

MATTY'S MEMOIRS :::

By FRANK MATTY
As Told to
JAMES GORDON FRASER

CHAPTER XXI.

All the time I was getting established in the world, in the way of getting a few dollars ahead of my bills, I had been wanting to own some really good horses. But it wasn't until along in 1896, 1897 and 1898 that I felt I could afford it.



FRANK MATTY.

When I did, I went into it on quite a big scale for those days. At one time I had more than 20 fast horses in my stable, all of them capable of stepping off a mile in time good enough to be in the money.

We used to have racing down at Kirk Park in those days, and for a year or two, I was president of the Kirk Park Racing Association, that conducted the meetings. Dan Doogan was the treasurer and Dick Perry was the secretary. Every old-timer in Syracuse will remember them. Dan Doogan is now up in Geneva or somewhere around there and doing pretty well.

There were a lot of good men who liked fast horses and owned and drove them in those times. Sim Dunfee always had a good one or two for his own use, and when we got together winter afternoons up in West Onondaga st., it was take a chance with your money and devil take the hindmost.

Sim had an old black mare he called "Hibernian Girl" that was pretty fast and he used to do a lot of bragging about her. He thought she was about the best in these parts, and after listening to him long enough to get sick of the story, Anse Alvord and I decided to make him put up or shut up. We agreed to go down to Kirk Park and put on a race with Dunfee driving "Hibernian Girl". Anse the big sorrel he used to clean up with in the Saturday afternoon meets, and me a horse I picked from my stable.

We made a few bets on it, and they weren't nickels, either. Sim would always bet you the U. S. Mint, if he happened to have it, and Anse and I were "Hibernian enough, because we knew "Hibernian Girl" was about done. So we went down, like Grant took Richmond. We got away ahead of him and stayed there, and when the race was about over, Sim tipped over the cutter and fell out. He claimed that made it no race, but that didn't go with us.

The most famous horse I ever owned was Coleridge, a big pacing stallion with a mark of 2:05 1/4. I bought him in 1898 from Capt. Alexander Hardy and Dallas Custer, who had bred him in Kentucky, for \$3,500, and I got my money back in a year and a big profit afterward. He was a great horse, game as a pebble and faster in the last hundred yards than anywhere else in the race.

Custer drove him for me, and he was campaigned in free-for-alls. I remember one great race we won in Great Barrington, Mass., from Roan Wilkes, a celebrated horse which had just stepped the mile in 2:04 1/4, a week earlier. That race earned me a week's salary. That was the rest of his life, for we bet real money on the horses then—when we knew they were really going to run.

I liked Miss Syracuse, a little waxy mare, the best of any horse I ever owned, but she wasn't as successful, probably, as Coleridge. And there was Miss Matty, Irene and Bonnie L., all great money-winners, and Cartridge, a Cole-ridge colt that did well. I raced them on about every track of any importance in the country in those years just before 1900, and, of course, here in Syracuse.

It saddened me to talk about those good old days, when we drove good horses late into the afternoon and then gathered a bunch of real men in the old Alderman cafe at night to talk it over and enjoy each other's boastings. There is something about memories of that kind that puts a lump in your throat. When you realize that nearly all of the men have gone on, and that there is no place in everyday life for the horse any more, you wonder if it's really progress.

I was pretty much occupied with racing in the last few years of McGuire's administration, but not so much so that I didn't keep my finger on things pretty well at the City Hall. I don't know whether I mentioned it or not, but one of the last fights I had before McGuire went out was the cause of getting a salary for aldermen.

Horace White's charter didn't provide for any salary, and there was a lot of uncertainty about the attitude of some of the boys when time for renomination came around. I told them, though, not to worry, but to get back again and I would look after the salary. I did, too, through my friends in the Legislature, for we not only got back the original \$250 a year, but another \$500 a year on top of it. I doubt if aldermen would be drawing one cent today if we hadn't had that fight.

Nearly everybody knows, I imagine, how and why the Republicans finally beat McGuire. They did it because of the adoption of the new charter, which forced reorganization of the government. And then they found—or pretended to find—that the Common Council had been spending more money than the appropriations provided without specific authority. It was the way the city's business had always been done, but under the new law, it was technically illegal. And they compelled McGuire to make up the deficit all at once in his last budget, which jumped his tax rate from \$12 to \$20 in one year. You can imagine what they did to him, or what it would do to any mayor.

One incident in those closing days of the McGuire regime will always be fresh in my recollection. One day a reporter on the old Post-Standard, who was very friendly to me, dropped into the Alderman Cafe to see me and asked if I knew any news. I told him I did.

"Haven't you heard that the Alderman Cafe is to be sold?"

continued to deny it. Lewis gave me the opening I was waiting for.

He demanded: "Then, if you didn't talk with anybody, how did you know these aldermen and other city officials had been indicted?"

I replied: "I knew it because of my dream."

"What dream?" "I dreamed that I saw Francis Hendricks meet John S. Kenyon, the Republican county chairman, on the street, and that Hendricks said—"

Lewis interrupted me there. He denounced what I was saying as "child's play," and begged the judge not to let me finish. But the judge was a good sport. He tried not to smile, but he ruled that I could go ahead.

He told Lewis: "You asked this man where he got his information. He says he got it in a dream. He is trying to tell you his dream. You asked for it and you're getting it. So long as he says it is true, there is nothing I can do to stop it."

So I went on: "I dreamed that I heard Hendricks say to Kenyon: 'We've got to indict 10 or 15 of these aldermen, and the mayor, Bert Allen and Jake Sehl, or we'll never get the damn Democrats out of the City Hall. It's got to be done.'"

That floored Lewis. It floored everybody else, too, including the judge. They let me go without another word. Lewis was so mad he couldn't have uttered a word,

anyway. And Hendricks and Kenyon and the rest of the Republicans were in the same condition after the newspapers got out on the street. Everyone of them had big black headlines telling about "Matty's Dream." It was the talk of the town for weeks.

B'ville Merchants Abandon Code Test

Retail merchants of Baldwinsville have abandoned their plan to test that section of the NRA code which placed that community in a different class because of population, from similar villages nearby. The storekeepers there claimed this placed them at a disadvantage in regard to store hours and store wages.

After a thorough investigation of the matter, however, and lacking serious complaints or specific cases of loss to the retailers, the merchants decided to drop the proceedings.

Under the code, retailers in towns of more than 2,500 have to pay higher wages and keep open shorter hours than in communities under that figure.

appropriating funds without authority? They indicted six, and then went back and indicted the rest. I'll give you their names."

Well, the story was true enough, because I had some good friends who were on that grand jury. In fact, there were three former aldermen on it. And the Post-Standard printed it. It made quite a sensation, and there was a big demand for an investigation to find out where the leak was. They called in the reporter, and he told them I had given him the information.

They were holding a special term of supreme court to handle the case of the aldermen, and Judge Wilmot Smith had been sent here. He called me in and sent here. He had once been district attorney and was considered very smart lawyer, was engaged as special counsel to question me. He started at it with a lot of brashness.

I admitted I had told the reporter the story. I admitted I believed it was true. But I denied that any member of the grand jury had violated his oath to tell me what had happened, and con-



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