

Knights of Columbus.  
— Knights of Columbus  
vs. Criminal Libel...  
AEK 5238

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**  
VS.  
**CRIMINAL LIBEL**  
AND  
**MALICIOUS BIGOTRY**

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ISSUED BY SUPREME BOARD OF DIRECTORS, KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
NOVEMBER, 1914

Deacidified

**CRIMINAL LIBEL AND MALICIOUS BIGOTRY AS  
COMMITTED AND PRACTICED TO INJURE THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS, PAR-  
TICULARLY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS : :**

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**THE TRUTH AND ITS PROOF REGARDING  
THE SPURIOUS K. of C. OATH  
OR  
FOURTH DEGREE OATH : : :**

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The Knights of Columbus was incorporated in 1882 under a special charter granted by the General Assembly of Connecticut. It is a fraternal benefit society composed of Catholic men who under said charter in addition to providing an insurance system which is scientifically sound and admittedly the best, endeavor "to promote such social and intellectual intercourse among its members as shall be desirable and proper."

Catholic men love their faith and would have all men, at least respect it. The Knights of Columbus have worked to spread the knowledge of Catholic Truth and thus secure for their religion the regard of all honest men.

The Knights of Columbus has now about 330,000 members, comprising men highest in public esteem and those more humble, but none the less respected by all who know them.

They have the esteem and encouragement of the hierarchy, Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and Priests. They hold the regard of all non-Catholic men who respect decent living and good citizenship.

And yet—there are those who would defame the Knights of Columbus, who would malign the men who compose it, who would libel in foulest charge this great Society and its adherents.

A most heinous, ungodly and un-Christian, yes, a murderous and illegal oath has been widely circulated as the one required by the Knights of Columbus from its members. It is an attack against the Catholic and his Church, a creation of Know-Nothings, A. P. A.'s, and their allies and successors.

Bigots have read this foul libel and gloated over its expected destruction of the Knights of Columbus; they have passed it to others, circulated it, approved it.

Some honest men have read it and been sorely troubled in consequence. It seemed unlike the Knights of Columbus they knew as honest men—yet would men dare publish such a thing if it was untrue; if untrue would not the Knights of Columbus prosecute their defamers!

What, then, was the duty of the Society to itself, to its members, to the host of men who were in doubt?

Oral denial was necessarily limited; written denial was not received by the public press; submission of the ceremonial to non-Catholic committees in several cities did not reach the multitude.

Criminal prosecutions were then instituted, but alas, the public press gave but scant, if any, notice to such prosecutions, although the libels were against the Catholic Church and primarily against the Knights of Columbus — 330,000 men.

We submit then the following account of actions taken to expose this libel, and

(a) We urge our non-Catholic friends to read it through and ask us any questions that may further enlighten them;

(b) We ask our members to circulate this pamphlet among non-Catholics, public libraries, colleges, normal schools and high schools and especially to the neighborhood public press and to bigoted publications.

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## CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Before giving the history of the various prosecutions and activities above referred to for criminal libel in printing or publishing or defaming by means of the alleged oath, we want to answer the foul charge intimating that the Congressional Record of the United States is authority for its genuineness.

Much has been printed by those circulating the bogus "Oath" tending to mislead the public into the belief that in some way Congress had found it to be true. So they have referred to the Congressional Record of Feb. 15, 1913, for proof of the genuineness of this "libel."

### THE FACT.

In the Congressional Record of Feb. 15, 1913, pages 3215 et seq., appears a Report of the Committee on Elections No. 1, on the contested election case of Eugene C. Bonniwell against Thomas C. Butler. The contestant had alleged that the circulation of the "Oath" against him was libelous, and a use of means not to be recognized, etc.

### A FALSE AND LIBELOUS OATH.

After reciting the "Oath," which decency and respect for our Order forbid reprinting, the Committee in its report says:

"This committee cannot condemn too strongly the publication of the false and libelous article referred to in the paper of Mr. Bonniwell, and which was the spurious Knights of Columbus Oath, a copy of which is appended to the paper. It also condemns the publication of editorials to excite religious prejudice in a political campaign. No man should be persecuted for his religion, whether he be Catholic or Protestant."

# PHILADELPHIA CASE.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

*vs.*

CHARLES MEGONEGAL AND CLARENCE H. STAGE.

Over a year ago (to be exact February 20, 1913) two men were held in bail for appearance in court to answer charges made by local Knights of Columbus. Charles Megonegal, a printer of 4201 Brown street, was charged with printing and causing to be printed libelous matter (the bogus K. of C. oath) wilfully and maliciously exposing the Knights of Columbus as a body; Charles B. Dowds, upon whose affidavit the arrests were made; James A. Flaherty, the Supreme Knight, and Philip A. Hart, Master of the fourth degree, to public hatred, contempt and ridicule, to their great damage, disgrace, scandal and infamy.

Megonegal and Clarence H. Stage, a barber, were charged jointly with conspiracy to defame and oppress the aforesaid members and others of the Order by causing said matter to be circulated.

At the hearing it was elicited from Megonegal that he had bought copies of the bogus oath in bulk from "The Menace" before starting to print it on his own account.

## A THREAT.

In its March 1, 1913, issue "The Menace," after reproducing a press dispatch reporting the result of the hearing before the magistrate, at which the accused were held for trial, said:

"Further than what is given here we do not know the particulars in this case, but we do know that these men are American citizens, and that they will be defended in their constitutional rights of free speech and free press. The press dispatch, as usual, lies when it says 'The Menace' has printed the so-called Knights of Columbus oath, as the files of our paper will show. But if the Knights of Columbus want to start anything with 'The Menace' for what it really has printed, they have our permission to do their worst, as we are ready to defend every utterance we have ever made about the Knights. And if they don't want their complete ritual and secret work printed and distributed to a million men in this Republic, they had better leave 'The Menace' out of this controversy."

## THE TRIAL.

On Friday, January 30, 1914, in the Quarter Sessions Court, before the Hon. Robert N. Willson, appeared Megonegal and Stage to answer the true bills of indictment found against them by the grand jury. Joseph Taulane, Esq., Assistant District Attorney, appeared for the Commonwealth; Owen J. Roberts, Esq., and Joseph P. Gaffney, for the private prosecutors; Peter F. MacLaren, Esq., for Megonegal, and Leroy M. King, Esq., for Stage.

The trial judge, the Assistant District Attorney in charge of the prose-

cution, the senior counsel for the private prosecutors and both attorneys for the defendants are non-Catholics.

James A. Flaherty, Esq., Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, having been sworn, testified as follows:

"This alleged oath is a tissue of falsehoods from the first word to the last—absolutely false. This prosecution was brought simply to vindicate the Knights of Columbus on account of the wide circulation given to this vile and scurrilous circular, the purpose of which was to breed strife and arouse religious bigotry. The alleged oath is absolutely baseless, and of such a flagrant character that it is indeed surprising that any one would give it the slightest credence. It was so persistently circulated that the Knights of Columbus were compelled to take some steps to refute it, and we thought criminal prosecution would be the best way to do it."

### GUILT ADMITTED, SENTENCE SUSPENDED.

Megonegal having pleaded guilty and Stage nolo contendere, which means that the truth of the charge is not contradicted, the district attorney stated that the prosecution was willing that sentence be suspended.

Attorneys MacLaren and King, counsel for the defense, joined in this request to the court, pleading good faith on the part of their clients, who, they said, had received the "oath" from "The Menace," of Aurora, Mo.

As evidence that their clients had been deceived, they presented to the court a copy of a letter sent to "The Menace" by Mr. King, asking the paper's aid in the defense of Megonegal and Stage, and the original of the reply received from "The Menace."

The text of Mr. King's letter follows:

Philadelphia, February 27, 1913.

Menace Publishing Company, Aurora, Mo.

Gentlemen:

Mr. Peter M. MacLaren and myself are associated in the case of libel and conspiracy brought by the Knights of Columbus against Clarence H. Stage and Charles Megonegal, of this city.

We notice in your issue of March 1 that you are prepared to print and distribute the complete ritual and secret work of the Knights of Columbus and we desire to obtain an authentic copy of said ritual and secret work for use in the trial of our clients, since the prosecution alleges that there is no oath taken by candidates for any of the K. C. degrees. Can you supply us with what we desire and need?

Our clients have no knowledge of the authenticity of the K. C. oath, having received them in the first instance from your company, and they naturally rely upon you to aid them in their present difficulty.

An early reply will be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

LEROY N. KING.

The answer of "The Menace" was as follows:—

The Roman Catholic Political Machine. The Deadliest Menace to American Liberties and Civilization

REV. THEO. C. WALKER, Editor. MARVIN BROWN, Associate Editor.

Single Subscriptions  
50 Cents Per Year

# THE MENACE

In Clubs of 4 or More  
25 Cents Per Year

The Menace Publishing Company (Incorporated)

Aurora, Missouri, March 5, 1913.

Mr. Leroy N. King,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:—

Replying to your letter of February 27th we wish to state that we are not in possession of the ritual and secret work of the Knights of Columbus, but we believe we are in fair way to get it, and the statement in a recent issue of The Menace, which led you to believe that we had it in our possession, while somewhat of a bluff on our part, was based on the fact that we know that it can be had. You will note that we printed in our No. 99 the ritual and secret work of the Hibernians, and we are positive that it is authentic. The alleged oath which your clients in Philadelphia were arrested for distributing, was circulated in practically every state during the late campaign and the demand upon us for this document was something great, and we had received copies of them from so many sources we simply printed and handled them as we would any other job of printing, to supply the demand, and while we have no apologies to make for so doing, we do not have any evidence that the oath is the one which is taken by members of the Knights of Columbus.

We feel sure that it would be folly for you to undertake to base your defense on the authenticity of this document.

We note that some of the officials are claiming that it is not an oath-bound order, which of course is a subterfuge and untrue. You can depend on them resorting to any method which they can contrive to bluff away their critics, and if they are so bent on vindicating themselves why not ask that they present in court the obligations which they do take. This would be the quickest way to clear the matter up in the minds of the people.

We are filing your letter and will be on the lookout for anything which we think will aid in the defense of these men.

Trusting that this will be satisfactory, we beg to remain.

Yours sincerely,

THE MENACE PUBLISHING COMPANY

Aurora, Mo

MB SR

(The arrow point is ours.)

## A PRECIOUS EXHIBIT.

The letter from "The Menace" to Leroy N. King, Esq., of counsel for the defense, is a precious document. Properly utilized, it should sound the death-knell of the malodorous Aurora sheet and the whole brood of lesser journalistic reptiles that have been hatched in its wake. It will be noted that there is no individual signature to the communication, and this is characteristic. However, the initials M. B., typewritten at the side, probably stand for Marvin Brown, associate editor.

Be that as it may, The Menace Publishing Company, in a letter which it was never dreamed would see the light, confesses having been the chief source of supply of an atrocious slander which "was circulated in practically every State during the late campaign." "We simply printed and handled them as we would any other job of printing," say the Aurora conspirators, to which they brazenly add: "We have no apologies to make for so doing." No apologies even to their poor dupes, haled before the bar of justice, to whom, on the morrow of their arrest, they gave loud assurance of full protection, only to callously desert them in their hour of supreme need. Surely in the plight of these men is a lesson which may well be pondered by the thousands of deluded tools of "Menace" malignity and greed.

And what say the Philadelphia ministers who, misled by the Rev. Dr. Barnett, rallied to the defense of a "free press" as exemplified in the detestable Aurora publication? Have they no rebuke for its violation of the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness?"

*"We feel sure that it would be folly for you to undertake to base your defense on the authenticity of this document,"* and yet "the demand upon us for this document was something great, and \* \* \* we simply printed and handled them as we would any other job of printing and \* \* \* we have no apologies to make for so doing."

Is liberty a license to wrong God, man, and country?

Is freedom of the press license to defame decent men?

Should the Post-Office Department permit the transmission of libellous and defamatory statements?

## STATEMENT FROM THE COURT.

Agreeing to the proposal that sentence be suspended, Judge Willson, who is one of the most prominent Presbyterian laymen in Philadelphia, said:

"I think that these cases have reached a very proper conclusion, and it is, in my judgment, quite suitable that, in accordance with the desire of all the parties concerned, sentence should be suspended in the cases.

"Great care ought to be taken that no injustice should be done by written or spoken words to either individuals or institutions. It is not at all strange that the prosecutors in these cases should not have been willing that the opprobrium which would naturally arise if the publications complained of had been founded in truth should be allowed to exist.



"I am personally glad to hear from the head of the Order or society referred to what he has said in regard to the matter.

"Though not of the same faith, I realize fully and without reluctance that the Church with which that society is affiliated accomplishes a vast deal of good. Its activities should be protected from misrepresentation.

"I may add that my personal acquaintance with Mr. Flaherty, the head of the Order in question, leads me to accept his statement without hesitation."

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## ANOTHER CASE.

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STATE OF MINNESOTA

*vs.*

A. M. MORRISON AND GARFIELD E. MORRISON.

Editors and Publishers of the Mankato Morning Journal (Minnesota).

A trial of the greatest interest to Knights of Columbus and to the Catholics of this country and of Canada as well as to non-Catholics—and among them, to none more than to the small band of loud-mouthed bigots who rail against the Church—was held in Waterville, Minnesota, Wednesday, July 29, 1914. This was an action of criminal libel brought by E. M. Lawless, editor of the "Waterville Sentinel," against A. M. Morrison and G. E. Morrison, father and son, editors and publishers of the "Mankato Morning Journal," of Mankato, Minn. The libel consisted in the charging of Lawless with having taken the bogus Knights of Columbus oath, which has been so largely circulated in this country and in Canada during the past year and a half. We will not attempt to reproduce this oath, but suffice it to say that it has been published as the Knights of Columbus oath and as the Fourth Degree oath, and is, in letter and insinuation, one of the foulest libels imaginable. It is in some respects a revamp of the old hoax which has for many years passed muster in the press of bigots as the Jesuit oath.

### OBLIGATION PUT IN EVIDENCE.

The outcome of this trial is of more than local interest. It is of national and international importance. The Knights of Columbus have often been accused of taking an alleged oath which, if the charge were true, would forever condemn them to the merited execration of their fellow men. But this was the first time that an individual knight was directly charged with the offence. It furnished the Order the first opportunity it has had to put the real obligation of the Fourth Degree in evidence and make it a matter of court record which any citizen may read for himself. Herein lies the importance of the case which establishes a precedent in the history of the Order.

Knights of Columbus and Catholics generally have been astounded at the conditions which make possible the publication and circulation by millions

of copies of this foul libel. Well meaning non-Catholics have been shocked by these accusations against Catholic men and Knights of Columbus whom they knew to be high-minded citizens and ideal neighbors. The bigots working in the darkness as of old, have pressed on the accusation and argued that if the "oath" was not true, the Knights of Columbus would soon, by prosecution or otherwise, prevent its further circulation. The Menace of Aurora, Mo., the mouth-piece of the rejuvenated A. P. A., sold this "oath" in vast quantities. Some of our late-born societies with high-sounding names and alleged patriotic purposes have been most active in the printing and circulation of this bogus oath.

### NOT NOTICED BY THE PRESS.

The trial above referred to is in reality the third public trial and by far the most important of all, yet, we cannot help noting with surprise and regret, that the public press did not deem it worthy of much notice, although it concerned a libel that had been so widely circulated and which affected an organization of three hundred and thirty thousand men. A scandalous divorce trial in the smallest city seems to find ample space in the press of the entire country through some medium of news service, and yet this important trial received scant notice and scantier space from a press which loves to boast of its impartiality in the prominence it gives to important news.

### A SENSATIONAL TRIAL.

The fact is that the trial was a most sensational one from many points of view. It was presided over by Judge George J. Dressel. The district attorney who prosecuted the case was Francis J. Hanzel of Montgomery, prosecuting attorney for Le Sueur County, who was assisted by Attorney Thomas Hessian of Le Sueur. The defendants were represented by Owen Morris, of St. Paul. The small country court room was crowded to the very limits of its capacity, and the spectators filled every available inch of space, having come in from the surrounding country to hear the case tried. A jury was finally selected, and it is of more than passing importance and a matter of gratification to the Order, as it is a compliment to him, that the Rev. Thomas Billing, the resident Methodist minister of the town, was chosen on the jury and was not challenged by the complainant, and as the result showed voted with the other eleven men to convict the two defendants.

The jury in this case were:—

William Callies, Emil Hehl, John W. Gish, Thomas McGovern, Vince Roessler, Rev. Thomas Billing, Joseph Miller, Jr., H. J. Luther, V. R. Wood, Chris. Ruedy, Steve Hoban, Ed. Zinbrich.

The proceedings were taken down in shorthand by C. G. Bowdish, Court Reporter of the judicial district.

After each juror had been questioned in turn, the defendants waived any challenge.

The following witnesses were called by the state:—

P. J. Gutzler, Rev. H. E. Chapman, Pastor of the Congregational Church, I. N. Griffith, Deputy Postmaster of Mankato, E. M. Lawless, Dr. E. W. Buckley, Supreme Physician of Knights of Columbus, Wm. J. McGinley, Supreme Secretary of Knights of Columbus.

### SUPREME OFFICERS PRESENT.

The surprise of the trial to the Knights of Columbus themselves and to all those whose curiosity had whetted their appetite to learn some of the secrets of that great order, was the calling of two of the Supreme Officers as witnesses. The first was the Supreme Physician, Dr. E. W. Buckley, of St. Paul, who testified in effect that Mr. Lawless had received initiation in the Fourth Degree under his direction as Master. Upon cross-examination Dr. Buckley was asked as to the nature of the "oath" administered in the Fourth Degree, and most emphatically denied then, as he did in answering subsequent questions of the defendants' counsel, that the Order had any oath in any part of its ceremonial or degree work. He freely admitted that the Order had a pledge or obligation which is administered to candidates. To the great surprise of all present, however, when interrogated as to the nature of this obligation, Dr. Buckley very fully answered the question and gave the substance of the obligation as administered to candidates on being initiated in the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus.

William J. McGinley, of New Haven, Conn., Supreme Secretary of the Knights of Columbus, also testified as to the nature of the obligation, as the official custodian of the original manuscripts and of all matters pertaining to the ceremonial of the Society. He placed a copy of the obligation in evidence and it was made part of the records of the trial. He emphasized the fact that the Knights of Columbus was not an oath-bound society, and that no member was asked to take more than an obligation which any gentleman might take. Both Dr. Buckley and Mr. McGinley testified in no uncertain words that the bogus oath, which was the subject matter of the prosecution, was, neither in letter nor in spirit, a part of any of the ceremonial of the Knights of Columbus in any of its degrees.

The following is a portion of the Direct and Cross-Examination of Dr. Buckley and Mr. McGinley:—

Direct Examination by County Attorney Hanzel.

Cross-Examination by Attorney Morris.

Q. Your name is Edward W. Buckley? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You are a practicing physician and surgeon in St. Paul, are you not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Now, you are also a Knight of Columbus? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Member of the Knights of Columbus, and a member of the fourth degree? A. Yes, sir.

Q. On January 27, 1907, did you hold any position in the Order? A. I was Master of the Fourth degree for Minnesota and North Dakota.

Q. As such master did you have charge of the giving of that degree? A. I did.

Q. Did you have charge of the giving of that degree on January 29th, 1907? A. What date?

Q. January 27th, 1907? A. I did.

Q. That was the time that Mr. Lawless said he took that degree; do you remember of his taking it? A. Well, he says he took it, and I think I remember his taking it, but I had 160 candidates in that class from Minnesota and North Dakota; I feel pretty certain Mr. Lawless took it at that time.

Q. Did you hear me read, and have you heard that purported oath credited to the Fourth degree of the Knights of Columbus, read here in Court? A. I did.

Q. Did any of those candidates, including Mr. Lawless, take such an oath as that? A. Not that I know of.

Q. Is there any such oath in the Order? A. There is not.

Q. Is there any oath in the Order? A. There is not.

Q. What do the members take in the Order? A. They take an obligation in the degrees, first, second, third, and fourth.

Q. Do you know the obligation of the fourth degree? A. Well, I know what it is in a general way; now, the Master doesn't give any part of the degree; he has charge of it and the degree team under him, and he is supposed to give to each one of the members of the degree team the special charge belonging to their office; and one of the officers of the degree, it is the duty of one of the officers of the degree to give the obligation; and, in a general way, of course, I remember what it is. I am not Master now, and haven't been for some years.

Q. You are the Supreme Physician of the Order? A. I am Supreme Physician, medical director, of the Order.

Q. Well, give us your general idea of that fourth degree obligation. A. The fourth degree is a patriotic degree; it exemplifies patriotism, and the candidate affirms that he will support the constitution of the United States and the constitution of his own State, that he will protect the purity of the ballot, and that he will remain a good member of the Catholic church. He also agrees to remain a good, law-abiding citizen of the United States.

Q. Is there any part of the degree work that resembles anything like that that appeared in that article that has been read here?

(By Mr. Morris). Objected to as calling for the opinion or conclusion of the witness. The proper way to do is to tell what they have and then put this beside it, and let the jury say whether there is any resemblance.

Objected to as incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial, calling for a conclusion.

Q. Is there any such oath taken in any of the degrees? A. No, sir.

## CROSS EXAMINATION.

By Mr. Morris.

Q. Are there obligations taken in each of the degrees? A. In each one, yes, sir.

Q. Are each of the four obligations different one from the other? A. Yes, sir. There are only two principal obligations, the one following at the third degree, and the other in the fourth.

Q. Is there anything in those oaths— A. Which oaths?

Q. Well, we are all wrong about calling them oaths, we all mean the same thing. A. That is right, if you mean it, but I can't answer the question with the word oath in it.

Q. Well I'll try to call it obligation. A. All right.

Q. You stated that in some of those oaths there is a requirement— or in some of those obligations there is a requirement to remain members of the Catholic church? A. No, was that my wording?

Q. That's the way I took it down. A. That's the intent, but that's not the wording. Well, yes, I'll take it back; they do really insist they must remain members of the Catholic church, in order to retain membership in the fourth degree.

Q. Yes, of the Knights of Columbus? A. Yes.

Q. That's true as to each one of the obligations? A. Well, it isn't so specifically stated; but the constitution and by-laws of the Order provide that.

Q. Is there anything in those oaths— A. Again.

Q. Oh, those obligations,—which has a denunciation of others, of other denominations,—which was— A. Nothing.

Q. Will not spare age, sex or condition, anything of that kind in any of the oaths? A. No, sir.

Q. Is the word spare in any of the oaths? A. In what? Well, now, is that done purposely?

Q. It is not. A. Well, I take it as an insult, because you are trying to trap me into saying oath.

Q. Well, it isn't intentional, I inform the Court and jury, it isn't intentional at all. Is the word spare in any of the obligations? A. In the sense that you mean, spare somebody from injury?

Q. Well, the word spare? A. Well, it might be, I don't recall, but in the sense of sparing anybody, or not sparing, no, sir.

Q. Which has the sense of not sparing? A. There is no such word nor no such sense in it.

Q. Are the words "these infamous heretics," or words of that import, in any of the obligations? A. No, sir.

Q. Doctor, you say one officer gives the obligation. You, yourself, now, couldn't give verbatim any one of the four obligations, could you? A. No, sir, I wouldn't attempt to.

Q. Is that oath written or unwritten? A. I don't understand your question.

Q. Oh, is that obligation written or unwritten? A. It is printed.

Q. And can you tell me where I may procure, where a copy of that obligation can be procured; give me the name and address of the person in whose custody one is? A. Yes, sir; now, I understand, you ask two or three questions there together. I can tell the name of the person in whose custody the ritual of the Order, the unwritten work and the written work of the Order is kept.

Q. Well, you may do so.

By Mr. Hessian. Well, I object to that as immaterial, and incompetent; what has that got to do with this case?

By Mr. Morris: Well, if we find the oath as printed, we can compare it with this.

A. Compare with what?

Q. The obligation. A. You mean, I think, to use that word purposely. It isn't my first time on the witness stand. I know when an attorney is asking a witness questions fairly, and when he isn't. Now, I object to the word oath because it would charge us inadvertently with having taken such an obligation.

Q. We don't charge you with it. A. You do by using the word oath, and then comparing it with some other oath. We take no oath.

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#### DIRECT EXAMINATION OF WM. J. MCGINLEY.

Q. Your name is Wm. J. McGinley? A. Yes.

Q. Where do you reside, Mr. McGinley? A. New York.

Q. In New York, in the State of New York? A. City of New York.

Q. You are a member of the Knights of Columbus? A. I am.

Q. Do you hold any position in the Knights of Columbus? A. I do.

Q. What is that position? A. Supreme Secretary.

Q. Supreme Secretary of the Knights of Columbus? A. Yes, sir.

Q. As such secretary are you custodian of the written and other work of the Order? A. I am.

Q. The ritual; you know of the obligations that are taken in the four degrees of that Order? A. I do.

Q. You have heard this purported oath read here in Court, have you not? A. I have.

Q. Do they take any oath? A. They do not take any oath. Our Society is not an oath-bound society; in fact, can't hardly be called a secret society. It is a Society of Catholic laymen, recognizing the authority of the Catholic church in matters spiritual.

By Mr. Morris. Objected to as not responsive to the question.

By the Court. I will sustain the objection to that part of it.

A. I am leading up to it, your Honor.

Q. What is the purpose of the Order of the Knights of Columbus?

By Mr. Morris. Objected to as incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial; the question here is whether Lawless took an oath as stated in that complaint. The purpose of the Order will throw no light on whether he did or didn't.

By the Court. He testified there is no oath taken; objection sustained.

Q. Have you a printed copy of that oath, of that obligation? A. I have.

Q. Will you produce it?

Marked State's exhibit D.

Q. What is State's exhibit D? A. State's exhibit D is an official copy duly attested under the seal of the Order of the Supreme Council of the obligation taken by all members initiated in the fourth degree of the Order.

Q. And you are the custodian of this? A. I am official custodian of the ritual and ceremonies of the Order and the laws of the Order under seal of the Order.

Q. And let's see, have you stated that is the one taken by the fourth degree members?

By Mr. Hessian. Yes.

By Mr. Hanzel. Now, we offer this in evidence.

By Mr. Morris. One question.

Q. By Mr. Morris. I notice "M. or F. N." at the head of this exhibit D; what does that represent? A. Master, or Faithful Navigator, title of one of the officers of the degree.

Q. Is that the only obligation of the fourth degree? A. The only obligation.

Q. Contains the only obligation in any way connected with the fourth degree of the Knights of Columbus? A. Yes.

State's exhibit D read to the jury by Mr. Hanzel.

#### STATE'S EXHIBIT D IS AS FOLLOWS:

"M. or F. N."

"I swear to support the Constitution of the United States."

"I pledge myself, as a Catholic citizen and Knight of Columbus, to enlighten myself fully upon my duties as a citizen and to conscientiously perform such duties entirely in the interest of my country and regardless of all personal consequences. I pledge myself to do all in my power to preserve the integrity and purity of the ballot, and to promote reverence and respect for law and order. I promise to practice my religion openly and consistently but without ostentation, and to so conduct myself in public affairs, and in the exercise of public virtue as to reflect nothing but credit upon our Holy Church, to the end that she may flourish and our country prosper to the greater honor and glory of God."

(Supreme Council Seal.)

"A true copy.

Attest

(Signed) Wm. J. McGinley,  
Supreme Secretary."

## CROSS EXAMINATION.

By Mr. Morris:

Q. Mr. McGinley, references have been made here to the words "oath" and the words "obligation," and apparently exception has been taken to the use of the word oath as describing the thing we are thinking of. Will you tell us the difference between oath and obligation? A. An oath, as I understand it, is a pledge or obligation or affirmation wherein or in connection with which God is called upon to witness, or the Deity; and an obligation is a pledge or undertaking of a kind in which the Deity is not called upon to witness. That is the distinction, I believe, between an oath and a pledge. I would suggest the word pledge rather than obligation. It is easier to say.

By Mr. Hanzel. Just a Question. Ought there not to be inserted there, also, isn't an oath something that would be administered by proper legal authority; ought not that to be a part of the explanation?

Q. I notice that you have these printed on little slips; what is the object of having them printed in that way, loose? A. For the convenience of the ceremony in the fourth degree of the Order whereby annually, at the first meeting of the fourth degree assembled in January of each year, all the members of the fourth degree renew that obligation, that is what is known as the annual meeting; and for the purpose of supplying the officers with their parts, for convenience's sake it is arranged in that form.

Q. Dr. Buckley, in his testimony, stated there was something in the obligation requiring members to remain members of the Catholic church; is that true? A. That's a constitutional, fundamental law of the Order. Well, toward the end there he promises to remain a member of the Catholic Order, in there by implication, if not expressed.

Q. I will ask you, is this all the obligation of the fourth degree? A. That is our obligation in the fourth degree.

Q. Do any of the other obligations, first, second, or third degrees, have reference to non-Catholics in any way, directly or indirectly? A. None whatever.

Q. You have heard this purported oath in the criminal warrant read, have you? A. Yes, I have.

Q. Have you seen that elsewhere? A. I have.

The defendants testified and also called Mr. Lawless, who had testified for the State. They were not cross-examined by the County Attorney.

It is unnecessary to go into the recital of the other evidence in this case. Suffice it to say that the defendants made no attempt to establish the authenticity of the bogus oath, but threw themselves on the mercy of the court and tried to show that there was no intentional libel on Mr. Lawless.



## DEFENDANTS FOUND GUILTY.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, which was read by the foreman, Rev. Thomas Billing, and the court imposed a jail sentence of thirty days on each of the defendants, from which they took an appeal to the District Court on the following day, each giving a bond of \$500 with H. B. Oblinger and W. Knaack as sureties.

Referring to the foregoing trial, we set forth below the correspondence between the Rev. Mr. Billing and Hon. Fred Bierman of Decorah, Iowa who, we believe, is the publisher of the Decorah Journal:—

Decorah, Iowa, Aug. 14, 1914.

Rev. Thomas Billing,  
Pastor of Methodist Church,  
Waterville, Minn.

Dear Sir: I have noted with interest that you were a juror in the prosecution of A. M. and G. E. Morrison of Waterville for criminal libel by E. M. Lawless of the Waterville Sentinel.

The reports are that the jury unanimously voted for the conviction of A. M. and G. E. Morrison. May I not ask you to write me a line or two stating whether or not this report is a fact? And also give me any bit of information that may be of interest in the case.

This anti-Catholic agitation, in my judgment, is very discreditable to all the Protestant churches that do not seek in the spirit of Christian charity to quiet it. Furthermore, it is a menace to the best conduct of political affairs, and breeds a very regrettable bitterness and suspicion among people who otherwise would be friends.

If you have no objections, I should thank you very much for the privilege of publishing your reply in the Journal.

Sincerely yours,

FRED BIERMAN.

Waterville, Minn., Aug. 15, 1914.

Mr. Fred Bierman,  
Decorah, Iowa.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 14th received. And while I do not care for publicity, must admit that either by the irony of fate or by the Hand of Providence, I found myself upon the jury empanelled to find a verdict in the E. M. Lawless criminal libel case against A. M. and G. E. Morrison of the Mankota Journal. I did not know until I reached the court room of the case. Had I known what awaited me that day, I would probably have been absent when the sheriff came three-quarters of an hour before the trial to

summon me. But when summoned did not inquire how or learn for what purpose. However, never having run away from anything that looked like duty, and not being challenged by either party, I stood my ground, and notwithstanding much adverse local criticism, am glad to have had the privilege of helping to nail down so ugly and diabolical a lie as the pseudo oath so widely published and attributed to Ed. Lawless was proven to be.

Furthermore, my district superintendent and other of my ministerial brethren (all of whom I have hitherto met) have expressed themselves as being perfectly at one with me.

The case was very simple.

1. The publication of the so-called oath in the defendant's paper was proven.

2. Its diabolical character was proven.

3. Its circulation in Waterville was proven by Rev. H. P. Chapman, pastor of the Congregational church of that city.

4. Its utter and complete falsity was proven by two witnesses of the highest standing in the Order, viz., Dr. Buckley of St. Paul, by whom, or in whose presence, the fourth degree was conferred on complainant Lawless. And also by Wm. J. McGinley of New York, supreme secretary of the Order and custodian of all the written and oral work.

The first ballot stood nine to three for conviction. The second ballot stood 10 to 2 for conviction, and the third was unanimous for conviction. The verdict was followed by a sentence of thirty days for each of the defendants in the county jail. The case, however, is appealed to the district court in September.

The case was the result of an anti-Catholic spirit (which has had other deplorable results) stirred up by the advent of Annie Lowry, the pseudo nun, whose trail across the state is quite visible, and certainly not enviable. Such things exhibit the strange anomaly of a religion of love producing the keenest haters, and a gospel of peace engendering strife and animosities more bitter than the disputes and rivalries of the most profane.

Yours for the peace of Zion.

(REV.) THOMAS BILLING,

Foreman of Jury.

THANKS FOR LETTER.

Decorah, Iowa, Aug. 17, 1914.

Rev. Thomas Billing,  
Waterville, Minn.

My dear Sir: I thank you very much for your letter of August 15th, and or the promptness of your reply.

I want to compliment you on the position you take in the matter, and

to say that, in my opinion, if the Protestant clergymen in general took this position, they would be held in higher esteem by the general public.

If I can do you a favor at some future date, I hope that you will not hesitate to call upon me.

Sincerely yours,  
FRED BIERMAN.

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## ANOTHER PROSECUTION.

Another case was tried in St. Johns, Newfoundland, on February 18, 1913. The defendant was Charles A. Swift.

This trial was held in the Central District Court before Judge Knight.

The defendant was charged with criminal libel in publishing and circulating the same oath described in the foregoing pages.

The complainant was Charles O'Neill Conroy for himself and the Knights of Columbus.

Mr. A. B. Morine, K. C., was counsel for the complainant and Mr. F. A. Mews for the defendant.

The witnesses for the Government were William Bowden, Kenneth Barnes, William F. Coaker, Charles O'Neill Conroy, John Fenelon.

The defendant testified admitting the charge and concluded his testimony as follows:—

“I should now like to express my very deep regret to Mr. Conroy and Mr. Fenelon and the whole Council of Knights in St. Johns and elsewhere, that I should have been led to believe through false representations that this was the oath of the Knights of Columbus, and I wish to make an apology to all concerned saying I sincerely regret having caused any pain or ill-feeling to the members, and I wish this apology to be as complete as possible. I may add that in January last I did not know any of the members of the Knights of Columbus as such.”

Mr. Morine then made the following statement to the Court:—

This proceeding was taken for the purpose of showing the bogus nature of this alleged oath. If the accused had justified his conduct, or attempted in any way to set up the truth of the alleged oath, the prosecution would be pushed to the greatest possible extent. There was no desire to persecute or even to punish where punishment was deserved. Mr. Swift having explained, and given proper information, the complainant is satisfied that Mr. Swift was a victim, that he had no actual malice, and that he sincerely regrets his part in the circulation of the defamatory matter. This being so, the prosecutor's object has been achieved, and he desires that these proceedings go no further against this particular accused. He will, however, prosecute for any further circulation of this same or similar matter, and reserves his

right to prosecute anybody else who has been concerned in the publication complained of.

Mr. Morine, therefore, asked that the proceedings be withdrawn against the accused.

The proceedings were accordingly withdrawn.

On February 19, 1913, the *Evening Telegram* of St. Johns published an editorial as follows:—

#### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

In dealing with the attempted circulation by Mr. Swift of the vile and unspeakable oath attributed to the Knights of Columbus, that body has done so in a manner that is merciful and yet firm and prompt. The standing of the Grand Knight, Mr. Conroy, and the Advocate, Mr. Fenelon, who were the complainants, is too well known in this community to need any further reference from us. Mr. Conroy in his sworn statements says in part: "The four principles of the Order are Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. No oath, either like it or unlike it, is used in the Order. No oath of any kind whatsoever is used." The accused, Charles A. Swift, has apologised in the most complete manner and has evidently been misled by the false representations of persons who were not so innocent of evil intent as he is.

Although no intelligent man could credit the Order with having such an oath, it is, nevertheless, cause for congratulation that the Order has got at the root of the matter and has shown by its actions that it will not tolerate such actions. The full text of the evidence will be found in another column.

The Daily News of that City published the following editorial:—

#### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

The dignified manner in which the Knights of Columbus have dealt with the unspeakable slanders, so gratuitously hurled at them, by unthinking and irresponsible parties, is greatly to their credit. Not vengeance, but vindication, was demanded, and that vindication has been as complete and thorough as possible. Two of the most respected and prominent lawyers in the city have solemnly sworn, not only that the "oath" was a malicious fabrication whose wording was wholly foreign to the Order, the cardinal principles of which were "Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism"; but that there was no oath of any kind taken by the members. Mr. Conroy says: "That oath is used nowhere in the Order. NO OATH, EITHER LIKE IT OR UNLIKE IT, IS USED." Mr. Fenelon adds. "The oath administered to me in these proceedings is the first and only oath of any kind whatever I have ever taken in connection with the Knights of Columbus." Such statements made by men of such exemplary character as Messrs. Conroy and Fenelon, would be accepted without reserve by anyone who knew them; but they have not contented themselves with an

ordinary denial; their clear and deliberate assertions being made on oath in a properly constituted court. In exercising clemency, the Knights will have won respect and admiration. But after this ample vindication, it should be a solemn duty on the part of members of the Order and their friends, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, to take steps to assure the severest punishment the law provides, to any who may make similar charges. It is an old story—this oath business, and the K. of C. is not the only society that has suffered similarly in the past. What made the offence more atrocious was an evident desire on the part of some, to revive those displays of sectarian hatred which were buried, it is hoped, forever, a quarter of a century ago.

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## ACTION IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

In Seattle, Washington a public statement was made on September 1st, 1912, in the course of which it was alleged that this same "Oath" was the Oath taken by Fourth Degree Members of the Knights of Columbus. As a result of this statement the Knights in Seattle voluntarily decided to submit to a committee of Protestant gentlemen, the printed ceremonial containing the actual obligation taken by Fourth Degree Members of the Order. The following newspaper extract gives the result of the investigation:

"The gentlemen to whom this obligation was submitted are H. C. Henry, railroad contractor and president of the Metropolitan Bank, J. D. Lowman, president of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce; J. E. Chilberg, Vice-president of the Scandinavian-American Bank of Seattle. The signed statement of these gentlemen follows:

### COMMITTEE FINDINGS.

"Honorable Catholic gentlemen of this city have placed for examination in the hands of the undersigned two papers. One, the actual fourth degree obligation taken by each person upon becoming a member of the Catholic organization known as the Knights of Columbus; the other, a printed circular purporting to be the above mentioned obligation. This latter is a blasphemous and horrible travesty upon the real oath, and as fair-minded citizens of this city, we cannot allow an atrocious libel upon the large body of our public-spirited Catholic fellow-citizens to stand undisputed. We declare further, that the obligation taken by the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus is one of loyalty and patriotism to our flag and nation, and that the said obligation binds those who assume it to the exercise of the highest type of American citizenship.

"Signed at Seattle, Wash., this 31st day of October, 1912.

H. C. HENRY,  
J. D. LOWMAN,  
J. E. CHILBERG."

We beg to submit all of the above as evidence of the fact that we have been the objects of a malicious slander at the hands of a disturber of the public peace.

T. J. GORMAN,  
Past Vice Supreme Master  
of the Fourth Degree.  
JOHN D. CARMODY,  
State Deputy of Washington.  
J. C. FORD,  
Past Grand Knight, Seattle Council.

#### RESOLUTION PASSED.

Mr. John D. Carmody,  
Seattle, Wash.

*Dear Sir:*—The following resolution was passed by the Olympia Clericus, an organization composed of all Episcopal clergymen in the State of Washington, west of the Cascades:

“Our attention has been called to a circular which has been rather widely distributed, purporting to be a copy of the oath taken by the members of a certain religious order or society. We desire on behalf of ourselves to express our deep regret that such an attack should have been made on the members of a religious body. We disclaim any desire to judge others, but feel most deeply that the interests of true religion can never be served in such a way.”

SIDNEY T. JAMES,  
*Secretary.*

All Saints' Rectory, Seattle.

## LOS ANGELES INVESTIGATION.

The following letters need no explanation:—

Hon. Paul J. McCormick,  
Court House, Los Angeles.

My dear Judge:

I take pleasure in handing you herewith the findings of the committee of Freemasons to whom you exhibited the ceremonials and pledges of the Order of Knights of Columbus.

I am very glad that I have been able, in a measure, to secure this refutation of a slanderous lie which has been widely circulated and which has been disseminated in many cases by well meaning, credulous and deluded persons.

I shall see to it that this report has wide circulation among Masons and you may use it in anyway you deem best to bring about an understanding of the truth among men who, above all controversies and contentions, desire to know and to follow that which is right and true.

Yours cordially,

W. R. HERVEY.

October 9, 1914.

We hereby certify that by authority of the highest officer of the Knights of Columbus in the State of California, who acted under instructions from the Supreme Officer of the Order in the United States, we were furnished a complete copy of all the work, ceremonies and pledges used by the Order, and that we carefully read, discussed and examined the same. We found that while the Order is in a sense a secret association, it is not an oath bound organization and that its ceremonies are comprised in four degrees, which are intended to teach and inculcate principles that lie at the foundation of every great religion and every free state. Our examination of these ceremonials and obligations was made primarily for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not a certain alleged oath of the Knights of Columbus, which has been printed and widely circulated, was in fact used by the Order and whether if it was not used, any oath, obligation or pledge was used which was or would be offensive to Protestants or Masons, or those who are engaged in circulating a document of peculiar viciousness and wickedness. We find that neither the alleged oath nor any oath or pledge bearing the remotest resemblance thereto in matter, manner, spirit or purpose is used or forms a part of the ceremonies of any degree of the Knights of Columbus. The alleged oath is scurrilous, wicked and libelous and must be the invention of an impious and venomous mind. We find that the Order of Knights of Columbus, as shown by its rituals, is dedicated to the Catholic religion, charity and patriotism. There is no propaganda proposed or taught against Protestants or Masons or persons not of Catholic faith. Indeed, Protestants and Masons are not

referred to directly or indirectly in the ceremonials and pledges. The ceremonial of the Order teaches a high and noble patriotism, instills a love of country, inculcates a reverence for law and order, urges the conscientious and unselfish performance of civic duty and holds up the Constitution of our country as the richest and most precious possession of a Knight of the Order. We can find nothing in the entire ceremonials of the Order that to our minds could be objected to by any person.

MOTLEY HEWES FLINT, 33d Degree Past Grand Master of Masons of California.

DANA REID WELLER, 32d Degree Past Grand Master of Masons of California.

WM. RHODES HERVEY, 33d Degree Past Master and Master of Scottish Rite Lodge.

SAMUEL E. BURKE, 32d Degree Past Master and Inspector of Masonic District.

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## RECENT PROSECUTION IN SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA.

The Santa Cruz *News* of Santa Cruz, Cal., published the following under date of October 28, 1914:—

“SOCIALIST EDITOR BOUND OVER; NO TESTIMONY PRESENTED  
BY DEFENSE.

“H. S. Turner, editor of the *World Issue* and charged with libeling the Fourth Degree members of the Knights of Columbus, through the publication of a false oath attributed to the organization, was bound over to the superior court by Justice of the Peace Bias this morning under \$300 bonds, following a very interesting preliminary examination in which the most noticeable incident was the ingenuity of Attorney Ralph H. Smith in the defense of his client, the defendant.

“The little courtroom above the firehouse was completely filled when the case opened this morning. Assisting District-Attorney Knight was John H. Leonard, the local attorney and a prominent Catholic.”

The complainant was Charles Gillen, who testified with Joseph J. Rosborough of Oakland, and Eugene F. Conlon, San Francisco. No evidence was offered by the defendant, and after argument by his attorney, Mr. Smith, Judge Bias held that there was sufficient evidence to hold the defendant for the higher court.



## BUSINESS MEN OF INDIANAPOLIS PROTEST AGAINST THE CIRCULATION OF THE FAKE OATH.

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*The Business Men, Whose Signatures Appear Below, are All Protestant—  
They cannot Comprehend How Any Christian Can Lend Himself to the Fur-  
ther Circulation of the Monstrous Lie.*

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS "FAKE OATH."

We, the undersigned citizens of Indianapolis, Indiana, beg to make public the following statement of facts, the truth of which is established by thorough investigation regarding the circulation in Indianapolis and Indiana of a "fake oath" as being the true fourth degree oath of the Knights of Columbus.

It will be unnecessary to reproduce the fake oath here on account of its vile character. Ordinarily charges of such vile nature should go unnoticed, but good citizens of all creeds owe it to themselves to pillory before the public those circulating this literature as un-American.

The true oath of the fourth degree members of the Knights of Columbus as hereinafter shown in the court proceedings, is as follows:

"I swear to support the Constitution of the United States.

"I pledge myself, as a Catholic citizen and Knight of Columbus, to enlighten myself fully upon my duties as a citizen and to conscientiously perform such duties entirely in the interest of my country and regardless of all personal consequences. I pledge myself to do all in my power to preserve the integrity and purity of the ballot and to promote reverence and respect for law and order. I promise to practice my religion openly and consistently but without ostentation and to so conduct myself in public affairs and in the exercise of public virtue as to reflect nothing but credit upon our Holy Church to the end that she may flourish and our country prosper to the greater honor and glory of God."

Appended to the "fake oath," which is being circulated anonymously, is this notation:

"Copied from the Congressional Record, Washington, D. C., Vol. 49 Pt. 4, Feb. 15, 1913, P. 3216."

By referring to the Congressional Record quoted it will be found that this "fake oath" is filed as an exhibit by Eugene C. Bonniwell, of Pennsylvania, in his charge against Thomas S. Butler, before the Committee on Elections No. 1, in Congress, growing out of an election contest. Mr. Bonniwell, the contestant, in his protest, printed in the Congressional Record, says:

"Messengers in the employ of supporters of Thomas S. Butler, traveled the district having in their possession and circulating a blasphemous and infamous libel, a copy of which is hereto attached, pretended to be an oath of the Knights of Columbus, of which body the contestant is a member. So revolting are the terms of this document and so mauseating its pledges that the injury it did, not merely to the contestant, but also to the Knights of Columbus and to Catholics in general, can hardly be measured in terms."

Copied from Congressional Record, Washington, D. C., Vol. 49, Pt. 4, Feb. 15, 1913, P. 3216.

Mr. Butler, in his defense, as printed in the Congressional Record, says:

"I apprehended with alarm the use of such a document in a political campaign, or at any other time. I did not believe in its truthfulness and so stated my judgment concerning it on November 4th, 1912, as soon as complaint was made to me of its general circulation. Inasmuch as I did not wish to give this document, which I judged to be spurious, any notoriety whatsoever, I refrained from its public condemnation until the time when a general complaint was made to me and I thought it my duty to publicly condemn it."

Copied from Congressional Record, Washington, D. C., Vol. 49, Pt. 4, Feb. 15, 1913, P. 3219.

The Congressional Committee, to which the matter was referred reported in part as follows:

"The committee cannot condemn too strongly the publication of the false and libelous article referred to in the paper of Mr. Bonniwell and which was the spurious Knights of Columbus Oath, a copy of which is appended to the paper."

Copied from Congressional Record, Washington, D. C., Vol. 49, Pt. 4, Feb. 15, 1913, P. 3221.

This shows that the "fake oath" IS A FAKE, and it explains how it got into the Congressional Record.

In addition to the reference made in the Congressional Record showing up this "fake oath," its false and malicious character was shown in two court proceedings, one in Waterville, Minn., tried on July 29, 1914, and one in Philadelphia, Pa., tried on January 30, 1914.

The Waterville case was a criminal libel brought by E. M. Lawless, the editor of the Waterville Sentinel, against A. M. Morrison and C. E. Morrison, father and son, editors and publishers of the Mankato Morning Journal, of Mankato, Minn.

The libel consisted in the charging of Lawless with having taken the "fake" Knights of Columbus "oath," which is the same "fake oath" so largely circulated in Marion County.

The trial was presided over by Judge George J. Dressel. The District Attorney who prosecuted the case was Francis J. Hanzle, of Montgomery, Prosecuting Attorney for Lesueur County, who was assisted by Attorney Thomas Hessian, of Lesueur. The defendants were represented by Owen Morris of St. Paul.

A jury was selected, and the Rev. Thomas Billing, the resident Methodist minister of Waterville, was chosen on the jury.

At the trial reputable citizens gave evidence that the "fake oath" was a vile fake and that the obligation above set out is the true obligation of the Knights of Columbus.

The defendants at the trial made no attempt to establish the authenticity of the "fake oath," but threw themselves on the mercy of the court and tried to show that there was no intentional libel on Mr. Lawless.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, which was read by the foreman, Rev. Thomas Billing, and the court imposed a jail sentence of thirty days.

In the Philadelphia case two men, Megonegal and Stage, were charged jointly with conspiracy to defame several members of the Knights of Columbus by causing the "fake oath" to be circulated.

At the hearing it appeared that the "fake oath" had been bought in bulk from the Menace in the beginning, but afterwards Megonegal had done the printing on his own account.

The Menace was called upon by counsel for these two men to give them some assistance, and it replied in a letter, dated March 5, 1913, and addressed to Leroy N. King, attorney for the defendants:

"We do not have any evidence that the oath is the one which is taken by the Knights of Columbus. We feel sure that it would be folly for you to base your defense on the authenticity of this document."

The case came on to trial at the Quarter Sessions Court in Philadelphia on January 30, 1914, before Judge Robert W. Wilson. The District Attorney was Joseph Taulane, who was assisted by Attorneys Owen J. Roberts and Joseph P. Gaffney. The defendants, in addition to Mr. King, had Peter F. MacLaren. Evidence was introduced that the "fake oath" was utterly false, and that no Knight of Columbus ever took it.

Megonegal pleaded guilty and Stage pleaded nolle. Whereupon, at the request of the plaintiffs, the sentence was suspended.

Knowing that the "fake oath" is false, we hold that all good citizens will join us in denouncing its circulation in Marion County and in Indiana, to the end that people of all creeds may dwell in peace and harmony as becomes the highest ideals of true and patriotic American citizenship.

- ALEX C. AYRES, Attorney.  
H. C. PARKER, Physician,  
AQUILLA Q. JONES, Attorney.  
JOHN G. WILLIAMS, Attorney  
HUGH McK. LANDON, Capitalist.  
FREDERICK M. AYRES, Pres. L.  
S. Ayres & Co.  
L. O. HAMILTON, Pres. Hamilton,  
Harris & Co.  
LINNEAS C. BOYD, Capitalist.  
GUSTAVE A. SCHNULL, of Schnull  
& Co.  
ALBERT P. SMITH, Attorney.  
J. M. McINTOSH, Pres. Nat'l City  
Bank.  
AUGUST M. KUHN, Treas. Aetna  
Trust & Savings Co.  
JOHN RAUCH, Clerk Marion Cir-  
cuit Court.  
G. A. EFROYMSON, Pres. H. P.  
Wasson Co.  
CHESTER P. WILSON, Pres. Inter-  
state Public Service Co.  
FRANK S. C. WICKS, Minister.  
HENRY M. DOWNING, Attorney.  
HENRY H. HORN BROOK, Att'y.  
FRANK E. GAVIN, Attorney.  
DICK MILLER, Broker.  
HUGH DOUGHERTY, Vice Pres.  
Fletcher Savings & Trust Co.  
J. W. STICKNEY, Gen. Mgr. Cen-  
tral Union Telephone Co.  
THOMAS A. WYNNE, Vice Pres.  
and Tr. Indianapolis L't & Heat Co.
- LOUIS NEWBERGER, Attorney.  
HENRY LAWRENCE, Mgr. Clay-  
pool Hotel.  
OTTO N. FRENZEL, Pres. Mer-  
chants National Bank.  
FRANK WHEELER, of Wheeler &  
Schebler.  
JOHN J. APPEL, Real Estate Agent.  
C. G. SANDER, of Sander & Recker.  
JOHN W. MINOR, Secretary and  
Treasurer Sentinel Printing Co.  
EVANS WOOLEN, Vice Pres. Amer-  
ican National Bank.  
WILLIAM FORTUNE, Pres. Indian-  
apolis Telephone Co.  
J. D. FORREST, General Manager  
Citizens Gas Co.  
CHALMERS BROWN, Pres. Re-  
serve Loan Life Insurance Co.  
F. F. HUTCHINS, Physician.  
WILSON S. DOAN, Attorney.  
EDWARD E. GATES, Attorney.  
OSCAR SCHMIDT, Pres. Old Town  
Co.  
ELMER E. STEVENSON, Att'y.  
SAMUEL O. PICKENS, Att'y.  
SOL MEYER, Pres. Meyer-Kiser Bk.  
LINTON A. COX, Attorney.  
FRANK T. EDENHARTER, Att'y.  
JOHN F. ROBBINS, Att'y.  
THOS. J. OWENS, Secretary Meri-  
dian Life Insurance Co.  
GEORGE J. MAROTT, Shoe Mer-  
chant.

The above appeared in the *Indianapolis News*, October 17, and in the *Star*, October 18. All signatures are those of prominent non-Catholic men of the City.

## COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES.

### ACTIVE WORK PROPOSED.

At the annual meeting of the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus held at St. Paul, Minn., August 4, 5, 6 last the following resolution was adopted:—

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors be authorized to expend a sum not exceeding Fifty Thousand Dollars to study the causes, investigate conditions, and suggest remedies for the religious prejudice that has been manifest through press and rostrum in a malicious and scurrilous campaign that is hostile to the spirit of American freedom and liberty and contrary to God's Law of "Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself," and that the Supreme Knight shall be authorized to appoint a Commission to be known as the Commission on Religious Prejudices, consisting of five members of the Order to conduct such investigation under the direction of the Board of Directors and to ascertain exactly who are the persons behind these movements and who are financing them, and who will learn what the authorities at Washington can and will do toward eliminating the most disturbing menace to the peace and prosperity of our land.

The Supreme Knight has appointed on the Committee as above authorized:

Chairman, Col. P. H. Callahan of Louisville, Ky., Joseph Scott of Los Angeles, Cal., Thomas A. Lawler of Lansing, Mich., A. G. Bagley of Vancouver, B. C., Joseph C. Pelletier of Boston, Mass.

The Committee will submit its plan to the Archbishops of the United States at their meeting in Washington, D. C. on November 17, and to the Archbishops of Canada by mail.

Those having any helpful suggestions are asked to submit them without delay to Mr. Callahan, Chairman of the Committee.

## K. OF C. EDITION OF CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPÆDIA.

We cannot close without calling special notice to the K. of C. edition of the Catholic Encyclopædia, that monumental work so highly approved by the Hierarchy, scholarly and students.

*Supreme Council Voted to Allow the Publishers of the Catholic Encyclopædia to Issue a Special K. of C. Edition for Sale to Knights and their Friends*  
—Set will cost \$29.

The Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus has voted to allow the Encyclopædia Press to issue a special Knights of Columbus edition of the Catholic Encyclopædia to be sold to the Knights and their friends.

The Rev. John J. Wynne, S. J., associate editor of the Catholic Encyclopædia appeared before the Supreme Council, and on behalf of the Encyclopædia Press, offered to put this special edition of the Catholic Encyclopædia on the market at a cost of \$29 for the fifteen volumes and the Index.

The issuing of this K. of C. edition of the Catholic Encyclopædia is in keeping with the work of the organization which already has issued large editions of two of Dr. James J. Walsh's most important books (The Popes and Sciences and The Thirteenth Greatest of Centuries) at a cost which brings them within the reach of many who would otherwise be unable to procure them. The Knights of Columbus deserve the commendation and support of every Catholic worthy of the name for this latest evidence of their activity in promoting the spread of Catholic literature, in order that the laity may become thoroughly conversant with the teaching and practices of the Church and be able to give reasons for the faith that is in them when they are questioned by those who are not of the fold.—From *Catholic Standard Times*, of Phila., Pa.

## AFFIDAVIT OF SUPREME OFFICERS.

We James A. Flaherty, William J. McGinley and Joseph C. Pelletier, Supreme Knight, Supreme Secretary and Supreme Advocate respectively of the Knights of Columbus do on oath depose and say that we are intimately familiar with all the ritual, ceremonial, and proceedings of the Knights of Columbus in the initiation, reception, degree work, promotion, and dealings with applicants and members; that no oath is required, asked for, received or given directly or indirectly in any of the foregoing, or otherwise in the Knights of Columbus; that the alleged Knights of Columbus or Fourth Degree Oath is absolutely and unqualifiedly false; that no such oath or pledge or oblation, or anything similar thereto has ever obtained, been given or received in the Knights of Columbus; that the obligation published in the foregoing pages of this pamphlet as given by William J. McGinley under oath at the trial in Waterville, Minnesota, is the true obligation taken or given in the Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree; that no obligation, promise or pledge asked from or given by an applicant or member in the Knights of Columbus is oath-bound, nor is the same even secret as against duly constituted civil authority or the requirements of the Catholic Church.

In witness whereof we hereunto set our hands this 13th day of November, 1914.

(Signed) JAMES J. FLAHERTY,  
WILLIAM J. MCGINLEY,  
JOSEPH C. PELLETIER.

State of Connecticut.  
New Haven, ss.

November 13, 1914.

Then personally appeared before me, James A. Flaherty, William J. McGinley and Joseph C. Pelletier and made oath to the truth of the foregoing statement by them subscribed.

BERNARD E. LYNCH,  
Notary Public.



