

Johnson–Jeffries (Part 1): Prelude to Armageddon

Written by Pat Putnam

Monday, 07 November 2005 19:00

RENO, NEVADA, Monday, July 4, 1910 – (The Associated Press) – John Arthur Johnson, a Texas Negro, the son of an American slave, tonight is the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.

James J. Jeffries of California, winner of twenty-two championship fights, the man who never was brought to his knees before by a blow, tonight passed into history as a broken idol. He met utter defeat at the hands of the new Black champion.

While Jeffries was not actually counted out, he was saved from this crowning shame only by his friends pleading with Johnson not to hit the fallen man again, and the towel was brought (sic) into the ring from his corner. At the end of the fifteenth round, Tex Rickard raised the Black arm, and the great crowd filed out, glum and silent.

Jeffries was dragged to his corner, bleeding from nose and mouth and a dozen cuts on the face. He had a Black closed eye and swollen features, and he held his head in his hands, dazed and incoherent. Johnson walked out of the ring without a mark on his body except for a slight cut to his lip.

...The great Jeffries was like a log. The reviled Johnson was like a Black panther, beautiful in his alertness and defensive tactics.

...After the third round, Johnson treated his opponent almost as a joke.

...The fifteenth round started with a clinch. Johnson then tore loose and sent Jeffries down with a lightening-like left and right blows to the jaw. Jeffries fell halfway through the ropes.

...Those under him saw he had lost his sense of surroundings and that the faces at the ringside were a blur to him. His time had come. He was feeling what he had caused others to feel in the days of his youth and power.

...Johnson stood poised over his adversary, ready with a left hook if Jeffries regained his feet.

...Jim Corbett, who stood in Jeffries' corner all during this fight, telling Johnson what a fool he was and how he was in for the beating of his life, now ran forward with outstretch arms, crying: "Oh, don't, Jack; don't hit him."

New York Times

NEW YORK, Tuesday July 5 – (Special Correspondent) – Racial riots swept the United States last night from the Atlantic to the Pacific after Jeffries' crushing defeat by Johnson in Reno, Nevada. The following are the results up to the present---
Nineteen persons were killed.

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251 were seriously injured.

Five thousand cases of disorderly conduct were dealt with by the police courts in various cities this morning in consequences of the rioting.

The goals (jails) in numerous cities were crowded with prisoners, in consequence of the bitter feeling against the Negroes manifested when it became known that a Black man had hammered a white man almost into insensibility and won the heavyweight championship of the world.

Most of the casualties were Negroes who were hunted down by white mobs, mostly because of boasts by the Blacks that they had finally demonstrated their superiority over the whites.

Two Negroes were shot dead at La Providence, Louisiana, after walking down the principal street of the town and announcing that a Negro could thrash a white man if he liked.

A Negro was fatally stabbed at Keystone, West Virginia for boasting in a drinking resort (saloon) that Jeffries had met his deserts and that his punishment by Johnson was a foretaste of that punishment which Negroes intended meting out to white men if the latter tried to assert their superiority in the future.

A nine-year-old white child was shot by Negroes who were riding in a motor car at Washington, the Federal capital. A white man cut a Negro man's throat in a tram car (trolley) at Houston, Texas. A Negro was shot dead in New York City.

Other Negroes were killed in Cincinnati, Omaha, Little Rock and other cities.

London Daily Express

Less than a handful of fights, as little as two perhaps, or three, ever generated as much racial and religious rancor, before and after the actual shootout, as Jack Johnson's Independence Day public mugging of beloved and balding old Jim Jeffries. Johnson's previous fight with Tommy Burns, in which he won the heavyweight championship, was merely a warm-up, fistic foreplay so to speak, to the widespread hysteria that now engulfed the new and old champions. Their 1910 showdown was for the racial and religious jackpot – the Great White Hope versus the Big Black Menace; a matching of Protestant virtue against uncivilized savagery; racist but God-fearing white America versus darkest Africa. In one corner stood Jeffries, security officer for the brave old world of the WASP; in the other there was Johnson, the feared and hated representative of the unwashed and unwanted schismatic Catholics, heretic Jews and heathen Blacks.

According to Randy Roberts in his book *Papa Jack*, a good 14 months before that pair would fight, the Chicago Tribune -carried a photo of a tiny blond girl, cuddly and curly, pointing at a towering Jeffries: the photo's caption begged: "Please, Mr. Jeffries, are you going to fight Mr. Johnson?" Her clarion call was crystalline: humanity needed, indeed demanded, the return of Jeffries, the retired and undefeated former champion, to slay the Dark Dragon. But Jeffries,

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porcine and in poor condition after six years of nonviolence and high living, did not immediately come charging out of the hay barn to pick up the white man's heavy impost.

Hardly had Johnson taken the title from Tommy Burns, on Dec. 26, 1908, before the search began for a Great White Hope. The scathing pen of Jack London, a devout racist, gave the campaign momentum; his passionate rhetoric, churned out at 10 cents a word, fertilized freshly sown racial hysteria.

One of America's leading reporters and novelists, London had been sent to Australia by the New York Herald to cover the Johnson-Burns championship fight.- What London witnessed disgusted him: a Black man easily defeating a white man for the greatest prize in sports. "This was no fight," London wrote in his anguish. "No Armenian massacre could compare to the hopeless slaughter that took place in Sydney Stadium. The fight, if it could be called a fight, was like that between a pygmy and a colossus."

(There is no evidence that London ever ran his massacre theory past any Armenians. It is sad that a man with so much talent and obvious intellect could make such an out-of-whack statement. From the 16th century through the Great War, much of the world's oldest civilization was controlled by the most brutal of its long series of invaders, the Ottoman Turks. In response to nationalistic stirrings within the country in 1894 and 1896, the Turks slaughtered thousands. The most ghastly of massacres took place in April of 1915 when the Turks deported the Armenian population to the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamian, where between 600,000 and 1.5 million of them were murdered or died of starvation. Not one of them was able to get up and go home to life in Canada from a fight they cheerfully entered and had been paid \$30,000 for the doing.)

Johnson, playing the lead role of the colossus, could have ended the one-sided battle anytime following the third round. Instead, with an anger fueled by a fusillade of racist remarks made by the champion, he had toyed with Burns, cast as the pygmy, taunting him, hurting him, bloodying him, before stopping him in the 14th round. London's account of the fight covered more than two pages of -The Herald,- but it was his last paragraph, seven short but searing sentences, that stirred the nation to an emotional frenzy.

Wrote the man who penned Call of the Wild: "One thing now remains. Jim Jeffries must emerge from his alfalfa farm and remove the golden smile from Jack Johnson's face. Jeffries, it's up to you! Jeffries, it's up to you! Remember the Maine! Remember the Alamo! God Bless White America!"

When Jeffries first became aware of London's battle cry, during the winter of 1908, he was at home on his alfalfa farm near Burbank, Calif. In the collective mind of his adoring white public, he was still Big Jim, a young and agile 20-something; 210 pounds of solid mass; the strongest man in the world; undefeated and seemingly unbeatable; and, to most, still the heavyweight champion of the world. In reality, he was an old 35; as creaky as an old planked floor; had been retired for 61 months, a lifetime for a professional heavyweight; and had become obese, 305 pounds of well-off and well-fed country farmer, hog fat, happy and losing his hair.

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A young newspaper reporter stopped by the farm and said: "What do you think of Jack London's idea?"

"What idea is that?" said Jeffries, obviously puzzled.

The newspaperman was shocked that the former champion had not heard the rallying cry sweeping the country. Jeffries listened quietly as it was explained to him.

Then he grunted and said: "I'm retired."

"But, Jeffries, it's up to you."

"Uh, huh."

Gaining momentum, the crusaderic call to arms swept the country. Ministers used it in their sermons. It became the hot topic in the halls of Congress. Barbers, bellhops and bartenders confided to their customers: "Big Jim will kill that uppity Negro." Across the pond in England, a Member of Parliament commented: "It is the duty of Mr. Jeffries to satisfy the enormous curiosity of the public which supports him so magnificently in this noble cause."

Compared to the other heavyweights of his era, Jeffries had been a Goliath among gnomes, 6'2" and a hard 210 pounds. Rex Lardner called him "a muscular giant with arms like oak trees, a body rippling with sinew, a forest of hair on his chest, and legs like the pillars of the Temple of Zeus." OK, so old Rex got carried away at times. Another writer, Lewis Burton, said Jeffries had earned the "awe of his generation." He was Jack Dempsey's first idol; later, Dempsey would adopt the Jeffries crouch. Jeffries was always at least 14 pounds heavier than any challenger and he twice crushed the likes of Bob Fitzsimmons, Gentleman Jim Corbett, and his archest of enemies, Sailor Tom Sharkey. When he stepped away from the ring at the age of 29, he had never lost a fight while amassing a fortune. He quit because he felt that there was no one who stood a chance against him; he was tired, he confided to friends, of beating up smaller men. After he had knocked out Corbett in 1900, Corbett said, "Nobody can ever hurt him, not even with an axe." And Corbett had chopped up Jeffries for the first 20 rounds,

The only thing Jeffries feared was age, that the slowing of his reflexes that would allow a lesser but younger man to wear him down. He did not fear a beating so much as he feared defeat by erosion, so early in 1905 he decided that before he would permit that to happen, he would be back on his California alfalfa farm or standing as the publican in his Los Angeles saloon, even if it meant he had to buy a free drink every once in awhile. (As Larry Holmes helped Eddie Schuyler and me to discover: heavyweight champions are never quick to pick up a bar tab). That decided, he announced that he had fought his last fight and, as it was the fashion in those times, he would organize and referee a tournament to find his successor; the heavyweight championship was like a king's crown, passed by royal selection from one monarch to the next.

After packing it in, Jeffries refereed a contest between Jack Root, a mediocre heavyweight from Chicago, and Marvin Hart, another mediocre heavyweight, from Fern Creek, Kentucky, just a hoot and a holler from Hollow Creek. Jeffries declared Hart had won by knockout and was, by

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his declaration, the new champion. Later, Jeffries claimed he had not declared Hart anything but the winner, but no one believed him. Seven months after winning the title, Hart lost to Burns, the smallest man ever to win the heavyweight title. The 5'7" Canadian, who started life as Noah Brusso, weighed just 168 pounds. Burns may have been small, but he certainly was not dumb. While the biggest purses were in the United States, the Canadian took the championship on a world tour, where he thought he was safe from his foremost challengers, four large and powerful Black fighters led by Johnson, and included Sam Langford, Sam McVey and Joe Jeanette.

(Before winning the title, Johnson fought Langford, the Boston Tar Baby, once; McVey 15 times; and Jeannette 14 times. Up to the time of World War I, to make a relative decent living, Blacks had to fight Blacks. When they were given a fight against a white, they were usually given the outcome before they were given the contract. After he won the title, Johnson fought none of them, even though Langford was his most persistent challenger, Black or white. While having a Black as champion was considered bad enough, the any idea of two Blacks fighting for the title was unthinkable. Normally, a rebellious character that loved tweaking the noses of the white establishment, Johnson went along. An astute businessman, he knew his share of the purse from all Black title fight would not pay training expenses.)

After taking the title abroad, Burns, a clever boxer as well as a powerful puncher for his size, defeated the champions of England, Ireland and Australia, which gave him universal acceptance as champion. Undeterred by 3,440 miles of ocean, Johnson followed him to England, where the National Sporting Club tried to match the pair. But when Burns demanded the unheard of guarantee of 6,000 pounds (\$30,000), the NSC, which had offered him half that amount, told him to whiz off. Burns shrugged and set sail for Australia.

Johnson wanted to continue his pursuit, but did not have the necessary funds. The NSC agreed to cover his expenses to Australia on the condition that should he defeat Burns, he would return to London and make first defense against Langford. "Done," said Johnson, who had no intention of fighting Langford ever again, in London or any other city.

Fortunately for Johnson, in Sydney, promoter Hugh D. McIntosh had great faith in the drawing power of a Burns-Johnson fight. He paid the champion Burns the 6,000 pounds he had demanded from the National Sport Club in London, and gave the challenger Johnson 1,500 pounds (\$7,500). In a large but roofless arena, they fought on Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, 1908. Burns was knocked down in the first 20 seconds, went down again before the first round was over. Towering over the champion, who had insulted him at every turn before the fight, Johnson taunted Burns, hit him at will, punished him savagely, and reduced the smaller man to a bloody punching bag. Not until the 14th round did Johnson really try to put away the courageous but outgunned Canadian. Almost out on his feet, Burns managed a snarl as Johnson, his smile parked for the moment, approached for the kill. But the American was too late; the ringside doctor had spoken to the police superintendent, who jumped up and ordered the referee to stop the fight.

"This was no fight," a greatly enraged London wrote as he began the first cry for a White Hope to stand up and recapture the heavyweight championship for the Caucasian race. London was inflamed not only by a Black man winning the most prestigious prize in sport, but because it was

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obvious to the most innocent of spectators that from the third round on Johnson had deliberately prolonged the beating he was laying on Burns. "What I saw here today," London penned, "cannot be listed as sport." That's when the American author had his first thought of Jim Jeffries. His pen flew across the paper.

Alerted to London's desperate plea by the young California reporter, the reluctant Jeffries began to read the sports pages more closely, the first bricks in the rebuilding of his mind into believing that his body could fight again. Upon his return to America, Johnson appeared in a string of six-round "no-decision" bouts, exercises that required little or no training. All Johnson had to do was make sure he was not knocked out, an outcome offering small chance.

Johnson never kept his commitment to National Sporting Club, although he did pay back the money the club had advanced him; nor did he ever defend the title against Langford. After winning the title, he fought five contests, one in Canada, four in the United States: two were listed as exhibitions and three as non-decision bouts, two sixes and one 10. He did just enough to keep from getting knocked out, which angered the public even more. He was in a no-win situation: if he merely scored enough points to win, he was lazy; if he battered his man and knocked him out, he was an African brute. He parried the national anger with a gold-toothed impudent smile, which only served to increase the frenzy to find a White Hope

Johnson's sixth defense was made on Oct. 16, 1909 in Colma, California against Stanley Ketchel, the middleweight champion with the reputation of a big punch, which everybody hoped gave him a chance.

A notorious playboy and ladies man, Ketchel was shorter than Johnson, 5' 9", but for their fight had beefed up to 171¼ pounds. Small but powerful, they nicknamed him the "Michigan Assassin," and most white Americans and a small part of Black America was hoping his big right-handed punch would erase Johnson's irksome golden grin.

The whole thing was designed as a double-cross from the beginning. Willus Britt, Ketchel's manager, said they would fight for 25 rounds, then suggested privately to Johnson that he carry the smaller man to the finish in order to provide a full-length movie that would provided an additional source of income. The purse was \$40,000, sixty percent to Johnson, the rest to Ketchel. Johnson never said no to any plan that would put additional dollars in his pocket.

The champion, who had been getting away with doing as little work as possible in his first five fights, quickly agreed. He figured he did not have to train, saving both money and effort. Looking to double-cross the champion, Ketchel trained hard. At 23, the middleweight champion was in his prime, eight years younger than Johnson. He was used to long distance fights; he had gone 32 rounds to win his title two years prior. He and Britt hoped to catch Johnson badly out of condition. As a bonus, manager and fight shared a vision of restoring the title to the white race. By becoming a national hero, Ketchel had explicit visions of having to beat off adoring females with an axe handle. Things went well for the movie until the 12th round. Ketchel chased the big man, a brilliant defensive fighter, who parried his wild punches with ease. Then in the 46th

minute of the fight, a Ketchel punch grazed Johnson's jaw. "Now, Stanley," Britt shouted. The

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cry caught Johnson's attention, and he turned to see who had yelled. Zap! A second Ketchel punch caught him just behind his left ear; a shade lower and he might have been knocked out. As it was, it put him on his back. The crowd went wild. Britt screamed. Ketchel grinned. Johnson cursed. As the champion arose from the floor, he was enraged by Ketchel's treachery. Thinking his opponent was badly hurt, Ketchel moved in, his famous right hand cocked, ready for the kill. As the smaller man drew near, Johnson caught him with a savage right uppercut under the chin, lifted him from his feet, shattering his teeth, and sent him crashing onto his back. The fallen White Hope never moved as the referee counted him out. He had been hit so hard his front teeth had been broken off at the gums.

Later in his dressing room, Johnson removed two teeth that had been embedded in his glove.

Several witnesses said they had timed the knockout, and that ten minutes passed before Ketchel opened his eyes. Not to be outdone, the promoter, Sunny Jim Collroth, who occasionally brushed shoulders with the truth, claimed it was closer to an hour. A priest was called up from the anxious crowd to administer the last rites, which proved unnecessary when Ketchel opened one eye and asked who hit him. Next to the prone middleweight lay Britt, who had suffered a heart attack. Two weeks later, while walking down the street, Ketchel's manager dropped dead.

Undaunted, a few hours following the fight, the irrepressible Ketchel took \$700 off Johnson shooting craps.

(On Oct. 15, 1910, one Walter A. Diple shot Ketchel to death with a rifle at Dickerson's Farm, when Diple found him with Goldie Smith, Diple's common-law wife, who was cooking the half-dressed middleweight champion his breakfast. "I'm tired. Take me home to mother," were Ketchel's last words. Stansilaus Kiecal from Grand Rapids, Michigan was 24 years old.)

Publicly, Johnson continued to flash his gold plated grin, causing white Americans to foam at the mouth. They despised him because he was Black; they hated him even more because he wallowed in their hatred. A growing number of Blacks were not happy with him, either. One Sunday morning, a Black Chicago minister reportedly told his flock: "We detest him because of his brazen, irresponsible affairs with white women."

Told what the minister had said, Johnson grinned and replied: "The man is jealous."

"When Johnson smiles," said Bob Armstrong, one of the champion's sparring partners, "people just get madder at him. And he likes that. He doesn't have to say anything; all he has to do is smile." Later, Armstrong admitted he was not sure if Johnson was smiling to anger the public or because he was proud of the gold caps on his front teeth. No matter the reason, the result was the same.

(In one of his lengthy essays about the Johnson-Jeffries fight for the New York Herald, London used the words smile, smiled or smiling 30 times. Even the newspaper joined the act; the editors entitled London's piece **The Golden Smile.**)

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Everything Johnson did was front-page news now, the uglier the reports, the greater the play. Photographers and writers hounded him. He once complained to Tad Dorgan, a prominent San Francisco boxing writer: "It's a good thing there is a lock on the door to my bathroom." Still, as he spent money more than he took in, he began to treat the clamor for a Jeffries fight more seriously. From those first six "fights," Johnson made only \$26,638, while during the same year, 1909, he ran up bills of more than \$80,000. He was low on funds; like the white race, he needed Jeffries.

Johnson had a fondness for blondes. After returning from Australia, he seldom traveled with less than two ladies of the evening from the Everleigh Club on 2131-33 South Dearborn Street in Chicago. A lavishly appointed four-story mansion, The Everleigh Club was celebrated as the most elaborate and expensive all-white brothel in the world, catering only to men of wealth and celebrities with more fame than fortune, and run by Minna and Ada Everleigh, sisters who claimed to be renegades from an aristocratic European family. Music was provided by a \$15,000 golden piano, steaks were served on \$100 plates of gold, and each of the 44 seductively decorated rooms had its own cascading perfumed fountain. A man of huge appetites, Johnson had his way with all the working girls, but his early favorite was Belle Schreiber, the saucy daughter of a Milwaukee policeman, whose testimony in his Mann Act trial years later would win him a year and a day as a revolving guest (actually 11 months, in Leavenworth, Geneva and Joliet) of the Federal government. Another who caught his attention was Hattie McClay (sometimes referred to incorrectly as McLay), tall, reedy and sexually acrobatic; her real name was Anna Peterson. Then there was Lillian St. Clair, a bouncy little bottle blonde who couldn't win a debate with a rock.

They traveled in style, at times in first class by rail, and other times in one of Johnson's big, fast automobiles – Mercedes Benz, Daimlers, Thompson Fliers, Stutz Bearcats – that he loved and one of which would eventually kill him. His favorite was a red Thompson Flyer. At times, when Johnson did not feel like driving, usually after a series of speeding tickets, the champion and his female entourage were chauffeured by Mervin Jacobowski, a white man, which did little to abate the white community's acid reflux.

With the money, the fame, the 14-karate smile, and a sculpted iron body that would have inspired Michelangelo, white women flocked after him. After the Ketchel fight, Johnson met Etta Terry Duryea, a sporting lady, but, according to most reports, technically not a lady of the evening. Born in Hempstead, N.Y. and raised in a fashionable section of Brooklyn, Etta had married Charles C. Duryea, an Eastern horseracing patron. While the marriage was of short duration, Etta still attended the races; she and Johnson met at a Coney Island race track. Soon they were living together and she took the name "Mrs. Johnson," although they were not officially married until later, on Jan. 18, 1911.

In his 1927 inventive autobiography, *Mes Combats*, Johnson claimed he had married Mary Austin, a black girl from his neighborhood in Galveston in 1898, although a 1900 census report shows him living at home with his 4'8" mother, Tiny, and his 5' 3" father and eight siblings. There is no mention of any wife. Still, Johnson said it was a happy marriage and when he moved to California in 1901, he took "Mrs. Jack Johnson" with him; when he returned a year later, he restored his status as a bachelor.

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From this point, you may need a scorecard to keep track of the female players.

Hitting out of the No. 2 spot was Clara Kerr, a Black prostitute he met in North Philadelphia in 1903. After a few months, she took the name of Mrs. Jack Johnson, and they lived happily until she ran off with an old friend of Johnson's, a horse trainer named William Bryant, and most of the fighter's money, clothing and jewelry. They reconciled briefly after he had her arrested, but she left him again when he woke up one morning with empty pockets and few prospects for a fight, this time for good. In his autobiography, Johnson said it was the treachery of Austin and Kerr that drove him into the arms of white women. Or, as his anonymous ghost writer put it: "...the heartaches which Mary Austin and Clara Kerr caused me led me to forswear colored women and to determine that my lot henceforth would be cast only with white women." Like all autobiographies, especially those of athletes and politicians, Johnson's did not write of how he had lived, but how he wanted people to believe he lived. Actually, he dallied with both white and Black females in legendary numbers, but after Kerr only white women were ever permitted to assume the trappings of Mrs. Jack Johnson, wedded or not.

The first Caucasian of record was Alma "Lola" Toy, a 20-year-old nightclub singer he met in Sydney during a three-month tour in Australia in early 1907. The only other thing of record about Alma was that after Johnson left for America, she was awarded a 500 pound libel judgment from the Sunday Times Newspaper Company for an article in a sister publication *The Referee*. It was upon his return that Johnson began his long-distance trips accompanied by Etta, Belle, Hattie, Lillian, et al, and Lucille Cameron-Falconet, all of them awarded the title of Mrs. Jack Johnson at one time or another, some of them with the blessing of the court and God.

Belle, who went to Chicago to become a secretary, but found work at the Everleigh Club much more lucrative (\$750 to \$1,200 a week), was the first favorite of Johnson's multiple traveling companions, but she was sent to the bullpen with the arrival of Etta. Later, Johnson would send Belle into exile after she began to rebel after Etta's death and Lucille's elevation to leading lady status.

The first to earn her married name the old fashion way was Etta, the tall and willowy quiet one who had about her an incessant sadness. Hers was a noteworthy beauty; reticent and, at times, chilling. In public, she rarely smiled, and her full lips seemed naturally cast in an unhappy moue, but the real key to her inner soul was her haunting blue eyes, which registered a permanent and undisguised dysphoria. After a few years with Johnson, Etta committed suicide, most likely because her husband refused to give up his other playmates, or, perhaps, because she was simply unhinged. On more than one trip, Etta and Belle and Hattie traveled with Johnson. The three women stayed in three separate hotels, a logistical nightmare, which, of all the true working ladies, only the fiery Belle seemed to mind. Etta was never happy with that passion-by-appointment arrangement, but after several clouts to the head, she learned to mask her displeasure.

She ended her melancholy with a .38 pistol in 1912. Three months later, Johnson began going with Cameron-Falconet, who, by some accounts was an 18-year-old prostitute from Milwaukee, or, as Al Stump wrote in his *The Rowdy Reign of The Black Avenger*, she was a 19-year-old sophomore at the University of Maryland 'with virgin and martyr written all over her.' In any

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case, strumpet or scholar, Johnson hired her as his stenographer. Enraged that her courtesan/chaste/hooker/student/daughter was going out with a Black, Cameron's mother filed a kidnapping charge against Johnson. "He has hypnotic powers," said mom, "and has used them on my little girl. I'd rather see my daughter spend the rest of her life in an insane asylum than see her the plaything of a nigger." Johnson was arrested for violation of the Mann Act, transporting a female across a state line for unsavory pursuits, but the case fell out when Lillian looked at her bigoted mother and at her unbiased lover, and decided it was a no-brainer; she refused to testify. No long afterward, Jack and Lucy were joined in wedded bliss.

(Two years later, the government went to Plan B, Belle Schreiber, who they found working in a Washington, D.C. brothel. She arrived in court with a great swishing of skirts and an icy glare for Mrs. Lucille Johnson, primly seated front row center. Despite the champion's continued kindness after tossing her out, Belle was still smoldering over losing her place in the Johnson pecking order. Down on her luck in Pittsburgh, the aging Belle had wired Johnson asking for money. He wired her \$200. When she showed up in Chicago, she spent several nights with Johnson showering him with gratitude. "Transported across a state line for sex," said the government's lead attorney, using Johnson's generosity and Belle's gratitude against the champion. "Guilty," said the all-white jury. "A \$1,000 fine and one year and a day in Joliet," said the Judge George Carpenter. "If I was white, would you do this?" said Johnson, who then grabbed Lucy and her jewelry; their passports; \$70,000 in cash; 20 trunk loads of clothes and ring and theatrical gear; his Mercedes runabout, and took off on a protracted tour of Europe and Latin America.)