



ROBERT LEE WRIGHT INTERVIEW

On another occasion in an important murder trial Stonewall was examining a very important and very hostile witness. The witness, an old man, pretended a deafness, which, at least in part, Stonewall doubted. The old man had a long, curved ear trumpet. When asked a question favorable to the prosecution, he managed to hear very well, but when an embarrassing question was propounded, he went completely deaf and was unable to understand even with the aid of that long, glistening trumpet.

Things began to look ugly for the defendant and Stonewall realized that unless the old man's testimony was impeached before he left the stand, his client stood an extremely good chance of having his neck stretched until he was very, very dead. The old man became more and more difficult with his "Hey?" and "Louder, please, bin a mite deaf".

Finally he asked the witness a particularly embarrassing question. He shook his head sadly. He couldn't begin to hear; the ear trumpet was pointed at Stonewall at a mocking angle. Again Stonewall asked the question but much louder, and as he asked it again he gradually approached the side to which the trumpet was held. A fourth time the question was shouted and a fifth. By this time he was back of the old man and out of his range of vision.

Then the tactics changed. "Mr. White, you're considered one of the leading farmers in your community are you not?" This, asked in a moderate voice, was different. The witness heard it readily and answered in the affirmative.

"Mr. White," gradually putting his hand over the end of the trumpet, Stonewall almost purred the question, "You have the reputation of being an honest, and truthful man, have you not?" Mr. White, ear trumpet clearly stopped up and therefore useless, readily heard and answered.

And then Mr. White, whose unsupported word had almost stretched the neck of Stonewall's client, stood discredited by his own ears.