

FOR AUGUST NEWSLETTER

Following the talk by Colin Winstone at the AGM on 31 May 2018, Colin gives us more information on the subject.

PUGILISM AT EPPLE BAY

Pugilism, or the sport of Boxing/Fist-Fighting as it is more commonly known, has been practiced since ancient times all over the world. The rules for Boxing, as we know them today, come from the Marquis of Queensbury which made the use of gloves compulsory, and were drawn up in 1867, though the legality in Britain was surprisingly not established until 1901.

Previously, fighting was done with bare fists/knuckles, often away from the authorities ending only when a contestant was felled and stayed down. One such site was our own **Epple Bay** where the horseshoe shaped chalk cliff edge allowed a perfect viewing of a fight down below. The fight would probably have begun when the tide started to go out.

Many aspiring men fought in such places to 'make their name' and be allowed to fight tougher opponents. Prize money could be very good as you worked your way up through the ranks and was extremely popular with spectators.

One such man, who started at the bottom and fought his way up to the top was **Tom Molineaux**. A former American slave, he gained his freedom fighting for his owner, worked his passage to Britain and worked the system including **Epple Bay**.

Tom Molineaux

- Born: 1784 Virginia USA
- Died: 1818 Ireland
- Weight: 200 pounds
- Height: 5 ft 8 ins

Tom Cribb

- Born: 1771 Bristol
- Died: 1848 Woolwich
- Weight: 200 pounds
- Height: 5 ft 10 ins

On a reported very hot day in the exceptionally hot summer of 1810, **Tom Molineaux**, titled the black Champion of America, fought a veteran English boxer, Tom Tough, otherwise Blake, and gained a very hard earned victory after a prodigious number of rounds. Mr Friend (probably of Birchington Hall) was the referee and the umpires were Lord George Sackville and Captain Prideaux.

After several years and many epic fights, he was finally able to challenge the then greatest boxer in England, **Tom Cribb**, and enter into the annals of boxing history despite losing the match.

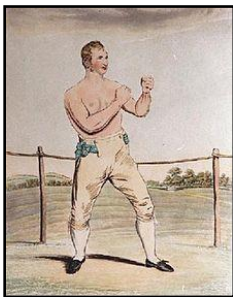
Colin Winstone



Epple Bay - 1919



Tom Molineaux



Tom Cribb