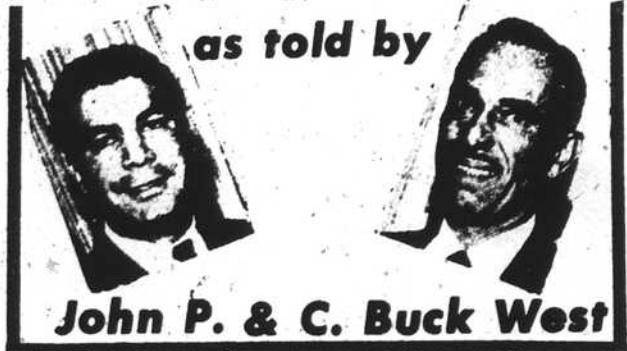


# Hidden History

The Unsung Saga of the Black Man

as told by



John P. & C. Buck West

SPONSORED BY



JACK JOHNSON

World Heavyweight Champion  
and Demolisher of "The White Hope"  
(1878-1946)

(Second in a three-part series as chronicled in Vol. II of J. A. Rogers' "World's Great Men of Color".)

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"JOHNSON'S VICTORY was gall to a vast number of Americans to whom it seemed to symbolize the triumph of the so-called black race over the so-called white. Race feeling was much stronger then than now and in the Southern states where such feeling had been long cultivated, the exploiters of Negro labor saw as a consequence of the victory, the blacks becoming restless. Even in the highest social, religious, and educational circles the defeat was taken to heart by many.

"On the other hand the true American sportsmen, even those who had no relish for a black 'idol,' were resigned, feeling that the better man had won.

"Johnson aggravated the former group even more by his actions. He seemed not to care what it thought. Lovable Peter Jackson would eventually have healed the wounded racial pride by his modesty but Johnson acted as if he loved to show up the whites after what he had experienced at their hands. He was an exhibitionist in public and obeyed Schopenhauer's counsel to great men, namely, not to be modest, to the letter. In the ring with the bright lights and the gaze of the crowd on him, he loved to display himself and was as showy as a political spell-binder, a Billy Sunday, or the type of Southern congressman ridiculed by Senator Claghorn.

"JOHNSON WOULD emphasize his superiority over his opponents, most of whom were white, by putting their weakness into bold relief with feline stealth and care, taunting them mercilessly, to boot. In a white fighter this conduct would probably have been condoned, and even liked. But in a black man, who was expected to be respectful to white folks, even when he was whipping one, it was unforgivable. Johnson had suffered all his life from color prejudice and it was almost too much to expect that one of his fighting nature was going to treat a white man, whom he had at his mercy as a 'bossman'.

"To make matters even worse he became entangled with women--and white women at that. What difference did it make to his critics that these women had sought him out or had been introduced to him by white men? Had the women been black, however, he could have had as many affairs as Tommy Manville without enmeshing himself with stern American morality. In fact, such affairs then would only have made good humorous copy.

"If also he had been a third-rater, he could have had white women as the lesser Negro fighters have had, or as the white fighters had Negro women, and no one would have minded. But Johnson, the world's champion, as a winner of white women, was too great an advertisement for so-called miscegenation. Other black men might be encouraged to take white wives and sweethearts, and black mistresses of white men might be encouraged to demand more than just loose relationships.

"THE RESULT WAS that Johnson, in winning the championship, dragged with him into the

VOICE READERS COMPRISE A \$30,000,000 MARKET

# EDITORIAL

FABULOUS LAS VEGAS has grown so rapidly in the past 12 years that not even an electronic computer could have kept up with the growth rate. Our City is still growing, and will continue to grow for years and years.

There is no city on the face of the earth that has more growing pains than our fantabulous Mecca of Chance. However, we, the Citizens of Las Vegas, cannot afford to gamble with the future of our city by trusting its destiny to inexperienced city fathers.

The future of Las Vegas rests heavily upon the shoulders of the city fathers. They have a big job--a job too big and too complex for little men with no experience for the job.

BIG JOBS call for men who are big in their knowledge of how to get the job done well. The City of Las Vegas has been most fortunate in having had just such a man in City Hall for the entire 12 years of our fantastic growth and its associated growth problems.

We cannot afford the extravagance of folly by losing the 12 years' investment we have in Commissioner Ed Fountain. Las Vegas needs

limelight, the whole race question with all its centuries of strife. After his second white marriage, anti-miscegenation laws were introduced into the legislature of almost every one of the states still without them, including enlightened Wisconsin and Minnesota.

"Johnson was often in the courts, too, for speeding. Good-natured, calm, methodic, orderly in the ring, he compensated for the restraint of discipline there by stepping on the gas outside of it. The incidents in which he became involved were given nation-wide publicity, always in an unfriendly way.

"Most of Johnson's white friends deserted him, and many of his Negro friends, taking their cue from the former, dropped him too. Negro ministers imitated the lead of white ones in denouncing him from their pulpits. The question of the heavyweight championship became so involved with the color dispute that soon the two were indistinguishable.

"The catchword of the day was 'A White Hope,' meaning a white man who could beat Johnson. A search was conducted by social leaders, ministers of the gospel, and college professors, as seriously as if so-called white civilization, its science, poetry, art, everything, depended upon a bruiser of one color beating a bruiser of another color. A reading of the newspapers and prize-fight promoters did much to inspire this persecution since they profited by it.

"THERE REMAINED only one man, Jeffries, and a nation-wide cry arose for him to restore 'the supremacy of the white race.' But Jeffries balked. Softened by years of retirement and indulgence, and probably afraid of Johnson from the first, Jeffries did not relish the prospect of meeting this fighting black demon. But public clamor grew so insistent that Jeffries was forced from behind the saloon bar and the color bar, and went off to the California mountains to train for the match.

"Unpopular Johnson was now practically ignored as the current titleholder. Jeffries was dubbed 'Undefeated Champion of the World.' He had won twenty-two championship fights, and the white chauvinists, incited by the press, looked to him to save civilization from 'black' domination as Christendom had looked to the Cid to save it from the black armies of Yusuf, the African, in Spain in 1088.

"THE TWO champions met at Reno, Nevada, on July 4, 1910, for a bout of forty-five rounds and a purse of \$101,000, the largest then in the history of the ring.

"Spectators came from all parts of the world, China, Japan, Australia, India, South Africa, South America. The racial angle of the bout had been played up until it seemed that the racial supremacy of the world was at stake.

"When the boxers entered the ring, the reception of each was vastly different. Jeffries was given a tremendous ovation; Johnson, a roar of cat-calls and boos. The crowd had come to see 'the nigger get licked,' and believing and hoping that Johnson was trembling at the sight

(See HISTORY, page 4)

Ed Fountain much more than he needs the job of City Commissioner. However, Commissioner Fountain is dedicated to the job and God knows we should each be thankful that he is. His knowledge and experience, coupled with his civic dedication makes him an invaluable asset to our Board of City Commissioners.

WE TAG the pseudonym "Big Daddy" to Ed Fountain, not because he is a giant in stature, but because he is the City Father who for 12 years has been the Big Daddy of all the little people in the City of Las Vegas.

We need our Big Daddy in City Hall to administer the big business of our big city, while protecting the interests of its little citizens. We are the little citizens whom Ed Fountain has held close to his great big heart for each of his 12 years in office.

You are SAFE with Big Daddy.

VOTE for Fountain for Las Vegas City Commissioner on May 2, and keep the city in experienced hands.

## THIS WEEK IN NEGRO HISTORY

AN "NPI" FEATURE

- April 20, 1853 Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, abolition poet-lecturer, began work.
- April 20, 1866 Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn., was opened to educate Negroes.
- April 20, 1883 Jan E. Matzeliger received a Patent for a shoe lasting machine, making manufacture of modern shoes possible.
- April 20, 1904 Joe Walcott, the "Barbados Demon," lost the world welterweight title. He is not to be confused with Arnold Cream, the "Jersey Joe Walcott" of recent boxing history.
- April 20, 1914 Birth of Lionel Hampton, jazz orchestra leader and "King" of the vibraharp.
- April 21, 1803 The Rev. J. Bishop, Negro pastor of Court St. Baptist Church (white), Portsmouth, Va., established the first Negro church in New York.
- April 21, 1589 St. Benedict, the Moor, black saint in Catholic Church, died.
- April 22, 1882 Benjamin G. Brawley, preacher-teacher, born in Columbia, S. C.
- April 23, 1856 Birth of Granville T. Wood--inventor of telephone receiver and various telegraphic devices--in Columbus, Ohio.
- April 23, 1962 Morris Memorial Building, Nashville, Tenn., was dedicated.
- April 24, 1942 Jack Blackburn, trainer of former heavyweight champion Joe Louis, died in Chicago at age 58.
- April 25, 1918 Ella Fitzgerald, jazz singer and perennial poll winner, was born in Newport News, Va.

## LAS VEGAS Voice

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