



Lamar Paul Gibson (1901-1953)

(Not many people realize that Pacolet had a championship boxer at one time. His name was Lamar Gibson. We are indebted to his son, Neil Gibson, for giving us the details of his story.)

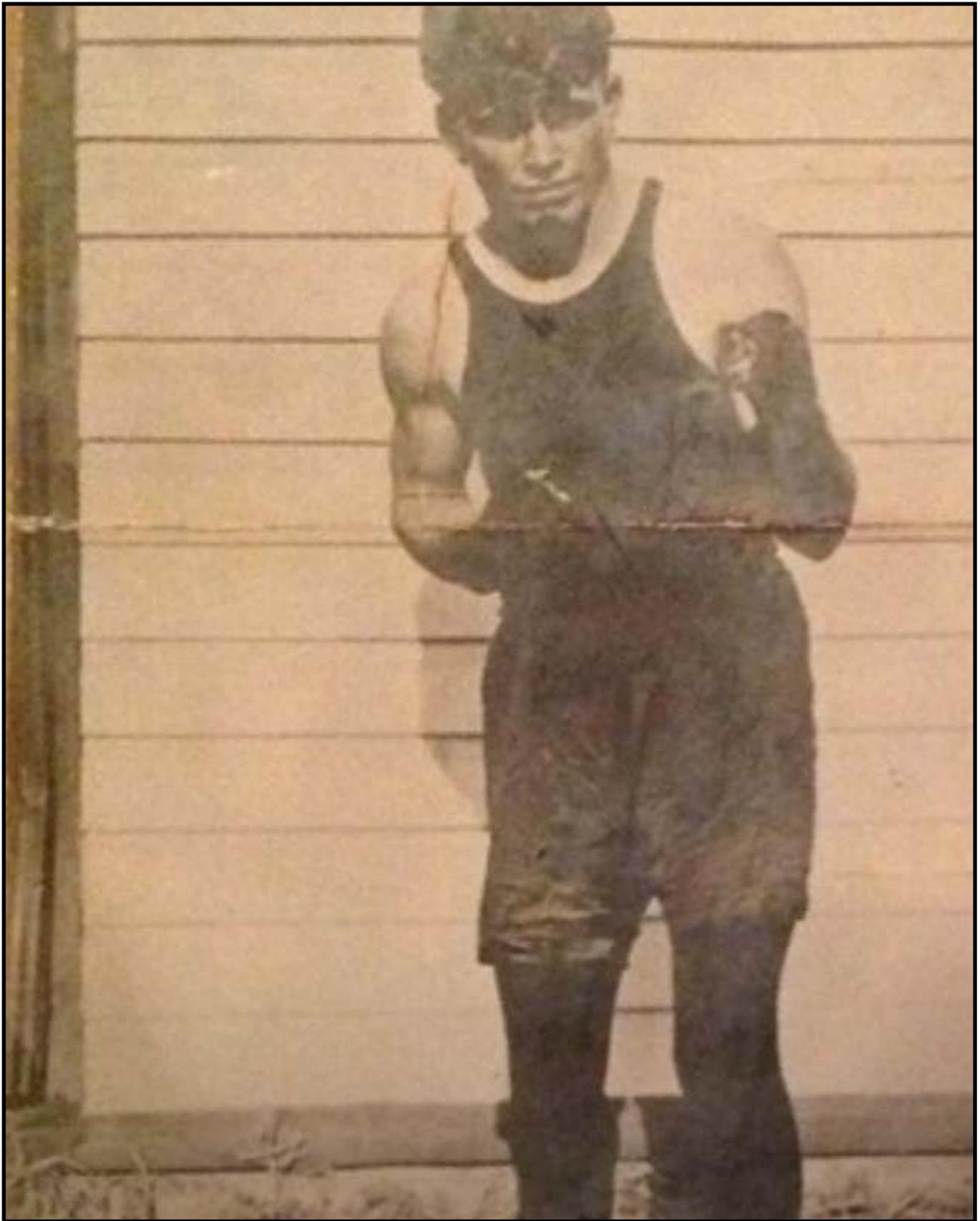
Lamar was born on a farm in the Asbury section of Cherokee County, SC. When he was 9 years old, his father died of heat stroke and his mother moved the family to Pacolet Mills. She went to work in the mill. Before Lamar's 10th birthday he also had to go to work in the mill to help support the family.

At the young age of 16, Lamar joined the navy and served for 8 yrs. While he was in the navy he learned to box. He won several matches and became the lightweight champion of the 5th Naval District. The 5th District had its headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia. After serving two "hitches" in the Navy, he returned to civilian life about 1926.

He returned to Pacolet after he left the navy and once again worked in the mill. While working in the mill, he continued to box and win matches. He became the lightweight champion of South Carolina!

Later, he raised his sights and had a match for the lightweight championship of the USA. Sadly, he lost that match. In the 2nd round of 15, he broke his right wrist with a hard punch. He ordered his team to wrap the broken wrist tight and went on to finish the fight and the other 13 rounds. This was the 4th time he had broken that wrist and his wife, Virginia Jett Gibson, begged him to give up boxing, which he did. He returned to work in the machine shop at Pacolet Mills. His boxer title was "Cannonball Gibson". Most of those at Pacolet called him by his nickname, "Jar". Lamar and Virginia had 3 children - Helen Gore, Hazel Hogan and Neil Gibson.

Tragically, Lamar died suddenly in 1953 at the age of only 52.



Lamar Gibson working out during his days as a boxer.



Lamar and his brother and sister about 1905. Lamar is on the left , his sister, Nannie, is on the right. His younger brother, Elms James, is in the middle.