Guide to the Citizens of Macon County (Ala.) Ku Klux Klan Letter
MSS.0303

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit
December 17, 2012
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
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## Summary Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repository</th>
<th>W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>Ku Klux Klan 1915-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Citizens of Macon County (Ala.) Ku Klux Klan letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent</td>
<td>0.05 Linear feet (1 item)</td>
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<td>Language</td>
<td>English</td>
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</table>
| Abstract                   | A letter dated July 1870 and signed by "Citizens of Macon County K. K.
K.", threatening W. B. Bowen of Macon County, Alabama |

### Preferred Citation note

Citizens of Macon County (Ala.) Ku Klux Klan letter, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.
Biographical/Historical note

Ku Klux Klan, often abbreviated KKK and informally known as the Klan, is the name of three distinct past and present far-right organizations in the United States, which have advocated extremist reactionary currents such as white supremacy, white nationalism, and anti-immigration, historically expressed through terrorism. Since the mid-20th century, the KKK has also been anti-communist. The current manifestation is splintered into several chapters with no connections between each other; it is classified as a hate group by the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center. It is estimated to have between 3,000 and 5,000 members as of 2012. The first Klan flourished in the Southern United States in the late 1860s, then died out by the early 1870s. Members adopted white costumes: robes, masks, and conical hats, designed to be outlandish and terrifying, and to hide their identities. The second KKK flourished nationwide in the early and mid 1920s, and adopted the same costumes and code words as the first Klan, while introducing cross burnings. The third KKK emerged after World War II and was associated with opposing the Civil Rights Movement and progress among minorities.

The first Klan was founded in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee, by six veterans of the Confederate Army. The name is probably from the Greek word kuklos which means circle, suggesting a circle or band of brothers. Although there was no organizational structure above the local level, similar groups arose across the South adopted the same name and methods. Klan groups spread throughout the South as an insurgent movement during the Reconstruction era in the United States. As a secret vigilante group, the Klan targeted freedmen and their allies; it sought to restore white supremacy by threats and violence, including murder, against black and white Republicans. In 1870 and 1871, the federal government passed the Force Acts, which were used to prosecute Klan crimes. Prosecution of Klan crimes and enforcement of the Force Acts suppressed Klan activity. In 1874 and later, however, newly organized and openly active paramilitary organizations, such as the White League and the Red Shirts, started a fresh round of violence aimed at suppressing blacks' voting and running Republicans out of office. These contributed to segregationist white Democrats regaining political power in all the Southern states by 1877.


Scope and Contents note

The collection contains a letter dated July 1870, signed by "Citizens of Macon County K. K. K." threatening W. B. Bowen of Macon County, Alabama.
Administrative Information

Publication Information
W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama April 2009

Revision Description
December 2012

Conditions Governing Access note
None

Conditions Governing Use note
None

Provenance
unknown

Processed by
unknown; updated by R. Rumstay, 2008; updated by Martha Bace, 2012

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- Letters (correspondence)

Geographic Name(s)

- Macon County (Ala.)
Subject(s)

- Alabama
- Ku Klux Klan (19th cent.)--History
- Organizations
## Collection Inventory

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<td>2960</td>
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