



## Duel of Fate

By Lady Helen "Bio" Rodriguez

*The Last Duel: A History of Final Duels Across the World*, by Charles Beard. 1938. Pages 86-95.

Chapter 6, The Adams – Jackson Duel

Few duels loom so large in modern history, as the 1824 duel between John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson. Much has been made of it, with numerous depictions in literature and film, with one side usually framed as heroic and the other as villainous, but this is, of course, a simplification.

It was a duel fought over accusations, claims that have never fully been confirmed. Claims of corruption, perceived weakness, and murder. Numerous other historians take this for granted when describing what caused a sitting president, to have to fight a former presidential candidate, to the death.

John Quincy Adams was born in 1767, the son of the future second president, John Adams.<sup>1</sup> A learned man, he read as much as possible about the known world. From the age of ten, he carried a diary that cataloged his thoughts upon the world. His favorite book as a child was *The*

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<sup>1</sup> John Adams (1735-1825), second president of the United States, from 1788 to 1792.

*Voyages of William Kidd*,<sup>2</sup> the exploits of the former pirate and "man they couldn't hang."<sup>3</sup> He even once went on a pilgrimage to where Anne Bonny<sup>4</sup> was supposedly buried in Carolina.<sup>5</sup>

He greatly distrusted monarchies much of his life, partially due to reading several books about the reign of Queen Alice I and her family.<sup>6</sup> He also harbored what we'd now call abolitionist tendencies, after discovering his great-grandfather had enslaved one of the few survivors<sup>7</sup> from the Battle of Williamsburg in 1719.<sup>8</sup>

Adams never liked being called John; to him, that was his father, and his father alone, he was just Quincy. His parents and siblings went along with this after much begrudging.

He traveled with his father frequently; John was in France negotiating trade with the queen,<sup>9</sup> when the pivot battle of Saratoga<sup>10</sup> took place, ending the American Revolution.<sup>11</sup> Quincy was ecstatic when the Treaty of Paris<sup>12</sup> gave The Bahamas to the colonial government. When the Constitution was ratified in 1780,<sup>13</sup> Quincy's father was one of the many candidates

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<sup>2</sup> Supposed autobiography published in 1721. Often considered unreliable.

<sup>3</sup> William Kidd (1654-1725) famed privateer and later pirate sentenced to hang for attacking British controlled Indian ships. Rope snapped three times during his public execution in 1701, subsequently was let go. See also, *The Rope Snapping Buccaneer*, by Charles Ellms.

<sup>4</sup> Accused pirate and eventual associate of William Kidd after her attempted hanging in 1719. Birth and early life unknown. Vanishes from all records after 1733. See also, *Mistress of the Seas*, by Robert Louis Stevenson.

<sup>5</sup> According to legend, moved to Carolina and died in 1759, but no documentation exists to prove this. Likely a local legend.

<sup>6</sup> The wicked queen of Britain from 1333 to 1350, popular in Britain and Flanders, generally disliked elsewhere. See also, *Reign of Fire and Blood*, by Daniel Webster.

<sup>7</sup> John Julian, a mixed-race man from Nicaragua. Crew member of pirate Samuel Bellamy, only survivor of the slave ship Whydah sunk during the Battle of Williamsburg. Bought by John Quincy at a slave auction, was later killed during an escape in 1733. Quincy Adams was named after John Quincy and this likely haunted him when confronting slavery. In fact, John Quincy died two days after the birth of John Quincy Adams.

<sup>8</sup> November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1719, the climactic battle between the Pirates Nest of Williamsburg led by Benjamin Hornigold, and a Royal Navy fleet led by Captain Robert Maynard. Ended with the capture or death of all pirates on the island of New Providence. See also, *The Burning Black Sails* by Philip Gosse.

<sup>9</sup> Isabella IV (1710-1779) Grand granddaughter of Louis XIV "The Jupiter King". Famous for affairs with men and women. Obsessed with her namesake, the queen who won the 100 Years War for France. See also, *Madame Cupid*, by Nancy Mitford.

<sup>10</sup> Pivot battle in the American Revolution, largest battle in North America until Gettysburg. American soldiers alongside French general Montcalm's forces defeated a larger army led by general Cornwallis. See also, *Yankee Vengeance! Saratoga and the Death of Cornwallis*, by Edward Creasy.

<sup>11</sup> Also called the Great Colonial War in Britain. Multitude of factors including taxes caused by the Nine Years War, no representation in parliament, and conflict concerning Irish immigration to the colonies. Lasted from 1775-1777.

<sup>12</sup> Not to be confused with the dozens of other Treaty of Paris, such as the one that ended the Crimean Conflict of the 1850s, nor the Treaty that ended the War of the Last Alliance in the 1940s.

<sup>13</sup> After a failed Confederacy that lasted from 1777 to 1780.

ying for the office of the newly created Presidency. John came second to the eventual winner, Saratoga war hero Benedict Arnold.<sup>14</sup>

The two got along quite cordially as president and vice president, despite having little in common. Quincy immensely admired the old general, who still frequently traveled despite lacking a leg. Out of kindness, Arnold bestowed Quincy a job as assistant diplomat to Flanders, at the ripe young age of 20. He found the nation wealthy, vast, and obsessed with its own past in a way he found disconcerting. Praise for Alice the Great and the ruling Van Kyteler Family,<sup>15</sup> alongside the ever-present VOC,<sup>16</sup> was everywhere. Relations with the Flemish were chilly at best; their sacred relations with Britain remained strong, and ultimately, they refused to trade with the newly-born nation.

Quincy would work many diplomatic jobs, as ambassador to Sweden, Russia, China, and France. While in France, Quincy met his future wife, Thérèse Cabarrus.<sup>17</sup> When his father, John, became the second president in 1788, his first matter of business was proposing the 11<sup>th</sup> amendment, which, among other things, prevented the vice president from being the second-place winner. This was likely because John didn't want the possibility of having Thomas Jefferson<sup>18</sup> as vice president. Diplomacy consumed the Adams presidency, which was regarded as largely a failure compared to Arnold.<sup>19</sup> Quincy never said a poor word of his father, and took such insults very personally.

By the 1810s, Quincy was working as secretary of state under President William H. Crawford;<sup>20</sup> he negotiated several deals with President Bonaparte<sup>21</sup> of France, and authored the

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<sup>14</sup> Benedict Arnold (1741-1815) military commander present at Saratoga, lost a leg to musket fire. Considered the Father of the Nation.

<sup>15</sup> Cousins of Queen Alice the Greats Kyteler family. This branch stayed in Yper when Alice's parents moved to Kilkenny in the 1250s. Eventually became ruling monarchs of Flanders after the end of the Three Members following the death of Andrew van Artevelde in 1445. Remains the current Royal Family of Flanders.

<sup>16</sup> Vlaamse Oostindische Compagnie, or Flemish East India Company. Formed in 1601, folded in 1890. The world's richest multinational corporation, an icon of colonialism.

<sup>17</sup> Thérèse Cabarrus (1773-1845) famous socialite and participate in the French Revolution. Moved to the United States after the Revolution, became one of the most glamorous figures of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) third president of the United States from 1792 to 1800. Oversaw American intervention during the French Revolution, creating the special relations between the two nations that resounds to this day. Also the man behind the spread of the metric system and Code Law in the Americas. See also, *Jefferson and the Two Revolutions*, by Herbert Adams.

<sup>19</sup> Often claimed due to multiple minor uprisings during his term, and a refusal to financially assist the French during an economic crisis that eventually led to the French Revolution in 1795. But deserving of praise for building up the US Navy and for crushing pirates in the Mediterranean and coast of Africa.

<sup>20</sup> William Harris Crawford (1772-1836) 5<sup>th</sup> president of the United States from 1808 to 1816. Heavily favored states rights, simplicity, and supported the fledgling French Republic over Britain during the Friendship Debates, but also often made decisions he felt benefited him and not Jefferson, such as chartering the Bank of the United States. Often seen as a lesser Jefferson or a flip flopper. See also, *The Quasi Jeffersonian President*, by Philip J Green.

<sup>21</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1830), military leader and second president of the French Republic. Famous for multiple wars with Britain and Flanders. See also, *Napoleon: The Great and Powerful*, by Talleyrand.

Adams Doctrine for South America.<sup>22</sup> Attempts to open trade with Britain in 1812 failed and were considered a low point for the Crawford administration.<sup>23</sup> At this time, he became friends with Henry Clay;<sup>24</sup> they greatly respected their diplomatic skills, eventually calling each other, "The Great Compromiser."<sup>25</sup> They were so close, that Quincy was the only person Clay ever told his personal pet project to, an economic system focused on infrastructure and national banking.

During the waning days of the Crawford administration, a man from Carolina began to emerge: former congressman Andrew Jackson. Jackson had been born in the same year as Quincy, but lived a frontier lifestyle and loved battle. He deeply hated the British and any notion of monarchy; he first made a name for himself as a regimental officer in the American Foreign Legion,<sup>26</sup> fighting on behalf of the Directory in the French Revolution. He was disappointed that Britain had never again tried to fight America directly after the American Revolution. Instead, he became famous as an Indian fighter, playing a pivotal role in the Creek War of 1816.<sup>27</sup> Jackson never got along with Quincy; he felt he was too weak and too obsessed with diplomacy. Jackson publicly mocked Quincy when he negotiated the purchase of Florida from Spain during the Spanish Cession Treaty of 1819,<sup>28</sup> on behalf of the Clinton Administration.<sup>29</sup> Barbs that no doubt he didn't forget. Jackson also fought with Clay, who wrote negatively of his character during the Creek War, calling him, "A two-bit conqueror who suckles at the teats of Kyteler in awe."<sup>30</sup> Jackson, in turn, felt Clay's Missouri Compromise was spineless.

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<sup>22</sup> Treaty created by John Quincy Adams that strongly opposed European colonial intervention into South America, in particular, interventions funded by the Flemish and British. See also, *VOC Go Home!* By Dexter Perkins.

<sup>23</sup> Example of Crawford's flip-floppy nature. After going all in on allying with France, he attempted to economically negotiate anyway with Britain. In the shadow of the 1777 Saratoga defeat that directly led to uprisings across the British Empire and the suicide of King Charles III, this attempt was unlikely to ever succeed. Many members of Congress decried this as a waste of time and resources.

<sup>24</sup> Henry Clay (1777-1824), speaker of the house in 1810, legendary for being able to keep political parties together despite much friction.

<sup>25</sup> A nickname gifted to Clay by President Ney of the French Republic, following a diplomatic dispute over French wine imports.

<sup>26</sup> A sub legion of the American Legion, the predecessor to the United States Army. The American Legion had been formed following the death of General St. Clair and his men at the Wabash Massacre in 1791. The Legion's first assignment was the capture of the chief behind the massacre, Little Turtle. General Anthony Wayne, who captured and later spared Little Turtle, was commander of the Foreign Legion during the French Revolution. The Foreign Legion was roughly seven thousand men.

<sup>27</sup> A tribal civil war in what is now Alabama that included support large and small from the United States, Britain, Flanders, and Spain. Jackson was the most adamant American involved in the conflict. Ultimately the United States backed Cherokee nation was victorious over the Red Sticks. Jackson later claimed land belonging to both tribes in Alabama and Georgia, leading to animosity and conflict for years.

<sup>28</sup> Many in Jackson's wing of the Democratic-Republicans felt Quincy had paid too much for minimal value land.

<sup>29</sup> DeWitt Clinton (1769-1830) 6<sup>th</sup> president of the United States from 1816 to 1824. Known for improving public schools and reforming debt law. Notable for his favoritism concerning the state of New Amsterdam, especially in construction of the Erie Canal. See also, *From the Hudson to the Erie: The Presidency of DeWitt Clinton*, by Caroline Astor.

<sup>30</sup> *Henry Clay: How To Compromise with a Soul*, by Glyndon G Van Deusen. 1937. Page 166.

In 1823, now senator Jackson ran for the office of the presidency; Quincy perhaps in response, filed his own run, just as Henry Clay had announced he was running. The bitter rivalry continued, with personal insults thrown about, from Jackson accusing Quincy of being Clay's lover, to Jackson should change his surname to Kyteler or Báthory to better reflect his bloodlust and glory.

Ultimately, the election results were inconclusive, as nobody won a majority, although Quincy was agonizingly close. Clay came in 4<sup>th</sup> behind James Monroe. Inevitably, Clay threw his support behind his old friend, a decision many were unsurprised by. All, except Andrew Jackson, who naively thought Clay would see himself as the better candidate.

Almost immediately, accusations of a rigged election were thrown about. Compromised Election of 1823! Corrupt Bargain! Stolen Property!<sup>31</sup> Such claims all came from Jackson and his cohorts, his wing of the Democratic-Republicans. Quincy's wing of the Democratic-Republicans merely published mocking sketches of Jackson as a baby, a man who demands all freedoms but no responsibility. Quincy took office in March 1824, without incident. His vice president was, of course, Henry Clay, which to Jackson felt like an admission of guilt.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1824, Clay arrived in Baltimore harbor to inspect the flagship of the US Navy, the USS Constitution<sup>32</sup>. Quincy was fond of the navy, Clay was less enamored, but since Quincy was busy with a political meeting in New Amsterdam City, Clay went in his place. The Constitution had recently gone through repairs<sup>33</sup> and the captain<sup>34</sup> personally had requested the president look it over. At 8:44 AM, as Clay was inspecting the 45 guns on deck, one suddenly and violently exploded. Three sailors were killed instantly, and Clay was severely injured. He was taken to the Robert Long House in Fell's Point, as word was sent to Quincy.

He arrived within three days from New Amsterdam. Clay was still conscious, but infection had set in, and he wasn't expected to live long. Clay had much of his face burned off; he resembled a ghoul or monster more than a stately gentleman. As Quincy stayed with Clay, he looked up at Quincy and said quietly, "The Democratic-Republicans did this to me..."<sup>35</sup> Quincy didn't understand; they were all Democratic-Republicans. Clay kept pointing to his badly burnt face. "Quincy! You must rise and do something!"<sup>36</sup> The Great Compromiser fell silent, and passed.

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<sup>31</sup> There exists no evidence that the deal had been corrupt, most historians believe Jackson was merely a sore loser.

<sup>32</sup> Built in 1798 to support the French Republic in a quasi-naval conflict with Britain, a conflict that only resulted in a handful of minor ship skirmishes. See also, *Our Little Naval War*, by Gardner Allen.

<sup>33</sup> USS Constitution had survived contact with a violent hurricane off the coast of Williamsburg the previous fall, it nearly sank, often considered a miracle it survived.

<sup>34</sup> Captain Thomas Macdonough (1783-1825), Irish American naval officer, 13<sup>th</sup> captain of the USS Constitution, earned great acclaim during the Pirate Wars. Sometimes said to have personally slain the British pirate, Charles Killigrew.

<sup>35</sup> Diary of John Quincy Adams, page 782.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, page 783.

Quincy kept his friend's dying words to himself; he told nobody. A short investigation by Congress looked into the disaster and concluded that it had been a tragic accident, nothing more.

Weeks later, staffers informed him that Andrew Jackson had been on the USS Constitution the previous morning. Jackson also gave a statement to Congress, backhandedly giving condolences to Clay's family. It was then that Quincy realized that his vice president had been telling him, Jackson had been behind it all! He may have even intended to kill the sitting US president!

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, Quincy confronted Jackson on the senate floor, asking where he had been on April 7<sup>th</sup>. He admitted to having been on the USS Constitution the previous day, but stated if he had wanted to kill Henry Clay, he'd have shot him, like many of his former rivals, in a duel. Quincy refused to believe this, further noting that it wasn't originally meant to be Clay giving the inspection. Jackson retorted, "The child of a failed president refuses to believe my honest words; I see no reason to further this argument, unless the president would like to settle things beyond diplomatic measures."<sup>37</sup>

Quincy backed down for a while, but continued to claim that Jackson had been behind the accident. Another investigation was opened, which ended with no solid conclusion, something Quincy pointed to as proof. The back-and-forth arguments between Quincy and Jackson grew more personal; citizens hounded Jackson at his home. His wife Rachel grew so stressed out from the accusations of murder, that she had a stroke and died. Jackson blamed Quincy for her death. On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, they argued once again before the Senate, and Jackson demanded a duel to end this feud. Quincy, at last, agreed. Several staffers begged Quincy to cease, he wasn't a duelist, Jackson was among the best in the nation,<sup>38</sup> and even if he won, a president partaking in a duel was unworthy of the position. Quincy refused, "This man is a scoundrel, a liar, and a child. He'd sooner throw all Indians into the sea, than to ever admit to being wrong about anything, least of all, the murder of the vice president!"<sup>39</sup> There was no going back; this conflict would end with pistols drawn.

They met in a field south of New Amsterdam City three days later, not far from where Hamilton and Burr had killed each other in a duel, decades prior.<sup>40</sup> The last pleas for common sense, went unheard. Each man was given a pistol, and told to march 15 meters. Jackson reportedly yelled as they marched, "You see me as a traitor to my nation, a modern Washington, and you the heroic

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, page 787.

<sup>38</sup> Jackson had partaken in 15 duels, winning all of them and killing each opponent. His most infamous victory was against attorney Charles Dickenson in 1806 following a dispute over a racehorse, Dickenson had also been mocking Jackson's wife.

<sup>39</sup> Diary of John Quincy Adams, page 788. Alluding to Jackson's handling of the Creek War and his well-known personal hatred of native tribes.

<sup>40</sup> 1804 duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr over much personal hatred. Occurred in New Jersey, both died as a result of wounds received. Last duel fought in New Jersey. See also, chapter 4, the Hamilton – Burr duel.

Arnold. Long have I awaited this day. Silly little boy, now you will learn the limits of books."<sup>41</sup> Quincy responded with, "Only a slave owner deals in absolutes. Against my better judgments, I do not wish to kill you, but I will do what I must."<sup>42</sup>

They both turned and fired, both were hit, Quincy in the left hand, Jackson in the shin. Despite the injury, Jackson was still intent on mocking Quincy. "You call this, a diplomatic solution, Quincy?"<sup>43</sup> Again, the seconds pleaded for mercy, and again, it was rejected. Two more pistols were drawn, and the distance was shortened to 11 meters. "I did not kill your vice president, but so what, he was a weak man just like you Quincy!"<sup>44</sup> "You were supposed to strengthen democracy, not damage it! You betrayed us all Jackson!"<sup>45</sup> They fired, the two men nearly fell to their knees, both hit in the lower chest. One last time, mercy was asked, and one last time, it fell silent.

Ten meters, one more shot each. They both had final words for each other. Jackson bellowed, "I love this country, but it will be better off without you. Now, you will die!"<sup>46</sup> Quincy's reply was short and to the point. "I hate you!"<sup>47</sup> Both guns were fired.

Quincy stood, holding his wound; Jackson stood for a second, before falling back. Jackson's gun had misfired, Quincy's bullet had hit dead center. Jackson's staff ran to him as blood ran down his mouth. His eyes did not stop staring at Quincy, even after his spirit had left. Quincy dropped his pistol and mournfully said, "What have I done...I felled Old Water Oak."<sup>48</sup>

A nearby doctor attended to Quincy's wounds; they were considered not serious. News spread near and far; the president of the United States, had killed a man in a duel. Dueling was not directly illegal across the nation, but Jackson associates thought it was sickening and cruel. There were talks of impeachment and removal, but everyone who witnessed the duel, claimed Jackson had essentially confessed to the crime.

The estate of Jackson, after his death, was run by his 15-year-old adopted son Andrew Jackson Jr,<sup>49</sup> who promptly sued the state of New Amsterdam for wrongful death, due to dueling technically being illegal in the state. Also involved were a couple of Rachel Jackson's nephews,

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<sup>41</sup> Diary of John Quincy Adams, page 789.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, page 789.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, page 789.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, page 789.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, page 789.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, page 789.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, page 790.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, page 790. Alluding to Jackson's lifelong nickname that he proudly held for his toughness after nearly being killed by a Redstick warrior during the Creek War. The warrior's knife got stuck in a nearby water oak tree, thus saving Jackson's life during the fight.

<sup>49</sup> Andrew Jackson Jr (1809-1850) only adopted child of Andrew Jackson, although there were rumors Jackson adopted an Indian child who later died of tuberculosis. Jackson Jr attempted to join the military but was kicked out for drinking habits related to his parent's deaths. Later sold the family estate, moved to France, and drowned in the Seine in 1850.

although they weren't officially adopted by her husband. The Jackson estate won in court, but was ultimately given a paltry payout; not a cent came from the Adams estate. No punishment fell on Quincy, at least not physically.

Within a few months of the duel, Congress passed sweeping legislation, outlawing duels of any nature across all states and territories. It was commonly called Jackson's Law, a name that still can be found in legislation.

To replace Clay, Quincy chose the former Jackson loyalist Martin Van Artevelde,<sup>50</sup> a controversial choice due to his Flemish heritage.<sup>51</sup> In some ways, the duel had even been politically helpful, many congressmen thought Quincy was weak, too easily rolled to be diplomatic when he needed to fight. Such hushed words were never spoken of again.

The duel would come up time and again during his long two terms as president, from his diplomatic dealings with the French Republic, to the short-lived Southern Crisis led by John C. Calhoun.<sup>52</sup> Reminding the state of Carolina what had happened to the last politician who angered him, and that the United States military stood at the ready, was enough to prevent revolt.

Ultimately, Quincy's presidency would be a mixed bag, although regarded better than his father's. Under his leadership, railroads and canals dotted the nation, a perhaps kinder policy of assimilation with tribes like the Cherokee than Jackson would have dreamed was passed, and through diplomatic measures, the eventual establishment of the Lavoisier Institution<sup>53</sup>. Jacksonians undercut him at every turn, but even they admitted his business with international trade was second to none.

Among his proudest achievements was enacting aspects of Clay's economic system, christened, the Clay System. Under Quincy, public works projects like the National Road and Ohio Canal were built, alongside strengthening the Bank of the United States.

To this day, the city-state like Cherokee Nation marks Jackson's death as a minor holiday, with Quincy as a well-respected figure. It's not a legacy he would have preferred, but it's perhaps what he deserved. The shadow of the gun always hung high over the administration, to its last day.

When you dig beneath the salacious stories and popular legends, you find an unanswered question. Was Jackson really guilty of murdering Henry Clay?

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<sup>50</sup> Martin Van Artevelde, (1782-1864) 7<sup>th</sup> US president. Key member of the National Republican party and later the Republican party.

<sup>51</sup> Descendant of the famous Jacob Van Artevelde, the man who formed the Flemish Three Members state during the 100 Years War.

<sup>52</sup> Often considered the Father of the Democratic Party, influential politician in the deep south.

<sup>53</sup> Historical institution named after and funded by, the estate of Antoine Lavoisier (1743-1826), the iconic French scientist and big supporter of the United States.

Despite Congress largely believing it, Jackson did not confess to the murder; he mockingly said he didn't do it but that it didn't matter all the same. Legally, there is a very distinctive difference. While it was true that Jackson had been on the USS Constitution on April 6th, he wasn't seen with anyone else and left only an hour after coming aboard. The cannon that exploded was believed to be loaded for a 21-gun salute later in the evening; it's entirely possible a stray spark had led to a fiery explosion, little more. The words of a dying man, can sometimes be as profound as a child's first words; Clay's last gasps do not amount to much.

However, it is equally true that some of Jackson's enemies, over the years, had died in suspicious circumstances. William Weatherford, chief of the Creek Indian Tribe, died in a house fire in 1822, days after meeting with Jackson. Jackson was also seen by an officer resting his arm on the very cannon that exploded not 12 hours later.

If this was taken to a court of law, it is doubtful a jury would return a conviction. The evidence isn't solid enough to be firm, but enough doubt remains, that I cannot, in good conscious say, that Quincy was wrong.

John Quincy Adams would live until 1850, dying after an argument with a member of the now-popular Democratic Party. Quincy was essentially the leader of the National Republican Party, and the issue of slavery had come to dominate politics. Tennessee senator Preston Brooks was a leading pro-slavery Democrat. Quincy was as firm an anti-slavery politician as one could be. During a heated debate, Brooks brought up the infamous duel, causing Quincy to mock Brook's heritage, saying he was a half-breed Brit. Brooks took his cane and began beating Quincy, but a staffer jumped in and took the cane. Quincy grabbed the cane from his staffer and struck Brooks across the nose, and was about to continue beating him, when he suffered a fatal stroke, and fell into a nearby American flag. The man of diplomacy died fighting for his beliefs, as he always had when pushed too far.

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## The True Story

***John Quincy Adams was born in 1767, named after his mother's grandfather, Colonel John Quincy, who passed two days after his birth. He was profoundly inquisitive and kept a diary throughout his life. Much of his early life was in the***

*shadow of his father, following him on diplomatic trips, even after the American Revolution ended. After serving as a lawyer, George Washington made him ambassador to the Netherlands in 1794; he remained in diplomatic positions until 1801. After a stint as a senator, Quincy served as ambassador to Russia under the Madison Administration. He helped negotiate the end of the War of 1812, and later served as Secretary of State for James Monroe. Quincy was a crucial figure in the creation of the Adams–Onís Treaty, which acquired Florida from Spain. He also helped create the Monroe Doctrine.*

*His relationship with Henry Clay was positive, as he was quite receptive to Clay's American System ideas, and neither liked Andrew Jackson. Both men decried him as aggressive, warlike, cruel, and unfit to lead a nation. Quincy felt dueling was abhorrent, calling out Jackson for his involvement in so many.*

*In the Election of 1824, Quincy only won via support from Clay, something Jackson considered a Corrupt Bargain, especially since Clay became Secretary of State under Quincy. The administration was ambitious, but many policies failed to pass through Congress. The Democratic-Republican party itself fractured due to fighting with Jackson, creating the National Republicans and the Democratic Party. Jackson ultimately beat Quincy in 1828.*

*Quincy remained in politics for the rest of his life, with a heavy focus towards anti-slavery actions near the end of his life. His actions post-presidency included, aggressively loathing the annexation of Texas and subsequent Mexican-American War, arguing on behalf of slaves in United States v. The Amistad, and playing a key role in abolishing the Gag Rule.*

*On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1848, during a heated vote to honor US Army officers involved in the Mexican-American War, Quincy suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and collapsed. He died two days later at the age of 80. Among the many politicians who paid respect to Quincy as he passed, was a young Abraham Lincoln.*