

## [Living By Faith]

No. 1

Approximately 1,800 words

26 B [Revisej?] SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: LIVING BY FAITH

Date of First Writing January 26, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed W. A. and Susie Crede

Fictitious Names W. A. and Susie Holmes

Street Address 240 Augusta Street

Place West Columbia, South Carolina

Occupation Mill Worker

Name of Writer Helen Shuler

Name of Reviser State Office

“Now, for the lands' sake, whoever told you that I'm interesting? Mrs. Holmes exclaimed. There ain't' nothing interesting about me. But do come on in the house. I'm tired and I want to rest. I've been over in town all morning, waiting on that doctor. There was such a crowd ahead of me.

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“My, it sure seems good to ease myself in this rocking chair. It don't seem possible that I could get so tired, I'm such a scrap.”

“Sammy, come to me this minute. Get me a rag, Minnie, to wipe this child's nose. He's got such a cold it's dripping clear down his chin.”

“Well, Ma, I just don't know where I'll find anything. Oh, just use his apron. I'll have to wash today anyway.”

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“I do enjoy doing what little I can for the sick,” Mrs. Holmes continued, “and sharing the little I have with those who are needy. You know our Master says, 'In as much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto Me.' Sometimes the neighbors come for me when I've got the next meal cooking, but I just leave it. Will says I have spoiled lots of good rations by going to help the other fellow.”

“Mamma doesn't care,” chimed in Minnie,” if the dinner burned up or if the fire goes out. She thinks it is her duty to go. She goes wherever she hears of any one being sick, and then she comes home tired and nervous and quarrels with us.”

“I go whenever I am able to go. But I am sick most of the time. Dr. Babcock treated me for a long tim. But he just patched me up. He said I had pellagra inside and outside. He made me drink lots of milk and eat vegetables. But the doctors can't cure us all the time. The Lord has to take a hand in it. And He'll do it when we ask him, but we must have faith. At that time, I belonged to the Southside Baptist church, but I wasn't a Christian. I hadn't been saved.

“One night I was awful sick. I was in a dreadful fix. Couldn't hardly walk. Just hobbled along with some one holding onto me. My feet were turned over on their sides. The doctor came that night and told me I'd die before morning. There wasn't another thing he could do. Then the preacher, Dr. Derrick, came to pray for me so I could go to heaven. After

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they left me, I thought about some passages I had read in my Bible: 'Is any sick among you? Let him call the elders of the church; and let them pray for him.' And another, 'And the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up.' Then I remembered about the meeting going on over at the Free Will Holiness Church. I called my husband and told him I was going there to get them to 3 pray for me."

"'You can go if you want to,' he told me, 'but I am not going to help you get there. I don't believe in such foolishness.'"

"Then I called the old Negro woman I had to take care of me. She put a few clothes on me and picked me up in her arms and carried me over to the church. When I got there, I asked the preacher to pray for me. During the meeting I realized what a sinner I had been, and I knew that if I did die that night I'd go to hell. I knew then that I'd never been a Christian and that my faith had been weak. When we got through praying and I got up off my knees, my feet had been straightened. I could walk the same as anybody. On that Monday night the Lord healed me, and that's the night I was saved. I had been cured by prayer. Now all the relief I get, I get from the Lord. I live by faith.

"When I got back home that night, the old bogey man, that's what I call him, tempted me. I found my baby awful sick. I told her pa not to send for a doctor, and I just got down on my knees and prayed. I asked the Lord to cure her. By morning she was as well as ever. The Lord had answered my prayer and cured her.

"Sometime later my married daughter was sick, and the doctor said she had double pneumonia. He was giving her all kinds of medicine, but she wasn't getting any better. One night I went over there, and the doctor had just told the family that Annie couldn't live out the night. They were going on something terrible. I quieted them the best I could. Then I went in the closet and got down on my knees, like the Master said, and I prayed and prayed. When I came out of the closet, my daughter was much easier and had fallen

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asleep. The next morning when the doctor came and found her so much better, he was surprised and wanted to know what I had done. I told him the Lord had cured her.

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I had just prayed and asked His help.”

“Minnie have faith? “Good gracious me, that child has more faith than I do. I wish mine was as strong as hers. But she ain't no Christian. She used to be a Christian before she started going to picture shows. You remember what the Master told the rich young ruler, 'One thing thou lacketh.' Well, Minnie will go to moving picture shows, and I think any one that goes to picture shows can't be a Christian.”

“No, indeed, I don't go to such things. “Deliver me from them. Picture shows are not of God, and I won't tolerate anything that is not of God.”

“Sometimes I tell Ma I'm going up town to buy a pattern or something,” Minnie interrupted, “but, instead, I go to the show. After I've been in there a while, I'll see Ma coming down the aisle looking for me. Then I'll duck my head down to hide. She usually finds me and pulls me out.”

“Yes, ma'am, Mrs. Holmes added, “that's the only time I ever go in the picture place.”

“About three years ago I was real sick again. I was in a dreadful fix. My faith must not have been as strong as it had been, because I let them persuade me to go to the hospital. The doctors said I had ulcer of the stomach, or maybe cancer. I stayed there three weeks. When I was able to come back home, they told me I had to eat something or drink milk every two hours. But I couldn't do that. I got so tired of the milk, and, anyway, I'm not always where I can eat that often. My stomach worries me something terrible. There's such a hollow feeling and misery right here.

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“Some of the women here in the village use snuff or smoke cigarettes. But not me. No indeed,” pounding the arms of the chair. “I hate the stuff. That's just filthiness of the flesh. Before I was saved and became a Christian, I used snuff. But the Lord has cleaned me for the filthiness of the 5 flesh and from all other filthiness.

“My husband dips the filthy stuff and has for twenty-five years. That is a sin he must answer for when he goes to meet his God. He hasn't yet been saved and is not a Christian. I can't get him to go to church nor read his Bible. All he wants to do on Sunday is sit around the house and rest. When I get down on my knees to pray, he thinks it's all foolishness and won't even stay in the house. Goes out on the steps and sits in the sun. He says I spend more time at church and visiting the sick than I spend at home. I collect the children in the neighborhood and along the road to the church and take them to Sunday School. Some days I can borrow a car or hire a truck to take them. I can get other people to go to church, but I can't persuade my own husband to go with me. I don't read nothing but the Bible. There ain't nothing good but the Bible.

“Before I was sick all the time, we got along pretty well. Will, that's my husband, had a good job in the mill, and we saved some money. We bought a home out in Shandon for \$2,500. We paid \$500 cash. That was all we had saved. Then we put a mortgage on for the rest. We were making the payments of twenty dollars regularly every month until I took sick and the mill shut down to part time.

“When we couldn't make the payments, we sold the place and came back here to the village. We got five hundred dollars for our portion, but it didn't stay with us long. There was too many hospital and doctor bills. Then, too, I had to take a Negro woman to help take care of me. I took everything we could rake and scraps.

“For a while we had a pretty hard time to get along. But we are doing fairly well right now. Will has kept his job in the mill and is getting twenty dollars a week. Jim, our boy, is

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working there, too, and pays me 6 some board. Then Minnie and her husband live with us and help with the expenses.

“Will complains whenever I give away groceries. He says we can't afford it. I don't always have them at home, and I don't always have the money to pay for them. But I just run down to the grocery and charge what I want until pay day. Sometimes the folks need a piece of furniture. Then I give it to them. Will says I have given away enough furniture to fill two or three houses as big as this one. But I feel that they need it more than I do. 'Blessed is he that considerth the poor; and the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.'

“Now tell me what church you belong to. Oh, you do. I'm so glad, for for I just love the Lutherans. They are so good. I know Mr. Smith from St. Paul's. He comes down here to see me real often, and he prays with me. I tell you he is a good man and I sure love him.

“If it hadn't been for my faith in the Lord I would not be living today. 'The just shall live by his faith.'”