

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

SPECIAL EDITION

A STORY OF TWO BROTHERS

If you wanted to visit the grave of Henry Clay, the great American statesman and orator we read about in our American history textbooks, you would need to go to a cemetery in Lexington, Kentucky. There you would find a great monument 130 feet tall with his form on top looking down on the city that honored him, both while he lived and after his death. Thousands of people visit his grave annually. The monument was completed in 1861 at a cost of \$58, 000.

To visit the grave of Henry Clay's brother, Porter Clay, you would need to go to Camden, Arkansas. You will find his grave in the old Oakland Cemetery on the north side of Maul Road. For many years, his grave was marked by a small stone and most folks did not even know who this Porter Clay was.

From articles printed in an early Camden newspaper, *The Beacon*, we learn more about the Clay family and the two different roads these Clay brothers traveled.

The two boys grew up in Virginia under the pious care of a Baptist mother and a preacher father who once was imprisoned rather than cease proclaiming "the glorius gospel of the Blessed God".

Porter was many years younger than his brother Henry. While Henry entered the world of politics, Porter followed the desires of his mother and became a minister and revivalist. Henry became famous for his oratorical skills and became a well-to-do statesman. Porter died in poverty.

Porter did study law and was admitted to the bar. The Governor of Kentucky, a friend of the Clays, appointed Porter as Auditor of the Accounts for the state. By this time Henry Clay had served two terms in the U. S. Senate and had been Speaker of the House of Representatives for four years. He now lived in Kentucky on his estate which he called Ashland. He even ran for president three times. He is known for making the statement, "I'd rather be right than President". Everyone predicted that young Porter would follow in the footsteps of his brilliant brother.

Porter served at Auditor of the state of Kentucky for several years. During this time his first wife died and he was remarried to the widow of U. S. Senator M. D. Hardin. Mrs. Hardin was a woman of great wealth and burning ambition. She desired her husband to take his place with the great men of that day.

Mrs. Hardin was the mother of two sons at the time of her marriage to Porter Clay. As these boys grew up, they developed wild and unruly traits of character. They had open contempt for their stepfather and his simple life. The mother and sons gradually came to treat Porter as an outcast. The situation became unbearable for Porter and he left the elegant lifestyle and devoted his life to preaching. He spent his time preaching to the

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poor people and sometimes spent the night in their humble homes. At one point, a dispute arose over some doctrinal questions and Porter was suspended as a minister. He then became an evangelist and traveled all along the Mississippi River, preaching in small towns to both whites and blacks. His travels brought him to Camden in the 1840s. After holding a revival, he started a church in the city and became its first minister.

His wife's sons barred him from ever returning to the family home in Illinois. His brother, Henry offered him a home at Ashland, which he declined, saying "I owe my service to God and He will take care of me."

He expected to live the remainder of his life ministering to the people of the little city on the banks of the Ouachita. He felt he had reached the goal of his mission. But in 1850, two years before the death of his famous brother, Henry, Porter Clay was stricken with a fever and died a few days later. Some of Camden's businessmen of that day paid for all expenses of Porter's illness and death. The money was later returned to them by Henry Clay, his distinguished brother.

Porter Clay's grave was unmarked for years, but a small board was placed upon it by members of the Baptist church. Finally, the New Century Club of Camden placed a small marker over his grave sometime around 1900. Today the grave is marked by a very nice monument which stands taller than most in the cemetery, placed there in 1939 (*see photo below*).

The last statement in the old newspaper article states "His body rests in the cemetery at Camden. His spirit rests with his God."

WHEN THE MOVIE STARS CAME TO GOOSEANKLE

It was during deer season in 1974 when the W. B. Irvin family met with friends and relatives for a get-together at the old home place and deer camp five miles southwest of Bluff City.

On the same day, David Carradine and Barbara Hershey were at Dill's Mill, about two miles south of the Irvin's camp. They had been filming scenes for the movie "Boxcar Bertha" at the old mill site and may have been doing some hunting also. The story I got was that some of their dogs got lost and as they were searching for them, they happened upon the location of the Irvin family's get-together.

This part of Gooseankle is way off the beaten path, but off course in deer season, it is not unusual to see strangers pass by. At some point in the conversation, Miss Hershey asked to use the bathroom in one of the Irvin's recreational vehicles parked at the camp.

Miss Hershey was an attractive lady, but from what I can gather, on this occasion she was a little bit on the dirty side and the owners of the camper didn't really want her to use the bathroom in their camper. The Irvins pointed to an outdoor privy behind the camp, which was what they used while camping. Miss Hershey, unaccustomed to such

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facilities, declined the invitation to use the privy and I suppose made other arrangements. The Irvins still laugh about the incident whenever it is mentioned.

According to the newspaper article these folks were present at the Irvin family reunion that day in 1974:

Mr. and Mrs. Hollie Irvin; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Irvin; Mr. and Mrs. Houston Delaney; Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Robinson; Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Walthall; Mr. and Mrs. Hartwell Irvin; Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Kirk; Judy Hesterly, Shelly, and Paul; Mr. and Mrs. Martin Robinson; Junior Burns; Lou Morgan; Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Garrison; Jeff Barlow; Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Franklin; Eldry Johnson; Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Delaney; Mr. and Mrs. Russell Atkins; Craig Robertson; Robert A. Jackson; Warren Ward; Roy Nash; Glen Spears; Kenneth W. Spears; Jerald Tyson; James Tyson, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. Coy East; Paul Steed; John Beard; Dr. John E. Steiles; Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Helsel; Mr. and Mrs. James Nelson; Foy and Scotty Nelson; J. D. Norman; James Plumbley; DAVID CARRADINE and BARBARA HERSHEY from Hollywood, California.

THE HANGING OF SQUIRE SMITH

The newspaper in 1905 called it “one of the most dastardly crimes which ever shocked the people of this section”. The article was referring to the murder of John and Count Gleghorn of Nevada County. They were well-to-do farmers who were working clearing land on their farm west of Rosston near the Hempstead County line. A black man named Will Preston was working with them. A black man named Squire Smith came to the farm and an argument began over a hunting dog. The incident ended with the two Gleghorn men dead. John Gleghorn was about 32 years old and had a wife and one child. Count Gleghorn was 31 and unmarried. Squire Smith escaped into the creek bottoms and a posse led by Sheriff Ed Hood began searching for him. The next day Squire Smith turned himself in. He was indicted for murder in January. The trial was held March 19, 1906 and he was sentenced to be hanged on June 14, 1906. Will Preston was also arrested in connection with the murders.

This was the last legal hanging in Nevada County. Hangings in those days always drew a large crowd of people and seemed more like a church service and a carnival all rolled into one. The accused was given an opportunity to speak to the crowd, religious hymns were sung, and a prayer was offered by a local minister.

Squire Smith spoke to the crowd for 25 minutes. He described how he slept the night before, saying “I rested all night last night and ate as heartily as I ever did.” He didn’t deny killing the men, but said he had to do it. Smith said, “I shot Mr. Count first, and when I left, Mr. John was still alive and I had four more loads in my gun”. He praised Sheriff Hood, saying he had been well cared for and had plenty to eat three times a day. He said, “I have no excuse to make for my pistol except for toating it, and if I had not toated it, I would not be here today to make this talk and to be hung.”

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Here is the complete text of the prayer by Dr. Godley offered on the day of the hanging and printed in *The Nevada News* on June 15, 1906.

Lord, Thou art our Creator and the final judge of all men. All men are alike before Thee, save as Thou seeist in their hearts and they shall be followers of that which is good and that which is evil. There is neither great nor small in Thy sight. Thou lookest on the heart alone.

As fallen beings, all men are sinful. No one can claim Thy salvation in his own merit. Many times and in many ways we forget Thy laws and transgress them.

But through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer is preached repentance and forgiveness of sins. Thou doest forgive sin wherever Thine eyes behold true repentance and faith in Thy beloved Son. The only star of hope for our fellow race is Thy forgiveness and mercy.

We commend to Thy mercy this man, doomed to die under our law, which is indeed, Thine own law, ordained of old that the murderer should suffer the death sentence of the judge.

If we know that even the murderers were changed in heart and would love and keep the law, we might turn aside from the penalty of death. But we know not the heart, and the high prerogative of forgiveness belongs to Thee, O God alone. If any man is penitent, have mercy: Thou wilt forgive.

We pray Thee, O God that the solemnity of this occasion may impress all those here present with reverence for the laws of the land, which it behooves every citizen to obey and uphold. Help us also to encourage and support all faithful officers of law who receive those charges from people to administer the laws, with all fidelity and in fear of God.

Above all, O God, help us to give heed to Thy truth of which alone can make us peaceable, which can write Thy laws in the hearts of men, that they might not be borne away by sinful passions, that hatred and revenge being cast out of the heart, man will not lift a murderous hand against his neighbor.

In the execution of the law, this Sheriff fulfilled his duty to the state. Not in malice, nor revenge, is this man's life taken, but that the lives of all men might be protected. Thou thyself, O God, has declared "Whosoever sheddest man's blood, by man's blood shall his blood be shed. I will require it at the hands of his brother". Therefore, we deliver this man to the cause of justice, which Thou has ordained on the earth, and commend his soul to Thine infinite mercy, through Jesus Christ.

Amen

Here is the news story of the hanging from The Nevada News (June 15, 1906): The Negro, Squire Smith who was hung here yesterday for the murder of the Gleghorn boys last fall, was removed from the jail to the old jail, in which the trap was built, at 6 o'clock in the morning. He showed no sign of fear and walked with a very staitly gait. He sat for a photo at 9 o'clock and showed little concern as if he was having a picture made for his sweetheart.

Precisely at nine o'clock, he was moved to the platform erected for that purpose and walked with an elastic step and talked to the multitude for 25 minutes. His manner all through the speech was brazen and impudent. He did not talk as a man about to be hung, but as one that seemed glad of what he had done.

After his harrangue, he was carried by Sheriff Hood and his deputies to the rear end of the old jail, where he ascended a flight of stairs as though he were going to an ice

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cream supper. The rope was adjusted around his neck and he shot through space to his eternal death without a word of fear or regret that he was going. His neck was broken and after ten minutes, he was cut down and turned over to his family.

Will Preston, who was also in jail and awaiting trial for the murders, escaped before time for his trial and was never seen again. Squire Smith, in his speech, said that Will Preston was innocent and he admitted to killing both of the Gleghorn brothers.

John and Count Gleghorn are buried in unmarked graves at Forest Hill Cemetery in Nevada County. Their brother, Thomas Levi Gleghorn, used a team of horses to drag a huge boulder to their graves for a headstone. They are buried in Row 10 at Forest Hill Cemetery.

YOU

By Edgar A. Guest
(from the Camden Evening News-1925)

You are the fellow that has to decide
Whether you'll do it or toss it aside.
You are the fellow who makes up your mind,
Whether you'll lead or will linger behind-
Whether you'll try for the goal that's afar
Or be contented to stay where you are.
Take it or leave it. Here's something to do!
Just think it over. It's all up to you.

What do you wish? To be known as a shirk,
Known as a good man who's willing to work,
Scorned for a loafer or praised by your chief,
Rich man or poor man or beggar or thief?
Eager or earnest or dull through the day,
Honest or crooked? It's you who must say!
You must decide in the face of the test,
Whether you'll shirk it or give it your best.

Nobody here will compel you to rise;
No one will force you to open your eyes;
No one will answer for you yes or no,
Whether to stay there or whether to go.
Life is a game, but it's you who must say
Whether as cheat or sportsman you'll play.
Fate may betray you, but you settle first
Whether to live to your best or to your worst.

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So whatever it is you are wanting to be,
Remember, to fashion the choice you are free.
Kindly or selfish, or gentle or strong,
Keeping the right way or taking the wrong.
Careless of honor or guarding your pride,
All these are questions which you must decide.
Yours the selection, whichever you do;
The thing men call character's all up to you.

RATES OF BOARD AMERICAN HOTEL--CAMDEN, AR., DEC. 27, 1847

Board and Lodging per month	\$15.00	Breakfast	\$.35
Board without Lodging per month	12.00	Supper	.35
Dinner boarders per month	8.00	Lodging	.25
Board per week with Lodging	5.00	Horse, per month	10.00
Board per day with Lodging	1.00	Horse, per day	.75
Board per day for Man and Horse	1.75	Horse, single feed	.35
Dinner	.50	Children and servants half price-	
		Lights extra	

ANY BOY'S DOG from The Camden Evening News -March 13, 1923

He's black and he's brown, and he's no breed at all
But he comes at my whistle, he leaps to my call
He's clumsy, ungainly, and huge as to size,
But his gentle dog-heart shines from out of his eyes.

He's useless for hunting, for tricks and the like,
But finest of pals, when we're out on a hike.
He runs far ahead in mad, rollicking play,
Then waits till I join him there perky and gay.

When I'm sad and unhappy, he snuggles my hand,
And he does all he can to say, "I understand".
And oft when we sit where the fire-shadows fall,
I forget he's a mongrel of no breed at all.

For his heart which is big as the rest of his size,
Is bursting with love, and shines out from his eyes.
And pal of my hikes, with his nose moist and cold,
I'd not trade my dog for his weight in pure gold.

--Edmund Leamy

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WHAT ANATOMY IS (found in the Camden Evening News-March 14, 1923)

A little Negro school girl down in Florida in answer to this question, wrote the following:

Anatomy is a human body. It is divided into three parts--the head, the chest, and the stummick. The head holds the skull and the brains if they is any, the chest holds the liver and the lites, and the stummick holds the entrails and the vowels, which are a, e, i, o, and u and sometimes w and y.

THE HISTORIC WATTS HOME



Note: *This is the home featured in the background of the website you visit to read **The Sandyland Chroncile**.*

The historic Watts home was located at Delta, an old community a few miles south of Willisville in Nevada County. The information from this article is from old newspapers on microfilm printed about 1900. Many of you will remember Watt's Department Store in Camden. This is the same Watts family whose ancestors owned this beautiful home. The cemetery mentioned has some of the oldest marked graves in Nevada County.

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The Watts home at Delta in Nevada County was one of the most beautiful places in south Arkansas. The home was built in 1858, and represented an outlay of thousands of dollars, and for many years it stood as a testimonial of the civic pride of the owner, Mr. Thomas J. Watts. He was a native of Georgia, a man of stern integrity, energy, decision of purpose, and strong domestic affection. Such men as he were those who won the respect and esteem of all who felt an interest in the up-building of this section of the country.

His wife, formerly Miss Elizabeth Godbold, was a woman of the finest character, loyal and true in every relation of life.

They came from Lowndes County, Alabama and lived first in a log house near the spot where the new house was afterwards built. The family consisted of three sons, John C., Monroe, and Thos. J. Watts, Jr. and three little daughters, Rachel, Mary, and May. The three daughters all died quite young. The new house was built by the most skilled workers to be found. The window frames, doors, etc. were made by hand. Some of the same men had just finished building the Graham house in Camden. Among them was Mr. Sifford. The plastering was done by B. Titcomb, who was an expert in that line. Among the painters as a man named Crowan, who was undoubtedly a genius, for he afterwards went to Italy and studied art, returning in later years with many fine specimens of his work, which unfortunately were lost.

Mrs. Lizzie Watts is the owner of a beautiful fire screen painted by him. The grounds surrounding this beautiful house formed an appropriate setting the picture. Hedges of box, carefully clipped, long rows of crape myrtles, and ??? altheas, with their wreath of bloom during the summer and fall, hydrangeas and oleanders in large tubs, and an immense white climbing rose which outgrew its frame, and stretched out long fragrant sprays as if in welcome to the fortunate guests who made up the house parties of the old days. All these combined to form an ideal picture of Southern home-life before the war.

A grove of fine old trees furnished shade when the children romped and played.

Another little daughter was added to the family, Miss Lizzie Watts, the only one of the children born in the home. When she was quite an infant, her father died. Mrs. Watts was devoted heart and soul to the Southern Confederacy. She frequently entertained soldiers for days at a time. Generals Magruder and Price was among her guests, also Gen. Churchill and family and Dr. C. M. Taylor of Little Rock. After the Battle of Poison Springs, wounded Confederate soldiers were brought to her house in wagons, and the entire lower floor, including the parlors and even Mrs. Watt's bedroom was converted into a temporary hospital.

Confederate soldiers were brought to her house in wagons and the entire lower floor, including the parlors and even Mrs. Watt's bedroom, was converted into a temporary hospital. All the Negro women on the plantation were put to work washing the clothing of the men and preparing broth and other food for them. After the war, the family continued to reside here, extending a charming hospitality to all their neighbors and

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friends. Large parties were frequently entertained for a week. The Watts Bros. had a large store near the house, to which the farmers for miles around brought their produce for barter.

Mr. John C. Watts married Mrs. Nannie Morris and Mr. Monroe P. Watts married Miss Minnie Lee of Camden, and on each occasion the young couples were entertained at the Watts home. Mrs. Watts died on April 18, 1886 and was laid to rest in the family cemetery, wherein are buried the remains of all their loved ones. They still use this cemetery and when the neighbors see the steady tread of a slowly moving procession coming up the road, they know another member of this fine old family has crossed the Delta of the River of Death toward the Gulf of Eternity.

After the death of Mrs. Watts, the family removed to Camden, and shortly afterwards, Mr. Thomas J. Watts was married to Miss Mary Helen Watts of Mt. Holly. The old home was sold to Mr. Geo. W. Hambrice. About two years ago the house was burned and no trace is now left of it, save the memories of those who once dwelt under its hospitable roof. Camden is proud to claim as citizens Messrs. M. P. and T. J. Watts and their interesting families, and Miss Lizzie is one of the most efficient and beloved members of the H. L. Grinstead chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

ALEX BRAGG, A DEVOTED SERVANT

Alex Bragg, one of the faithful and devoted body servants of the war period of Camden's history has been called to his reward. He died at his home January 7th of pneumonia. He was born in 1845 on the Bragg plantation four miles west of Camden, where he has continuously resided all his life, except during the time he was in attendance upon "Marse Anthon" during the closing months of the great conflict. His full name was Alexander Hamilton George Washington Bragg. His parents, George and Millie, were brought to Arkansas from South Carolina by the Bragg family, and Millie, being a house servant, heard much talk of the founders of our great republic, so she conceived the idea of naming her son for two of the most distinguished men.

Alex's long life was preeminently one of devoted service to the Bragg family. In youth he was the comrade and playfellow of the older sons, cheerfully taking upon himself every burden and counting it his highest joy and privilege to share in their camp hunts and fishing expeditions. During the four years of the war he was the guardian and protector of Mrs. Bragg and her daughters. No knight of the olden time was ever more faithful than he; no Samurai was ever more loyal to his Emperor. When Mr. Anthon V. Bragg at the age of sixteen enlisted in the Confederate army, then, and not until then, was Alex ever tempted to desert his post as guardian of the family. But he thought that "Marse Anthon" needed him most and he went unhesitatingly and rendered many and varied services to his young master in camp and field. At the close of the conflict, when all the other Negroes were gladly welcoming freedom and seeking other homes, he quietly settled down at the old home and took up the work of farming and cattle raising which enabled him to live comfortably, while his services were at all times invaluable to the Bragg family. So closely did he identify himself with them that upon one occasion when

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someone remarked that his hair was gray, he said, "Yes, all the Bragg boys turn gray early." He was always eager to uphold the family honor and to rejoice in their good fortune, and in times of sorrow when the Angel of Death invaded the home, faithful old Alex was sure to be on hand, to weep with them, and to render any service possible.

The greatest grief of his life was in the sudden death of his beloved "Marse Anthon", and from that day to the end of his life he seemed to feel that his mission was to "take care of Miss Virginia". Nobly did he maintain his trust. And right joyously may we, in spirit, follow him across the dark river where he will rejoin those whom he loved and served, and will enter into the reward given to all who do their duty faithfully in this life. His last illness was short and at times he was delirious. A most pathetic feature was the fact of his talking to "Marse Anthon" as if they were on a hunt together. Everything possible was done for his comfort, and he responded gratefully to the voice of "Miss Virginia" when she spoke to him, but his life's work was done and it was his time to go. Sleep sweetly, faithful one, in your humble grave on the hillside, near the old home which you have guarded for so many years. May your awakening be in the Sunshine Land with a welcome from those you love, and a plaudit of "Well done, good and faithful servant" from the Master.

ACTIVITIES OF THE KU KLUX KLAN IN PRESCOTT

We have all seen stories about this organization in the news even in recent times. Most of the information we get about them is not too favorable. I have only seen members of the KKK in real life on one occasion. That was about 25 years ago in Texarkana. A large group of them dressed in full Klan attire (white robes and hoods) was demonstrating at a shopping center. The demonstration attracted a lot of attention from shoppers and motorists.

The Ku Klux Klan was formed in Pulaski, Tennessee in 1865 just after the Civil War. They disagreed with the reconstruction government set up after the war and didn't like the idea of northern carpetbaggers coming into the South trying to run things. They would sometimes try to intimidate certain politicians to force them to leave their jobs. They would ride through neighborhoods at night, terrorizing innocent people and leaving behind a burning cross. Their agenda was one with which many people agreed, but the methods they used soon gave them a bad name and the Klan was feared by certain groups of people. The member's identity was kept secret because they would wear white hoods to hide their faces.

The Klan had almost disappeared by the late 1800's, but in 1915 it was revived with new leaders and by the 1920's it had about three million members. It was popular all over the South even in small towns and farming communities. Even today, a large group of Klan members are headquartered in northern Arkansas near Harrison.

The first appearance of the Ku Klux Klan in Prescott was in the fall of 1922. Robed in garb of the order, ten white-robed klansmen entered the Methodist Church and took their places in front of the chancel. They gave Rev. Roebuck an envelope containing a small

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printed slip of paper which gave ~ condensed version of information about the KKK and a letter which the preacher read to the congregation. Two new \$20 dollar bills were attached to the letter. The preacher assured the visitors of the appreciation of the gift and his hearty approval of the principles for which the Klan stood.

A portion of the letter is as follows: "the KKK stands for the two greatest gifts that Heaven has bestowed, namely the Holy Bible for our guide and practices and the American flag handed down by our forefathers who fought and died to keep it clean and spotless... We are here today to uphold the Holy Bible and its sacred writings, and to make America a better America for true and real Americans to live in. The KKK stands for all pure and right and is squarely against everything that is wrong". At the conclusion of the reading of the letter, the white-robed visitors silently withdrew from the church and the service proceeded in normal fashion. (The Nevada News- 11-2-1922)

I think the catch-phrase in their letter was "true and real Americans". Those groups the Klan didn't agree with were not considered to be true and real Americans.

In September, 1922 several Prescott citizens witnessed the first open air meeting of the KKK. From about eight to twelve o'clock at night, people driving down the Rosston Rd. could see huge fiery crosses burning in an open space in a thicket in the direction of the high school building and could see a large crowd of white-robed guards patrolling in a large circle around the multitude of klansmen. No outsider got close enough to be able to tell who composed the assembly. The number of automobiles which carried the men to the meeting was estimated to be from 44-55 and the crowd was estimated to be between 200 and 400. It was evident an initiation was being conducted and a banquet was held with several speeches being made, but none was close enough to hear or recognize the members.

A Negro boy who accidentally passed too close to the white-robed figures estimated the crowd at a million and said that the members were ten feet tall. (The Nevada News-9-14-1922)

In another article, it is recorded that the KKK had captured a whiskey still and put it on display early one morning on the streets of Prescott. Attached to the still was a message-- "Wildcatters and bootleggers had better take heed. We are after you."- The Ku Klux Klan. The words Ku Klux Klan were written in red.

The KKK also visited the Christian Church in Prescott. During a normal Sunday service, the doors opened and hooded Knights marched down the aisle and formed a line before the preacher. They handed the preacher a note and some money. They carried the Holy Bible and an American flag.

The minister, Mr. Hall, was at a loss for words as he received the strange guests. He is not sure he even thanked them for the \$50 dollar donation. There were 18-20 men in robes but they seemed like a thousand. (The Nevada News- 12-7-1922)

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I can only imagine what it would be like to be sitting in a worship service under these circumstances. Can you imagine how children would react to someone coming into church dressed in robes and hoods? The robes might not be all that unusual for some groups, but the hoods would be a bit unusual. If they had telephones back then, I'm sure the phone lines were buzzing as folks called their friends to tell what happened at church that day? Would our reaction today to such an incident be any different?