

## [Tightwad Gives Church a Dollar]

Folklore Dup.

FORM A

Circumstances of Interview

STATE, Washington

NAME OF WORKER, J.F. Ariza

ADDRESS, Federal Writers' Project, Seattle, Wash.

DATE, December 22, 1938.

SUBJECT, "Tightwad Gives Church a dollar; NOT a hundred."

1. Name and address of informant: A Seattle Minister who insists his name must not be divulged. To do so would cause him embarrassment. Insisted he would not talk to me if he felt his name "would be connected in any way" with the narrative.
2. Date and time of interview, December 19, 1938; forenoon.
3. Place of interview, at ministers' residence.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant, Methodist Union of Seattle, Republic Building, Seattle, Wash.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you, no one.

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6. Description of room house, surroundings, etc. The pleasant, comfortable home of an elderly, retired minister, in good circumstances.

Folklore.

FORM B

Personal History of Informant.

STATE, Washington

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ADDRESS, Federal Writers' Project; Seattle, Wash.

DATE, December 22, 1938

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NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT: A Seattle Minister who insists his name must not be divulged. To do so would cause him embarrassment. Insisted he would not talk to me if he felt his name "would be connected in any way" with the narrative.

1. Ancestry Probably English. Did not say.
2. Place and date of birth, "Oregon Territory the year before the Civil War began" (1860)
3. Family, an aged wife; made no allusion to family.
4. Places lived in, with dates, "many years a preacher in Seattle," he said. Nothing further.
5. Education, with dates, unknown.

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6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates, minister of Gospel; no further knowledge on subject.
7. Special skills and interests, unknown to interviewer.
8. Community and religious activities, a retired Methodist Episcopal Minister.
9. Description of informant, feeble and slightly ill; mind fairly vigorous, but at times his more active wife would prompt him, then his mind would clear.
10. Other points gained in interview, none in particular.

### TIGHTWAD GIVES CHURCH A DOLLAR; NOT A HUNDRED.

We were trying to raise a thousand dollars for urgent repairs to our church. Its condition was dangerous; unless it was immediately repaired, the city building inspector would close it. We called a special meeting to raise the money. Our members turned out nobly the church was packed. Most of them were families and individuals of modest circumstances. One of the more prosperous was a widow, Mrs. X, hard of hearing and also hard to get money from. She gave less to the church than the poorest member gave. She was quite generally regarded as downright miserly. Indeed, one deacon, privately referred to her as "the Copper Queen," because, he averred, "she never given more /[#?] than a penny or, at most, a nickel in the collection."

It was an open meeting. Some suggested holding a fair, an appeal to local philanthropists, and various other ways of raising the money. These more abandoned, the majority believing we should subscribe the funds ourselves.

First to come forward was Mr. B., our most affluent member. He headed the list with a hundred dollar subscription. He had hardly sat down when Mr. C. , not as well to do but

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willing to sacrifice under the circumstances, arose and also gave a hundred dollars. I was elated.

“Will anyone else be as generous?” I asked, yet realizing the futility of expecting a third hundred-dollar contribution.

Then, to everybody's utter astonishment, Mrs. [X?] stood up and said , “I will give the same.” There was a spontaneous burst of applause as she sat down, some of the members leaving their pews to congratulate her. She looked surprised, and blushed scarlet.

Dear, good Mrs. X! To put her at ease and also to thank and congratulate her, I went down to her pew. I knew her gift would stimulate others to be generous, I forgave all her former parsimony, feeling [X?] had been properly rebuked for my — well, my idea that she was hopeless and that we could never expect anything from her. In the hour of dire need she had proved to be pure gold. 2 It being an informal meeting, I remained in the aisle beside Mrs. X.

“Brothers and sisters,” I began as the members, their faces radiant and happy, settled down following the excitement, “are there any others who will match Mrs. X.'s generous gift of one hundred dollars?”

Before anyone could speak, Mrs. X. gave a gasp and leaped to her feet. “A HUNDRED DOLLARS?” she [skrieked?]. “Why, Mr. Blank, I subscribed ONLY A DOLLAR! I thought that was what the others gave.”