

KLAN EX-DRAGON HELD IN CAROLINA

He and Nine Are Accused of
Accessory After Murder

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SUMTER, S. C., Sept. 17—Robert E. Scoggin, former Ku Klux Klan grand dragon, was arrested by the state police today after he and nine klan associates had been charged with conspiracy to commit robbery and accessory after the fact of murder.

The arrest grew out of a confrontation near here Sunday night between a new klan organization formed by Mr. Scoggin and the rival United Klans of America. Mr. Scoggin lost his position as United Klan grand dragon while serving in Federal prison for contempt of congress.

The imperial wizard of the United Klan is Robert Shelton of Alabama, who also served in prison on a contempt conviction.

Willie L. Odom, 50 years old, who operated a small grocery store near here, was shot and killed Sunday night while leaving the rally of the Scoggins group, the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan, realm of South Carolina.

Mr. Scoggin became embroiled in a struggle for klan leadership in South Carolina after his release from prison in January. He was succeeded as grand dragon by Harry Gilliam, a neighbor in Spartanburg.

More Warrants Due

Additional warrants will be issued, probably tomorrow, according to Sumter County Sheriff I. Byrd Parnell. None of the 10 charged so far are Sumter County residents.

Chief J. P. Strom of the State Law Enforcement Division coordinated with Sheriff Parnell's deputies in making arrests and in conducting the investigation leading to the warrants, Mr. Parnell said.

In addition to Mr. Scoggin, others charged in warrants were Glenn Cook, James Howard Kniphfer and Raymond Scott of Aiken, Charles L. Murphy of Enoree, Walter Elrod of Williamston, Preston Cox and Joe Turner of Florence, G. E. Pritchard of Laurens and Carl N. Wildes of Andrews.

By late afternoon Messrs. Scoggin, Kniphfer, Cox, Turner, Wildes, Murphy and Elrod had been arrested.

According to Sheriff Parnell, who attended the rally Sunday night at the Sumter Raceway, security guards of the host klans attempted to take a tape recorder from Walter B. Brown of Sumter, a member of the rival United Klans. Mr. Brown kept the recorder but was told to leave. During a scuffle, a window in his car was smashed. As he drove to the exit, he was stopped by other klan security guards, who attacked him.

Mr. Odom followed in another car with his wife and two sons. Sheriff Parnell says that witnesses saw the guards attempt to stop Mr. Odom, but he fired a .22-caliber pistol six times as he sped away. There was return fire from the security guards, and a .38-caliber slug hit Mr. Odom in the back of the head, apparently killing him instantly. His car crashed into a ditch, and his wife suffered two cracked ribs.

The boys, aged 12 and 17, escaped uninjured. "Nobody was hit, as far as we know," Sheriff Parnell said of the shots fired by Mr. Odom.

Mr. Brown, a used-car salesman in Sumter, declined to comment today on the events of Sunday night. "I wouldn't even say if I was there or not," he said in a telephone interview from his home.