

CASSIUS CLAY'S DUELS.

ACCOUNTS SAID TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN BY HIMSELF.

A Set-to with Knives, in Which He got Sixteen Wounds and the Other Man Died—His Trouble with Tom Marshall and with Brown of Kentucky.

Gen. Cassius Marcellus Clay—statesman, writer, thinker, duellist, Minister to Russia during the first administration of Abraham Lincoln, a relic of days that are past—whose recent troubles with the wife that left him alone in his fortified castle, White Hall, in Madison county, Ky., has again attracted public attention to his interesting personality, has a cold-blooded way of alluding to the numerous bloody affrays in which he has been a principal. An old friend lately said that he met the battle-scarred warrior not long ago, after a long separation. He congratulated Gen. Clay on his health.

'Yes,' the sage of White Hall replied. 'I have not been confined to bed for over thirty years except once, which was from a slight indisposition occasioned by an encounter with a man named Turner of Foxtown.'

Gen. Clay killed Turner with a bowie knife in the 're-encounter,' and the 'slight indisposition' was caused by sixteen knife wounds, his antagonist having repeatedly driven his bowie to the hilt in Clay's breast and side. Turner died in an hour, confidently believing that his foe had preceded him to the unknown beyond.

Gen. Clay is not communicative, and the privilege of listening to him relate his experiences on the field of honor is one accorded very few persons, and it is something long to be remembered.

'My first duel,' said Gen. Clay not long ago, 'occurred when I was 23 years old—nearly 65 years ago—and terminated without either party firing a shot. I was engaged to be married and a rival suitor, who had been disappointed, wrote a letter to my sweetheart's mother. The man was a doctor and his name was Declarey. I went to Louisville to find him, and took my friend James S. Rollins, who became Gen. Rollins during the war, with me. As soon as I went there I went to a cooper shop and got a good tough hickory cane about as thick as your finger.'

'Well, sir, I saw Dr. Declarey on the street. I went up to him and asked him if his name was Declarey. He replied that it was, and then I told him that I would like to have a talk with him. This was one of the main streets of Louisville, and although I intended to cane him, I did not intend to do it where a crowd would rush in and prevent my giving him the punishment he deserved. So I quietly turned our promenade off into a side street. In the meantime my friend walked along the other side of the street and watched me. When we reached a side street I said: Dr. Declarey, I am Cassius M. Clay, about whom you have taken the trouble to write this letter, and I would like to know if you can give me any explanation of your action.' He said nothing, so I raised my cane and began to strike him. He cried out and a crowd soon collected, but Rollins, by spreading out his arms and running in again and again, pretending to separate us, actually kept the crowd back until I was able to give him a good caning. A few hours later I got a challenge from him. We fixed a place in Indiana, just over the river, and the next day I was there on time. A great mob of Declarey's friends were on the ground, and Gen. Rollins refused to allow the fight to go on. We there-upon chose another place, but Declarey's mob followed us there. The next day was to be my wedding day, and I had to be on hand. Declarey wanted me to come after I was married, but I had decided objections to breaking up my honeymoon in that way. He afterward said he intended to cowhide me the next time he saw me, and I went to Louisville to give him a chance. I went into the dining-room of his hotel and leaned against a pillar to wait for him. As I stood there I heard some one behind me rise. I turned and saw Declarey. He was as pale as death, and I saw the coward in his eye. He walked out of the room and did not return. A man who acted like that could not, in those days, be respected in Kentucky, and Declarey committed suicide the next morning by cutting arteries.

'Curious, isn't it,' mused the General, 'that a man will have the bravery to commit suicide and still not have enough physical courage to fight? I have had a number of such instances in my life. It was so with Tom Marshall, who was so famous as an orator in Kentucky. There had been for years a feud between the Clays and the Marshalls. Henry Clay, you know, had a duel with Humphrey Marshall, and Tom Marshall and myself were enemies for years. My first trouble with him was at the time I was editor of the True American, and Marshall headed the mob which was raised to kill me and demolish the paper. Well, the mob attacked me, but I was not killed.

'Soon after this I went to the Mexican war as captain of another company of the same regiment, and I decided to settle my trouble with him before we got through the war. He was drunk about half the time, and I believe he often cultivated drunkenness in order to say mean things and not be called to account for them. I expected to have a duel with him, and I got a stone and sharpened my sword until it shone like silver and had an edge like a razor. I gave him one or two chances to challenge me, but he did not do so, and at last one day, when we were pitching camp, Marshall rode into my quarters. He may have been drunk and he may have mistaken my company for his.

'At any rate, he came up to me and made some insulting remark. I rose and said: 'Tom Marshall, we may as well settle our feud, and row is as good a time as any. Get down from your horse and we will fight it out.'

'He replied: 'Not now. Some other time.'

'I here drew my sword and said: 'The time for men who wear swords is now. You chose your own time to mob me at Lexington, and you are a coward if you refrain on account of your surroundings.'

'Marshall hereupon rode over to his tent. In a few moments he came back with his pistol. I saw him and went into my tent and got mine. I came out with one in each hand. They were cocked, and I said, 'I am ready for you.'

'He was a coward and he was afraid to fire. He turned his horse and rode back to his tent. That same evening he tried to drown himself in the R. Grande River, but the men saw him and prevented him. He was afraid to fight, but he was not afraid to commit suicide. Had we fought with swords I would have carved him up like a pancake.'

The story of Gen. Clay's canvass for Congress against Wickliffe gives one an insight not only into the fighting character of this fire eater, but also affords a peep into that phase of Southern life that is now, happily, extinct. He once told the story in these words:

'During the campaign Wickliffe introduced my wife's name into one of his speeches. I challenged him and we fired at ten paces. Both of us missed, and I raised my pistol up into the air and demanded a second fire. The seconds would not permit this, and we left the grounds without a reconciliation or an apology on either side. As I look over the matter now, I don't believe our seconds had loaded the pistols with balls, and I did not see how I could have missed.

'Well, Wickliffe here had the worst of the fight, and during the canvass for Congress I was making a very good opposition to him, much to the disgust of the Pro-Slavery party. He had a handbill which he read during his speech. We had our speeches together, and when he brought out this bill I always arose and asked if I might interrupt him. He would politely consent, and I would then say the handbill he had read was untrue and had been proven so.

'The Pro-Slavery men got tired of this, and they decided to kill me. They sent Tom Brown, who was one of the most noted bullies in Kentucky. It is said that he had had forty fights and had never lost a battle. Brown came, and he and Wickliffe, a fellow named Jacob Ashton and Ben Wood, a police bully, held a consultation, at which they loaded a pistol which Brown was to use on me the next day. I knew nothing of this, and had not my duelling pistol with me. I interrupted Wickliffe as usual and as I did so Brown struck me with his umbrella and told me that my statement was a lie.

'I saw at once that it meant fight, and when I recognized Brown I knew it meant a fight to the death. I had a long sharp bowie knife in the breast of my coat, and I jerked this out, but before I could strike Brown's friends grabbed my arms from behind and hauled me back about fifteen feet from Brown. Brown now pulled his revolver and told them to get out of the way and let him kill me. The crowd got back and I stood alone. Brown had his pistol pointed at me, and I started toward him I could see him looking along the barrel of his revolver. He took aim and waited until he thought I was near enough to give him a sure shot, and then fired. I felt the ball strike me in the breast and I thought it had gone through me, and I determined to kill him if I could before I died. I

came down on his head with a tremendous blow of the bowie knife, but did not split open the skull. I struck him again and again, and stunned him so that he was not able to fire. With one out of the knife I sliced his nose right in two, so that it separated in the middle and came out as flat as a pancake. With another blow I cut off his ear so that it hung by a shred, and with a third I put out his eye. The conspirators now seized me, and I was struck with hickory sticks and chairs, some of the blows of which I still feel.

'I broke loose from my captors and again made for Brown, and they, to keep him out of my way, picked him up and threw him over a stone fence about seven feet high, and this ended the fight. Though I was the assailed party, they afterward tried me for mayhem, and at his trial Brown confessed the conspiracy and Henry Clay defended me. Of course I was not convicted, but I felt very friendly to Brown and wrote him a note thanking him for his evidence and tell I was willing to be friends with him if he cared to be so. He refused however, to bury the hatchet, and when I remembered his condition I did not wonder at it. The doctors had patched him up pretty well, but he was a horrible-looking object, and I expected that he would insist upon a duel with me, or would attack me and have his revenge. I met him several times afterward, however, and he never touched me. I have no doubt that he stayed in Lexington intending to kill me, but that the probability is that he had not the moral courage to attack me.'

'Where did Brown's ball strike you, General?' 'It struck me just over the heart,' replied Gen. Clay, 'and I would have been killed but for one thing. The scabbard of my bowie knife was tipped with silver, and in jerking the knife I pulled this scabbard up so that it was just over my heart. Brown's bullet struck the scabbard and embedded itself in the silver, and we found the ball there. There was a red spot just over my heart, and the whole seemed almost providential.'

Although Gen. Clay never travelled without a brace of pistols in his satchel, his favorite weapon was a bowie knife, which he always carried concealed under his coat. During a fight at a political meeting once he was stabbed in the lung. He drew his bowie knife and rushed upon the man who had been responsible for the outbreak. The crowd got out of his way, and he found a cleared path to the man who had incited the riot. With a shout of anger he plunged the knife into the man's abdomen, and then, exclaiming, 'I die for my country,' he fell fainting to the floor. He was carried home, and for many days hung between life and death. Upon the day that he was able for the first time to leave his bed the man whom he had stabbed died.

Her Quandary

Ethel—Oh, dear! I don't know what to think! Algy asked me last night if I wouldn't like to have something around the house that I could love and that would love me.

Edith—well? Ethel—well, I don't know whether he means himself or whether he is thinking of buying me a dog.

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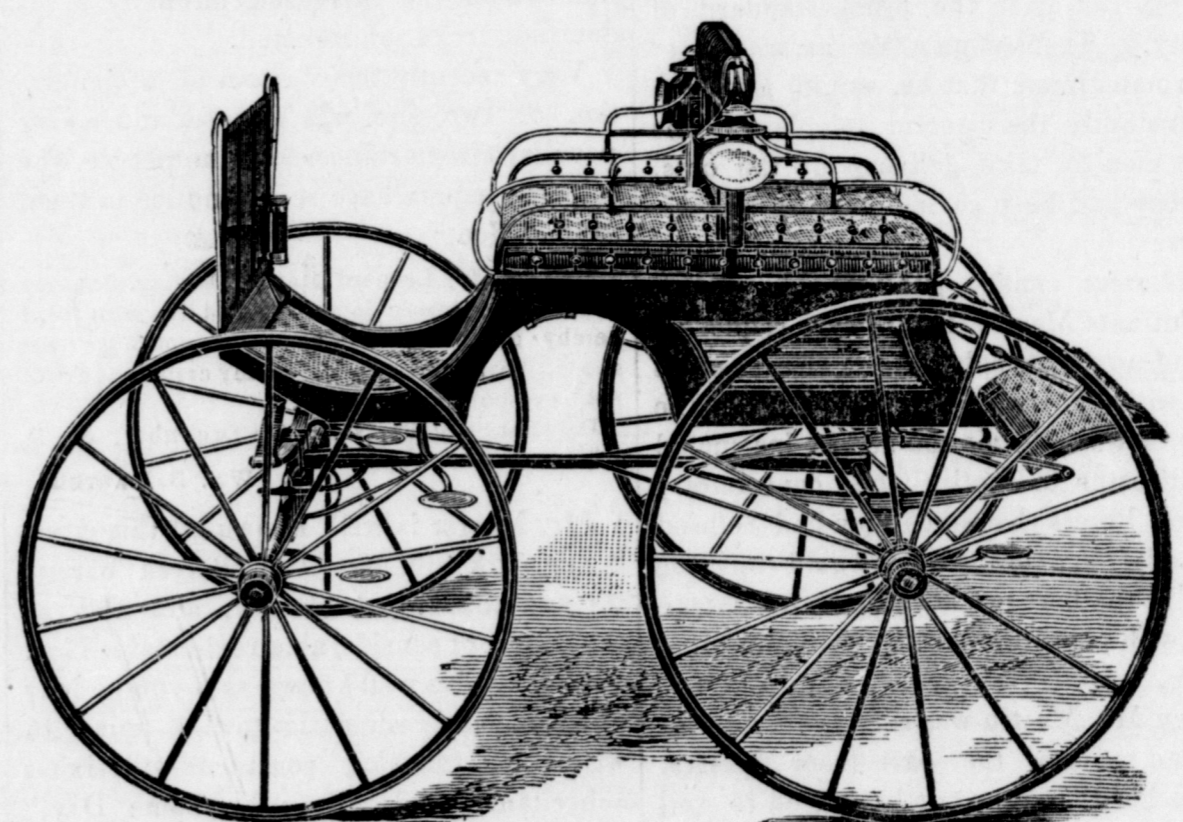
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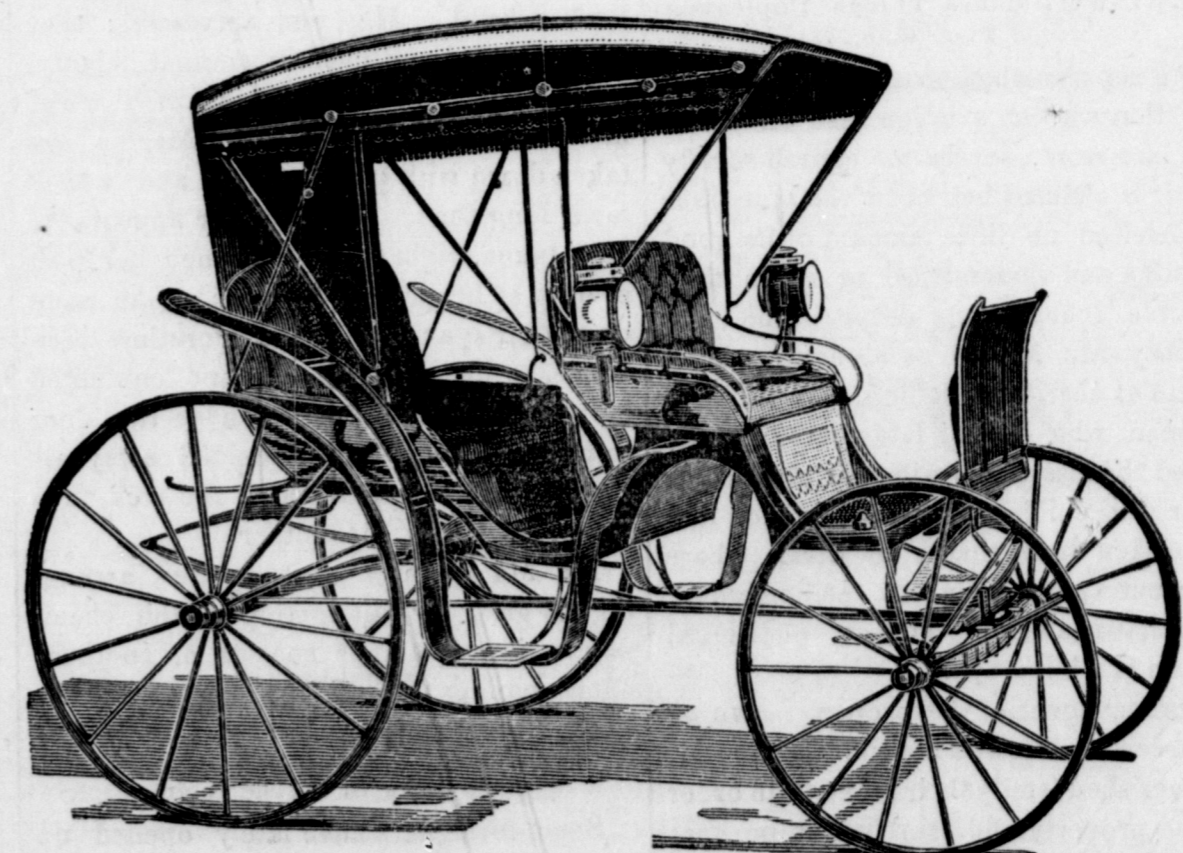
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