

## [Holy & Sanctified Church of God in Christ]

Belief and custom - Religious denomination

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK 9 Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Vivian Morris

ADDRESS 225 West 130th St. New York N. Y.

DATE Dec. 21, 1938

SUBJECT Holy & Sanctified Church of God in Christ

1. Date and time of interview Dec. 19, 1938 9.30 P. M. to 12.30 A. M.
2. Place of interview Observation at Church on 133rd St. East of 7th Ave. above Dickie Well's Cabaret.
3. Name and address of informant None
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant. None
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you None
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

## Library of Congress

A large room with two large coal stoves—one in the front and one in the back with two large [stovepipes?] that wound up to the ceiling and came to a V point in the center on either side, of the stove aisles, which divided the church, was a line of chairs extending from the back of the church to an elevated platform in the center front.

(Use as many additional sheets as necessary, for any of the forms, each bearing the proper heading and the number to which the material refers.)

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Vivian Morris

ADDRESS 225 West 130th St. New York

DATE Dec. 21, 1938

SUBJECT HOLY & SANCTIFIED CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST.

“As I sat waiting for the services to begin in the Holy and Sanctified Church of God in Christ, the jumping rhythm of Dickie Wells' Swing Band, which was blaring forth in spine-tingling jitterbug fashion, caused the congregation to shuffle softly in time to the music.

A quick glance showed two large coal stoves—one in the front and one in the back, with two large stovepipes that wound up to the ceiling and came to a black V - point in the center. On either side, of the stove aisles, which divided the church, was a line of chairs extending from the back of the church to an elevated platform in center-front.

## Library of Congress

On the platform in back of the rostrum and seated in a chair to his left, was a man dressed entirely in brown.

The front rows were taken up by the congregation and in the back seats was a collection of disinterested children of assorted ages who paid no attention to their surroundings.

Deacon Jigging, the acting pastor, lifted his shining, cobra-shaped head in the direction of the sky. When he finally focused his eyes on his saints, a most effective prayer had been to de Lawd!

The deacon began his lengthy sermon by stretching his grey-clad figure 2 to its full six feet and saying to one of the sisters in the front row: "Now sistuh Nettie, read me whut de Bible seh 'bout 'postle Paul in dem dere Acks—you know.' Sister Nettie bellowed in a strong throaty voice that did justice to her three hundred odd pounds: 'De good book sehs heah, dat de 'postle Paul, toll de sailuhs aftuh fo'teen days an' fo'teen nights un hunguh —' 'Hol' rat dere,' interrupted Deacon Jigging cocking his head to one side and shaking a long finger at his twenty-one saints who comprised his congregation, 'dem's deep woids —saints...(pause) fo'teen days and fo'teen nights uh hunguh—go on saint, dig a mite deepuh!'

'Shipwrecked an' teared to pieces....'

'Shipwrecked, (jumps up) an' teared to pieces! Gawd-a-mighty, think uh dat!

"Postle Paul sed——(a long mailing moan)

'Stay on de ship! said Saint Nettie

'Stay on the ship?' he shifted his stance and continued, 'what dat mean? Now some uh y'all don' know whut dat mean? Stay on de glory ship—de Lawd's ship. Go on Sistuh —

## Library of Congress

'Ef y'u wan tuh be saved! !

'Ef, (deliberately and loudly) yo' wan' tuh be saved! (Stamp) fum de debbil!

'Whooh! shouted a weazened saint, 'sho' God do! ! (stamp ) Preach on! ! !

'Ah knows whut ahm ta'kin' 'bout, 'said Jigging. Then he held one foot in the air and shook his finger in the air, saying,

“An' he know whut ah'm sayin'!

"Deed he do.' seconded the weazened one.

'Now tek dat sistuh yonduh,' he points to a plump, round little lady with three children surrounding her, 'She 'tended to go 'way, didn't yuh sistuh?'

'Amen, sho' did!'

'Ah know dat she felt sub'n pulling (pulls) pullin' 'gin huh and whispuhin' 'don' go, don' go'.  
Dat uz me and de Lawd, saints.

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We fin'ally got huh tuh stay.”

'Y' all sho' did pull hard,' beamed the lady,' cause I had the children ready an' mah suitcase packed—an' den we didnt go!'

'Amen, dat's the powah uh de Lawd saints—de powah uh de Lawd!'

'He's all-seein', all-heahin' an' all doin'', interposed one of the saints.

'Amen!'

## Library of Congress

'Now le's talk 'bout Nicodemus' said brother Jiggins.

'Ole Nicodemus?'

'Yeh—Nicodemus believe in God but he didn' want his peoples to know dat he bow his head to no man, said Jiggings

'What he do brother?'

'He sneak 'way in de middle uh de night an' go see Jesus—sneakin' in de back way.'

'No?'

'But Jesus 'buked him doh—an' seh, 'Nicodemus! Stamp O Nicodemus! !

'Yeah! ! !'

'Nicodemus! stamp!'

'Whut fo' yu come to me in de middle of de night lak a thief in de night?'

'Amen!'

'Dese wondus which you know ah done done, is sub'n no mo'tal man could do!'

'Do Jesus!'

'No mol'tal man could do!' (stamp) (Wipes perspiration)

'Nicodemus say, "Lawd, ah don' mean no ha'm.

'Lawd seh, "Nicodemus, (stamp) ah can read y'u like a book.'

'Amen!'

## Library of Congress

'An' read us lak a book. (stamp)

'Hallelujah! Hallelujah! ! !'

'An read the w'ul lak a book!'

One white sister here starts to wave her hand in a fluttering motion like a bird learning to fly.

Then another sister strikes up a hymn: 'Dry bones in the valley!. They start their hand-clapping and the tempo speeds up. The saints scream and yelp, then unable to contain themselves longer, begin to hop up then down, waving their arms, crazily. Acting Pastor Jiggins takes advantage of the situation to read some more from the Bible. The children gleefully join in the hand-clapping and laugh and smirk at the antics of their elders.

The orchestra and pleasure-seekers underneath are drowned out by the stamping and shouting of the frenzied church-people.

The man on the platform with the brown suit becomes cross-eyed with religious ecstasy and dances about with a crazy, rocking rhythm, his arms flopping lifelessly, at his sides.

Mid all this excitement, a little shovel-headed boy in the rear, calmly draws men with cowboy paraphernalia on and six-guns spitting flame, (maybe a creative artist of the future) and Indians riding stick horses. The church rolls on and the tempo decreases, then a weary sister breaks out with a song consisting of "Eyes, Eyes" Ad Infinitum.

Brother Jiggins finally waves for silence and speaks: 'Somo w'lile back, some uh our saints was 'ticed 'way by some folks who tol' dem de wuz de 'real thing.'"

"True!"

## Library of Congress

'But of de debbil don' git dem 'fo' dey gilts back, de'll fine' out dat, dey lef' de real thing heah.'

'Amen'

'Wheah's de real thing?'

'Preach! Preach!!!'

'Sistuh Nettie, read dat passel whut says we's de real thing!'

"Au'—

'Au'—repeated acting Pastor Jiggins, 'de followers uh God who shall be saved.

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'De followers of God who shall be saved'—

'Will be holy an' sanctified'

'Will be holy an' sanctified'

'Amen!'

'Dat's owah faith'

'Owah faith'

'Some uh us stan' still'

'Yeah'

'Some uh us shouts'

## Library of Congress

'Yeah'

'Ah don' condemn neither'

'Amen, amen'

'We got diffunt ways uh showin' we's sanctified.'

'Amen. Dat's de trufe!

'Now ah'll offer a li'l prayer fo' everybody.'

After the prayer was over, a sister in a maroon dress, jumped up and said: 'How bout a piece uh money fuh deacon Jiggins, saints an' fren's?'

She jumped about, gobbling up nickels, dimes and pennies and looking squarely at me, she said: 'Give us eighteen cent mo' an' make a Dollah fo' de deacon fo' his evening's work.'

I dug down in my picket pocket -book because I had obtained money's worth!