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PUSSYFOOT JOHNSON IS
A PRODUCT OF THE WEST

All England is Talking About American Temperance Worker
—Has Supplied Comedians With Abundant Material for
Telling Gags—His Mission Overseas was in the Interests
of the Anti-Saloon League.

All England is now talking about
"Pussyfoot" Johnson.

No one in a generation has supplied the comedians of the halls and of the musical comedy stage with as much material for telling gags, or the humorists and cartoonists of the newspapers and magazines of the British Isles with such invaluable material for the whole country to roar over.

He is being violently attacked and violently lauded by the British press and ever since he arrived in London from America, accounts of his doings cable.

Johnson's mission overseas, as a representative of the Anti-Saloon League of America, is to help the British Isles follow the United States on the road of national abstinence. He has a modest office in Fleet street and from it he directs the spectacular raids the dry forces are making upon the old, conservative British point of view on the subject of the "pub."

He speaks on street corners and in halls. His hecklers are plenty but they never "get his goat". The wets

hate him and the dries marvel at him. He is always game.

William Eugene Johnson first gained notoriety or reputation, according as one views it, as law enforcement official for the federal government in the Indian country during the administration of President Roosevelt. Acting under orders of the Interior Department Johnson was told to go to Oklahoma and elsewhere and suppress the liquor traffic among the Indians.

Times without number Johnson was lodged in jail at the order of local officials, only to be released later when they discovered that they were dealing with Uncle Sam's man and that Uncle Sam was protecting him. If occasion seemed to warrant, Johnson would sometimes pay a small fine just to gain time to go on to the next locality where liquor sales were being made in violation of law. First and last he put more than 400 men behind bars. Frequently his life was in danger.

Once a bunch of law violators offered \$3000 for his dead body. Some fellows who needed the money went out and killed a man they thought was "Pussyfoot". They were paid the reward and they and their employers proceeded to hold a glorious drunken wake around the body. Next day "Pussyfoot" and his deputies showed up and pinched the whole lot.

Once in the Indian country of Minnesota Johnson and his men smashed two saloons. As soon as they had attacked one of the places the village marshal showed up. They refused to be arrested. One of the deputies went outside and talked with the marshal while "Pussyfoot" continued the work of demolition.

Then came the mayor, village council and a number of citizens, Johnson and his men parleyed until the second saloon had gone the way of the first and then they submitted to arrest. They were taken to the county jail at Crookstown, where they were kept eight days and then released.

The name "Pussyfoot" was given him by those whom he was hunting because of his pussyfooting characteristics. He would be here today and gone tomorrow, and leave no traces of his departure. He would start west and come back from the east. He would apparently be dead and suddenly he was alive. His work was almost uncanny.

Often he was able to get results by sheer bluff. He would march up to his men, and, discarding his own weapon, invite the liquor dealer to do the same, promising him that if he could not handcuff him and take him away the accused man was free. This sort of bluff won for "Pussyfoot" an admiration even from his enemies in the days when the west and southwest were newer than they are now, and when a fair fight was guaranteed all contestants.

It is a fact that Johnson never was afraid of any human being, and let folks know it, not, indeed by braggadocio or vociferant declaration, but quietly and firmly, all the while looking his man in the eye. His great size and strength, of course, were in his favor, and even his enemies had to admit that when it came to a fight he was as square as a die.

Not infrequently men who suffered most from his enforcement activities later became his steadfast friends and

fellow enforcers. On his staff he had first and last, hundreds of men. Some of them had been among the worst desperadoes of the country. He fought fire with fire, set thieves to catch thieves, and repaid honor with honor. There never was a man associated with him who would not gladly have given his life to protect his chief.

Once "Pussyfoot" happened on a peculiar situation. He found a narrow strip of land between Kansas and Oklahoma, which was literally no man's land. An error in surveying had somehow left that little strip, say from a dozen to fifteen feet wide and half a mile long, outside of either state. Three men camped on the narrow strip and built a long, narrow shack and opened up a saloon, gambling house and other accommodations. They had no license, of course, because Kansas and Oklahoma, first of all were dry, and there was no state authority to grant them license, and because the federal government apparently had not concerned itself about the strip. The three men held themselves without the pale of either state or federal law, and they did an enormous business.

Johnson took the ground that if these men were without the pale of the law with respect to observance, they also were without the pale with

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respect to protection, so he took the law in his own hands and went in and smashed them up. He later found some sort of law whereunder they were put behind the bars.

Before his entrance into government service Johnson had been a newspaper man and a writer for the magazines. He put his knowledge of the writing game into his detective work and frequently stirred up things that way. Once or twice his vigorous and virulent pen landed him in durance vile.

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