

## Introduction

William Walter Cleary was born in 1831 and died in 1897. He was a firm believer in state sovereignty and maintained that states had the right to secede and resist the coercive measures of the federal government. True to his convictions when Kentucky refused to secede he quitted the state and went South. He was assigned duties which he performed chiefly in Bermuda and Canada and were of such character as to make him one of the few marked men connected with the attempt to establish the Confederacy. He was one of the last to receive amnesty and to return home to Kentucky. There he lived in Cynthiana and in 1874 moved to Covington where he served as Kenton County commonwealth attorney until 1880. While in Richmond during the war he was assigned to the division of claims in the war department. While there he kept a journal of his experiences which is here recorded.