

'GOD' OF HARLEM REACHED 'HEAVEN' AFTER LONG TRIP

Father Divine Blossoms Out In New York Negro Belt At End of Arduous Trek — Exiled From Georgia

By Charles Norman (AP Feature Service Writer)
NEW YORK—Awd whippers of "God," melodious chants of "peace," it's wonderful," greet Father Divine's appearances among his followers, but to ordinary mortals he seems a generally shrewd colored person of less than ordinary height, with a bald head, and an addiction to double-breasted blue suits and bright ties set off by a pearl stickpin.

He reached the heaven of Harlem by easy stages from points south. Valdosta, Ga., saw the last of him in 1914. There, a jury found him of unsound mind, recommended that he leave the state. The warrant called for the apprehension of "John Doe, alias God," for he withheld his own name and his followers gave him the appellation which has stuck. Following his trial, he left Georgia.

His New York in 1915
His real name seems to have been George Baker. In his 60 years of wandering evangelism, his various names underwent a number of changes, but "God" remained. In Baltimore, as a disciple of one Sammie Morris, a negro preacher who asserted he had been born again as "Father Jehovia," Baker became "The Messenger."

At various times he was Major J. Divine, Rev. J. Divine, and finally Father Divine.
He arrived in New York with a handful of followers in 1918. In towns en route, where he electrified negro audiences with his powerful oratory (whose underlying doctrine is "Peace, it's wonderful"), his followers found temporary jobs which supported the wandering group.

Religious Communism
First in Brooklyn, then in Long Island, Father Divine launched a kind of religious communism. Wages were pooled, he saw to the feeding and clothing of his followers, inserted ads to get jobs for unemployed disciples, and even appeared before prospective employers to announce he was the Rev. J. Divine, and could "recommend and re-recommend, guarantee and re-guarantee" the job-seeker concerned.

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MISSED THE KING. An illness kept J. P. Morgan, American capitalist, from the coronation of King George VI. He is shown upon his arrival in New York.

It was in Sayville, L. I., that his group flourished and his fame spread. His Sunday dinners, at which food was good and plentiful, and where no collections were taken, brought clamorers from Harlem, who returned to New York's negro community bearing tidings of a messiah.

By 1931, with complaints pouring in, the police of Sayville decided Father Divine was a "public nuisance" and arrested him on that charge. He went to jail. A judge died, his conviction was reversed by the appeal court in 1933, and his fame grew. He removed his "heaven" to Harlem and issued a statement to set at rest whispers, rumors and charges.

Divine Elucidates
Part of his statement, signed, "I, Rev. M. J. Divine," follows:
"I AM giving this statement to forewarn the public and those who may be concerned; that these reports are unfounded, the most of them, especially in reference to any person or persons selling their insurance policies or turning them in and giving the refunds to ME, and also the fictitious name, they have given ME."

"I accept of no donations, contributions or love offerings or any such, that is, if it is known to have come from any person."
"The Rev. Million Followers of Mine, and Believers, having given ME their lives and all they have possessed, does not mean that they give it to ME as a person, neither have these things come under MY Personal Jurisdiction. When they say, they have given ME anything or all they have, they are not speaking of giving ME anything personally, for they can tell the world at large, I do not need it as a Person."

Rides in Rolls Royce
This statement, with characteristic punctuation, words appear to tell as much as it leaves unaid concerning Father Divine's financial operations. Observers believe the "angels," devoted followers of Father Divine, hand over their wages and possessions, receiving in return board and lodging and "Peace, it's wonderful." Several suits, to recover possessions thus handed over, introduce a sordid, mundane note in the rapturous atmosphere of Divine's "heaven."

Although no one has ever discovered that Father Divine either carries any cash on his person or owns anything in his name, he rides in a Rolls Royce (second hand) and operates apartment houses, flats, shops and "extension heavens" in Baltimore, Newark, Jersey City, Bridgeport Conn., and a "promised land" near Kingston, N. Y., as a vacation ground.

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CORNERSTONE OF NEW STATEHOUSE LAID TOMORROW

Part of Salem Ceremony to Be Broadcast Over N.B.C. — Governor Martin Talks

SALEM, June 16.—(AP)—Several thousand persons, one of the largest crowds ever to come to Salem, are expected to see the laying of the cornerstone of Oregon's new capitol tomorrow afternoon—the first such ceremony since 1873.

Several who saw the laying of the cornerstone of the building that was destroyed by fire two years ago will see the ceremony, part of which will be broadcast over a nationwide (NBC) radio network between 2 and 2:30 p. m.

Governor Martin will give two addresses, one on the radio program and the other later. The Rt. Rev. Benjamin B. Dagwell, Episcopal bishop of the Oregon diocese, will give the invocation and Justice Geo. Rossman will be master of ceremonies.

The 186th Infantry band will provide the music, while Francis Kealy, one of the architects who designed the building, will describe it. State officials will be introduced, and then the grand lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, with Grand Master R. Frank Peters officiating, will conduct the laying of the cornerstone.

Among those speaking in the program following the broadcast will be Carl C. Donagh, U. S. district attorney; Ross B. Hammond, contractor who is erecting the building; C. C. Hockley, Oregon PWA director, and Judge Lawrence T. Harris. Moet Rev. Edward D. Howard, D.D., Catholic archbishop of Oregon, will give the benediction.

Documents to be sealed in the cornerstone will be disclosed tomorrow, and the sealing will take place in Portland today. All state offices, except those prevented by the constitution, will close at noon tomorrow. Those not closing will maintain skeleton staffs. Salem business houses also will close.

The new building is scheduled to be opened in August, 1938, but construction is considerably ahead of schedule.

SENATE APPROVES MINE WORK BILL

WASHINGTON, June 16.—(AP)—The senate, disregarding a prediction the house would refuse to concur, approved a bill to permit suspension of the annual \$100 assessment work requirement on mining claims held by location.

Senator Murray (D. Mont.), author of the measure, urged immediate action, contending several hundred miners and prospectors would otherwise be placed in "great distress."

He said that under existing law not less than \$100 worth of labor must be performed before July 1 on mining claims for which patents have not been issued.

SMALL GRAIN AND FIELDS BENEFIT

PORTLAND, June 16.—(AP)—General rains over Oregon in the past week

DEVELOPMENTS IN DEAD BABY CASE DUE COMING WEEK

Investigation continued today into the death of an unidentified newborn baby whose decomposed body was found Monday afternoon in a nurse's room at the Ashland Community hospital.

Possible new developments were expected with the return of Miss Irene Simons, 23-year-old nurse in whose room hospital executives said the body was found. Miss Simons, they said, had occupied the room up to June 1 when she left for the east on a month's vacation.

Investigating authorities said today they had been informed that Miss Simons had notified an Ashland friend she would be back about the middle of next week. It was not known whether she was yet aware of the discovery.

Meantime, Miss Ardath Loehner, hospital superintendent, formally notified the Ashland city council by letter at its meeting last night that she wanted to relinquish her lease on the hospital, or assign her lease to any qualified person Miss Loehner might suggest.

The council did not discuss the discovery of the baby's body. The meeting was adjourned subject to call to consider the qualifications of anyone who might be suggested as sub-lessee. It is understood that Miss Simons had been interested in leasing the hospital, which is city-owned.

Remains of the baby's body were to be sent this afternoon or tomorrow morning to Dr. Frank Menne of Portland, pathologist of the University of Oregon medical school, who is to make a microscopic examination in an effort to reveal facts not yet disclosed. Investigating authorities said they were awaiting word from Dr. Menne regarding the way in which he wanted the remains sent to him. They expected to hear from him this afternoon.

It was through negotiations for a sub-lease that the baby's body was discovered. Miss Loehner consulted Frank J. Vanddyke, city attorney, regarding the lease and in the course of the conversation told Vanddyke about offensive odors which she said had been emanating from the room for some time. Vanddyke ordered an investigation and the body was found in a traveling case.

greatly benefited small grains and some fields thought to be seriously damaged by drought began to appear promising, the U. S. department of agriculture weather-crop summary said today.

Scattered sections still remained in need of more moisture and in some areas grain was lodged by heavy rains, while the growth of corn was retarded. Considerable rain damage to strawberries occurred but cane fruits benefited.

REP. CONNERY DIES, WOMAN MAY HEAD LABOR COMMITTEE

Co-Author Wage-Hour Law Stricken by Food Poisoning — Sen. Chavez III

WASHINGTON, June 16.—(AP)—The death of Rep. William P. Connery, Jr. (D-Mass.) may place a second woman in an important government labor post.

Rep. Mary T. Norton (D-N.J.) is entitled by seniority to succeed Connery as chairman of the house labor committee—a position which requires frequent conferences with Mrs. Frances Perkins, secretary of labor.

Mrs. Norton said she was too shocked, however, by Connery's unexpected death late yesterday from food poisoning to decide at once whether she would accept the chairmanship.

She would have to relinquish her position as chairman of the District of Columbia, which gives her the unofficial title of "Mayor of Washington."

If she chooses to retain her present post, the labor chairmanship will pass to Rep. Ramspeck (D-Ga.). Connery was co-author of the wage and hour measure. During his 15 years in congress he sponsored many labor bills. He introduced in the house the Wagner labor relations bill.

The 48-year-old representative became ill late Monday after returning from a speaking tour in Massachusetts. Connery and his wife once were partners in a vaudeville act. He also had been a theatrical manager and a candy manufacturer.

It was his annual custom to be "master of ceremonies" on the day the house finally adjourned. Then he led the marine band and members in songs and stunts.

He was rated as one of the capital's best raconteurs. Many of his favorite stories were based on experiences overseas during the 10 months he served in the 26th (Yankee) division.

WASHINGTON, June 16.—(AP)—Senator Chavez (D-N.M.) was in the naval hospital today, suffering from food poisoning similar to that which caused the death yesterday of Representative Connery (D-Mass.).

Chavez was stricken in his office with nausea, chills, and a high fever, and the capitol physician, Dr. George W. Calver, immediately ordered him to the hospital. His condition this

morning was reported much improved, and his son, Dennis Chavez, Jr., said the senator apparently was in no danger.

Rome, it was officially estimated, had a population of 1,133,088 in 1935. Its greatest population in ancient times was 312,000 in 585 B. C.

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