

FITZSIMMONS WAS A WONDER

Details of Some of His Bout in Ring

His Hands Never Excelled in Size by Any Pugilists'—His Monetary Troubles—Made Money Than Predecessors in Championship

In its article on the career of the late Bob Fitzsimmons, the New York Sun says that in view of the fact that he never weighed more than a few pounds above the middleweight limit, yet won the heavyweight championship of America, he was generally regarded as the most remarkable pugilist of his time.

His parents moved from Wales to Australia while he was a youngster and settled at Timaru, New Zealand, where the son was apprenticed to a blacksmith. It was while swinging sledges in the shop of his employer that Fitzsimmons developed the wonderful arm, shoulder

and chest muscles that later made him so terrific a hitter in the ring.

While Fitzsimmons stood 5 feet 11 3/4 inches tall, yet his legs were thin and tapering, albeit muscular and serviceable. He was a middleweight from the hips down, but a heavyweight from the waist to the neck. His arms were long and shrewdly ended in a pair of hands that in the ring never were excelled for size. So large were his hands that Fitz usually required special gloves.

A small head and a slender neck surmounted a trunk that could hardly be improved on for size and strength.

Fitzsimmons, while not quarrelsome, never avoided a setto, and the success he had in several impromptu jousts led his friends to enter him in an amateur tourney arranged in 1880 by the great Jim Mac, then the heavyweight champion of the world, who was making a tour of Australia. Fitz won the tournament easily, and in the following year competed in another event of the same kind. In this tourney one of Fitz's victims was Herbert Slade, a man that Mac thought could beat Sullivan.

Fitzsimmons was but eighteen years of age when he won these two tournaments, and at the conclusion of the second the youngster expressed a willingness to meet the great Mac in battle, but nothing came of it.

It was eight years later when Fitz launched forth on his professional career, his first victim being Dick Ellis, who was stopped in three rounds in Sydney.

Then came his bout with Jim Hall,

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who at the time claimed the middleweight championship of Australia. This bout took place in Sydney February 10, 1890, and Hall won by a knockout in the fourth round.

Fitzsimmons afterwards put himself in black and white with the assertion that he "killed" Hall for a money consideration of \$75. This affair put a damper on his prospects in Australia and he decided to try his luck in America and landed in San Francisco in the spring of 1890, at which time he was twenty-eight years of age and at the height of his physical powers. He weighed about 180 pounds in ring condition and had the appearance of an animated bear.

Billy McCarthy and Arthur Upham, two coast trial horses, were groomed to try out the Timaru Terror, but McCarthy was stopped in nine rounds and Upham in five.

Jack Dempsey, middleweight champion of America, was advised by unwise friends to make a match with the new-comer and lost title at New Orleans January 14, 1891, being knocked out in the fourteenth round after taking a terrible beating.

After disposing of a few middleweights of small ability, Fitz took on Peter Maher, a contender for the heavyweight title, and made him quit at the end of the twelfth round at New Orleans March 2, 1892.

It was on September 7, 1892, that Corbett beat Sullivan for the American heavyweight title, and Fitz set sail for a match with the new champion.

Corbett told Fitz to "get a reputation," and the Cornishman proceeded to do so. He knocked out Jim Hall in four rounds at New Orleans, March 8, 1890; Dan Creedon in two rounds at New Orleans September 26, 1894; Peter Maher in one round at Langhly, Tex., February 21, 1896, and stopped Tom Sharkey in the eighth round in San Francisco December 2, 1896. Wyatt Earp, the referee, called the blow foul with which Fitz dropped the sailor, but the majority of those at the ringside declared the blow landed fair and in the pit of the stomach.

Five years after Corbett had won the title from Sullivan the champion was finally forced by public opinion to give the Cornishman battle, the contest taking place at Carson City, Nev., March 17, 1897, Fitz winning by a knockout in the fourteenth round.

For two years Fitz did no boxing except on the stage, but he finally accepted a match with Jim Jeffries, and it took place at Coney Island June 9, 1899, Jeff winning by a knockout in the eleventh round.

Fitz then prepared for a return match with Jeff and by way of preparation knocked out Gus Ruhlin in six rounds and Tom Sharkey in two rounds.

He then got another match with the champion, which was fought in San Francisco, July 28, 1902. For seven rounds Fitz gave Jeff a terrific beating, cutting his face badly, blacking both his eyes and otherwise marking him. Jeff's iron jaw withstood the assault, and when Fitz had disabled both his hands with his heavy punching the champion sailed in and knocked out the Cornishman in the eighth round.

Fitzsimmons was 35 years of age when he won the title from Corbett and 37 when he lost to Jeff, the most advanced age at which any heavyweight champion had won or lost.

Fitz was in his fortieth year when he lost his second battle to Jeff, his defeat being due solely to the insidious use of his knuckles to stand the strain of punching the big boiler-maker.

Although Fitz had retired the undefeated middleweight champion, he lost the heavyweight honors in the ring, he weighing 167 to 215 by Jeff. When Fitz won from Corbett the victor scaled 160 to 184 by the loser.

Fitz decided he would gather one more title before he got too old, and so on November 25, 1908, when he was 41 years of age, he took on George Gardner, holder of the light heavyweight title, and beat him on points in a twenty round bout in San Francisco.

On December 20, 1908, when Fitz was 43 years of age, he lost his last title to Philadelphia Jack O'Brien by a knockout in the thirteenth round at San Francisco.

Although it was evident to all of his friends that he had reached the end of his pugilistic rope Fitz was still unconvinced, and he set out in an effort to prove that he was in the running.

He took on Jack Johnson, then looming on the heavyweight horizon, in a bout in Philadelphia, July 7, 1907, and was knocked out in the second round.

Knocked Out By Bill Lang

Then Fitz went back to Australia, and in Sydney, where he had won his first battle, he lost his last contest. Fitz was knocked out by Bill Lang at Sydney in twelve rounds December 27, 1909.

This defeat by a mediocre performer like Lang seemed to convince Fitz that his pugilistic sun had set and he did no more boxing except on the stage.

He did make an effort to box in this city a few years ago, but the Boxing Commission interposed an age limit and shut him out.

While Fitzsimmons was not a showy boxer, yet he was a ring strategist of the first rank, and could hit a knockout

punch with either hand. His left was his most dangerous in attack, his favorite method being a shift followed by a heavy left to the pit of the stomach and a hook with the same hand to the chin.

While Fitzsimmons performed in a sensational manner in the ring and never in his life dodged a challenger, yet he made less money than any of his predecessors in the championship.

Fitzsimmons' matrimonial experiences were varied and at times exciting. He got his first wife in Australia and brought her to this country. After winning the middleweight title from Dempsey, Fitz was lured to the vaudeville stage, and in his company were Martin and Rose Julian, acrobats. Rose was a handsome girl and a graceful performer.

Before the tour ended there had been a rearrangement of relations. Fitz and his wife separated. After their divorce Martin Julian married the divorcee, while Fitz took Rose Julian as his helpmeet.

Fitz and Martin Julian became reconciled through the efforts of Rose Julian, and the boxer was managed by his brother-in-law for the greater part of his ring career. Fitz established his

home at Bonaventure, purchasing a fine villa there in the midst of the fashionable folk, much to their consternation. Their protests were futile. It was while living happily there that Mrs. Fitzsimmons was suddenly attacked with pneumonia and died.

Hard Blow to Fitz

This was a hard blow to Fitz, for Rose Julian had made him a good wife. She saved his money for him and closely watched his interests. It was she who sat at the ringside at Carson when her husband was battling with Corbett for the title and who encouraged the Cornishman by shouting:

"In the slats, Bob, in the slats." After the customary year of mourning Fitz proposed to Julia May Gifford, who was well known on the comic opera stage. She had a powerful voice, and Fitz told all his friends he had a second Fatti. They were not congenial, and the third Mrs. Fitz got a divorce on January 20, 1915.

In March of the same year Fitz married Mrs. Temo Stenomin, and they lived together till his death.

Rose Julian bore three children for Fitz—Bob Fitzsimmons, Jr., Martin Julian Fitzsimmons and Rose Fitzsimmons. Bob has boxed on the stage with his father, and Fitz frequently predicted that his son would be the next champion. A son by his first wife is living in New Jersey. Martin Julian and the original Mrs. Fitzsimmons live in Bath Beach.

FREIGHT HANDLERS MEET.

The railway freight handlers, at their annual meeting held last evening, elected the following officers: President, W. H. McDonald; vice-president, John Ward; financial secretary, John Baird; recording secretary, William Williams; treasurer, James Taylor; business agent, J. A. Brittain; sergeant-at-arms, J. A. Harrington; finance and audit committee, Fred Long, D. McGinnis and F. Robinson; trustees, J. Hargrove, Wm. Hayward and Dan Coughlan.

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