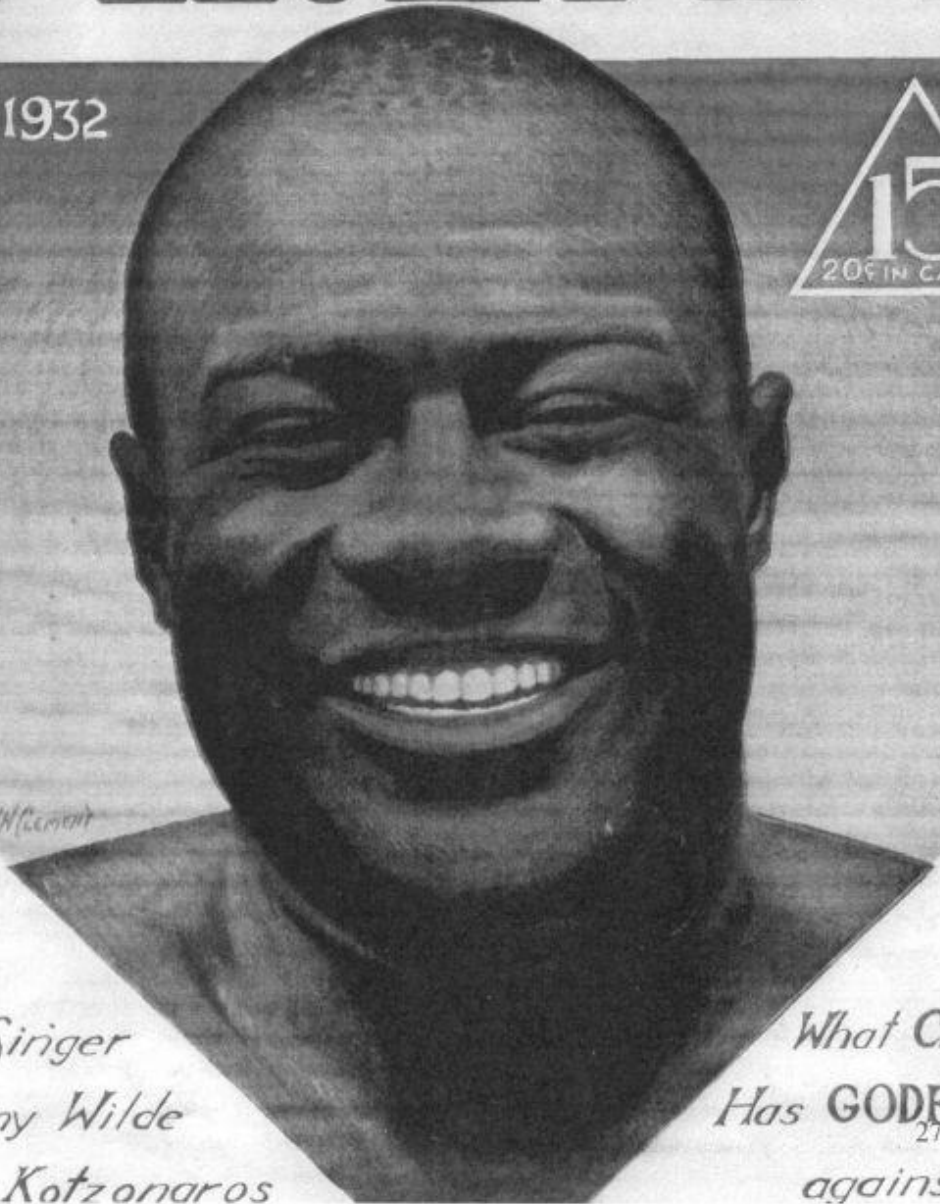


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What Chance
Has GODFREY
against



George Godfrey, "Champion of the Mammoth Class," as he looks in fighting mood.

What About George Godfrey?

HUGE COLORED HEAVYWEIGHT IS A REAL
MENACE IN THE PRESENT SCRAMBLE
FOR TUNNEY'S VACANT TITLE.
HE HAS THE QUALITIES A
CHAMPION NEEDS.

By ROBERT L. JONES

WELL, boys, yours truly just made a raid out to Leiperville yesterday for the sole and express purpose of getting a real close squint at this man-mountain, Godfrey, and the positive low-down on what he possesses in the line of dangerous goods to the boxing racket. I had seen him in several of his matches and had obtained plenty of expert inside stuff on him regarding all his most important scraps—Sharkey, Uzcudun, Risko, Renault, Wiggins, Clem Johnson, "Tham" Langford, and so on—and was all cocked and primed to give the genial husky a close once over.

"Mistah Jim," meaning Jimmy Dougherty, the Baron of Leiperville, who manages the affairs of Godfrey and several other boys, was conspicuous by his absence during the visit, he being very busy at a little tete-a-tete with the members of the Pennsy commission at the time. Therefore, the info obtained was given solely by the gladiator, himself. There was none of the polysyllabic stuff usually handed out in interviews by pugs who remain as mum as a knot on a log and do their speaking through the mouths of their managers, and who do not understand one-tenth of what has been said after it is all over.

Anyway, the big boy reported in trunks and shoes as if ready for a workout, and he got it—mentally. What—when—where—who—question after question was fired at him, and just as rapidly were his answers returned, proving that within that massive head of his is a brain which matches in wisdom the strength of the mighty body which supports it.

To begin with, I learned that Feas Smith Williams, as Uncle Sam knew him, was born in Mobile 30 years ago, but that he was raised in Chicago from his seventh year. It also developed that the said F. S. W. did his stuff for the Navy four years in his younger days and later for the Army eighteen months to the end of the war, as per certain documents exhibited by the party interviewed. Furthermore, during the thirty years of his life Feas Smith Williams has done much traveling here and there—North and South, East and West. Frisco and Old Orchard, Me., Chicago and New Orleans rolled easily and familiarly from his tongue from time to time. They are all familiar places to him. And with the telling of his travels and experiences he told also of his career as a fighter, of many things which have never been published about him, of his hopes for the future and of the reasoning upon which he bases those hopes. He made observations on life and living, and his observations were wise and good.

Where did he start boxing? In New Orleans while he was yet young (he had sauntered down there from Chicago when he became fifteen or so) the big colored boy first started slinging leather around the smaller clubs. Then he tried the game in Memphis, Paducah, Gulfport, Mobile—anywhere he could pick up a few bucks on the side to augment his income as a husky wielder of sundry tools. But this boxing was done purely as a side issue.

"It wuz in Mobile while I wuz wu'kin' in the shipya'd that I had mah fus' impawtunt fight," said big George in his peculiar style of talking. Traveling as he has throughout all parts of the country he has acquired an accent all his own. One minute he speaks exactly like



This big man certainly has a splendid physique.

a resident of the North, pronouncing every word clearly and correctly; the next, he becomes a victor from the South and talks precisely as do the colored people there. Most of the time, however, he "compromises" by using a sort of half-North, half-South speech, so that his hearers have a hard time deciding just what has been his "raising."

Continuing his story of his first "big" scrap, he said that while employed in the boiler shop of a Mobile shipyard he had attracted a little local reputation as a fighter. Well, there was another huge colored boy, Eddie Singleton, working in the same shop, and the question soon arose as to which was the better man. The employees of the yard made up a good-sized pot of money and the two big busters went at each other, Marquis of Queensbury rules. The Singleton boy rushed out and caught George a whack in the chest; George backed up a step, then came in with everything he had in a right to the jaw. The blow landed and broke the recipient's jaw in two places, ending the fight in less than a minute. The purse George collected was several hundred dollars; not bad, so he thought, for a single minute of a sixteen-year-old boy's time.

That, says Godfrey, was his first important fight in that it showed him the possibilities of financial success in the ring; but his real career as a fighter did not begin until after the war. The beginning of the story lies in a military cantonment in Alabama where George had been put over a bunch of dusky boys as boxing instructor. One day Sam Langford came through, saw the big instructor, and was favorably impressed. Giving him his card, "Tham" told George to hunt him up in Chicago after the war, and he would make a fighter of him. This George did, and for some time he took lessons—and punishment—from the "Boston Tar Baby" in the latter's gym in the windy city. When George improved sufficiently Sam began sending him around to do his stuff in various places, and since that time Godfrey has devoted himself almost entirely to the fight game, and his fights are without number or record. He has fought all who were willing to oppose him, and some of them he faced several times. Sam Langford, for instance, squared off against the present heavyweight contender about eleven times, winning about three, losing about four, and drawing the rest.

Once, while George was still new to the game, he met Langford in Covington, Ky., and, thinking the time ripe to establish himself in the fight game, he stepped right out at the bell to finish "Tham." Really, George was just a big, green boy, and when Langford saw what he was up to, the "Tar Baby" knocked him out in a hurry, "jes to show you not to git sma't wif yo' bet-tahs," as he confided to Godfrey after the fight. Time was telling on Sam,



The victory smile of Godfrey is winning enough to make the loser grin back.

finally stopped the veteran in three rounds in Burton, Iowa, but none of their matches really showed the two in fair comparison, for Langford was far past his prime, while Godfrey was still climbing.

Speaking of his bouts with "Tham," George says that the Boston Tar Baby hit him the hardest sock he ever received, a terrific punch on the left eye. The immediate result was a closed optic and a blinded "Gawge," whom Langford proceeded to trim most beautifully. Dempsey, for whom George served as sparring partner prior to his bouts with Gibbons and Firpo, also cracked him some awful punches, says Godfrey. He considers Dempsey the best fighter he ever knew, and Jack Johnson, with whom he trained at Columbus, Ohio, some eight years ago just after Jack had been released from Leavenworth, as the best boxer.

It was shortly after this, and while George was still new to the game, that he lost a bout to Jack Renault, the Canadian. Jack was about the first white man George ever fought, and the dusky boy suffered from stage fright and so on. Anyway, he did not try to damage his opponent; while, on the other hand, Renault did not do much havoc with him. But in the eleventh round of the scheduled twelve-round fight the referee gave the battle to Renault on a technical kayo, for **29** the loser had not even been sent to the canvas. George has since overcome his timidity about hitting opponents, as



Note the huge size of his arms alongside an average

What About George Godfrey?

(Continued from Page 15)

any who have faced him in recent years will testify.

Returning to the subject of Langford, Godfrey said that Sam did him more damage with one punch than any fighter he ever faced. It was in one of their numerous engagements that the Tar Baby landed a left to the mouth, driving George's lower lip about his upper teeth and cutting it severely. He also did sufficient other damage with other blows to bring Godfrey to say that this ten-round meeting was the worst trimming he ever received, and that as a result of it he returned to Chicago to live for a week on such food as could be taken through a straw.

With perfect frankness and clearness of detail "Big Gawge" told of the reverses he has suffered, and it was in the same style that he told of his successes and of his opinions of other fighters. The hardest blow he ever landed on a man, he says, was the punch with which he kayoed Jim Malone. Malone was knocked into the ropes, whereupon George pulled him forward to finish him with another punch. But he saw that his foe was out, so he released him and allowed him to fall to the floor where he lay as if dead. Jim was very thoroughly out for some time.

Among the men against whom he must make his race for the world's title he considers Sharkey the most dangerous and the best of the lot. But does he have any fears of meeting Jack in the ring? Not so you can tell it, and having met the Boston scrapper once—he was brave enough to do it in Boston, where the papers gave him the nod while the referee gave it to the sailor—he knows plenty about the "Loquacious" and his shortcomings.

"If Sharkey finds his man (Loughran, for instance) can't hurt him, then that man is sho' gonna take a beating. But if a man belts that Sharkey a few good ones 'round de body—oh, boy, he sho' don't like 'em there! His head is awful hard an' he can take plenty punishment on it, but I know what I'm sayin'—he don't like 'em in de middle. Now, when I wuz fightin' him, ev'ry time I thumped his stomach one he would grunt loud. An' if I can ever get that man in de ring agin, even in Boston town—well, that 'ud be jes' too good to be true!"

George has been associated with most of the great lights in professional boxing, either as opponent or sparring partner, and he has also become acquainted with many headline wrestlers. And the movie stars—did you see "Old Ironsides?" Well, George is the genial cook who did so much good work in the movies, and he had a similar role in "Sea Fury." This being but a small part of his movie work, it is easily understood that "Gawge" must be at home before the "Klugs." Incidentally, it was while working before the cameras that George became acquainted with the flying machine business. Every day the producer, James Cruze, and a number of the actors commuted from the mainland to the scene of the picture out on Catalina Island via flying boat. The sensation was strictly okeh, opined George, but he has an aversion to risking his neck on "these hesh flyin' machines wit' wheels."

One thing which has been troubling the sport world for some time is the why and wherefore of the fact that Godfrey was

from remaining within their limits after dark, due to the fact that there are so many British subjects who are inclined to trouble and do wonderful things with knives, then beat it for their home islands where they are hard to apprehend. Thus, by keeping all colored people away at night time the cities concerned avoid a heap of trouble with the specific disturbers in question, even though the ruling works hardship upon many a peaceful American citizen. In spite of that situation and ruling, however, we think that it would have been proper for George to have been extended a special dispensation from the nabob down there to permit him to view the fight. But he wasn't, and it's all over now, and anyway, George, you didn't miss such a whale of a fight.

For the past six years George has been under the management of Jimmy Dougherty, the "Baron of Leiperville," who has been bringing him along to the tune of much fear and trepidation on the part of the rest of the heavy fighters. And as no story on George would be complete without a few words from the Baron I made it my business to look him up after having finished with his fighter.

"I suppose," said the Baron, "that George has given you about all the dope you want on his record, so I will just say a few words about him personally as I have known him for six years. First of all, I want to say that he is honorable, trustworthy, honest and good-natured. He loves everybody, and children most of all. Well do I remember an event that occurred while he was training for his fight with Risko last year. A large delegation of New York newspapermen and photographers came over to see him train one afternoon, but no George showed up. I was completely put out and was at a loss as to where to search for him. Finally, though, about six o'clock two little girls came over from a neighbors to report that George had been host to a bunch of children at a circus that afternoon in Chester, and that he had wound up the day with seventeen rides on the hobby horses, he with his two hundred and fifty pounds of bulk leading the procession each time.

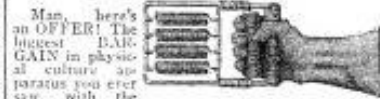
"He is single, not a drinker or gambler, but he is always 'busted.' He has no sense of the valuation of money, and when he has it, it flows freely. He delights in taking a big bunch of his friends to a hotel for a banquet, then to the best show in town, and footing the entire bill, h' himself.

"Like the late 'Tiger' Flowers, George is religiously inclined and makes heavy contributions to various church bodies. He delights, also, in being present at religious conferences and meetings.

"People everywhere who know sports agree with me that Godfrey is the best heavy in the game, and it is only the fear and reluctance of other fighters to meet him that keeps him from gaining his rightful recognition universally."

Another interesting yarn Mr. Dougherty told about George concerns one of the big boy's numerous trips to the coast. During the first month he was in that section his telephone bill amounted to \$850 or so, thanks to numerous calls from his home (Los Angeles) to friends in New York and other eastern points. At the time George was a bit short financially, and the telephone company had to wait until he fought again to collect. George had to

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Name _____

tween Godfrey and Renault, stating that Renault was not a sufficiently capable opponent and advising that a Godfrey bout would be permitted only with such men as Dempsey, Schmeling, Sharkey, or Uzcudun. "This," bemoaned big "Gawge," "jes' about shuts me out of Pennsylvania. Ev'rybody knows Schmeling is way too little fo' me, and the other three have refused big money already to give me a chance at 'em. An' even if they wuz kinda willin' they'd want more money than any Pennsylvania promotah could affo'd to pay. Jes' guess I'll have to do my fightin' somewhere else.

"But I do think it's kinda unfair, all that. When de big guns won't fight me for any price they ought to let the smaller fellahs make a little money tryin' agains' me.

"Cos I realize I'm gettin' older all de time, and the other boys know it, too. But I have found during the last three years that nobody can hurt me and I know I can lick any man in de fight game, and I belong to be champion. But I know they are afraid of me now and are waitin' and hopin' 'gainst some time when I get older; then they'll all be wantin' to take a thump at me, like they treated some of the good colored fighters of old times like Langford and Wills.

"Yessuh, I ought to be champion, and if I wuz champion I'd still be de same old Gawge to my friends and everybody. I'd be a credit to my race and would make myself liked by the white people. I'd be a gentleman and know my place, an' I'd be a fightin' champion what'ud be a credit to the fight game."

The Bloody Aftermath of the July Battle

(Continued from Page 31)

know about the "White Hope" era. The black man was so unpopular as champion that fight fans throughout the world started a clamor for a white man to come and bring the crown back to the white folk. Some even went as far as believing that the badly beaten Jeffries could still retrieve his lost laurels in a return match with the black man.

Jeffries himself showed very little desire, however, to match his ability and strength again with Johnson. The colored champion felt confident of his own ability to take the measure of the boilermaker any time he wanted to, and declared himself willing to give his victim a return fight if he so desired.

But just as today, the heavyweight ranks then were devoid of good championship timber. The best man fighting then was Al Kaufmann, who later made quite a name for himself. Al was really the first "white hope" candidate. He challenged Johnson immediately after the Reno fight, and his challenge inaugurated the long "white hope" campaign to dethrone the black man.

In this respect it is interesting to note that Johnson himself coined the "white hope" phrase when he stated in a newspaper interview:

"Al Kaufmann is now the white man's hope," he said. "Kaufmann is the best man in the world over the 45-round route."

The desire to wrest the title from "Li'l Arthur" was so strong at the time that even wrestlers were urged to turn to the boxing ring in defense of the white race.

Frank Gotch, world's champion wrestler at the time, really deserted the wrestling game and started to train as a boxer. In joining the ranks of the "white hopes" he engaged James J. Corbett, the former world's heavyweight champ, to train him in the arts of ring tactics and technique. But the wrestling champion never made much progress as a boxer. If memory serves us right he was knocked out or badly defeated in his first fight and gave up hope of ever becoming a fighter. The eyes of the boxing world were then turned to Australia, where Bill Lang was bowling them over.

He was imported into this country and set to train and advances were made to obtain a match for him with the colored champ. But his fighter from the Antipodes made a miserable showing in his first few fights here with third raters and he was definitely counted out as the "white man's hope."

Things looked pretty black for boxing in the winter of 1910. Beset by enemies from all sides, the few friends the game still had, set out in earnest to save the game in this country. The hunt for a "white hope" took on even wider proportions. This we will discuss in our next chapter on the heavyweights.

The Game of Spills and Splinters

(Continued from Page 21)

have the speed to drive himself over a short space, but he may not have the physical endurance to last six continuous days of racing.

"Spencer is the one exception, but he is able to do both due to the fact that he sprints differently than any other rider. Most of the sprinters make their sprints short and snappy; Spencer makes his sprint a long, steady one without a let down. In other words, he utilizes his endurance in the sprints."

"Who were some of the great six-day riders that you have seen?"

"Possibly the greatest of all the six-day men I have seen was Jackie Clarke. He

the long grind the name of Alfred Goulet cannot be left out. Alf could sure stand up well over the stretch.

"I think the best of the lot today is Reggie McNamara of Australia. Reggie, more than any other one rider, to me personifies the qualities you need to be a great rider. He has had enough accidents to have killed an ordinary man, yet he is out day after day burning up the track. Just for the sake of making an interesting point I will give you a short resume of what he has gone through. He has had a broken jaw, a fractured skull, a broken arm, an appendicitis operation, and only last summer was in an automobile accident and re-