A BOY'S DOINGS IN A FEUD.

ONLY 9 YEARS OLD, BUT WELL ABLE TO USE A KNIFE.

An Incident in the Hatfield-McCoy War in the Mountains of Kentucky—It was a Serious Case of Mistaken Identity.

The arrest and imprisonment of Alexander Messer, one of the Hatfield faction, not long ago, for a murder committed in the course of the Hatfield-McCoy feud, recalls the fact that the crime which Messer committed was due to a mistake made by mountain officers in arresting a boy of 13 for a deed done by a boy of 9. The part which this boy—Budd McCoy—took in the feud has never been told in print.

Budd McCoy was 9 years old at the time to which reference is made in this story, and his home was on the Blackberry branch of Pond Creek, in Pike county, Kentucky. It ought to be said now that this is a true story, for otherwise the reader might think that the writer, in an attempt to be sensational, had drawn the long bow. The McCoy family was a large one. Budd had eight brothers and six sisters, all of whom were older than he, some of them being smarried and having children quite as old as their uncle Budd. Besides these brothers and sisters, Budd had so many cousins living in Pike county that he couldn't for the life of him remember half their names, though he generally saw them all from two to three times a year, when they all went to the outdoor church gatherings, which in the mountains of Kentucky and West Virginia are called associations.

Over the State line in West Virginia was a family that consisted of no end of brothers and sisters, with cousins, also, just like the McCoys, whose name was Hatfield. Anderson Hatfield was the name of the father of this family, and Randolph McCoy was the father of Budd. Between the McCoys and the Hatfields there was a deadly feud. As they say down there, the two families were at war, and that means that whenever three or four McCoys caught a Hatfield out by himself, they would hide in the brush on the mountain side and shoot him in the back, while the Hatfields were just as anxious to kill McCoys, and just as cowardly in their way of doing it.

In 1882, the year that Budd was 9 years old, but one man had been actually killed in this way. His name was Bill Stayton, and he was one of the cousins of the Hatfields. He had been waylaid by two of Budd's cousins and shot to death because he had once thrown a stone at Budd's father and knocked him down, and thus openly avowed himself with the Hatfields. Little Budd knew all about the feud from the time it began, when his father sued one of the Hatfields for the value of two long-nosed hogs and got beaten. He had listened to his father and older brothers as they discussed the chances of meeting the Hatfields and shooting them and getting shot by them, and the one thing that worried him most was that his father said he was too young yet to learn to shoot, and so he must wait an awful time, it seemed to him—two whole years—before he could hope to kill a Hatfield. However, he got a chance at one of them much quicker than he anticipated, and the revenge taken for the blood that he helped to shed was horrifying.

On the first Monday in August, 1882, there was a general election in Pike county, and among other candidates before the people was an elderly cousin of Budd who wanted to be Justice of the Peace. Now it happened that this man, whose name was Thomas Stafford, had married one of the Hatfield girls, and so was considered a member of that family also, as was a discreet man who had kept friendly with both families, and the consequence was that not only Budd's father and older brothers turned out on election day to help Mr. Stafford get elected, but the Hatfields, who lived in West Virginia and could not, of course, vote in Kentucky, also came over to the polls to work for the same end. Little Budd and his next older brother, Randolph, Jr., a lad of 13, both went to the election ground to play with the other boys sure to be there.

Up there in the mountains the elections are held in the open air. This time the judges of election had a table placed on the piazza under a big beech tree over on Blackberry Creek (not the branch Budd lived on), and the ballot box stood on the table before them. With the two families there interested in obtaining a common end, what easier than for a discreet man like Stafford to get them together, to shake hands and become friends again? It was done. But unfortunately there was no law against selling whiskey there then, and in their excess of good feeling the Hatfields and McCoys all drank heartily from the same jug of moonshine whiskey. If whiskey is bad, at such gatherings, but moonshine is the worst sort, and, to make matters still worse, when the jug of corn whiskey was empty a jug full of mountain-made applejack took its place. The mixture made the men ugly.

After emptying the jug of applejack Talbot McCoy, one of Budd's grown-up brothers, was anxious for more, but had no money to buy it. Then he met one of the Hatfields who had borrowed $1.75 of him a long time before. Talbot asked for the money, and the next thing anybody noticed was the two men fighting. Immediately there was a rush made by the men about the polls, and the fighters were separated and arrested by two constables.

But the fight was destined to go on. A McCoy had hit a Hatfield, and all the ill feeling that had existed between the families was roused once more, and the truce which Stafford had brought about was forgotten. Deacon Ellison Hatfield, a brother of Anderson Hatfield, chief of the Hatfield faction, was the one to pick up the fight for his side. The Deacon, in spite of his church office, had taken too much moonshine whiskey and was ready for a fight. Drawing a big pocket knife, he opened the blade, and with many hard words called Talbot McCoy a coward for pitching into one of the smallest of the Hatfields. The more he talked the angrier he got, and so, too, did Talbot, until finally the constable who was holding Talbot said that the Deacon was going to cut Talbot anyhow, and so concluded to get out of the way and let the two men fight it out.

The instant he was released Talbot sprang back two steps, and with a quick motion drew a pocket knife and opened the blade. Then both men stooped a bit and jumped for each other with murder in their hearts, while the ring of eager mountaineers about them swayed to and fro as each one strove to see every move made. Talbot, who was the younger and quicker, drove his knife into the Deacon's left side, missing a fatal wound only because the point of the knife struck a rib and glanced off. The Deacon's knife descended on Talbot's head, slashing through the soft black hat and clear across the top of his head, laying open the scalp to the skull for over five inches.

At this the two separated and then closed in with a bound. Neither uttered a word or cry, although the Deacon's knife closed on his hand, cutting it half way across, so that he had to drop the weapon. While Talbot piled his stabbing the Deacon again and again with the agility of an Italian desperado. But the Deacon, although mortally wounded, was a man of great strength and pluck, and closed in on his younger opponent, intending to throw him. Thereafter he had the advantage, for Talbot could no longer use his knife so well.

As the two men struggled from side to side, swaying first against one part of the ring and then another, the men of both families began to draw their weapons—here a pistol, there a knife. Squeezed in between two full grown men, with his head stretched eagerly forward, watching every movement, stood little Budd McCoy, with an open pocketknife clutched in his right hand. After a little the two fighters in their struggle half stopped in front of him, and in an instant he had reached out and plunged his knife repeatedly into the legs of Deacon Hatfield. Two of the blows were below the knee, but one was in the hip, and it was a deep cut for so small a hand to make.

Again the men struggled away, and again they got back before the boy, who piled his knife as before. This time he was seen by one of the Hatfields, who called a neighbor's attention to the act. But before they could do anything toward seeing fair play the Deacon by a last desperate effort threw Talbot McCoy to the ground, and, picking up a stone, raised it aloft to crush the skull of his enemy.

Among the spectators was Farmer McCoy, another brother of Talbot. He had drawn his pistol, as he said, to see fair play. Now he could stand the sight no longer, and shot the Deacon in the back.

This ended the fight. The Deacon fell to the ground dying, while Farmer McCoy fled up the road with a lot of bullets from a Hatfield pistol flying past him, while young Budd threw his knife into the creek and slipped away unseen.

At the same moment Randolph McCoy, Jr., the boy of 13, came running up from a spring some hundred yards below, where he had been playing with a companion. He had heard the shooting and arrived just in time to see his brother Farmer arrested and brought back, and Talbot also arrested. Then the Hatfield who had seen Budd stabbing the Deacon's legs pointed out Randolph to the officers and accused him of the crime of which little Budd was really guilty. It was an awful mistake, but a natural one. People could not be expected to distinguish between two small brothers in a family of fifteen.

Young Randolph, made wild by an intuition of his coming fate, an intuition that did not yet oppress his older brothers, protested his innocence, but his eagerness and fear only convinced the officers that he was guilty.

The officers kept the three prisoners in a house near by over night and next morning started for Pikeville to put them in jail to await trial. But they never got there. Old Anderson Hatfield, Deacon Ellison's brother—Bad Anse, he was and still is called—with a great mob of relatives and friends, took the prisoners from the officers and carried them over Fog River to West Virginia, and put them in a school house there to await the result of the Deacon's wounds.

The Deacon had been carried over the river also, and lay in the house of Anderson Ferrald at the mouth of Mate Creek. The school house where the prisoners were kept was half a mile away. The surgeon who was summoned found twenty-seven wounds in the Deacon's body, one of which split his left lung half in two, and several others were as deadly, but still the wounded man did not die until Wednesday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Meantime the prisoners were kept lying on the school house floor bound with a rope so securely that their arms swelled to double size, and it was impossible for them to rest or sleep. Hatfields, armed with all sorts of weapons, stood guard and discussed with each other the parts of the bodies of the prisoners that would be most painful when "shot full of lead." The mother of the prisoners and Talbot's wife, with a baby four months old in her arms, came to see them. There were tears and pleadings, such as might have melted the heart of any one but a savage. But they were vain. The women were even brutally taunted with the fate these boys were to suffer. At last the hour arrived when the deacon ceased to breathe. A messenger on a mule rode madly up to the school house with the news, and then with cries like wild beasts many of the younger Hatfields ran around the school house peering through the cracks in the hope of getting a shot at the prisoners without endangering their own friends. But Valentine Hatfield, another brother of the deacon and a Justice of the Peace withal, stopped that by telling them to wait till night and then they could have their revenge.

Worn out by their long sufferings, the prisoners broke down and wept, but Talbot, who was, after all, a manly sort of a fellow for a mountaineer, soon recovered his composure. Turning to old Bad Anse and to Valentine Hatfield he said:

"Gentlemen, when you shoot me I want you to look me in the face." Then he pleaded for the lad, Randolph. It appears that at this time both Bad Anse and his brother Valentine had been convinced that they had got the wrong one of the two little boys, and had determined to spare Randolph's life, but to teach him a lesson they meant to make him witness the death of his older brothers.

As night came on the prisoners were taken out of the school and driven down the road toward Tug River, the dividing line between Kentucky and West Virginia. As they reached the river, Farmer McCoy, overcome by fear, fainted and fell on the sand, but water was sprinkled in his face in order that he might be revived and realize his fate. The three were driven then over into Kentucky, and there, on the edge of the woods were tied to some pawpaw bushes.

Talbot, who had remained silent and proud, was tied with his back to his executioners. Farmer, who was half dead with fear, was tied facing them, and the lad, little Randolph, was tied kneeling and facing his older brothers. Then the gang formed in line a few feet away, with their arms pointed at the two older brothers. Old Bad Anse shouted to his brother Valentine, who stood over on the Virginia side:

"All ready."

"Take aim! fire!" shouted Valentine.

There was a roar of guns and rifles, and Talbot and Farmer were no more. Their bodies were shot full of bullets.

The boy on his knees could only gasp with horror at the awful scene. The men formed in line and marched down the path a few rods on their way back across the river. Then one of the gang, named Alexander Messer, thought of the possibility of this boy becoming a witness against them should they ever be brought to trial for what they had done. Speaking to Bad Anse, who commanded the gang, he said:

"Dead men tell no tales."

"Go, you," said Bad Anse.

He obeyed. Loading both barrels of his shotgun with heavy charges of powder and rifle bullets, he went back. The boy did not notice him till he was but a few feet away, and could only give one wailing cry for mercy, which was heard by an older brother a quarter of a mile away, and then Messer fired both barrels of the gun. The whole of the boy's head was shot off, and a piece of the skull was afterward picked up ten feet from where he knelt.

Young as was little Budd, he fully realized that it was his act that had caused the arrest and murder of his brother Randolph. Six months later he was attacked with a sort of fever common in the mountains. From the first, he told his mother that he should not get well, and he did not. Within seven days the disease had run its course, much sooner than usual, and he was dead. The last words he spoke were an incoherent reference to the murder of his brother Randolph.

Of course the feud has not been ended. The laws of the States are openly defied, the officers seem to care nothing about it, and one deed of violence has followed another. Probably many other murders are yet to come, and not until this wild country is opened up by railroads and settled by law-abiding citizens from other States will life and property become safe from bushwacking and mob rule.

MEXICO'S WHITE HOUSE.

The Magnificent Pile of Marble that Maximilian Once Occupied.

From the Omaha Bee.

President Diaz has moved his official residence out to the Castle of Chapultepec, which becomes once more—for the first time since the unlucky Maximilian and his charming wife lived there—the "White House" of Mexico. Chapultepec is one of the loveliest spots imaginable. It is unique in itself as well as in its name—"The Hill of the Grasshopper."

Montezuma made his summer house here, and an underground passage still in existence, was made, by his direction to a point in the valley below, so that the Aztec chieftain could go and come as he pleased. Under the old cypress trees in the park the conqueror Cortez pitched his tent after the celebrated "Noche Triste," or night of sorrow, when the Aztecs fell upon the Spaniards and massacred them. Here Maximilian and the unfortunate Carlotta made love as they promenaded the magnificent marble terraces which were built by order of the "Austrain Grand Duke." Here the American army fought a bloody but decisive battle—one which has made the queer word Chapultepec familiar to American ears. One might relate numberless historical incidents connected with the spot which abounds in romantic memories, if space permitted, but the place itself demands some description.

Imagine a park of 1,000 of acres, covered with a dense growth of cypress, many of the trees 500 or 600 years old. The gray Spanish moss festooned from limb to limb adds to the picturesqueness of the scene. In the center of this park—which is surrounded by massive walls on three sides, the old aqueduct forming the barrier on the fourth—rises a precipitous mound, if such a term will express the idea. This mound is composed principally of rock, and is probably 200 feet in height. There is but one road to the top, the summit being inaccessible, except by this single route.

Upon the very apex stands the castle, completely covering the space, so that no matter from which direction you look there is a sheer descent of nearly 100 feet. The castle was built in sections, and presents no singular feature of architecture, except a peculiar double staircase that seems to have no supports. When Maximilian first saw the staircase he remarked to the architect that he would not trust his own weight upon it; whereupon the designer, with his Majesty's permission, brought a regiment of soldiers and marched them up and down the stairway ten abreast, thus demonstrating its strength. This staircase is the only one of its kind in existence, and is built of white marble and brass.

The terraces at Chapultepec are one of the sights of Mexico. They are floored with white marble, with brass balustrades, and lighted by electricity. The upper terrace extends the entire distance around the castle and is twenty-four feet wide. Exquisitely little flower gardens are located at frequent intervals, and here are blooming geraniums, fuchsias, heliotrope, and mignonette, making the air rich with perfume and adding to the brightness of the scene.

The furnishing of the castle for the reception of President Diaz has been very elaborate. The private apartments are in the northwest wing. Each room is frescoed appropriately. The chess room has a chess board in the centre of the ceiling, with the bishops, kings and queens in a merry dance about it, the pawns furnishing appropriate music from the four corners of the room. The private reception room of the President's wife is "done up" in pink silk with plush and brocade hangings to match. Every wall in the entire suit of rooms is covered with silk brocade instead of paper. The bedroom occupied by the President and his wife was elaborately and furnished at an expense of $30,000. The dinning room has a seating capacity that is limited to thirty persons. The magnificent solid silver that once belonged to the Emperor Maximilian is to be used, but the china and glassware are not in keeping with the magnificence of the silver; one of the soup tureens requires four men to carry it, when filled.

President Diaz is greatly loved by his followers, and he will doubtless make the castle of Chapultepec quite as brilliant as it was in the days when the Austrian and Empress Carlotta drove their coach and gray horses and golden state chariot up the hill and made the castle ring in accordance with the approaching and retiring of the gay cavalcade, while the Emperor Maximilian is to be used, but the china and glassware are not in keeping with the magnificence of the silver; one of the soup tureens requires four men to carry it, when filled.

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