

Bendigo



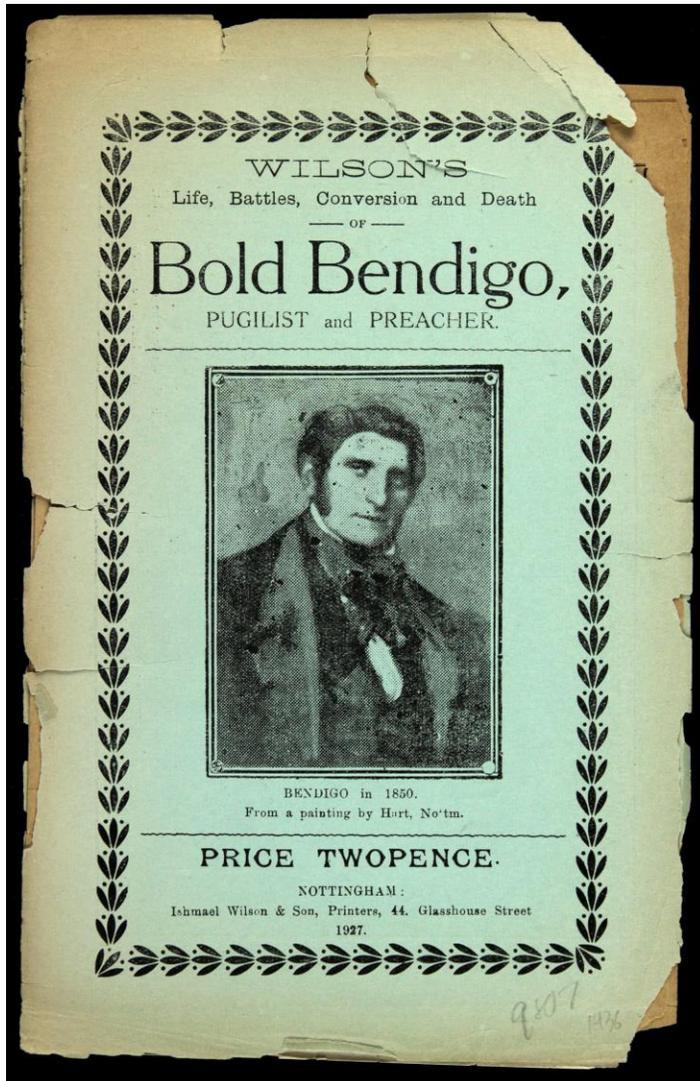
Born into the slums of Nottingham on 18 October 1811, he was the last of 21 children, himself one of triplets, Abednego, Shadrach and Meshach named after the young men in the Book of Daniel who emerged from the fiery furnace of Babylon. Which was rather apt, seeing as Nottingham in Victorian times wasn't exactly the cover of a Quality Street tin. With over 300 people per acre crammed into certain parts, it was one of the most densely populated areas in the British Empire .

Naturally, the slums were rife with pestilence and disease, and the life expectancy here was less than half the national average – a shocking 22 years. The town boundaries had not changed since they were erected nearly 800 years before, and the Industrial Revolution led to massive overcrowding. A town that probably housed around 1,000 people when built now squeezed in about 50,000. One government official even labeled Nottingham as the 'Worst town in England'. The worst affected areas were Narrow Marsh and the streets crowded between Long Row and Parliament Street, the people here said to "be the poorest of all Queen Victoria's children". One of these streets, New Walk, was Bendigo's stomping ground.

The young Bendigo was a born athlete, being noted as an excellent runner, cricket player, stone thrower and somersaulter. For a bet he once threw half a house brick over the River Trent with his left hand! Like most men of his era, he was well into cockfighting and badger baiting down at the local pub and fished at the Leen and the Trent. When he was 15 his father died, and so it was every man for themselves in the Thompson house. Bendigo was sent to the Nottingham Workhouse with his mother, but he didn't stay long. His time here proved to be the turning point in his life. Experiencing the harshness of Victorian poverty, he vowed never to return.

After leaving the Workhouse, Bendigo scraped a living selling oysters in and around the streets of Nottingham. Getting bored with the stink of fish, he got a job as an iron turner, which developed his muscular physique. His background, his environment and now his job put him in good stead for his future career path of Prizefighting.

By the age of 18 he was already fighting for money, in order to put food on the table. He destroyed his first eight opponents - including the Champion of Bingham - and by the time he was 21 he was virtually a professional fighter. Although a lot smaller than many of his opponents at just 5' 9", he had an extremely quick hand speed, an extraordinarily hard punch and fought without any fear whatsoever. Not only was he stronger and faster than many of his



contemporaries, but he was also very skilful, earning the nickname 'Bendy' due to his bobbing and weaving. People just couldn't get near him. It wasn't too long before 'Bendy' Abednego became Bendigo.

Though it was his speed and agility that won him his fights, it was Bendigo's personality and sense of humour that won him the crowd. Over 100 years before Muhammad Ali, he would make up rhymes about his opponents during fights, and distract them with insults and tall tales of their wives and mothers while pulling funny faces. It wasn't long before the local hero was drawing crowds of over 10,000 people to his illicit fights, held way out of town in barns or fields in an era when public transport was virtually non-existent.

All legendary boxers need a fierce rival, and Bendigo's was another local lad from Hucknall, Ben Caunt. In 1835, the two met for the first time for the princely sum of £25. The fight only lasted 22 rounds, which was relatively easy compared to their rematches (back in those days, a round lasted until one

fighter was knocked down, with no time limit) Bendigo, who was three stone lighter and six inches shorter, got into difficulties early on and started to go down a bit easily. This (along with Bendigo's constant manic laughter and free flowing insults) frustrated Caunt, who ended up striking Bendigo while he was kneeling and so losing on a foul. A writer at the fight described Caunt as "full of trickery and treachery... he has no ethics" and Bendigo as "deadly and as poisonous as a rattlesnake with about the same ethics"

Over the next two years, Bendigo had three fights, first of all dispatching the renowned John Leachman of Bradford in a 52-round contest, before travelling to Newcastle the year after to take out Charley Langham in 51 rounds. A few months later, Bendigo answered a letter in the newspaper from a Liverpool man called William Looney, challenging "any man in the world for £100 stake and £200 a-side". They met on 13 June 1837, on a hill at Chapel-en-le-Frith - the halfway point between their hometowns. The fight lasted 92 rounds(!), but will probably be remembered for Bendigo's reaction to Looney contemplating a haymaker in the 15th round by falling to the floor "on his nether end throwing up his legs and laughing". Bendigo took control shortly after and even started somersaulting in the ring, endearing him to the crowds.



However, even through the constant barrage of punches, Looney fought bravely on and he even nearly nicked the fight with a massive right hand when under some pressure from Bendigo. Eventually, as with most bouts of the time, Bendigo's stamina and athleticism shone through and he was declared the winner after dominating over an hour's brawling.

Bendigo's name and status was steadily rising, and on April 3 1838 Caunt finally got his rematch for £300 prize money. Although three years younger in an era when every year counted, Caunt came into the ring in poor shape compared with the excellent physique of his opponent. Bendigo trained especially hard for this match and easily outfoxed and out-manoeuvred Caunt, leaving him looking clumsy in his attacks. However, the fight went on for 75 rounds of furious combat. That was marred – or enhanced, depending on your point of view – by foul play and crowd violence.

In the fifth round, Caunt had Bendigo against the ropes and nearly strangled him but Bendigo fought back, peppering his opponent with body shots and more insults. Desperate for victory and revenge, Caunt was said to have Bendigo by the throat, strangling him again in the thirteenth. By the time Bendigo's followers had cut the ropes and entered the ring his face was going blue. A fight broke out between the two sets of supporters and Caunt took a few hits across the back with a ring stake.

When order resumed, Bendigo had a hit of brandy and stepped back up to the scratch. In the fiftieth round it was Bendigo's turn for some underhand tactics, lashing out some kicks on Caunt, but the referee dismissed the complaint. In the seventy-fifth round, the referee stopped the fight as Bendigo went to ground without being struck, an illegal tactic in Prize Fighting. After the fight, Bendigo claimed it was a slip; a claim backed up by contemporary accounts, putting him well ahead and coasting.

Naturally, all hell broke loose. His supporters attacked Caunt with sticks, stakes and whatever else they could get their hands on. Caunt was dragged to his coach by his cronies and attempted to flee. The coach was held up by Bendigo's mob, Caunt was dragged out, but during the melee he eventually escaped, riding bareback on a stolen horse...

NEBRASKA STATE JOURNAL, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 3, 1910.

BENDIGO'S FAMOUS THIRD BATTLE WITH CAUNT

BENDIGO'S FAMOUS THIRD BATTLE WITH CAUNT



WILLIAM THOMPSON
("BENDIGO")
From "Fighting the Giants of
Belle Isle."



BEN CAUNT
From "Fighting the Giants of
Belle Isle."

RIVALS Who Alternated in the Championship Fought Ninety-Three Rounds, and Caunt Lost on a Technicality—Bendigo Terminated His Career by Becoming a Clergyman.



Caunt Saw His Corner and Ordinarily Fat Days. Instead Bendigo's Friends Claimed the Decision for 1888 as a "Foul."

Tom Spring stands as the last of the list of really great champions that began with Mendoza, and the sport sensibly declined after he vacated the title in 1824. "Jem" Ward, who held the position of champion and for the next eight years, fell under the suspicion of crooked tactics several times, and, though an able fighter, was never matched with a man who could give him trouble. For a quarter of a century the championship was not held by a single man worthy to be classed with such as Belcher, Gully and Cribb.

After the retirement of "Jem" Ward, in 1833, he left the belt for competition. "Jem" Burke, "The Deaf un", claimed it, but in 1839 he was beaten by William Thompson, better known as Bendigo, who received the belt from Ward. Bendigo retired from the ring as a result of an injury, and Benjamin Caunt, after defeating "Nick" Ward, received another belt and the championship. Bendigo recovered and challenged

Caunt for the title and the new belt.

It was here and hounds when the day came for the final settlement or the long feud between the two leading fighters of England, -with the pugilists, their attendants and a crowd of ten thousand chasing hither and yon across county lines to avoid roving bands of constables who were out to spoil the Sport. Up stakes and move was the word until the harried contingent took cover at Sutfield Green after circling through Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire and Bucks, and here the twenty-four foot ring was pitched upon the turf in proper British style.

A peculiar interest attached to this meeting quite aside from the fact that the championship was at stake Both were from Nottinghamshire—Bendigo from the county town and Caunt from Hucknall, where his parents had been tenants of Lord Byron. In trying out their apprentice hands for the prize ring, before ever a Londoner knew of the existence of such men, they had been matched against each other, Bendigo winning. Later, in 1838, when both were well known and rising, they had fought a slashing seventy-five round contest, Caunt gaining the decision on a foul. Since then Bendigo had held and relinquished the title and Caunt had won it. This was to be their third meeting, on September 29, 1845.

William Thompson, the challenger, was born in 1811, one of three children at a birth. His fighting name of Bendigo was a popular contraction from the pseudonym under which he first appeared in the prize ring. Some irreverent person had dubbed the triplets who were all boys, respectively Shadrach, Mesbath and Abednego. For want of a better nom de guerre young Thompson as a pugilist announced himself "Abednego of Nottingham," and the word, transformed through the alchemy of general use, remained.

Clownish Bendigo

Bendigo was the clown of the profession, though his irrepressible tendency to practical jokes and horse play did not prevent him from fighting when there was downright need of it. In many a stricken field he had shown himself a terrific hitter and a boxer of endurance, though he was better and less favorably known for his trickiness and his method of lighting for time by dropping to hands and knees at crucial moments. For the rest he did not lack science or strength.

Caunt was a huge, slow witted, beef raised pugilist of tremendous physical powers, who was never remarkable for his knowledge of the fine points, but who had gained his prominence through sheer muscle and pluck. The nimble Bendigo had always affected to make a butt of him, called him a "clodhopper" to his face and gibed him unmercifully in the ring. Of the two Caunt had the bitterer personal feeling, was far the stronger and much the less accomplished pugilist. Caunt had been one of the first boxers to make a tour of America at a time when the sport was regarded as a kind of barbarous novelty on this side, and had appeared at the Bowery Theatre in "Life in London." At this time he was thirty years old, four years younger than Bendigo.

At twenty minute's past three the men entered the ring, having first thrown their hats within the arena. Caunt was attended by Young Molyneux, an American negro, and "Jem" Turner as seconds, with Butler in charge of the bottles. Bendigo was supported by "Nick" Ward and "Jack" Hannan as seconds, "Jem" Ward and "Jem" Burn as bottle holders. The adversaries shook hands before stripping and tossed for corners. Caunt won and took advantage of position on slightly higher ground, with his back to the sun. In accordance with the articles, Spring, who was backing



Caunt, produced the big fellow's new championship belt. Bendigo buckled it on with some bravado, to be sure, so he said, that it would fit him. and handed it to "Jem" Ward for safe keeping. The men then tied their colors to the stakes, blue with white spot for Bendigo and an elaborate orange affair with blue border for Caunt, bearing the inscription, "Caunt and Bendigo, for 200 and the Championship of England, September. 1845. May the best man win."

Choosing a Referee.

There was much confusion fit the last moment, caused by the failure of the boxers to get together in the choice for a referee. Fortunately, some one espied the famous George Osbaldiston, known throughout England as "t" Auld Squire." who had retreated to his carriage to escape the crush. He finally consented to serve and the battle was declared on.

The men presented a remarkable picture of manly and athletic grace as they advanced to the mark. Caunt was six feet two and n half inches in height and trained to a point he had never before equalled, having dropped from 238 to 105 pounds, his weight on the morning before the fight. he was nothing but bone and sinew, a hard hitting, bruising lion of a man, with an arm like a swinging beam and built like a windmill. Bendigo, slenderly but compactly formed, was about five feet ten inches in height and weighed 169 pounds. He dragged his left leg slightly, part of the after effects of an injury received while skylarking which had once effectually shelved him. Save for, this he was a handsome, rugged figure. In his attitude Caunt showed little science, standing erect, with feet near together. Bendigo kept his right foot well advanced and brought his fists up and close with head back they came together smiling, Bendigo opening the usual fire of jests with a humorous greeting and Caunt responding easily, then after touching hands, both snapped on guard. Bendigo flew instantly into his tactics, all bounce and dash, hopping in and dancing out, feinting here, there and here again like a shadow boxer.

Caunt new his man and waited his chance. suddenly letting out with a Humming Left swing. Bendigo ducked and grinned like an imp, tapping in lightly to the body With left and right, getting out again, and acting altogether like a mischievous Schoolboy. Caunt went after him doggedly and swung again, when Bendigo Coming under his guard smacked him hard under the left eye. Caunt Drove wildly and the challenger repeated the blow, opening an old scar on Caunt's cheek and drawing first crimson. Bendigo's friends went wild at his Cleverness and Bendigo, dancing away, laughed openly at his adversary. Caunt closed furiously missing with his left once more and grappled For a fall. Bendigo was no match for him at this and was forced down in a corner by the giant.

Could Do No Damage.

The second round was almost a repetition of the first, save that Bendigo could do no damage. Caunt was apparently laboring under the delusion that he was fighting a man of his own size, and his terrific, rock crusher swings passed where Bendigo could dodge them easily. Meanwhile the little fellow wasbering in repeatedly to face and ribs, and at the end of the round parried right and left drives that would have felled an ox. Bendigo exercised his usual shiftiness in slipping quickly to his knees when threatened by one of Caunt's bruising clinches.

Caunt was very quiet and there was no trace of a smile upon his lips when he came up for the third round. he went after his man from the start with venom and resolution, smashing Bendigo out of his hopping tricks with a right to the head and driving him. Bendigo had all he could do to cover himself, and on the retreat was caught in Caunt's powerful arms. They wrestled a moment, when Bendigo, wriggling to release himself, brought both tottering to the ropes. Bendigo fell across them on his back, and Caunt, still eager, threw him clear out of the ring, falling on top of him.

The exertion of the struggle had blown the big fellow and he was glad of his second's knee and the spraying of his bottle Holders during the interval. His huge chest was laboring when be came to the scratch and Bendigo, with a grin, circled him with incredible swiftness, whirling, ducking, dodging, jabbing: then suddenly slammed his left in under Caunt's guard with a telling hook to the ribs and once more away. The giant followed him, eyes ablaze, and rushed for close quarters, smashing in with the left and catching the elusive Bendigo a pretty rap on the mouth, though missing with his right. Bendigo tried to fight out of the corner, but Caunt was seeking trouble and brushed his feints aside, whirling into a mill. Bendigo, as usual, reached Caunt's body to save himself, then slipped down on the ropes, bringing the round to an end and grinning at his own excessive brilliance.

The Feel of a Solid Blow.

Caunt again opened the action in the fifth round and seemed anxious to get the feel of a solid blow, but Bendigo would give him no chance and danced away from the tremendous right and left swings launched by the champion. Caunt tried to stop and draw Bendigo in pursuit, looking for a swift come back, But the challenger was not to be tempted and Caunt, furious again, lashed out Though unable to gauge his man. Bendigo found the vicinity warm and drew of in order, Caunt Pursuing fiercely. There was some pretty sparring when Caunt let go right and left hard. bendigo still smiling bobbed his head and The blow whistled harmlessly away. Caunt forced again when Bendigo diving quickly to a hold slipped once more to his knees.

Caunt was to the front again at the sixth round piping and evidently distressed, but Waiting at the scratch for Bendigo with undiminished eagerness. It was the belief of his friends that he had been trained to fine and that the desperate And unavailing efforts of the early rounds had sapped him greatly. He went after the jumping jack Bendigo and chased him about the ring Vainly seeking to land. Thrashing out with right and left he grazed Bendigo's ear when that skilful shifter promptly plumped down To the ground out of danger. On opening the seventh round Bendigo Seemed ready to try conclusions, having craftily played to tire his man and the milled it

Vigorously. Bendigo smashed home his left on Caunt's head and the big fellow returned the compliment with interest, rocking Bendigo, who found close quarters painful. Caunt drove again but still too high and Bendigo repeated his tricks by dropping

Bendigo's Skill.

It had been the champion's part to force the pace throughout, but he sparred away at opening the eighth round and Bendigo, quite as unexpectedly, leaped into the fray with a dash and abandoned peculiarly his own. Caunt stood upon the defensive, but was much too deliberate in his movements, and Bendigo skillfully working up to his advantage, finally slipped through the other's guard with a remarkable display of science and ripped his left to the big fellow's check. The crowd cheered and cheered again. Caunt, unable to get in a smash, closed with violence and rushed his man to the ropes. He was unprepared for the sudden check and, borne forward by his own impetus, missed balance and turned a cartwheel over the ropes, falling on his head. The cheers for Caunt were derisive, as well they might be.

Bendigo waded into the ninth round gleefully, footing a kind of improvised hornpipe about the champion and parrying the others determined swings with ease. Apparently he was careless, but at an opening he sprang upon the offensive, jolted through to the ribs and got in another slashing cut to Caunt's face. When Caunt tried to retaliate Bendigo was not there the sprightly boxer having taken the opportunity

to drop to his knees. It was the jumping jack again in the tenth round, Bendigo giving his man no chance, but hammering all over Caunt with sly taps and feints, feeling for advantage. Again, when his time came he whirled in and peppered the champion's face. Which was now chopped to ribbons. But he was a trifle too sure and Caunt caught him fairly in his massive arms. The giant had waited for just, such an opportunity and little Bendigo was a puppet in his arms. He hugged like a Cornishman, threw Bendigo by main strength and fell heavily upon him.

Led a Merry Dance.

Bendigo seemed to have suffered no ill effects at opening the eleventh round. In fact, Caunt had barely touched him and his skin was still fresh. He resumed his jiggling tactics and led his huge antagonist a merry dance, jumping in and away with the speed of light. As usual, he tormented Caunt into lifting his guard and swinging high, then swept in like a flash, jammed his left to the jaw and his right to the

ribs and fell out of harm's way. Caunt was furious and followed him, dropping on his knees beside him. Luckily the giant restrained his temper in time and Bendigo mocked him while both were being borne away by their attendants. At this stage of the fight both adopted the customary course of refraining from the least unnecessary exertion after falls, allowing seconds and bottle holders to lift them bodily into their corners.

The twelfth round opened with a charge by Caunt, who looked and noted the goaded bull. He drove at Bendigo, swung at him, slammed and volleyed and milled, all to no purpose, for the nimble boxer would not stand to him and was as hard to find as a flying insect. Finally Caunt, in

desperation, drove his man into a corner and it looked serious for a moment. Bendigo could not fight out again and was hard put to it to dodge and parry the blows that sung about him. Finally he had recourse, as usual, to dropping, but the evasion was patent and the ring ran, with jeers and catcalls.

The many expressions of disapproval drove Bendigo out of his flippant attitude for a time and he came more soberly into the thirteenth round. For all his shiftiness and fondness for playing the clown he had a punch that Belcher in his best days might have envied, and he was looking for a chance to use it now. He crept around Caunt warily, taking every chance and parrying the swings and drives launched by the other by straightforward parrying and warding. Caunt slammed a wicked one with his left that just grazed the top of Bendigo's head when he bobbed. Bendigo stood up to it fairly and jolted heavily to the ribs.

Caunt got back at him with right and left body drives but the little chap broke their force. Bendigo was plainly after trouble and offered himself freely, watching for an opening. It came when Caunt whirled up his arms for another attack. Suddenly Bendigo circled in drew of his left and smashed Caunt flush upon the right cheek. A blow with every ounce of his terrific fighting power behind it. The tremendous impact lifted Caunt clear of the turf and sent him down full length. So great was Bendigo's effort that the recoil of his own blow threw him back upon the stakes. Caunt was almost senseless when borne to his corner.

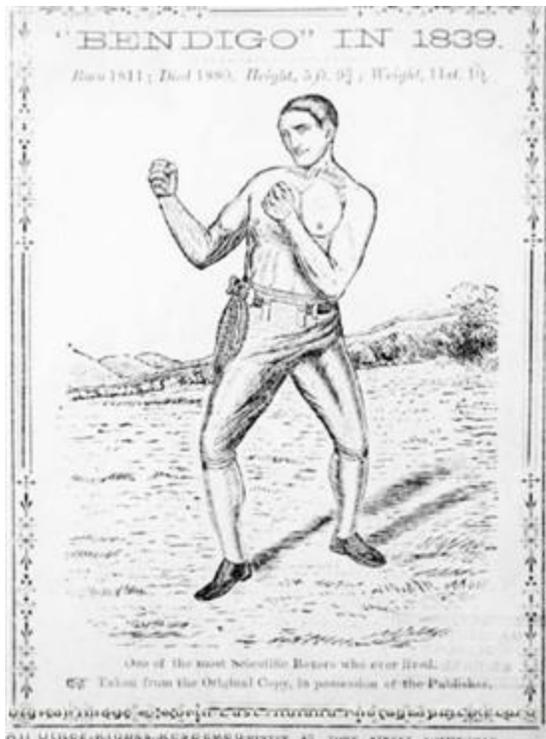
Nodding Over His Prowess.

Bendigo was the mountebank again - when he pranced into the fourteenth round, grinning and nodding over his prowess. He evaded Caunt's rush and slammed in with his left but was slow and the champion caught him. They struggled on the ropes, when Caunt wrenched his man forward, threw him and fell upon him. The champion had recovered at the fifteenth round and tried to answer Bendigo's continual mockery with some witticisms of his own.

They mixed it prettily, Caunt missing left and right drives. Caunt then closed and was wrestling when Bendigo slipped cleverly from his grasp, reached an arm around his neck, hung at the back and pulled the giant to the ground. In the sixteenth round Bendigo missed a blow and slipped through a clinch to his knees.

Having tasted the success of his dangerous left swing, Bendigo sought further use for it. He crept in cat wise, leaping from side to side to avoid Caunt's powerful drives and finding his distance snapped through with a smash to the mouth that split the champion's upper lip. Caunt staggered and went down amid applause for the little fighter.

The next four rounds were terminated in short order by Bendigo's shiftiness. Caunt, hammered and distressed but still hungry for fighting but could not pin the other once. The agile "Bendy" wriggled away from him, stung him about the face and dropped when the giant threatened mischief. In the twenty second round Caunt exasperated by his inability to get at his artful dodger tried to coax his man within range, but Bendigo would have none of it and Caunt rushed at him pounding right and left. Bendigo dodged and slipped down when lightly touched. In the next session The challenger again waltzed around the big fellow suddenly lashing one To



Caunt's damaged mouth. The champion had his chance here and slammed One to the head that served as a hint to the cautious Bendigo to make a drop of it.

Back came the irrepressible Bendigo for more foot work in the twenty forth Round, but he was very nearly to clever He flung in a reaping hook to the ribs that checked Caunt and promptly sat down Without waiting for a return blow. This was to obvious and clearly in contravention of the London Prize Ring Rules. Cries of "Foul" were raised on behalf of Caunt but the referee after some hesitation pronounced "Fair" and time was called amid tumultuous uproar and disorder.

At this point "Nick" Ward, exhausted by his untiring efforts in lifting and treating Bendigo , was overcome and had to be taken out of the ring. His place was taken by "Nobby" Clark. Caunt Rushed the next session with left and right. Bendigo stood

up to him with some wild exchanges, then slipped With his usual cunning and fell.

Cleverly Tripped.

The challenger went upon the offensive in the twenty-sixth round and whirled his left once more to Caunts mouth .The champion pursued him determinedly and drove him into a corner with swings that stopped when he hit one of the stakes. They closed and wrestled Bendigo tripping cleverly and falling on his man.

Caunt was growing cautious having lost strength and suffering from a puffed right hand he awaited Bendigo in the next session and the challenger working through a Clever rally planted his left to the face and dropped as usual. The champion sought revenge in the twenty eighth round and lashed out driving Bendigo to the ropes where he closed with him. They struggled hanging on the lower rope and Bendigo hitting up at his man until released by the seconds.The following session saw some wild fighting until Caunt taking a leaf out of "Bendys" book slipped to his knees. In the thirtieth round They mixed it with equal good will taking body jolts and taps to the head.Caunt got home a good left hander Slamming Bendigo over the right eye and cutting him severely .Bendigo Countered to the nose and fell.he was in need of patching in the interval.

The next two rounds were brief, Bendigo's hitting and dropping methods bringing repeated protests from Caunts backers. At the thirty-third round Caunt, rushing in angrily, caught his man and hurled him over the ropes, falling on him. It was the nimble dancing pugilist to the fore again during four more rounds, but in the thirty-eighth Caunt was himself again for a moment. He forced Bendigo into a corner, where the sly one had no excuse for slipping, and pounded him over the head with hard swings. Bendigo found the interview expensive and closed when Caunt

with a sudden exertion of strength plucked him off his feet and tossed him over the ropes, falling himself on the inside. Another futile session was followed by Bendigo's usual left to the face, right to the ribs and drop.

In the forty-first round Bendigo again peppered Caunt's mouth, but retreated before the big fellow's rush Caunt caught him at the ropes, threw him and fell upon him. A short, shifty session followed and in the next Bendigo by scientific maneuvering got through a neat lunge to the throat and went down to escape a receipt.

Respite from Hard Smashes.

The champion had had some respite from Bendigo's hard face smashes and seemed quite fresh when he came up for the forty-fourth round. He forced the fighting vigorously and Bendigo after taking a blow to cover himself dropped. Caunt, indignant at being foiled whenever about to seize an advantage, leaped after him but unfortunately fell on his knee beyond him. The move was taken to mean the intention of foul tactics and brought loud disapproval. Bendigo had recourse again to his Hop o' My Thumb methods and tripped his fancy steps into the forty-fifth round, seeking a way for his left wallop. Caunt, enraged, flung the crook of an arm around his neck and swung him around twice clear of the ground. Bendigo twisted and caught a lock with his left leg when Caunt threw his weight upon him and brought him down underneath. The big fellow won the fall in the next session.

Caunt was stronger and waded into the forty-seventh round with renewed resolution. He was dangerous and Bendigo broke ground. The champion followed and they milled, taking and giving short arm jolts and slashes. With better aim than he had yet displayed Caunt whipped through a powerful blow to the forehead. Bendigo gave way, milling desperately on the retreat and footing it swiftly. As Caunt rushed in Bendigo smashed a pretty one to his usual target, the face, and slipping through Caunt's grasping hands fell and grinned derisively at his adversary.

The next ten rounds were fought by Bendigo with variations on his Merry Andrew and lightfoot tactics hit and drop. The practice was perfectly permissible so long as he received a blow before falling, but the old timers sighed for the days of Spring and the knee to knee millers who knew how to give and take with science. Gaunt stood the ordeal well and Bendigo weaker under his repeated falls and the broiling sun.

At the fifty-eighth round Bendigo was all over his man dealt him a stinger to the nose and dropped. In the next Caunt went after him hard, right and left and Bendigo slipped on the ropes. Caunt, considering the other down, was walking for his corner when Bendigo pursued him, hit him and they wrestled until both were down. The following round was a hit to the mouth and a fall for Bendigo. One hour and twenty-four minutes had now passed, but the men were solid on their feet and fresh, though Caunt's face was a pulp. Up to the seventy-fourth round there was no change. Bendigo evading punishment wherever possible and contenting himself with worrying Caunt's head.

The champion came up strong for the seventy-fourth round and charged milling fiercely. Bendigo was forced to the corner and took right and left to the jaw. Suddenly taking the

offensive he repeated his earlier terrific Left swing to the face. Caunt tottered but saved himself and was coming back When the challenger fell. Both men were wild and ineffective for the next eight Rounds and time was slightly regarded in either corner, the seconds working over their charges long After the half minute.

Strain Began to Tell.

By the eighty-third round the strain had begun to tell upon Bendigo. The champion advanced incautiously and Bendigo ever alert for just a chance shot through a nasty uppercut to the jaw. Caunt came back with surprising strength walloped his man with a flush drive to the mouth, caught him before he could get down and fell upon him. The challenger was greatly shaken by his fall and had lost his smile when he hit and slipped through the next session the referee was forced to warn both men about time for the next three intervals and both were weak in the exchanges. At the eighty eighth round two hours had passed.

Bendigo dragged himself into the eighty eighth round slowly. But Caunt seemed to be fresher. The champion was all for coming to close quarters, where his erratic aim might find the target, but Bendigo fighting hard. kept him at a distance and proved he was still keen eyed for openings by slipping over two smashes with his left to the battered face of his adversary before going down. In the next session he again worked past Caunts guard and got home with a haymaker to the ribs that looked like a knockout .the following session was an inglorious scramble, during which the disorder about the ring greatly increased .in the ninety second round Bendigo in falling hit Caunt below the belt but the blow was held to be unintentional.

Both fighters came to the centre jauntily for the ninety-third round, which was to prove the last, and, incidentally, -to turn loose a controversy never quite decided. Caunt set the pace and pitched in right and left forcing Bendigo to the ropes, where he hung. He scrambled up, when Caunt hit him down again. The champion now repeated a mistake which he had made earlier in the fight believing that Bendigo was down for good and the round therefore at an end. he turned his back and walked for his corner. Bendigo got up and rushed in pursuit. Caunt saw him coming and deliberately sat down. Instantly Bendigo's friends claimed the decision for him on a "foul." Declaring Caunt had fallen before being Struck, The referee decided that such was the case and rendered the decision, carrying title, stakes and belt, to Bendigo.

So ended the only famous battle of a period which added little to the reputation of the sport. The decision was hotly attacked. It was said that Bendigo had no right to rise again and that Caunt sat down to escape being surprised or taken at disadvantage until "time" was called again. It was openly charged that the referee had been intimidated by the cudgel bands about the ring. No precise settlement of the question was ever reached, but the decision stood reflecting no particular credit upon either contestant. Caunt was undoubtedly the stronger at the end, but his utter inability to land a decisive blow left the ultimate result of a finish fight a question.

Caunt retired from the ring after this official defeat, Returning once years afterward to decide a family Quarrel. Bendigo enjoyed the honor for five years and retired. The incorrigible jokester wound up his erratic career by a solemn reformation and turned dissenting clergyman, dying at the age of sixty-eight years.

