

PUNCHING WITH PEMBERTON

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The Fabulous Story of Bridgeport's

Big Neil J. MacDonald and His Seven Fighting Sons

By J. EARLE PEMBERTON

Neil J. MacDonald was born June 28, 1860, at Boisdale, Cape Breton, N. S. "Big Neil", as he was affectionately known, was the father of 20 children—12 boys and 8 girls. His passing in 1946, at the age of 86, climaxed a mining and athletic career unprecedented in the history of one man's life. His wife, the former Penzie MacCormack, a native of Port Morien, died September 24, 1916.

Most young people today may not even hope to live to the ripe old age of 76, but when we state that Neil J. MacDonald spent the working hours of 76 years down deep in the bowels of Mother Earth, producing coal, it stands as something of a record in coal mining history. Although most of his working days were spent in Cape Breton mines, he also worked in the No. 1 seam in Springhill, which was eleven feet in thickness and figured in one of the early explosions.

Long Distance Runner

Neil J. MacDonald was a great lover of sports and in his youth was a strong distance runner, taking part in many modified marathon runs and competing against the top leading distance runners of his time.

In the early years of the Alexandra Rink in Glace Bay, he performed frequently in that sports centre, and on one occasion was part of a relay team that ran against R. J. MacDonald of Antigonish, known as the first winner of the Boston Marathon.

When Tom Longboat, the famous Ontario Indian runner, and his running mate, the great Alfie Shrubbs of England, ran in the Alexandra Rink, Big Neil J. was close on their heels—so close, that some of the local sporting gentry offered to back MacDonald to the extent of \$1,000 for a match race with Longboat. However, the Indian refused on the grounds that he and Shrubbs had an important engagement to keep in Charlottetown, P. E. I.

Great Tory

In politics, Big Neil J. was a staunch Tory. So strong was his leaning toward Conservatism that he named a horse he owned "Sir Charles Tupper". When Neil J. was in training for a road race, he would bridle the horse, take a tight grip on the reins, and pace behind him while running up and down the roads of Bridgeport at top speed.

24-Hour Run

Back in the 1880's, Neil J. entered a 24-hour track race held in connection with a picnic in Sydney, and ran all competitors into the ground. These 24-hour races were similar to the famous six-day bicycle rides that were staged in New York's Madison Square Garden. The laps were kept track of, and when a runner gained a lap or two he would then take time out to eat, rest and sleep. A tab at the finish showed that Big Neil J. led all entries by a wide margin. The run was unique in the history of marathons, as it drew runners of all creeds and colors—Indians, Negroes and white men ran side-by-side for the full 24 hours.

His Seven Sons

Big Neil J. MacDonald's sporting interest was imparted to his seven sons, all of whom were prominent in boxing circles as well as other forms of sport.

Joe, the oldest of the MacDonald brothers, was born July 25, 1888, in Glace Bay. Francis, who operated a gym at Bridgeport and gave boxing lessons at five bucks

per lesson, together with all the punishment one could absorb. A man named Walker operated a club in Bridgeport around that time and many a hectic bout was staged, including a battle royal in which the following took part: Joe MacDonald, Mickey MacPhee Angus MacNeil and Angus (Bob Mac) MacDonald.

In an amateur tournament held in the Alexandra Rink in 1915, he took on two opponents in one night in a pair of four-rounders. In the first bout he was paired off with Caledonia's Alex (Oliver) MacNeil, and when Joe extended his arms for the opening round handshake, MacNeil pulled a fast one by banging Joe on the jaw, flooring him for a nine-count. When he got to his feet he was almost helpless, but weathered the round. When he returned to his corner, his seconds, Tom Foley and Dan Alex MacDonald, dumped a whole bucket of cold water over him to bring him around.

"I beat MacNeil," said Joe, "but lost out to Jake Kipping in the finals."

Joe's last bout was a 4-round exhibition with Maurice MacDonald at Bridgeport in 1922. Joe, now in his 73rd year, lives on the old homestead at Bridgeport.

John (Jackie Kid) MacDonald

John (Jackie Kid) MacDonald was born November 29, 1889, in Glace Bay, N. S. He received his first boxing instructions from the late Tom Foley at Foley's gym in the old King's Theatre. Jackie "Kid" MacDonald was without doubt the first champion crowned

in Cape Breton. In 1908, at the old King's Theatre, he defeated Joe Sullivan for the feather-weight championship of the Maritime Provinces. Sullivan was brought to Glace Bay by Tom Foley and was highly regarded.

John was a member of the old Bridgeport Fire Department and ran in many relay races. In 1908 he won the annual 24th of May five-mile road race in Glace Bay. This road race was sponsored jointly by the late Will Mark Petrie and the Glace Bay Gazette.

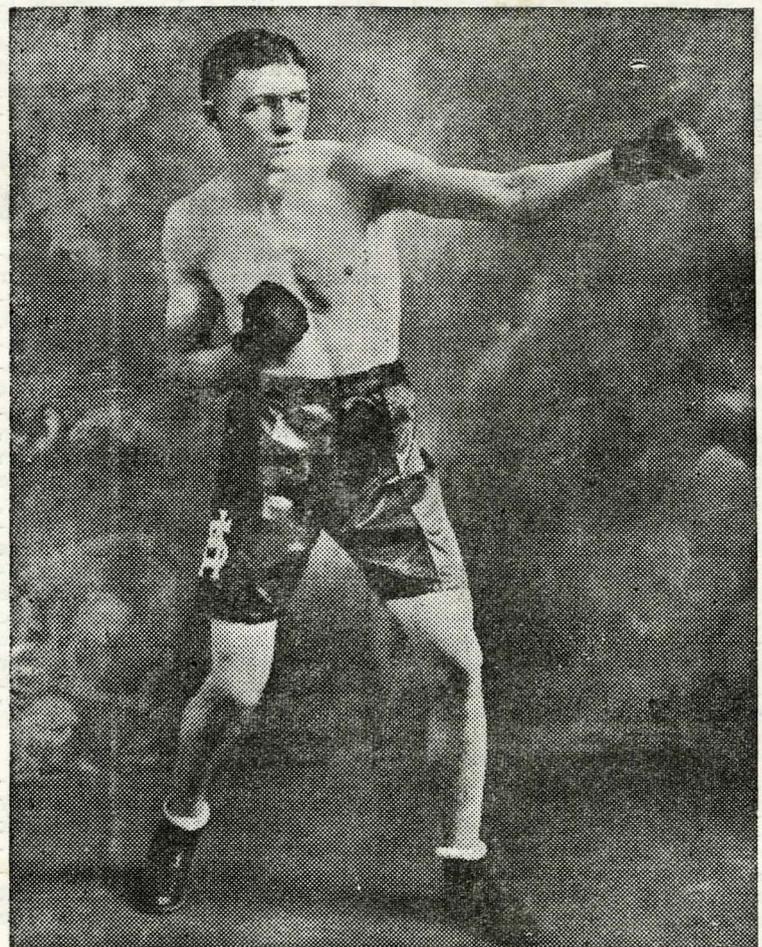
Went to U. S. A.

In 1910 John went to the United States, and boxed in Bangor, Portland, Eastport and Old Town in the State of Maine. He returned home in the fall of 1912, and was booked to fight Billy Parsons, but developed blood-poisoning in one hand. The bout was called off. Later he boxed an exhibition with Kid Burns in the old P. W. A. hall at Bridgeport.

He returned to Boston in 1913 and entered an amateur tournament held in the old Mechanics Building. He fought his way to the finals, losing out to Johnny Newman by a close decision. He (continued on page 2)

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Two \$25 Draws



STEVIE (KID) MacDonald

Neil J. MacDonald

(continued from page 1)

then decided to go to Providence, R. I., where he teamed up with his brother Neilly and later was joined by his brother Dannie. Together they boxed in many amateur tournaments in and around Providence. On several occasions John, Neil and Dannie boxed different opponents on the same card.

The complete boxing record of John (Little Jack) MacDonald is not available. However, we do know that a brilliant ring career was cut short when he was forced to retire due to a heart condition. He died in Providence, R. I., on December 17, 1948, at the age of fifty-nine. Burial took place in Providence.

Neil (Battling MacFarland) MacDonald

Neil (Battling MacFarland) MacDonald was born February 19th, 1892, in Glace Bay, N. S. Neil started his boxing career in Glace Bay in 1910. A few of the men he defeated were: Roddie (Big Pay) MacDonald, Neilly MacIntyre, Kid McDermid, Angus (Bob Mac) MacDonald, and others.

In 1911, Neil went to the USA, settling first in Maine and later in Wanskuck near Providence, R. I., where he boxed as an amateur, defeating some of the best simon-pures in the business. In 1914 he turned pro and continued to cut a swath through the best welter and middleweights in New England. During his career he performed in Providence, Boston, New York, Portland, Bangor and Old Town.

Press Reports

The following clippings from the New York Herald of February 22, 1915, tell of the rapid strides made by "Battling MacFarland" in the roped arena:

"McFarland's right name is Neil MacDonald, and he is a son of Neil J. MacDonald of Bridgeport, N. S. He received his first lessons in boxing from Glace Bay's Chief of Police Joe Francis, and from the start showed that he possessed all the qualities of a coming champion. Since leaving Bridgeport, Nova Scotia about 4 months ago, "McFarland" has engaged in about fifty bouts, not losing one, and winning most of them by the knockout route."

Following are the N. Y. Herald reports on two bouts in February 1915:

"Battling MacFarland of Providence, state middleweight champion, knocked out George Stone of this city in the sixth round of the main bout on the Unity A. C. card last night was a hard battle all the way, with the Rhode Island middleweight doing the forcing in every round. In the third McFarland found an opening to Stone's jaw and dropped him for the count of eight. Stone came back strong, but was weak in the fourth. McFarland won the fifth easily, driving his man all over the ring, and in the sixth drove a hard, straight right to the jaw



GROUP PICTURE - 1918

In front: Archie. Front row (left to right): John, Eddie, Neil Sr., Joe, Tommy Scott. Back row (left to right): Stevie, Neilly (Brochen) MacDonald, Neil Jr., Joe Francis, Doug MacFarlane. (Note: Neil "Brochen" MacDonald is no relation to the Neil J. MacDonald family.)

that ended the contest. McFarland was unmarked at the finish." "Battling MacFarland stopped off at Woonsocket, on his way to New York, long enough last night to administer a severe beating to Cy Goodwin of Boston, in the main bout of a boxing show held in the Rubber City. The contest was a rough one of eight rounds and the mixing at times was furious."

McFarland Stops Ruell

From The Providence Evening Journal, February 4, 1916:

"Battling MacFarland, the Wanskuck Railsplitter, and challenger of the world at 154 pounds, surprised the fans by sending K. O. Ruell of Fall River into dreamland in the fourth round of a special bout of an all-star show at the Rhode Island A. C. last evening, a big crowd being treated to one of the best boxing shows in years. Entering the ring on the short end of many 10 to 7 wagers, the battling one started a hurricane that made the odds look false in less than a round of miling. He was loaded to the muzzle with confidence, packed a fine wallop in each hand and gave the best exhibition of footwork ever displayed in these parts. The outcome was a foregone conclusion."

Won New England Title

One of the highlights in Neilly's career was his 1915 victory over Johnny Wilson of New York for the New England middleweight crown. In May, 1920, Wilson won the world middleweight championship by defeating Mike O'Dowd in 12 rounds in Boston.

Neilly also starred in amateur baseball in the Providence Twi-

light League, and later played semi-pro. Although his first love was boxing, Neilly says:

"My greatest thrill in sports came when I was called up for a tryout with the famous Boston Redsox."

In occupation Neilly was a security policeman. From 1912 until his retirement in 1954, he was employed with the Winston Textile Company. His last visit to the old home in Bridgeport was in 1957, and he was interviewed by the writer at that time. He enjoys good health and makes his home in Providence, Rhode Island.

Dannie MacDonald

Dannie MacDonald was born February 26, 1893, in Glace Bay. Dannie got his first training in the boxing game from the late Joe Francis. In 1914 Dannie went to the United States and settled in Providence, R. I. It wasn't very long before press reports of his ring success began to filter into his home town. One interesting report appeared in an old Glace Bay Gazette dated January 29th, 1918: "Another Bridgeport Boxer Makes Good. Another son of Neil J. MacDonald, making his mark in the ring, beat Walter Brooks of New York in a Providence bout, and Brooks has high standing as a scrapper."

Press Report

The Providence Evening Tribune of Jan. 16, 1918, in its report of the MacDonald-Brooks bout, stated: "The talent was given a setback in the semi-final when Walter Brooks, a two-fisted, hard-hitting battler from New York, substituted at the last minute for Kid Lewis of Pawtucket and took

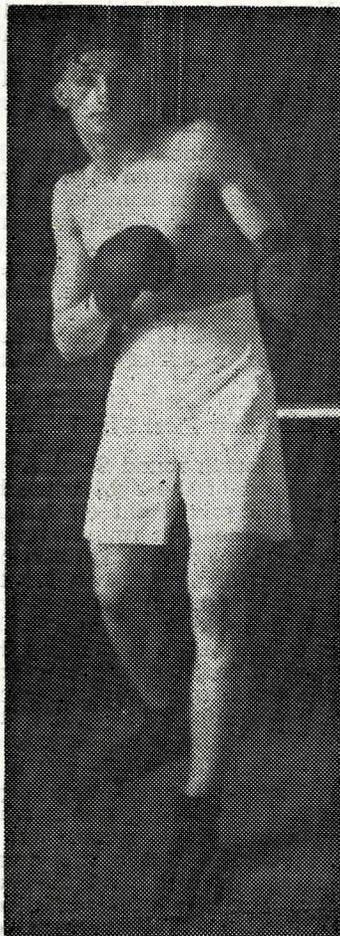
a lacing from Dannie MacDonald, the pride of Wanskuck. MacDonald deserves a world of credit for the battle he put up. This Brooks has drawn with such good boxers as Benny Leonard, Johnny Howard, Frankie Driscoll, Mickey Devine, Kid Herman, Frankie Callahan, Young Lustig, Gene Delmont and Frankie Fleming, Canada's premier featherweight, who knocked out Benny Leonard in 1915.

MacDonald had the piledriver from New York on the mat in the second round, and when the bell ended the session Brooks was on Queer Street. Ten minutes rest proved a tonic, however, and throughout the remainder of the mill he kept wading in, taking everything McDonald could hand out; trying all the time to slip over his right for a dream wallop. The Cape Breton lad was aware of his punch, however, and he never let the New Yorker get set to put it across. Instead, MacDonald kept stepping in and shooting a left and right to the head and then backing away before Brooks could unload one of his skyrockets. The wise boys had made Brooks a big favorite, and as a result lost a wad, as MacDonald won by a couple of city blocks.

Press Report

"Dannie MacDonald whips Harry Young in semi-final to the Pal Moore - Terry Martin bout." The following account of the bout is from the Providence Exchange:

"In the second bout, scheduled for six rounds, Dan MacDonald, the Cape Breton boy, dropped Harry Young of Federal Hill in the second round, the latter's seconds tossing in the towel after



Neil MacDonald
(Battling McFarland)

their charge had been floored four times in short order."

Report after report of Dannie's ring exploits kept coming in, and then one day a wire was received stating Dannie had been injured in the ring, and was in serious condition.

The report (carried by Canadian Press) read: "Providence, R. I., Saturday, March 23, 1918. Dan MacDonald, of this city, collapsed in the tenth round of his bout with Hammering Howie at the Woonsocket Athletic Club last night. He is in the Woonsocket Hospital with concussion of the brain. His condition is serious."

Four hours after being admitted to hospital, Dannie MacDonald died.

Bout Should Have Been an Exhibition

The following report of the ill-fated bout appeared in the Glace Bay Gazette, dated April 1, 1918: "Bridgeport boxer, substituting for another, gamely fought on against a man 40 pounds heavier, in what should have been an exhibition bout."

From accounts of the bout in Woonsocket on Mar. 22, between Hammering Howie and Dannie MacDonald, contained in Providence and Woonsocket papers to hand, the bout will go down as one of the most scandalous affairs ever pulled off under the guise of boxing.

Hammering Howie, a Roumanian Greek, whose real name was John Popkesou had been matched to meet Jack Mansfield, of Boston. MacDonald went down from Providence to see the bout, and

when Mansfield failed to appear, Dannie was asked to substitute. He had not boxed or trained for some weeks and naturally was not in condition. It has always been the custom, when a boxer substituted for another, that the bout is to be purely an exhibition, and the number of rounds is reduced, but this was not done in this bout. In this case, Dannie MacDonald, a featherweight, substituted for a man who a year previously was matched to fight Roddie MacDonald. Against Dannie was a man who was a big welterweight, almost 40 pounds heavier than Dannie, as well as having the advantage of height and reach.

For the first seven rounds MacDonald held the big man even, but his lack of training began to show, and his heavier opponent began to dish out some hard punishment. The crowd shouted to "throw in the sponge", and when he came to his corner after the end of the seventh round, MacDonald's seconds coaxed him to let them to throw in the sponge, but the game little Bridgeport boy forbade them doing so.

In the eighth and ninth Howie gave the little fellow a hard time and in the tenth put him down twice for the count of nine. With the audience shouting to stop the fight, as it was only a question of how much longer the half-dazed Dannie could last, the police, referee and club officials stood and watched a game little boy, who went on to help out, being beaten to death. Near the end of the tenth round, following a fusillade of lefts and rights to the head and body, MacDonald sank to the floor unconscious.

This was apparently not bad enough. With MacDonald being worked over by three doctors in his dressing room, in a frantic effort to bring him to, the officials went right ahead and pulled off what was supposed to be the main bout of the evening. Immediately after this, MacDonald was removed to hospital, where he died shortly after the last rites of the Catholic Church had been administered.

Dannie MacDonald was a member of the Rover Social Club and also of the Holy Name Society. His unassuming disposition and genial ways, as well as his cleverness as a boxer, made him countless friends, and deep regret over his death was felt in Providence, where he made his home, as well as in Thornton, Woonsocket and Marienville, where he had frequently boxed. Dannie MacDonald was to have been married on April 17th to Miss Gertrude A. Dean of Providence, and had not intended doing any more boxing.

Immediately after MacDonald's death, Howie was arrested and charged with manslaughter. However, the charge was dropped and Howie was released. Dannie MacDonald's remains were brought home and burial took place in Oceanview Cemetery, Dominion.

Edward (Eddie) MacDonald

Edward (Eddie) MacDonald was born August 13, 1894, in Glace Bay, N. S. Eddie was one of the best distance runners ever turned

out in Nova Scotia, and was a better than average boxer. Away back in 1912, he boxed a semi-final to the Billy Parsons - Neilly McIntyre bout. His opponent was Dan MacCormack of North Sydney. The following year he boxed a curtain-raiser to the Big Joe MacInnis-Joe Uvanni bout staged in the old Casino Theatre, Commercial Street, Glace Bay. His opponent at that time was Lauchie MacLean, later Major Lauchie MacLean.

Eddie started running when he was 12 years old, and his first prize was a baseball bat and glove. He competed in many of the early 24th of May three-mile road races held in Glace Bay—stacking up against such stars as Dooley Roach, Wilfred Sheriff, and Alex MacKinnon, who was killed overseas in World War I.

Broke World Record

In 1915, Eddie competed in a 2-mile indoor run put on by Kid Burns and the late Doug MacFarlane in the old Alexandra Rink. One of the men he ran against is the well known Dannie MacKinnon, well known London Life insurance agent of Glace Bay.

In relating the outcome of this 2-miler, Eddie said: "I won the race, and a few days later I was standing on Senator's Corner, when Doug MacFarlane tapped me on the shoulder and informed me that I had broken the world record for the 2-mile indoor run. I didn't know what to say when Doug told me that he and Mike Dryden had clocked me in record breaking time."

(NOTE—It is to be regretted that this record was never officially recorded.)

At Aldershot, 1918

While a member of the armed forces, Eddie ran a 3-mile race at Aldershot with the temperature hovering around 95 degrees.

At the two-mile mark my stomach turned. I staggered, and felt like quitting," Eddie said. "Our commanding officer noticed my plight and, running alongside, he whispered in my ear, 'Don't quit, Eddie. Lady Borden is watching and she is going to give out the prizes at the finish.'"

The race was a grueler and was won by Billy Muise, Indian runner from Truro, N. S. Silas MacLellan of Noel, Hants Co., also ran.

Ran in England

While stationed in England with the Canadian troops in the first World War, Eddie competed in track, field and boxing events put on by the Bramshot Area Athletic Association. He also took a leading part in Canadian Troops Empire Day Sports in England in 1919. Eddie was one of the key men in the big 5-mile cross-country run held at Bramshot and won by the 17th Reserve.

After the war he ran in a number of road races in Cape Breton and came second in a 3-mile event that started in downtown Glace Bay and wound up at the old Black Diamond Track at New Aberdeen. Not much of a feat, you will say. Well, try it some early morning after loading about 20 boxes of coal on night shift.

In 1922, Eddie competed in the eighth 3-mile 24th of May Pier Road Race, and at the finish was breathing down the neck of Sydney's Reid Ross, the winner.

On Pension

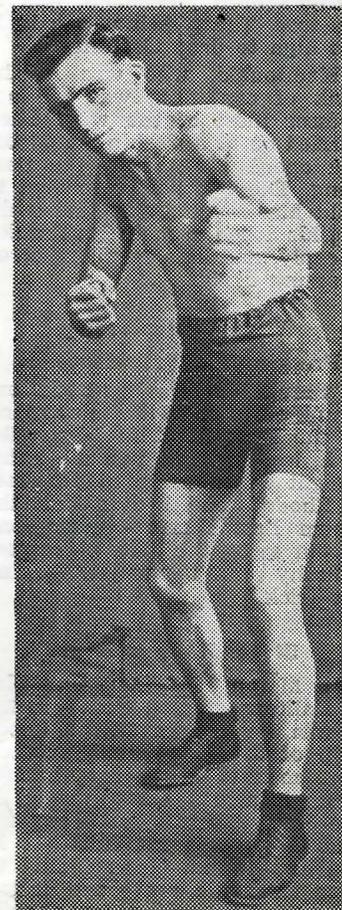
Eddie mined coal the better part of his life, but a few years ago met with a distressing accident in the mine and as a result had to retire on pension. He lives in Bridgeport and his hobby is gardening. May God bless you, Eddie; you were one of the stalwarts.

Stevie (Kid) MacDonald

Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, the pride of the family, was born on January 13, 1901, in Glace Bay. Stevie started boxing in his home town in 1916. His first main bout was a ten-rounder in which he knocked out Andy DeGaut in three rounds. The bout took place at the old L. O. C. Hall in New Aberdeen, Nov. 19, 1923. He followed this up by whipping Gordon Paris in ten rounds at the old Alexandra Rink in May of 1924. The following month Stevie went to the USA and made his headquarters in Boston, moving later to Providence, R. I. The Bridgeport boy wasn't long across the border when he won the lightweight championship of the State of Rhode Island. In thirty starts he had only one decision rendered against him.

Press Reports

"Providence, R. I., January 7, 1925. Tiger Flowers trounces Dan Dowd with ease. Before a crowded house at Marienville last night, (continued on page 4)



Dannie MacDonald

Neil J. MacDonald

(continued from page 3)

Tiger Flowers, sensational colored middleweight, handed Dan Dowd the human shock-absorber, a wholesale lacing, the bout being stopped in the sixth round.

"In a special bout Stevie MacDonald of Wanskuck, who looks better every time he starts, stopped Tommy Martin of Federal Hill in the second round. Stevie was on the point of putting Martin away when the referee called a halt."

"Providence, R. I., Feb. 9, 1925. Maloney cracks Maxted's jaw in less than round. Jim Maloney of South Boston, conqueror of Jack Sharkey, Sully Montgomery, Battling McCreary and others in the heavyweight ranks, made his Rhode Island debut last night when he stopped Sailor Tom Maxted of Newark after one minute's fighting in the first round, fracturing his opponent's jaw.

"In an eight-round semi-final, Stevie MacDonald of Wanskuck, R. I., battled to a draw with clever Tony Britt of New Bedford."

From the Providence Journal, Nov. 5, 1925: "Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, Wanskuck R. I., lightweight, was awarded the decision over veteran Spencer Gardiner of Newport at the end of a rugged eight-round contest that topped a busy card of boxing conducted under the auspices of the Veterans of Foreign Wars at Providence Infantry Hall last evening. The Nova Scotia battler nearly ended the bout in the opening round with the best blow of the contest, a well-timed, powerful right that landed on the Newporter's head and shook him to his toes. The punch was a trifle too high to drop Gardiner.

MacDonald, who was in the pink of condition, was the aggressor most of the way. They carried on at a slashing clip from the opening round to the final gong. The Newporter seemed to hold MacDonald, who was making his debut in main bout ranks, cheaply, and as a result received a severe drubbing."

Wins Championship

Press report, Providence, R. I. "Stevie MacDonald knocks out Frankie Curico in the third round at the Rink A. C. in Marienville, R. I., last night to win the lightweight championship of the state of Rhode Island. It didn't take the Down East herring-choker long to put away the state champion, a flashy right to the jaw turning the trick."

Stevie Returns Home

In March 1926, Roy Chisholm of Halifax defeated Johnny Gillis to win the lightweight championship of the Maritime Provinces. Two months later, the two met again in a return bout staged in the Savoy Theatre in Glace Bay, and Gillis was knocked out in the first round. Gillis failing to regain the title, sent Cape Breton promoters scurrying for a suitable opponent to oppose the Halifax battler. A wire was sent to

Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, inquiring if he would consider coming home to fight Chisholm for the Maritime title. Stevie accepted, and the stage was all set for the encounter. The following report appeared in the old Glace Bay Gazette: "Stevie here for fight with Chisholm. Bridgeport boxer arrived home in good shape. Allie Lewis to train him."

Stevie Crowned Champion

The bout took place in the Savoy Theatre, June 29, 1926. Here is the press report:

"Stevie puts Chisholm away in eighth. Roy Chisholm never had a chance of beating Stevie MacDonald in their bout last night, staged by the Police Club at the Savoy Theatre.

"After feeling each other out in the first round, MacDonald went to work early in the second, and dropped Roy for the count of nine with a deadly right to the jaw. After that it was only a question of time. The end came in the eighth when Stevie dropped Chisholm cold in his own corner and right at the feet of his seconds. There was no need of referee Tommy Casey counting. Chisholm's manager threw in the towel and the house broke out in wild applause for the new champion. Chisholm was forgotten, and they might have thrown him in the ashcan for all anybody seemed to care. The Halifax boy was left nothing but a reputation for bulldog gameness. Never in a Cape Breton ring or any other ring did a boy stand up under such terrific punishment. Ah, give the fallen king his due.

"Stevie the Kid was sent for. Stevie came, and he brought the championship back to Cape Breton.

"In the semi-final Eddie Provoe put Frankie Greaves away in the third round."

Beat Chris Newton, Junior Lightweight Champion

"Sydney, N. S., July, 1926. "Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, of Bridgeport, Maritime lightweight champion, was awarded the referee's decision over Chris Newton of Toronto, junior lightweight champion of Canada, at the end of ten gruelling rounds last night. The bout itself was a corker, and rarely has a faster contest been witnessed in a Cape Breton ring. Both boys went at it hammer and tongs all the way, and fast footwork was noted on both sides. They stepped in and out with amazing speed for ten slashing rounds. Stevie had a wide margin in the final round and landed some damaging punches. He caught Newton flush several times and had the Toronto boy in bad shape.

Semi-Final

"Eddie Provoe of Glace Bay, and Clarence DeDieu of Dominion, staged one of the best semi-finals ever held in Cape Breton. Both were hard punchers. It was a case of "dog eat dog". DeDieu opened a cut over Provoe's eye in the first round with a left-hook. Provoe connected and DeDieu went down for a count of



John (Jackie Kid) MacDonald

one. The succeeding rounds had the fans on their feet, with DeDieu being on the receiving end. DeDieu staged a comeback in the final two rounds and was given a draw. It was close, but if anything, Provoe had the edge.

"Referee Jim Cruickshanks refereed both bouts. Bill (Boss) Wilson as announcer was in rare form. The veteran Dan MacKay watched the seconds tick off at the timer's table."

NOTE: Clarence DeDieu now holds the responsible position of Chief of Police of Dominion.)

Whips Louie Nemis

"Glace Bay, N. S., August 28—Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, fresh from his campaign visit in the United States, celebrated his return by winning over Louie Nemis of New Waterford in one of the most viciously fought bouts ever seen in a Cape Breton ring. From the tap of the gong, the fighters went at it hammer and tongs, and the crowd, one of the largest ever to see a fight here, were kept in an uproar from start to finish.

The fight, which was staged at the old Black Diamond Race Track, was between a remarkable fast, clever boxer and a slugger who was immune to punishment—and the boxer outsmarted the slugger in every round. MacDonald held Nemis at long range long enough to shoot over a left to the face and then crashing his right to the body, alternating with a terrific right uppercut that had plenty of force behind it, but not enough to make the doughty Italian break ground for an instant.

Nemis contented himself with trying to batter Stevie into submission in the clinches, but the more experienced Steve usually kept Nemis from doing any great damage in close.

Stevie was the first to enter the ring, and was given a great reception. He was handled by his veteran manager Allie Lewis and also in his corner were Maurice MacDonald and Clarence DeDieu.

Nemis got a rousing reception as he entered the ring a minute later, accompanied by his manager, Frankie Burns, and Young Khattar.

Drew First Blood

In the fourth round Stevie drew first blood of the fight when he crashed a solid right on Nemis' nose. In the fifth round referee Tommy Casey warned Nemis about not breaking clean. In the seventh round Stevie slipped and went to his knees, Nemis tumbling over him. At the end of the seventh round, referee Casey and Frankie Burns, Nemis' manager, had a verbal set-to regarding the latter's coaching from the corner while the bout was on.

In the final round both boys went at it viciously, Nemis realizing that his only chance was a knockout. But Stevie was away ahead at the bell, and the two judges, E. McK. Forbes of Glace Bay, and Cecil Sutherland of North Sydney, gave the award to MacDonald.

Semi-Final

The semi-final was a corker while it lasted, with Young Khattar throwing in the sponge to Archie Young of New Waterford at the end of the third round.

The curtain-raiser was a draw between Young Fahey & Young MacLean. Tommy Casey refereed a hard bout in faultless style. Bill (Boss) Wilson was announcer and timers were Hugh Philpott and Doug MacFarlane. The bout was well handled and was promoted by Dawn Fraser and Mickey Walsh.

That same year, Stevie handed clever Tony Julian of Boston a severe drubbing in a ten-rounder at Black Diamond Track.

Back to U. S. A.

From 1926 to 1929, Stevie the Kid hopped across the border several times, and in 1928 located in Cleveland, Ohio, where he was handled by Eddie Mead, manager of Henry Armstrong. Jack McKenna was also handled by Mead at that time. On May 30, 1928 at Mills Stadium, Chicago, Stevie took on Joey Medill, crack Chicago lightweight, and dropped a close decision in a thrilling ten-rounder that had the fans on their feet from start to finish. The fight with Medill was a special bout to the Jackie (Kid) Berg-Freddie Mueller mainliner. Stevie at that time was billed as the lightweight champion of Canada. The following month, Stevie knocked out Jimmy Hackley, clever Indianapolis lightweight, in the fourth round of a scheduled ten-round bout at the Armory in Indianapolis, Ind.

Defeats Goodman

"Last night at Cleveland, Ohio, Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, crack Glace Bay lightweight, made a comeback before his American friends, winning a decisive victory over Joey Goodman, highly rated Virginia lightweight, at the Public Auditorium in Cleveland. MacDonald's comeback, so Eddie Mead wires the Glace Bay Gazette, was all the more impressive because of the fact that before the fight Goodman was looked upon as a sure winner and the odds were all in his favor. Goodman, gritty, aggressive and promising, was an almost overwhelming choice to defeat MacDonald, but after forging into the lead in the first two rounds, Joey was floored in the third, fourth and fifth rounds, and although he made a desperate rally in the last half-minute of the fight, he lost Johnny Kilbane's decision. MacDonald was given a tremendous ovation at the end of the bout.

Living With Mead

At this time, both Stevie MacDonald and Jack McKenna were living with Mead in Cleveland. In a letter to his old trainer Allie Lewis, Stevie stated that he is being used wonderfully in his new home. Eddie Mead, who is manager of Stevie and McKenna, thinks so much of the Cape Breton boys that he has the two of them living with him at his home in Cleveland, and they are the only two of the many boxers in Mead's stable so favored. Mr. and Mrs. Mead make Stevie and Jack feel very much at home and they apparently cannot do enough for them. Stevie is to train with Mickey Walker, middleweight champion of the world, for his fight with Ace Hudkins. Stevie will provide the speedy workouts and tune Walker for speedy attack.

Shellacked Cowboy Eddie Anderson

Stevie's greatest ring triumph came at Indianapolis, March 5, 1929, when he shellacked Cowboy Eddie Anderson of Cody, Wyoming. When Stevie stepped in with Anderson, a cagey veteran, he proceeded to show the fans just what a good right hand was like. He floored Anderson twice, and in the fourth round the Cowboy was stretched out dead when the bell rang and they had to pick him off the floor.

(NOTE: When Stevie fought Anderson, the Wyoming battler was rated in the select circle of

world junior lightweight contenders.)

In defeating Anderson, Stevie made a tremendous hit with the fans, and was so impressive that he was sought after by the big fight clubs of Chicago, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Scranton, Detroit, and other cities.

Speaking of the Anderson victory, Stevie said: "In my dressing room before the fight I felt terribly lonely. Being a stranger and alone, I felt a little afraid of the outcome. When I climbed in the ring, the announcer was introducing a bunch of old-time boxers and sportsmen. I never paid much attention until he intoned these words: 'Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to introduce Mr. Dan Willie Morrison, President of District 26, United Mine Workers of America and Mayor of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, which is the home town of Stevie (Kid) MacDonald, one of the principals in this bout.'

"Gee, what a thrill and feeling of confidence I got," said Steve, "knowing that Dan Willie was to sit in at ringside and watch the bout, filled me with new life and energy. I've got to win! I've just got to win—not only for Dan Willie but for my home town."

The mayor was as thrilled with Stevie's victory as the 20,000 fans who witnessed the contest.

Double Trouble

When Stevie beat Anderson the victory put him in line for a shot at Cleveland's Billy Wallace, who was managed at that time by the wily Leo P. Flynn. This meant double trouble for Stevie, as he had no signed contract with his manager, Eddie Mead, and before Flynn would consent to a crack at Wallace, he demanded half of Stevie's purse, and in the event that Stevie won, he would be required to turn over half of his future ring earnings from his verbal contract with Eddie Mead. The whole crooked thing so disgusted the Glace Bay boy that he packed up and returned home.

Kept Busy

From 1929 to 1935, when he retired, Stevie was kept busy campaigning in the Maritimes and Newfoundland. Boxing fans will recall the two thrilling bouts he and Bobby Jackson engaged in back in 1932. The first was staged in the Olympic Hall on Commercial Street and the second was held in Dannie (Flat) Campbell's garage next to the Legion Hall on Union Street, Glace Bay. Stevie won the first ten-rounder and the second resulted in a draw.

In 29 years of campaigning, Stevie had a total of 187 bouts. He is employed as a mechanic at No. 26 Colliery and resides at Reidville, Glace Bay. His wife is the former Peg Burchell and they are blessed with five children—three boys and two girls.

Archie (Curly) MacDonald

Archie (Curly) MacDonald, the youngest of the MacDonald boys, was born August 20th, 1906, in Glace Bay. Archie started boxing back in 1920 in his home town. Early in 1926 he went West, locating in the mining town of Drumheller, Alberta. The baby of the fighting MacDonalds wasn't long in the West when reports of his ring exploits began to appear in the local press. The Glace Bay Gazette of April 21, 1927, carried the following:

"Archie (Curly) MacDonald, the youngest son of the famous MacDonald family of fighters from Bridgeport, Glace Bay, is piling up a wonderful record in the Canadian and American West, where he has been fighting since 1926, without losing one decision. In his last five bouts he stopped all his opponents in two rounds or less. Last week, in Robstart,

(continued on page 6)

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Baltimore - 160 lbs.

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Heavyweights

GORDIE

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GLACE BAY

Neil J. MacDonald

(continued from page 5)

Sask., MacDonald knocked out Mark Shafer of Consul, Sask., in the second round of a scheduled ten-round main bout. On account of the crowd being so large and the bout so short, MacDonald agreed to take on any man his weight in the house. Just to give the fans a run for their money, MacDonald took on boxer Blar from Eastend, Sask., who was considerably heavier, but MacDonald stopped him also in the second round."

Barnstorming Tour

In 1927, Archie MacDonald and Eddie Provoe started out from Calgary on a boxing barnstorming tour, boxing in every important city and town from Calgary to Vancouver, and from Vancouver to Mexico, where they boxed several exhibitions at the big race track in Tijuana. The two Bay boys also boxed in the state of Utah, Oregon and Washington. They lived and travelled from place to place on their ring earnings, which is something unique in the history of boxing. Eddie Provoe died in New York in 1951. Archie MacDonald and his family make their home in Glace Bay.

All 20 children of the MacDonald family were born in Bridgeport, Glace Bay, N. S.

In 1913, George Chip, of the fighting Chip family of Scranton, Pa., won the world middleweight championship by knocking out Frank Klaus in six rounds. Early in 1918, the late Joe Francis and Neil J. MacDonald got together with the idea of matching the

seven fighting MacDonalds with seven of the fighting Chip boys. The Chips were contacted and all agreed to go along with the contest. However, the tragic death of Dannie MacDonald terminated proceedings and the bouts had to be called off.

And so we bring to a close the story of Bridgeport's Big Neil J. MacDonald and his fighting sons. I hope the story has thrilled you as it has thrilled me in piecing it together.

Neil J. MacDonald was a man whose word was as good as his bond. He ruled the roost with an iron hand, and the discipline was reflected in his family. May God rest his soul.

A Letter From Blair Richardson

South Bar, N. S.
August 25, 1960

Dear Mr. Pemberton:

Just a line to thank you for the very kind words you said about me on television last week. I only hope I can live up to that and at least be a credit to boxing.

I enjoyed the program very much and I thought you were good on TV. You certainly know your boxing. That is another reason I appreciated what you said, because I, as well as others, respect your opinion on boxers and boxing.

Well, once again, thank you very much for all you have done for me. Here's wishing you the very best.

Your friend,
BLAIR RICHARDSON

Blair Richardson's Boxing Record

Blair, Richardson, Sydney, N. S.
Middleweight Champion of Eastern Canada
Born: January 29, 1941

1956	
July 1—Tiger Dorrington, Sydney	KO-4
August 28—Jimmy Desmond, Sydney	KO-4
October 17—Jim Stewart, Stellarton	KO-3
1957	
May 27—Doug Turnbull, Stellarton	KO-4
July 1—Al McLean, Sydney	Lost-6
August 23—George Bonovich, Sydney	Draw-6
September 28—Ray Mascoll, Sydney	KO-4
1958	
May 3—Russ Micholsky, Glace Bay	KO-1
May 31—K. O. O'Malley, Glace Bay	KO-2
July 26—Kenny Stokes, Glace Bay	KO-2
November 3—Alf Grant, Halifax	KO-3
1959	
January 14—Joe Scott, Sydney	KO-3
April 8—Tiger Roy Steele, Sydney	KO-8
June 16—Nick Kovac, Halifax	KO-3
(Won Maritime Middleweight Title)	
July 6—Wally Wilson, Halifax	KO-2
July 29—Al Duarte, Whitney Pier	KO-5
August 18—Hank Mercer, Halifax	KO-5
September 15—Gaston Roy, Halifax (Title Bout)	KO-8
October 6—Yvon Turenne, Halifax	KO-6
(Won Eastern Canada Middleweight Title)	
October 16—Willie Troy, Sydney	KO-4
October 27—Bobo Fiddler, Halifax	KO-8
1960	
March 14—Dick Verde, Boston	KO-1
April 1—Wilber Washington, Boston	Won-6
April 17—Al Rose, Glace Bay	KO-6
(Richardson suffered broken jaw)	
September 27—Ted (Roosevelt) Myrick, Halifax	KO-4

IRA L. McAREL

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