

LONG ISLAND SEES BIGGEST KLAN CROWD

25,000 Said to Be in Assembly
That Initiates 1,400 Near
East Islip.

USE BIBLE, ALTAR AND FLAG

Flaming Cross Illuminates All-
Night Proceedings—Band
Plays Patriotic Airs.

Special to The New York Times.

EAST ISLIP, L. I., Friday, June 22.—
In an open field about nine miles north
of this village, the Ku Klux Klan late
last night and early this morning held
the largest meeting it has ever staged
in New York State.

Accepting the Klansmen's own esti-
mate of the number in the mass that
blackened acres of farmland, 25,000 ad-
herents of the order were assembled.
Reporters who surveyed the throng with
eyes somewhat more accustomed to ap-
praising numbers thought there were a
few thousand fewer than the number
the Klansmen boasted. At all events, the
crowd was many times that which on
May 26 last assembled at Eastport, L. I.,
for a similar ceremony, which was then
the biggest of its kind the masked men
had achieved within the State's confines.

Although manifestly held in the open
as a dramatic gesture of strength, the
avowed purpose of the meeting was to
administer the now famous Klan oath
to a large class to be taken into the
order. Before the meeting began, it
was officially announced that 2,000 men
would become members of the robed
and hooded fraternity before morning
Information which filtered beyond the
confines of the assemblage early this
morning, however, put the number ac-
tually initiated at 1,400 to 1,500.

No Attempt at Interference.

In view of the doubtful effectiveness of
the law adopted by the last Legislature,
compelling secret orders to divulge their
membership, and the move by the Klan
a few days ago to incorporate, the au-
thorities gave no heed to the meeting
and made neither attempts to stop it
nor efforts to learn the identity of those
participating. On the other hand, some
of those in the convocation, displaying
a bold disregard for secrecy that has
not characterized other Klan meetings
on Long Island, readily disclosed their
identities to reporters when they were
asked.

The scene of the ceremonies was a
forty-two-acre tract four miles north of
Central Islip on the west side of Carl-
ton Avenue. Early last night the much
heralded assemblage began to gather,
the Klansmen filtering a few at a time
through the fringe of curious who left
their homes early to hurry to the scene
and witness as much as the guards who
picketed the outskirts would permit. By
dark the fields began to blossom with
white figures, roads from every direc-
tion became gradually congested with
automobiles, while horse-drawn vehicles
brought others, and a steady line set in
afoot.

An invitation to newspaper men to be
present, instructed reporters who wished
to attend to get off Long Island Rail-
road trains at the Bayshore Station and
ask for "Mr. John Johnson." A group
of reporters who arrived shortly before
the meeting was scheduled to begin
found two young men in a small auto-
mobile waiting at the station. The re-
porters asked for the mysterious Mr.
Johnson, and the man in the automobile
said they would be conducted to him.
At the same time they were warned that
once they had penetrated the lines they
would not be allowed to leave until the
ceremony was completed.

By the time the reporters had set out
with their guides it had become dark
and the headlights of the thickly ar-

Continued on Page Ten.

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Continued from Page 1, Column 2.

iving cars threw sporadic spotlights on a weird picture. As the white robed, hooded figures poured onto the field, they were marshaled into a statuesque hollow square, ghostly, even though now and then lifelike eyes glimmered through slits in the masks that hid every face. In the centre stood a tall flagpole, a great American flag waving from its peak, its colors gleaming in the rays of a searchlight. A spreading cross picked out in red electric lights was nailed to the pole, just beneath the flag.

At the base of the pole stood an altar, draped with another American flag. It, too, stood out in relief as a searchlight played steadily on it. Its sole ornament was a Bible opened at the twelfth chapter of Romans, which the neophytes later were instructed to read, because it set forth the principles they should follow.

A band of twenty-five pieces, brought down from New York, was on hand near the altar. As the Klansmen began to filter off the roads and assemble near the altar it began to blare patriotic airs, including "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

Towering over the heads of the throng

that fenced in the altar was a rude wooden cross, reaching fifty feet into the air. As the initiation ceremonies started this was set ablaze, and soon it was flaming and crackling in chorus to the droning intonation of the ritual.

The ceremonies were conducted by the Kleagles of Suffolk, Nassau and Queens Counties under the general supervision of the King Kleagle of the State, who later told reporters that he was Major Johnson, U. S. A., retired.

A district Kleagle mounted the platform and introduced "a prominent minister of Long Island," who spoke for thirty-five minutes defending the Klan and attacking as among its enemies the Roman Catholic Church and the Jews. He declared that he was not a member of the Klan, but was there with them, because "our country is in increasing danger." The Catholic Church, he said, was a political party in disguise and the Jews, he declared, were here merely for the money they could get and for political influence.

Then the Kleagle called the new members before him in a semi-circle and read to them the tenets of the Klan. Following that he asked them a series of ten questions on their fitness to become members of the organization. During the questioning Klan members circulated among the initiates to see that all answered each question put to them.

The last rite was the administering of the oath, which was done with all kneeling, their left hands over their hearts and their right hands raised in the air. The band again played "The Star-Spangled Banner," and another minister was introduced who pronounced the benediction.

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