

BAD MEN SAW THE FIGHT

Battle with Bare Knuckles in Nevada Boom Days.

PLEASANT AFFAIR FOR A HOLIDAY

Contest Between Jack Askew, a Cornishman, and Dublin Pete Out in the Sage Brush Thirty Odd Years Ago.

"I was thinking," said old Sport, "how seldom now days you meet a man who has ever seen a battle with bare knuckles on the grass under London prize ring rules. I saw one once. It was all that was coming to me, and a little more, if I had a chance to see another I'd pass it up to some one as big a fool as I was then."

"It was in 1875, anyway not more than a year before or after, when I stopped off the overland train at Reno, Nev., and took a crooked little railway to Virginia City, where a friend of mine was dealing faro for Ormsdorff and McGee. I'll not mention his name, for he's now raising potatoes and a family not far from Carson City and his name turned a card these twenty years."

"We'll call him Tom. He was glad to see me and have a chat about the old Houston street days."

"Well, Tom was a popular dealer at a popular game and naturally knew all the people worth knowing on the Comstock. And some others. I was keeping cases for him one night so we could gossip when the play was light, when he got a tip that the fight the whole town had been talking about for a month was to be pulled off the next day."

"Tom said we'd go, for I'd see something I'd never see if I lived in New York till Fifth and Sixth avenues met. It seems that there was high feeling in camp—as they called the town—between the Cornishmen and the Irish. There was a Cornishman there named Jack Askew, and he'd gone into the fighting game."

"He'd given up looking to every Irishman they could find to go against him and the Irish were sullen. Well from somewhere a bare knuckle fighter called Dublin Pete was picked up, brought to Virginia City and a meeting arranged."

"But the sheriff couldn't be squared. He was a miser not to make a record and he would do no business. He needn't have done another day's work if he would, but he wouldn't."

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you the money that was up on that fight. It was a rich town, turning out a million a day in bullion. Tom was telling me, and every cent that could be begged, borrowed or robbed was up on that fight."

"The tip was the closest I ever heard of. It was framed up to hurry the mill off early in the morning and beat the sheriff. I'd say not many more than a hundred men took or had been on top of town before daylight the next morning."

"Tom and I had good saddle horses and it was a fine gallop down the Geiger grade to a little house that was a stage station in the early days. The sun was just coming up over the Humboldt range to the east making mighty pretty patches of gold and purple on the snow on top of the range. I've seen pictures painted like it."

"We were to get coffee at the little house, and then when the air was warmed up the ring was to be pitched. But as we rode up to the house out stepped the sheriff. He'd been put wise and had slept there all night."

"I never saw a finer figure of a man. He had been a gold miner in California. From Stikyou county, California, he came, I was told; and that's the place this here Bret Harve wrote the pieces about."

"He could have spared two inches and

then been six feet tall. He was as straight as one of the pines that grow in his county, with clear, cheerful blue eyes you'd like to have looking at you over the sight of a gun. He was little more than a lad, 25 or so, but he had a man's heart in him.

"He looked over the crowd and smiled a little. I looked over the crowd and I never felt less like smiling in my life. Mind you, it was just then daylight, and I'd not had a peek at the gentleman we'd gone out with."

"Take my word for it, son, a big majority of those men should have been in prison, and a fair lot of the others should have been hanged. There were stage coach robbers, train robbers, claim jumpers well, as Tom explained it to me, the baddest bad men of California, Utah and Nevada had gathered for that fight."

"Now, I'm going to make a guess why that young sheriff smiled. I may be wrong. He smiled when he figured out the chance he'd have if it came to actual gun play with that party of gentlemen."

"One of the party passed him a cheerful good morning and said he was glad the sheriff had come out to see the fight."

"I'm sorry to give you trouble, boys," he says, "but you can't pull off this fight in Stow county."

"They only laughed at him and drank their coffee. Then one said he'd get the stakes and rope for the ring out of the wagon. The sheriff stopped smiling. But he didn't lose any color, when he pulled his hand out of his overcoat pockets, with a six shooter in each hand, and says:

"Don't take that ring tackle out of the wagon. I won't allow it."

"He didn't raise his voice. He didn't say, like the stories, that he'd shoot the first man. He used that soft little word allow, and the man who had started for the things stopped."

"I see the sheriff give Tom a quick look, and Tom nudged me and we walks over to the side of the sheriff. Others did; perhaps a dozen of us in all. Not more. There were nearly a hundred of the worst men I ever saw in my life facing us."

"I was feeling uncomfortable, gripping my gun hard and clearing the hammer from the pocket lining. They talked together a little and then one asked how far to the county line."

"About three miles," says the sheriff. "You can make it across the sage brush. There's no road."

"It was the cool nerve of that man saved us, I guess. The crowd began to jolly him, told him he was a good hearted lad and begged him to come along with them and see the fight."

"Much obliged, boys," said the sheriff, "but I never could a-bear the sight of blood."

"He rode with us, though, to show the county line, and when he'd seen the ring pitched in the next county he waved his hand and rode off. A brave man, that."

"There were two side seat wagons in the lot that trundled over the sage brush. In one were Pete, his seconds and principal backer; in the other Jack and his party."

"The night had been so fair, up in horse blankets I didn't have a fair look at them until they were stripped for the ring. Pete was like these old fashioned pictures you see of bare knuckle fighters of Heenan's days. A bullet headed, low browed, muscle knotted brute."

"Jack Askew looked more like the glove fighters you see of today. He was a beauty, but he looked more like a man than bulldog."

"The wagons, buggies and other traps the people had gone out in were wheeled in close to the ring and the saddle horses were fastened to them on the outside, you understand. There was a fringe of men around the ropes and the others were on the vehicles, so we all had a good view."

"Under London prize rules a round ends when one fighter goes to grass, as they say—one knee of one man to grass. There was no boxing, no dodging, rucking, sidestepping as in these days. At the call of time the two brutes sprang at each other, there was the dull clug of bony knuckles on flesh; one or both would fall, the seconds would rush in, carry off their men, sponge off the blood, and then at it again."

"You'd have to look up some of the old papers to learn how many rounds they fought. I never knew. The spectators, most of them, were madder, uglier than the fighters. There was a gun in nearly every man's hand; knives in some."

"Pete began to go to grass without being struck. He'd lost much blood and was saving himself. Once when he did that Jack stamped on him with his spiked shoe. But Pete would usually get in one blow before he fell, and was wearing the Cornishman out."

"I'll not give you particulars. They're not pretty, but finally Jack could no longer see, no longer stagger from his second's knees. It was all over."

"It was too much for me. I'd been in a daze, anyhow, and when the action stopped something in me stopped. Anyway, when somebody pulled me off the buggy seat where I was sprawled out, most of the people had left. Before I got my wits moving all had left but the wagon with Jack and his party."

"What you lookin' for?" asks the man by the driver of Jack's wagon.

"My horse," I said. "Somebody has stolen him."

"I've lost the worth of a dozen horses," says he. "You're the stranger who stood by the sheriff. That was good nerve of you. You can ride in with us unless you'd rather walk."

"I washed soon that I'd walked. I sat next to poor Jack. A cauliflower would have made a better looking ear than the one toward me. His eyes were two closed bumps of red and purple and his nose and mouth— But I'll not tell you. The mother who loved him wouldn't have known him."

"He died a day or two later down in the hospital below the camp. I don't remember what it was called, but it was kept by some Sisters of Charity. I saw them when Tom and I went down to see did he have what he needed."

"But I must tell you about the horse. Tom didn't see me where I'd sprawled out in the buggy, and rode in, thinking I was ahead of him."

"But, I said, 'let me find the villain who stole my horse. I would wish to have some argument with him.'"

"Tom took me that night to a restaurant, where he introduced me to a fine young fellow named Sam Davis. He was eating fried bread with maple syrup. I well remember it."

"Well, this Sam Davis was one of the most entertaining chaps I ever met. He was full of his stories and jokes and a husky chunk of a lad, too. I was much pleased with him. He was in great spirits."

"I'm feeling all to the good tonight," he said, "because I got my story of the night into the Chronicle an hour before the Gold Hill News got it. And I beat the out-of-town men out of their boots. I tied proofs of my story for six out-of-town papers long before the correspondents of other papers limped into town. It was a fine feat. I'll have some more fried bread and maple syrup."

"You were lucky to get back to town so hasty, Mr. Davis," I said. "How did you manage it?"

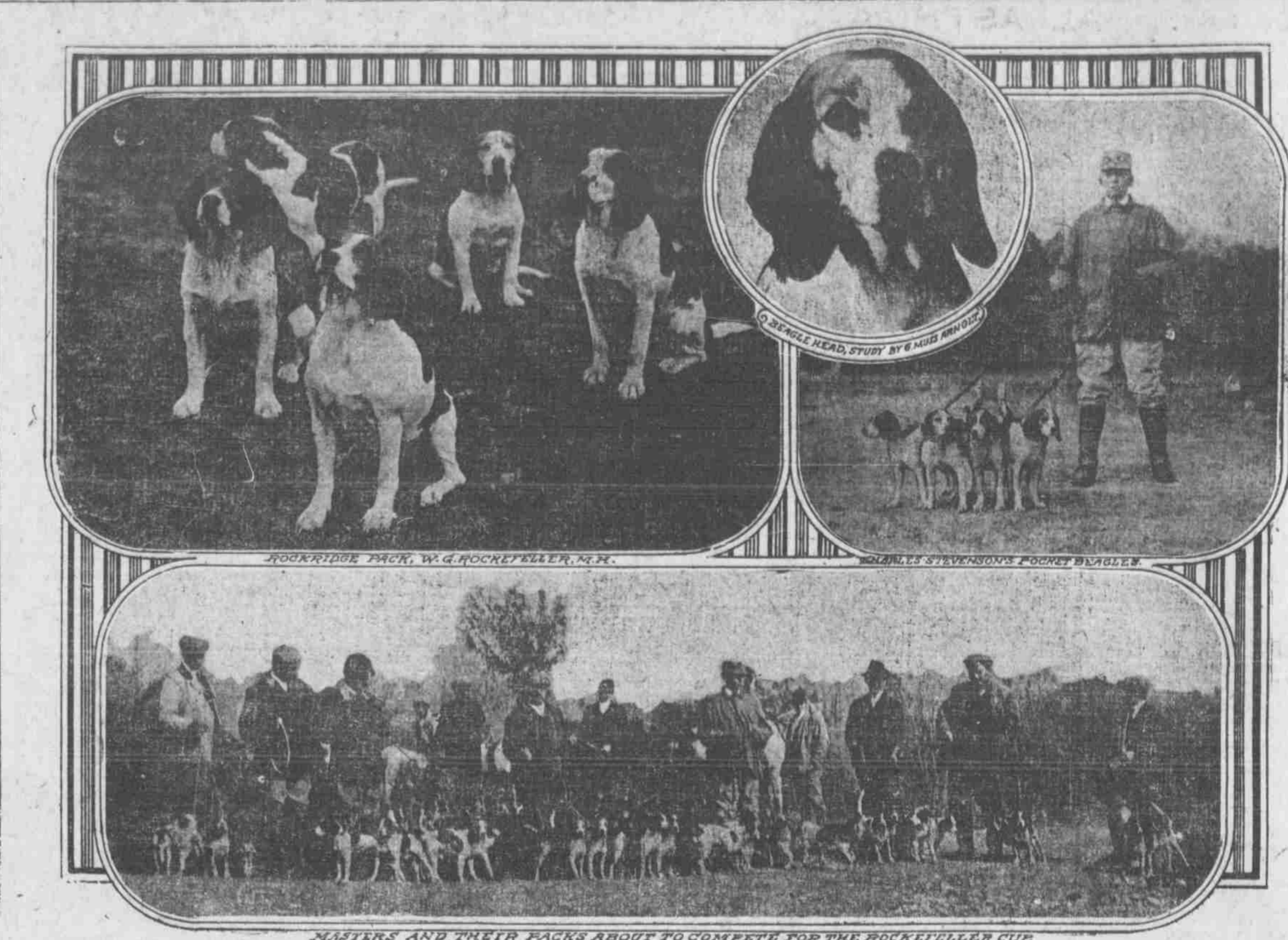
"I rode out in the wagon with Jack Askew," he said, "but I borrowed a horse to come back on."

"You borrowed it?" I said.

"Yes," he said, "and it was a fine animal. When I find the man I borrowed it from I'm going to open a bottle for him."

"Order the bottle, Mr. Davis," I said.

"The national trials were in Maryland last year, and they have not been at Westbury since 1891, when H. P. Whitney fol-



TRYING OUT THE HARRIERS

Beagle Fanciers to Hold Their Meet This Month.

LITTLE DOGS IN RABBIT CHASE

Rich Men and Poor United in Love of the Miniature Foxhounds—Points of the Dog that Count.

NEW YORK, Oct. 12.—Beagles have been hunted in England as long as packs of foxhounds, and there have been harriers in this country for 11 years, but founded on imported dogs. The National Beagle club of America is only of yesterday in comparison, yet the eighteenth annual field trials are to be held this month at Shalwell, Albemarle county, Virginia, about five miles from Charlottesville.

Rich men and poor are united in the love of the miniature foxhounds, for the beagles are copies of their big cousins in conformation, color and hunting attributes, and at each field trial enthusiasts gather from all parts of the east and the south. The beagle pack on foot or horseback he may take the title of master of harriers. They hunt hares with them in England, hence the term.

Packs of the larger beagles are followed by riders, although many pedestrians join in the hunt, but the packs of thirteen beagles are too slow for horsemen. Some of the English schoolboys keep packs of foot beagles.

Until a season or two ago the Delancey Kanes, Isolina, Reynolds, Potters and other Westchester county residents hunted a pack of imported beagles two or three times a week in the enclosed country surrounding the water works at New Rochelle. English hares and western Jack rabbits

were turned up to the park and the riders, women and men, had many fine insects.

Green is the color for harriers, as pink is for fox hunters. But the masters of harriers only sport their colors at a club meet or when they bring a draft from their pack into the ring for a dog show special class in which appointments are specified. A green coat is even more rare at a field trial than a red jacket in these days on the golf links.

Instead, shooting suits, usually redolent of tobacco and the worse for wear, of brown cassava, khaki, corduroy or tweeds, are worn, with caps and high boots or yellow leggings. Some of the handlers have circling horns on their belts, similar to those seen in old hunting prints, but they are seldom sounded.

The two judges, who follow the beagles as closely as they can, and some of the onlookers bear long canes to stir up a rabbit crouching on its fours, but the bunny is seldom slow enough to need such a hint. The beagles work without any assistance, except that when time presses the handlers may be ordered to lift them over a hedge or from a cold scent to a place where a rabbit is known to be.

Some beagle men are opposed to any lifting. They maintain that beagle works on a chain of scent as close reasoners do

on a chain of thought, one point leading to another in a sure sequence and to lift the dogs confuses them.

Plenty of rabbits and for scent to lie good are the conditions needed for an exciting series of field trials. On some days, as in bird shooting, the scent comes and goes as mysteriously as a will o' the wisp, but when the atmosphere conditions are right the sport will be good if there are any cottontails about.

Some of the small beagles are no bigger than rabbits. In England some are so small that a couple of brace may be carried to the cover in the pockets of a great coat. While the pedigree of the American beagles may always be traced to English stock, the direct importations are usually too sensitive in coat to work in the thorny shrubbery here as fast as the homebreds.

"Stand in your tracks, let no one move except the judges," will be the order from the marshal, the field representative of the trial committee, when the buying of the beagles shows that they are bringing out a rabbit on a hot scent. They are mute on a cold or baffling scent, but the music when in full cry rings out clearly and strong through the woods.

A beagle that gives tongue after over-running the scent is branded "a liar," and

the fault counts heavily against it in the points. The climax of excitement to the followers is when a rabbit dashes into the open, followed closely by a brace of beagles giving tongue as they run with noses to the ground their coats pricked with blood from the brambles and the tails waving like flags. Then the whole crowd pelts along at a racing clip, the judges in the van, to watch the work of the dogs and the outcome of the chase.

Whiskey from Turnips.

"Try this, mon," said the Scotch host, pouring an inch or two of whiskey from a jug.

"The guest tried it, reddened, coughed, choked."

"See?" he said as the other pouted his lips.

"Aweel, mon, tell's what ye think o't."

"It warms me," said the guest. "It warms and thrills me. But is it not a little weak, a little hot?"

"It went down, I confess, like a torchlight procession or a string of chestnut burrs."

"The Scotchman laughed contemptuously. "Ye've got no throat," he said. "Ye'll never make a whiskey drinker. Loosh, mon, that is the purest an' most potent spirit ever passed yer lip—an' ye choked on it. It is pure turnip spirit made on ma brither's farm at Craighputtock."

"Made out of turnips, hey?"

"To be sure. All over bonny Scotia they mak' whiskey, but of turnips. They're hearty thero. Nought goes to waste. Here's to ye, mon!"—Minneapolis Journal.

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