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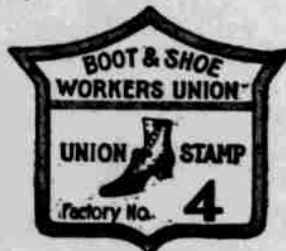
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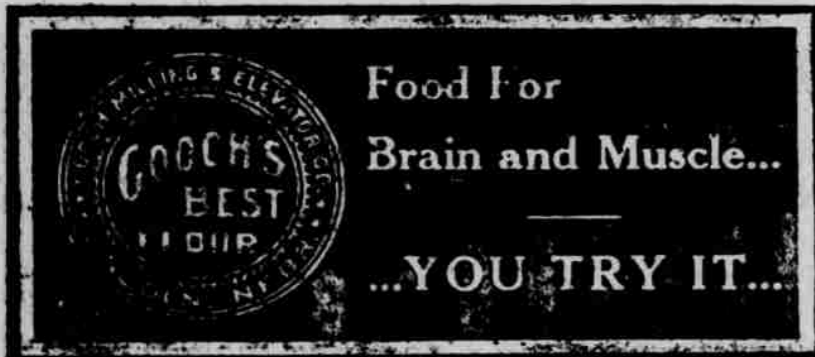
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MY STORY OF MY LIFE

BY
**JAMES
J.
JEFFRIES**
FROM PHOTO.
TAKEN
APRIL 15, 1910



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CHAPTER XVIII.

I KNOCK OUT CORBETT, THE GREATEST
BOXER OF THEM ALL.

THE Seaside A. C. at Coney Island was packed that Friday night when I fought Corbett. At least 8,000 people turned out. Corbett was first in the ring, and I didn't keep him waiting. George Considine, Billy Madden, Gus Ruhlin and Leo Pardello were in Jim's corner, and Brady, Ryan, Jack and Dunkhorst were behind me. Charlie White, the referee, came in ten minutes later.

As soon as Jim and I met we shook hands, and it was like meeting an old friend. We were going to fight all right, but that was a business proposition. Corbett smiled as if he was half tickled to death to see me again, and I guess he was. Jim was the only man in the whole place who knew what kind of fighting condition he was in that night. He knew he was fit to fight for his life.

The bell rang, and we came together slowly in the middle of the ring. I had plenty of time to size Corbett up. His skin was white as marble except around his wrists and his neck and his head, where he was tanned to a sort of mahogany color. Anybody could see that he'd been doing a lot of work out in the sun.

My recollection of this fight is a little confused. It wasn't like any fight I'd been in before. Right at the start Corbett began dancing around, light as a feather, in and out, reaching for me with the left and getting away from my rushes in a way that made me feel so foolish I had to stop and laugh. Then when I grinned he'd jab again and jump away like a rabbit. The crowd was cheering Corbett for his cleverness, and he deserved all the cheering he got. I landed on him now and then, but he was always going away so fast that the blows didn't do much damage. It's a lot easier to beat a man who'll stand up and fight than one who runs away and picks his own time to trade punches with you.

I kept on chasing Jim as fast as I could, slamming punches at him whenever he was in range. Most of them he jumped away from or ducked, some he blocked and some got through to the mark. In the meantime he was pecking at me with both hands with-



IN THE NINTH JIM THOUGHT HE WAS
WINNING.

out stopping except for a sprint when I got too hot on his trail. Now and then he came to a clinch and as White broke us away snapped left and right to my face almost before I could move. He was the fastest man and the greatest boxer I ever saw that night. Along in the third or fourth round Corbett ran around and around me in circles, while I stood and pivoted to face him. When I finally lunged out to get him Corbett laughed and ran away untouched. As the fight went along he grew more and more confident and used his right hand now and then, sending it over as hard as he could.

In the ninth round Jim thought he was winning. He rapped me a couple on the chin and then swung his right to the same spot so hard that the force of the blow shoved me back on my heels. I could see his eyes blaze as he thought he had me staggering, and for a minute he rushed and took a wild chance mixing with me in the hope of landing a knockout. I grinned and blocked his blows and walked right into him without starting a punch. In the next round he went at me just as hard. It was wonderful how that fellow could land and get away. I chased him around and around the ring until I was tired, and still he sprinted or dashed in again when he saw an opening. My nose

was bleeding, and my right eye was badly swollen.

The fight was half over now. All along Tommy Ryan kept telling me to "take my time" and "jab him." When I walked out at the beginning of each round Brady yelled instructions after me so loud that Corbett couldn't help hearing. I asked Brady if he was trying to get me licked, and he kept quiet after that. Ryan was still telling me to jab and box and take my time, but as the fight went along the crowd yelled "Corbett, Corbett, Corbett!" louder and louder, and I began to think what the decision might be if I didn't get him. Why should I be changing my style to suit Tommy Ryan and boxing a man like Corbett instead of cutting loose as hard and fast as I could until I landed the right punch? I began to suspect that Ryan was a little more interested in Corbett than he was in me. I told Ryan to keep still and went out to fight my own fight. Round after round I chased Corbett and landed whenever I could get him into a corner. Even then he blocked most of the blows with his elbows or his crossed arms. But one of my swings glanced from his shoulder and hit him on the jaw and shook him badly, and after that I landed oftener. In the nineteenth Jim looked tired. He tried to duck under a left and lost his footing and fell. He jumped up quickly.

Through this nineteenth round Ryan kept yelling to me and telling me to "stick the left out." Near the end of the round there was a fuss in the corner, and when I walked back for the rest before the twentieth Brady was in the corner and Tommy Ryan had disappeared. Brady told me afterward that Ryan's advice made him more and more suspicious as the fight went on. He began to suspect that Ryan was trying to make me lose, so he jumped up and told Ryan to get out of my corner.

"Get down or I'll bust your head," Ryan said.

Brady jumped down and went out for two policemen with their clubs. He put them right behind my corner and climbed up again.

"You get away from this corner," said Brady.

"Get away yourself before I take a punch at you," said Ryan.

"This is my club, and I'm Jeff's manager," said Brady.

"I'm just hiring you. If you don't get back there and keep still I'll hand you to those two cops, and they'll throw you out."

Tommy looked at the cops and climbed down. Brady jumped up, and as I came back to my corner he whispered: "Jim, they've got the tip over in the other corner that Corbett's going to get the decision. Your only chance is to knock him out. Forget everything about boxing and go out and fight."

From that on I never gave Corbett time to stop on one spot. I knew I'd have to get him. I had my second wind, and the tired feeling had all gone. As for Corbett, he was willing. Game and clever as he was, he could not stand the pace much longer. He ran for his life around the ring, and when I caught him he slipped his left shoulder into me and clinched. In the twenty-second I swung my right so hard that it knocked him down, although it only landed on his shoulder. Corbett jumped up instantly and mixed with me. I put a heavy left into his ribs, which were red and sore now, and he winced and lost some of his speed.

The bell rang, and I went back to my chair. Tom O'Rourke ran around to my corner and said to Brady: "For heaven's sake send this man in. He's losing!"

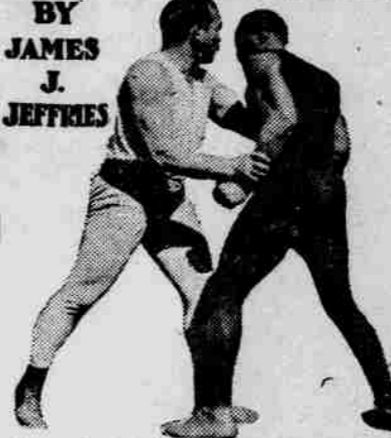
"I am, am I?" I said to myself. Just then the bell rang for the beginning of the twenty-third. There wasn't much time left, and I surely didn't want to risk losing that championship decision. I jumped out of my chair and ran at Corbett as hard as I could go. He jabbed lightly and skipped away, but before he could gather himself I was after him with a rush. I drove him back nearly to the ropes, and here I saw the right chance at last. I hooked my left into his stomach, throwing him back hard against the ropes within a yard of his own corner. As he bounced back I brought the left up obliquely to his jaw—my double punch. It lifted Corbett up in the air, and he fell to the floor solidly like a sack of grain. His right arm lay under him and his neck rested across the rope of the ring. He struggled a little and fell back limp, and White began to count. While the count was going on I saw Considine trying to throw a bucket of water over Corbett to arouse him, which was against the rules of the game. Reaching through the ropes, I kicked at Considine to drive him back, and he fell over two or three people, water bucket and all.

Jim was counted out, and Charlie White helped to carry him to his corner. After a minute or so he revived enough to stagger over and shake hands. I felt sorry for him, for he certainly had made a great and a game fight.

That was a night to be remembered. The fight had been so sensational that when it was all over the crowd went wild. Hundreds of people swarmed over the ring, some cheering for Corbett because of his fine showing and some for me because I had won like a champion with a knockout. I got dressed as soon as I could and started for Ben Cohen's. I had my lucky No. 1 room there that night. It was only a block or so from the club, and I tried to hustle through the crowd. But it was no use. Before I knew what was happening a lot of men grabbed me and shoved me up on their shoulders. There wasn't any use in struggling, so I just lay back across a bunch of heads as if I had a couch under me, with a big cigar in my mouth, and made the best of it.

MY STORY OF MY LIFE

BY
**JAMES
J.
JEFFRIES**



From photo taken April 15, 1910.

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CHAPTER XIX.

I GO ON THE STAGE AND THEN GET BACK
INTO THE FIGHTING GAME.

I DIDN'T do any fighting for over a year after beating Corbett. Brady had me busy in the show business. After the Sharkey fight Tom and I had sparred every night for a week at Koster & Bial's old place, torn down now. We were arrested the first night for violating some sort of an anti-boxing law. Manny Friend was our lawyer. I remember that Billy Brady got impatient over the legal way of handling the case down there in the Jefferson Market court. He jumped up, pushed Manny aside and made a redhot speech, telling all about our boxing show. When he was all through the judge asked, "Are you counsel in this case?"

"I am not," said Brady. "I'm no lawyer. I'm just telling you facts."

"Well," said the judge, "if you aren't a lawyer you ought to be. Case dismissed."

There wasn't any more trouble this time. I played a part in "The Man From the West," a big show that Brady fixed up for me. When I boxed at any theater it was generally with my brother Jack, and we weren't bothered.

About three months after the Corbett fight John L. Sullivan had a big benefit at Madison Square Garden, and I boxed with him. Three half minute rounds were enough. John had put on fat after quitting the game. I just let him punch at me and ducked under his swings until he was winded. Sullivan made a speech. I didn't.

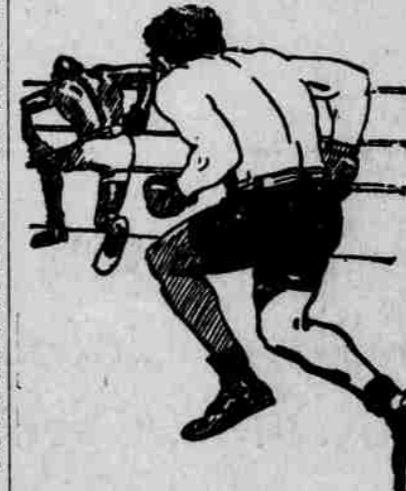
Fitzsimmons boxed an exhibition with Thorne that night. Sharkey sparred too. I told Tom about meeting his father at Queenstown when I went to Europe and how he saw me off at the pier.

"Good luck to yez," he said, "and may yez lick all the fighters in the world except me bye Tom."

"You haven't licked me yet," said Tom, grinning. "I ain't licked until I'm knocked out cold."

When winter came along I had a little experience that came near putting me out of the game. Bob Fitzsimmons came around to one of the theaters one night to shake hands and have a talk. Bob sat in a box until the show was over and then came behind the scenes. I stood there in my tights without even putting on a sweater, and I was wet and hot from the boxing. The cold wind blew on me, and I felt chilled before Bob left and I went to my dressing room.

Two doctors and three rubbers worked over me all night. In the morning I didn't feel much better, but thought I'd go to the hotel and get a good sleep. Joe Maxwell, the singer, and I went to breakfast. I ordered a lot of lamb chops, but when they came in I could only eat one, and that was a little one. That settled it. Maxwell



GRIFFIN SPRINTED AROUND THE ROPES
WITH ME AFTER HIM.

insisted that there must be something seriously wrong with me and made me go to see his doctor. The doctor ordered me to bed. It was pneumonia, and, remembering how near pneumonia came to killing me in San Francisco, I hustled to my room in the Hotel Minot and stayed there several days until I was all right again.

Nine months after the Corbett fight I was to have met Ruhlin in Cincinnati. Billy Deane took charge of my training again, and we opened a camp and started hard work. Everything was going along fine, and the whole country was interested in the match when it went wrong. The mayor of Cincinnati was in favor of the fight and had given us assurances that there'd be no interference. But the governor ordered it stopped. An injunction was issued, and the matter went to court. Billy Brady was the principal witness. He told the judge how Mr. Roosevelt, who had just been

lected vice president, went to the big fights in New York and how he had reserved boxes for him. That was a fact. Mr. Roosevelt likes a good fight better than anything else. But all that didn't make any difference. The fight was called off.

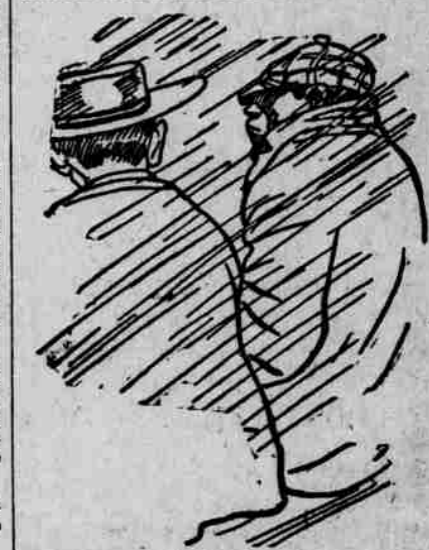
After the misfire in Cincinnati the Twentieth Century A. C. of San Francisco made an offer for a fight between Ruhlin and me on Nov. 15, six or seven months away. We signed up. Down in my home town, Los Angeles, the boys wanted to see me in the ring, for I hadn't boxed there since winning the world's championship. So a match was made with Griffin, the name old Griffin who had given me my first fight when I was a seventeen-year-old boy. We were to fight four rounds.

I guess my fight with Griffin was one of the funniest that ever took place in a ring. I intended to stop Hank in four rounds, but I couldn't get a chance to hit him. From the moment we put our hands up he sprinted around the ropes, with me after him as hard as I could go. He ran around the ring so fast in the fourth that I nearly got winded trying to catch him. That coon was tickled half to death over staying four rounds with the champion.

While in Los Angeles I had made another match with Joe Kennedy of San Francisco, a four round bout, to be fought at the Reliance club of Oakland a week after the Griffin affair.

Kennedy was a big fellow of about my own weight. He started out in Frisco by taking a decision over Gus Ruhlin in twenty rounds. He was clever. After beating Ruhlin, Joe went to New York to make a clean-up. The first man he fought was Peter Maher, and they figured Peter easy for Joe, who was touted as the coming champion. Joe made a show of Peter for one round, and in the second Peter managed to get over his famous wallop, and Joe turned his toes up toward the ceiling until the ten count was finished.

The Reliance Athletic club was packed on the night of the 24th. When



"I'M ALL RIGHT, BUT I'VE GOT COLD
FEET," SAID GUS.

we began fighting Kennedy started cleverly and got through the first round all right, but in the second I dropped him with a straight left on the jaw, and he was counted out.

I was beginning to feel like fighting again now. Billy Deane had fixed up the training camp, and in a few days I went to work. At first I did a lot of hunting and hill climbing—the best training in the world. I expected a hard fight and trained for it. A few days before Nov. 15 I was in the best shape of my life, and when I boxed that four rounds with Griffin in Los Angeles they had said I was fat and would have a hard time to "come back" again. We went down to the bay. The last day's work was done in the gymnasium of the Reliance Athletic club. It was a ladies' day in the gymnasium, but the club gave them another room to exercise in, and almost all of them, for that matter, came in to see me work. When that day's training was over I stepped on the scales in the dressing room and weighed just 212½ pounds, stripped. That is the lowest fighting weight I remember except the 204 pounds at which I won the championship from Fitzsimmons.

There was a lot of betting going on. I was a 2 to 1 favorite, and the Ruhlin money was all from the east. Californians were with me.

Ruhlin was still staying out at Blanken's, taking it easy on the last day. They told me that he looked in great shape and seemed to be confident of winning. Gus was weighing 202 pounds stripped. He was of my own height. He had plenty of cleverness. He was strong. He could take a punch. In reach he had a big advantage over me, having a stretch of seventy-eight and three-fourths inches, the longest of all the heavyweights.

On the morning of the fight I came down from my room in the Metropole in Oakland and found the weather outside gloomy and wet. That was my lucky weather. All my big fights have been won on wet days. Late in the afternoon Deane and I went across the bay to San Francisco and had dinner together at the Western, where Al Smith was. Then we went to the St. Nicholas, a big, quiet hotel, and I slept for an hour while waiting the call to the ring. I can always sleep well just before a fight. That's an indication of good nerves.

Ruhlin left Blanken's Six Mile House at 7 o'clock and drove into town with Pop Blanken and Billy Madden. After the fight they told a funny story about that ride. When they came into the city Pop turned to Gus and asked him how he felt. It was raw and cold and damp. Gus shivered and said, "Gee, I'm all right, but my feet are cold!" "What, already?" asked Pop.