

The Dawn of Tomorrow

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Is Walls Ready For Marciano?

Boxing experts are nodding their heads sagely and opining that this 25-year-old Canadian heavyweight's record proves he has the stuff.

By JOHN BREHL

Canadian boxing bugs are talking title again. They're dusting off memories of Tommy Burns the Canadian who was world's heavyweight champion nearly half a century ago, and measuring them to fit a tall, lean quiet young heavyweight named Earl Walls.

The surprising thing, considering Walls' sudden leap to prominence, is that the championship belt could conceivably fit.

Sept. 8, 1953, could turn out to be an important date in the history of fisticuffs. It was that night that Walls, a 25-year-old genius, parlayed a staggering left hook and a crushing right cross into a sixth-round knockout of Rex Layne, a once-distinguished heavyweight. It proved his first-round knockout of the same Layne, two months before, had been no fluke.

Who's Layne? Just the boy with the bull-like build picked several years ago by Jack Dempsey as a coming champion. Just a former No. 2 ranked heavyweight. In 1951, it took Rocky Marciano, current heavyweight king with the devastating punch, six full rounds to knock out Layne in a bruising battle.

The crunch of that sharp right cross—delivered after Layne had clearly won the first five rounds—started the ballyhoo drums beating in earnest. Already there's talk of a January match between Walls and the winner of the Marciano-Roland LaStarza bout. Walls himself does little talking except with his fists. But here's what his handlers say:

Uncle Jimmy Jones, co-manager: "My boy is ready for Marciano right now."

Shirley S. Jackson, railroad porter and co-manager: "We'd have a 50-50 chance. Marciano is a boring in-fighter, a tough fighter. You've got to have a fighter with a real punch to slow him down. Earl's got the punch."

The record bears him out. Walls, a native of Windsor who lives in Toronto and fights out of Edmonton, has already, in 33 pro fights, scored 14 first-round knockouts. He has scored a total of 24 knockouts. Since May, 1952, Earl has turned in 12 straight wins, and only Joe Kahut, ring-wise Seattle veteran, managed to stay the route.

Testimonial from Layne
Right now he's sitting on top of the world—a particularly heady feeling for a boy who only 16 months ago was feeling discouraged, frustrated, with only a mediocre record behind him.

Now the boxing experts in the United States, who only yawned and looked the other way when Walls tried to get a footing in New York several years ago are nodding their heads sagely and opining that he has the stuff.

If he does, it will be a great shot in the arm for Canadian boxing. Not since Tommy Burns has the Domin-

ion turned out a heavyweight champion, and only a few champions in other classes.

Canada's luck internationally in late years has been more along the lines of the heavyweight who went to a large U.S. city for a fight. He was knocked kicking. As the groggy fighter climbed to his feet, he heard a spectator calling ribald remarks. "Come up here and say that," the fighter shouted. The spectator did. In fact he climbed into the ring, took one swing, and knocked the fighter out again.

Probably Walls' best witness to his chances against the top-notchers in the U.S. is the man he beat: Layne. Layne says Walls is the greatest puncher he ever fought, and Rex has fought practically all the good ones today.

"He's the only man around who stands a chance with Marciano. What a fight that would be," says Layne. "Charles, Johnson, LaStarza? Walls would knock 'em all stiff."

"That's a real testimonial for the boy who just a couple of years ago was having trouble getting bouts, for the lad who had to take a year and a half layoff from his trade, and was driving a taxicab for meal money.

Walls' ring career began back in 1947. Second oldest of 10 children, Walls, a high school graduate then 19 years old, standing six feet and weighing 180 pounds, was visiting in Toronto with his family. One day they went to dinner at the home of Shirley Jackson, an old friend of Earl's father, and himself once a middling-fair lightweight in Ohio. A radio announcer began talking of Joe Louis preparing for a fight. According to Jackson, Walls said: "Gee, I'd like to be a real fighter, like that guy."

Jackson, who has had a share in handling several Toronto fighters, took him up on it. A few days later he drove to Windsor and brought Walls back to his home in Toronto, where the fighter stayed until he bought his own home last spring.

Knocked Out Stabmate
Jackson bought him his ring equipment and turned him over to Uncle Jimmy Jones, a veteran trainer and old friend of Jackson. Earl showed a lot of promise, so they sent him down to New York, where he sparred around the famous Stillman's gym and began getting some bouts.

In New York he found the way of a prizefighter is hard. You can't pick and choose your opponents, you get thrown in against fighters you're not ready for. Earl won a few, lost a few in New York.

Earl came back to Toronto and soon was sent to England. There again he showed his punching prowess, but failed to sweep all before him. At that, two of his losses in the Old Country just shouldn't have been, according to Jackson. Jackson claims one loss came on a disqualification when Walls retaliated to his opponent's holding and hitting. He lost another, to Lloyd Barnett, when he broke his hand. "But he had Barnett on the floor five times before that and finished the bout, broken hand and all," Jackson says. After he came back to Canada,

Earl had a few fights, but still was not setting the world on fire. He had a couple of bouts, with Jimmy Slade and Abel Cestac, but lost them both, on a decision to Slade and on a first-round kayo to Cestac. Then, early in 1951, he began his long lay-off. By May, 1952, he'd reached his present stature of six feet, two inches and best fighting weight of 192. That month he went to Edmonton to fight a supporting bout, mainly just for the ride to accompany his stablemate, Vern Escoc, then Canadian heavyweight champion.

Walls scored a first-round knockout, and Jack Berry, hustling Edmonton promoter, signed him to meet Escoc himself a month later. Earl kayoed his stablemate and became Canadian champion. A few weeks later he showed his right to the crown by knocking out Escoc in a return engagement.

For the next year, the tall, handsome Walls became top dog among performers on the Edmonton boxing acres. All but two of his bouts since his return to the ring have been at Edmonton—one was at Vancouver and the last Layne bout was at Salt Lake City.

Along the way to the first Layne bout, Walls achieved the distinction of knocking out three other heavyweights in the Layne stable, which is managed by Marv Jensen. When he kayoed Layne, he had knocked out every one of Jensen's heavyweights.

Glass Chin? It's a Laugh

Berry and Edmonton fight fans could hardly believe their luck when Layne signed after Walls had run out of opponents. Layne, a former New York main-eventer, was on the downhill trail, but he was still ranked No. 7.

Both boys—the hulking, bull-shouldered Layne and the relatively slender Walls—came out slugging. From the bell it was toe to toe with no regard for defence. After only 53 seconds, Walls landed an explosive left hook to the body, followed with a left hook to the jaw and a short right that "didn't travel six inches" to the chin. That was all for Layne.

The news startled the boxing world. Nat Fletcher, editor of Ring magazine, immediately jumped Earl to sixth place in his monthly rating of the heavyweight class, currently poverty-stricken for talent.

But it didn't convince the "smart" people. They claimed Layne was overweight and flabby for the fight, that he'd been over-confident. That's why his second bout with Layne ranks as Earl's favorite victory. Layne, the erstwhile fat boy, got treatment for a thyroid condition, trained hard and got down to about 191 pounds, the best condition he'd been in for years.

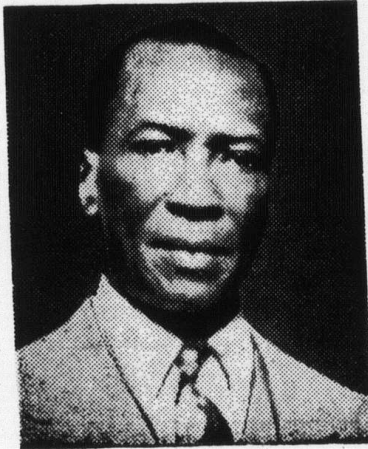
The fight proved something else, too. One thing that irritates Walls and his managers more than any other is the insistence of some "experts" that Walls has a glass chin. In the September Layne fight, Earl took a real hammering for the first five rounds. He was knocked down once, but bounced up quickly again. Glass chin? Jackson laughs. Earl's on the glory road, all right

but what about cash returns? He's far from a millionaire, of course. But the first Layne fight at Edmonton, shows what could be in the books for Walls from now on. Jackson says that although the fight drew only about 5,000 fans, the gate was \$8,000, due to the prices charged ranging up to \$15 ringside. According to Jackson, Walls drew \$7,000, which, even considering the expenses and splits, isn't a bad payday.

Earl needs it now. Last June he became a married man, wedding Laura June Palmer, of Brantford, whom he met two years ago on a blind date. They bought a six-room house in east-end Toronto.

Up to recently, at any rate, his wife had never seen Earl fight. And she told friends, "I don't ever want to."

HONOR PASTOR AT WINDSOR



Rev. I. H. Edwards

Windsor—A reception in honor of its pastor, Rev. I. H. Edwards, was held here recently at the British Methodist Episcopal Church. The celebration was a final tribute to Rev. Edwards, who retired after 29 years of service to the Windsor Board of Education.

A large number of the congregation attended the reception, together with Rev. W. J. Harris, Windsor; Rev. and Mrs. F. O. Stewart, St. Catharines, Rev. Edwards is returning as pastor of the Windsor church for his fourth consecutive year.

IODINE LOSSES IN SALT

Iodine in salt is easily lost. Tests show that all the iodine in salt blocks disappears in two months after exposure in pasture, and there is no chemical method of preventing this loss. The answer is to put out at a time only as much iodized salt as the animals will lick in a few days.

Salt loses its iodine less quickly when fed in the stall, but providing smaller quantities more frequently will guard against insufficient iodine intake by livestock.

Iodized rock salt will keep well for about nine months if stored in a dry place in its original container. Loose salt containing iodine will remain stable up to 1 months if kept in a tightly closed glass jar.

CALLED TO BAR

Lincoln Alexander was called to the bar recently and will practice with a Hamilton law firm. Mr. Alexander received his B.A. at McMaster University.

10-YEAR-OLD DANCER GETS BREAK AT 'EX'

Pretty little 10-year-old Marianne Gale Jones, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chester Jones, is going places. Under the capable supervision of Miss Dorothy Hurst, Marianne completed two years of baton and three years of tap. She is also an established member of the Imperial Frontiersmen's Majorette section. For her outstanding effort and hard work, she was among a selected group who performed at the Canadian National Exhibition.

65 YEARS IN BRITISH EMBASSY MARKED BY MESSENGER

Washington, Oct. 1—A few minutes before 11 a.m. today a spry, wizened Negro made his way through the corridors of the British Embassy to a sunlit terrace, where he bowed and bent his knee to Ambassador Sir Roger Makins.

"Charliq," said the ambassador, after pumping his hand, "it was 65 years ago this morning that you came to work for the embassy. . . I think you've broken all records."

Charles Browne bowed as he had bowed to 15 earlier British envoys to Washington. Then he began to speak—and with the measured flow of his eloquence a rich tapestry of social and diplomatic history seemed to glow around him.

Life Begins Anew

"Have I awakened from a dream?" he cried, looking about at the stately pillars of the ambassador's residence, at the lingering roses in the sun-drenched garden. "Life begins anew for me on this glorious day."

A native Washingtonian, Charlie Brown has long been an institution in the capital's diplomatic world. He is a messenger by vocation. A college graduate, he also has become a friend of the great and a walking storehouse of unwritten history.

Tall Sir Roger bent to listen as little Charlie opened the floodgates of his memory.

Charlie spoke of kings and princesses . . . of balls and receptions . . . of beautiful women and handsomely dressed escorts . . . figures of a candle-lit era now vanished forever.

"There was Lord Pauncefote and his beautiful daughters," he recalled, eyes glowing. "With them, the social life of the capital came alive. A wonderful influence! A wonderful uplift!"

At last he paused, shook hands with the embassy officials gathered in his honor, and retired to his tidy little office, to his pictures of royalty—some autographed—and his day's work.

"Retire?" he said to a questioning reporter. "I'm too young to retire. That's for old people."

Charlie is only about 85.

WINS SILVER MEDAL

Elaine Upshaw of Kippendavie Ave. Toronto, has been awarded the Frederick Harris scholarship and silver medal of the Royal Conservatory of Music for attaining the highest marks in Ontario in her Grade Four singing examinations.