

BREMETON DAILY NEWS SEARCHLIGHT

February 20, 1933 - March 10, 1933

RIDLEY BOXING SERIES WILL BEGIN
TOMORROW

"A DECADE IN THE RING," a series of 17 stories by Ralph A. (Bud) Ridley, Bremerton Boxing Promoter, will begin tomorrow in the News Searchlight.

Ridley, former featherweight champion of the Pacific Coast and one of the ranking fighters of the world at one time, tells of his early bouts and his start as a boxer. He follows it up with intimate stories of the "inside" of the ring game and of its personalities.

The local promoter is the descendent of an English bishop and started boxing as a piece of luck when he was caught sneaking into a wrestling match in Idaho. From that first bout on the wrestling program he climbed high in the game.

Oldtimers will recall many of the points brought out by Ridley from 1916 to 1926 when the boxing game saw its most flourishing days. A personal friend of Jack Dempsey and other champions, Ridley has contacted the best of them and his articles will appeal to every reader.

Watch for them. The first will be published tomorrow. (2/20/1933)

A DECADE IN THE RING

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A Bishop's Ancestor, Now a Bremerton Boxing Promoter, Tells of Thrills and Throbs of Resin Racket During His Career

By R.A. (BUD) RIDLEY
(As Told to Peter Salvus)
2/21/1933

Every youngster, at some time or another wants to be a boxer. The cleanliness of the sport, the contacts made and the value of a healthy, strong body encourages him. Some follow the sport for recreation, some to build themselves into strong, upstanding citizens, and some follow it as a profession. I was one who followed it as a profession. In this series I hope to take the reader through a decade of boxing history - a decade that saw the greatest era of the ring sport and one that saw the game rise to heights unparalleled. If the use of the personal pronoun occurs too frequently, I beg the reader's pardon, but to avoid confusion and bring this series as close to the reader as possible, such license is necessary.

NEARLY 35 YEARS OLD

Today, nearly 35 years old. I can look back over events of real interest from the time I fought my first fight in 1912 as a boy of 14 until I hung up my gloves in 1926. I drifted around awhile and finally settled in Bremerton and entered the boxing promotion business.

My first fight wasn't much to brag about. As a matter of fact it was a penalty which I incurred with the other boy of my own age who were trying to sneak into a wrestling show at Sand Point, Ida. That youngster's trick started me in the fight game and I've never regretted it.

We were caught by the promoter of the show and he said he'd turn us over to the police. We protested and pleaded our innocence and he made another bargain. If two of us would fight a preliminary to his wrestling show he would let all of us in free of charge.

I was the one picked for the bout. Incidentally, should the parents of Clark Mitchell, who live in Bremerton, read this, they probably will remember the event.

HURT BOTH THUMBS

I fought Clark, who was Fat then, and weighed 140 pounds, while I weighed 100 pounds. The bout was three rounds. I hurt both thumbs with sweeping swings. That shows how amateurish I was.

Ted Thye, now one of the outstanding wrestlers and promoters of the northwest, appeared on the same program. He was just a green kid then and lost his bout.

It was held in a roller-skating rink. There was no ring but only a mat on the floor and chairs crowded close to it.

In my bout with Mitchell we roughed it up quite a bit. With my short arms I had to stay inside of his swings and the lesson I learned then of keeping close to my opponent stayed with me during my entire career.

LANDED ON SPECTATORS

One skirmish between Clark and I landed us both out in the chairs and in the laps of the spectators and we kept on fighting. The crowd roared and the wrestlers probably learned a trick or two watching us in action.

Now briefly, I will tell something of the background of my family which covered my ring experience. My mother, who now lives in the Ballard district of Seattle with my 83-year-old grandmother, explains that as far as the family can trace their history, we are related to Bishop Ridley, famous figure of English history. Both of my parents and myself were born in the United States.

My father was a printer by trade and owned a small weekly newspaper in the Middle West until he died. I was born in Alexander, Minn., and until father's death lived there. Then we moved to Sand Point, Ida.

I have always wanted to write, as stories I have experienced and gathered during my decade in the ring would fill volumes.

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I will try and condense them in this series.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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February 23, 1933

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After my first bout in the ring as a free admission to a wrestling show, I became enthusiastic over the sport and had five more fights. For these I was given free tickets to the wrestling show and I sold them for 5 cents each to my schoolmates.

I had won 5 fights in a row and the promoters and fans liked my style. The promoters came to me with a proposition whereby I was to meet Jimmy Stack, a 105 pounder from Spokane at 10 rounds.

There was little and no supervision of boxing at Sand Point in those days and I entered the arena with 2 rings on the 4th finger of my left hand and with both my hands free of tape.

I was lucky against Stack. He was a tall, skinny fellow and I was short and stocky. I knocked him down 5 times and his face was pretty badly cut from my rings. His second came over between rounds and I was forced to take off my rings.

TWO RINGS WORN

I didn't wear them for any particular reason, though. Just forgot to remove them. Since then I've always examined the hands and taping of my opponent. I can still remember Stack's face.

I had a return match with him shortly and won that. For the second fight, especially as I had beaten an out-of-town boy before, I was quite a drawing card and fans turned out and packed the arena.

The promoters gave me \$15 and it was my first professional fight. In addition, the fans passed the hat around and I received an addition \$15.

In September 1916, we moved to Seattle. We lived at a small lumber town just outside the city but later moved to Ballard.

POSED BEFORE MIRROR

I had no idea of being a professional pugilist but I did read the Police Gazette, then the big sports magazine, and practiced poses I saw in the pictures before the mirror.

Johnny Coulon, then bantamweight champion, was my idol. He was a little fellow, the same as I, and I used to read of his exploits and victories with interest.

With my brother Frank, who is now working for the Pittsburgh Athletic Club, I went to the fights at the Seattle Elks club. In the main events were Leo Houck, now a motion picture director in Hollywood, and Chet Neff, a baker at Long Beach.

If they could fight, so could I, was my thought as I watched them in action. I weighed 112 pounds then, and as hard as nails and anted and liked to fight. That was near close to the war and although just in my teens I thought I'd try boxing in earnest.

MET DAN SALT

I went to the gymnasium in downtown Seattle and was introduced to a big fellow with hair already turning white.

That was my introduction to Dan Salt, one of the original boxing promoters in Seattle and its gliding light. Salt died in 1923, but I want to say now he was one of the cleanest, squarest and finest men I have ever met in the ring game.

Salt looked me over, tried me out in the gymnasium and told me to get ready for a fight a week hence. It was at the old Dreamland arena, skating rink and dance hall on University Street in Seattle now occupied by a garage across from the Olympic hotel.

I fought a guy named Charlie Davidson, 114 pounds, in the curtain-raiser. Incidentally it was my first curtain-raiser I ever fought in my life. This was in November.

WON FIRST BOUT

I defeated Davidson when they stopped the fight in the third round, as I recall. I went over big, judging from the cheers of the fans. I was only 5 feet, 2 inches tall and looked about 13 years old. But, if I do it myself, I could fight. When it started I never saw so many people in one place in all my life and as I sat on the stool in my corner waiting for the opening gong, I was sure nervous.

As soon as the bell rang, I forgot it all until Salt came over to my corner, and said, "Not a bad start, Bud."

The ring game had gotten me. I never changed my name because I knew I'd make good. Portus Baxter, then a Seattle writer and now retired, came out the next day with the nickname "Bud" tacked on to me. It still sticks.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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February 24, 1933

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From 1917 to 1919 I graduated to the preliminary class to semi-finals. After my victory over Charlie Davidson in Seattle, I was taken under the managerial wing of Lonnie Austin, who was the junior member of the firm Austin and Salt. Dan Salt did the promoting and matchmaking and Austin handled the fighters in their gym on First and Seneca.

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It was during that period I first came to Bremerton as a shipfitter. As I recall, the boat being built at the time was the O-2, a submarine.

My hardest fight occurred when I was in a semi-final with Tuffy Wing of Portland. He was just too fast and clever for me although I had been in only 25 fights when I met him and he was considered among the best in the Northwest.

While working in the navy yard as a shipfitter I also did some fighting on the side although they were not many and I had no chance to train.

Left Lonnie Austin

I drifted away from Austin's managership and went on my own. I fought here and there with varying success and gradually learned more about the boxing game.

Clay Hite, who created the Bremerton fiasco in boxing promotion here a few years ago was then promoting in Seattle. I fought for him in a roller skating arena above a building at Third and University. My opponent was Frankie Monroe.

It was at this time also that I first met Jack Dempsey. The former champion was working in the Seattle Construction company shipyards and fighting on the side.

Dick Wells, a former boxer, trained with Dempsey and in his own words, "He was a tough son-of-a-gun." When Dempsey fought Jess Willard for the title at Toledo July 4, 1920, Wells was the only one around Seattle who thought Dempsey had a chance.

First Met Dempsey

I met Dempsey personally. He was just a green kid back in 1917-18 but was built like a bull and was about the strongest of all the hardy shipbuilders.

In addition to Dempsey and Wells, Johnny O'Leary, claimed to be one of the greatest lightweights ever turned out in Seattle, also worked in the ship-yards. O'Leary's untimely death when he in his prime lost a great boxer to the game.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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February 25, 1933

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The evening that Eddie Pinkman, now of Seattle, then coast lightweight champion, was billed to meet Ritchie Mitchell at the old ice arena in Seattle, I was introduced to Fred (Windy) Winsor, former manager of Jack Dempsey. After listening to many glowing tales of the ring and promises of being pushed into the world's championship in a year, I signed to box under him. That was in 1919.

Winsor, you may recall, was mixed up in the Fred Fulton-Tony Fuente diving match in the South later and barred from boxing.

From the time Winsor took me over I began to rise toward the top. I had lots of confidence in his ability to make good matches, and for the first time I was in the "pink" of condition. My first bout under him was with Bernie Dillon at Milwaukee, Ore. I won by a knockout in two rounds. After winning over George Franklin at the Hellig theatre in Portland, we left for the Northwest to invade California.

Stopped Drexel

My first bout in California was with Mickey Drexel in Oakland whom I stopped in the first round. A few nights later I won from Johnny Ortega in San Francisco. I had suddenly found myself.

Under Fred Winsor's clever handling I forged ahead by leaps and bounds, fighting once, twice and often three times in one week. They were not easy fights, either; in fact I thought at times that my manager was deliberately trying to have beaten.

Meeting such boys as Jimmy Dundee, Harry Pelsinger, and Danny Kramer. I was gathering experinec rapidly.

Spider Kelly Helped

Due to the fact that I had one of the best trainers of boxers in the world putting me through systematic training, I was able to beat most of the boys in the south. Spider Kelly, the great old-time lightweight used to drop by and show me a few tricks which came in mighty handy during the years that followed.

Frankie Neil, former world's lightweight champion was another good friend to come forward with good, sound advice.

Barred Down South

Then one week my hustling manager signed me up for three fights in one week. But we were never able to fill them for a scheduled bout to take plave at the L street arena in Sacramento fell on the same night that I was to appear at the Coliseum in San Francisco.

Well, the promoters got together and decided to call a halt. I was barred from the Northern California rings as a result.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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February 27, 1933

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After being barred from boxing in Northern California, I breathed a sigh of relief. At last I could get a much needed rest. But I was wrong. Not with my manager, Windy Winsor. We

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caught a train and went south to Los Angeles. By a coincidence we caught the same train as Jack Dempsey. Jack, "a real good soul," insisted we move into his drawing room and we had a much better trip south.

Teddy Hayes, at the time chauffer for Dempsey, met us at the Central avenue station in Los Angeles and we rode to our hotel in style. The next day we went to the Universal Studio to watch Dempsey as he worked on the picture, "Dare Devil Jack."

But Winsor decided we were wasting too much time so he signed for a fight with Danny Kramer, hard-socking featherweight from Philadelphia - though I had not trained a bit for a week - to take place at the old Vernon arena.

Nervous That Night

On the night of the fight I dressed in the Stag hotel across the street from the arena. I was unusually nervous on the night., knowing as I did I was in poor condition to be facing one of the hardest body punchers in the world.

I was shadow-boxing around the room, warming up, at about 9:30 when Winsor burst into the room, "Get your clothes on, Champ! The fight's off!" Of course I was thunderstruck but I wasted no time in complying with his wishes. Again, I heaved a sigh of relief.

"Bud Ridley Barred"

The newspapers of Los Angeles came out the next day with glaring headlines: "Bud Ridley Barred in LA,"

Nothing daunted, we jumped to Seattle and fought Earl Baird at the ball park. We went through six slugging rounds to a draw.

We then hopped back to California and prepared for an eastern invasion. Otto Floto, great writer on the Denver Post, now dead, was giving me plenty of publicity through the Middle West and he had been doing his best to steam up a Ridley-Pete Herman match. Herman was then world's bantamweight champion.

Visited Otto Floto

We left San Francisco in September, 1920, stopped in Kansas City to visit Otto Floto and from there went to Cleveland where we visited Mat Hinkle., boxing promoter there. We got into Benton Harbor, Mich., a week before Dempsey met Miske.

Miske was like a baby before the terrific punches of Dempsey and in the first minute of the fight he crashed a terrific right hand to Miske's side. Billy's face writhed in agony as he slumped to the floor, but he gamely got to his feet and managed to last another round.

Dempsey Hits Miske

The fight ended when Jack crashed over a right to his chin. Going back to Chicago on the train with Otto Floto, Jack Curley, Fred Winsor and myself, we came upon One-Eyed Connolly, the world's greatest gate-crasher, trying to bum his way without a ticket. We each put in a little and paid his fare.

A week after we got into New York Fred Winsor and I began to argue and quarrel. I'll confess I was homesick and cranky. Our words developed into blows at last and I wired home for money and set sail for Seattle minus a trunk, suitcase and a manager.

Later I witnessed the dempsey-Carpentier fight.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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February 28, 1933

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After splitting with with Fred Winsor and I returned to Seattle, I was met at the King street station by Nate Druxman who was anxiously looking into an opponent for Joe Gorman. Although Gorman outweighed me by ten pounds, I accepted the match and lost a six-round decision. I met Joe Waterman that night and a friendship started that still holds. He became my manager.

Joe and I went to San Francisco to fight Joe Coffee, a mighty good boy and a hard puncher. Joe and Winsor met in an impromptu battle in the dressing room before the fight which ended before much damage was done. My bout with Coffee ended in a draw.

We went back to Seattle, then back to New York where I boxed at the Pioneer Sporting Club, Rockaway Beach and Coney Island, winning my bouts. I got a cauliflowered ear when I fough Bobby Michels at the Pioneer and the bout was stopped. The commissioner ordered me to remove my mouthpiece and consequently my lips were cut making me appear much worse than I really was.

Boxed Johnny Dundee

Due to the bad ear I called off a bout with Danny Frush in Boston. A few weeks later I boxed Johnny Dundee at Long Island. Georges Carpentier was a guest that day. We were then ready to go back to Seattle but when Leo P. Flynn gave us tickets to the Dempsey-Carpentier fight we decided to stay in New York.

When the first gong sounded at Boyle's Acres in New Jersey when Carpentier and Dempsey met, the Frenchman glided fearlessly out of his corner and led with a flshy left. But before the round was over it was apparent to the 100,000 fans that it was just a matter of time before the Manassa Mauler would smash Carpentier to the floor.

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In the second round Georges lunged with a terrific right hand that landed flush on Dempsey's jaw. The champion staggered backward a step. He seemed dazed.

The fans rose in a howling mass, cheering the Frenchman; but it was Carpentier's last gesture. From then on to the kayo it was all a Dempsey fight.

First Fought Here

We went back to Seattle from there. Then I boxed my first time in Bremerton. It was against Joe Harrahan at the elks temple here. I met Sailor Walters at the ball park here a short time later.

Then we received an offer from Eddie Tait, formerly of Seattle (whose wife, incidentally recently was found dead in a river in Manila), to visit Manila. We accepted and left on the Suwa Maru in September 1921. Joe Waterman, my wife and my elder daughter, Charlotte then six months old, were in the party.

The boat made stops at Yokohama, Nagasaki, Kobe, Shanghai and Hong Kong. I warmed up at Hong Kong by boxing one of the Chinese champions at the English club here. A few days later we sailed into Manila bay.

Met By Churchill

We were met at the dock by Frank Churchill and a group of newspapermen. Churchill later became manager of Tod Morgan and was the first to bring out the Filipino stars who reached their heights in the United States from 1922 to 1933. He was then managing Pancho Villa, the great Filipino champion who was killed after a bout with Bud Taylor. (EDITORIAL NOTE: This is how it was stated in the article).

After looking me over from head to foot the ring critics decided I was too small to fight their champion, Macario Villon, holder of the featherweight and lightweight championships of the Orient.

However we met in October in a 10-round fight which ended in a draw. We fought a slashing fight for the whole ten rounds with no advantage on either side. Two weeks later I boxed Elin Flores 15 rounds to a draw.

Trained for Villon

I laid off then for a few weeks and at Christmas time took a trip back into the hills to a place called Baqulo. The Moros, a cannibal tribe, lived there. Every Sunday they had dog day at the market. They brought in small, white dogs, sold them and ate them.

When I got back to Manila I began training for a 20-round bout with Villon. Incidentally this bout was the hardest and most terrific fight I ever went through.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 1, 1933

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Shortly before my fight with Macario Villon, feather and light-weight champion of the Orient, and after my return from the inland trip, my manager, Joe Waterman, and I received a summons from Governor General Leonard Wood to call upon him at the Malacaun palace. We had no idea what to expect as a boxer never before had been called by the governor to visit him. We were ushered into the governor's presence and greeted by a wide friendly grin. Our nervousness left us immediately. We learned he was much interested in boxing and asked how the Filipinos were treating us during our visit.

Then he rose to his feet and showed me how Jack Dempsey, the non-pareil, used to punch with a right hand. When we were leaving he smiled and told me he would be at the fights on the next Saturday night.

Two days before my bout with Macario Villon, a sty appeared on my left eye and by the day of the fight the eye was inflamed, swollen, and very tender. But I thought nothing of it and went on with the fight anyhow.

Crowds Pack Doors

The afternoon of the fight we went to the stadium gymnasium to weigh in and found a lineup of Filipinos waiting for the doors to open for the evening's show. They all had their lunches under their arms.

In the stadium was a pen back of a fence where the lower class Filipino is admitted for 50 centavos (25 cents). I stepped into the gymnasium and stopped in amazement. There barefooted and sliding over the floor shadow boxing was a Filipino boxer. His feet made a noise like sandpaper drawn across a rough surface.

It was Pancho Villa, later to become the world's flyweight champion. He was there to weight in for the semi-final bout. While waiting for time to weight in Joe Waterman and Frank Churchill, Villa's manager who was later to handle Tod Morgan, became involved in an argument as to whether or not I was taller than Villa.

Stadium Was Filled

I made a dime bet with Waterman that I was taller. I lost! We were exactly the same height.

When I walked into the stadium that evening, every seat in the house was filled. The pen where the Filipinos stood peering over the fence was packed. The stadium was beautiful that evening. Everything was white. The people all wear white clothes in Manila.

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Villon and I posed for pictures before the show. George Lee, famous Chinese fighter, was introduced as meeting Pancho Villa the following Saturday. My bout was for 20 rounds.

When the bell rang Villon and I moved cautiously toward each other. We sparred around, getting the feel of the other's tactics, and when the gong sounded ending the round I felt confident I was going through to a win.

Tried Left Hook

In the First minute of the second round Villon lunged in with a terrific right. I stepped back to make him miss. Then when his glove swished harmlessly by I moved in with a counterpunch. His head was lower than I expected it would be and I also missed. We fell into a clutch.

His head lay under my chin, against my chest. His arms were held low. I reached out quickly to grasp his elbow, planning to spin him sideways and to hook with my left.

I executed the spin all right, but at that moment he straightened, bringing his head up into my face with a sickening crack. The next moment I felt the warm blood streaming down my face and my left eye was closed from the deep gash over the upper lid.

During the minute's rest following the round Joe succeeded in stopping the flow of blood but could do nothing to open the eye. My hopes of winning this bout against this ripping, tearing Phillipino were fading rapidly, handicapped as I was with one eye hopelessly out of commission.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 2, 1933

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At the start of the thrid round with one eye completely closed and 18 more rounds to go in my fight with Macario Villon, featherweight and lightweight champion of the Phillipines, began the most terrible battle of my career.

I came out with a rush at the sound of the gong and, to my surprise the champion retreated, planning, I presumed, to tire me. My confidence rose considerably and I kept up my offensive fighting without a let-up. The bout, up to the 10th round, was fairly even although I missed many times, I landed enough though, to keep Villon backing away.

During the 10th round I cornered the champion for a moment and lashed out with all strength but due to my impaired sight, I missed and the Phillipino slid out into the open with a catlike twist he turned and jabbed me with a solid left. His glove crashed into the right side of my

face. To my horror I felt my other eye slowly swelling shut.

Hideous Nightmare

I went back to my corner at the end of that round like one in a dream--a hideous nightmare. I looked up at the card which was suspended over the ring to name the round, and was surprised and dismayed to find we had traveled just half the distance.

Suddenly I became aware of a familiar voice near my corner calling my name. I turned my head and though meree slits in my eyes, I recognized Kenny Kroxton, a boy I had worked with in the Bremeton navy yard, sitting in a row next to the ring.

Believe me, seeing one of my old friends made me feel happy even though my hopes of winning or even staying the distance were all gone. I began to wonder how it would feel to be knocked out. I expected to be carried off my feet as soon as the champion became aware of my helplessness.

Joe Waterman Pleads

Joe Waterman pleaded with me to give up- to let him throw in the tow; but I felt that if Villon continued to backpedal I still had a chance of lasting through. I might even land a lucky punch. And too, I knew that Jack Munro; promoter from Sydney, Australia, was waiting with much interest the outcome of this contest.

When I rose to my fee, at the start of the 11th I was virtually blind. I buried my chin against my chest and walked out to meet my unscathed opponent. I could just see a blurred outline of the man before me. At times I was completely in the dark.

I missed by feet in many of my lunges but by tearing in and punching I managed to Villon at a distance. I began to exult to myself, " I was going to stay the limit! The great Villon was afraid of me!"

In the 18th round he stopped in his backward rush and snapped a sharp punch into my side. The blow jarred me from head to foot and I gasped from the pain. Stopping stock still I tried frantically to get my bearings.

Villon Goes Down!

All of my remaining strength seemed to have left me- I trembled inwardly. I knew that one more punch would finish me- that the end had come. I visualized myself on the floor in a senseless heap.

But the expected blow did not come. Through the slit in my right eye I saw the champion standing there watching me. I set myself and swung over a right with all my

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remaining strength, felt a solid impact and heard a wild cheer from the American section upstairs.

I knew I had knocked him down. Then vaguely I knew he was up again and that he was positively running from my helpless fury.

I don't remember the last two rounds of that battle. The next thing I knew was that I was being led out of the ring: that I had lost the decision ; that I had stayed the 20 rounds-going through the most terrible ordeal of my long career as a professional boxer.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 3, 1933

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Two weeks after the Villon battle we left Manila on the Niko Maru bound for Sydney, Australia. Joe Simonich, tough middleweight boxer from Butte, and his wife, were in the party. The boat made stops at Zamboanga, Thursday Island, and on February 5, 1923, we steamed into the beautiful Sydney harbor. Frankie Munroe, Billy McCann, Charlie Moy, and Billy Hunefeld, all American boxers were already in Australia when we arrived.

On March 14 I met Silvino Jamito a tough Phillipino in a 20-round go at the Sydney stadium. They weight in just before the bout takes place in Australia not at 2 o'clock in the afternoon as is the custom in this country.

I weight 9.1 stone, (127 pounds). He was one pound heavier. A stone is 14 pounds.

Fast Pace Set

I had no idea two men could taavel over the 20-round route at as fast a pace as we set. It was like in the old four-round days in California, only five times as long. Jamito was a bobbing weaving fighter, very tough and very aggressive.

I was more or less the same type and what a battle it was! We were in wonderful condition. There wasn't an idle moment during the entire bout. When the last gong sounded Referee Joe Wallus placed his hand on my head in toke of victory. Instead of raising the victor's hand as they do here the referee places his hand on the winner's head. In my next bout in Sydney I met Louie Garcia and won by a knockout in the 10th round.

Used First Foul

Tow weeks later I met Stanley McBride. This bout went to the 12th round when I was disqualified for butting. McBride was warned a dozen times for butting, heeling and clinching until I figured it was about time for me to reciprocate.

We were in a clinch in the 12th round when Stanley raked the palm of his glove across my face. I lowered my head until it was directly below his chin, then brought it up deliberately. The referee immediately placed his hand on my opponent's head and left the ring. It was the only time in my entire career that I ever lost a bout on a foul.

I went to Melbourne a few weeks later to box Bert Spargoe, Australian featherweight champion. The weight was to nine stone two, ringside with a forfeit of 50 pounds (about 225 dollars).

The weight didn't worry me in the least. In fact I was so sure of being under that I never bothered with the scales until the night of the fight. You can imagine my surprise and chagrin when I found myself two pounds overweight. The champion gave me one hour to take off the extra pounds or he would claim the money.

Claimed Weight Forfeit

Going back into the dressing room, I shadow-boxed eight rounds, tugged and pulled around with a sparring partner, and a vigorous rubdown and went back to the scales. I was still a quarter of a pound overweight.

Usually a boxer will not claim a forfeit for a quarter of a pound but Spargo claimed it, saying "if he wasn't a bloomin' Yankee, I wouldn't take it."

By that time the semi-final was over and we trouped to the ring. I certainly didn't feel equal to the task of going 20 more rounds after what I had been through but I was determined to do my best anyway.

Spargo proved to be a clever boxer and was on the defensive most of the time. We went the full 20 rounds. But I lost the decision.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 4, 1933

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Soon our campaign in Australia drew to a close. I met a boxer by the name of Jamito in Melbourne and went 20 rounds to a draw. My left shoulder bothered me a great deal I that fight and at times I was barely able to hold my arm up into position. I had wrenched it a year before, boxing with Young Zuzu in Seattle, but it hadn't bothered me for a long time and I thought I would have no more trouble with it.

I was certainly glad when the last bell rang that night for it meant my contract of five fights had been filled and we could pack up and go home. Joe Waterman had been ill with a bad cold and was unable to go to my corner in the next

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fight. We had been gone 10 months. It seemed like 10 years.

We sailed a week later on the Cotura bound for San Francisco. The boat made stops at Papo Pago and Samos, where we stopped long enough to walk among the natives who lined up along the dock to sell their wares. It was there I got the greatest bargain of my life—a bunch of bananas for one shilling (12 cents).

Swim for Money

A few days later we were in Honolulu. When the ship was about a mile from where it tied to the dock, a gang of 20 or more Hawaiian boys came swimming along like a school of fish. The passengers at the rail began tossing money into the water and we saw some fancy diving and lashing of the water as they would all start for a coin.

Few remained in Honolulu just a few hours. It was long enough, however, to drive to Waikiki beach and on up to the Pall, a mountain road which winds around the very edge of a cliff. They told us an entire army of men was forced over to death years before due to some strategy of the enemy.

July 3, 1922, we sailed through the Golden Gate and into old San Francisco. Joe went immediately to New York where he planned to arrange a winter's campaign for me. I was to follow in September.

I stepped on some scales one day and found myself weighting 138 pounds. I began immediately on a strict diet, eating no potatoes nor sweets. The weight seemed to fairly drop off me.

By the time I started for New York I was down to 125 pounds. Joe had lined up a bout with Irish Johnny Curtin in Jersey City. The winner was to be matched with the world's bantamweight champion, Joe Lynch.

I went into training at Grupp's gymnasium where I mingled with champions and near champions. Included were Harry Wills, Bill Brennan, Jack Britton, Mike McTigue, Mike and Tommy Gibbons and Jock Malone.

I boxed with Jack Britton, Charley Pitts, Panama Joe Gans, Charley Phil Rosenburg and other good men to get in shape for my bout. I was in wonderful condition by my shoulder was bothering me a lot.

Opponent is Dropped

When I fought Curtin I weighed in at 117½ Pounds and my opponent was a pound heavier. When the first bell rang that evening, Johnny and I tore after each other, both determined to get the shot at the champion.

The going was fairly even up to the ninth round. In that canto Curtin let his mind wander for a second and I caught him with a right hand that dropped him to his knees. He was up without taking a count. I started forward after him but the bell rang.

During the rest period Johnny recuperated and came out with a rush when the bell rang. He sent in a jarring left rip and snapped a short right to the point of my chin.

The ring turned up on end. Not one but 20 lights appeared about the ring. To save my life I couldn't keep myself from reeling and stumbling around before Curtin's savage attack. I wasn't even able to defend myself.

When the referee became aware of my condition he stepped in and awarded the fight to Johnny Curtin.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 5, 1933

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Our greatest problem after that fight was to get my arm fixed. It was almost impossible to box with it in that condition, and to sign for a fight would have been utter folly. Joe and I even talked at times of my hanging them up. A Dr. Chase in New York recommended Dr. Charles Spencer, of Los Angeles, to us so we boarded a train for the Southern California city.

Charles Spencer proved to be as good as Dr. Chase had said he was, and I was ready to go again in a month.

Ernie Gooseman was selected as my first opponent at the old Vernon arena. They were then having the four-round bouts in California. It seemed to me that we had hardly started when the fight was over, owing to the fact I had been going over the longer route for the preceding year. But it didn't seem to bother me any, as I always stated a 20-round fight just like a short one. I always figured that if my opponent could stand the pace I could. I won the decision.

The following week I lost a decision to Danny Kramer, Philadelphia southpaw. I won from Frankie McCann at Hollywood. Also Danny Nunes and Jackie Norman at Vernon, each bout one week apart.

Fights in Seattle

We decided it was time we were on the go again, so we started north. Stopping at Oakland I won another decision over Frankie McCann. Opponents were scarce there so we went on north to Seattle, where I met Joe Gorman at the Arena. At the bell Joe rushed across the ring and swung a terrific hook. I'll truthfully swear that it was the hardest blow that I have ever taken. The punch

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sent me across the entire breadth of the ring to land in a heap on the canvas. Believe me I took nine counts before getting to my feet. I had plenty of trouble for the next minute or so weaving under the barrage of punches Gorman hurled at me. The bell was like sweet music to my ears. Joe worked over me during the minute's rest, rubbing my legs, the back of my neck and arms and when the bell opened the second round I was my old self. I stared the round with murder in my heart. To think that I would be hit by a wide left hook like that, made me just boil inside.

Defeats Forbes

I knew by the way Joe carried his left hand that he was going to shoot the same hook. Blocking his punch with my right forearm, I hooked right with him, only shorter, and down went Mr. Gorman. Seeing him on the floor sort of cooled my anger, but still I wasn't satisfied; and when he got up without taking a count I was after him again. He saw me coming and went down without being hit, which automatically disqualified him.

For the next few months I was the busiest fighter in the Northwest, sinning from Danny Edwards, in Vancouver, stopping Ernie Ferren in Spokane, and boxing a draw with Frankie Britt in Tacoma in 10 days after the Gorman fight.

After much dickering Joe matched me with Bert Forbes in Vancouver. Joe was the only man in country who thought I had a chance with Forbes. He was a lightweight, was clever, smart and a terrific puncher. I had lots of confidence in Joe's judgment; but, nevertheless, down in my heart, I thought Forbes would stop me. I planned, however, to make things as interesting as possible for him, until he did send over the finishing blow. Just to show that Joe Waterman knew his onions, I knocked out Bert in the fifth round.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 6, 1933

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It was eight months before I crawled through the ropes again to do battle. That bout was with Frankie Ellis in Olympia, which I won by a knockout in the second round. A week later I won from Dandy Dillon in Tacoma. In the same ring I met Mike Ballerino, who later became junior lightweight champion of the world, and won another decision.

Starting on another campaign, I boxed twice a week for the next year or so, meeting such boys as Joe Gorman, Joe King Leopold, Danny Nunes, Georgie Adams, Vick Foley and others. Joe Gorman and I met six times in all. We end up even, each winning one and the others were draws. They were all rip-snorting battles. When I

entered the ring with him in the opposite corner, that killing left hook of his was in my mind, and he put it across again.

I won the Pacific coast featherweight championship belt from Danny Nunes in the Armory at Portland. My old manager, Fred "Windy" Winsor, was in Portland that night, and from reliable sources, I heard that he was coaching Nunes how to beat me easily. But, apparently, his instructions were forgotten or misfired in some way for I won that fight, not easily, but with enough edge to convince all present.

About that time Joe Waterman accepted a job as a trainer, and I went back to my home at Lynwood Call., where I planned to box for another year or so and then hang up the mittens for good. I was growing tired of traveling around the country.

Fights Exhibition Match

I placed myself under the management of Fred Nuemerkle, then manager of the gymnasium at Vernon. I boxed draws with Frankie Garcia and Danny Nunes in San Diego.

In an athletic program I boxed a four-round exhibition with Young Mendles at Burbank, the program being held at Jim Jeffries' ranch. After much persuasion, Jim boxed two rounds with his brother, Jack. I was in Jim's corner to give him water and plenty of air.

Then came news that Louis (Kid) Kaplan was going to visit the Pacific coast and I was to be his first opponent. Jack Doyle, Los Angeles promoter, had erected a beautiful boxing arena at 38th and Santa Fe streets in Vernon, and it was to be the scene of the encounter. The 10-round law had just passed a month before. Our bout was scheduled for 12-rounds with no decision given. I weighed 124 pounds but in order to get the bout I had to weigh in at 127 at 2 o'clock on the day of the fight.

A few days before the fight I hurt the arm that I had broken the year before while training with Young Peter Jackson in the gymnasium. I was afraid that I would have to pass up my chance to meet the champion; but my trainer, the great fight of the Wolgast days, Frankie Sullivan, promised to have the arm in good condition by fight time, so I went on with my preparations.

The bout took place on the evening of February 10, 1925.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 7, 1933

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There were a good many noted figures in the audience that evening. Jack Dempsey and his

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wife, Estelle Taylor, were introduced from the ring and were given a big ovation. Next came Mickey Walker, would middleweight champion. Down at my left sat none other than Charlie Chaplin, William Farnum, Lou Cody and my other screen celebrities.

Kaplan came out at the bell and lunged in with a left hook. I blocked with my right forearm and then stepped back momentarily, being still uncertain as to whether he arm was going to stand the gaff or not. When I realized it had not hurt me in the least, I stepped back in to meet the champion at his own game-slugging. I knew that his eight-pound weight advantage would be hard for me to overcome; but nevertheless, I planned to make the going interesting.

Every round was a rough, slam-band affair with Kaplan having the edge. After the first few rounds my arm started to pain me considerably. The champion used a left hook incessantly, most of which I blocked with my right forearm. Before the battle was over there was a knot on my arm as big as an apple. I was positive that the bone was fractured again; but I could still hold the arm up in position.

The ninth round was my biggest. I decided to take one more good chance with the right when he dropped his left to lunge in with a short right to his chin.

Bell Ends Chances

The round was nearly over before the chance came. I fainted with a left, stepped back, then fainted again. Down went his left. I gripped my right hand as tight as possible and let drive with all my strength. The blow landed flush on the point of Kaplan's chin. I saw the champion stagger, his eyes took on a glassy stare. I sensed victory in that moment, and I didn't mean to let the opportunity get by either. I thought that my dreams of being a world's champion were at last to be realized. But the man who wore the crown was till before me and on his feet- I must put him down. As the thought flashed through my mind I put every ounce of strength I had into a charge. Just as I was in close enough to hit him, the bell rang ending the round and also, my chances of scoring a knockout..

Kaplan recuperated during the minute's rest and came out with a rush. He, evidently, decided to end it as soon as possible for he fought savagely, ripping in terrific punches from every angle, never stopping for a second. The 11th round was a little slower, for the champion was tiring and my arm was terribly painful.

Between the 11th and 12th, the last round, Joe Waterman, who had come down from Portland to be in my corner, patted me on the back. "all right, Bud, old boy", he whispered

encouragingly, "last round coming up. Go get him!"

I sprang to my feet aat the sound of the gong, and, after touching gloves, I threw caution to the winds, punching like I had never done before. But the more I punched, the more he let go. Not throwing any bouquets at myself; but I will say the thousands who packed into the Vernon arena that evening saw a real battle.

When the last bell clanged, the champion threw his arm around my shoulder, grinning.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 8, 1933

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"Well, that was a battle, wasn't it, Bud"? he asked.

"No foolin'"! I answered, glad it was over.

I rested a month or so after that then went to Salt Lake City where I lost a 12-round decision to Lou Poloun. I had lost interest in the game since the Kaplan fight. I was growing tired of traveling around-being away from home so much. I began to think of quitting.

A few weeks later I went to San Bernadino where I won a 10-round decision from Sammy Sandow, tough lightweight from Cincinnati.

Soon after that bout I received a wire from Joe Waterman offering me a fight with Vic King, tough Australian featherweight, to take place in the Crystal Pool in Seattle. I accepted and left at once for the Northwest.

I felt before the fight that this bout would be my last before the home folks, and I wanted to win that bout. There had been rumors floating up and down the coast of my being through. I was afraid of it myself, but hated to admit it.

I entered the ring the night of the bout three or four pounds above my fighting weight. I had lost all interest in winning. I was more concerned with the size of the house, financially speaking. I didn't care to tie myself down to common foods any more. Hitting the road in the mornings was growing irksome. Consequently, I was not in the best of shape. But when I entered the ring and heard the cheers of my old friends I made up my mind to please them-to win if it killed me.

Determined to Win

At the first bell I went out to meet the younger man with all the zip of old. My one thought was t leave a good impression with the Seattle folks. Starting right out, I didn't go through the usual feeling out process, but lashed out punching as hard and fast as I could. In the third round Vic went down from a left hook, but

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was up immediately. I tried my best to put him down for the count, but guess I was getting slow, for I was unable to land a knockout punch. My mind wandered back three..four..five years, in the days when I went through 20 rounds without drawing a long breath. King would have been kayoed then; but he stayed the limit although losing the decision.

From there I went to Portland and lost a 10-round decision to Vic Foley. After that fight I knew that I had enough of the boxing game as far as participating in the actual fighting was concerned, for I had retreated before the charges of the younger men, something I had never done in the old days.

Nevertheless, I signed to meet another youngster, Chuck Hellman, the Portland boy who had just returned from California, where he had decisively defeated the great Doc Snell.

So on February 2, 1926, I met Chuck Hellman at the at the Armory in Portland. I trained hard for that bout, boxing six and eight rounds daily in training, hitting the road in the mornings and eating according to "Hoyle". Even though I had years of experience and knew just how much work it would take to put in the "pink" I am afraid I trained too hard for I was tired even before crawling through the ropes.

Before the first round was a minute old I knew that it was the end. I knew that the bout would be the last that I would ever enter and, down in my heart, I knew that I was going to lose. The thought madden me. Like many of the old timers, I was from "Missouri", in other words I had to be shown despite the fact I already knew.

A DECADE IN THE RING

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March 9, 1933

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Try as I would I was unable to land on the elusive Hellman, or hold ground against his rushes. His punches seemed to sap all of my strength. I suffered in that bout-not so much physically as mentally. I saw many openings, many chances to land telling blows, but for some reason, I was unable to take advantage of them.

During the rest period, between the eighth and ninth rounds I didn't hear the instruction whispered by my handlers. I paid no attention to their advice. I was fighting a battle inside of myself. My common sense told me I was through, but another sense answered "no".

The bell opened the ninth round. I was going to prove to myself and to my many friends in Portland, that I was as good as ever-I'd show them. I put everything I had into a rally. During

that rally, or rather, last dying effort, I managed to land on Chuck with a swinging right. Hellman went down from the force of the punch; but was up immediately. Then another thing happened to convince me I was through. I stood there watching Hellman. Watching him shake his head to clear away the cobwebs that had gathered with my punch. Watched him when I should have been in there battering away with punches.

Feels Discouraged

I went back to my corner at the end of that round discouraged and heartsick for I was convinced beyond a doubt that I was through-a "has been". I knew I was beaten but I didn't care, I wanted that last bell to ring so that I could leave the ring for all time.

Hellman rushed out at the bell punching and smashing away with hard, jolting hooks. I was too tired to fight back, and was forced backwards around the ring. Hellman snapped a sharp right hand into my side, and with a gasp of pain, I sank slowly to the floor. As I knelt there on my knee, listing to Referee Ralph Gruman toll off the count. I thought of my record of never being counted out. Was this, my last bout, going to break that also? At nine I got shakily to my feet. I just wouldn't be counted out. My head was as clear as ever; but I was weak, tire, trembling like a leaf. Oh, how I wanted to tear in and return some of those punches, but it just couldn't be done.

Joe Waterman, promoter of the show, came running up to the ring shouting to Ralph to stop it. So just before the last bell sounded the bout was stopped. I lost my last bout by a technical knockout-but could still say that I had never been counted out.

I was happy for a few months, but the, when day by day I read the paper and never seeing my name or picture I began to feel slighted. Then, too, what was I going to do? What sort of business was I going into? I had learned the shipfitter's trade in Bremerton navy yard years before, but there was practically nothing doing in that line. It was too late in life to start learning another trade.

Works as Instructor

I received an offer from Harry Hanson, who managed the Armory gymnasium in Portland to instruct his amateurs. I accepted and remained there for a year. It was terribly trying for awhile, especially when I was forced to tell a boy or man the same thing a hundred times or more to do the same thing, then when he came in the following day, he'd forgotten everything we had gone through the day before. I couldn't understand why they couldn't pick it right up; I didn't stop to

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think that I had been in the business for 12 years then.

I stayed there a year then went back to California, where I opened a gymnasium at Maywood, a suburb of Los Angeles. It was there I started a green awkward kid by the name of Jim Ferren. Today, Jim Ferren is a heavyweight, and, if I'm not mistaken, will be meeting the best in the world in a few years.

In 1930, I took over the management of the American Legion gymnasium at South Gate, California where I turned out some fairly good boys, among them Irish Danny McCoy and Georgie Hansford who is not fighting main event in the large clubs in the south.

In October, 1931, I went in with Charlie "Pop" Chartrand in the gymnasium at Burwell and Pacific, here in Bremerton, where after a few months of struggling along, we started promoting boxing shows.

Here's hoping I'm still a resident of Bremerton 20 years from today.



BIRTHDATA *May 25* BY **CARLOS**

**CANDLE-LIGHTING JAMES JOSEPH TUNNEY,
 FORMER WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION**

As all boys must, Gene learned to fight his own battles while getting his education in the schools of New York, where he was born May 25, 1898. In early manhood he joined the U. S. Marines and became actively interested in boxing. While in France he won the A. E. F. light heavyweight championship.

Mr. Tunney favors Wagnerian opera and dislikes musical comedies.

He is today a prominent business man, serving as Chairman of the Board of the American Distilling Co. He takes great pleasure in working with boys' clubs and his number two hobby is collecting rare wines.

Tunney became world heavyweight champion by defeating Jack Dempsey Sept. 26, 1926, a date never to be forgotten by fight fans. A return bout in Chicago the next year ended with the crown still in his possession. These fights drew two of the largest gates in the history of boxing. After knocking out Tom Heeney in 1928, Gene retired undefeated. The habit of years is still with him, though, and he keeps in condition by doing road work.

This is a Carlos Jones drawing submitted by his granddaughter Dara Jones.

