Principals and Seconds

IN DUELLING.

By Meigs O. Frost

AmeriCan service men, the world's greatest experts in the world's deadliest weapons, have been a familiar sight, thousands of them, in New Orleans more than three years now, in World War II.

They have been on the way to fighting fronts all over the world, where only one law prevailed — kill or be killed. They have returned from those fighting fronts where death was their daily companion. Some might think that deadly combat was something they would want to forget.

Yet thousands of them have visited the Louisiana State Museum weapons collection in the Cabildo at Jackson Square; thousands have visited the Duelling Oaks in City Park; New Orleans' fantastic duelling history has held a strange fascination for them.

Mankind being what it is, duelling has been a fascinating subject for research, reading, reminiscence for many men. And New Orleans for generations has held the record of being the scene of more duels, more fantastic duels, than any other American city.

It is no wonder that G. I.

Joe, headed for combat, returning from combat, should be interested in the arms and relics of personal, man to man combat, in a city where for years an average of five duels a day were fought.

Laws against duelling were passed in Louisiana in 1818 and again in 1845. They meant nothing. In New Orleans as late as 1873 was published "The Code of Honor, or, Rules for the Government of Principals and Seconds in Duelling." It bore the name of the publisher: "Clark and Hopleine, Book Printers, 9 Bank Place." That short street is Pleasure Place now; it runs from Grosvenor to Natchez, one block south of Camp street, across the front of the Board of Trade building. The little book is reported to be the only formal code of honor ever published in the United States. Its author,

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Private First Class Cid Warren (right), Barbourville, Ky., spins fast, gets in body shot on Private First Class J. C. Ponder, Troy, N. Y., re-enacting in Pere Antoine's garden pistol duel where principal stood back to back, wheeled and fired. They are using single-shot, muzzle-loading pistols.

Private Norman Bailey, Brooklyn, N. Y. (left), and Technical Sergeant Lloyd C. Hoeplund, Lake City, Minn., left hands lashed together, re-enact historic knife duel with G. I. machetes in Pere Antoine's garden behind old St. Louis Cathedral.

"Arrested" for "attempts to fight duels" (left to right), Private First Class Julius C. Ponder, Troy, N. Y.; Staff Sergeant Karl R. Winters, Clinton, Iowa, and Sergeant Robert Kjorness, Minneapolis, Minn., "pay penalty" in New Orleans official city yards of generations now in Cabildo northeast.

Sergeant Robert Kjorness (right), Minneapolis, Minn., parries deadly lunge of Staff Sergeant Karl R. Winter, Clinton, Iowa, re-enacting in Pere Antoine's garden historic duel with Cadeau colichemard, triangular-bladed, needle-pointed rapiers from Louisiana State Museum weapons collection.
New Orleans Was Duelling Paradise

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was the late Don José Quintana, then a member of the editorial staff of The Picayune, journalist of the New Orleans daily newspaper. He had served as consul in the Republic of the United States of America at Mexico City during the War between the States.

Mrs. Ella Polk Neilson became publisher of The Picayune, first woman publisher of a major daily newspaper in the United States. She continued publication of the paper, accepted any challenge to be a woman's Librarian of Congress, and announced publicly that if any copy was not printed as she desired, she would accept any challenges on the part of her publisher's wife of New Orleans, June 18, 1898. The Picayune, under the editorship of Mrs. Neilson, was in the middle of the mid-1890s.

France, Spain, and England had anti-dueling laws when French founded New Orleans in 1718. But they had duelists, too, and they brought them to the New Orleans underworld. New Orleans particularly seemed to breed duels like a swamp breeds mosquitoes. Every condition was here to foster furthering. Hot French and Spanish blood. Hot adventurers, American blood. European nobility and aristocracy. A society founded on the snobbery of Paris, Madrid, and London. Rich planters accustomed to the absolute authority of slave ownership. Hot hatreds, racial, political, financial, commercial. Into the port of New Orleans came from all the world merchants, shipowners, and naval squadrons. Sailors and soldiers all hoping to be the first in a duel with a respect for the rest of the West. The French, Spanish, and English, like a frontierman and a farmer, plotted and planned and revolved and talked and bargained. Strong liquor flowed freely. Gambling flourished openly. Coffee houses, barrooms, gambling houses, taverns were everywhere. They were not institutionals for promotion only. These were the days when people went into a duel to settle a quarrel. Young men studied under masters of arms harder than they studied under their schoolmasters. They lived, and lost, their lives depending on what they learned from their masters. They were often dependent on what they learned in school. The French gentleman did not consider himself a gentleman until he had fought a duel, and the English gentleman could say with quiet pride: "At fair men proves I have proved myself—he had fought his duel. Now he was a man of honor. He had faced death on the "Field of Honor.""}

**Fantastic Duel**

The Picayune's earliest recorded duel was one of the most remarkable. It was in 1802. Cadet Duques and Adolphe de Molinier, rich young planters, met by the old Magny canal. Mirror-like, their horses were in line. Careless seconds brought only one pistol.

"Toss a coin," said Cadet Duques. "I'll take the first shot." If the horses did not win, he gets the next three shots. After the toss, at 10 paces (20 feet) he