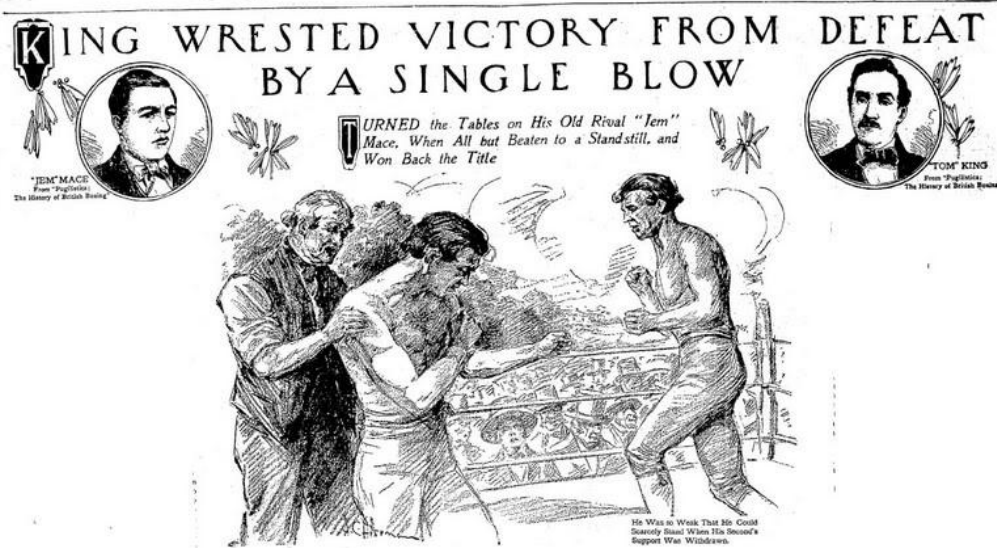


Tom King (born: August 14, 1835 died: October 3, 1888) also known as "The Fighting Sailor" was an English boxer who fought both bare-knuckle and with gloves Strong, fast, and durable he was a skilled pugilist. He retired from the ring in 1863, as the Heavyweight Champion of England, following his defeat of the boxer Jem Mace. In retirement he became a successful bookmaker, and married the daughter of a wealthy shipping magnate and acquired great wealth.



King was born in Silver Street, Stepney East London and at an early age joined the Royal Navy, in the service he learnt to box, both with and without gloves. Retiring from the navy while still a young man he became a docker, where his skills with his fists earned him respect and some limited notoriety, following several brawls with colleagues.

King's brawling bought him to the attention of the retired boxing champion Jem Ward who began to give him serious pugilistic training. At this time prize-fighting was illegal in England, and likely to be broken up by the police with ensuing arrests. Matches were arranged by word of mouth and often held on remote farms, the venue being abruptly changed at short notice. However the illegality of the sport did not stop matches being well attended by members of all classes from dockers to the highest echelons of the aristocracy.

King's first professional victory was over Bill Clamp, a celebrated dockyard fighter. Two quick successive victories over Tom Truckle and Young Broome led to his first attempt to attain the English heavyweight crown from Jem Mace in 1862. The bout lasted for 43 rounds for the first 30 rounds King seemed in control. However, experience began to tell and Mace finally in spite of being almost blinded in both eyes finished King with a crushing blow to the throat.

Mace and King met for a rematch less than a year later in 1863, on this occasion King defeated Mace in the 21st round, victory was achieved by a simple punch to the face. Mace conceded and

King finally obtained the heavyweight crown.

The next great fight was 20th December 1863 against John C Heenan the American fighter who had fought the celebrated British boxer Thomas Sayers to a less than honourable draw for the heavyweight title in 1860. Following the "draw" Heenan had been unofficially acclaimed the heavyweight champion, so the defence of this title against Heenan was an important march in English boxing, Thomas Sayers himself even acted as Heenan's second in this match, The bout was held at "Cockmounts Farm", Wadhurst, East Sussex Heenan relied on brawn and wrestling rather than skill and pugilistic science and was defeated by King in the 24th round. King escaped from the fight almost unscathed.

King now became very selective of his opponent refusing to meet Mace in the ring again. Mace was furious at not being given the opportunity to regain his heavyweight title, and in order to prompt a fight deliberately set out to pick a fight with King in the street , but King still refused to fight him and retired allowing the heavyweight title to fall vacant though many unofficially claimed it.

Having defended and retained the heavyweight title King retired. Unlike many of his contemporaries who relied on the charity and munificence of their former patrons and fans for support after their lives in the ring, King went on to make a fortune as a successful bookmaker. In later life he became a celebrated rower, and married the daughter of a wealthy ship owner. He died on October 3 1888 Stockbridge, Hampshire aged 53. He is buried West Norwood Cemetery, London.

After the famous drawn battle between "Tom" Sayers and John Heenan The little champion retired from the ring, his health rapidly declining. A gigantic 210 pound wrestler from Lancashire, Samuel Hurst, known as "the Staleybridge Infant" put forward a claim to the championship, and, no other adversary being available, he was matched with one of the old standbys, "Tom" Paddock, whom he defeated in five rounds, in 1860.

Meanwhile two remarkable fighters were coming to the front, notable figures at a time when the sport had again fallen upon evil days. These were "Jem" Mace and "Tom" King. Mace disposed of "the Infant" with ease in eight rounds, and since the beefy Lancashireman was in nominal possession of the title "Jem" stepped into the honor. King challenged him, and in 1862 they fought a gallant forty three round battle, which Mace won. King was not satisfied and demanded another meeting. The rivalry of these two first-class boxers did much to redeem a period of pugilistic history chiefly taken up with "crosses," forfeiting, Fiascoes and exploitation and confused by numerous bickering claimants to the championship.

THERE was comfort for fight followers when it was known that Mace and King, the two greatest, gladiators of the time, were once more to try their differences within the twenty-four foot ring. Here at least was promise of clean sport and a trial of manhood such as the ancient fistic heroes had loved; here was every reasonable hope that the noble science of self-defence should again be demonstrated by masters in an honorable, straightforward manner.

The men were well matched. In their previous battle they had shown equal fortitude, courage and

manly forbearance. Both had won thousands of enthusiastic supporters. Both were known to be in prime condition and eager for another interview. The posting of the money and the signing of the articles had been free from the chicanery and wrangling of which the sporting world had grown weary. In spite of prevailing rowdyism, in spite of a contemporary spasm of virtue which had galvanized the authorities into determined opposition to the exhibition of boxing, it; was felt that the chances were good for a revival of the traditions of the game.

No cleverer, more skilful, more determined boxer than "Jem" Mace had ever stepped within the ropes. Since "Jem" Belcher, with the possible exception of "Tom" Sayers. the ring had not seen a man so highly gifted, so well equipped for pugilistic success. He was essentially all that is meant by the phrase "a natural fighter." Science, speed, resolution, a perfect eye and a cool head were his, and from his first encounter he had forged steadily to the front as one to whom highest honors were due. If he had smirched his record by "throwing" his first fight with "Bob" Brettle, as was generally believed, the fact was rather To be ascribed to dishonest; management, and the unhealthy influence of grasping promoters than to any taint of cowardice in Mace himself.

Born in 1831. he was thirty-one years old when he met King, and, though counted among the ranks of the veteran fighters, had scarcely run through half his extraordinary career, during which he held the title three separate times. When he entered the London ring at the age of twenty-six he fought at 130-135 pounds, but, like other lightweights, notably Sayers, increased by twenty pounds or so within a few years. In both battles with King he tipped the beam at about. 158 pounds. His height; was close to 5 ft.10 ½ in. His figure was classic in its proportions, symmetrical, graceful, but solidly built, fine and true in every line. He was heavily but not clumsily muscled about the arms and shoulders, with a magnificent arching chest, flat loins and rounded hips. His skin was always clear and firm with health, free from folds or flabbiness. Pride of his perfect physique was always strong in him. and training was almost superfluous, for he kept; himself habitually on the edge of fighting trim.

Mace had gone to school of his own abilities and gifts for all he knew of the boxing game, but one odd circumstance had proved of great value to him in aspiring to the championship, in early life he had been the traveling proprietor of a booth, wherein, at fairs and public gatherings, he played the violin, and incidentally professed to give instructions in pugilism. This pursuit of strangely assorted arts brought him frequently to measure fists against stalwart rustic, champions, usually men of huge stature, and in demonstrating his prowess upon their mighty frames he learned the knack of handling adversaries far beyond him in size and strength.

Mace the Older.

"Tom" King was the junior of Mace by four years and was born in Stepney in August,1835. His early life was passed as a sailor, first, in the naval, later in the marine, service. In matters pugilistic he ranked as a novice, having appeared In public but twice prior to his first match with Mace. King was a man against whom cot the slightest breath of professional suspicion was ever blown. He was a big. quiet, good natured . speedy, high grade fighter, unsurpassed in courage, strong as a bullock and well versed, for all his experience had been so brief, in the tactics of the sport. While yielding to Mace in scientific attainment, h was a first class ring general, had his

temper always under control and never gave away a chance.

In physical equipment he apparently had a decided advantage. Six feet two inches in height, he stripped at 178 pounds, or a little less, all sound, hard grained muscle and bone. Not so compact and finely formed as Mace, lacking the smooth, supple grace of his adversary, he was a more rugged and formidable type. In Appearance. A critical judge of pugilistic equipment might have said that in jaw and neck he fell short of desirable solidity and breadth and that his loins were a trifle weak. For the rest he was a Herculean figure, built for heavy work-, endurance and effective delivery.

When the day for the fight. November 26, 1862, arrived there was trouble and to spare abroad for enthusiasts who were minded to be present. The authorities for a hundred miles in all directions were keen to interfere should a spot be selected within their jurisdiction. The final arrangements were kept carefully secret; until the last moment, with the result that, thousands struck false trails and suffered disappointment. Early in the morning a. train bearing, the boxers and some three hundred followers left London for Thames Haven, where steamboats were to convey the party to some safe place. At the destination it was decided that no better ground was available and the ring was pitched near the shore.

Soon after eight o'clock the champion tossed his hat inside the ropes and climbed through, attended by "Bob" Brettle and "Bob" Travers, a negro, both former opponents of his. King followed, in company with "Bos" (Ros) Tyler and "Jack" McDonald,. second and bottle holder. Both men were loudly cheered and acknowledged the greeting modestly, then retired to their corners to prepare. Betting was brisk at odds of 6 and 7 to 4. the backers of Mace to the front and making the offers. Some heavy wagers were laid at the long price.

The men stripped and advanced to the scratch at the call of time under a dull and leaden sky. There was nothing to choose between them as to attitude or Condition. Both walked with the firm, springy step of health and confidence, showing no hurry or nervousness. Experts at the ringside declared that neither man had ever appeared to greater advantage. And that both were in better shape than at their first meeting. They shook bauds in friendly fashion .and stood away, awaiting the first move and watching each other keenly, while they fell into the approved position with freedom and ease.

Mace opened the preliminary sparring with great caution and after some swift and clever play they separated for a moment, rubbing chests and arms against the nip of the sharp morning air. The introduction having passed they joined again for serious work, and Mace, pressing slowly in. snapped out Suddenly with his left. King was out of range quickly, displaying great, agility. The champion followed with a sharp flourish, quite willing to set the pace, when King came back in an impetuous rush, taking Mace's check on his left and whipping a wicked reaper with his right. ".Jem" parried the blow in beautiful style, 'but. broke ground sharply. King pursued, swinging right and left and driving "Jem" toward his corner. Here the champion ducked under a blow and ran in to grips, but. "Tom" met him neatly, caught a strong hold under the arms and was heaving for a fall when Mace slipped through and dropped to save himself.

Mace Shows His Power.

Both were eager at the call for the second round and came dancing to the centre, but still held off from the offensive until Mace led as before with his left. King back stepped again and on recovering launched a high right swing that grazed the top of the champion's head, sweeping up under Mace's rising guard at the same instant with a left hook that smacked smartly on the mouth. It was a clever blow and brought wild cheers from his partisans, who now profited by bets on first crimson. "Jem" would not give an inch and whirled back manfully left and right, both tapping King lightly on the face. But the champion was too Wary to risk a hot mill so early in the fight and on King's next rush met him and closed.

After a short wrestle Mace wriggled through and dropped. Mace was the first to the scratch for the third round and swept into a flashing bit of quick play with the upper hand. They sparred with wonderful speed and precision, agile, lithe and watchful as cats, putting eye and judgment, to the test. This was no meeting of hammer wielder no ding-dong slugging exhibition, but a match between men who understood scientific boxing and who placed craft and skill above mere brute strength.

King suddenly stepped back, changed ground and rushed from a new angle, feinting right, lashing a sharp left over "Jem's" guard to the cheek and following, up with a wide half circle right swing that rang home to the side of the champion's head and sent him staggering, Mace answered the shouts of the King party by waltzing right back, and they met for a brief, fierce rally, King' pressing steadily, in behind his heavy firing.. Mace tried hard to hold him, jammed through a stinging left to the jaw and tried again, right and left. But "Tom" was armed at all points, warded both blows and still advanced until the champion once again ducked into a clinch. The struggle was determined and protracted, the men wrestling from side to side of the ring, seeking a throwing hold. King got his right arm around "Jem" and finally overbore him. In going down Mace was curiously doublet! and struck the ground on the top of his head. For a moment it looked as if he had received serious injury, but he soon put all fears at rest by jumping to his feet with a laugh and a wave of his hand.

The champion, as usual, opened the fourth round with his left, but washout of distance. King was a trifle slower in starting, but took the lead, slamming his left to the face and getting through a right jolt to the ribs at almost the same instant. Mace found his opponent's superior reach a troublesome matter and after three attempts to retaliate drew oft again in good order, milling as he went. "Tom" followed, missing right and left swings' rind after some quick feinting drove his left prettily through an opening. Mace threw the blow off with his right guard just in time and they sparred a moment at close range, arm countering fist with the accuracy and regularity of a clockwork. 'King showed fondness for keeping the upper hand and broke sharply into a rush, delivering straight with the left and coming on with a wide right swing. Mace caught the swing and got away by fast footwork. King still came on and as they dallied an instant feinted repeatedly with his right. "Jem" was on tiptoe, shifting from side to side and poised for trouble. As King lashed out with his left the champion stopped the blow dead in midair on his guard, stepped lightly forward on his left foot and sent a left handed drive with his weight behind it

crashing straight to the jaw.

King was badly shaken by the blow and drew off an instant, while Mace sprang to nail the advantage. "Tom" met him with an answering spurt and they fought across the ring and back again in almost perfect form, neither able to get through the Opposing guard. Then, as King sent his left harmlessly over "Jem's" ducked head, the champion sidestepped and whipped a vicious right cut across the face, completing the scheme of decoration he had begun. King rushed him rather wildly and Mace got through one, two, with lightning swiftness to the nose and mouth. "Tom" had had quite enough of this pepper treatment and closed to grips. After a brief 'struggle he broke away and went down.

Both Badly Battered.

Both bore the sanguine marks of battle when they advanced to the scratch again, being slashed and ripped about face and body. It was the measure of their magnificent condition, however, that, neither showed a sign of distress in body or wind after four of the fastest and longest rounds ever witnessed in a championship fight. King had had a shade the better of the interview so far.

"Tom" dashed into action as soon as he raised his hands at the centre for the fifth round and tried his favorite maneuver of a wicked left jab, accompanied by a half circle right swing, footing toward his adversary at an angle. The left found Mace a trifle unready and smacked home to the jaw. "Jem" ducked the swing and broke away, then, as King came up, shot through right and left to the face with the speed of light, and off again. This exchange demonstrated in itself the best points of each man's fighting. The champion's ability was best shown in the almost unprecedented rapidity and precision with which he could plant both fists and get out of danger before the other's guard was even shifted. So far, in the present battle, he had tempered his style to extreme caution, but from 'this time on the feature of the fighting was this snapping attack of his almost too quick for the eye to follow.

As King followed on determinedly "Jem" retreated slowly, pausing three times to deliver the one, two to the face and doing heavy execution. "Tom" was greatly bothered, and finding no effective means of retaliation he closed Impetuously for a wrestle. Mace twisted away nimbly until he caught the upper hold, when he threw himself into the struggle with address and aggression, finally hurling King clean of the ground in fall heavily near the ropes. The round had been his all the way, and this appropriate climax turned- loose, a tumult of applause among his friends, who offered 2 to 1 freely.

"Jem's" jaw and mouth were badly swollen when he walked to the centre again, and King, besides a battered face and body, showed a left eye that indicated persistent treatment from the champion. They fiddled for a moment at the opening, shifting and changing ground, extremely watchful and wary. Then "Tom" advanced, and the sparring warmed until he began real hostilities once more by dashing in with left to jaw and right swing to the side of the head. Mace seemed unable to stop these deliveries as long as King was free to choose his own time and distance for the rush, but he now mixed in fiercely giving the challenger no opportunity to repeat.

King flung away "Jem's" volley on' either arm and they joined in the heaviest and fastest mill of the fight. Straight across the ring they worked, swinging, countering, feinting, jabbing, boring, both exhibiting a marvelous guard and an unerring judgment. "Tom" tried the left to the jaw repeatedly, then suddenly slammed through with a right to the ribs in handsome style. Mace devoted most of his efforts to the face, planting his right and left but varying with a vicious little hook to the body that taught King to watch his lower guard As he ducked and came in with one of these "Tom" slashed him wickedly along the cheek, but the champion, in the same wink, got back with driving facers. The crowd was hoarse with one continuous, indiscriminate cheer. Such boxing had not been seen in the prize ring for fifty years. King kept forcing The pace and developed terrific speed behind his right body drive with which he drubbed the champion consistently, but, almost blinded by one of "Jem's" straight smashes, he ended a wonderful round by closing. After a hard struggle they fell together, "Tom" underneath.

When they confronted each other for the seventh session King seemed disinclined for more hard going and drew off toward his corner. Mace followed and "Tom" craftily turned his apparent retreat into a swift charge, lashing his left to the ear. "Jem" held up the companion swing and shot over his left flush to the nose, drawing Claret plentifully. King was still in motion and the slighter champion broke ground before him, jamming in a right to tile ribs and taking a stinger to the cheek, but unable to stem the advance. "Tom" hammered "Jem's" guard with his right and pushed one over to the jaw, then bored In, Mace disputing every inch with short arm jabs. When King took a backward step and rushed again, working left and right, Mace dodged aside and caught him about the body slipping to the ground as King was bracing for a fall. The eighth round was brief. King opening with a wild right swing and Mace smashing a beautiful pile driver to the centre of the forehead, but slipping against one of the ring posts. "Tom" threw him through the ropes in the struggle. In the ninth they exchanged heavy facers, and King, in an irresistible rush, forced his man through the ropes again.

King to the Fore.

It was King to the front again in the tenth round, starting from the preliminary flourish with a smart left drive that caught "Jem" on the side of the jaw and slewed him around. Mace fought back fiercely and they joined in a pretty rally at a fast pace. "Tom" pounded the ribs freely and accepted a short arm smash to the face as he got in close. Throwing himself bodily upon Mace he executed one of the most difficult maneuvers possible under the old prize ring rules, hooking the champion's head in a right arm lock and jibbing him back and forth against the left fist. "Jem" made the experiment costly, however. Throwing his leg over, be unbalanced King, and as the challenger lurched to recover pounded upper cuts and smashes all over his face with terrific force and rapidity, at the same time extricating himself. The ferocity of the attack gave King no chance to make a stand, and Mace was all over his man In the mill that followed, landing repeatedly left and right until King closed In desperation. Here "Jem." planting a neat back heel, hurtled "Tom" over for a clean fall, ending an active and exciting round.

The challenger swept into the eleventh round with his familiar shifty charge, whipping left to the Jaw and right to the ear. Mace met him instantly with a straight reaper to the chin that snapped him back, and when .King shook himself together and came on again repeated the dose with the

left full upon the nose, covering his man with crimson. "Jem" dodged aside when "Tom" once - more took the warpath and they met knee to knee for a heavy exchange. King's method of lowering his head a trifle in rushing made him a fair target for 'Jem's" punishing face smashes and brought him full against the terrific one, two time and again. He finally closed and Mace slipped from him, taking a rib searcher as he went down The referee called the attention of "Tom's" second: that he had struck while the champion was falling, but the blow was clearly accidental.

That the battle was slightly but perceptibly tending Mace's way during this period was the opinion of all the experts. King was finding some difficulty keeping ahead of the pace of the whirlwind champion, and had undergone harder punishment, while "Jem" seemed to suffer no inconvenience from what he had received. King himself was conscious of the wavering chance and now went in to reassert his earlier lead. He jumped into the twelfth round with a rush, "Jem" giving before the heavier weight of his antagonist, but parrying the left drive and right swing and peppering to the face in retreat. "Tom" forced his man right across the ring into Mace's own corner, where he landed a thumper to the ribs, and "Jem" clucked and closed. King falling upon him. In the next session, which was brief, the challenger again forged to the front, driving Mace by sheer pressure. "Jem" got in a good facer, but was slashed about the ribs, and, "as "Tom" still came on, fell to save himself.

"Jem" had no intention of surrendering the upper hand having once gained it, and it was his turn to take the initiative in the fourteenth round. He waded in. stopped King's rush with straight drives to the face, followed with a swing to the ear, whipped over a dead check to the body and smashed his left beautifully through King's flailing guard with a shallow crescent to the nose. It was a neat hit and turned King side on. The champion threw his weight well forward on his left foot and punctuated the delivery with a powerful drive to the head. King fell off, plainly shaken, but returned to the attack undaunted. They milled for a moment in heroic style, neither yielding, until they closed by common impulse and went down in the centre of the ring.

King was out of the running so long as the champion chose to fight like this. Mace was giving away no chances, but. He was using every trick and move known to his art to increase his lead, baffle "Tom" and wear him down. His speed, accuracy and tirelessness were a revelation even to those who knew him best. King made desperate efforts to stop him, to slip in a series to check him, but "Jem" was at 'his best. He went after King in the fifteenth round, fought him to a standstill at short arm and then sent in his flashing right and left deliveries, hopping out of range of "Tom's" exasperating swings. King could still get the punch to the body, but Mace's condition was such that the challenger made no impression. When King finally rose to the situation and began one of his slantwise rushes "Jem" the crafty took to grass and ended the session.

End of the Conflict.

The one thought of King was now to get the star on this bewildering opponent, and he went into the sixteenth round full steam up using his familiar left drive and right swing. It was a crucial test, a head on collision, with both men keyed in every nerve. Mace no longer sought retreat. He had learned how to manage "Tom's" favorite introduction, and catching both blows, he smacked a pretty one to the jaw and another to the left eye before getting away. King's right swing had

bothered him at first, but he had sounded its weakness. It left an opening and was too wide to be effectual. The ease with which he handled it afforded a tip which the alert King was shortly to appreciate very fully. They bored at each other, taking short arm body smashes in which Mace - had the decided advantage, then closed and fell, "Jem" underneath. In the seventeenth round King, who still toiled to take the lead, had another convincing demonstration of the futility of his attack with the right Mace stopped it slid under it or past it every time, planting a stinger through the opening. King fell back upon his left, slammed it to the ribs, sent it again to the jaw and again to the mouth, but the agile Mace was going away whenever the blow landed and scarcely blinked.

King, pressing slowly on tried again with the left, but failed, and "Jem," leaping in, jammed a straight one to the forehead, swept a short hook to the face and got away. They joined in a fierce rally. Mace landing frequently, until they closed and fell on the ropes. It was clearly the champion's battle. Money at 6 to 1 was offered on him at this point with no takers. The eighteenth round was all "Jem's." King slipping to his knees when he tried to charge.

Mace was anxious to make an end when he came briskly to the centre for the nineteenth round. There had been rumors that the police were " approaching and his purpose now was to settle the argument out of hand. Affairs seemed ripe for a sudden termination. King was weakening and losing with every round. The champion strode toward his man confidently, and as they joined began to work his way in to close quarters, weaving his blows from side to side. King, no longer aggressive, watched keenly, holding himself in reserve, and tapping out just enough to hold "Jem" away.

Mace saw his opening, or thought he did, fainted swiftly right and left and threw back his right, for the drive he meant to finish with. He was too sure. Intent only upon his own game, he had presented the very opening his opponent was seeking. King, swift, sure, cat footed, stepped lightly aside and threw every ounce of weight, and power behind a tremendous cross counter drive with his right The blow swept full to the left cheek, meeting "Jem's" forward movement with stunning force.

Nothing could have been more startling or unexpected than the transformation. One instant the champion stood ready, grinning, triumphant about to land the coup de grace. The next he was reeling away, crimson streaked, to fall helplessly in the center of the ring. no spectator could catch his breath to exclaim or to cheer. No man could do more than to stare at the crushed heap that was a champion but a second before and the cool, steady, erect figure that had just become one.

The referee gave the call of "Time!" thrice before Mace could be brought by his frantic attendants into Shape to leave his corner. He advanced tottering, swung widely with his left and went down under a straight drive to the face. The crowd understood at last and broke into pandemonium.

Once more, for the twenty-first round, "Jem" Mace came to the centre. He was so weak that he could scarcely stand when his second's support, was withdrawn. King looked at him a moment, then went, up to him, gave him a gentle push and sent him down. He was still conscious and

demanded another chance, but the fight was over his second tossed up the sponge, ending one of the most brilliant battles on fistic history after thirty-eight minutes of fighting.