in Wakefield, planned to move to a more upscale neighborhood, he received a note in January 1923 signed "K.K.K." threatening a visit from the Klan on the very first night he stayed in his new abode. Levine naturally worried that he and his wife would lose everything they had worked for over the course of many years. When William W. Bryant, a black postal worker, moved with his wife to a home they had purchased in a white neighborhood in Arlington, they received a threatening letter in September 1924 signed "K.K.K. of New Hampshire." The letter read, "We learn you have deliberately moved into a white neighborhood," and it warned Bryant: "Unless you move away immediately more drastic measures will be taken against you."²⁶ The social and economic

gains of these above individuals apparently inspired the jealousy and threats of the KKK or its sympathizers.

Catholic institutions were also Klan targets in Massachusetts. In January 1923 a worker found a note inside of the new Immaculate Conception High School building in Malden that stated, “No Catholic high schools or colleges for this district while a Klansman lives.” Because the KKK threatened to bomb the structure, hundreds of former students began guarding the building during the evenings. In the same month Rev. James T. O’Reilly, the pastor of St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Lawrence, received—as did some of his parishioners—a letter signed by the KKK stating that the hooded society planned to destroy their church and other parish buildings. Also in January 1923, Rev. James Donnelly, the pastor of St. Bernard’s Church in Fitchburg, received a letter from the KKK that it planned to blow up his church with dynamite.

Given this menacing climate, the KKK was suspected of causing the fire that destroyed the Catholic school of St. Anthony Parish in Shirley in 1923. In November 1924 a young boy witnessed two people dressed in Klan robes setting fire to St. Gregory’s Roman Catholic Church in Dorchester. Charles H. Smith, a member of the Knights of Columbus and the manager of the Smithsonian Bureau of Investigation, a Boston detective agency, contacted the premier of Québec, Louis A. Taschereau, to alert him of the similarities between the church fires in the Boston area and those that had taken place in Québec. Smith subsequently received a chilling letter signed “K.K.K.” and stating, “We are dead wise to your game, furnishing dope to the Canadian government about the church fires. We will shove your body through the murder machine. Beware of the fifth day after this—Leave town.”²⁷

The PPP formed in reaction to this hostile climate. As an anti-Klan organization, the PPP wanted to be proactive in northeastern Massachusetts, and its actions resembled those of the KKK. When the PPP suspected the Klan of holding a meeting on property owned by the Deaconess Fresh Air Home in Haverhill, fifteen PPP members dressed in their robes surrounded the building in January 1923 and threatened to burn it down. The PPP also drew the letters *KKK* on the home. The *Boston Daily Advertiser* reported that “Haverhill citizens deplore the acts both of the Ku Klux Klan and the P.P.P.,” yet it acknowledged “Meanwhile the Ku Klux Klan is growing rapidly.”²⁸ No other articles about the PPP were found. If the society continued its anti-Klan activities, it did so under a much lower profile, without regalia and without crediting itself for its tactics.

VIOLENT RESISTANCE, MAY-JULY 1924

Despite the possible disappearance of the PPP, anti-Klan sentiment continued to run deeply in the greater Franco-American community of Haverhill. In a column from September 1923 published in English, likely for the benefit of the KKK and its supporters, *Le Citoyen* issued Klan members a warning: "They may be able to thrive in the South where colored folks are afraid of the whites, but in this section of the country they are going to have casualties." In August residents of the Belvedere district of Lowell had been awakened before midnight by the sound of a cannon, only to be confronted by both a twenty-foot cross burning atop Fort Hill Park, visible for miles, and by the firing of a second cannon. *L'Etoile* reported that this incident marked the first visible sign of the Klan's presence in Lowell. *Le Citoyen* promised repercussions for the Lowell men who joined the Klan: "If you are in business and value it keep your face out of the K.K.K., for you are going to be shown up in the end." *Le Citoyen* concluded its English-language editorial by threatening members of the Ku Klux Klan with violence: "These fanatics, if they try to pull their stuff in this territory, should first arrange with the undertaker for a decent burial, for, believe us, they are going to get all that's coming to them."²⁹

The editor's prediction came true the following year. In 1924 the Ku Klux Klan met violence in the northeastern and central Massachusetts communities of Bolton, Berlin, Byfield, Salisbury, Wilmington, Haverhill, Lancaster, Spencer, Millbury, and Worcester. After selectmen in Berlin, fearing disorder, refused to allow the KKK to meet at the city hall in May, one hundred Klan members turned out for a meeting in Bolton and were met there by four hundred Klan opponents. Anti-Klan members hurled rocks at their adversaries, but there were no reported injuries. When two hundred Klan members met in a field near Berlin in July, young men hiding behind trees and stone walls attacked them as they departed. Indulging in a little Bay State humor, the *Boston Daily Advertiser* joked, "The Klansmen emulated the British in their famous retreat from Lexington, as their autos dashed back along the road they had come, amid a bombardment of rocks."³⁰

When nearly one thousand Klansmen and Klanswomen met on the fenced ball field of Byfield in July, one hundred young men armed with bats and other clubs demanded access to the meeting. Klan members called the state police for protection and received it; the KKK had a permit to use the ball field, officers informed the Klan's opponents and told them they would break the law if they forced their way into the meeting. Tensions dissipated when Klan opponents withdrew, and the meeting resumed. At its conclusion

the KKK burned a thirty-foot cross to symbolize the purifying of American politics, a national goal of the organization, as a Klan leader informed the *Boston Herald*.³¹

Five hundred Klan members also met in July in the field of Harry E. French in Salisbury and burned a forty-foot cross. As they left the site, two hundred youths from Amesbury threw stones at their vehicles. Police did not report any injuries.³²

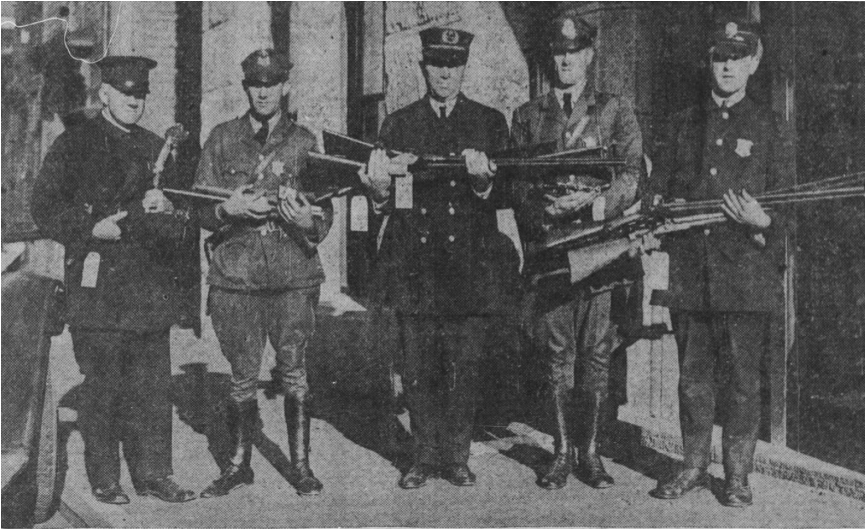
While fifteen hundred Klan members gathered on the farm of Dr. Bradford Powell in Wilmington in July, hundreds of anti-Klan sympathizers prepared to ambush them. After the Klan had burned a twenty-foot cross and were starting to leave the farm, bird calls went out, and Klan opponents emerged to hurl stones, clubs, and other objects at the departing vehicles, breaking windows and denting cars. Glass, nails, and tacks strewn onto the roadway punctured tires as well. The Klan members at the meeting covered their license plates to prevent onlookers from determining their identity. There was no indication that they fought their attackers; instead, they drove off as quickly as they could to escape harm and possibly to escape identification.³³

ANTI-KLAN RESISTANCE: HAVERHILL AND LANCASTER

The small clashes that took place in Massachusetts between the Klan and its opponents from May to July 1924 appeared to give anti-Klan forces both experience and confidence. This led to more violent confrontations in the Bay State from late July through October, resulting in more serious consequences, including some casualties.

In late July 1924 an estimated three thousand to five thousand Klan members assembled on a farm in Groveland but did not burn a cross, at the request of police, who undoubtedly anticipated trouble. When the Klan finished its meeting around midnight, sweepers had to clear the road of nails and glass that anti-Klan forces had placed there to puncture the tires of Klan vehicles. State police, with the assistance of police from nearby municipalities, escorted the Klan from their meeting. One member of the KKK drove each of the one thousand vehicles while other Klansmen, “all armed with rifles, revolvers, shot guns, black-jacks and pieces of iron pipe,” walked alongside the automobiles, noted the *Boston Herald*. “Large numbers of the Klan group were apparently former service men, wearing army uniforms,” reported the *Biddeford Daily Journal*.

The Klan members moved peacefully through Groveland, but when they crossed the Merrimac River into Haverhill four hundred to five hundred people attacked them with rocks and other projectiles at White’s Corner.



"Police With Guns Taken Following Battle Over Klan at Haverhill"

Boston Globe, July 31, 1924

These opposition forces, armed with baseball bats, revolvers, and rifles, had also come from Boston, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, and Newburyport. The Klansmen fought their attackers, and three to five anti-Klan members (newspaper accounts vary on the actual number) suffered gunshot wounds. Twenty-four men, Klan and anti-Klan members alike, were arrested by state and Haverhill police during the riot. Among the anti-Klan sympathizers arrested were Francis Cotter and Edmund Lucy, both of whom suffered gunshot wounds, along with James Connolly and Eugene Lemiere, the latter from Haverhill.³⁴

Le Courier de Lawrence remarked with evident pride that a Franco-American officer of the law, Olivier Leblanc of Haverhill, had single-handedly arrested eleven rioters. In an attempt to mock the negativity commonly directed toward such hyphenated Americans as Leblanc during the 1920s, *Le Courier de Lawrence* pointed out that "Leblanc appartient à la race dégénérée des franco-américains" (Leblanc belongs to the degenerate race of Franco-Americans). At the court hearing State Trooper Leblanc testified that Klan vehicles had been traveling single file when a car with individuals hostile to the KKK pulled up alongside the procession and exchanged gunshots; the Klan fired the first shots, Leblanc pointed out, and he stopped both vehicles.³⁵

Judge John J. Winn of the central district court in Haverhill criticized both the society and its antagonists for taking the law into their own hands.

He fined eight Klansmen who had been riding in vehicles where weapons were found for disturbing the peace, and he sentenced another Klan member, who had been found in possession of a lead pipe, to thirty days in jail. Winn dismissed the charges against two teenage members of the society from Worcester, and he ordered the remaining arrestees to stand trial. Several weeks later Judge Daniel J. Cavan found eight Klan and five anti-Klan members guilty of disturbing the peace, and he sentenced each to thirty days in jail.³⁶ Through such prosecutions and convictions, Massachusetts authorities sent a message aimed at deterring vigilante groups from organizing either on behalf of or against the Ku Klux Klan.

Following the Haverhill riot, newspapers in the Bay State commented on the influence of southern and midwestern Klan members in New England. The *Boston Daily Advertiser* noted, for instance, that the fifty-six-year-old William Y. C. Humes, “a Southerner” from Miami, Florida, had ridden in the Klan vehicle that had reportedly fired gunshots after the Klan meeting in Groveland. Humes had been in Massachusetts during the summer to promote Florida real estate investments, and the newspaper pointed out that he was not a person of high moral character, for he had previously been arrested for the murder of a young man who had given “undue attention” to his twenty-four-year-old wife. When 500 Klan members met in Oxford and 150 met in Lunenburg in August *L’Opinion Publique* observed that a number of Klan autos had license plates from Ohio and Texas, something the newspaper interpreted to mean that the local branches lacked sufficient organization and needed to rely on outside speakers.³⁷ These brief accounts, like those discussed earlier, provide some insight into the presence of Klan members from the South and Midwest in Haverhill and other Massachusetts communities, but the full extent of their involvement in New England is not known.

Haverhill was not the only site of violence between Klan and anti-Klan groups in Massachusetts in the summer of 1924. In May the KKK had held meetings on farms and fields in Lancaster and Spencer, located in Worcester County. In late July clashes between the two forces in these locales left over fifty people hurt, with five of them seriously injured as the result of fractures of the back and skull and bullet wounds to the head, chest, arms, and legs. At least one of the wounded was a police officer. In Lancaster alone five hundred men and boys confronted two hundred Klan members with sticks and stones and held them under siege for nine hours until police were able to escort them away from their meeting place.³⁸

The number of individuals involved in the confrontation in Spencer went unreported but police intervention there prevented a riot. “Des noms

français parmi les adversaires du Klan” (some French names among the Klan’s opponents), noted *L’Etoile* in its description of the event. Arrested for throwing stones at Klan vehicles as they departed from their meeting on the Wilson farm in Spencer and thereby causing an estimated fifteen thousand dollars in damage were the Spencer residents Léo Gagnon, John Daoust, Julius Durnowski, Charles McGrail, William J. Sullivan, and John Demetre. Each received a three-month jail sentence at the Worcester House of Corrections.³⁹

Several individuals involved in the Lancaster clash were also arrested. Charles A. Schumacher Jr., who owned the land where the riot took place, admitted firing his gun into the air to dispel the rioters, and police charged him with disturbing the peace. Arrested on the same charge for throwing stones were Louis Draleaux, David Salvatore, and Constantino Sommi.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the available evidence sheds little light on the men who constituted the opposition to the Ku Klux Klan in Massachusetts. But the last names of the arrested opponents in Lancaster and Spencer suggest that Franco-American, Irish, Italian, and other ethnic Catholics joined forces to combat the Klan in their communities. The variety of ethnic surnames also suggests that the Irish were not the Klan’s primary opponents (or targets) in the Bay State.

Following these encounters, *L’Etoile* observed that the Klan members who had been carrying firearms at Haverhill and Lancaster had had permits to do so. The newspaper said that the state representative Roland D. Sawyer, a Democrat from Ware, complained that many civic authorities who were authorized to grant gun permits were either Klan members or individuals sympathetic to the society, and he announced plans to introduce legislation to restrict the issuance of permits. Sawyer’s bill, as amended, stipulated that licensees keep detailed records of the firearms they leased and sold and of the individuals who acquired them; it also required licensees to share their records with licensing authorities as well as the commissioner of public safety and police. Approved in April 1925, the legislation called for prison sentences for those who carried without permit such dangerous weapons as “a pistol or revolver, loaded or unloaded” and “any stiletto, dagger, dirk knife, slung shot [*sic*], metallic knuckles or sawed[-]off shotgun.”⁴¹

ANTI-KLAN RESISTANCE: WORCESTER AND ELSEWHERE

After the Lancaster and Haverhill riots, the state police cut short or postponed the department’s vacations so that all officers could be called to duty and at least fifty could react within an hour’s time to disturbances in any part of

Massachusetts. In addition, Commissioner of Public Safety Alfred F. Foote issued orders on August 1 requiring state police to disarm all Klan members attending meetings along with those who were watching the gatherings. "I have pointed out that we cannot forbid the Ku Klux Klan from lawful assemblages, under the Constitution," Foote stated, "but we can and will prevent any and all assemblages of men bearing arms." The individuals with permits would be able to retrieve their firearms the following day, and those without permits would face arrest. "These instructions apply equally to klansmen and anti-klansmen," Foote announced. "I want it understood from one end of this state to the other, that Massachusetts will not tolerate armed warfare between any factions whatsoever," he emphasized.⁴²

When some thirteen hundred Ku Klux Klan members gathered at a farm in Shrewsbury on August 1, state and local police searched all vehicles within one mile of the meeting site and confiscated the weapons they found.⁴³ The final take included five loaded revolvers, eleven clubs, one lead pipe, and an unspecified number of rifles, shotguns, slingshots, blackjacks, and rocks. The police arrested two Klansmen, one of whom had a rubber hose filled with zinc filings in his car and another who had two clubs in his. Police averted a riot by keeping anti-Klan sympathizers, estimated at half the number of Klan members, some distance away from the highway so the KKK could leave the premises without being attacked.⁴⁴

In September seventy-five Klan opponents showered over seven hundred Klan members with rocks as they met in the field of Arthur Mystrom in Millbury. Only after the police arrived and Klan foes took off did members of the hooded society leave the site. There were no known injuries.⁴⁵

Such hostilities did not deter the Ku Klux Klan from gathering about the state. In October an estimated fifteen thousand Klansmen and Klanswomen from throughout New England assembled at the New England exposition grounds in Worcester, where they initiated up to twenty-six hundred candidates into Klanhood. The hooded society thrilled its members with an air show. The hired pilot flew a Curtiss biplane over the crowd that was painted with the letters "K.K.K." on its underside and the words "100 per cent American" on its topside. When the plane descended suddenly and disappeared, a Klan spokesperson purportedly announced that the aircraft had been "forced down by a rifle bullet which punctured the fusilage [*sic*] and crippled the engine." This announcement must have created high drama at the fairgrounds and stirred up sentiment against the Klan's opponents. Called to the scene, the police discovered a bullet hole in the plane's hood. But the pilot claimed the hole had been made prior to the event and that a

clogged fuel line had instead caused the engine to fail that day, so the police chose not to investigate further. The plane was quickly repaired and flew again over Worcester that evening. Decorated with red lights in the shape of a cross, the plane created a brilliant show, delighting the assembled Klan members.⁴⁶

Anti-Klan violence surfaced only after the Klonvocation ended. When Ku Klux Klan members left the fairgrounds, “a hostile mob numbering several thousand” attacked them and their vehicles. While some young men threw stones as the vehicles passed through Worcester, others jumped onto the running boards and assaulted the occupants. A number of automobiles sustained damage, and individuals reported injuries. Two Klan members were arrested for possession of revolvers, but the district court subsequently dismissed the charges against them. Arrested for throwing stones, Michael Burke, a sixteen-year-old Worcester anti-Klan member, had to appear before the juvenile court, for the district court judge chose not to dismiss the charges against him.⁴⁷

All throughout 1924 Klan members in Massachusetts faced intimidation, if not violence. In October over three hundred Klan opponents surrounded the Methodist Church in Upton, where the KKK was holding a meeting, and remained there until the police dispersed them. Some of these foes of the group then chased a couple of Klan vehicles through Upton and threw stones at one of them. When the KKK rented the Southboro Town Hall for a meeting in December 1924, anti-Klan demonstrators filled the hallways outside of the room to prevent KKK members from entering it.⁴⁸

Even people not ostensibly associated with the KKK might mistakenly be singled out for assault. In late October 1924 nearly half a dozen bands preceded Republicans, who were dressed in blue and red uniforms, as they marched through the streets of Clinton in a torchlight parade. The party stalwarts were demonstrating in favor of the Coolidge-Dawes ticket in that year’s presidential campaign. A burning cross on a hill appeared to signal the start of the parade, and anti-Klan forces emerged to throw rocks and rotten fruit and vegetables at the marchers. While the Republicans may have suffered indignities, none suffered injuries.⁴⁹

As the above events suggest, the Klonvocation on the New England exposition grounds represented the last major event of the Ku Klux Klan in Massachusetts in 1924. The gathering also represented the last public appearance of the organization in Worcester in the 1920s. After the Klonvocation’s violent conclusion, the Worcester Klan virtually disappeared as a force to be reckoned with. This fact, in addition to the Klan’s inability to establish a foothold in Boston, as revealed in the last chapter, demonstrate

that its strength in the Bay State did not lie in urban areas. Instead, the Massachusetts Klan found its strongest support primarily in rural areas of the state, as was true throughout much of New England.

HJM

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Notes

1. Editor's Note: Since the 1990s, many scholars have reinterpreted the 1920s Klan. Rather than the violent, racist extremists of popular lore, Klansmen appear in these works as far more mainstream figures. They shared a restrictive American identity with most native-born white Protestants after World War I. Klansmen were active in both local and state-level politics, pursued fraternal fellowship, community activism, local reforms, and paid close attention to public education, law enforcement (especially Prohibition), and moral/sexual orthodoxy. For some of the latest works (of which there are many), see, for example, Thomas R. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American: The Rebirth and Decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), Felix Harcourt, *Ku Klux Culture: America and the Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017) and Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (NY: Liveright Publishing, 2017).

2. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, The Ku Klux Klan Hearings, 67th Cong., 1st sess., 1921, in *Mass Violence in America* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1969), 3-4, 12 October 1921, 74; "Peter Francis Tague," *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774–Present*, n.d., bioguide.congress.gov; *Washington Post*, 2 November 1930, 14. The *Washington Post's* figures, which seem extraordinary, "came from an authoritative source," claimed the newspaper, which also indicated that the Klan had admitted nearly nine million members nationwide by 1925. Because national Ku Klux Klan records do not exist, membership figures necessarily represent estimates. Based on accounts in national newspapers and Klan reports, Kenneth Jackson has made the following personal estimates of the number of Klansmen and Klanswomen in New England for the period from 1915 to 1944: Vermont, two thousand; New Hampshire, two thousand; Rhode Island, five thousand; Massachusetts, twelve thousand; Maine, fifteen thousand;

and Connecticut, twenty thousand. Given that Jackson's number of two million members nationwide is considerably less than the estimates of other scholars—such as Leonard Moore's, who has placed the society's strength at between three and six million members during the 1920s—Jackson's figures for individual New England states may similarly be low. *Washington Post*, 2 November 1930, 1; Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915–1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 235, 237, 288n; Leonard J. Moore, *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921–1928* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 1, 44; Robert Moats Miller, "The Ku Klux Klan," in *Change and Continuity in Twentieth-Century America: The 1920's*, ed. John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1968), 255.

3. François Weil, *Les Franco-Américains, 1860–1980* (Paris: Belin, 1989), 26; James S. Olson, *Catholic Immigrants in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1987), 101; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (1955; repr., New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 35–105, 264–99; Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City*, 21.

4. Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 267–68, 289.

5. Moore, *Citizen Klansmen*, xii, 1, 2–3, 118, 188–90.

6. *New York Times*, 6 December 1922, 4, 23 December 1922, 1, 2; Constance Backhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900–1950* (Toronto: Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History by University of Toronto Press, 1999), 186; Julian Sher, *White Hoods: Canada's Ku Klux Klan* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1983), 23–25, 30, 40, 48, 51; Martin Robin, *Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascist Politics in Canada, 1920–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 11, 24, 25, 50, 54, 59; B. J. Grant, *When Rum Was King: The Story of the Prohibition Era in New Brunswick* (Fredericton, N.B.: Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 1984), 43–45; James M. Pitsula, *Keeping Canada British: The Ku Klux Klan in 1920s Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 11, 19, 243–44, 249; R. S. Pennefather, "A Roman Catholic View of the Orange Order in the 1920's," in *The Orange and the Black: Documents in the History of the Orange Order, Ontario and the West, 1890–1940* (Toronto: Orange and Black Publications, 1984), 42–43; J. B. McGeachy, "Immigration Issue in Western Canada," *New York Times*, 2 June 1929, sec. 3, 2.

7. R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), xiii, 70. A history of U.S. Catholics that excludes French-Canadian immigrants and their Franco-American descendants is James M. O'Toole's *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008.)

8. For overviews of the Klan, see David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*, 3rd ed. (1981; repr., Durham, N.C.: Duke University

Press, 1987); Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (1987; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); and David J. Goldberg, “The Rapid Rise and the Swift Decline of the Ku Klux Klan,” *Discontented America: The United States in the 1920s* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 117-39. C. Stewart Doty’s history of discrimination against Franco-Americans contains a brief account of the Klan’s activities in New England. See “How Many Frenchmen Does It Take to . . . ?” *Thought and Action* 11 (Fall 1995): 85-104.

9. Rory McVeigh, *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-Wing Movements and National Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 10-11, 13-17. McVeigh’s examination of the eighty issues of the *Imperial Night-Hawk* published in 1923 and 1924 found that only thirteen Klan events took place in Massachusetts, twelve in Maine, ten in Connecticut, two in New Hampshire, two in Rhode Island, and one in Vermont. McVeigh, *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan*, 10-12, 17. The national Ku Klux Klan published the *Imperial Night-Hawk from its Imperial Palace* in Atlanta, from March 1923 to November 1924; it was followed by *Kourier Magazine* from December 1924 to February 1932, and then by *Kourier* from March 1932 to November 1936.

10. *Washington Post*, 2 November 1930, 14; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 2:39-40; Edward Bonner Whitney, “The Ku Klux Klan in Maine, 1922–1928: A Study with Particular Emphasis on the City of Portland” (honors thesis, Harvard College, 1966), ii. Although the term Northeast can also apply to the mid-Atlantic states of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, that designation in this book will refer specifically to the six New England states.

11. See, for example, the works by the former Klan members Henry P. Fry and Edgar I. Fuller: Fry, *The Modern Ku Klux Klan* (1922; repr., New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), and Fuller, *The Visible of the Invisible Empire*, revised and edited by Geo. La Dura (Denver, Colo.: Maelstrom Publishing, 1925.) The traditional view is also espoused by such scholars as Emerson Hunsberger Loucks, *The Ku Klux Klan in Pennsylvania: A Study in Nativism* (New York: Telegraph Press, 1936); Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Rabb, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790–1970* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); David H. Bennett, *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); and William D. Jenkins, *Steel Valley Klan: The Ku Klux Klan in Ohio’s Mahoning Valley* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1990.) For a review of the historiography on the 1920s Klan, see Leonard J. Moore, “Historical Interpretations of the 1920’s Klan: The Traditional View and the Populist Revision,” *Journal of Social History* 24 (Winter 1990): 341-57.

12. Moore, “Historical Interpretations of the 1920’s Klan,” 342. See, for example, Robert Alan Goldberg, *Hooded Empire: The Ku Klux Klan in Colorado* (Urbana:

University of Illinois Press, 1981); Moore, *Citizen Klansmen*; Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Shawn Lay, *Hooded Knights on the Niagara: The Ku Klux Klan in Buffalo, New York* (New York: New York University Press, 1995); see also the individual essays on the KKK in Texas, Colorado, California, and Oregon in *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical Appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s*, ed. Shawn Lay (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992). A more recent study that downplays Klan violence—and negative portrayals of the Ku Klux Klan—and focuses on how members of the hooded society formed part of the prevailing culture during the early twentieth century can be found in Kelly J. Baker, *Gospel according to the Klan: The KKK's Appeal to Protestant America, 1915–1930* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011). Two studies that do not follow the path of the above-cited monographs in their normative depictions of the 1920s Klan are those of Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), and Yvonne Brown, “Tolerance and Bigotry in Southwest Louisiana: The Ku Klux Klan, 1921–23,” *Louisiana History* 47 (Spring 2006): 153–68. The most recent general history of the Ku Klux Klan in the twenties is Thomas R. Pegram’s *One Hundred Percent American: The Rebirth and Decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), which synthesizes the research of the past several decades and situates the KKK in the mainstream while also illustrating how the hooded society’s extremism positioned it outside of mainstream culture.

13. *Portland (Maine) Press Herald*, 13 October 1923, 20, 1 January 1924, 24, 15 February 1924, 1, 11 March 1924, 11; *Portland (Maine) Evening Express*, 1 January 1924, B3; *Maine Klansman*, 10 January 1924, 2, 20 March 1924, 1; Harold B. Clifford, *Charlie York: Maine Coast Fisherman* (Camden, Maine: International Marine Publishing, 1974), 100–101; *The Ku Klux Klan Hearings*, 13 October 1921, 90.

14. Charles C. Alexander, *The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), 249; Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 202; Goldberg, *Hooded Empire*, 78–83.

15. *Boston Herald*, 16 June 1922, 24.

16. *Boston Sunday Advertiser*, 21 January 1923, 2; *Boston Herald*, 24 January 1923, 1, 6; *Portland (Maine) Press Herald*, 24 January 1923, 2; Hamilton, 22 January 1923, cited in *Sanford (Maine) Tribune and Advocate*, 22 May 1924, 1.

17. *Boston Herald*, 16 December 1922, 18.

18. *Boston Herald*, 27 November 1922, 1, 29 November 1922, 1, 7; *Republic* (Boston), 2 December 1922, 1.

19. *Boston Herald*, 5 December 1922, 18, 21 October 1922, 4; E. M. McNulty, “John Francis Hylan,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967),

7:284.

20. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 12 November 1923, 4. Among the Massachusetts members of the National Vigilance Association were the president of Williams College, H. A. Garfield, the president of Wellesley College, Ellen F. Pendleton, and the speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, B. Loring Young. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 12 November 1923, 4.

21. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 18 August 1924, 6.

22. *New York Times*, 21 September 1924, 25.

23. Thomas Carens, "Convention Has Klan Problem: Make-up of State G.O.P. Platform Committee Points to Action," *Boston Herald*, 12 September 1924, 8; *New York Times*, 21 September 1924, 25.

24. Melvyn Stokes, *D. W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation: A History of "The Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 146; Biddeford (Maine) Daily Journal, 8 September 1924, 5.

25. *La Tribune* (Woonsocket, R.I.), 17 January 1923, 1; *L'Etoile* (Lowell, Mass.), 16 January 1923, 1; *L'Impartial* (Nashua, N.H.), 18 January 1923; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 16 January 1923, 3, 17 January 1923, 2, 18 January 1923, 13; *Le Citoyen* (Haverhill, Mass.), 18 January 1923, 1; Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, *Action Française: French Canadian Nationalism in the Twenties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 76-79; *Imperial Night-Hawk* (Atlanta, Ga.), 4 April 1923, 8.

26. *Boston Herald*, 21 October 1922, 4, 25 September 1924, 10; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 24 January 1923, 2; *L'Etoile*, 25 September 1924, 1.

27. *Boston Sunday Advertiser*, 7 January 1923, 3, 14 January 1923, 2; *L'Avenir National* (Manchester, N.H.), 6 January 1923, 8, 24 November 1924, 1; William Wolkovich-Valkavicius, "The Ku Klux Klan in the Nashoba Valley," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 18 (Winter 1990): 71-72; Charles H. Smith, Manager, Smithsonian Bureau of Investigation, Boston, to William Cardinal O'Connell, Boston, 10 January 1923, Ku Klux Klan file, Archdiocese of Boston Archives, Brighton, Massachusetts; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 19 January 1923, 2, 3.

28. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 24 January 1923, 4.

29. *Le Citoyen*, 7 September 1923; *L'Etoile*, 15 August 1923, 1, 5.

30. *L'Opinion Publique* (Worcester, Mass.), 15 May 1924, 1; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 14 July 1924, 2.

31. *Boston Herald*, 21 July 1924, 1.

32. *L'Etoile*, 25 July 1924, 1, 6; *L'Opinion Publique*, 26 July 1924, 5; *Le Citoyen*, 1 August 1924, 1.

33. *Boston Sunday Herald*, 27 July 1924, 1, 4.

34. *New York Times*, 31 July 1924, 1; *Boston Herald*, 31 July 1924, 1, 1 August 1924, 1; *L'Etoile*, 31 July 1924, 1, 3; *Biddeford Daily Journal*, 31 July 1924, 1; *L'Opinion Publique*, 31 July 1924, 6; *Boston Sunday Herald*, 3 August 1924, 8.

35. *Le Courier de Lawrence* (Mass.), 8 August 1924, 4; *L'Etoile*, 1 August 1924, 6; *Boston Herald*, 1 August 1924, 1.
36. *Boston Herald*, 1 August 1924, 1; *New York Times*, 1 August 1924, 13, 19 August 1924, 36; *L'Etoile*, 1 August 1924, 6.
37. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 4 October 1924, 8; *L'Opinion Publique*, 6 August 1924, 1.
38. *L'Opinion Publique*, 24 May 1924, 1, 30 July 1924, 1; *Boston Herald*, 30 July 1924, 1, 31 July 1924, 2; *New York Times*, 30 July 1924, 1, 31 July 1924, 1; *L'Etoile*, 31 July 1924, 1.
39. *Washington Post*, 30 July 1924, 1; *L'Etoile*, 31 July 1924, 1, 4; *L'Opinion Publique*, 30 July 1924, 4, 31 July 1924, 1; *Boston Globe*, 30 July 1924, 7.
40. *New York Times*, 2 August 1924, 10; *Boston Herald*, 2 August 1924, 2; *Portland Press Herald*, 2 August 1924, 2.
41. *L'Etoile*, 1 August 1924, 1, 6; Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *A Manual for the Use of the General Court for 1923-1924* (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1923), 478; Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Journal of the Senate for the Year 1925* (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1925), 45, 817; Chapter 284, *Acts and Resolves Passed by the General Court of Massachusetts in the Year 1925* (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1925), 323-25.
42. *New York Times*, 2 August 1924, 10; *Boston Herald*, 2 August 1924, 2; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 2 August 1924, 19.
43. *Boston Herald*, 2 August 1924, 1; *Biddeford Daily Journal*, 2 August 1924, 1; *New York Times*, 2 August 1924, 10. It is unclear why the French-language press reported far fewer numbers, with *L'Etoile* (2 August 1924, 1) indicating that there were 100 Klan members and *L'Opinion Publique* (2 August 1924, 1) about 350.
44. *Boston Herald*, 2 August 1924, 1; *New York Times*, 2 August 1924, 10; *Biddeford Daily Journal*, 2 August 1924, 1.
45. *L'Opinion Publique*, 20 September 1924, 1; *L'Impartial*, 23 September 1924, 1.
46. *L'Opinion Publique*, 18 October 1924, 1; *Boston Sunday Herald*, 19 October 1924, 1, 10; *New York Times*, 19 October 1924, 1; *Boston Herald*, 20 October 1924, 1; *Worcester (Mass.) Sunday Telegram*, 19 October 1924, 1A, 11B; *Worcester (Mass.) Evening Post*, 21 October 1924, 1; "Klan Plane Crippled by Shot From Crowd," *Richmond-Times Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.), 19 October 1924, 1.
47. *New York Times*, 19 October 1924, 1, 20 October 1924, 18; *Boston Sunday Herald*, 19 October 1924, 1; *L'Etoile*, 20 October 1924, 1; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 20 October 1924, 2; *Biddeford Daily Journal*, 20 October 1924, 2.
48. *L'Opinion Publique*, 11 October 1924, 2; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 19 December 1924, 6.
49. *L'Opinion Publique*, 29 October 1924, 1, 30 October 1924, 1.