

*At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*  
by Dwight D. Eisenhower

p. 93

“The lad was exactly my age but somewhat smaller and although I cannot recall the cause of the quarrel, we were squaring off and hitting at each other as hard as we could. There was no semblance of science. Our only hope was for one to outlast the other.

Gradually, I gained an advantage and was pounding my antagonist with satisfying rhythm. Suddenly, an avalanche struck me in the back. My opponent’s older brother had come racing through the ring of yelling spectators and, hitting me right at the shoulders, bore me to the ground. There, he began slamming me all over the place.

Although he was somewhat stronger and larger, I did manage to get up, realizing now that I had two rather than one to try holding my own against. The outlook was not cheerful but I was stubborn enough to keep up the contest.

It happened that Edgar, just coming back from Northside School where he was in the eighth grade, saw what was happening. He pushed his way into the crowd of boys and, walking into the center, interposed himself between the bigger brother and me. I shall never forget his immortal words. ‘Now,’ he said, ‘you and I will settle this while Dwight finishes the job on this brother of yours.’

The bigger boys looked at Ed, turned around, and pushed off. The younger boy left too.

Ed and I walked home for our lunch. I cannot recall any time, even in World War II, when unexpected reinforcements were more gladly received.”