

The Frisco Flash

(based on a true story)

by

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Author's Note: This play is based on my own original historical research from primary sources, e.g. newspaper accounts, photographs, the official - not always accurate - boxing record, marriage, court and census records of a now forgotten African-American welter weight boxing champion - Cecil Lewis Thompson, professionally known as Young Jack Thompson - who was born and died young in Los Angeles, but who came to maturity in Oakland and San Francisco, and fought his biggest fights in the Midwest and Northeast.

Additionally, secondary sources have been used to place those bare biographical facts into a more complex social context.

Of course, this play is not actual history: I've fictionalized, compressed, created amalgams of multiple real people, and otherwise used my imagination to create a dramatic narrative. But I've endeavored to always remain true to the spirit of Thompson.

The genre is heightened realism mixed with surrealism and utilizing the theatrical devices of the Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre.

CAST

THE MAN / THE FATHER (Older African-American Male roles):

Young Jack Thompson as an older man, Scipio Thompson, Roy E. Smith, John H. Johnson = characters aged from mid-30s to mid-40s.

THE BOY / THE SON (Younger African-American Male roles):

Lewis, Young Jack Thompson, Rafus Carter = characters aged from teens to mid-30s.

THE IRISH BOXER (Younger Caucasian Male # 1 roles):

Jimmy McClary, Moxie Sandow, Boxing Announcer, Referee, Court Officer (voice only), Younger Reporter, Waiter, Census Man = characters aged from teens to mid-30s.

THE MANAGER (Older Caucasian Male roles):

Da' Wright, Jackie Grant as an older man, Allen E. Sussman, Dutch Myers, Whalen's Trainer, Julius Hopper (radio announcer), Older Reporter, Club Announcer (voice only) = characters with ages from mid-30s to 80s.

THE JEWISH BOXER (Younger Caucasian Male # 2 roles):

Jackie Grant, Promoter, Russ Whalen, Judge = characters aged from teen to 40s.

THE FLAPPER (Caucasian and African-American Female roles):

Sharlyn, Mrs. Granofsky, Book Writer, Bridget Killough, Cuebelle = characters early 20s to late 40s - note, if possible, this role should be cast with a very light skinned African American or multi-racial actress as the reason will be made clear in the second act.

THE MOTHER / THE SISTER (African-American Female roles):

Mamie Thompson, Charlotta Bass, Margaret Kelly, Carolyn Gilliom, Galveston Woman = characters aged from mid-20s to early 60s.

Place: a cemetery in the Adams district of Los Angeles, then Oakland, San Francisco, greater Los Angeles, NYC, Chicago, Detroit, etc.

Time: Now, then: 1920 - 1946, 1957, and 1983.

ACT I

(In the dark, any relatively modern song about institutional violence and injustice, e.g. Tupac Shakur's "Me Against the World" or Killer Mike's "Don't Die".

Lights up, in contrast, almost idyllic with the sound of birds and the buzz of summer insects.

The older version of Young Jack Thompson is wearing what he was buried in. It was once top of the line, but now is showing wear, tear and would be out of style for the year he died.

Behind him is a projection of a dual gravestone reading: "Son / Cecil L. Thompson 1904 - 1946 / Mother / Mamie Thompson 1883 - 1956".

THERE IS A CIRCLE OF LIGHT AROUND THE GRAVE STONE AREA THAT IS DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE PERIMETER OF THE STAGE AREA. As the scene continues, the lights on the perimeter of the stage will slowly fade out till that area of the stage is in darkness and the lit area is a square, i.e. a boxing ring.¹

Looking out in the direction of the audience, he sees a pack of tourists.)

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Hey! Hey! Don't pass me by! Don't pass me... Damn tourists. Come over here!!! Look at my grave! I was World Welter Weight Champion! Not once. Twice! Oh, those tourists are ... Colored people. Amazing. Come over!! Hey!! - Goddamnit! Goddamnit! *(Suddenly retreating and looking up at the sky.)* I take it back; I take it back. Forgive me Jesus. I am a sinner. I know I wasn't good enough a man to be sitting by your side, but please, please, tell your daddy I'd rather stay stuck here in purgatory, not sent down there.

(A middle-class African American teen wearing sweat pants and a hoodie, 14 - 16, enters.)

¹ As there are many quick costume changes, possible staging solutions are using behind the projection screen as a changing area, or in keeping with the Brechtian devices, all actors could be visible at all times with just suggestive costume changes and the playing area would thus be even more like a literal boxing ring.

LEWIS

Your suit's got holes in it.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

WHO are you? Are you a servant of the Grim Reaper, or are you an angel of the Lord sent to guide me out of the path of thorns and wicked desires?

LEWIS

(Pulling the hood back, to reveal his face.) I'm in that tour group you were screaming at.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Oh ho ho. Are you testing me, angel? I testify: the Lord is my Shepherd, no matter how far I have strayed from the flock.

LEWIS

Oh. You're one of those crazy homeless men my mom warned me 'bout.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Homeless? This is my home now.

LEWIS

Are you saying you're a ghost?

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Are you sayin' you lied about being an angel!?

LEWIS

I never said - *(Lewis goes up to him.)* How come I can touch you?

OLDER YOUNG JACK

I don't know. Nobody human ever seems to see me here. So, maybe's you got a grave around here too.

LEWIS

No, way man. I'm *alive* Lewis Kelly.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Kelly? That's an Irish name.
My sister married a Kelly.
A colored Kelly of course.

LEWIS (cont'd)

And I'm from Downriver. In
Detroit? I'm visiting. *Just*
visiting. With my momma... Now,
what are you yapping about? And
why are you using that corny
grandpa language. "Colored"?
If you weren't a brother, I'd
be insulted - And don't you
dare get down on Detroit, you
hear?

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Why would I get down on the auto capital of the world? I love
Detroit! That's where I won the championship. The first time.

(Lewis inspects the gravestone.)

LEWIS

Uh huh. Whatever you say. *(Reading)* Cecil L. Thompson.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

That's my birth name. But my boxing name is Young Jack Thompson.

LEWIS

Okay, so if this is really you, then how come you're up here,
instead of being in the ground next to your momma?

OLDER YOUNG JACK

That's just her bones right next to mine, but her blessed soul is
in heaven. I can feel her praying for me. But I can't rest. I
can't rest no matter how much she wants me to.

LEWIS

You need to stop lying.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

(A beat.) I think I see your tour group - over there.

LEWIS

No, you don't.

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Quick you better go. Catch up with them before they close the gates for the night.

LEWIS

Shut up!

(Again Lewis takes a step out to the edge of the light.)

OLDER YOUNG JACK

You scared?

LEWIS

No. It's dark. That's all. *(A beat.)* My... my momma was born here in Los Angeles. She told me stories: the Harlem of the west, she called it. The mansions. The jazz clubs. You know about that?

OLDER YOUNG JACK

Oh, yeah. That's when Central Avenue was the bee's knees. I was in my prime then too. But before that, I was living in Oakland....

(Suddenly the sound of the cemetery gates SLAMMING shut. Blackout. A boxing BELL sounds.)

Lights up, briefly blaring at the audience. Then, a Projection: "1923 - Imperial Gym - San Francisco".

Scipio Thompson stands behind a large body bag. Young Jack Thompson, in boxing shorts and gloves, hits the bag.)

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Hit me. C'mon, hit me. Not those pigeon puffs. C'mon! Show me you is a man.

YOUNG JACK

I am punching. I am. Daddy.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

You is eighteen already. You is full grown. But you wanna coo in my ear. Like a cute little dove. Hit it!

YOUNG JACK

I am! What do you want from me?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

I says, hit it. Not love it. It ain't a kitten. The bag's a bear, gonna eat you for lunch.

YOUNG JACK

Huh?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Stop thinking. Knock me over! Damn it, boy. Just go home. Go. Go home, Cecil. Go home to your momma. Help her with the dishes. Go be with your sisters, Ceeeeeee-cil.

(Young Jack lets loose a tremendous flurry of punches. Scipio gets pushed back and can't hold on to the bag.)

SCIPIO THOMPSON (cont'd)

Better. Better. *(A beat, as Scipio catches his breath but pretends he's not doing so.)* But not good 'nuff. Yet. Remember this: You listening?

YOUNG JACK

Yes, sir.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

You's be as nice - polite - a gentleman - with every white man in this gym and especially out in that street. Oakland's all right. But there's Klan all over Los Angeles, looking for trouble. So, when I take you down to L.A. for a match, you smile.

YOUNG JACK

I know.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

(Snorting) You know. *I know!* But in the ring, you is an equal. You is a warrior.

YOUNG JACK

Yes.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

You wanna win, you gotta knock the feller out on the other side. 'Cause no white man's gonna lose on points. The judge always, ALWAYS, picks the white man if the match is 'nary close. So, when I says, hit that bag, you hit that bag. Hard. You understand?

YOUNG JACK

Yes, daddy.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

And when you get knocked down, and you will get knocked down.

*(Lights up on another part of the stage. Jimmy McClary - a skinny, angelic looking 15-year-old Irish-Canadian boxer sits on a **stoop** of a rooming house. He is literally, very hungry.)*

SCIPIO THOMPSON (cont'd)

There's lots of good I-talians, Jew-boys and Mick fighters - just as hungry, just as mad as you. You come back. You always come back.

YOUNG JACK

I understand.

(Lights out on Scipio and Jack.)

A Projection: "W. 7th Street, Oakland, 1923" - then the lights come up full on Jimmy. Mamie Thompson walks by carrying a sack of groceries. A tin of milk falls out of the bag.

*Jimmy jumps up, takes it, looks at it longingly, then stops Mamie with shout. Note that Jimmy speaks with a slight **Irish accent** and Mamie still has a bit of her **native Texas** in her accent:)*

JIMMY McCLARY

Ma'am! Ma'am! You dropped this.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Thank you, kindly. *(She takes him in fully.)* Child, you... lost?

JIMMY McCLARY

No ma'am.

(Jimmy is quite shy, and has a tendency to look down.)

MAMIE THOMPSON

Where do you live?

JIMMY McCLARY

Right here. *(He points.)*

MAMIE THOMPSON

The rooming house?

JIMMY McCLARY

It's just for now. Till Da' can get me a fight.

MAMIE THOMPSON

All you boys - boxing. Such foolishness. And where is this "Da'" of yours?

JIMMY McCLARY

At the docks. Trying to catch some crabs.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Well, you're coming with me. You can have dinner with us.

JIMMY McCLARY

I can't ma'am. Da' said to wait for him right here on the stoop. So, I gotta wait.

MAMIE THOMPSON

You're skinnier than a stray cat. You can just leave him a note.... What's the matter, you can't write?

JIMMY McCLARY

I can.... a little. Ma'am, I appreciate your kindness. Especially as I can't stomach anymore crabs. But, Da' gave me his word that if I listen to him, I'll be champion ...So's, so's, I gotta just stay right here.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Well... here, just keep the milk then.

JIMMY McCLARY

I... I can't.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Didn't your momma teach you, it's rude not to accept a gift?

JIMMY McCLARY

Yes'um.... I won't forget your kindness.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Just say a prayer to the good Lord. That's enough child.

JIMMY McCLARY

Well, what name shall I tell him to bless when I pray?

MAMIE THOMPSON

Mamie, child. Mamie Thompson. (*Note: pronounced May-mee*)

(Mamie nearly exits, but looking back at Jimmy. She freezes in place. Lights dim on Mamie.)

Sunset: Foster "Da'" Wright, walking with a limp, carries a pail of crabs and a paper bag of semi-rotten broccoli. Da' looks like the stereotype of a 1920's boxing trainer... bowler hat, cigar, an ex-boxer himself, but he's also originally from England.)

DA' WRIGHT

I still got my crabbing skills! Twice as many as yesterday. And look, lad, the market was throwing these broccoli out.

JIMMY McCLARY

They're all yellow.

DA' WRIGHT

You cut that away. No need to waste the rest. Where'd you get that tin o' milk?

JIMMY McCLARY

I didn't steal it.

DA' WRIGHT

Didn't say you did.

JIMMY McCLARY

A nice colored lady made a gift of it.

DA' WRIGHT

(A beat.) We'll be doing better, soon enough. After dinner we'll get back to training.

*(Lights out on Da' and Jimmy. A few furniture pieces are brought to where Mamie is standing. Clean and neat, the **Thompson home**. Night.)*

MAMIE THOMPSON

Where you been?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Nowhere. (A beat.) After I left the Imperial Gym, I went over to Moose Taussig's place. I wanted to check out his new boys.

MAMIE THOMPSON

So, they be fighting there at 9 o'clock at night?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Boxing's only half way legal in California, woman. I told you that, so many times. It's gotta be like in a private club.

MAMIE THOMPSON

With gambling too?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

(Lying) No. *(She gives him a look.)* Well, not by me.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Why can't you do something all the way legal for a change, Scipio Thompson.... Please.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Oh, when we was young, back in Los Angeles, you seemed to like how I beat up that white man.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Certainly, I approve of self-defense. And I'm glad you didn't go to jail. But we still had to move to Oakland on a cause of it.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

So? More jobs up here, anyway. And no Klan.

MAMIE THOMPSON

But Los Angeles is warm like Texas. I get a chill in my bones nine months of the year up here. And you've been different.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

(Dismissing her) Ahh! I'm the same as I always been.

*(A beat. She stares at him, working up to her deeper grievance. Lights dim. Meanwhile, lights up on the threadbare **attic room** of Da' and Jimmy.)*

DA' WRIGHT

Here, now. Take these straps in your mouth and hold these weights up.

JIMMY McCLARY

Da', how is holding that up gonna do any more than pull my teeth out?

DA' WRIGHT

Jimmy, people who know nothing say, "that fighter has a weak chin" and "that one, he has a strong jaw." Like it's all in the bones.

JIMMY McCLARY

Ain't it?

DA' WRIGHT

Some of it is. But most of it is in yer neck. You build those muscles up, you're gonna keep yer head on straight when it counts.

(Da' exits as lights dim on Jimmy who grimaces and endures this exercise through the next scene while returning to full on the Thompson's.)

MAMIE THOMPSON

Cecil was a godly child, till you started taking him to that devil's play pen, you call a gym.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Stop calling that boy, Cecil. He's Young Jack Thompson and he's got to think that name 24 hours a day.

MAMIE THOMPSON

I birthed that boy out of my womb, named him, and that's what will be on his grave.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

And that boy is stronger than ninety nine out of a hundred men.

MAMIE THOMPSON

What's a strong body matter when you got gangsters with guns there too?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

They don't bother us. *(Holding her.)* I told you that.

MAMIE THOMPSON

(Pulling away) You're playing with fire, Scipio. If you don't

MAMIE THOMPSON (*cont'd*)

start acting like a husband and a father - you got daughters too - otherwise, mark this: I'll stop acting like a wife.

(Lights out on Scipio and Mamie; lights up in their attic room on Jimmy and Da', who has returned and takes the weights away.)

DA' WRIGHT

Now, next you gotta work on your balance and where your eyes look. Here, take a swing at me.

JIMMY McCLARY

Ah, Da'. I don't want to hurt you.

DA' WRIGHT

Don't worry, lad.

(Jimmy throws a gentle punch. Da' blocks it. Jimmy is not looking at Da' but instead his eyes follow his own deflected fist. Da' counters with a shove that knocks Jimmy backward.)

DA' WRIGHT (*cont'd*)

Okay, what happened?

JIMMY McCLARY

I don't know.

DA' WRIGHT

You know.

JIMMY McCLARY

I woulda' got hit.

DA' WRIGHT

Why?

JIMMY McCLARY

You blocked me.

DA' WRIGHT

No.

JIMMY McCLARY

No?

DA' WRIGHT

I didn't get hit because I blocked you. Why did *you, get* hit?

JIMMY McCLARY

Because I wasn't fast enough? If I hit you hard enough -

DA' WRIGHT

Sometimes you hit a man who can take that punch.

JIMMY McCLARY

So... I have to be able to block you... after I swing?

DA' WRIGHT

Yes. But how are you going to block me if you ain't *looking* at me??? So, before you learn to block, you gotta learn to look. Here put this book on your head and don't let it fall. Get used to keeping yer head up.

*(Lights change. Da' walks out again. The Projection:
"4 months later - the Imperial Gym". Young Jack
enters, taking in the skinny white boy with a book on
his head.)*

YOUNG JACK

Are you here to box or go to gentleman's school?

JIMMY McCLARY

I'm here to get paid.

YOUNG JACK

Aren't you the bold one.

JIMMY McCLARY

Just hungry. But I made two dollars a fight in Vancouver. Twice.

YOUNG JACK

Well I'm going to make... five dollars a fight here. I just don't want to rush it yet.... Why are you doing that? *(meaning the book.)*

JIMMY McCLARY

Watch my head when I box and you'll understand. I've seen you. You're a natural. I had to train myself to do what you do.

YOUNG JACK

Man, you mess up my head. You look like some choir boy but talk like a veteran.

(Jimmy shrugs and smiles shyly.)

YOUNG JACK *(cont'd)*

I'm Cecil... I mean Jack. Young Jack Thompson.

JIMMY McCLARY

(Laughing.) I'm Jimmy... You say your name like it's a brand new, tight pair of shoes.

YOUNG JACK

My step-daddy... I mean my daddy Scipio Thompson just gave me that name.

JIMMY McCLARY

Why'd he give you a new name?

YOUNG JACK

First of all, you're Irish so you can just be yourself.

JIMMY McCLARY

The Irish aren't as popular as you think. It was a lot of Mick this, Mick that. Da' saw me fighting on the street because of it. Then, he got my family to let me go away with him. You see, something happens to me when I start fighting. It's like I got the devil in me.

YOUNG JACK

I know! I know just what you mean. My momma just don't understand. That's why I like having a new name. I can be Cecil for her. And for Scipio, well like he says, there's power in a name. Jack Thompson was a great Negro heavy weight. So, I'm Young Jack, just like him... but smaller.

JIMMY McCLARY

Sorry. Never heard of him.

YOUNG JACK

Well, people all over the Bay area know him. Even the white ones. Us coloreds especially don't forget our own. You just hear the stories, you know. On the corner. At the barber. And you think, he's remembered. He's a man. I want to be remembered like that.

JIMMY McCLARY

I just wanted to get out of the tenement, you know, fifteen of us there. Anyway, Cecil's an all-right name by me. But what do I know? Anything's better than Babyface. That's all I get called.

YOUNG JACK

No, no. Babyface is a good name. Think how great it'd be for getting the girls.

JIMMY McCLARY

(Laughs shyly) I don't know nothing about that. That's for fancy guys like you. Anyway, Da', my trainer, he don't let me see girls. He says he'll make me world champ, but only if I listen to everything he says.

YOUNG JACK

What's the point of being champ if you don't get to have some fun?

JIMMY McCLARY

Not being hungry, ever again.

(Lights dim on the boys who chat and laugh, and in another part of the stage, they come up on Scipio and Da'. They look at the boys talking.)

DA' WRIGHT

Looks like the boys are getting along. What you say, we let them be regular sparring partners?

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Regular? I--- don't know about that. Getting that much pounding, every day. I gots to save him for the real thing.

DA' WRIGHT

(Snorting) I'd be hearing you like playing the angles.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

I just want my boy to have the best shot.

DA' WRIGHT

Don't we all? ... I'll give you a nickel a week. For expenses.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Mmmm. Starting now?

(Da' laughs, and gives Scipio the nickel. Projection: "1 month later". A bell RINGS. The two boys circle and jab. Jack is all smiles and jawing, but Jimmy is all serious and concentrated. At this point in Jimmy's career, he is incredibly fast but a relatively light puncher.)

YOUNG JACK

Buzz, buzz, buzz. Have some of my honey.

(Jimmy is fast and Jack misses. It's almost like the two are dancing. Moving in, responding. Taking turns who leads.)

JIMMY McCLARY

I'm tasting nuttin' sweet.

DA' WRIGHT

See, they've both gotten so much better when you're fighting quality.

YOUNG JACK

Oh, sweet dreams are on the way! *(laughing)*

SCIPIO THOMPSON

C'mon Jack. Keep that right up. Stop yapping so much.

(Jimmy lands a light jab, and bounces away.)

YOUNG JACK

Jimmy is that all you got? I couldn't even feel that last one.

(A WHITE PROMOTER - who looks a lot like a gangster - enters and watches from the shadows. Jimmy feints left then connects with a hard right to Jack's jaw which staggers him.)

SCIPIO THOMPSON

What's going on?

JIMMY McCLARY

How's that? Hard enough?

(Jack is dazed. Jimmy from pure joy does a forward flip in the ring - this will become his signature move after a victory. Jack is enraged.

YOUNG JACK

Don't showboat me!

(Jack connects with a left to the chest, pushing Jimmy back a few steps. Suddenly, it's a real fight. And both are getting punished by the other as they stand their ground and punch wildly.)

SCIPIO THOMPSON

Stop it. Stop it!

(The trainers drag the boys apart.)

JIMMY McCLARY

Let me go, Da'. Let me go!

YOUNG JACK

I had him. I had him.

DA' WRIGHT

(To Jimmy) Enough! It's over.

SCIPIO THOMPSON

(To Jack) You got nothing. You save it till counts. *(To Da')*
We're done.

YOUNG JACK

(Shouting) I'm coming back. I'm coming back.

(Scipio pulls Jack away to the other side of the stage.)

JIMMY McCLARY

I'll be ready for ya'!

DA' WRIGHT

Lad, lad. Go, take a shower. And calm down.

JIMMY McCLARY

(Breathing hard. A long beat.) Yes, Da'.

PROMOTER

(To Da') I heard you been begging for months to get a fight for your Babyface. I thought it was all hot air. But come over to Taussig's Gym again tomorrow. Let's see how he handles the current Champ of California, and not some wild, colored kid.

*(A set / projection change: the **gym locker** on one side of the stage and the **Thompson household** on the other.)*

Jimmy is sitting on a stool as Da' is icing Jimmy's fists and bruised face. On the other side of the stage Mamie is icing Jack's face)

MAMIE THOMPSON

Cecil.

YOUNG JACK

It was nothing. We both... we both just forgot we're friends. It was just the ring, momma, the ring taking over.

DA' WRIGHT

Lad, lad. Now, this one tomorrow, he's got 30 pounds on you.

JIMMY McCLARY

I can take him, Da'.

MAMIE THOMPSON

Son. I can't watch this. I can't watch you come home hurt.

YOUNG JACK

Momma, I'm sorry. But this is the only way I can get any respect in this world.

DA' WRIGHT

Jimmy, learn your lesson from what Young Jack did to you today. The way to win is *not* to get hit. You dart in, you dart out. You dance with him till you opponent gets tired from chasing you and makes a mistake. Use your brain not your heart.

(Jimmy nods.)

DA' WRIGHT *(cont'd)*

This is the beginning. This is when your real career begins.

MAMIE THOMPSON

I'm not asking you to stop. But... Your father and I - well - I'm taking your sisters with me to Los Angeles. You'll be alone up here in Oakland. *(A long beat of quiet agony, then...)* You come visit, you hear.

YOUNG JACK

Momma, I - I'll come whenever I can.

MAMIE THOMPSON

(Hugging him.) Son, I'll miss you. Miss you so much. Remember, you change your mind, you can stay with us too. Any time.

*(Sounds of **TYPEWRITING** as Jack moves upstage. Now, down-left, a manual typewriter is set up on a small*

desk in front of a folding chair. An identical one is set on stage right - however the stage left typewriter is used by a black reporter while the down-right one is used by a white sports writer.

A Projection: "1 Year Later".)

MOXEY SANDOW

(Typing) Moxey Sandow, Oakland Tribune, April 4, 1925. On the semi-wind-up, Jack Thompson easily handled Battling John Ward. But the real action that got the crowd going was the main bout -

YOUNG JACK

Wait, wait, wait. That's it? I took 5 out of the 6 rounds from Ward. And it's YOUNG Jack Thompson, not Jack Thompson.

MOXEY SANDOW

What do you want? You're the undercard. No one came to see you. You should thank me for even mentioning you at all. And *I didn't* even say you were colored. That was real white of me.

ROY E. SMITH

(Typing) Roy E. Smith. April 10, 1925. California Eagle. Young Jack Thompson continued his climb up the ladder to pugilistic glory when he defeated the accomplished Joseph Ward in San Diego last Friday -

YOUNG JACK

Okay, that's a little better, but you couldn't give a brother some more newsprint than that?

(Stepping forward is Charlotta Bass - an imposing 50-year black woman - who puts up her hand to stop Smith from replying.)

(To Jack) You don't harass Mr. Smith. You have an issue, you take it up with me, Charlotta Bass, publisher of the Eagle - circulation 67,000. Biggest weekly Negro newspaper west of the Mississippi.
(To the Audience) Sports gets one page in each issue. Page 7. There are more important things that the community must be engaged in.