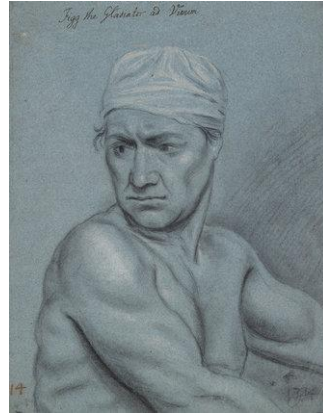




0. BOXING: ITS REBIRTH - Story Preface

1. BOXING: ITS START

2. BOXING: ITS REBIRTH

3. JIM BRADDOCK'S FIRST RISE

4. HOOVERVILLES

5. STARVING PEOPLE

6. JIM and MAE BRADDOCK

7. JOE GOULD and MAX BAER

8. BRADDOCK BECOMES CINDERELLA MAN

James Figg (1684-1734) is credited with reviving the ancient sport of boxing in Britain (where he is known as the "Father of British Boxing"). Jack Dempsey went further, calling him the "Father of Modern Boxing." Jonathan Richardson created this portrait of Figg. It is maintained at the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archeology, University of Oxford.

In January of 1681, the *Protestant Mercury* (a London newspaper) reported the story of a bare-knuckle boxing match between the Duke of Albermarle's footman and a butcher. In this first-known newspaper story about a boxing match, the butcher won.

At the time, boxing was really a mixture of wrestling and boxing. (The ancients also had a mixed wrestling/boxing sport, called *Pankration*, whose rules would never pass muster today. Biting an opponent - or gouging his eyes, nose and mouth with fingernails - was all that was prohibited.)

Not until James Figg became a boxer, in 1719, was any effort made to train would-be participants in a boxing school. Figg, known as the "father of boxing" (he fought nearly 300 times before his death in 1734), started a Boxing Academy and died unbeaten. He was known, as well, for challenging just about anyone to boxing bouts at his *Southwark Fair* booth.

Although the sport was still vicious then, without rules or regulations, the King (George I) enjoyed the spectacle. His interest (in 1723 he set up a boxing ring in London's *Hyde Park*) helped boxing to regain respectability.

One of Figg's students, John ("Jack") Broughton, introduced the sport's first rules in 1743 - after an opponent died following a fight. His rules included breaks, if a boxer were knocked down, and gloves used for practice.

Champion from 1729 until 1750, Broughton also taught boxing at his Amphitheater near Oxford Street. His rules were used until 1838, when the *Pugilistic Society* created the *London Prize Ring Rules*.

Broughton lived until he was 86 years old and is buried, with his wife, in the *West Cloister* of *Westminster Abbey*. His gravestone notes his status as a champion boxer:

*Mr. John Broughton
Champion Prizefighter of England
Died Jan 8th 1789, Aged 86 years*

Other world-champion British boxers followed, including *Daniel Mendoza* (known as the "father of scientific boxing"), *Jem Belcher*, *Tom Cribb*, *James Burke* and *Jem Mace*. Footwork, sparring and counter punches were developed during this time frame, changing the sport from a slugfest to something more sophisticated.

The *Queensberry Rules* of 1867—written by *John Graham Chambers* and sponsored by *John Sholto Douglas*, the Eighth Marquess of Queensberry (who was once embroiled in a famous trial involving Oscar Wilde)—introduced three-minute rounds, the ten-second count (if a fighter went down), a prohibition against wrestling/hugging and boxing gloves.

At the end of the 19th century, American fighters began to defeat their British opponents. When *John L. Sullivan* was world champion for ten years, the sport became popular in America.

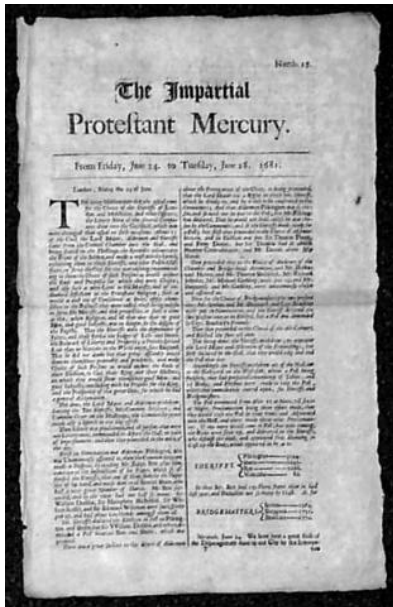
It was never more popular, however, than when a down-on-his-luck fighter named *Jim Braddock* staged one of the most incredible sports comebacks of all time.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BOXING-ITS-REBIRTH-Cinderella-Man>

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The Protestant Mercury Newspaper

Image online, courtesy the rarenewspapers.com website.

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James Figg

Image online, from *The Boxers of Yesteryear: James Figg*, courtesy the maltaboxing.net website.

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Southwark Fair

Image online, courtesy Wikipaintings.org website.

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Aerial View of Hyde Park

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Jack Broughton

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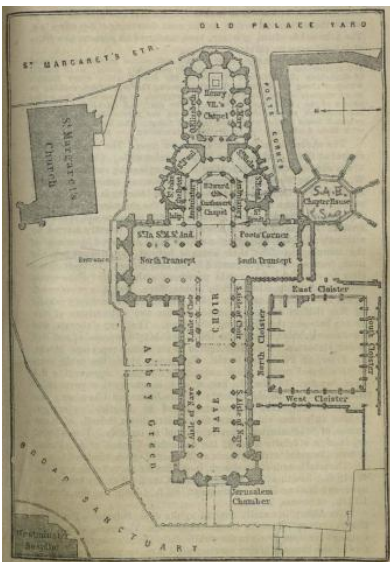


1743 Boxing Illustration

Image online, courtesy the ezinekungfumagazine.com website.

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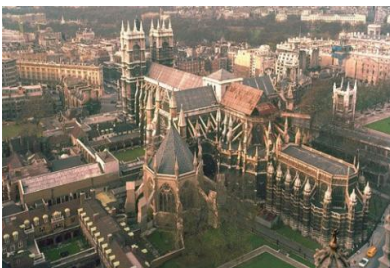
West Cloister Layout - Westminster Abbey

Image online, courtesy Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin.

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Aerial View of Westminster Abbey

Image online, courtesy the utexas.edu website.

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Daniel Mendoza

Image online, courtesy the londonboxers.org.uk website.

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Tom Cribb (1781-1829)

Tom Cribb

Image online, courtesy the kungfumagazine.com website.

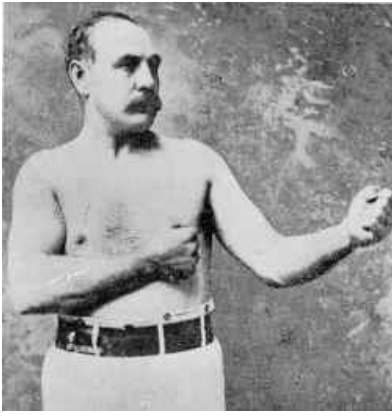
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John Sholto Douglas

Image included in *Oscar Wilde and Myself*, by Lord Alfred Douglas, London, J Long, 1914. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD

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Jem Mace

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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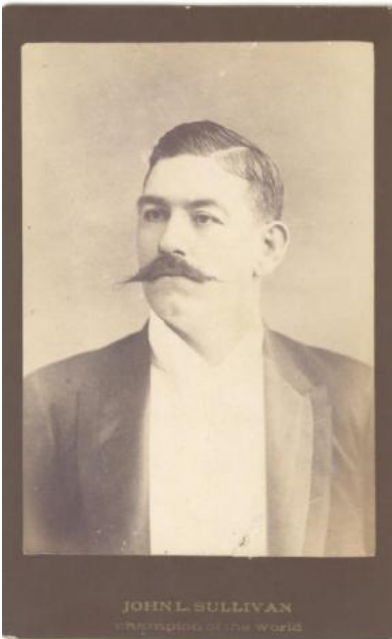
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Jim Braddock

Image online, courtesy theboxingmagazine.com website.

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John L. Sullivan

Image online, courtesy the fighttoys.com website.

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