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## The Making of a Boxer

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## PREFACE

Perhaps you have heard this story before. A member of an ethnic minority grows up on the rough side of town. Prejudice and lack of financial resources limit his opportunities in life, but he soon discovers that he has athletic abilities, and that people are willing to pay to watch him perform. His sport offers him the chance to earn more money than he could have dreamed of and to socialize with the rich and famous. He becomes a star, a household name, the object of intense media attention, and a hero to members of his ethnic group, who see him as a symbol of their hope to escape poverty and degradation. He is also a symbol of his country, since his fellow citizens see his sport as embodying the nation and its values—strength, determination, courage—and many are willing to overlook the fact that he is, well, different. Yet he has many detractors, some of whom are motivated by envy or prejudice; they wait for him to slip up, and they are happy when it turns out that he is not a model of virtue. He lives lavishly, spends more quickly than he earns, and gets into trouble with the law. Eventually he doesn't even have the distinction of being criticized, as the fickle media turn their attention elsewhere and our former sports star descends into obscurity.

This is the story of many professional athletes in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Yet it is also the story of Daniel Mendoza, a British boxing champion who fought over 200 years ago. Born in the East End of London in 1765 to Jewish parents of limited means, Daniel grew up in a difficult environment. Faced with the prejudice of his non-Jewish neighbors, he responded to anti-Semitic taunts with his fists. Soon his reputation as a boxer spread, and he obtained opportunities to fight for prize money. By the end of the 1780s he had become a star. Thousands of spectators paid to watch his matches—and to bet on the outcome—and thousands more read about his bouts in the newspapers. He was one of the very first national sports heroes, both in the sense of being famous outside his city of origin and in the sense of symbolizing a sport that many regarded as particular to their “nation.” Boxing fans often claimed that their sport was essentially British. Unlike the French, who reputedly settled their disputes

by dueling with swords or pistols, the British had (in the words of boxing enthusiasts) a more “natural” and “manly” way of defending their honor: by using their fists. Paradoxically, an outsider, a Jew with a Hispanic name, came to epitomize a “British” sport. Many of his coreligionists became his pupils, and a generation of Jewish boxers, now largely forgotten, carried on the tradition that Mendoza started. Yet Mendoza was only human, and he succumbed to the temptations of sudden wealth and fame. He spent beyond his means and repeatedly found himself in legal trouble. Meanwhile his fair-weather friends disappeared and his adversaries gloated over his misfortunes.

Why should Mendoza’s story matter to us today? To begin with, it sheds light on the origins of celebrity sports culture, which began in eighteenth-century Britain and has been with us for more than two centuries. It also reveals another legacy of the century that is normally viewed from a different angle: nationalism. Historians typically study nationalism in terms of learned treatises and political speeches, whereas eighteenth-century British boxing shows us how ideas and emotions regarding the “nation” permeated the practices of everyday life. Moreover, Mendoza’s story reveals ambivalent attitudes of a society towards its minorities, who were allowed (sometimes grudgingly) to participate in national life by braving pain and injury in athletic contests but whose social mobility was limited and precarious. We might rightly ask, to what extent is our society different? Finally, Mendoza’s story is relevant to our understanding of gender, or how ideas about what is “manly” or “effeminate” define a particular society’s values and power relations. When supporters of boxing praised their sport as manly, or when a boxer questioned the “manliness” of his opponent’s behavior, they implicitly relegated all “effeminate” people to the margins of society and deemed them unfit for respect. This was not an inevitable way of dividing up the world, though it is largely with us still.

*Mendoza the Jew* is divided into five parts, each with its own purpose.

Part I is a graphic history. It relates the narrative of Mendoza’s life and career, with particular emphasis on the boxer’s rivalry with Richard Humphries. It is the product of my collaboration with graphic artist Liz Clarke, who has taken the story and text I assembled from historical sources and infused it with beautiful images that evoke emotion and action. A work in its own right, the graphic history can be read on its own, but I hope you will not stop there.

Part II consists of primary sources—in other words, original sources from the period under consideration. These sources give you a deeper understanding of the story told in Part I. They will transport you directly into Mendoza’s world. They will also enable you to question and critique the graphic history by comparing it to the sources on which it is based.

Reading them will give you the tools to engage in the same kind of historical analysis that professional historians engage in.

Part III provides you with the historical context to enrich your understanding of both the graphic history and the primary sources. It gives you information about the history of the Jews in eighteenth-century Britain, prejudice and tolerance in British society, the rise of spectator sports, the history of boxing in particular, and developments in the history of nationalism and gender.

Part IV is an account of the process by which Liz and I produced the book you are reading. It is meant to give you a still clearer sense of how the discipline of history works.

Part V consists of suggested writing assignments that enable you to “be your own historian” by interpreting the primary sources and critiquing the graphic history. It is written with the conviction that you truly understand how a work of history is produced only when you begin to make one for yourself.

Taken together, the five parts function as a lesson in historical methodology. When you are finished with this book, you will have not only a deeper understanding of the issues outlined in the previous paragraph (e.g., the history of celebrity sports culture, prejudice and tolerance, nationalism, and gender), but also a deeper understanding of how the discipline of history works.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe a debt of gratitude to many people who have played a role in the making of this book. Liz Clarke has not only amazed me with her stunning artwork, she has also helped me focus and clarify my ideas and saved me from more than one embarrassing error. Karlyn Hixson, the Oxford University Press representative for Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, DC, stimulated my interest in the graphic history form by introducing me to *Abina and the Important Men*, which inspired me to begin work on *Mendoza the Jew*. Charles Cavaliere, editor for world history textbooks at OUP, believed in this project from the beginning and has played a role in every phase of its development. He has carefully read every word, examined every image, and given unfailingly sage advice on everything from the fonts we have used to the cover design. The following reviewers took time out of their busy schedules to evaluate the proposal for this book: Abel A. Alves, Ball State University; David A. Bell, Princeton University; Dean Bell, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies; Rafe Blaufarb, Florida State University; Robert Bond, San Diego Mesa College; Robert Brennan, Cape Fear Community College; David M. Kalivas, Middlesex Community College; John Moser, Ashland University; Mark Edward Ruff, Saint Louis University; Annemarie Sammartino, Oberlin College; Victoria E. Thompson, Arizona State University; Janet M. C. Walmsley, George Mason University; and Molly A. Warsh, University of Pittsburgh.

Once the text and artwork were submitted, Keith Faivre efficiently shepherded the book through its many stages of production. I was fortunate to have Mary Anne Shahidi as my eagle-eyed copyeditor and the talented Michele Laseau and Bonni Leon-Berman as the book's designers. At the College of William and Mary I had the good fortune to work with Kathleen DeLaurenti, an exceptional reference librarian who helped me find and organize visual materials from the eighteenth century, and Sagra Alvarado, an outstanding research assistant who made my work easier by transcribing often barely legible articles about Mendoza from the 17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers database. Computer wizard Pablo Yañez found the fonts that we used in the graphic history when

quoting Mendoza's memoirs and an eighteenth-century newspaper. Friends and colleagues too numerous to name read selections of the book in progress and offered comments and encouragement. I have also been fortunate to have the support of my family. My spouse, Ute Schechter, cheerfully indulged my unexpected preoccupation with boxing, even to the point of watching boxing movies with me. My son, Arthur Schechter, took an early interest in this book and asked me on many occasions, "How's Mendoza?" My mother, Marilyn Schechter, took me to the Muhammad Ali Museum in my hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, and relayed the tantalizing (but as yet undocumented) story that my great-grandmother's cousin was Max Baer, a Jewish boxing champion from another time and place.

CHAPTER 1

# THE MAKING OF A BOXER



BARNET COMMON, A FIELD NORTH OF LONDON. APRIL 17, 1787.



DANIEL MENDOZA WAS FROM A JEWISH NEIGHBORHOOD IN WORKING-CLASS EAST LONDON, KNOWN SIMPLY AS "MENDOZA THE JEW." HE WAS ONE OF BRITAIN'S MOST PROMISING BOXERS.



SAM MARTIN WAS A BUTCHER FROM THE CITY OF BATH, ENGLAND AND AS A BOXER WAS RANKED NUMBER TWO IN BRITAIN. IN THIS MATCH BETS WERE IN HIS FAVOR BY A TWO-TO-ONE MARGIN.

MARTIN WAS STRONG AND THREW FREQUENT PUNCHES, BUT MENDOZA WAS QUICKER AND MORE AGILE.

HE COULD AVOID OR BLOCK PUNCHES, AND THEN, WHEN HIS OPPONENT WAS OFF-BALANCE...



...HE DELIVERED A SWIFT, POWERFUL BLOW TO THE GUT, OFTEN FOLLOWING UP...



...WITH A PUNISHING PUNCH TO THE FACE.







ARE YOU SATISFIED, MARTIN?

AYE, MENDOZA, I'M SATISFIED.



MENDOZA'S FANS, MANY OF THEM POOR JEWS FROM EAST LONDON, WERE THRILLED... ESPECIALLY IF THEY HAD BET MONEY ON THE WINNER.



THE PRICE OF ADMISSION TO THE MATCH WAS A GUINEA, THAT WAS MORE MONEY THAN A SKILLED WORKER EARNED IN A WEEK, BUT THEN AS NOW, PEOPLE WILL SOMETIMES MAKE GREAT SACRIFICES TO ATTEND A SPORTS EVENT.

FOR THE RICH, WHO COULD AFFORD THE ADMISSION PRICE AND HAD THE MONEY TO MAKE LARGE BETS, THE MATCH WAS MERELY A FORM OF AMUSEMENT. AND INDEED, MANY BOXING FANS WERE RICH AND POWERFUL.



CONGRATULATIONS, MR. MENDOZA.

ONE OF THEM WAS THE MARQUESS OF BUCKINGHAM, WHO HAD RECENTLY BEEN A CABINET MINISTER TO KING GEORGE III.



EVEN THE PRINCE OF WALES, THE FUTURE KING GEORGE IV, WAS THERE.

YOU'RE AN ADMIRABLE BOXER, MR. MENDOZA, AND A CREDIT TO YOUR PEOPLE.

I'M A BRITON, SIR.

YES, THAT'S WHAT I MEANT.



THE PURSE FOR THIS MATCH IS 50 GUINEAS.

BUT MY PATRON THE PRINCE AND OTHER GENTLEMEN HAVE COLLECTED A LARGER BOUNTY FOR YOUR EXCEPTIONAL MERIT. YOU HAVE ROUGHLY A THOUSAND GUINEAS.



A THOUSAND GUINEAS WAS MORE THAN A CARPENTER OR A STONE MASON WOULD EARN IN OVER TWENTY YEARS!



NO WONDER HE WAS A HERO TO THE POOR JEWS OF EAST LONDON. NOT ONLY DID HE PROVE THAT JEWS COULD BE GREAT ATHLETES, HE SEEMED TO SHOW THEM A WAY OUT OF POVERTY.



SEE, THE CONQU'RING HERO COMES! SOUND THE TRUMPETS, BEAT THE DRUMS. SPORTS PREPARE, THE LAUREL BRING, SONGS OF TRIUMPH TO HIM SING.

MENDOZA'S SUPPORTERS SANG A SONG OF TRIUMPH FROM A WORK ABOUT THE ANCIENT JEWISH WARRIOR JUDAH THE MACCABEE. IT WAS A GOOD WAY OF EXPRESSING THEIR JEWISH PRIDE WHILE ALSO SHOWING THEIR BRITISH PATRIOTISM, SINCE THE COMPOSER, GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759), WAS FAMOUS FOR HIS MANY WORKS CELEBRATING THE BRITISH MONARCHY.



I'M HAPPY FOR YOU, DAN, BUT YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT FIGHTING.

WE'LL BE MARRIED SOON, AND THEN WE'LL HAVE CHILDREN. I DON'T WANT THEIR FATHER TO COME HOME AN INVALID, OR NOT AT ALL.



YES, MY DEAR ESTHER, I UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS. BUT WAIT 'TIL YOU SEE THE PRIZE MONEY.

I'LL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE COMFORTS TO OUR CHILDREN THAT MY FATHER COULD NEVER HAVE GIVEN ME. AND LISTEN TO MY FRIENDS SINGING: THEY THINK I'M JUDAH THE MACCABEE!



MENDOZA WAS A SEPHARDIC JEW. HIS ANCESTORS HAD LIVED IN "SEPHARAD" OR THE IBERIAN PENINSULA (I.E., SPAIN AND PORTUGAL). BUT IN 1492 KING FERDINAND AND QUEEN ISABELLA EXPELLED THE JEWS FROM SPAIN, AND IN 1497 KING MANUEL OF PORTUGAL FORCED HIS KINGDOM'S JEWS OUT AS WELL.



INITIALLY THE REFUGEES SETTLED IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, A VAST, MUSLIM-RULED REALM CENTERED IN CONSTANTINOPLE (TODAY ISTANBUL, TURKEY). THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE WAS FAR MORE TOLERANT OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES THAN THE CHRISTIAN COUNTRIES OF EUROPE WERE.



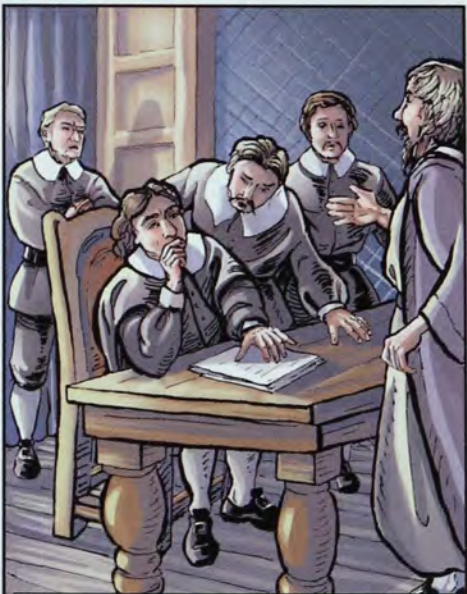
BACK IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL, SOME JEWS PRETENDED TO CONVERT TO CHRISTIANITY SO THEY COULD STAY IN THEIR HOMES. BUT THEY SECRETLY PRACTICED JUDAISM.



BUT THE INQUISITION ROOTED OUT CRYPTO-JEWS (SECRET JEWS) AND BURNED THEM AT THE STAKE. THEREFORE NEW WAVES OF SEPHARDIC EMIGRATION TOOK PLACE.



IN THE LATE 16<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES PERSECUTED JEWS TOOK REFUGE IN THE NETHERLANDS, WHICH HAD BECOME MORE TOLERANT ONCE IT GAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN. THERE THEY COULD PRACTICE THEIR RELIGION OPENLY. ONE OF THEIR LEADERS WAS A RABBI NAMED MENASSEH BEN ISRAEL.



IN 1655 HE PERSUADED THE "LORD PROTECTOR" OLIVER CROMWELL TO ALLOW JEWS TO RESIDE IN ENGLAND. AS A STRICT PROTESTANT, CROMWELL WAS HIGHLY INFLUENCED BY THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND HE BELIEVED THAT THE RETURN OF THE JEWS MIGHT LEAD TO THEIR CONVERSION (THOUGH HE DID NOT FORCE THEM TO CONVERT) AND THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST. AS A PRACTICAL RULER, HE BELIEVED THAT SUBJECTS WITH CONNECTIONS TO OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE GOOD FOR COMMERCE.

DANIEL MENDOZA'S GRANDFATHER AARON MIGHT HAVE BEEN BORN IN SPAIN (WHERE HIS PARENTS HAD TO HIDE THEIR JEWISH BELIEFS) BUT GREW UP IN AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS. HE EVENTUALLY SETTLED IN LONDON, BENEFITTING FROM CROMWELL'S POLICY OF TOLERANCE TOWARD THE JEWS.



AARON WAS A **SHOCHET** OR RITUAL SLAUGHTERER. HIS JOB WAS TO BUTCHER ANIMALS IN A HUMANE MANNER, ACCORDING TO THE CODES OF JEWISH LAW; SO THEY COULD BE CONSIDERED KOSHER OR RITUALLY CLEAN. HE WROTE A BOOK IN SPANISH FOR OTHERS OF HIS PROFESSION, AND HE EVEN ILLUSTRATED IT.

AARON ESTABLISHED A FAMILY TRADITION. HIS GRANDSON WOULD ALSO WRITE A HOW-TO BOOK FOR HIS OWN PROFESSION: **THE ART OF BOXING.**



DANIEL'S PARENTS ABRAHAM AND ESTHER WERE BOTH BORN IN LONDON IN 1731. THIS IS WHAT DANIEL WROTE ABOUT HIS PARENTS IN HIS MEMOIRS:



"My parents, who were of the Jewish persuasion, were by no means in affluent circumstances... and though their family was large, they contrived to bestow a tolerable education on all of their children – they justly conceived this to be an object of the highest importance, as it concerned their future welfare in life, and therefore used every effort in their power to accomplish it."

Colegios del  
**SULHAN ARUH.**  
 וְיָדָו וְתַרְגּוּמוֹת  
 De Misma Escriptura, por Edición corriente  
 y Breve.  
 Con Aprobacion  
 del Senor  
**H A H A M**  
 y Licencia,  
 de los  
 SEÑORES del MAHAMED.  
 Por  
**AARON MENDOZA.**

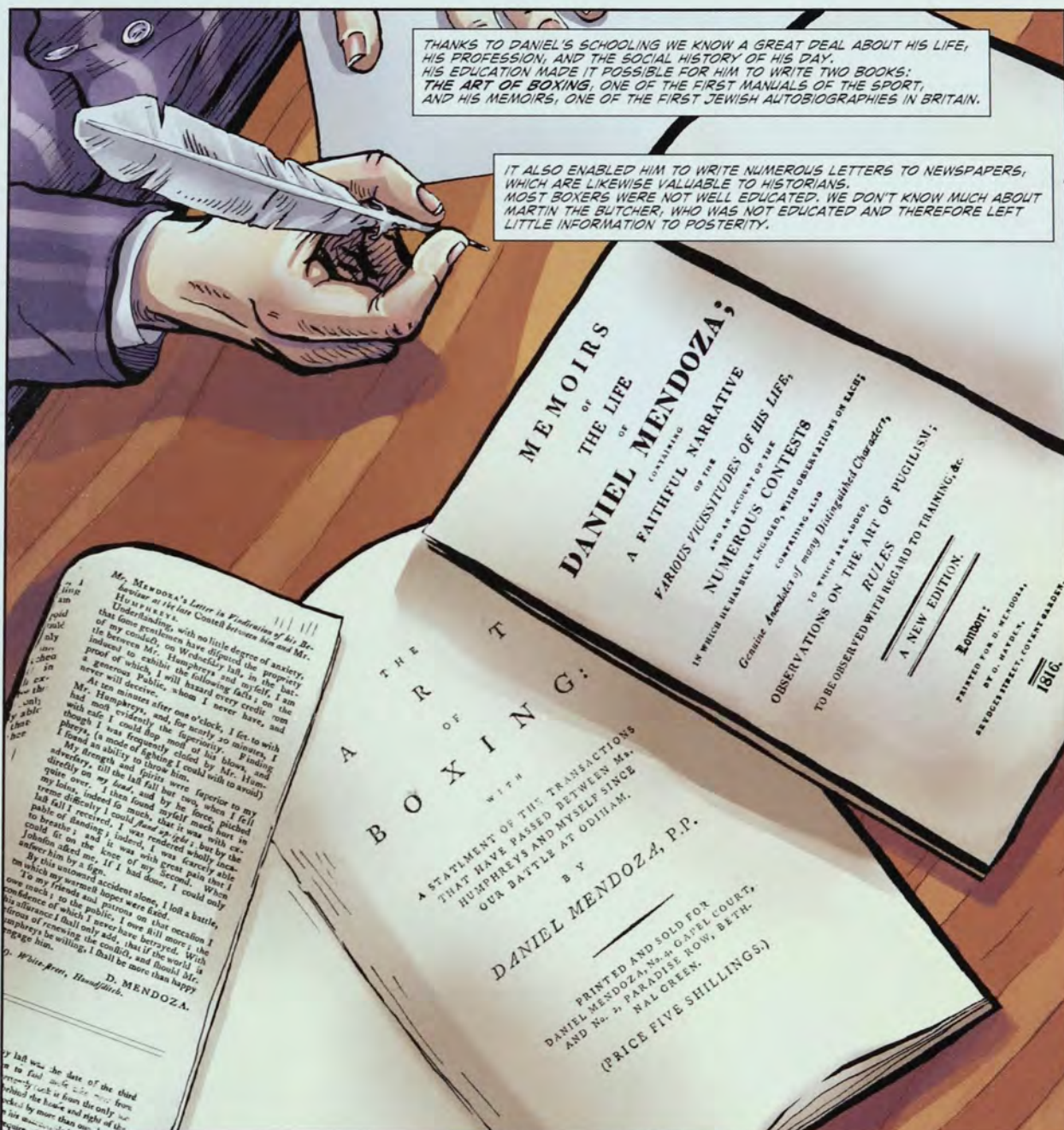
THE MENDOZAS ATTENDED THE "SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE," WHERE DANIEL HAD HIS BAR MITZVAH, THE CEREMONY IN WHICH A 13-YEAR-OLD BOY BECOMES A MAN BY READING FROM THE TORAH (HEBREW BIBLE). THE SYNAGOGUE WAS FOUNDED IN 1701 AND IS STILL IN EXISTENCE.



"I was...sent at a very early age to a Jew's school, where I remained some years, and was instructed in English grammar, writing, arithmetic, and those branches of education which are usually taught in schools. I was also instructed in the Hebrew language, in which, before I quitted school, I made considerable progress."

THANKS TO DANIEL'S SCHOOLING WE KNOW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT HIS LIFE, HIS PROFESSION, AND THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF HIS DAY. HIS EDUCATION MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO WRITE TWO BOOKS: *THE ART OF BOXING*, ONE OF THE FIRST MANUALS OF THE SPORT, AND HIS MEMOIRS, ONE OF THE FIRST JEWISH AUTOBIOGRAPHS IN BRITAIN.

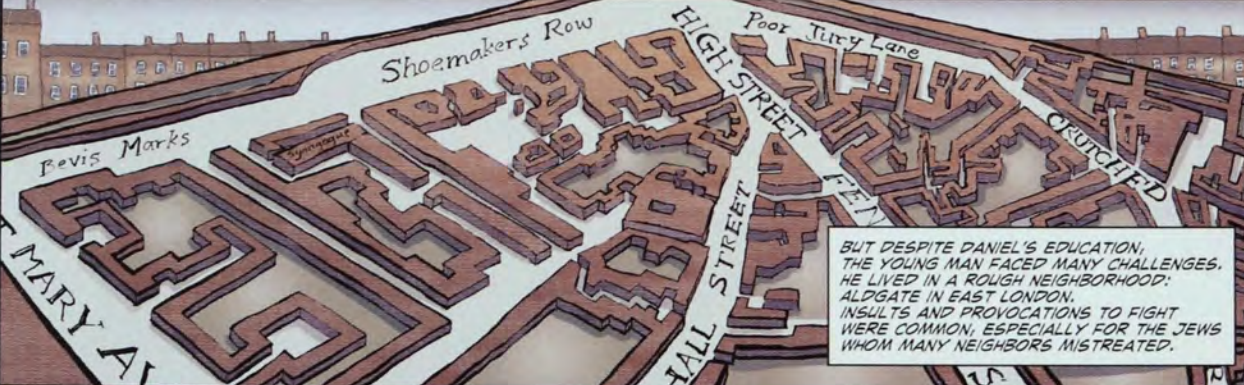
IT ALSO ENABLED HIM TO WRITE NUMEROUS LETTERS TO NEWSPAPERS, WHICH ARE LIKEWISE VALUABLE TO HISTORIANS. MOST BOXERS WERE NOT WELL EDUCATED, WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT MARTIN THE BUTCHER, WHO WAS NOT EDUCATED AND THEREFORE LEFT LITTLE INFORMATION TO POSTERITY.



Mr. Mewoods's Letter in Praise of his Br-  
 Under-standings  
 that Gentleman with no little degree of anxiety,  
 of my conduct, on Wednesday last, in the bar-  
 proof to exhibit the following facts; I am  
 a generous Public, whom I will hazard every credit com-  
 never will deceive, whom I never have, and  
 At ten minutes after one o'clock, I got to with  
 had most evidently the superiority, I got to with  
 with ease I could keep most of his blows, and  
 though I was frequently cloed by Mr. Hum-  
 I found an ability to shove him, I could with to avoid)  
 My strength and spirits were superior to my  
 directly on my head, and by the force, pitched  
 quite over, I then found myself much more in  
 my loss, indeed I could not stand, I was  
 I found myself much more in  
 to breathe, and it was rendered wholly in-  
 could fit on the knee of my second, when  
 I Johnin asked me, if I had done, I could only  
 suffer him by a sign. If I had done, I could only  
 by this unseasoned accident alone, I lost a battle,  
 on which my friends and hopes were fixed,  
 one such; to the public, I owe still more, the  
 confidence of which I never have betrayed. With  
 firmness of renewing the conflict, and should Mr.  
 employers be willing, I shall be more than happy  
 engage him.  
 D. MENDOZA.  
 White-Foot, Hand-dish.

**THE ART OF BOXING:**  
 WITH  
**BOXING:**  
 A STATEMENT OF THE TRANSACTIONS  
 THAT HAVE PASSED BETWEEN MR.  
 HUMPHREYS AND MYSELF SINCE  
 OUR BATTLE AT ODJHAM.  
 BY  
**DANIEL MENDOZA, P.P.**  
 PRINTED AND SOLD FOR  
 DANIEL MENDOZA, No. 21, PARADISE ROW, BETH-  
 AND No. 21, PARADISE ROW, BETH-  
 NAL GREEN.  
 (PRICE FIVE SHILLINGS.)

**MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF DANIEL MENDOZA;**  
 CONTAINING  
**DANIEL MENDOZA;**  
 A FAITHFUL NARRATIVE OF THE  
 VARIOUS VICISSITUDES OF HIS LIFE,  
 AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE  
 NUMEROUS CONTESTS  
 IN WHICH HE HAS BEEN ENGAGED, WITH OBSERVATIONS ON EACH  
 Genuine Anecdotes of many Distinguished Characters,  
 TO WHICH ARE ADDED,  
**OBSERVATIONS ON THE ART OF PUGILISM;**  
 RULES  
 A NEW EDITION.  
 LONDON:  
 PRINTED FOR D. MENDOZA,  
 No. 21, PARADISE ROW, BETHNAL GREEN,  
 1816.



BUT DESPITE DANIEL'S EDUCATION, THE YOUNG MAN FACED MANY CHALLENGES. HE LIVED IN A ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD: ALDGATE IN EAST LONDON. INSULTS AND PROVOCATIONS TO FIGHT WERE COMMON, ESPECIALLY FOR THE JEWS WHOM MANY NEIGHBORS MISTREATED.

DANIEL WAS THEREFORE AMBIVALENT ABOUT BOXING. HE HAD THE EDUCATION OF A "RESPECTABLE" PERSON, BUT HIS CIRCUMSTANCES MADE IT TEMPTING TO USE HIS FISTS, AN ACTIVITY THAT NOT EVERYONE APPROVED OF. HIS FATHER HAD PROVIDED HIM WITH GUIDELINES.



"Whenever I returned home with a black eye, or any external mark of violence, my father never failed to inquire strictly into the cause, and would reprove me severely when it appeared I had involved myself wantonly in a quarrel; but on the other hand, if he found I had acted only in self-defence, or from any justifiable motive, he would freely forgive me, and declare he would never exert any paternal authority to prevent me from standing in my own defence, when unjustly assailed, being well aware that courage is not only useful, but almost indispensably necessary to carry us through life."

SINCE THE MENDOZAS WERE A LARGE FAMILY WITHOUT MUCH MONEY, DANIEL WAS EXPECTED TO LEARN A TRADE AT A YOUNG AGE. AT 13 HE BECAME A GLASSMAKER'S APPRENTICE.



HE DIDN'T LAST LONG. ACCORDING TO MENDOZA, THE GLASSMAKER'S SON WAS "VERY HAUGHTY," "VERY ABUSIVE AND SCURRILOUS."

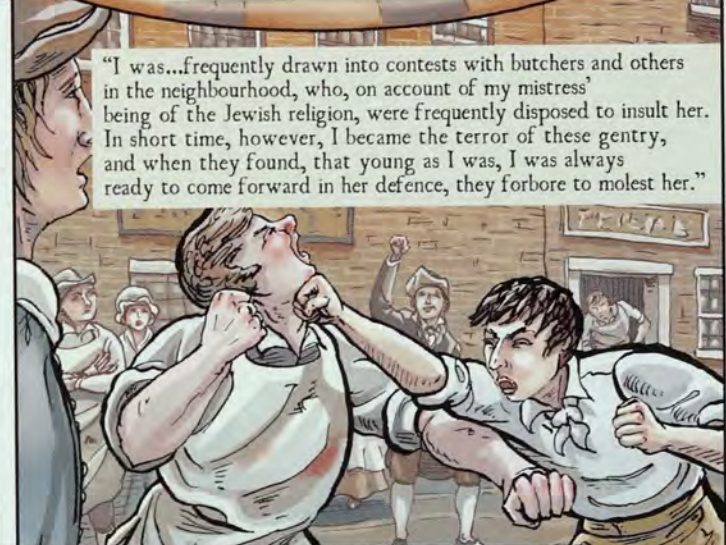


"Having one day taken the liberty of remonstrating with him on the subject, hoping thereby to induce him to amend his conduct, I found that, so far from such being the effect, he became highly exasperated at my presumption, as he was pleased to term it, and made use of such violent threats, that I determined no longer to submit and therefore gave him a severe thrashing (though in his father's house; and having done so, thought it prudent to imitate the manners of the great - I resigned my situation, to avoid being turned out."

NEXT DANIEL GOT A JOB APPRENTICING FOR A FRUIT SELLER. THE "MISTRESS" (FEMALE BOSS) WAS A JEWISH WOMAN WHO WAS OFTEN THE VICTIM OF ANTI-SEMITIC INSULTS.



THESE APPLES ARE TOO EXPENSIVE, YOU GREEDY JEWESS!



"I was...frequently drawn into contests with butchers and others in the neighbourhood, who, on account of my mistress' being of the Jewish religion, were frequently disposed to insult her. In short time, however, I became the terror of these gentry, and when they found, that young as I was, I was always ready to come forward in her defence, they forbore to molest her."

DANIEL DID NOT LAST LONG AT THE FRUIT SELLER'S SHOP.

I APPRECIATE YOUR DEFENSE OF MY HONOR, DANIEL, BUT I'M AFRAID ALL THIS FIGHTING IS BAD FOR BUSINESS.



DANIEL WENT FROM JOB TO JOB. HE WORKED FOR A TEA DEALER...



...AT A TOBACCONIST'S SHOP...



...IN A CANDY FACTORY...



...AS A COOKIE BAKER...

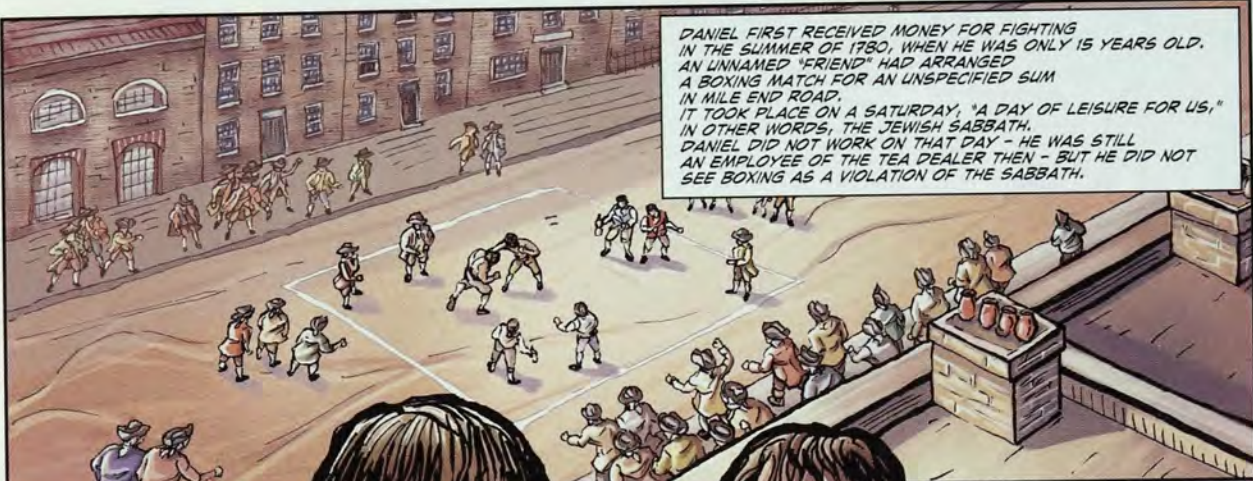


HE WAS EVEN A SMUGGLER FOR A FEW DAYS.




THE ONLY THING YOUNG DANIEL COULD DO CONSISTENTLY WAS FIGHT.

"...having learnt that one of our party had, but a few weeks previous to this, lost his life in an affray with some revenue officers, I quitted my employment in disgust, having remained therein only four or five days."




DANIEL FIRST RECEIVED MONEY FOR FIGHTING IN THE SUMMER OF 1780, WHEN HE WAS ONLY 15 YEARS OLD. AN UNNAMED "FRIEND" HAD ARRANGED A BOXING MATCH FOR AN UNSPECIFIED SUM IN MILE END ROAD. IT TOOK PLACE ON A SATURDAY, "A DAY OF LEISURE FOR US," IN OTHER WORDS, THE JEWISH SABBATH. DANIEL DID NOT WORK ON THAT DAY - HE WAS STILL AN EMPLOYEE OF THE TEA DEALER THEN - BUT HE DID NOT SEE BOXING AS A VIOLATION OF THE SABBATH.




DANIEL WAS NOW A PROFESSIONAL BOXER. HE WAS EARNING MONEY FOR PUNCHING ANOTHER MAN INTO SUBMISSION. HE WAS NOT AVENGING AN INSULT OR FIGHTING IN SELF-DEFENSE. THERE ARE NO RECORDS OF WHAT HIS FATHER THOUGHT, BUT IN HIS MEMOIRS DANIEL IS SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE.


"I had never before fought for money, and felt some reluctance to a battle of that sort on the present occasion; however, as my friend had made the match, I was unwilling to disappoint him, and therefore resolved to use my utmost exertions in his favour."




"Accordingly, at the time appointed, I met my opponent, and...had to contend against superior strength; but, after a contest which lasted near an hour, had the satisfaction to...come off victorious."



IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BOXERS DID NOT ENTER THE RING ALONE. EACH HAD A "SECOND" AND A "BOTTLE-HOLDER." THE SECOND WAS OFTEN A MORE EXPERIENCED BOXER WHO FUNCTIONED AS A KIND OF COACH. IN 1780 DANIEL'S SECOND WAS AN UP-AND-COMING BOXER NAMED RICHARD HUMPHRIES (SOMETIMES SPELLED HUMPHREYS).



"Mr. Humphreys was...my second on this occasion; and when some of the spectators called out to him to direct me where to strike, I well recollect hearing him reply, 'there is no need of it, the lad knows more than us all.'"



DID MENDOZA IMAGINE THIS EXCHANGE? WE CAN'T KNOW FOR CERTAIN. BUT WHATEVER RICHARD HUMPHRIES SAID ON THAT OCCASION, THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE TWO MEN WAS NOT DESTINED TO LAST.



