Klan marches into Marshall

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But the writer of the *Morning News* article pointed out, "that there were some local men in the ranks is certain as from time to time some of the marchers would hail a bystander by calling him by name."

Those few remarks were among the only ones made as the Klansmen walked otherwise silently in a single file, the newspapers reported.

"There were very, very few colored people who witnessed the march," the *Morning News* writer remarked, perhaps stating the obvious.

A few members of the local Klan No. 168 had made one small appearance a few days earlier by somberly delivering a cross of flowers to the funeral of Marshall's Robert Henry, who had been killed in a railroad accident in Handley. The show of respect — done in full Klan regalia — made most Marshall citizens believe Henry was a member of the Klan.

The only other mention of the Klan in a Marshall newspaper before 1922 was on April 2, 1921. *The Marshall Messenger* wrote a story under the headline, "Ku Klux Klan is unable to organize here." The story said when the meeting was about to start the leader announced, "no Catholics or Jews could join the order, whereupon some of the gentlemen present asked to be excused." The meeting broke up, the story says, with no agreement made to form a Klan here.

Obviously organizational efforts worked better without a newspaper reporter in the room, and in the ensuing 10 months, the Klan went from not existing to a powerful unit. Exactly how this happened will probably never be known.

That first march through Marshall had a profound effect on the town and its citizens. The previously Invisible Empire was now demonstrably made of flesh and blood and ready to show its might. Some members commandeered Henry Southerland's barn near the North Marshall School — at the present site of J.H. Moore Elementary. When Southerland challenged them, he was told to leave and that he would be paid $5 for the trouble.

He did not argue. The Klan knocked at Southerland's back door and handed his young daughter a $5 bill, telling her to give it to her father. The next morning Southerland was left to clean up the banners carried in the parade: "Sober Dances or None," "We Want the Bible Read in Our Schools," "Hotel Porters, No More Dates," "We Are 100 Per Cent American," "Association With Negro Women Must Stop" and others.

Messenger Editor and Publisher W.A. Adair wrote a somewhat humorous story about meeting a member of the Klan, "A bully who looked like he was eight feet tall — but who was in fact only about seven feet," who wanted a private meeting with Adair.

Adair didn't report what was said in the conversation, except to say that the Klan member told him to keep his identity to himself.

"Mister," Adair wrote that he replied, "I didn't get your name and that ain't your name no how and besides that, I can't see very well."

In 1922, the U.S. Post Office at the southeastern intersection of Washington and Houston — the building still stands on the Marshall Square as a federal courthouse — was open until 8 each night. The reason for the late hour is now obscured by time, but it is clear from news reports that it was Ray Daniels' habit to pick up his mail — and probably that of Perkins' Brothers store — just before the post office closed.

If the letter from the Marshall Klan No. 168 had made him nervous at all, it had not led him to alter his routines, which apparently were well-known.

On the night of Feb. 20, 1922, Daniels had retrieved his mail and was reading a letter on the post office steps. Three men he did not know walked up the steps of the post office and, on passing him, they went into action. One man threw his arms around Daniels, pinning Daniels' arms to the side. Another man struck Daniels just over the eye with a pistol, giving him a bloody gash. While Daniels was still dazed from the blow, the three men hustled him into a waiting car, which, newspapers would later report, "burned no lights and had no number." The men, however, wore no hoods.

There were few witnesses, but two others described the attack much as Daniels later related it. What no outsider witnessed was the administration of one of the Klan's typical punishments: Daniels was tarred and feathered.

The men — witnesses said there were six involved in the attack — had been recruited from nearby Klans so that Daniels would not know them. He was driven to the "ball park," which Judge T. Whitfield Davidson says in his autobiography was about a mile from town, where the tar and feathers were waiting.

The practice of tarring and feathering is described by historians as being administered in a number of different ways, with the hot tar sometimes being poured over the victim, then feathers thrown on.

In this case, Davidson says in his book, the tar and a pillowcase of feathers was emptied on the ground and then Daniels — who had been stripped to the waist — was rolled through them.

Less than an hour later the ordeal was over.

Daniels was driven back into town wearing his coat of feathers and dumped in front of the Marshall National Bank at the feet of Chief Sheriff's Deputy Ellis Johnson.

Ellis did not sound an alarm. He did not give chase. He did not note a description of the men or the car, which would have been stained with Daniels' blood.

In fact, Ellis Johnson would never investigate the case. Neither would Sheriff J.C. Sanders — who was to be in a meeting at the Odd Fellows Hall at the time of the assault — or any member of the sheriff's department.

The Marshall Police Department, likewise, would never assign anyone to the case.

Marshall Klan No. 168 had struck and the law had averted its collective eyes. The question was, would anyone in Marshall have the courage to strike back?

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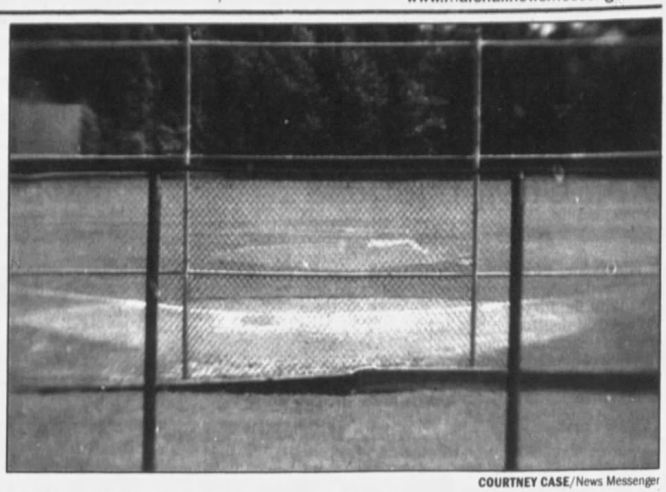

COURTNEY CASE/News Messenger

COKER FIELD IS seen Thursday in Marshall. Local businessman Ray Daniels was tarred and feathered on this field on Feb. 20, 1922, by Ku Klux Klan members after being abducted from the steps of the Marshall Post Office, now the Sam B. Hall Jr. Federal Courthouse. **Below:** The front page of *The Marshall Morning News* reporting the Jan. 27, 1922, march of Klansmen through downtown Marshall.

The Marshall Morning News

SILENT KLANSMEN MARCH 371 STRONG

Parts Conference Favors Parcels Office, Lower Freight Rates And Water Commerce

K. K. K. Pulls Off First Parade In Marshall Last Night While 10000 View

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