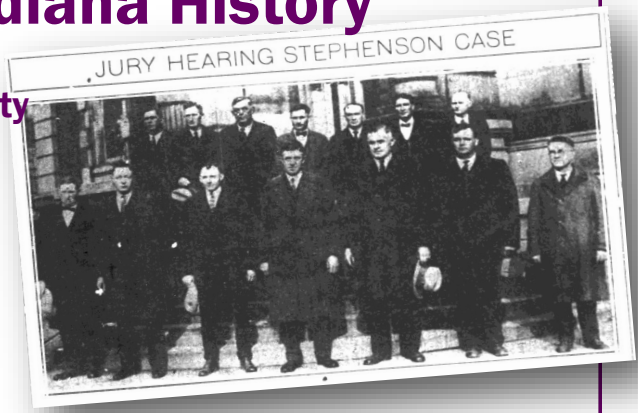




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This Week in Indiana History

**November 14th, 1925:
 D.C. Stephenson Found Guilty
 in Oberholtzer Trial**

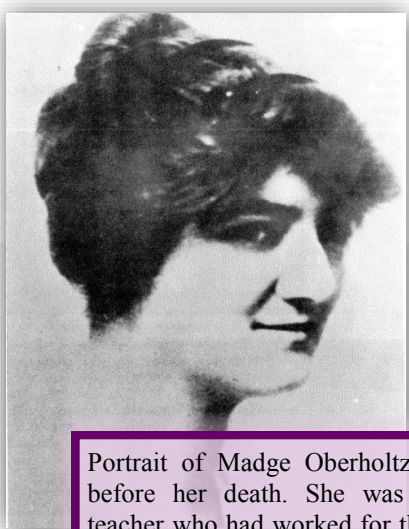


On this day, D.C. Stephenson, the leader of the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana during the height of its power, was convicted of murder in the Madge Oberholtzer trial. The guilty verdict and Stephenson's sentence to life in prison, preceded a rapid decline in membership of the Ku Klux Klan, ultimately discrediting it as a political force in the Midwest.

After several unsuccessful appeals and being denied a pardon, Stephenson released a list of prominent Indiana politicians who were on the Ku Klux Klan's payroll. It contained numerous high ranking officials, plus the mayor of Indianapolis and Indiana Governor Ed Jackson. Stephenson was paroled in 1950, but he was soon sent back to prison in Indiana for parole violations. He was discharged six years later by Governor Craig.

"My Word Is Law in Indiana;" "I've Got Out of Worse Scrapes Than This," Stephenson's Alleged Remarks, Keynote of Prosecutor.

**READS GIRL'S STATEMENT;
 CITES ITS SUBSTANTIATION**



Portrait of Madge Oberholtzer shortly before her death. She was a school teacher who had worked for the Indiana Young People's Reading Circle, a special section of the Indiana Department of Public Instruction.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION? SEE THE RESOURCES BELOW:

- ISL Indiana Division, Newspaper Clippings Files, "Stephenson, Drew Curtis"
- ISL Indiana Division, Indianapolis Newspaper Card Index, "Stephenson, D.C."
- D.C. Stephenson Collection / ISL Rare Books & Manuscripts L246
- The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana Politics* / ISL 363 C359K 1972
- Grand Dragon: D.C. Stephenson and the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana* / ISL 322.4 L973G
- "Murder Wasn't Very Pretty: The Rise and Fall of D.C. Stephenson," Abbott, Karen, *Smithsonian Magazine*, August 30, 2012. Article online: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/murder-wasnt-very-pretty-the-rise-and-fall-of-dc-stephenson>
- The D. C. Stephenson Trial: An Account* [website] by Doug Linder (2010). Link: <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/stephenson/stephensonaccount.html>

Photo from *The Dragon and the Cross* by Richard K. Tucker / ISLM HS2330.K63 T84 1991