



STORY OF MY LIFE

By JAMES J. JEFFRIES

Copyright, 1910, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate. Copyright in Canada and Great Britain. All rights reserved.

old folks to a home of their own on a half cleared farm of 100 acres not far from Carroll, O. There they built a log cabin of two stories.

My father was a devout churchgoer for many years, but finally turned evangelist and preached in the open air, declaring that churches were a useless expense and that the money spent on them should be devoted to the poor instead.

I was born in the old log cabin on the Ohio farm, like my brothers and sisters. So I suppose if I hadn't taken up fighting as a profession I might have had as good a chance to become president of the United States as Abe Lincoln, James Garfield and other log cabin men.

On my mother's side I descend from the earliest Holland Dutch settlers in this country. My mother's home was in Bogertown, Pa., and her name was Rebecca Boyer.

Her father was Christopher Boyer, and he was a strapping big fellow too. He was a natural fighter, and they say that when he died over fifty years ago he carried the scars of many a hard ring battle fought with bare fists. He was the champion of his part of Pennsylvania and fought for the fun of it.

So I suppose fighting is in my blood and I come by the fighting instinct naturally. At any rate, having a few fighting ancestors has always furnished me with a good argument and a good excuse at home.

When I was born in the old log cabin my fighting weight was just fourteen pounds. My parents never suspected at the time that they were bringing up the future world's champion of the ring.

To develop me gradually they started by making a strong, healthy farmer boy of me, my father always contending that to round out a natural life a man should work hard until forty years of age and after that should turn to the cultivation of the spirit. On this theory he has never given up hope for me in spite of my ring career. I've always been grateful for the right kind of a start, for if I'd been brought up in a city like some boys, with no healthy and natural out of door life, I might not have been worth much as a fighter.

It was in 1881 that my father took his family to California, where we settled down on a ranch just outside the city of Los Angeles. Father built a fine fourteen room house and laid out ninety-seven acres of fruit trees. Our place was at Arroyo Seco canyon Arroyo Seco means dry river.

This was a grand home for us. There were my two older sisters and one younger, Lizzie, Almada and Lillie, and my brothers Cal, John, Tom and Charlie, afterward known as Jack.

I don't think any of us started our growth working on the ranch. When father went away to town in the morning he'd send me out to do some work in the field. After a little while the sun would get up and the sand would be pretty hot. Then I'd go back to the house and tell mother it was too hot

CHAPTER I.

SOME FIGHTING THAT THE JEFFRIES FAMILY DID BEFORE MY TIME.

HERE at the start I want to say that I am an American all the way through. I was born in America, and so were all of my forefathers for two full centuries ahead of me.

The original stock of the Jeffries family was Scandinavian or Norse



GEOFFREY KILLED A BEAR WITH HIS SWORD AND SAVED THE LIFE OF RICHARD COEUR DE LION.

vikings. It has been traced back to Normandy in the year 900, or just about there. In 1066 my ancestors went to England on a fighting trip with William the Conqueror. The family's name was spelled according to the owner's taste in those days. At first it was Godfridus, then Godfrey, Godfrey and Geoffrey. Later it went through new changes—Gæfferoy, Jeffrey, Joeffrey, Jeffries, Jeffray, Jeffris and Jeffries, with a few other variations.

There is a tradition that a certain Geoffrey fought in the crusades and once saved the life of Richard Coeur de Lion, when he was attacked by a bear in the hills near the city of Jaffa, killing the bear with his sword.

This old Geoffrey may or may not have been an ancestor of mine, and I'll not try to fill these pages with records extending back a thousand years. I'll start with the first of my family who came to America. He was Robert Jeffries, named after some Norman English ancestor away back in the year 1108, whose name was spelled Rolf Godfrey. This Robert Jeffries was born in Wiltshire, England, in 1650. He came to America in the year 1681 and settled at Uplands, now Chester, Pa., where he died in 1739, leaving a large family. Several of his sons afterward moved to Virginia.

My great-grandfather, William Jeffries, settled in Fairfield county, O. It was a wild country then.

My grandfather, James Jeffries, for whom I was named, was one of the children who made the journey from Virginia in the six horse prairie schooner. He was renowned for his prodigious strength. When he was six years old he could drive a four horse team. When he grew up he was six feet and two inches tall and weighed 230 pounds, and no one in all that country could equal his feats of lifting. He was noted, too, for the fact that he never drank, smoked, swore or lied in his life.

My grandfather stayed on his father's farm until he was twenty-four, when he married Mary Banadum, the daughter of another frontier farmer, and set up a home of his own. In their log cabin, sixteen feet square, their fourteen children were born. The fourth son received the highly romantic name Alexis Cehon Jeffries. This was my father. He grew big and powerful like all the other men of the Jeffries family.

When my father married he and his wife went twenty miles away from the



FIFTEEN OR TWENTY MILES THROUGH SAND AS HOT AS THE TOP OF A BOILER.

to work. I'd explain that the sand was too hot to stand in barefooted and I didn't want to wear my shoes.

Then I'd get out my shotgun and stuff a lot of cartridges into my pockets and start for a hunt. I'd walk fifteen or twenty miles barefooted through sand and gravel as hot as the top of a boiler and over rocks and brush and come home with a few quail or some nice fat doves. Father would be at home. He'd look at me severely and say:

"Jim, I suppose you finished your work this morning?"

"No, sir. It got too hot."

"Was it too hot to go hunting?"

"No, sir; not in the shade."

"A-hum!" he'd say. "And did you get anything?"

"Then I'd go out to the kitchen and bring in the game. He'd frown a little to show he hadn't forgotten telling me to work in the field, but then he'd smile, for he was a man very fond of game, and he couldn't resist the charm of a brace of plump quail.

At the worst I could always depend on my mother. She could never see anything wrong in what her boys did.

The Styles of Summer

IN MEN'S WEAR we have secured the finest lines of Summer Clothing ever offered to the discriminating buyers in Lincoln.

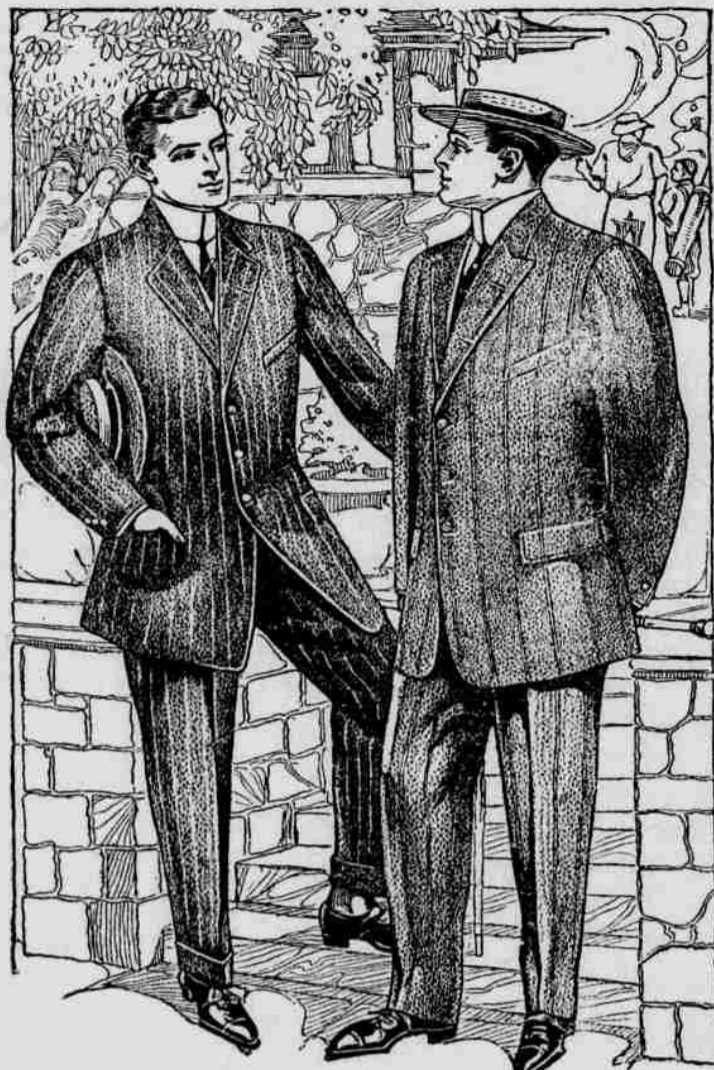
¶ We desire to call especial attention to the elegant display of these lines made in our windows. Nothing better in fit, style, color, make or appearance has ever been offered in this city. You need but to look at the garments thus displayed to get a clear index of the superb stock we have to offer you. The very best makers have been located in order to secure the splendid offerings we have for your benefit. We desire to especially call the attention of union men to the unusually large and well selected stock of

Union-made Garments

we have laid in for their convenience and benefit. Of this stock we have every reason to be proud—the style, fit, workmanship and "seasonability" being so marked. The union man who outfits at this store will carry away with him, in addition to the satisfaction of being outfitted in union goods from head to foot, the satisfaction of knowing that on the very threshold of the summer season he has secured his outfit at the bargain price offered elsewhere late in the season, when the selection is gone.

Union Outfitted from Head to Foot

¶ This is possible for the union men who patronize us. Union-made clothing, hats, shirts, collars, shoes, etc., at prices that will fit the worker's purse and the same time afford us a fair margin of profit. We aim to make this store the profitable place for wage earners hereabouts.



"MODERN CLOTHES" BRANDS KEENE & CO. MADE IN U.S.A.

SPEIER & SIMON
On the Corner 10th and O Streets On the Square

CHAPTER II.

I KILL MY FIRST DEER AND HAVE MY FIRST BIG SCHOOLBOY FIGHT.

I WAS only eleven years old when I killed my first deer. I had the first rifle my father gave me, and it wasn't any toy rifle picked out for a boy. My father didn't care for fancy outfits either for hunting or for fishing. So he gave me a 45-70 Winchester. That gun was big enough to



THE SNAKE WAS CRAWLING SLOWLY AROUND INSIDE THE HEDGE OF THORNS.

kill elephants with, and when I tried it on a quail it didn't leave anything but a cloud of feathers floating in the air. I snapped at a jack rabbit running away from me across the sand, and the whirling bullet took him end on. All I found was his hide and his ears and hind legs.

One fine day a road runner went along the smooth trail ahead of me like a sprinter until he disappeared, and I looked around to see if he had built in a rattlesnake anywhere.

Often in the desert or the mountain valleys I have found traces of a road runner's work. A road runner is a long legged bird. He likes smooth ground where he can take a long running start, and the way he can make those bony legs fly is a sight. A road runner's chief business is killing rattlesnakes. When he finds one asleep he gathers a lot of cactus thorns. Then he builds a circle of thorns all around the snake lying there asleep in its coil, turns all the points carefully in toward the center, steps back a little and begins to make a racket. The snake wakes up, sees the road runner, looks the hedge all over, finds that he can't get through it anywhere and makes up his mind to die on the spot. He strikes himself with his own fangs, and in a few minutes it's all over for the snake. Then the road runner squawks a couple of times, clears away the cactus thorns and has a rattler for lunch.

This particular bird had disappeared. But as luck would have it I happened to find his victim out in the middle of a clear patch of sand. The snake had just awakened, I guess, for he was twisting and crawling slowly around and around inside the hedge. Now and then he'd lift his head high and start to slide across, but as soon as his neck touched the thorns he'd draw back

quickly and go squirming around again. There weren't any openings in the fence.

To hurry matters a little I picked up a switch and tapped the rattler over the head with it. He got into a great rage, and in a minute or so he turned deliberately and struck his fangs into his own body down near the tail. He pulled the fangs free and struck again and again, slowly and heavily. I didn't waste any more time waiting to see him die. He was practically a dead rattler then. I didn't want his rattles, because they always said it was bad luck to cut off the rattles of a rattler that had time to strike himself before he died. His blood is full of poison, and if you happen to get it on your knife blade and cut yourself afterward there may be trouble.

I was up in Big Tahunga canyon now, keeping my eyes open for deer. And, sure enough, not long before sunset I ran into two does and a fine buck. They were standing in a group in easy range, right in a little gully.

Up came the 45-70 Winchester to my shoulder. I drew a fine bead on the buck and pulled the trigger. A puff of dirt flew up into the air from the bank just behind my buck, who lit out up the hill. I could hear him crashing through the thickets. The two does tore off into the brush and disappeared.

For a moment I stood there the most disappointed boy in the world. I had been cocksure of dropping my game, and all I had done was to raise the dust beyond him. I followed his trail for a little way in the dusk, then gave it up. He was badly scared at least, and there wasn't a chance that he'd stop running for miles.

When I got back my big brother met me.

"Well, Jim, did you get a deer?" he asked.

"No. I had a chance, but I missed," I said gloomily.

"Are you sure you missed?"

I told him all about it.

"Jim," said he, "I'll bet you hit that buck. We'll go out in the morning and get him."

I didn't feel very optimistic myself, but early next morning my brother and I started up the canyon. When we got near the place where I had seen the deer there were two or three vultures sailing in lazy circles overhead. Looking around, we could see others, high up in the air, coming toward us.

"You got that deer," said my brother. "We're just in time."

Sure enough, we followed up his trail and found him without much trouble. He was hit a little way back of the shoulder.

My father used to tell stories about our fighting ancestors every now and then, but not often enough to excite too much interest. "The Jeffries family was heard of in the Revolutionary war and in the Indian wars," he used to say, "and let me tell you, though they were a quiet and peace loving people, they never allowed themselves to be whipped."

That was the principle I tried to follow. I never picked any fights, but if one started in spite of me I took great joy in not allowing myself to be whipped. The surest way to prevent that was to pound the other fellow until he gave in.

When I was a small boy in the Arroyo Seco school, near our home ranch,

there was a bigger boy in the school named Fred Hamilton. Fred and I had some rivalry, although at that time I hadn't grown very tall. He was nineteen years old and weighed about 195 pounds. I weighed about 140, but I was stocky and broad and strong even then.

One day Hamilton and I got into an argument. After a few words he reached over and hit me. Now, my father used to say, "If an enemy smite thee, turn the other cheek." I thought that was all right, but if he hit the other cheek, too, whatever followed was his own fault.

Remembering the Bible lessons at home and these precepts always laid down by my father, I turned the other cheek according to rule.

"Just hit me once more," I said.

"and I'll get mad," I said.

He did it.

And then things began to happen. I might not have had a chance with him when we were both on our feet, but I caught him with a hip lock at the first rush and threw him flat on the ground. Before he could wriggle away I was on top, hammering with both hands. I didn't know anything about fair stand up fighting in those days and didn't bother my head about ring propeties. Everything went. Hamilton couldn't throw me off, and I gave him a fierce beating. His eyes were blackened and his face bruised when I got through. Then I let him up and went back into the schoolhouse. He followed.

Of course there was an investigation on the spot.

"Did you do all this damage?" asked the teacher after taking a good look at Fred.

"I did," said I.

The teacher looked at the big fellow and laughed. The difference in our sizes made it seem ridiculous, I guess. At any rate, teacher wouldn't believe that little Jimmy was the guilty party and refused to punish me.

Hamilton and I had many a good laugh over it years afterward when I



I GAVE HIM A FERCE BEATING.

had grown up to a man's size, and he didn't mind the idea of having been beaten by me.

On another day a teacher threw a ball at me and hit me on the head. I picked it up and threw it back and hit him on the head, but much harder. I wasn't punished for that, for it was just tit for tat and no favors.

All through my school days I had little scraps, like other boys, but none of them serious. My brother Charles (or

Jack) did more real fighting. On one occasion he fought a big boy for a full hour and fairly massacred him. It was a fair fight, all arranged before it began. The other boy had a second, and I seconded Jack. He was a game kid. At first the fight went against him, but he stuck it out until he beat the other boy to a pulp, as the sporting writers always say in the newspapers.

Profit in Ancient History.

A gentleman who was visiting one of the public schools in a Scotch town asked a bright looking boy:

"What profit is there in the study of ancient history?"

"About 18 pence, I suppose," was the reply.

"What?"

"Well, the teacher makes us buy the books from him, and we have to pay 3 shillings. I think he gets them for 18 pence apiece, so he has a clear profit of 18 pence, according to my calculation."—London Standard.

THE BARBERS.

Colorado Artists Set Good Example For Nebraska Brethren.

On Sunday, June 5, the State Association of Barbers of Colorado will meet at Denver to perfect a state organization. Representatives from every local of the Journeymen Barbers' International Union in the state will be present. The object is twofold—it will look after social matters and will also look after the securing of some needed laws protecting the trade and its followers in the Centennial state. It is also expected that the association will be able to organize a number of towns that now have no locals.

This is an example that could be profitably followed by the Barbers of Nebraska. The trade is organized in Lincoln, South Omaha, Fremont and partly in Omaha, Columbus, Kearney, Grand Island, Beatrice, North Platte, McCook, Fairbury, and several other towns ought to have strong locals. A state association would be a material help in this work.

The Lincoln local met in regular semi-monthly session last Wednesday night with the usual 95 or 99 per cent of attendance. The assertion is volunteered that the Barbers' Union has a larger percentage of its membership present at every regular meeting than any other union in the city. This may explain in part the splendid progress the organized men have been able to make within the last year.

"NUTS" POST SUES JOURNAL.
Indianapolis, Ind., May 18.—C. W. Post, the millionaire food manufacturer of Battle Creek, Mich., who has made war for years in favor of the open shop, brought suit here today against the Typographical Journal, or \$50,000, charging libel.

He avers that the Journal published an article charging that the products of the firm are adulterated.