

The Boxing Biographies Newsletter

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The World - 23 November 1896

Jem Mace and Donovan, Veterans

of the Ring, Shake Hands,

MEET IN THE RING NEXT MONTH.

Meanwhile They Exchange Grandisonian

Courtesies and Size Each Other Up,

BOTH OF THEM FIT AS A FIDDLE.

Jem Mace, of England, arrived Saturday on the Etruria. There was a time when this simple announcement would have blocked Broadway with a hurrying crowd, eager to look at the champion pugilist of the world; the shiftiest man who ever put up his hands in the twenty-four-foot ring'.

But no crowd impeded his progress now, for Jem has not fought anybody for years. He has devoted himself to the gentle art of how to grow old and look young. He is as great a master at this as he was at his earlier art of putting men to sleep with his fists.

Al Smith, who has undertaken the arrangement of a six-round glove contest between Mace and Mike Donovan, who was for years the middle-weight champion of America, met the old-time champion at the pier and took him to the Gilsey House. In some mysterious way word soon went round that Mace was here. Fighting men and followers of the ring came in by dozens and shook

his hand and told him how well he looked. He was delighted to see them and chatted as blithely as a schoolboy.

But occasionally he asked Mr. Smith: "***Where's Mike?***"

Of course the really proper thing for a modern pugilist to do when he speaks of his next antagonist is to scowl and curse, but Mace acted as if he were asking for an old schoolboy chum. He sat patiently in the Gilsey cafe, where sandwiches abounded and where a white-jacketed youth often appeared with glasses on a tray. Seated in an admiring circle around him were a score of fighters and ring followers. Dan Creedon and Kid Lavigne were leading the laughter that greeted every one of the veteran's jokes.

Suddenly there was a stir as a white haired, pink-checked man came striding briskly through the crowd. Mace smiled broadly as he caught sight of him approaching. "***Well, Mike, old boy,***" exclaimed the Englishman rising and grasping his hand. "***how in the world are you ? how've you been eh?***". Donovan's face had about six smiles on it. "***Jem, old boy,***" he said, "***I'm glad to .see you. How are you?***" They sat a opposite sides of the table. "***I'm well,***" said Mace. "***I'm very fit.***" "***And you're right,***" Donovan exclaimed. "***You want to be well, you know.***" "***We'll make some of the young uns open their eyes, eh?***" said the Englishman. "***I've been training three months for this go.***"

The two leaned back in their chairs and smiled at each other. Their glances darted from point to point. Moved by some sudden impulse, each half rose and grasped the other's hand. Then they sat down again and studied each other keenly. Both men are a fine example of the healthy influence that hard fighting has upon a man. Both have eyes keen as a lynx. Mace's dark skin shows a ruddy tinge on the cheeks that a society bud might envy. Donovan's fair complexion is like a baby's.

"***A little thin up there, Mike,***" Mace remarked as he stretched out his gnarled brown hand and putted Donovan's gray thatch. "***Excuse, me, Jim,***" retorted Donovan, reaching over and deftly whipping off the Englishman's shining top hat, There stood revealed a dark, glistening bald poll. There was a roar of laughter from the admiring circle. The two veterans chaffed each other like boys. Their conversation was a pleasant reminder of by-gone days when pugilists used to ratify their, matches in courteous phrases and then solemnly drink to the toast "***May the best man win,***" each, of course, thinking of himself, but neither uttering a word to the other's disparagement.

They made a striking picture, Mace is sixty-six years old, but does not look a day more than forty. His keen. gypsy eyes twinkle mischievously, His shoulders are broad and his cunning arms are long and thick. He has biceps as big and hard us any blacksmith's. His waist is slender. His legs are of proper roundness and sturdiness for a fighting man. He looks as though he is good for twenty years more of giving and taking hard knocks He weighs 182 pounds net. There is a funny fat roll of muscle joining the back of his head and his neck, covered with gray bristles.

Donavon weighs 159 pounds and there is no fat on the back of his neck or elsewhere. Any cannibal king would reject him from the stew-pot because he is so tough and stringy. His chest

sticks out. His arms are long and they move quickly. In Donovan one finds a striking example of the whalebone type of fighting man. His springy gait excites attention. It would be remarkable in a man of thirty. In a veteran of his years it is phenomenal. As for his age— well! He has said that he is forty nine so often in the last half-dozen years that now he believes it himself.

At all events he was old enough to fight all through the civil war in a regiment from his native State of Ohio. yet if his hair were to turn black he would easily pass for thirty. Donovan and Mace sat together chatting of old times until late in the afternoon. Then they said good-by to each other and shook hands three or four times. They will not meet again until the night of Dec. 14, when they will put up their skilful hands and bang away at each other for six rounds





Friday, 4 June 2010

[East End boxing was floored by the flames](#)



By Alex Daley

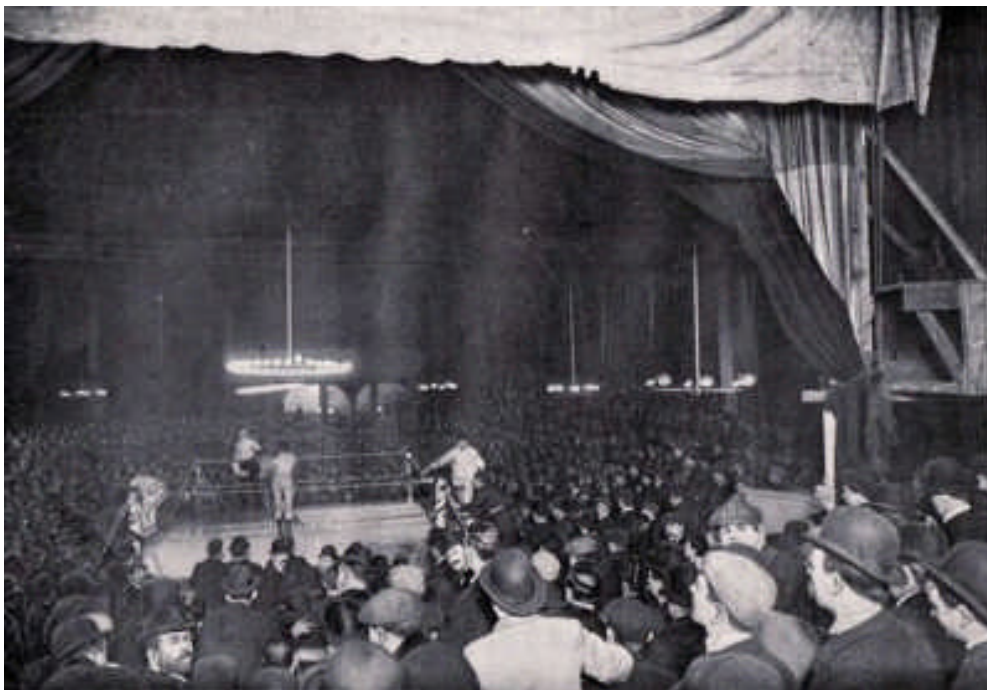
Today, the spiritual home of East London boxing is undoubtedly the York Hall, Bethnal Green. Where else can you watch great domestic action in an intimate atmosphere from a decent seat, and still have spare cash for the train fare home? York Hall is a special place, but it's really only the latest in a long line of similar grass-roots venues that have drawn fans to the East End since boxing with gloves began. The predominant cultures and customs have changed in recent

decades, but the noble art is always there, as synonymous with East London as Bow Bells or jellied eels.

The first big East End hall in the post bare-knuckle era was Wonderland, which stood in the heart of Stepney borough at 100 Whitechapel Road, adjoining a pub and a Jewish theatre. It began as a venue for novelty shows (hence its name), and was first opened for boxing in the late 1890s by leaseholder Jack Woolf and a matchmaker called 'Professor' Joe Smith. Little is known of Smith, who faded from the picture fairly quickly and was replaced by Harry Jacobs, an irascible but brilliant matchmaker, who would steer Wonderland through its most successful phase.

With the astute leadership of Woolf and Jacobs, Wonderland quickly became the capital's leading working-class fight hall. It was crowded practically every Saturday night, to the extent where ringsiders often complained of spectators standing between them and the ring. After the 'house full' signs were up on the venue's official pub entrance, bar staff were not averse to taking backhanders to let spectators in through a private passage inside the pub.

The tiny ring, which was only around 12 square feet, allowed no room for back-peddling and ensured that each contest was a come-forward fight. The referee sat on a platform outside the ring and had a handy escape hatch in case of an angry post-fight mob. Jellied eels were quaffed by the bucket-load and the remnants spat beneath chairs and onto the backs of the heads of those sat in front. Ringsiders were showered with resin and fragments of disintegrating ring canvas whenever the stewards swept the ring between bouts, and throughout each show local pickpockets ran amok. Betting was supposedly strictly prohibited, yet bookmakers flagrantly flouted the rules and took bets round the hall before and during each fight. The setting was as rough and ready as can be imagined, but usually the action on offer more than justified the discomfort.



Some of the best fighters in Britain showed their wares at Wonderland: men such as Charlie Knock, Curly Watson, Ernie Veitch, Johnny Summers, Young Joseph and Bombardier Billy Wells. The last three were all British or European champions, and at least four world champions boxed at Wonderland as well. These were Jimmy Britt, the Dixie Kid, Kid McCoy and Tommy Burns. Burns defended his world heavyweight crown there against Newcastle's Jack Palmer on 10 February 1908. Admission was specially raised for the event and East Enders sat spellbound as the Canadian KO'd the Geordie inside four rounds. Burns lost his world title to the legendary Jack Johnson in their famous clash at Rushcutter's Bay in Sydney, Australia 10 months later.

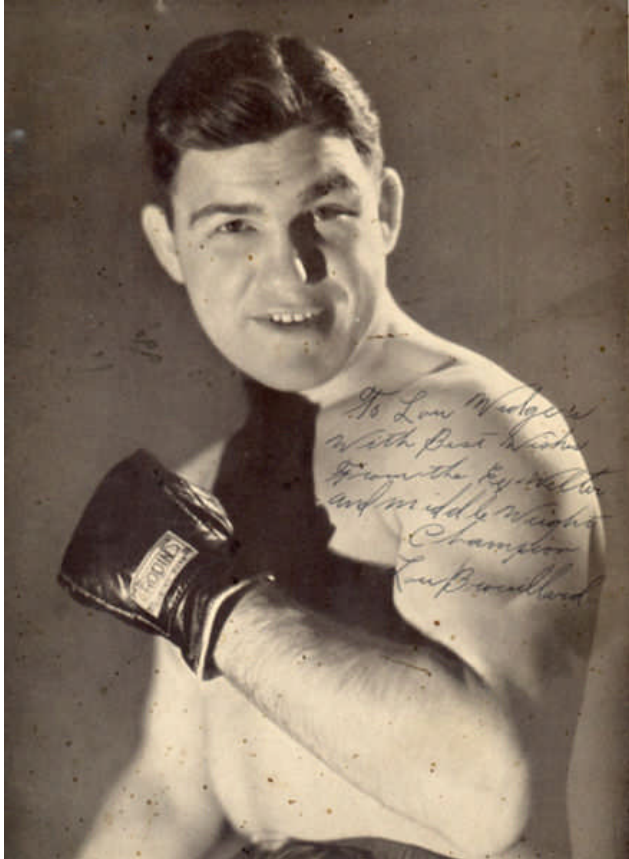
During its relatively short life as a fight hall, Wonderland rose rapidly to national fame. Things were running swimmingly on the surface, but beneath it trouble was brewing between business partners Jack Woolf and Harry Jacobs. It soon became plain that the pair could simply not get on, and their disputes bubbled over into bitter public rows.

Jacobs, it was alleged, after paying a fighter a certain sum, would get the said boxer to sign a receipt for a larger figure, while surreptitiously pocketing the difference. Jacobs's counter claim was that Woolf admitted spectators through his private pub entrance without paying their fees into the partnership account. The pair remained at constant loggerheads. Something had to give and it turned out to be Jacobs.

Since Woolf owned the Wonderland lease, Jacobs was forced to move on and stage his own shows elsewhere. This he duly did, but his rival shows, at the nearby Paragon Music Hall, proved a dismal failure. And it is for this very reason that he became the suspected perpetrator of the astounding event that occurred next.

On 13 August 1911, despite the efforts of 140 firemen with 12 streamers and three motor pumps, Wonderland mysteriously burnt to the ground. The fire was attributed to a faulty electrical circuit in some cinema apparatus being tested for a screening that night. But few who had witnessed the angry public rows between Woolf and Jacobs fully accepted the official line. Rumours of 'foul play' were rife.

The East End was hard hit by the loss of its beloved home of boxing, but shortly afterwards another arena rose almost phoenix-like from its ashes. With the threat of serious competition removed, Harry Jacobs opened this new venue, Premierland (pronounced Pree-mier-land), on 16 December 1911. The new hall stood on Back Church Lane, only streets away from its predecessor, and its opening marked a new chapter in East London's rich boxing past.



Name: Lou Brouillard
Birth Name: Lucien Pierre Brouillard
Born: 1911-05-23
Birthplace: Saint Eugene, Quebec, Canada
Died: 1984-09-14 (Age:73)
Nationality: Canadian
Hometown: Worcester, Massachusetts, USA
Boxing Record: [click](#)
Stance: Southpaw
Height: 5' 7" / 170cm
Reach: 72" / 183cm
Division: Middleweight
Manager: [Maurice Lemione](#)

Morning News, Florence
 26 Aug 1932

Jimmy "Shamus" McLarnin whom sports writers refer to as "the mightiest fighter of his weight and inches in ring history" and as the "Baby Faced Kid from Vancouver," is in New York begging for a fight. Sounds a bit incredible, but it's true. Jimmy, you know, or

perhaps you missed the news recently, received for a fine pasting at the capable fists of Lou Brouillard, erstwhile champ of the welterweights, in a fifteen round match in New York.

It was "Shamus's" second defeat and it changed his plans considerably. McLarnin figured to return home after the Brouillard win and come back to New York later in the summer for a title bout with Champion Jackie Fields or with his perennial opponent Billy Petrolle. After that Jimmy planned to retire from the ring wars. But now, soundly trounced by Brouillard, Jimmy is yelling for a return match and it can't take place too soon for him. He feels that the year's layoff before the Brouillard meeting didn't do him much good and he is certain that he can defeat the former welter champion in a return match.

This young man Brouillard, billed as the "Walloper from Worcester." is quite a fighter in his own right. He won the welterweight title from Jack Thompson, but held it only for a few months, losing to Jackie Fields in Chicago by a decision which, to many, had an odor reminiscent of the stockyards. It is hardly probable that Fields will give another crack at the crown in Chicago, privately remarked that if he never faced Lou in the ring again he would be happy.

Brouillard is a converted portsider. Contrary to the general opinion he is not a natural southpaw, but turned around to the awkward stance following a bout in which several ribs on his left side were fractured. To protect the weakened members Lou boxed with right hand extended instead of the left. He is a husky youngster with the torso of a heavyweight and the legs and hips of a feather. While not a one-punch knockout artist he can peg punches heavy enough to hurt and

make opponents respect him. Proof that he can take it was brought out in the McLarnin bout when he stood up under Jimmy's heavy smashes and crowded in for more.

Lou doesn't fight in the accepted southpaw style, using more of a square stance when facing an opponent. His only concession to the style made famous by Lou Tandler, former lightweight star of Philadelphia, is a slight turn of the right side, as shown in the above cartoon, and a slight advance of the right foot as he shuffles into action. He throws a powerful left hand blow to the body, which, incidentally, was a deciding factor in his win over McLarnin.

He's a tough hombre, this French-Canadlan youngster, and he is Going somewhere in his chosen profession.

End

The "Walloper from Worcester"

By HARDIN BURNLEY

The Corsicana Daily Sun 25 July 1933



ONLY a few weeks ago, Mickey Walker took on Lou Brouillard up in Boston as a tune-up match for his scheduled light heavyweight title go with Maxie Rosenbloom. Something must have gone wrong, however, for the fight actually turned out to be a tune-up bout for Mr. Brouillard, who is shortly to clash with Ben Jeby for the New York commission's version of the ' middleweight title.

Mr. Brouillard, in case you haven't seen him in action, is an exceedingly rough and uncouth individual inside of those ropes, and, to make matters worse, he throws his punches from the wrong side — he's a southpaw. "Lefty Looie" hails from Worcester, Mass., and he first catapulted into the fistic spotlight several years ago when he won the world's welterweight championship from Young Jack Thompson, only to lose it to Jackie Fields in his first defense. Brouillard is not what is called a smart fighter, but he certainly uses

NEW DEAL By Laufer



his head in some of his fights. He butted Jimmy McLarnin all over the ring in their clash last year, and James finished with bad gashes over each eye as a result of the Worcester Walloper's billygoat tactics. "Lefty Looie" is the kind of a guy who would be a wow in a rough and tumble scrap. He is of French- Canadian descent, and he fights like one of those rough and ready lumberjacks from the Canadian forests.

Brouillard has no style or class, and he is most unorthodox in his manner of throwing punches. Mister Brouillard in action is not a very pretty spectacle to watch; in fact, he is the very antithesis of a "picture

fighter." He is abnormally short and squat, with the torso of a heavyweight fastened onto a pair of stumpy legs that seem to be of bantamweight proportions.

His style of fighting, if one may term it that, consists in swarming all over his opponent with a ceaseless barrage of short arm hooks to head and body.

The Worcester Windmill is apparently tireless, and is a sawed off Hercules for strength. He gave away some ten pounds to Mickey Walker and bulled him all over the Ring — and Mister Walker is not exactly a weakling, even though he may be getting along in years.

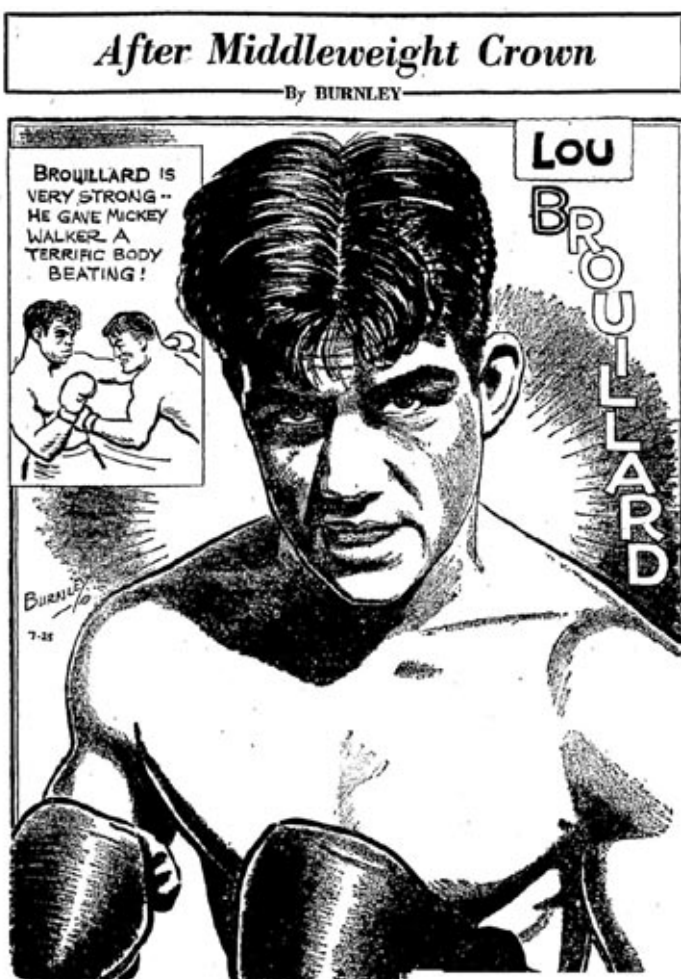
Brouillard is no world-beater. He has been licked by such as Fields, Johnny Indrasano and Andy Callahan. But Lou attributes these defeats to weight-making, and says that, fighting as a middleweight, he is a greatly improved scrapper.

At any rate, Mister "Lefty Looie" Brouillard is a mighty tough customer, no matter how you take him; and while he may not be a great fighter, he is probably good enough to lick most any of the present crop of middleweights. Just think of the guys that pass for leading middleweights nowadays — Ben Jeby, Gorilla Jones, Vince Dundee! Imagine what Ketchel, or Harry Greb for that; matter, would have done to THAT kind.

Winnipeg 23 Sept 1933

BROUILLARD GOES OUT OF CLASS TO TROUNCE HEUSER
Middleweight Champion .Forces German to Quit-at End of
Eighth Round
ENHANCED REPUTATION
By JIMMY THOMPSON

Boston, Sept. 23.—Stepping out of his class, . Lou Brouillard. French- Canadian middleweight champion of the world, last night gave Adolph Heuser, of Germany, such a terrific beating that the ranking light heavyweight defaulted at the end of the eighth round of the Boston Garden's 10 round feature bout.

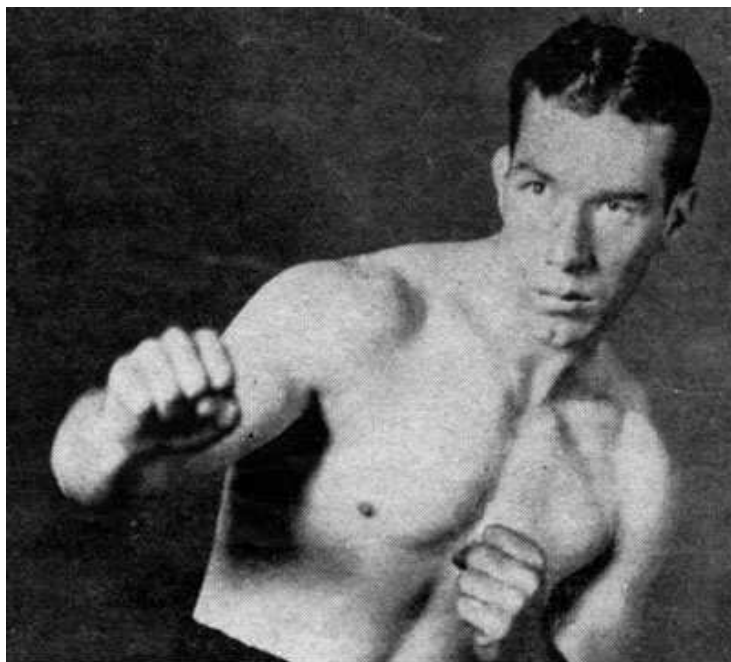


Both of Heuser's eyes were cut by the terrific left hooks that steamed from the shoulder of the titlist, a native of St. Eugene. Qua., now living In Worcester. Mass. with the German's vision badly hampered as the result of the injuries, his manager, Johnny Buckley, announced the surrender.

Brouillard weighed 163, seven pounds less than his opponent. In the first round they stood toe-to-toe, slugging each other's head and body with both hands But when Brouillard discovered the German liked this sort of going, he backed away and started firing terrific lefts to the body and a jarring right to the jaw to pile up a wide lead.

The German fought back gamely, but was seldom able to score cleanly on the weaving champion. Most of the German's steam left him in the sixth session, when Lou staggered him twice with sizzling lefts to the jaw. Another terrific left opened Heuser's

right eye in the seventh and the other optic was put out of commission in the eighth .



Name: Bucky Lawless
Birth Name: Thomas William Lawless
Born: 1908-03-03
Birthplace: Auburn, New York, USA
Died: 1966-06-19 (Age:58)
Nationality: US American
Hometown: Syracuse, New York, USA
Boxing Record: [click](#)
Managers: [Joe Netro](#), [Harry Anderson](#)

Published approx 1998

Thomas "Bucky" Lawless always loved Auburn, and Auburn loved him. He lived at 46 Perrine St with his sister, Carol Prystal. Bucky had two other sisters, Margaret Fahey and Elizabeth Price, and a half-brother, Bernard Lawless. They are all dead.

His nephews are Tom Prystal of 51 Lansing St., who was a former star athlete at Mount Carmel High, and Ted Prystal, who now lives in Virginia, and a niece, Carol, who lives in Nashville, Tenn.

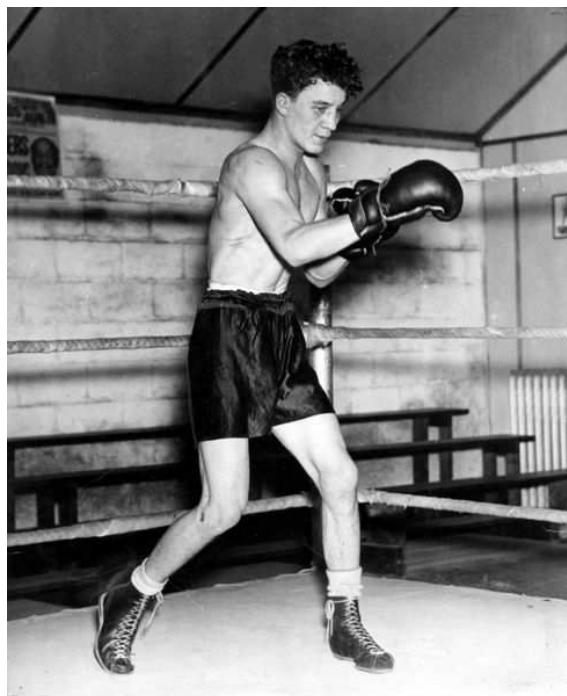
Bucky graduated from Holy Family School, and was a communicant of Holy Family Church. Bucky fought as a top-ranked welterweight and middleweight in the 1920s and early 1930s. He was known as "The Terror." He possessed a hair-trigger, left-hand punch, with quick hands and clever boxing ability, and almost always was the aggressor in his bouts.

Bucky had the distinction of defeating eight former world champions during the peak of his career, although he was never a title holder himself. He defeated Jackie Fields, Young Jack Johnson, Vince Dundee, Freddie Steele and Gorilla Jones. He defeated Jones in five of their seven bouts.

In his fight with Young Jack Johnson, who was the welterweight champion at the time, Bucky weighed in at 148 pounds, one pound over the limit, so the fight was considered non-title. Johnson weighed in at 147 pounds. Bucky won the 10-round decision before 11,240 fans in Chicago. On three different occasions, Bucky defeated world champions, but each time he was over the weight limit. In 1931 Bucky was feted with a parade of 100 cars that advanced

from the five points to the Elks Club on Dill street. There a reception was held in his honor, with hundreds in attendance, and hundreds turned away. The hall couldn't hold the multitude of fans who showed up to honour Bucky.

Bucky died on June 20 1966 at the age of 58..He brought fame and publicity to the city of Auburn; and he gave boxing everything he had. Bucky is in the Auburn Hall of Fame, but he most certainly deserves to be installed into the Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota.



Name: Tippy Larkin
Alias: The Garfield Gunner
Birth Name: Antonio Pilleteri
Born: 1917-11-11
Birthplace:
Died: 1991-12-10 (Age:74)
Nationality: US American
Hometown: Garfield, New Jersey, USA
Boxing Record: [click](#)
Stance: Orthodox
Height: 5' 7" / 170cm

THE FREEPORT JOURNAL STANDARD TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 1943

Hammering Henry Puts Tippy Larkin To Sleep In Second Round Of Fight

Negro Veteran Prepares For Invasion Of East

BY DAN McGUIRE

United Press Staff Correspondent

San Francisco, March 9 - Armstrong, the little negro veteran from Los Angeles, prepared today for an invasion of the east after knocking out, Tippy Larkin of Garfield, N. J., in the second round of a scheduled 10-round main event at Civic auditorium last night.

The quick kayo, coming after Larkin had outboxed the former triple-titleholder in the first round, left the capacity crowd of more than 7,000 dazed, for the New Jersey fighter had been hailed as a harder puncher than Willie. Joyce, who decisioned "Hammerin" Hank in Los Angeles last week,

15th Win In Comeback

The victory was Armstrong's 15th in 17 comeback fights and served notice on Beau Jack, whom Henry meets in New York April 2, that the cagey veteran may have slowed down slightly but he still packs a murderous right hand.

Larkin, almost a head taller than Armstrong and with a decided advantage in reach, came out fighting at the opening bell and bothered Henry with short right hand uppercuts. Armstrong, bobbing and weaving in customary fashion, could not get inside Tippy's tight guard. In the last, 30 seconds of the round, however, Henry poured in a couple of hard rights to the head that shook his rangy opponent.

Larkin Game

Larkin tried to stay away as the second round started but Armstrong caught him in the middle of the ring and they shot short jabs at each other for the first minute. Tippy brought up his guard to protect his head and Henry, set for just this opportunity, drove a left hook to the body and followed with a straight right to the chin.

Larkin's back hit the canvas. Game to the last, Tippy rolled over at the count of three and struggled up to one knee at five. Then, with a groan heard in the gallery, he flopped back and was counted out by Referee Joe Gorman after one minute and nine seconds of the round. The house grossed \$18,000. Armstrong weighed in at 139 with Larkin a pound and a half heavier.

