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# Guide to the Clifford N. Taylor Papers

WA MSS S-1321



by Tina Evans

December 1990

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New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** WA MSS S-1321

**CREATOR:** Taylor, Clifford N.

**TITLE:** Clifford N. Taylor papers

**DATES:** 1920-1924

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of Clifford Taylor's business records and printed material. The business records document the Ku Klux Klan in North Dakota and the American Crusaders and printed material contains publications by the Klan.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.taylor>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.taylor>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 1982.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

## Conditions Governing Use

The Clifford N. Taylor Papers are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Clifford N. Taylor Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Scope and Contents

The Clifford N. Taylor Papers consist of one box of correspondence, printed material, and reports relating to Clifford N. Taylor, a Ku Klux Klan "Kleagle" in Devils Lake, North Dakota. The material dates between the years 1920 through 1924, with the majority of the papers spanning the months June through September 1924.

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were initially formed in 1867 in Pulaski, Tennessee, but had fallen into decline by the early twentieth century. In 1915, however, the Klan was revitalized and reorganized. The states were divided into nine domains headed by nine Grand Goblines. Each state was headed by a King Kleagle overseeing a corps of local Kleagles. The King Kleagle and the local Kleagles answered to an Imperial Kleagle, who also acted as Chief Treasurer. The local Kleagles functioned as salesman, selling Klan memberships for \$10.00. The local Kleagle kept \$4.00, sending \$6.00 to the King Kleagle. The King Kleagle kept \$1.00, sending \$5.00 to the Grand Goblin and so forth, with \$2.00 ultimately being deposited in the Imperial Treasury. Each local Kleagle was responsible for a weekly report, sent to the Imperial Kleagle, stating the number of prospective initiates canvassed, the amount of money collected, the towns canvassed that week, and the towns which would be canvassed the following week. The Kleagles also acted as public relations men, explaining the Klan's purpose and doctrines at invitational meetings.

Clifford N. Taylor served as a local Kleagle in Benson, Pierce, and Ramsey counties, North Dakota, during the latter part of 1924. The papers are comprised of two sections: Taylor's business records, arranged by subject, and printed material arranged by title.

The correspondence, arranged chronologically, begins in September 1924 and is mainly between Taylor and "G1 North and South Dakota." (This was probably E. C. Harris, the Imperial Representative in Aberdeen, South Dakota.) The letters, mostly carbons, contain official news and mandates addressed to "All Fieldmen." There are also handwritten copies of letters written by Taylor to the Imperial Representative, asking advice on the recruitment of potential members and questions concerning the reporting procedure. Of particular interest is the discussion concerning the creation of the American Crusaders, a branch of the Ku Klux Klan which admitted foreign-born Protestants. Taylor acted as an "Organizational Representative" for the branch of American Crusaders in Benson, Pierce, and Ramsey counties.

Other subjects of correspondence include the possible formation of a women's branch of the Ku Klux Klan, criticism of the fieldmen for failure to submit weekly reports to the state and national offices, the selection of delegates for an October 26, 1924, Konvention in Aberdeen, South Dakota, expenses, the proper care and marking of Klan robes (including cloth samples), and suggestions for ways to set up meetings for potential members. There are also letters on the official Klan letterhead from the Imperial Wizard, H. W. Evans, concerning the appointment of a Committee on Constitution and Laws, the misconduct of Klansmen, and the promotion of a high ranking national Klan official.

Eight folders contain weekly reports submitted by Taylor to the Imperial Kleagle for Benson, Pierce, and Ramsey counties for the period September through November 1924. The Kleagle's Weekly Petition Report contained statistics on the number of petitioners who had joined the Klan and paid their initial membership fee. The Organizers Weekly Report contained similar statistics for the American Crusaders. Taylor did not

have a great deal of success recruiting new Klan members during this period. The Part Payment Weekly Reports appear to record expenditures. Report Guides for Ramsey County contain information on potential members.

Other material in the Business Records section includes an application and questionnaire for the American Crusaders, bills and receipts, cards belonging to Taylor, a memorandum book containing accounts and lists of names, notes for an unsuccessful invitational meeting held on October 17, 1924, in Devils Lake, North Dakota, and an official Klan announcement concerning the position of the Klan in politics.

The Printed Material section consists of Ku Klux Klan pamphlets and flyers. "Americans take Heed!" (1920) was originally published in McClure's Magazine as an editorial. "Christian Citizenship" reminds Klansmen of the political convictions of the Klan. "Facts for Patriotic Americans" and "Making American Catholic" contain "facts" about the Catholic Church in the United States. A proclamation, dated 1924, extends an invitation to Klansmen in South Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska to a Tri-State Konklave and parade to be held in Iowa. Of particular interest is a pamphlet describing the electric cross favored by Ku Klux Klan for use in ceremonies and meetings.

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## Collection Contents

### Business Records

|              |  |               |
|--------------|--|---------------|
| b. 1, f. 1   | Application for citizenship in the American Krusaders  | n.d.          |
| b. 1, f. 2-8 | Correspondence   | 1924          |
| b. 1, f. 9   | Bills and receipts   | 1924 Sep-Nov  |
| b. 1, f. 10  | Cards  | 1924, n.d.    |
| b. 1, f. 11  | "(Closing)": typescript, original  | [1924] Sep 21 |
| b. 1, f. 12  | Invitational meeting: notes  | 1924 Oct 17   |
| b. 1, f. 13  | Lists of names   | n.d.          |
| b. 1, f. 14  | Memorandum book  | 1924 Aug-Nov  |
| b. 1, f. 15  | Note   | 1924 Dec 4    |
| b. 1, f. 16  | Official News and Instructions to be Read in the Klaverns of the Realm: typescript, original | n.d.          |
| b. 1, f. 17  | Questionnaire: American Krusaders  | n.d.          |

**Weekly reports**

## Kleagle's weekly petition reports

|             |                             |              |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| b. 1, f. 18 | Benson County, North Dakota | 1924 Nov     |
| b. 1, f. 19 | Pierce County, North Dakota | 1924 Nov     |
| b. 1, f. 20 | Ramsey County, North Dakota | 1924 Sep-Nov |

## Organizer's weekly petition reports

|             |                             |          |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| b. 1, f. 21 | Benson County, North Dakota | 1924 Nov |
| b. 1, f. 22 | Ramsey County, North Dakota | 1924 Nov |

## Part payment weekly report

|             |  |             |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 23 | Benson County, North Dakota                | 1924 Nov    |
| b. 1, f. 24 | Pierce County, North Dakota                | 1924 Nov    |
| b. 1, f. 25 | Ramsey County, North Dakota                | 1924 Nov    |
| b. 1, f. 26 | Report guides: Ramsey County, North Dakota | 1924 Oct 18 |

**Printed material**

|             |  |             |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 27 | "Americans, take Heed!": pamphlet                                      | 1920        |
| b. 1, f. 28 | "Christian Citizenship": pamphlet                                      | n.d.        |
| b. 1, f. 29 | "Facts for Patriotic Americans": pamphlet                              | n.d.        |
| b. 1, f. 30 | "Genuine K. K. K. Flour": clipping                                     | n.d.        |
| b. 1, f. 31 | "Making America Catholic...": pamphlet                                 | 1923 Jul    |
| b. 1, f. 32 | "The Old Rugged Cross": pamphlet                                       | n.d.        |
| b. 1, f. 33 | "Proclamation. Realm of Iowa. A Monster Tri State Konklave and Parade" | 1924 Oct 11 |



## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Race discrimination -- North Dakota  
Race discrimination -- South Dakota  
Secret societies -- North Dakota  
Secret societies -- South Dakota

### **Geographic Names**

Benson County (N.D.) -- History  
North Dakota -- Race relations  
Pierce County (N.D.) -- History  
Ramsey County (N.D.) -- History  
South Dakota -- Race relations

### **Names**

Evans, H. W. (Hiram Wesley)  
Haynes, E. C.  
Taylor, Clifford N.

### **Corporate Bodies**

American Crusaders  
Catholic Church -- Social conditions -- North  
Dakota  
Ku Klux Klan (1915- ) -- North Dakota