

## [Greenhorn Stories]

Beliefs and Customs - Folk Stuff

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview 8.

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Arnold Manoff

ADDRESS 27 Hamilton Terrace

DATE Oct. 26, 1938

SUBJECT GREENHORN STORIES - GUSSIE SIMON

1. Date and time of interview Oct. 25, afternoon
2. Place of interview 2096 Creston Ave. Bronx.
3. Name and address of informant Cussie Simon 2096 Creston Ave.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. See previous interview with same informant.

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NEW YORK

FORM B Personal History of Informant

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Arnold Manoff

ADDRESS 27 Hamilton Terrace

DATE Oct. 26, 1938

SUBJECT GREENHORN STORIES - GUSSIE SIMON

1. Ancestry See previous interview for all information on this form.
2. Place and date of birth
3. Family
4. Places lived in, with dates
5. Education, with dates
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates
7. Special skills and interests
8. Community and religious activities
9. Description of informant

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10. Other Points gained in interview

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NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Arnold Manoff

ADDRESS 27 Hamilton Terrace

DATE Oct. 26, 1938

SUBJECT GREENHORN STORIES - GUSSIE SIMON

[??????????] [????????]

(A man had taken over his wife and his children to America and he had taken an apartment in Harlem.) And he showed his wife all the

American Ways, that she has to use gas, how to handle the gas range and all the new things. And he called in a neighbor even to show her where the butcher is and where the fishman, to show her how to buy and how to arrange those things and then when she was alone and she looked around — she cooked her supper. She tried to make everything nice her first Friday in America, she had plenty of everything. It was in the wintertime and they didn't use the icebox. So she made gofilte fish and she made pudding and cold chicken and soup. She felt very proud of the kitchen.

She came from a small city where they didn't have these things. So after everything was all done she looked for a place where to put everything for tomorrow, because you know

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they don't cook on Saturday. So she was looking around the kitchen where to put her things and she discovered a little door there. So she opens the door and she sees there is a kind of a pretty big closet there 2 with one shelf. The only thing is that it is dirty there. So she is not lazy and she thinks to herself she will wash it out. So she takes a pail of warm water and she scrubs out this closet and she makes it clean like gold. And then she takes the fish and the chicken and the soup and she puts it in there. When her husband came home she begins to rave about the wonderful Schabbus (Sabbath) she made him her first week in America. So she sets the table and she puts the Cholloh on and then she goes to take out the fish and the other things from the closet. So all excited she gives an open-up-the-door to take out the stuff. There is no closet! Nothing! Only a hole there. There is no Sabbath. So she got scared and she tells her husband that she put away all the things in the closet and now it is all gone, even the closet, and she can't make it out. So he noticed already that it was in the dumbwaiter she went to get out the food. So he tells her she can kiss the Schabbus (Sabbath) good-bye because her closet had been pulled down by the janitor.

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There is an artist, a great Russian artist, Monyovitch. So he is not very material, you know what I mean. His wife and his children take care of all his things. They buy all his clothes. So [?????????] [?????] (when it was in Russia the pogroms did he catch himself out just with his life.) So he sneaked out of Russia. He had to steal the border.

So he didn't take any baggage, just a little money in his pocket.

[?????]

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(When he went over the border.) He had only a jacket. It was cool and he felt he ought to be more presentable and he ought to have a coat.

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So they telegraphed his friends in Antwerp to meet him. So he thought he was not presentable to meet his friends and there he had to meet writers and artists. So when he stopped in Germany and he was passing by a store and in the window he saw a beautiful silk coat and it appealed to his artistic sense and he bought it. He went in and bought it. He thought it would be very nice and warm and he thought it would be very nice to meet his friends. It looked like a nice coat; it had lapels and all, and a belt. He goes into the store and he buys it and he puts it right on and goes with it to Belgium with the train. And when he came there and he got off the train and his friends saw him so they didn't say anything. They were a little surprised when they saw how he was dressed but they didn't want to say anything to hurt his feelings. But later one of his friends got him alone and asked him "Was it so bad there in Russia that you had to run out without a coat, that the only thing you could wear was your bathrobe?" So he says, "You mean this? I bought this coat in Germany." So they all bust out laughing and they told him that he had bought a bathrobe instead of a coat. You see he was a poor man in Russia although he was a famous artist. He didn't know about these things.

\* \* \* \* \*

There in another story about him. He wanted a leather lumber-jacket when he came to America. And he couldn't speak a word of English.

So he went to Macy's and he wanted to describe them what he wants. So he looked for it but he couldn't see it. So the salespeople came over to ask him what he wants. So he started to describe to them. So he knew it was leather. So he made like this with his hands on his body and said in Yiddish Ledder! Ledder! (Leather! Leather!) So they went away and came back with field glasses that they hang from the shoulder with a strap. So He said no. So they went away and came back with a travelling 4 thing something that hangs from the shoulders with straps. So he said no. So they went away and brought him all kinds of leather things, portfolios and he said no. So then he saw that a boy had run in who was

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wearing a leather lumberjacket. So he chased the boy all over the store and he got a hold of his and dragged him by the arm to the salespeople and he said, "This! This!"

\* \* \* \* \*

There was a man who came over to America and he was here a little while and he got sick. So he went to a doctor and the doctor looked him over and gave him a medicine and told him, "Stay in bed for three days." So the man went home and he took the medicine and and he made his bed and he got up on the bed and stood there like that standing up. When his wife came home she sees her husband is standing up in bed, so she says [?????????] [?????] (What kind of craziness is this? What do you stand like this in bed? Have you altogether crazy become?) So he tells her that the doctor told him to shtay in bet which in Yiddish means stand in bed. So the wife let him alone and he stood like that on the bed until he fainted, because he thought that was the doctor's orders.

\* \* \* \* \*

There's another one about a man who came to America and wherever he went he saw a candy store with the sign Ice Cream to he read the sign to mean Itche Cream. Itche is a Jewish name. So one day he writes his wife in Europe a letter. 5 -5- [?????] [?????????] [?????????] [?????????????] [?????????] [5?]

(Dear Sarah, America is a wonderful land. You have it never dreamed what is here in America. The buildings are crazy big. In the city,

New York, one can see the most beautiful and the best what there is in the world to see. And what do you mean? The whole land belongs to a Jew what his name is Itche Cream. Wherever you Go you see his label, Itche Cream.) \* \* \* \* \*

There is a story everybody knows about the man that moved up with his family from the East Side to the Concourse. They moved in a new building that had the name the

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Theodore Roosevelt apartments. So in the middle of the house there was a big courtyard and in the middle of the courtyard was a big statue maybe fifteen feet big. The statue was of Theodore Roosevelt because it happened when he was very popular still.

So everybody when they came into the courtyard right away they were hit in the face by this statue. So when this man moved in right away, of course he invited his relatives they should come and visit him so he could show off his new apartment. So the relatives came and of course he showed them all around and he explained to them all the modern improvements and then later they went down for a walk. So when they are waling out of the house in the courtyard, one of the relatives when he sees the statue he points to it and he says. "Who is that such an important man that they make such a big statue of him?" So the man that just moved in looks at his relative and he says to him, not joking

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[??????????] [??????????]

(Really, Chyam, are you a fool? If you were possessed of such a house, such a palace, whose statue would you build in the center of the palace.) (And points like that proud to the statue.) [6?]

[??????] [7?]

(That is of course the landlord!)

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