

Documents: 1A) The Ku Klux Klan on Long Island

Helpful Vocabulary

Ku Klux Klan - A whites-only organization that started in the South after the Civil War. It used violence to prevent African Americans from receiving equal rights. It also opposed political rights for Catholics, Jews, and immigrants. A Kleagle was a high ranking official in the Klan.

Hooded and White-Robed Representatives Hold Meeting in Freeport Speakers Attack Jews In Part Of The Meeting To Which Reporters Were Admitted Newspaper Men Told To "Write What You Like" But To Be "Fair To Us"

Nassau Daily Review, September 9, 1922

Freeport residents were startled last night by the appearance on Railroad Avenue of several members of the Ku Klux Klan entering Mechanics Hall, robed in the regalia of the order. About 150 prospective members met at Mechanics Hall and seven delegates of the Klan were in charge.

Crowd Sees Klan Give Gold Purse and Flag, Nassau Daily Review, January 12, 1925

East Rockaway -- More than 300 people crowded into the little Church of the Nazarene last night, to watch the presentation of a silk American flag and a purse of gold to the church by the men and women of the Ku Klux Klan of Lynbrook. About forty members of the order in full regalia but without masks marched into the church and took places in the front pews. The Rev. Paul Hill received the gift and thanked the Klan for its generosity.

K.K.K. Gives Church Flags and Purse, Nassau Daily Review, March 9, 1925

Hempstead-- Led by Paul Linder of Malverne, of the Ku Klux Klan in Nassau County, 189 members of the Klan, including 85 women members, marched in the First Baptist Church at the Sunday evening service, and presented two flags and a purse of gold to Pastor Rundle. There was a big crowd of people on hand, which filled the church to overflowing. After the congregation had sung a hymn, the martial strains of "Onward, Christian Soldiers" were struck up on the organ, and the file of Klansmen began, down the center aisle, led by the cross of the Klan and flags. The members of the Klan wore hoods and robes, but were not masked. Pastor Rundle expressed the appreciation of his congregation and himself. The Kleagle then gave a stirring address, telling of the ideals of the Ku Klux Klan and denying that the Klan is against any religion or class. He said that the Klan has as much right to exist as various other orders.

Long Island Klan Initiates 1,000 at Holiday Fete, N.Y. Herald Tribune, July 5, 1927

Lindenhurst -- More than 10,000 members of the Ku Klux Klan of Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties, who had been prevented by the New York police from marching in parades, celebrated the Fourth of July in a ten acre field east of this town. More than 1,000 persons, about 400 hundred of them children, were received into the order. During the evening there were patriotic speeches, fireworks and the burning of a forty-foot cross.

Klan Celebration Scares Residents of Valley Stream,

Nassau Daily Review, February 23, 1928

Three flaming crosses in three different sections of Valley Stream lighted up the sky at midnight yesterday to bring out the entire fire department of the village in a general alarm. Each cross was set in the woods around the village, one near the South drive, another in the eastern section near Cochran place, and the third in the woods to the west of the village. The police believe the crosses were a part of the celebration of Washington's birthday by members of the Ku Klux Klan.

Questions

- 1- How did the Ku Klux Klan win support from some Long Island churches?
- 2- In your opinion, why did Klan members burn crosses and parade in "full regalia"?
- 3- According to Klan leaders, they had the same rights as any other group. Do you agree or disagree? Why?