

CRAIG TOLLIVER KILLED

WITH THREE OF HIS DESPERATE FOLLOWERS.

END OF A DEADLY VENDETTA.

A KENTUCKY FEUD IN WHICH TWENTY MEN HAVE FALLEN BROUGHT TO A CLOSE BY A BLOODY FIGHT IN THE STREETS OF MOREHEAD—THE STORY OF TOLLIVER'S CRIMES.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., June 22.—The best piece of work that has been done for Kentucky within a half century was done to-day at Morehead, Rowan County, when a Sheriff's posse shot to death the celebrated outlaw and murderer, Craig Tolliver, and his two brothers, Jay and Budd. The doings of the Tolliver gang, of which Craig was the leader, has made Rowan County a synonym to the world for all that was lawless and brought upon Kentucky some of the bloodiest blots that have tarnished her escutcheon. For years this man had been at the head of a murderous faction, and the lives that have been sacrificed through his direct agency number not less than a score. The law has been impotent, because no man had the temerity to testify in court against the Tollivers, and while their guilt was an established fact in half a score of notable assassinations, it has been impossible to get the facts before a jury.

Three weeks ago Tolliver, acting in the capacity of a Justice of the Peace, to which office he had been elected by his adherents, no one daring to oppose him, issued warrants for two brothers, W. H. and John B. Logan, members of the opposing faction. He headed a posse, placed the young men under arrest, and had them shot. This bold act capped the climax of a career of crime, and it was determined that the outlaws should be brought to justice. The Tollivers were in possession of Morehead, the county seat of Rowan, and when they heard that a movement for their arrest was on foot they prepared for defense, and signified their defiance of all law and law officers.

Morehead is a little way station on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, nearly 200 miles from Louisville. For some days details of men from Tolliver's band have inspected every train at the station, allowing no stranger to alight until satisfied that he was neither a spy nor an officer. A few nights ago a train slowed up at the station and one of the brakemen thoughtlessly jumped on the rough platform. He found himself instantly covered by half a dozen Winchester rifles. He saved his life by throwing up his hands and pleading for mercy.

But this precaution on the part of the Tollivers did not prevent the execution of the well matured plans of Sheriff Hogg. Armed with warrants from the Governor, this gentleman has for a week been perfecting plans to capture these outlaws. He organized a posse of 100 men, picked for their known courage and coolness, quietly armed them with Winchester rifles, drilled them into his idea of how they had best proceed, and when everything was in readiness selected to-day at 5 o'clock as the time for action. He had little hope of taking either Craig or his followers alive, but he was determined to execute his warrants effectively. He chose daylight as the time for laying siege to the town because it gave women and children a better opportunity to avoid danger. In spite of Tolliver's watchfulness the Sheriff's posse had surrounded Morehead this morning before the town knew it. The outlaws were alert, however, and quickly stood to arms and sent defiance to the officers. Sheriff Hogg deployed half his men in a circle around the little town, where they were protected by the heavy wood; with the other half he quickly closed in on the desperate little band in the heart of the village.

When in hearing Sheriff Hogg called to Tolliver that he had warrants for his arrest, and commanded him and his party to surrender. To this order Tolliver's answer was a command to his men to fire, and 12 Winchester rifles rang out in the morning air. Several of the posse were slightly wounded, but quickly, in obedience to the Sheriff's order, they began to close in about Tolliver's little band. Tolliver shot at one of the posse, who was crossing the railroad near the water tank, about 50 yards east of the Central Hotel, near which Tolliver was standing. The man dodged behind a pile of lumber, and Tolliver, his three cousins, Bud and Jay Tolliver and Hiram Cooper, immediately ran into the hotel. The house was at once surrounded by the posse, some of them getting quite close on the south side by reason of the heavy growth of underbrush running up near the railroad. Others kept a very respectable distance for fear of the deadly guns which the Tollivers knew so well how to handle.

Then began a battle the like of which has never been seen in Kentucky since the war. The four men cooped up in the hotel building refused to surrender, and at every opportunity shot at their assailants. On the other hand the posse were not idle, and their rapidly repeating rifles cracked with clock-like regularity, the bullets fairly riddling the house in which the Tollivers had taken refuge.

THE LEADING OUTLAW KILLED.

While this battle was going on the wildest excitement prevailed. The women and children rushed to the railroad station, seeking that protection there which seemed to be denied them at their homes. The cursing of the men, yelling of the children, and crying and screaming of the women formed a scene of confusion which is rarely witnessed more than once in a lifetime. For more than an hour was the fight kept up in this style, when Craig Tolliver, thinking his position becoming insecure, attempted to get to the woods from the rear of the hotel with Andy Tolliver. This foolhardy act cost Craig his life, for just as he and Andy succeeded in getting a hundred yards from the house the besieging party poured a regular volley into them, slightly wounding Andy. Craig Tolliver fell dead, pierced by four bullets, two of which entered his head and two his breast. Andy made his escape.

Bud Tolliver had been mortally wounded at the first fire and was carried to a lot, where he died. Then the battle began in earnest. The besiegers got so close to the house as they could and poured volley after volley into the building. All to no effect, however, other than perforating the building. Jay Tolliver and Cooper staid in the house nearly two hours, when, thinking it would be to their advantage to leave, they attempted to escape. Just after leaving the shelter of the house a number of the posse who had been concealed behind a pile of lumber sprang out and fired a deadly volley at the two men. They both fell to the ground and died in a few minutes.

As soon as Sheriff Hogg saw that there was no further resistance he had the dead bodies of the desperadoes taken to the residence of Craig Tolliver and placed on the floor of the porch. A passenger train was due at Morehead about the time the fighting began, and a detail of the posse was sent to flag it. This was done, and the train was backed about a half mile from the town, where it stood for more than two hours before the Sheriff would allow it to proceed. When it finally pulled into the station at Morehead about 30 or 40 of the posse, carrying their pretty new Winchesters, boarded the cars. Their appearance caused great consternation among the passengers. Several of the ladies fainted, and many of the men left the train rather hurriedly. The object of the posse was soon found to be the finding of Andy Tolliver, who had escaped. After searching the train thoroughly and failing to find their man they quietly left the cars, and those of the frightened passengers who had run out returned to their seats.

The Sheriff's posse was composed of the best men in the county of Rowan, and were all sober, quiet farmers, who appeared to know their duty and were not afraid to do it. Everybody in Morehead seems glad that the Tollivers are killed, and peace is now expected in that unhappy county. After the fight was over it was found that Craig Tolliver's brother, a little 16-year-old boy, had several bullet holes through his clothing. Upon all the posse getting together it was discovered that only one, Dr. Brown, was wounded. He was shot in the thigh, but not badly hurt. The greatest excitement still prevails, and a raid is expected to-night. Squads of the posse are posted all over the town, and if there should be enough of the Tolliver party left to make a fight another bloody tragedy may be looked for. Craig Tolliver leaves a widow and two little children. Jay was unmarried. Budd and two little children and one little child. Cooper was unmarried.

During the Tolliver-Martin feud and before to-day, 16 men have been killed, as follows: Solomon Bradley, John Martin, Whit Poltry, B. Candell, Deputy Sheriff Baumgarten, Marion Keaton, John Davis, Wiley Tolliver, a railroad man

named Wither, Will Logan, Ben Ranburne, John Day, Floyd Tolliver, John B. Logan, W. H. Logan, and one other. This makes 20 men in all killed during the vendetta.

A KENTUCKY VENDETTA.

The vendetta which has just resulted in the killing of Craig Tolliver and the fight in Morehead to-day really began over ten years ago, although Tolliver at that time was not connected with it. The Underwood-Holbrook feud, which was begun as long ago as 1877, and in which some 30 men were killed on both sides, including all the males of the Underwood family, was really the commencement of the war of factions in Rowan County, which it is hoped the death of Tolliver will now bring to a close. To understand thoroughly the Martin-Tolliver vendetta it is, therefore, important to have a clear idea of the Underwood-Holbrook war, for which Martin was responsible.

John Martin was the son of a respectable Kentucky farmer, and in 1876 was County Clerk of Rowan County and the proprietor of a store in Morehead. He was doing well and was highly respected until he fell into bad company, took to gambling, and finally lost his store. About the same time he was accused of falsifying the records of the Rowan County Court, and on account of this charge he was defeated when he appealed for a re-election. After this Martin's downward career was rapid. In the Spring of 1877 he was arrested in Mason County charged with horse stealing, one of the most obnoxious of crimes in the State of Kentucky. He managed to secure bail, however, and returned to Rowan County. Here he found that his old friends had deserted him, and he rented a small farm of old George Underwood, who lived in Olive Hill, just across the line, in Carter County. Martin, with his young wife, went to live with Underwood in his double log cabin, and for a time all went well. One morning, however, Squire Elijah Holbrook, Underwood's nearest neighbor, discovered that two of his best horses were missing. He promptly fixed upon Martin and Jesse Underwood, the old man's favorite son, as the thieves, and accused them of stealing the horses. When the charge was made to old Underwood his answer was: "You lie!" Holbrook went away, and in any State but Kentucky that would have been the last of it, unless recourse was had to the law.

As it proved, however, this was but the beginning of one of the bloodiest feuds that ever disgraced the State. Holbrook gathered his friends together, and an order was sent to Underwood that Martin must go or war would be declared. Martin's wife was ill at the time, and besides this the spirit of old Underwood rebelled at being treated in this cavalier fashion by a band of self-constituted Judges. He defied his neighbor to begin the war, and Holbrook responded with alacrity. A number of Underwood's sons were shot from ambush during the next year, and occasionally one of Holbrook's men was picked off by the Underwood boys. Finally old George's house was so closely besieged that it was thought prudent to send Jesse, who was the main object of the attacking party's vengeance, away from the cabin, and one night he sneaked out and took to the bush. The country in that section is rough, rocky, and heavily timbered, and Jesse secreted himself during the day, occasionally venturing home at night to visit his father and secure a fresh supply of provisions. Bands of armed men on both sides patrolled the country, and skirmishes and fights were frequent between the opposing parties. The Governor ordered two bodies of State troops to the scene to put an end to the disturbance, but they failed to make peace between the two factions, and the war of extermination went on. Holbrook insisted that Underwood and all his friends should leave the county, and Underwood continued to defy his enemies.

The double log cabin in which the old man was besieged finally came to be known as "Fort Underwood," and nobody who had respect for his life ventured near the place. One night in 1880 old Underwood, believing the coast to be clear, ventured into the yard for a load of wood. An ambushed enemy took good aim and wounded the old man severely. News of this was carried to Jesse in his hiding place, and the next night he made an attempt to visit his father. This was undoubtedly precisely what the Holbrook people expected. Jesse was shot down just as he reached the door. He was dragged inside the "Fort" by the women, and died that night, his aged mother holding his hands. A wail of anguish went up from the grief-stricken women of the house, which was answered by yells of derision from the enemies without, and the firing of a volley of shot guns. Notices were then posted on the trees warning people against approaching "Fort Underwood" under pain of death, and the women were left alone with their dead for a short time. They feared to leave the house to make arrangements for the funeral, and indeed no undertaker would have dared to accept a commission to bury the dead man. So the body was covered by a sheet, and the aged parents and their friends watched it day and night, bemoaning the fate of their favorite son.

Four nights after the killing of Jesse a band of masked men appeared at the door of the house and demanded admittance. Old Underwood grasped his shotgun and staggered to his feet determined to sell his life dearly, wounded as he was. His wife and the other women grasped his arm and begged him to hear what the men had to say, and he was finally induced to listen to them. "We hear that Jesse is dead," said the ringleader, "and we want to learn if it is true. If he is really dead we will go away and there shall be no more fighting." Old Underwood was prevailed on to pass his arms out of the door and let the men enter. As they came in the old man was sitting on the bed beside his dead son, and his little granddaughter was holding one of his hands. One of the men lifted up the sheet and identified Jesse. All tried to disguise their voices, but Underwood recognized one of them, and called him by name. With an oath the betrayed ruffian raised his shotgun and emptied the contents of both barrels into the old man's body. He fell forward into the arms of his granddaughter, and died without a groan, and the murderers, with a loud shout of exultation, left the house and disappeared. The siege of "Fort Underwood" had been raised at last, but not until its last defender had perished at the hands of his enemies.

Hostilities were now suspended. The women of Underwood's family left this section of Kentucky, and Martin went to Licking City, where he engaged in the business of illicit distilling. He was arrested several times, but always managed to evade punishment, and he was not prominently heard of again until 1884, when he succeeded in becoming the central figure in another feud which has just ended by the death of Tolliver. In August, 1884, a regular election for Sheriff was held at Morehead, and Sol Bradley, a Democrat, was shot. Martin, who was present at the time and was a Republican, was accused of the murder, and a feud was at once begun. On one side were John Day, an ex-Sheriff; Sam Gooding, the defeated Democratic candidate, and Alvin and Jeff Bowling, all Democrats; on the other were Cook Humphreys, the newly elected Sheriff; James Cary, the Rowan County Clerk, and H. M. Logan, a merchant, all Republicans. The Democrats insisted that Humphreys had not been elected and should not serve, while the Republicans were determined that he should serve. Party feeling ran high, until one day in December, 1884, when Floyd Tolliver, a friend of the defeated candidate, with an acquaintance, appeared in Morehead. Meeting Martin, who happened to be in town, some sharp words passed, and Martin went on to Judge Cary's hotel. Tolliver and his friend followed, and a war of insults began, which was ended by both Tolliver and Martin drawing their pistols. Martin fired first, killing Tolliver instantly. All the witnesses agree that the killing was justifiable. He was hurried off to jail in Clark County for safe-keeping, and Craig Tolliver, who now for the first time appeared on the scene, began the work of avenging his brother. A new faction was formed, with Craig Tolliver at the head, and composed principally of Democrats, the Martin party being made up almost exclusively of Republicans.

Craig Tolliver and his followers were anxious to get hold of Martin and lynch him, but there were difficulties in the way of securing their victim from Clark County, where the citizens were peaceable and law-abiding. In order to overcome this obstacle an order was forged, purporting to be signed by the authorities of Rowan County, for the delivery of Martin to the agents of Rowan County bearing the order. This was presented at the jail, and the prisoner was turned over to the "agents." He was handcuffed and placed on board a train bound for Morehead. At Farmers' Station, seven miles from Morehead, the car was boarded by a mob, and a rattling fire of shotguns was directed apparently at the posse guarding the prisoner. When the smoke cleared away it was found that nobody but Martin had been injured, but he was fairly riddled with shot and was dead. Craig Tolliver had avenged his brother by the death of his slayer, and a vendetta had begun as bitter in its nature as that of the Underwood and Holbrook factions, of which the same man Martin was the original cause.

Miss Sue Martin, the sister of the murdered prisoner, accused C. Taylor Young, County Attorney of Rowan County, of having forged the order upon which her brother had been given up to his enemies. This woman now, by a sort of tacit consent among the opponents of Tolliver, became their leader, and most of the plans for carrying on the war were concocted at her house. A few days after the killing of Martin, Attorney Young exhibited a hole in his coat, which he claimed had been made by a shot fired from ambush. Sheriff Humphreys had appointed a man named Baumgarten a Deputy, and he was suddenly shot by a concealed enemy and killed. His assassin was never discovered, but it was freely charged that he had been disposed of by the Tolliver faction, and no follower of Craig was ever heard to deny the charge. About this time, too, Alvin Bowling, of the Tolliver gang, killed the Town Marshal of Mount Sterling. He was placed in jail, and his brother, Jeff Bowling, came from Missouri to see what he could do to aid Alvin. Jeff and John Day met Sheriff Humphreys and his friend Ed Pierce on the street and a war of words was the

result. Humphreys and Pierce retreated to Judge Cary's Hotel, and the Tolliver faction then gathered in force in front of the house. They bombarded the hotel all night, 100 rounds of ammunition being used, but the inmates escaped uninjured, although the doors and windows were riddled with bullets.

By this time nine out of ten men in Rowan County had become members of either the Martin or the Tolliver faction, and the scandal to the State had become so great that Gov. Knott could not fail to take some notice of it. Instead, however, of sending troops to arrest the leaders and promptly suppress the disturbances, he sent an ambassador of peace to the warring factions in the person of Adjt.-Gen. Castleman, whose instructions were to endeavor to pacify both sides. Castleman induced Gooding and Day, leaders of the Tolliver party, and Cary and Logan, representatives of the Martin faction, to go to Louisville. They had two conferences with the Governor, the result of which was that an agreement to keep the peace was signed by both sides. Peace was formally declared upon their return to Morehead, but the agreement was laughed at by those who knew the character of Craig Tolliver. That he would ever rest as long as one of the men whom he held responsible for the killing of his brother was alive nobody at all familiar with his career believed.

THE OLD FIGHT RENEWED.

Soon after this shallow declaration of peace Tolliver took steps to place himself in a position to better carry out his plans against his opponents. The office of Marshal of Morehead was his objective point, and he reached it by the aid of his Democratic friends. The Republicans said that Craig lived in Morgan County, and that Attorney Young had imported him to enable him to renew the vendetta. He was elected, nevertheless, and for a time he took no step toward reopening the fight. There was no trouble until June, 1885, when Pierce, who had been a friend of Sheriff Humphreys and a member of the Martin gang up to that time, made a public statement that Sue Martin had offered him \$50 to kill Attorney Young, and \$25 apiece for all the rest of the Tolliver faction whom he could murder. Tolliver, although this statement was denied and ridiculed by Sue Martin, saw in it, or pretended to, evidence of a plot to murder himself and his followers, and he seized on it as an excuse for reopening hostilities. On June 28 he pretended to have received information that a mob was gathering at Farmers' Station, and, summoning a posse, he went there to break it up. He found no mob, but announced that it had gone to Sue Martin's house, near Morehead, led by Sheriff Humphrey. He then secured warrants of arrest for Humphrey and a number of others and proceeded to Miss Martin's house. The intrepid Sue met them within a few feet of her door. "Well," she exclaimed, "what's it?"

"We want Cook Humphreys," Tolliver answered.

"He isn't here," said Sue, retreating backward.

"Oh, yes, he is," retorted Tolliver, following the woman toward the door.

"Well, if he is, come and get him," shouted Sue, as she stepped within the house and closed the door.

Tolliver and his posse charged the door and broke it in. They reached the stairway and ascended rapidly. As they touched the top step a door opened, and a voice shouted: "Get out of here!" and the cracking of shotguns saluted the invaders. They turned and tumbled down the stairs pell-mell to the floor below and got out of the house as quickly as their legs could carry them. Craig Tolliver was the only one hurt, his left hand, jaw, and body being perforated with buckshot. After waiting until they thought it safe to venture out, Humphreys and his friend Reyburn, who composed the only "mob" in the house, tried to escape through the bushes. Humphreys succeeded, but Reyburn was shot dead in his tracks.

The vendetta had now created so much excitement in Kentucky that the Governor dared no longer delay active interference. A body of State troops 100 strong, under Major McKee, was ordered to the scene, with instructions to put an end to the troubles at all hazards and arrest the leaders. The troops arrived at Morehead on July 3. On the day previous two houses belonging to Sue Martin had been burned by the Tolliver people, in revenge for the burning of the house of Tolliver the day before. Major McKee did his work well. Ten of the principal leaders on both sides were arrested, but Tolliver could not be found. He was hunted down, however, and on July 21 was safely landed in the jail at Lexington. Then the mistaken leniency of the State Administration again showed itself. Instead of promptly trying Tolliver and hanging him or placing him beyond the power to do more harm, the prosecution was withdrawn on condition that Tolliver and Humphreys should leave the State. This was agreed to, and the farce of a vindication of justice was at an end.

Tolliver left the State, but he had left behind him too many scores to be settled to permit him to remain long away. Scarcely had order been restored in Rowan County when he returned to Morehead and announced himself a candidate for Police Judge of the city. He received just 20 votes, but, as nobody had the courage to vote against him, he was elected. He at once began the persecution of his old enemies. On the 8th of this month he issued warrants for the arrest of William and John Logan, sons of H. M. Logan, his old opponent in the Martin faction. The boys were charged with being engaged in Ku Klux conspiracies. Tolliver, Marshal Mannin, and a posse went to the Logan house to arrest the boys, whose father was in jail, charged with conspiracy to kill Z. Taylor Young, another of Tolliver's old friends. Mannin undertook to force his way up stairs after the housekeeper had told him the boys were not in, when the Logans riddled him with buckshot, killing him instantly. They then tried to escape by the rear of the house, but two of the posse opened fire on them, and when the smoke cleared away both were found dead on the ground.