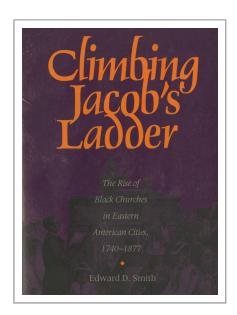


Climbing Jacob's Ladder: the rise of Black churches in Eastern American cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition records

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2011



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# **Table of Contents**

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	
Series 1: Research files	3
Series 3: Audiovisual records, 1987-1994 (bulk 1991-1991)	43

### **Collection Overview**

Repository: Anacostia Community Museum Archives

Title: Climbing Jacob's Ladder: the Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American

cities, 1740 - 1877 Exhibition Records

Date: 1987 October - 1988 October

Identifier: ACMA.03-036

Creator: Smithsonian Institution. Anacostia Community Museum

**Extent:** 27.63 Linear feet (63 boxes)

Language: English .

**Summary:** An exhibition on the growth of African American churches in the eastern

United States. The exhibit was organized by the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988. These

records document the planning, organizing, execution, and promotion of the exhibition. Materials include correspondence, research files, exhibit scripts, administrative records, brochures, press coverage, education packets, loan

agreements, floor plans, and catalogues.

### **Administrative Information**

### Related Archival Materials

Audiovisual materials related to this exhibition located in Anacostia Community Museum Archives.

### Other Finding Aids

Box list in accession file.

### **Preferred Citation**

Climbing Jacob's Ladder: the rise of Black churches in Eastern American cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition records, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution

#### Restrictions

Use of the materials requires an appointment. Please contact the archivist to make an appointment: ACMarchives@si.edu.

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

African American churches

### Museum exhibits

## Types of Materials:

Brochures
Catalogs
Correspondence
Exhibit scripts

Exhibition records -- 1967-1989

Photographic prints

### Names:

Anacostia Community Museum Anacostia Neighborhood Museum Smith, Edward D.

# **Container Listing**

## Series 1: Research files

Box 1, Folder 1	Audiotape script
Box 1, Folder 2	Daily evaluation form
Box 1, Folder 3	National Museum of American History, Costume Study Gallery
Box 1, Folder 4	Newspaper clippings and magazines
Box 1, Folder 5	Articles
Box 1, Folder 6	Brochures
Box 1, Folder 7	Photocopies of "Climbing Jacob's Ladder"
Box 1, Folder 8	Biographies Notes: Bios of John "Sonny" Bia, Louise Lelia Briscoe, Mabel Oden Carroll, Laurena Deadwyler, Hatte L. Haliburton, Maggie Lewis Hedgespeth, Hazel Beatrice Young Jenkins, Scott L. Lyles, Vernice Evelyn Lyles, Clifton Pleasant
Box 1, Folder 9	Seymour, Smith: "Early Black Churches of Anacostia," 1988
Box 1, Folder 10	Exhibit script (panels)
Box 1, Folder 11	Exhibit script research, correspondence and revisions  Notes:  Black church exhibit Louise Hutchinson Revised script Smithsonian research report Parts of script? Several letters from University to Dr. Edward Smith about script for exhibit
Box 1, Folder 12	Black church Exhibit loose memos (Memos about extending the exhibit)
Box 1, Folder 13	Stanley Nelson, Lydia Lively, The Black church: The case for Historical Preservation Film treatment
Box 1, Folder 14	Final exhibit script, 1987
Box 1, Folder 15	Exhibit draft

Box 2, Folder 1	Edward Smith: Correspondence
Box 2, Folder 2	Completed photographic orders
Box 2, Folder 3	Appreciation program and reception, Sept. 17, 1988
Box 2, Folder 4	Correspondence: video rights  Notes: Letter to CBS about rights to play a sermon (song Dry Bones in the Valley) in the exhibit video presentation, Music video commentary
Box 2, Folder 5	SITES: Traveling exhibition notes, 1990-1993
Box 2, Folder 6	Requests for photocopy
Box 2, Folder 7	Photgraphy requests
Box 2, Folder 8	SI Press submission form for "Climbing Jacob's Ladder" book
Box 2, Folder 9	Collectibles insurance renewal, Oct. 1987-Oct. 1988
Box 2, Folder 10	Correspondence: symposium
Box 2, Folder 11	Correspondence: photography rights, travelling exhibits, artifact list, insurance value
Box 2, Folder 12	Brochure
Box 2, Folder 13	Correspondence
Box 2, Folder 14	Correspondence: requesting artifacts
Box 2, Folder 15	Edward Smith: memoranda about exhibit extension
Box 2, Folder 16	Correspondence: drafts of requesting artifacts, draft of script
Box 2, Folder 17	Photcopies of prints not purchased but already in office
Box 2, Folder 18	Photocopies of prints not purchased and not in office
Box 2, Folder 19	Exhibit labels
Box 2, Folder 20	The Renaissance: Black Arts of the Twenties, 1985
Box 2, Folder 21	Brochures
Box 2, Folder 22	Memo regarding exhibit script with unedited script attached
Box 2, Folder 23	Purchase orders

Box 2, Folder 24	Outgoing video loan files
Box 2, Folder 25	Contract orders, purchase orders
Box 2, Folder 26	Publication from the Columbian Harmony Society
Box 2, Folder 27	Allotment proposal research
Box 2, Folder 28	Exhibit script, artifact list and list of lenders
Box 2, Folder 29	Exhibit script
Box 3, Folder 1	Video stills from "Church Songs of Black Americans"
Box 3, Folder 2	Selected readings
Box 3, Folder 3	Articles
Box 3, Folder 4	Educational material, material for docents, audio script
Box 3, Folder 5	Photographs
Box 3, Folder 6	Draft of exhibit script and artifact list
Box 3, Folder 7	Black Bostonians
Box 3, Folder 8	Revised exhibit script
Box 3, Folder 9	Smith, Edward: "Climbing Jacob's Ladder" and education booklets
Box 3, Folder 10	SITES
Box 3, Folder 11	Script and list of photography Notes: Script, list of used photos for exhibit with neg. number and description
Box 3, Folder 12	Submission for Presidential Design Awards and Slides
Box 3, Folder 13	Educational material
Box 3, Folder 14	Docent training
Box 3, Folder 15	SITES
Box 3, Folder 16	Educational material
Box 3, Folder 17	Draft of exhibit script

Box 4, Folder 1	African Education Society Report Washington, 1830
Box 4, Folder 2	American Methodist Historical Society Sesqui-Centennial
Box 4, Folder 3	A.M.E. Church Review, Fall 1983
Box 4, Folder 4	A.M.E. Zion Church Offices and Departments
Box 4, Folder 5	Correspondence: Richard Allen and Absalom Jones to Dorothy Ripley
Box 4, Folder 6	Afro-American resource guide
Box 4, Folder 7	Afro-Anglican Magazine clipping, Oct. 1859  Notes: Afro-Anglican magazine October 1859, page 335 with table of black churches in Philadelphia
Box 4, Folder 8	A.M.E. Christian Recorder, May 28 1984
Box 4, Folder 9	The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography - The African Methodists of Philadelphia, 1794-1802
Box 4, Folder 10	The Colored American, Dec. 1865-Jan. 1866 Notes: Augusta, Ga- The Colored American Dec 30, 1865, p.3 Jan 1866
Box 4, Folder 11	A Chronicle of Christian Stewardship Sesqui-Centennial St. John Methodist Church, 1798-1948
Box 4, Folder 12	Bibliography
Box 4, Folder 13	Journal of Southern History, Nov. 1975: Afro-American Protestants in the Old South (Bailey)
Box 4, Folder 14	Ernest B. Bayliss Civil War correspondence, 1862
Box 4, Folder 15	The Baptist History Association Pamphlet
Box 4, Folder 16	Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASAALH), INC conference program, Oct. 1984
Box 4, Folder 17	Baldwin, Lewis V: "Languishing in the Backwaters of African Methodism"
Box 4, Folder 18	Barber, Jesse: "Climbing Jacob's Ladder," 1952
Box 4, Folder 19	A Brief Historical Account of the First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia, PA
Box 4, Folder 20	Copies of "The Bee" 1882-1886

Box 4, Folder 21	Banks, William L: "The Black Church in the US," 1972
Box 4, Folder 22	Benedict, David: "A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World," [1831] 1971
Box 4, Folder 23	Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church: "Black Episcopalians," by Robert A. Bennett
Box 4, Folder 24	Notes on "Slaves without Masters," by Ira Berlin
Box 4, Folder 25	Bethel, Elizabeth Rauh: "Promiseland a century of life in a Negro community," 1982
Box 5, Folder 1	Bragg, George F: "History of the Afro-American Group of the Episcopal Church," 1922
Box 5, Folder 2	Bratton, Mary: "John Jasper of Richmond," 1979
Box 5, Folder 3	Brooks, Walter Henderson: "The Pastor's Voice," 1945
Box 5, Folder 4	Baltimore Afro-American, Nov. 30 1895
Box 5, Folder 5	Baltimore Afro-American, May 16 1896
Box 5, Folder 6	Baltimore Afro-American, Dec. 21 1895
Box 5, Folder 7	Notes on "One More Day's Journey," by Allen B. Ballard
Box 5, Folder 8	Notes by Louise Daniel Hutchinson on "The Black Church and Bicentennial"
Box 5, Folder 9	Official history of the first African Baptist church Philadelphia, PA. by Charles H. Brooks
Box 5, Folder 10	Boston Almanac 1843
Box 5, Folder 11	The New York Times Magazine June 30, 1985 Portrait of s small black church
Box 5, Folder 12	Escape from Slavery The underground railroad by Charles L. Blockson
Box 5, Folder 13	Brooks, The evolution of the Negro Baptist church
Box 5, Folder 14	The autobiography of Hiram Rhodes Revels together with some letters by and about him by Joseph H. Borome
Box 5, Folder 15	The Negro Genius a new appraisal of the achievement of the American Negro in literature and the fine arts by Benjamin Brawley

Box 5, Folder 16	The Silver Bluff Church A history of Negro Baptist Churches in America by Walter H. Brooks
Box 5, Folder 17	Brooks, The priority of the Silver Bluff Church and its promoters
Box 5, Folder 18	The Beginnings of the insurance enterprise among Negros
Box 5, Folder 19	The journal of American Folk-lore Vol IV, Decoration of Graves of Negros in South Carolina
Box 5, Folder 20	Two Centuries of Methodist concern: Bondage, freedom and education of Black people by James P. Brawley
Box 5, Folder 21	The Maryland Pendulum Winter 1983/4
Box 5, Folder 22	Carnegie Quarterly Volume XXXIII number 1 Fall/Winter 1987-1988, Black churches: can they strengthen the Black Family?
Box 5, Folder 23	A semi-centenary discourse, delivered in the first African Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia May 1857 by William T. Catto
Box 5, Folder 24	Charleston Advocate
Box 6, Folder 1	Charleston (SC) Missionary record
Box 6, Folder 2	One hundredth anniversary of the Chestnut St. Union American M.E. Church
Box 6, Folder 3	Wrestlin' Jacob a portrait of religion in the old South Erskine Clarke 1979
Box 6, Folder 4	Richmond Her past and present by W. Asbury Christian D.D.
Box 6, Folder 5	Christian Index, Hist. of the Bapt. Denomination in Georgia
Box 6, Folder 6	History of Church of Christ (Holiness) USA 1895-1965
Box 6, Folder 7	Brief History of the financial department of the African Methodist Episcopal church
Box 6, Folder 8	Frederick Cooper, Elevating the race: the social thought of black leaders, 1827-50
Box 6, Folder 9	Handwritten notes from Cones, A black Theology of Liberation
Box 6, Folder 10	The Crisis: The Isaac Hathaway Art. Company Dec 1917 and "To Bishop Hood" Feb 1919 his death – poem and photo
Box 6, Folder 11	Cornish, Rev. John

Box 6, Folder 12	The late Bishop Walters March 1917 Front page of Crisis: a record of the darker races May 1920
Box 6, Folder 13	The nine new Bishops August 1920 and The Methodist church North, March 1911
Box 6, Folder 14	Rev. H.C. Bishop Notes: Mrs. S.J. Garnett, Oct. 1911 The Rt. Rev. J.T. Holly May 1911 Benj. T. Tanner June 1923
Box 6, Folder 15	The Abyssinian church of N.Y. Sept. 1923
Box 6, Folder 16	Various articles Notes: The church November 1910 Three Bishops Nov 1916 The Negro church May 1912 Colored Richmond Jan 1917
Box 6, Folder 17	Personal Monument to Bishop Holsey Feb 1928
Box 6, Folder 18	Mathew Anderson: With a eulogy by Dr. Francis Grimke April 1928
Box 6, Folder 19	Various articles Notes: The Rt. Rev. H.B. Delany October 1828 Three Senior Bishops July 1915
Box 6, Folder 20	Various articles Notes: Bishop John L. Hurst and wife December 1915 Bishop Alexander Walters February 1912
Box 6, Folder 21	Various articles Notes: The late Wm. B. Derrick June 1913 The late Bishop Gaines, March 1912
Box 6, Folder 22	Cromwell, The first Negro churches in the District of Columbia
Box 6, Folder 23	Crowder, a study of lined Hymn singing in selected black churches of North and South Carolina
Box 6, Folder 24	The journal of Negro History Vol. LVI, No. 1 January 1971, Va. Baptists and the Negro in the Antebellum era by W. Harrison Daniel
Box 6, Folder 25	Daniel, VA Baptists, 1861-1865
Box 6, Folder 26	VA Baptists and the Negro in the early republic
Box 7, Folder 1	Davis, George Liele and Andrew Bryan, Pioneer Negro Baptist preachers
Box 7, Folder 2	Daniel, Southern Protestantism and the Negro 1860-1865
Box 7, Folder 3	Davis, The life and public services of Rev. Wm. Washington Browne

Box 7, Folder 4	Davis, a Narrative of the life of Rev. Noah Davis
Box 7, Folder 5	De Costa, The story of St. Philips' church
Box 7, Folder 6	Des Champs, John Chavis as a preacher to whites
Box 7, Folder 7	Douglass, Annals of the first African church. The African Episcopal church of St. Thomas
Box 7, Folder 8	The growth of segregation in American congregationalism in the south by Richard B. Drake
Box 7, Folder 9	Du Bois, the Negro church
Box 7, Folder 10	Handwritten notes on Fields, Lemon swamp
Box 7, Folder 11	The Du Sable Museum heritage calendar 1984
Box 7, Folder 12	Fisher, a short history of the Baptist denomination
Box 7, Folder 13	Fisher, Lott Cary the colonizing Missionary
Box 7, Folder 14	Fitchett, The traditions of the free Negro in Charleston, South Carolina
Box 7, Folder 15	Fitchett, the status of free Negroes in Charleston
Box 7, Folder 16	Fitchett, the origin and growth of the free Negro population of Charleston, South Carolina
Box 7, Folder 17	Fitts, Journal of Black church history and thought Rev. James Henry Eason, July-August 1984
Box 7, Folder 18	Handwritten notes Foley, God's men of color
Box 7, Folder 19	Freedom's journal NY
Box 7, Folder 20	An illustrated history the city of Washington by Thomas Froneck
Box 7, Folder 21	Fulier, History of the Negro Baptists of Tennessee
Box 7, Folder 22	The first Black Baptist by Gaustad
Box 7, Folder 23	Gardener, William Watkins, Antebellum black teacher and Anti-slavery writer
Box 7, Folder 24	Bearing the cross, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the southern Christian leadership conference by David J. Garrow

Box 7, Folder 25	Carol V.R. George, in the beginning Mother Bethel A.M.E. church
Box 7, Folder 26	George, Segregated Sabbaths
Box 8, Folder 1	Catholics
Box 8, Folder 2	Rev. C.C. Goss, Methodism, its founders and pioneers
Box 8, Folder 3	Handwritten notes Graham, Baltimore: The 19th century black capital
Box 8, Folder 4	Green, The secret city a History of race relations in the Nation's capital
Box 8, Folder 5	Greenleaf, History of the churches of all denominations
Box 8, Folder 6	Guilday, The life and times of John England first Bishop of Charleston
Box 8, Folder 7	Handwritten notes on Hagood, The colored Man in the Methodist Episcopal Church
Box 8, Folder 8	Hall, Tallahassee's: Black churches, 1865-1885
Box 8, Folder 9	Hardon, The Protestant Churches of America
Box 8, Folder 10	Jasper, A case History in leadership
Box 8, Folder 11	Harris, A Negro History tour of Manhattan
Box 8, Folder 12	Harris, James Lynch: Black leader in Southern reconstruction
Box 8, Folder 13	Hartgrove, The story of Josiah Henson
Box 8, Folder 14	Hartshorn, Penniman, an era of progress and promise 1863-1910
Box 8, Folder 15	Hayden, Faith, Culture and leadership a history of the black church in Boston
Box 8, Folder 16	Isaac Hathaway artist and teacher
Box 8, Folder 17	Hayden, after the war: the mission and growth of the episcopal church among blacks in the south, 1865-1877
Box 8, Folder 18	Hayden, Conversion and control: dilemma of Episcopalians in providing for the religious instructions of slaves, Charleston, South Carolina, 1845-1860
Box 8, Folder 20	Headley, the great riots of New York 1712 to 1873
Box 8, Folder 21	Henderson, The Phoenix Election Riot
Box 8, Folder 22	Henson, Father Henson's Story of his own life

Box 8, Folder 23	Henson, Uncle Tom's Story of his life
Box 8, Folder 24	Hester, One hundred and five years by faith, a history of the twelfth Baptist church
Box 8, Folder 25	Hilyer, the 20th century union league directory
Box 8, Folder 26	Holmes, the evolution of the Negro college
Box 8, Folder 27	Holmes, Cotton Mather: A Bibliography
Box 8, Folder 28	Handwritten notes, Hood, 100 years of the A.M.E Zion church
Box 8, Folder 29	Horten, Black Bostonians
Box 8, Folder 30	Hughes, Meltzer, Lincoln, Pictorial History of Black Americans
Box 8, Folder 31	Humez, Gifts of Power: The writings of Rebecca Jackson
Box 9, Folder 1	Hewitt, N.Y.s Black Episcopalians
Box 9, Folder 2	Hewitt, The sacking of St. Philip's church, N.Y.
Box 9, Folder 3	Hunter, A nickel and a prayer
Box 9, Folder 4	James, Institute for colored youth
Box 9, Folder 5	Handwritten notes of Jacobs, Linda Brent Incident in the life of a slave girl
Box 9, Folder 6	Articles Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860
Box 9, Folder 6  Box 9, Folder 7	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson,
	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860
Box 9, Folder 7	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860  Jackson, religious instructions of Negroes
Box 9, Folder 7 Box 9, Folder 8	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860  Jackson, religious instructions of Negroes  Jackson, Brief history of the Gilfield Baptist church
Box 9, Folder 7 Box 9, Folder 8 Box 9, Folder 9	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860  Jackson, religious instructions of Negroes  Jackson, Brief history of the Gilfield Baptist church  Jacobs, Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa
Box 9, Folder 7 Box 9, Folder 8 Box 9, Folder 9 Box 9, Folder 10	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860  Jackson, religious instructions of Negroes  Jackson, Brief history of the Gilfield Baptist church  Jacobs, Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa  James, "The Sun Do Move" The story of the life of John Jasper
Box 9, Folder 7  Box 9, Folder 8  Box 9, Folder 9  Box 9, Folder 10  Box 9, Folder 11	Notes: Puckett, religious folk-believes of Whites and Negroes and Jackson, religious development of the Negro in VA from 1760 to 1860  Jackson, religious instructions of Negroes  Jackson, Brief history of the Gilfield Baptist church  Jacobs, Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa  James, "The Sun Do Move" The story of the life of John Jasper  Johnson, God's Trombones. Seven Negro sermons in verse

Box 9, Folder 15	Information about the book, Joyner, Down by the riverside, a South Carolina slave community
Box 9, Folder 16	Handwritten notes, Kaplan, The black presence
Box 9, Folder 17	Kelly, Bygone Baltimore
Box 9, Folder 18	Kennard, a short history of the Gilfield Baptist church
Box 9, Folder 19	Kerber, Abolitionists and Amalgamators
Box 9, Folder 20	Knight, Notes on John Chavis
Box 9, Folder 21	Lakey, The rise of colored Methodism
Box 9, Folder 22	Information of the life of Lucy Craft Laney
Box 9, Folder 23	Lapsansky, since they got those separate churches: Afro-Americans and racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia
Box 9, Folder 24	Lankford, Lankford's artistic churches and other designs
Box 9, Folder 25	Levesque, inherent reformers inherited orthodoxy: Black Baptists in Boston
Box 9, Folder 26	Libby, Rev. Thomas Henry
Box 9, Folder 27	Lilly, Historic churches of Charleston
Box 9, Folder 28	Handwritten notes Lines, Slaves and churchman
Box 9, Folder 29	Locke, The Negro in art
Box 9, Folder 30	Locke, the new Negro an interpretation
Box 10, Folder 1	Rev. Lott Cary, in African Repository
Box 10, Folder 2	Methodism and Morgan State College 1866-1900 by W.A. Low
Box 10, Folder 3	Mc Pherson, the struggle for equality
Box 10, Folder 4	McAfee, History of the Woman's Missionary Society
Box 10, Folder 5	Mathews, Slavery and Methodism
Box 10, Folder 6	Handwritten notes on Mays, the Negro's church

Box 10, Folder 7	Doris Evans Mc Ginty, The Black presence in the music of Washington, DC: 1843-1904
Box 10, Folder 8	Melnick, Billy Simons: The Black Jew of Charleston
Box 10, Folder 9	Militelo, The first Negro Catholic Bishop
Box 10, Folder 10	Mitchell, the history of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church and Mt. Zion cemetery
Box 10, Folder 11	Morris, National Baptist catechism, sermons, addresses and reminiscences
Box 10, Folder 12	Miller, the father of Black Nationalism
Box 10, Folder 13	Mount Moriah Baptist Church – Ms. V. Smith
Box 10, Folder 14	Murray, Presbyterian and the Negro – a history
Box 10, Folder 15	The National Harp of Zion
Box 10, Folder 16	1930 and 1935 Disciples of Christ year books
Box 10, Folder 17	N.C. Republican and C.R. Advocate, May 22, 1844 Bishops of the A.M.E. church
Box 10, Folder 18	Misc. Newspaper articles on Black churches
Box 11, Folder 1	N.Y. Freeman
Box 11, Folder 2	O'Brien, Factory, Church, and Community: Blacks in Antebellum Richmond
Box 11, Folder 3	Opportunity, Bishop John A. Gregg July 1926 – Photo in A.M.E. Church
Box 11, Folder 4	Opportunity, Zion Church, N.Y. April 1926 Photo of exterior and interior
Box 11, Folder 5	Various articles Notes: Opportunity, Religious Folk songs of the American Negro, Nov. 1925, The technical study of then spirituals, Nov. 1925, The Negro's cycle of song, Nov. 1925
Box 11, Folder 6	Opportunity, Negro Folk Song, Oct. 1923
Box 11, Folder 7	Philadelphia Bibliography and maps
Box 11, Folder 8	Pierre, The work of the society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts among the Negroes in the colonies
Box 11, Folder 9	The Negro Almanac 1976

Box 11, Folder 10	Porter, Modern Negro art
Box 11, Folder 11	Announcement SI holiday party 1984
Box 11, Folder 12	Pegues, Our Baptist ministers and schools
Box 11, Folder 13	Perdue, The Negro in Savannah 1865-1900
Box 11, Folder 14	Phillips, The history of the colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America
Box 11, Folder 15	Philadelphia Black Churches
Box 12, Folder 1	Ponton, Life and Times of Henry M. Turner
Box 12, Folder 2	Various articles  Notes: Music, I am a Pilgrim – Gardner A Pilgrim and Stranger by Teare  Jesus is a rock in the weary land – Cooke
Box 12, Folder 3	Rabinowitz, Southern Black leaders of the reconstruction era
Box 12, Folder 4	Provine, The economic position of the free Blacks in the District of Columbia
Box 12, Folder 5	Handwritten notes on Reid, Irony on Afro-American History
Box 12, Folder 6	Rabinowitz, Race relations in the urban south. More than Religion: The urban church
Box 12, Folder 7	Randolph, from slave cabin to the pulpit
Box 12, Folder 8	Randolph, the life of Rev. John Jasper
Box 12, Folder 9	Reimers, Negro Bishops and Diocesan Segregation in the Protestant Episcopal church
Box 12, Folder 10	Spangler, The rise and progress of Adventist blacks
Box 12, Folder 11	Richmond Planet, Feb. 21, 1885 "Rev. Richard Wells", God's Hand in the History"
Box 12, Folder 12	Handwritten notes: Ritz, divided soul
Box 12, Folder 13	Rountree, An index to biographical sketches and publications of the Bishops of the A.M.E. Zion church
Box 12, Folder 14	Rousseve, The Negro in Louisiana
Box 12, Folder 15	Rusling, a note on early Negro Baptist history

Box 12, Folder 16	Russell, Black Baptist secondary schools in VA
Box 12, Folder 17	Robinson, some Aspects of the free Negro population in Washington DC.
Box 12, Folder 18	Silcox, Delay and Neglect
Box 12, Folder 19	The Ebony Handbook
Box 12, Folder 20	A guide to St. Michael's church Charleston
Box 12, Folder 21	Barnett, St. Luke's Episcopal church
Box 12, Folder 22	Sernett, Afro-American religious history
Box 12, Folder 23	Sherwood, the Oblates' hundred and one years
Box 12, Folder 24	Sterling, we are your sisters
Box 12, Folder 25	Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit
Box 12, Folder 26	Sernett, Black religion and American Evangelicalism
Box 12, Folder 27	Star of Zion
Box 12, Folder 28	Simonson, Nelson C. Richard Allen's free papers
Box 12, Folder 29	Black religions in the new world
Box 12, Folder 30	Simpson, Black Pentecostalism in the United States
Box 13, Folder 1	Shiloh Baptist church DC
Box 13, Folder 2	Sherer Jr, Negro churches in Rhodes Island before 1860
Box 13, Folder 3	Sixth Mt. Zion Baptist church Richmond VA (John Jasper)
Box 13, Folder 4	Southern, The music of Black Americans
Box 13, Folder 5	Sobel, Trabelin' on: The Slave journey to an Afro-Baptist faith
Box 13, Folder 6	Sobel, "Wrasslin Jacob" Black and White understanding of causality and purpose
Box 13, Folder 7	Sobel: "They can never both prosper together"
Box 13, Folder 8	Simms, the first Baptist church in North America
Box 13, Folder 9	Star of Zion

Box 13, Folder 10	Stevens, Anthony Burns a history
Box 13, Folder 11	Stockton, origin of the Emmanuel church
Box 13, Folder 12	Synan, The Holiness-Pentecostal movement in the United States
Box 13, Folder 13	Springfield Baptist church
Box 13, Folder 14	Thomas, A 19th century operated shipyard
Box 13, Folder 15	Tanner, Benjamin Tucker
Box 14, Folder 1	Taylor, Black religion and the church
Box 14, Folder 2	Taylor, A.A. "Religious influences" The Negro in S.C.
Box 14, Folder 3	Thomas, the first African Baptist church in North America
Box 14, Folder 4	Townsend, South Carolina Baptist 1670-1805
Box 14, Folder 5	Tubman, Harriet Home
Box 14, Folder 6	Tupper, the first century of the first Baptist church of Richmond, VA
Box 14, Folder 7	Tucker, Black Pastors and Leaders: Memphis 1819-1972
Box 14, Folder 8	Van Deusen, the Black man in white America
Box 14, Folder 9	Washington Grit
Box 14, Folder 10	Handwritten notes on Walker, a rock in a weary land: The African Methodist Episcopal church during the civil war and reconstruction
Box 14, Folder 11	Handwritten notes on Walls, The AME Zion church
Box 15, Folder 1	Woodson, the History of the Negro church
Box 15, Folder 2	Washington, the origins of Black Baptist Separatism
Box 15, Folder 3	White, Prince Saunders: An instance of social mobility among Antebellum New England Blacks
Box 15, Folder 4	Wightman, Life of William Capers, D.D.
Box 15, Folder 5	Williams, A Discourse delivered in St. Philip's church
Box 15, Folder 6	Bishop Waters (George Miller)

Box 15, Folder 7	Washington Times: Black Gospel
Box 15, Folder 8	Wesley, Richard Allen, Apostle of freedom
Box 15, Folder 9	Wesley, The Negroes of N.Y. in the Emancipation movement
Box 15, Folder 10	Levesque, Inherent Reformers-inherited Orthodoxy: Black Baptists in Boston
Box 15, Folder 11	Wood, Jr., Baptist and the American experience
Box 15, Folder 12	Williams, The Black Evangelical Ministry in the Antebellum border states
Box 15, Folder 13	Wright, the Bishops of the A.M.E. church
Box 15, Folder 14	Handwritten notes: Williams, The A.M.E. Christian Rec.
Box 15, Folder 15	Wright, Encyclopedia of African Methodism
Box 16, Folder 1	Abyssinian Baptist church
Box 16, Folder 2	Alfred Street Baptist church, Alexandria, VA
Box 16, Folder 3	African Meeting House, Boston
Box 16, Folder 4	Allen Chapel A.M.E.
Box 16, Folder 5	Berean Baptist (DC)
Box 16, Folder 6	Bethel, A.M.E. Georgetown, S.C.
Box 16, Folder 7	Bethel, A.M.E. (NYC)
Box 16, Folder 8	Bridge Street AWME (Brooklyn)
Box 16, Folder 9	Central African Bapt. (Augusta)
Box 16, Folder 10	Christ Episcopal church Philadelphia
Box 16, Folder 11	Collins Chapel C.M.E. (Memphis)
Box 16, Folder 12	Columbus Avenue A.M.E.Z. (Boston)
Box 16, Folder 13	Corinthian Baptist Church, DC
Box 16, Folder 14	Ebenezer A.M.E. church (Baltimore)
Box 16, Folder 15	Emmanuel A.M.E. (Portsmouth, VA)

Box 16, Folder 16	Ebenezer A.M.E. (Fort Wash)
Box 16, Folder 17	Bethel A.M.E. (Baltimore)
Box 16, Folder 18	Charles Street A.M.E. church
Box 16, Folder 19	Emmanuel A.M.E. (Charleston)
Box 17, Folder 1	Ebenezer Baptist church (Boston)
Box 17, Folder 2	Ebenezer Baptist church (Richmond)
Box 17, Folder 3	Emmanuel Baptist Church (Anacostia)
Box 17, Folder 4	First little Bethel (Stroudsburg, Pa.)
Box 17, Folder 5	Fifteenth Street Presby. (DC)
Box 17, Folder 6	First African Baptist Church (Philadelphia)
Box 17, Folder 7	First African Baptist Church Richmond
Box 17, Folder 8	First African Baptist Church (Savannah)
Box 17, Folder 9	First African Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)
Box 17, Folder 10	First Baptist Church (Baltimore)
Box 17, Folder 11	First Baptist Church (Lexington, Ky.)
Box 17, Folder 12	First Bryan Bapt. (Savannah)
Box 17, Folder 13	First Baptist Church (Marshall Heights DC)
Box 17, Folder 14	First Baptist Church (Randolph St. in DC)
Box 17, Folder 15	First Baptist Church, Petersburg
Box 17, Folder 16	First Baptist Church (Vienna, VA)
Box 17, Folder 17	First Baptist Church (Williamsburg, VA)
Box 17, Folder 18	Guiding Light Refuge Baptist (DC)
Box 17, Folder 19	Heritage United Church of Christ (Baltimore)
Box 17, Folder 20	Isle of Patmos (DC)

Box 17, Folder 22 John Street Church (NY)  Box 17, Folder 23 Gillfield Baptist Church (Petersburg)  Box 17, Folder 24 John Wesley A.M.E. Zion (DC)  Box 17, Folder 25 Liberty Baptist Church (DC)  Box 17, Folder 26 Lincoln Temple Cong. (DC)  Box 17, Folder 27 Mc Kindrey United Methodist Church (Edith Shepard)  Box 17, Folder 28 Lombard Central Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)  Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 14 St. John's Baptist Church (Lexington, S.C.)	Box 17, Folder 21	Israel Metropolitan Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (DC)
Box 17, Folder 24 John Wesley A.M.E. Zion (DC)  Box 17, Folder 25 Liberty Baptist Church (DC)  Box 17, Folder 26 Lincoln Temple Cong. (DC)  Box 17, Folder 27 Mc Kindrey United Methodist Church (Edith Shepard)  Box 17, Folder 28 Lombard Central Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)  Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 22	John Street Church (NY)
Box 17, Folder 25 Liberty Baptist Church (DC)  Box 17, Folder 26 Lincoln Temple Cong. (DC)  Box 17, Folder 27 Mc Kindrey United Methodist Church (Edith Shepard)  Box 17, Folder 28 Lombard Central Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)  Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 23	Gillfield Baptist Church (Petersburg)
Box 17, Folder 26 Lincoln Temple Cong. (DC)  Box 17, Folder 27 Mc Kindrey United Methodist Church (Edith Shepard)  Box 17, Folder 28 Lombard Central Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)  Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 24	John Wesley A.M.E. Zion (DC)
Box 17, Folder 27 Mc Kindrey United Methodist Church (Edith Shepard)  Box 17, Folder 28 Lombard Central Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)  Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 25	Liberty Baptist Church (DC)
Box 17, Folder 28 Lombard Central Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia)  Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 26	Lincoln Temple Cong. (DC)
Box 17, Folder 29 Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 1 Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 27	Mc Kindrey United Methodist Church (Edith Shepard)
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Box 18, Folder 2 Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)  Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 17, Folder 29	Lovely Lane Church (Baltimore)
Box 18, Folder 3 Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church  Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 1	Metropolitan A.M.E. church (DC)
Box 18, Folder 4 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)  Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 2	Metropolitan Baptist Church (DC)
Box 18, Folder 5 Mother A.U.M.P. Church  Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 3	Metropolitan Wesley A.M.E. Church
Box 18, Folder 6 Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)  Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 4	Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (Philadelphia)
Box 18, Folder 7 Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church  Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 5	Mother A.U.M.P. Church
Box 18, Folder 8 Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition  Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 6	Mother Zion A.M.E. Church (N.Y.C.)
Box 18, Folder 9 Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)  Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 7	Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church
Box 18, Folder 10 St. Augustine (DC)  Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 8	Mount Zion (DC) in Maddex Edition
Box 18, Folder 11 Old West Church, Boston  Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 9	Myrtle Baptist Church (Newton, Mass.)
Box 18, Folder 12 St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)  Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 10	St. Augustine (DC)
Box 18, Folder 13 St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)	Box 18, Folder 11	Old West Church, Boston
	Box 18, Folder 12	St. Xavier's cath. (Baltimore)
Box 18, Folder 14 St. John's Baptist Church (Lexington, S.C.)	Box 18, Folder 13	St. Georges Church (Philadelphia)
	Box 18, Folder 14	St. John's Baptist Church (Lexington, S.C.)
Box 18, Folder 15 St. John United Methodist Church (Augusta, Ga.)	Box 18, Folder 15	St. John United Methodist Church (Augusta, Ga.)

Box 18, Folder 16	St. Joseph A.M.E. (Durham N.C.)
Box 18, Folder 17	St. Luke's Episcopal Church (DC)
Box 18, Folder 18	St. Paul A.M.E. (St. Louis)
Box 18, Folder 19	St. Phillips Episcopal Church (N.Y.C.?)
Box 18, Folder 20	Second Baptist (Beth. Pa) Zora – The good news messenger
Box 18, Folder 21	St. Phillips Monumental (Ga)
Box 18, Folder 22	Sixth Mt. Zion Baptist Church (Richmond)
Box 18, Folder 23	Springfield Baptist Church (Augusta)
Box 18, Folder 24	St. Phillips Episcopal Church (Richmond)
Box 18, Folder 25	Tindley Temple United Meth. Church (Philadelphia)
Box 18, Folder 26	2nd Presbyterian Church (Charleston, S.C.)
Box 18, Folder 27	Third Street Bethel A.M.E. (Richmond)
Box 18, Folder 28	Sharp Street Methodist Church
Box 18, Folder 29	Twelfth Baptist Church
Box 18, Folder 30	Waters A.M.E. Church
Box 18, Folder 31	St. Thomas Episcopal Church (Philadelphia)
Box 18, Folder 32	Union Baptist Church (Philadelphia)
Box 18, Folder 33	Union Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church
Box 18, Folder 34	Zoar United Methodist Church (Philadelphia)
Box 18, Folder 35	Union Baptist Church (Cambridge, Mass)
Box 18, Folder 36	Zion Olivet Presbyterian Church (Charleston)
Box 19, Folder 1	A.M.E. Christian Recorder
Box 19, Folder 2	A.M.E. Education Dept.
Box 19, Folder 3	A.M.E. Finance office

Box 19, Folder 4	A.M.E. Sunday School Union
Box 19, Folder 5	A.M.E. Youth Division
Box 19, Folder 6	ASAALH Association for the Study of African American Life and History
Box 19, Folder 7	Adams, Bishop John Hurst
Box 19, Folder 8	Afro-American History and Culture Museum Philadelphia
Box 19, Folder 9	Afro-American Historical Society (Wilm. Delaware)
Box 19, Folder 10	African-American Institute (Rev. Jonathan Weaver)
Box 19, Folder 11	African American Museum Association
Box 19, Folder 12	Afro American religious hist. group
Box 19, Folder 13	Afro-American History and Genealogical Society 84
Box 19, Folder 14	American Bible Society
Box 19, Folder 15	Amistad center Newsletter
Box 19, Folder 16	Attendance at Museum
Box 19, Folder 17	Avery Institute
Box 19, Folder 18	Augusta Chronicle (Ga)
Box 19, Folder 19	Augusta Richmond county library (Ga)
Box 19, Folder 20	Baptist History Association (Tex.)
Box 19, Folder 21	Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs
Box 19, Folder 22	Barnett-Aden Gallery
Box 19, Folder 23	Baskin, Andrew
Box 19, Folder 24	Bayliss, Ernest B. (letter regarding diary 1990.032.0001)
Box 19, Folder 25	Bethune Cookman
Box 19, Folder 26	Bethune Museum and Archives
Box 19, Folder 27	Berea College

Box 19, Folder 28	Birchtree Group
Box 19, Folder 29	Bishop College
Box 19, Folder 30	Black Fashion Museum
Box 19, Folder 31	Black Film Institute (UDC)
Box 19, Folder 32	Black church video project Sonic images production)
Box 19, Folder 33	The Boston Athenaeum
Box 19, Folder 34	Boston Public Library
Box 19, Folder 35	Boston Univ. Afro-American Studies
Box 19, Folder 36	Braithwaite, Dr. Roland
Box 19, Folder 37	Bruce, Dr. Beverly (Howard)
Box 19, Folder 38	California Afro-American Museum
Box 20, Folder 1	C.M.E. Bishops (Othal Lakey – Cincinnati)
Box 21, Folder 2	C.M.E. Publishing House
Box 22, Folder 3	Carver Photo
Box 23, Folder 4	Charleston S.C. Museum
Box 24, Folder 5	Chicago Art Institute
Box 25, Folder 6	The Christian Index Office
Box 26, Folder 7	Cincinnati Art Museum
Box 27, Folder 8	Clarke, Dr. Erskine
Box 28, Folder 9	College of Charleston Library (S.C.)
Box 29, Folder 10	Collins, Janet (Milner Association Philadelphia)
Box 30, Folder 11	Columbia Harmony Society
Box 20, Folder 12	Columbia Hist. Society (DC)
Box 20, Folder 13	Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Box 20, Folder 14	Crew, Spencer
Box 20, Folder 15	Cripps. Dr. Thomas
Box 20, Folder 16	Davis, Dr. Henderson S. (A.M.E. Indianapolis)
Box 20, Folder 17	Delaware Heritage Commission Office
Box 20, Folder 18	Dobson, Jualynn, N.Y.C.
Box 20, Folder 19	Dozier, Richard
Box 20, Folder 20	Driskell, David
Box 20, Folder 21	Dunston, Bishop Alfred G.
Box 20, Folder 22	Dupree, Sherry (Church of God in Ch.)
Box 20, Folder 23	Fisk Jubilee singers
Box 20, Folder 24	Fisk University
Box 20, Folder 25	Fleming, Cynthia (University of Tennessee)
Box 20, Folder 26	Friends of Black Alexandria
Box 20, Folder 27	Gaither, Barry (Boston)
Box 20, Folder 28	Gardner, Sara
Box 20, Folder 29	Elio Gasperetti
Box 20, Folder 30	Gellerman, Robert
Box 20, Folder 31	Genovese, Dr. Eugene D.
Box 20, Folder 32	Ga. (University of Ga. Library)
Box 20, Folder 33	Goldsworthy, Terry Blacks in Ind.
Box 20, Folder 34	Grahams, Leroy
Box 20, Folder 35	Grants
Box 20, Folder 36	Carroll Greene Banneker-Douglass Museum (Annapolis)
Box 20, Folder 37	Enoch Pratt Library

Box 20, Folder 38	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Box 20, Folder 39	Green, Johanna
Box 20, Folder 40	Gum Springs Hist. Soc. (Ronnie Chase)
Box 20, Folder 41	Hoggard, Bishop J. Clinton
Box 21, Folder 1	Hall, Charlie
Box 21, Folder 2	Hall, Dr. Robert L.
Box 21, Folder 3	Hanes, Loretta
Box 21, Folder 4	Harris, Michael
Box 21, Folder 5	Harrison, Alferdteen
Box 21, Folder 6	Historic Augusta, Inc.
Box 21, Folder 7	Harvard's Houghton Library
Box 21, Folder 8	Hayden, Carleton
Box 21, Folder 9	Hayden, Robert: Boston Pub. Schools
	Historic Savannah Foundation
Box 21, Folder 11	Howard University Institute for urban affairs and research – receipt
Box 21, Folder 12	Huff, Earl (Bishop UAME church)
Box 21, Folder 13	Hood Theological Seminary
Box 21, Folder 14	Howard University Library
Box 21, Folder 15	The Hyde Collection
Box 21, Folder 16	Huntley, Tyrone
Box 21, Folder 17	ITC
Box 21, Folder 18	Interfaith Connector
Box 21, Folder 19	Ives, Patricia Carter
Box 21, Folder 20	Jones (Dean, Howard School of Religion)

Box 21, Folder 21	Steven Jones (Philly)
Box 21, Folder 22	Kaplan, Sidney
Box 21, Folder 23	Kiah Museum (Savannah)
Box 21, Folder 24	King-Tisdell Cottage Museum (Savannah)
Box 21, Folder 25	L.C. Folder (Library of Congress)
Box 21, Folder 26	Library of Congress Manuscript collections
Box 21, Folder 27	L.C. rare books
Box 21, Folder 28	L.C. Black Newspapers (notes)
Box 21, Folder 29	Josephite Pastoral center (DC)
Box 21, Folder 30	L.C. Music Division
Box 21, Folder 31	L.C. HABS
Box 21, Folder 32	Living Hist. tours Inc. (Charleston S.C.)
Box 21, Folder 33	Laney Walker Museum (Augusta)
Box 21, Folder 34	La Salle College (Philly)
Box 21, Folder 35	Ada Ruth Austin Lombard
Box 21, Folder 36	Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Box 21, Folder 37	Lott Carey Headquarters (DC)
Box 21, Folder 38	MD Hall of Records (Annapolis)
Box 21, Folder 39	Lowe, Gail
Box 21, Folder 40	MD Hist. Society (Baltimore)
Box 21, Folder 41	Mc Graw, Marie
Box 21, Folder 42	Moore, Kendrick
Box 21, Folder 43	Martinsville – receipt for book
Box 22, Folder 1	Osce Madden – Elizabeth Thornton
	Page 26 of 53

Box 22, Folder 2	Mc Call Piano (service) with photos of a piano – melodeon Bethel A.M.E. Baltimore
Box 22, Folder 3	Mc Daniel, George: center for southern folklore
Box 22, Folder 4	Moorland General Info
Box 22, Folder 5	(Moorland) Daniel Payne Collection
Box 22, Folder 6	(Moorland) Henry Turner
Box 22, Folder 7	Moorland Music Division
Box 22, Folder 8	(Moorland) Francis Grimke Collection
Box 22, Folder 9	(Moorland) Daniel Payne
Box 22, Folder 10	(Moorland) Fifteenth Street Presbyterian church records
Box 22, Folder 11	(Moorland) Clarkson papers
Box 22, Folder 12	(Moorland) Ruffin papers
Box 22, Folder 13	(Moorland) Henry M. Turner papers
Box 22, Folder 14	(Moorland) Cook Family Collection
Box 22, Folder 15	(Moorland) Simms Family papers
Box 22, Folder 16	(Moorland) Metropolitan A.M.E.
Box 22, Folder 17	(Moorland Cromwell Family papers
Box 22, Folder 18	(Moorland) Jacob White collection
Box 22, Folder 19	(Moorland) George F. Bragg collection
Box 22, Folder 20	(Moorland) Stewart-Flippin Family papers
Box 22, Folder 21	(Moorland) Sara Turner
Box 22, Folder 22	Morehouse College
Box 22, Folder 23	Murray, Dr. Andrew
Box 22, Folder 24	Museum of the city of N.Y.
Box 22, Folder 25	National Afro-American Museum at Wilberforce

Box 22, Folder 26	National Archives: The Negro in the Military 1639-1886
Box 23, Folder 1	National Archives: Catalogue federal census 1790-1890
Box 23, Folder 2	National Baptist Convention 1984
Box 23, Folder 3	National Baptist Publishing board (Nashville)
Box 23, Folder 4	National Baptist Sunday School Pub. Board
Box 23, Folder 5	NPS – North Atlantic Region
Box 23, Folder 6	New England Antiquities photocopies
Box 23, Folder 7	Office of Black Catholic (DC)
Box 23, Folder 8	Office of Black Catholic Ministry (NYC)
Box 23, Folder 9	Oregon (University of Oregon)
Box 23, Folder 10	New York City Presbyterians
Box 23, Folder 11	Old Slave Mart Mus. Charleston S.C.
Box 23, Folder 12	Paine College
Box 23, Folder 13	Peale Museum (Baltimore)
Box 23, Folder 14	Pennsylvania Academy of the fine arts
Box 23, Folder 15	Peek, Marvin
Box 23, Folder 16	Pennsylvania Hist. Preservation Office
Box 23, Folder 17	Philadelphia Tribune
Box 23, Folder 18	Princeton University Seminary-Speer Lib.
Box 23, Folder 19	Province, Phillip (documents regarding the melodeon)
Box 23, Folder 20	Rabotenn, Albert
Box 23, Folder 21	Reed Organ Society
Box 23, Folder 22	Richmond Times Dispatch (Petersburg)
Box 23, Folder 23	Russo, Jean B.

Box 24, Folder 1	St. Augustine College Library
Box 24, Folder 2	St. Paul College
Box 24, Folder 3	Dr. Sattlerwhite
Box 24, Folder 4	Sernett, Milton
Box 24, Folder 5	Schneider, Barbara
Box 24, Folder 6	Shaw University Archives
Box 24, Folder 7	Sisters of the Holy Family
Box 24, Folder 8	S.C. Historical Society
Box 24, Folder 9	Southern Baptist material
Box 24, Folder 10	Southern Baptist Sunday school board
Box 24, Folder 11	S.C. State Museum
Box 24, Folder 12	Southern, Dr. Eileen
Box 24, Folder 13	Snowden, Kathleen
Box 24, Folder 14	Sprankle, Emeline
Box 24, Folder 15	Stewart, Black Churches Brooklyn (Brochure)
Box 25, Folder 1	Sulpician archives
Box 25, Folder 2	Taylor, Dr. Olive
Box 25, Folder 3	Tennessee Conference United Meth. Church –
Box 25, Folder 4	Thornton, Elizabeth
Box 25, Folder 5	Tubman, Harriet Hist. Society (Wilm)
Box 25, Folder 6	Union Theological Seminary
Box 25, Folder 7	U.N.C. at Chapel Hill
Box 25, Folder 8	University of Va. Alderman Lib.
Box 25, Folder 9	Vaughn Cultural Center (St. Louis)

Box 25, Folder 10	Victor Records
Box 25, Folder 11	VA Historical Society
Box 25, Folder 12	VA State College Library
Box 25, Folder 13	VA State Library
Box 25, Folder 14	Bishop Walters (AUMP)
Box 25, Folder 15	WHMM Channel 32
Box 25, Folder 16	WNET Television (N.Y.C. Anne Boggan)
Box 25, Folder 17	Virginia Museum of Fine Art
Box 25, Folder 18	WTKK Television (Manassas, VA-Ellie Byrnes)
Box 25, Folder 19	Maggie Walker Home
Box 25, Folder 20	Washington, Dr. James M.
Box 25, Folder 21	Weeksville Society of Brooklyn
Box 25, Folder 22	Wilberforce (Mrs. Nulhern)
Box 25, Folder 23	Wilcox, Rosalinde
Box 25, Folder 24	Williams, Jean (Rev) Philadelphia
Box 26, Folder 1	Arkansas Historic Preservation Program – Little Rock First Missionary Baptist Church
Box 26, Folder 2	Various Churches  Notes: Florida Department of State – Mount Zion A.M.E. church, Ocala;  St. James C.M.E. church, Tallahassee; Bethel Baptist Institutional church, Jacksonville
Box 26, Folder 3	Historical Preservation Center, SD and Allen Chapel, A.M.E. Church
Box 26, Folder 4	State Historic Preservation Office Salem, Oregon and Morning Star Baptist Church
Box 26, Folder 5	Omaha, Nebraska Notes: Nebraska State Historical Society; St. John's A.M.E. Church, Omaha; Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Omaha
Box 26, Folder 6	Department of Natural Resources Indianapolis, IN

Box 26, Folder 7	Kentucky Heritage Council
Box 26, Folder 8	Historic Black Churches in DC
Box 26, Folder 9	South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia
Box 26, Folder 10	Kansas State Historical Society
Box 26, Folder 11	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Box 26, Folder 12	Colorado Historical Society
Box 26, Folder 13	Department of Land and Natural Resources Hawaii
Box 26, Folder 14	Idaho State Historical Society
Box 26, Folder 15	Office of Cultural Affairs Historic Preservation Division, NM
Box 26, Folder 16	Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Nevada
Box 26, Folder 17	State Historical Society, North Dakota
Box 26, Folder 18	Oklahoma Historical Society
Box 26, Folder 19	Alabama Historical Commission
Box 26, Folder 20	Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Louisiana
Box 26, Folder 21	Department of Archives and History Jackson, Mississippi
Box 26, Folder 22	Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation Olympia, Washington
Box 26, Folder 23	Trinity A.M.E. Church, Salt Lake City, Utah
Box 26, Folder 24	Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Box 26, Folder 25	Massachusetts Historical Commission
Box 26, Folder 26	New Hampshire Historic Preservation Office
Box 26, Folder 27	Department of Environmental Protection New Jersey
Box 26, Folder 28	Iowa State Historical Department
Box 26, Folder 29	National Register of Historic Places WV
Box 26, Folder 30	Department of Natural Resources Alaska

Box 26, Folder 31	Arizona State Parks
Box 26, Folder 32	Department of Parks and Recreation California
Box 26, Folder 33	Department of Cultural Resources North Carolina
Box 26, Folder 34	Maryland Historical Trust
Box 26, Folder 35	Minnesota Historical Society
Box 26, Folder 36	Harrison, The Farish Street Historic District: Memories, Perceptions, and Developmental Alternatives
Box 26, Folder 37	Texas Historical Commission Black Churches in Texas National Register Department
Box 26, Folder 38	National Register Correspondence with Delores Byers
Box 26, Folder 39	National Register Responses (Delores Byers)
Box 26, Folder 40	National Register Form letter
Box 27, Folder 1	S.I. (Douthis) response to Johnnie's article – for Ed
Box 27, Folder 2	S.I. Douthis- Black Church Project
Box 27, Folder 3	S.I. Douthis Responses to Johnnie's article – For Mr. Kinard
Box 27, Folder 4	Douthis article mailed out
Box 27, Folder 5	S.I Division of Musical Instruments
Box 27, Folder 6	S.I. Douthis, Johnnie on Public Service Ann.
Box 27, Folder 7	Douthis, Johnnie
Box 27, Folder 8	S.I. Libraries
Box 27, Folder 9	Smithsonian CAL notes about conservation treatments (Edward Smith)
Box 27, Folder 10	S.I. Folklife office
Box 27, Folder 11	Smithsonian Radio
Box 27, Folder 12	Edward Smith
Box 27, Folder 13	Smithsonian Museum Support Center

Box 27, Folder 14	Shipping Office – Dave Squires
Box 27, Folder 15	S.I. Communication Branch
Box 27, Folder 16	Smithsonian Archives
Box 27, Folder 17	S.I. Fellowship and Grants
Box 27, Folder 18	Afro-American Communities Project (Jim Horton Boston)
Box 27, Folder 19	Smithsonian Department of Public Programs
Box 27, Folder 20	Smithsonian's 18th Center Life Project
Box 27, Folder 21	Smithsonian Program in Black American Culture (Reagon)
Box 27, Folder 22	Smithsonian Public Programs Office NMAH
Box 27, Folder 23	S.I. Office of Public Affairs: Joyce Lancester and Johnnie Douthis
Box 27, Folder 24	Public Affairs – Douthis: Press Reaction 1987-88
Box 28, Folder 1	S.I. Press: Brochure and Info on Brochure Cover
Box 28, Folder 2	S.I. Press: Brochures (Invoices for print Brochure)
Box 28, Folder 3	Smithsonian Press: Invitations (requisition for supplies or services – invitation)
Box 28, Folder 4	Brochures mailed or handed out
Box 28, Folder 5	S.I. Press: Black church flyer manuscript
Box 28, Folder 6	Smithsonian Press
Box 28, Folder 7	S.I. Press – Catalogue
Box 29, Folder 1	Release for Video material (for SITES) for use of Video Bernice Reagon Curator Division of Community Life – National Museum of American History
Box 29, Folder 2	Traveling exhibit Climbing Jacob's ladder – photo rights
Box 29, Folder 3	SITES Proposal and resumes
Box 29, Folder 4	SITES misc. research and funding
Box 29, Folder 5	Travelling exhibit drafts photo rights

Box 29, Folder 6	Travelling exhibit photo rights and agreement mailed out
Box 29, Folder 7	SITES for 2/23/89 meeting drafts for travelling exhibit – panels
Box 29, Folder 8	SITES letters photo agreements
Box 29, Folder 9	SITES – National Archives Negatives
Box 29, Folder 10	SITES – Memos, Press
Box 30	Encyclopedia of Religion in the South by Samuel S. Hill – photocopies
Box 31, Folder 1	Agenda 1985 and 1987
Box 31, Folder 2	Smithsonian Institution Research Reports
Box 31, Folder 3	Press review
Box 31, Folder 4	Honor Black Churches
Box 31, Folder 5	Symposium proposed for Anacostia
Box 32, Folder 1	Smithsonian Exhibit Central correspondence with script editor  Notes: Two binders: edited script received in rough draft from editor.
Box 32, Folder 2	Edited script (Draft)
Box 32, Folder 3	Final corrections
Box 33	Script drafts
Box 34	Script drafts
Box 35, Folder 1	Readers for the Black Church script
Box 35, Folder 2	Syracuse University – revised script
Box 35, Folder 3	Misc. research
Box 35, Folder 4	Harvard University – revised script
Box 35, Folder 5	Musical practices in Black churches of New York and Philadelphia ca. 1800-1844 by Eileen Southern
Box 35, Folder 6	Union Theological Seminary – revised script
Box 36, Folder 1	Vanderbilt University – revised script

Box 36, Folder 2	Howard University – revised script
Box 36, Folder 3	Howard University – revised script
Box 36, Folder 4	Princeton University – revised script
Box 37, Folder 1	Readers' comments on exhibit script
Box 37, Folder 2	Sharon's critique of the script
Box 37, Folder 3	Critique by the Sulpician's of BC script
Box 37, Folder 4	Critiques and meeting on script – 1986 Sharon, Mr. Kinard, Louise
Box 37, Folder 5	Critique Louise, BC copies suggested
Box 37, Folder 6	Revised script by Reverend Jeane B. Williams
Box 37, Folder 7	Rev. Williams
Box 37, Folder 8	Script, articles, comments
Box 38	Galley proofs
Box 39	Scripts – ready for typesetters
Box 40	Scripts – unedited
Box 41, Folder 1	Script
Box 41, Folder 2	Photocopies of photographs
Box 41, Folder 3	Script
Box 41, Folder 4	Script
Box 42	Manuscript for catalog edited from SI press
Box 43, Folder 1	African Methodist Epicopal Church Philadelphia (Ben Salem A.M.E. Church)
Box 43, Folder 2	Dr. Rae Alexander-Minter
Box 43, Folder 3	Alfred Street Baptist Church
Box 43, Folder 4	American Baptist Historical Society
Box 43, Folder 5	Atwater Kent Museum

Box 43, Folder 7 Dr. Lewis Baldwin  Box 43, Folder 8 Boston Musuem of Fine Arts  Box 43, Folder 9 Calvary Episcopal Church  Box 43, Folder 10 Corcoran Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 11 Delaware Musuem of Art  Box 43, Folder 12 Emmanuel A.M.E. Church  Box 43, Folder 13 First African Baptist Church, Richmond  Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home  Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 1 Moriand Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives  Box 44, Folder 6 National Musuem of American Art	Box 43, Folder 6	Bethel A.M.E. Church Baltimore
Box 43, Folder 9 Calvary Episcopal Church  Box 43, Folder 10 Corcoran Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 11 Delaware Musuem of Art  Box 43, Folder 12 Emmanuel A.M.E. Church  Box 43, Folder 13 First African Baptist Church, Richmond  Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home  Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 7	Dr. Lewis Baldwin
Box 43, Folder 11 Delaware Musuem of Art  Box 43, Folder 12 Emmanuel A.M.E. Church  Box 43, Folder 13 First African Baptist Church, Richmond  Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home  Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 8	Boston Musuem of Fine Arts
Box 43, Folder 12 Emmanuel A.M.E. Church  Box 43, Folder 13 First African Baptist Church, Richmond  Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home  Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 9	Calvary Episcopal Church
Box 43, Folder 12 Emmanuel A.M.E. Church  Box 43, Folder 13 First African Baptist Church, Richmond  Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home  Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 10	Corcoran Gallery of Art
Box 43, Folder 13 First African Baptist Church, Richmond Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 11	Delaware Musuem of Art
Box 43, Folder 14 Frederich Douglass Home  Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 12	Emmanuel A.M.E. Church
Box 43, Folder 15 Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries  Box 43, Folder 16 Gillfield Baptist Church  Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 13	First African Baptist Church, Richmond
Box 43, Folder 17 Mr. Jerome Gray  Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 14	Frederich Douglass Home
Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 15	Garrett Seabury Theological Seminaries
Box 43, Folder 18 Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention  Box 43, Folder 19 The Historical Society of Pennsylania  Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 16	Gillfield Baptist Church
Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 17	Mr. Jerome Gray
Box 43, Folder 20 Howard University Gallery of Art  Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 18	Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
Box 43, Folder 21 Lane College  Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 19	The Historical Society of Pennsylania
Box 43, Folder 22 The Library Company of Philadelphia  Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 20	Howard University Gallery of Art
Box 43, Folder 23 Library of Congress Office of Exhibits  Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 21	Lane College
Box 44, Folder 1 Mecer University Library  Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 22	The Library Company of Philadelphia
Box 44, Folder 2 Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University  Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 43, Folder 23	Library of Congress Office of Exhibits
Box 44, Folder 3 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 44, Folder 1	Mecer University Library
Box 44, Folder 4 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 44, Folder 2	Moorland Spingarn Research Center – Howard University
Box 44, Folder 5 National Archives	Box 44, Folder 3	Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church
	Box 44, Folder 4	Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
Box 44, Folder 6 National Musuem of American Art	Box 44, Folder 5	National Archives
	Box 44, Folder 6	National Musuem of American Art

Box 44, Folder 7	National Portrait Gallery
Box 44, Folder 8	The New York Historical Society
Box 44, Folder 9	The New York Historical Society (library)
Box 44, Folder 10	The Ninetheenth Street Baptist Church
Box 44, Folder 11	North Carolina State Archives
Box 44, Folder 12	Rhode Island Black Heritage Society
Box 44, Folder 13	Schomburg Center for Research in Black culture
Box 44, Folder 14	Shilo Baptist Church of Washington
Box 44, Folder 15	Sixth Mountain Zion Baptist Church
Box 45, Folder 1	Sulpican Archives Baltimore
Box 45, Folder 2	Sullivan Hall, Temple University, Philadelphia
Box 45, Folder 3	Third Street Bethel A.M.E. Church
Box 45, Folder 4	Twelfth Baptist Church, Massachusetts
Box 45, Folder 5	Union Baptist Church, Baltimore
Box 45, Folder 6	Valentine Museum
Box 45, Folder 7	Reverend Jeane Williams
Box 46, Folder 1	Request for Photo services
Box 46, Folder 2	Photographs Oblate Sisters of Providence of St. Francis Oblate Archives, Baltimore
Box 46, Folder 3	Tanner, Henry O.
Box 46, Folder 4	Grave Decorations
Box 46, Folder 5	Photographs: History of Israel Metropolitan C.M.C. Church, Washington DC
Box 46, Folder 6	Culp, Twentieth Century Negro Literature
Box 46, Folder 7	New Photo list for exhibit
Box 46, Folder 8	Photo order

Box 46, Folder 9	Draft of new Photo list for exhibit
Box 46, Folder 10	Photograph list
Box 46, Folder 11	Portrait, Photos, Artifacts (sources)
Box 47, Folder 1	Atlanta University Archives
Box 47, Folder 2	Andover-Newton Seminary
Box 47, Folder 3	Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage INC.
Box 47, Folder 4	Boston Athenaeum and Boston Museum of Fine Art
Box 47, Folder 5	Charles Street A.M.E. Boston
Box 47, Folder 6	Disciples of Christ Hist. Soc.
Box 47, Folder 7	Duke Divinity School Library
Box 47, Folder 8	Gibbes Art Gallery (Charleston, SC)
Box 47, Folder 9	Historical Foundation Presbyterian Church
Box 47, Folder 10	Georgia Historical Society
Box 47, Folder 11	Historical Society of PA.
Box 47, Folder 12	Josephite Archives
Box 47, Folder 13	Livingstone College Library (N.C)
Box 47, Folder 14	Library Company of Philadelphia
Box 47, Folder 15	Library of Congress
Box 47, Folder 16	Louisiana State Museum
Box 47, Folder 17	Metropolitan Museum of Art (N.Y.)
Box 47, Folder 18	Massachusetts Historical Society (Boston)
Box 48, Folder 1	Miller, John
Box 48, Folder 2	National Archives and National Portrait Gallery
Box 48, Folder 3	Moorland Spingarn and New York Historical Society

Box 48, Folder 4	N.C. Department of Archives and History
Box 48, Folder 5	Presbyterian Historical Society
Box 48, Folder 6	Rhode Island Black Heritage Society and Rhode Island School of Design
Box 48, Folder 7	St. Luke's Episcopal Church D.C.
Box 48, Folder 8	St. Michael's Church Charleston
Box 48, Folder 9	Schomburg Center, NYC
Box 48, Folder 10	Sharp Street M.E. Baltimore
Box 48, Folder 11	Sisters of the Holy Family
Box 48, Folder 12	Smith College
Box 48, Folder 13	Southern, Eileen
Box 48, Folder 14	Sulpican Archives Baltimore
Box 48, Folder 15	South Carolina Department of Archives and History
Box 48, Folder 16	Tulane University
Box 48, Folder 17	United Methodist Publishing House
Box 48, Folder 18	United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
Box 48, Folder 19	The college of William and Mary
Box 48, Folder 20	The Valentine Museum
Box 48, Folder 21	Wisconsin Historical Society Library
Box 49, Folder 1	Release for Video Materials
Box 49, Folder 2	Calls, letters, acknowledgements about exhibit brochure and catalog
Box 49, Folder 3	Calls, letters, acknowledgements about exhibit brochure and catalog
Box 49, Folder 4	Floor plan for exhibit
Box 49, Folder 5	Banner designed for BC
Box 49, Folder 6	Visitor attendance figures 1987-88

Box 49, Folder 7	Music video script (draft)
Box 49, Folder 8	Diagrams for measuring books
Box 49, Folder 9	Floor plan
Box 50, Folder 1	Music video script (final draft recorded 9/23/87)
Box 50, Folder 2	Epstein, Dena music video (letter to request the use of photograph in video)
Box 50, Folder 3	Ware, Caroline music video (letter to request the use of photograph in video)
Box 50, Folder 4	Anacostia churches invited to honor Black church
Box 50, Folder 5	Proposal: Black church
Box 50, Folder 6	Dr. Stewart (comments on Black church)
Box 50, Folder 7	List of church addresses for Honor Black church
Box 50, Folder 8	Memos on exhibit (spending for FY87)
Box 50, Folder 9	Honor Black church (Bishop Jackson's certificate)
Box 50, Folder 10	Honor Black church form letters
Box 50, Folder 11	Honor Black church blank certificates
Box 50, Folder 12	Invitations to Honor Black churches
Box 50, Folder 13	Honor Black churches responses
Box 50, Folder 14	Honor Black churches addresses and directories
Box 50, Folder 15	Meetings and conversations relative to proposal
Box 50, Folder 16	Education department: Zora and Robert projects
Box 50, Folder 17	Honor Black church program
Box 50, Folder 18	Honor Black church day
Box 50, Folder 19	Music and video material
Box 51, Folder 1	Memos Shipping Info – Misc.
Box 51, Folder 2	Extension of show
	D 40 550

Box 51, Folder 3	Extension of show – form letters and list with addresses
Box 51, Folder 4	Budget for art transport
Box 51, Folder 5	Insurance Registers
Box 51, Folder 6	Art transport
Box 51, Folder 7	contractor outgoing condition reports
Box 51, Folder 8	Arttransport invoices – letter of confirmation to pick up items
Box 51, Folder 9	Arttransport Edward Smith lists
Box 51, Folder 10	Artifacts pulled from show – copied memos
Box 51, Folder 11	Smithsonian: Objects Facilty Registrars office (NMAH)
Box 51, Folder 12	Artifact lists prepared for shipping return (list of lenders)
Box 51, Folder 13	Artifact lists prepared for shipping incoming
Box 51, Folder 14	Sending show to Philadelphia Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum
Box 51, Folder 15	New Artifact list
Box 52, Folder 1	Sites exhibit script and itinerary
Box 52, Folder 2	Draft for Rosemary Sites
Box 52, Folder 3	Sites: educational objectives
Box 52, Folder 4	Stanzas for 5 Banners
Box 52, Folder 5	Material sent to Laurie SITES 9/6/89
Box 52, Folder 6	SITES luncheon 9/26/89
Box 52, Folder 7	SITES meeting 9/29/89
Box 52, Folder 8	SITES meeting 9/19/89
Box 52, Folder 9	From Diana Cohen 12/29/89
Box 52, Folder 10	Meeting with SITES since 1989
Box 52, Folder 11	SITES editing and design

Box 52, Folder 12	Maps of eastern states
Box 52, Folder 13	SITES: Text, captions, biographies, exp. of maps, copies of photos
Box 52, Folder 14	Misc. material for preparing map etc. 8/89

Return to Table of Contents

## Series 3: Audiovisual records, 1987-1994 (bulk 1991-1991)

15 Cubic feet (8 audio cassette sound recordings; 4 open reel 1/4" sound recordings; 1 cartridge 1/4" sound recordings; 2 audio cassette sound recordings)

7 Linear feet

10 Video recordings (5 VHS 1/2" video recordings ; 2 U-matic 3/4" video recordings ; 3 open reel 1" video recordings)

Creator: Anacostia Community Museum

Language: English.

Scope and Audiovisual materials created for an exhibition on the growth of African American churches in the Contents: eastern United States. The exhibit was organized by the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum and

eastern United States. The exhibit was organized by the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988. This collection contains the audiovisual output of the exhibit, including video created for use within the exhibit and video and audio recordings of guided

exhibit tours.

Restrictions: Use of the materials requires an appointment. Some items are not accessible due to obsolete format

and playback machinery restrictions. Please contact the archivist at ACMarchives@si.edu.

Related Anacostia Community Museum. Climbing Jacob's Ladder: the rise of Black churches in Eastern

Archival American cities, 1740 - 1877.

Materials:

Preferred Climbing Jacob's Ladder audiovisual records, Anacostia Community Museum Archives,

Citation: Smithsonian Institution

Names: Smith, Edward D.

Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Anacostia Community Museum

Topic: African Americans

African American churches

Museum exhibits

Genre/Form: Sound recordings

Video recordings

ACMA AV000962: Church Songs of Black Americans 1740 - 1877, 1994, c1987

2 Video recordings (AV000962, AV003327; open reel; 1 inch)

1 Video recording (AV002642; VHS)

3 Sound recordings (AV002679, AV003345, AV003421; open reel; 1/4 inch)

1 Sound recording (AV003336; cartridge; 1/4 inch) 001822 002138 001601 002619 001410 000859 002000

Creator: Smithsonian Institution

Smith, Edward D.

Boyer, Horace Clarence, 1935-

Anacostia Museum

The Media Exchange, Inc.

Technical: 001822 002138 001601 002619 001410 000859 002000

Language: English.

Notes: ACMA AV003327

ACMA AV002679 ACMA AV003345 ACMA AV003421 **ACMA AV003336** 

ACMA AV002642

Title transcribed from opening credits of video recording.

This short documentary provides an overview of the development of church music alongside the growth of African American churches in the eastern United States from the arrival of black Africans in Jamestown in 1619 through 1877 and the Reconstruction era. The evolution of church music within African American churches included the formation of music programs and performances, hymnals, choirs, negro spirituals, and music education as well as the addition of organs to accompany the singing of psalms, hymns, and anthems. During the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s, the Christianization of slaves and Africanization of Protestant hymns swept through the American colonies. European Christianity and the emotionalism of the African homeland were combined during the Second Awakening, which began in the late eighteenth century and lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century. The history of church music created by urban and rural congregations within New England and Southern states is explored.

Short documentary. Part of Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audiovisual Records. Complete production: AV000962, AV003327. Production elements: AV002679 [narration], AV003345 [outtakes - sound], AV003421 [music], AV003336 [music]. AV003421: 6 songs including We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder [also known as Jacob's Ladder] and Battle Hymn of the Republic [also known as Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!]. AV003336: 2 recordings of We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder. Dated 19940923 [AV000962]. Undated [all other recordings].

Church Songs of Black Americans 1740 - 1877, Exhibition Records AV03-036, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Church Songs of Black Americans 1740 - 1877 was created alongside the Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition which explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th-and 19th-centuries in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988.

Produced by The Media Exchange, Inc. Copyright 1987 - Smithsonian Institution. Coordinator - Edward D. Smith, Historian, Anacostia Museum. Script Writer - Dr. Horace Boyer, Associate Professor, Department of Music, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Names:

Allen, Richard, 1760-1831 Jones, Absalom, 1746-1818 Mather, Cotton, 1663-1728 Watts, Isaac, 1674-1748 Wesley, John, 1703-1791

Liele, George, approximately 1750-approximately 1825

Hosier, Harry, approximately 1750-1806

Rush, Christopher, 1777-1873 Spencer, Peter, 1782-1843

Garnet, Henry Highland, 1815-1882 Allen, William Francis, 1830-1889 Garrison, Lucy McKim, 1842-1877

Ware, Charles Pickard, 1840-1921 Sankey, Ira David, 1840-1908 Bliss, P. P. (Philip Paul), 1838-1876

Bradbury, William B. (William Batchelder), 1816-1868

Turner, Henry McNeal, 1834-1915 Anacostia Community Museum Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Society of Negroes

St. George's United Methodist Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

St. Thomas' Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Mother African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (New York, N.Y.)

First African Presbyterian Church (New York, N.Y.)

African Harmonic Society (New York, N.Y.)

First African Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia, Pa.) Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church (Washington, D.C.)

St. Philip's Church (Harlem, New York, N.Y.) Shiloh Baptist Church (Washington, D.C.)

Jubilee Singers

Topic: African Americans

African American churches

Churches Church history Religion Church music

Music

African American choirs

Choirs (Music)
Spirituals (Songs)
Shape-note singing

Music -- Instruction and study

Slavery

**Enslaved persons** 

Jacob's ladder (Biblical dream)

Place: United States
Genre/Form: Video recordings

Sound recordings Documentary films

ACMA AV001351 A: The Early Black Church as a Social Institution, 1988

1 Sound recording (audio cassette)

004652

Creator: Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Technical: 004652 Language: English. Notes: Title transcribed from physical asset.

> Historian Ed Smith explained the historical role of the black church in America, particularly the significant role of churches in African American communities. His talk focused on the early black church as a social institution in regards to educational, economical, political, and cultural spheres.

> Lecture. Audio only. Related to the exhibition 'The Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877.' Dated 19880627.

> The Early Black Church as a Social Institution, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

> 'The Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877' exhibition explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th- and 19thcenturies in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October

1987 to October 1988.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum

Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

African Americans Topic:

Churches

African American churches

Church history

Anacostia (Washington, D.C.) Place:

Washington (D.C.)

**United States** 

Sound recordings Genre/Form:

ACMA AV002681: Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audio Tour, 1987

1 Sound recording (open reel; 1/4 inch) 1 Sound recording (audio cassette)

003221 003250

Creator: Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Technical: 003221 003250

Language: English.

Notes: **ACMA AV001345** 

> Audio tour for the exhibition - Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 -1877 - presents African American religious history beginning with the first African slaves who brought African religious faith with them and the incorporation of African religion customs with Euro-Christian faith. The audio tour includes the history of Black Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Episcopalian congregations in the North; black congregations in the South during Civil War and Reconstruction; black churches and politics, including slave rebellions; the work of Reverends and Preachers; negro spirituals; and vodou. Names profiled include Cotton Mather, David Walker, Nat

Turner, Henry M. Turner, and the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

Audio tour. Part of Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audiovisual Records. AV002681: dated 19871201. AV001345: undated.

Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audio Tour, Exhibition Records AV03-036, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audio Tour was created for the Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition which explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th- and 19th-centuries in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988.

Created for Anacostia Neighborhood Museum.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum

Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans

Churches

African American churches

Religion
Christianity
Spirituals (Songs)
Enslaved persons
Slave insurrections
Museum exhibits

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)

Washington (D.C.)

**United States** 

Genre/Form: Sound recordings

Narration

ACMA AV003356: Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston, circa 1987

2 Sound recordings (open reel; 1/4 inch)

000542 000320

Creator: Anacostia Community Museum

Vance, Jim

Technical: 000542 000320

Language: English.

Notes: ACMA AV003428

Narrator Jim Vance presents a very short history of the Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston and the life of Reverend Leonard Grimes. The church's and reverend's work with the Underground Railroad and antislavery movement, and after the passing of Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 are highlighted. The arrests of Shadrach and Anthony Burns are also addressed. Members of the Twelfth Baptist Church wanted the right to bear arms as part of the Union Forces during the Civil War; William L. Garrison and Frederick Douglass argued for this right.

Narration only. Might be part of Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audiovisual Records. Production elements: AV003356 and AV003428 [narration]. AV003356: begins at 000115 [first minute of recording related to The

Times of Richard Allen]. Undated.

Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston might be related to the Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition which explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th- and 19thcenturies in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988.;Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston was formed by a small group of dissentients who split from the First African Baptist Church in 1848. It served as an anti-slavery meetinghouse, and provided refuge and spiritual guidance to free blacks and fugitive slaves. Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston was also known as the Fugitives Church or the Church of the Fugitive Slave.; Reverend Leonard Grimes was pastor of the Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston from 1848 to 1874. Born to free parents in Leesburg, Virginia, Grimes first became involved in the antislavery movement through his work with the Underground Railroad in Washington, D.C.

Copyright holder unknown. Field 110 might be incorrect. Narrator: Jim Vance.

Names: Grimes, Leonard A., 1815-1873

Minkins, Shadrach

Burns, Anthony, 1834-1862

Garrison, William Lloyd, 1805-1879 Douglass, Frederick, 1818-1895 Twelfth Baptist Church (Boston, Mass.)

Anacostia Community Museum Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans

African American churches

Churches Church history Religion Slavery

Enslaved persons Fugitive slaves

Antislavery movements African American abolitionists

**Abolitionists** 

Jacob's ladder (Biblical dream)

Place: Boston (Mass.)

**United States** 

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Genre/Form: Sound recordings

Narration

ACMA AV003354: Abolition Church and Richard Allen, 1987 1 Sound recording (open reel; 1/4 inch)

001009

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 001009 Language: English. Notes: Title transcribed from physical asset.

Abolition Church and Richard Allen includes the following music selections: Documentary Themes A-E, Battle Hymn of the Republic, Onward Christian Soldiers, and Solemn Hymn.

Instrumental music. Might be part of Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audiovisual Records. Dated 19871006.

Abolition Church and Richard Allen, Exhibition Records AV03-036, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Abolition Church and Richard Allen might be related to The Times of Richard Allen which was created alongside the Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition [Exhibition Records 03-036]. The exhibition explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th- and 19th-centuries in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988.

Copyright holder unknown. Field 110 might be incorrect.

Names: Allen, Richard, 1760-1831

Anacostia Community Museum Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans

African American churches

Churches Religion Church music Music

Jacob's ladder (Biblical dream)

Place: United States
Genre/Form: Sound recordings

Music

ACMA AV000961: The Times of Richard Allen, 1994 1 Video recording (AV000961; open reel; 1 inch)

2 Sound recordings (AV003353, AV003356; open reel; 1/4 inch)

000820 000039 000542

Creator: Anacostia Community Museum

Howell, Michael W.

Vance, Jim

Smithsonian Institution 000820 000039 000542

Language: English.

Technical:

Notes: ACMA AV003353

**ACMA AV003356** 

Title transcribed from opening credits of video recording.

Michael W. Howell dramatizes Richard Allen's life from his birth into slavery through his establishment of what was to become the modern-day African Methodist Episcopal Church. Events which led

to the founding of the Free African Society and Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia are explained.

Short one-man dramatization with still images and narration interspersed. Part of Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audiovisual Records. Complete production: AV000961 [captions burned into image]. Production elements: AV003353 and AV003356 [narration]. AV003356: first minute only [remaining recording related to Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston]. Dated 19941031 [AV000961]. Undated [all other recordings].

The Times of Richard Allen was created alongside the Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition which explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th- and 19th-centuries in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988.; Born a slave in 1760 on the Delaware property of Benjamin Chew and later sold to Stokely Sturgis, Richard Allen was one of the founders of the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia in 1789. In 1801, his collection of spiritual songs and hymns helped to establish an ongoing tradition of hymn singing at Mother Bethel. Allen also formed the Free African Society, Philadelphia's first black mutual aid society to serve the needs of African Americans regardless of religious beliefs, with Absalom Jones in 1787 after African Americans were segregated during worship services at St. George's United Methodist Church in Philadelphia.; Michael W. Howell collaborated with Smithsonian staff to create The Times of Richard Allen, a one-man dramatization performed by Howell at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History in 1987 to augment the museum's exhibit "After the Revolution: Everyday Life in America, 1780-1800," which focused in part on Allen. [McIntyre, Mike. Accolade for Round House. The Washington Post, Feb. 17, 1987.]

Copyright holder unknown. Field 110 might be incorrect. Performer: Michael W. Howell. Narrator: Jim Vance.

Names: Allen, Richard, 1760-1831

Jones, Absalom, 1746-1818 Chew, Benjamin, 1722-1810

Sturgis, Stokely

Anacostia Community Museum Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (Philadelphia,

Pa.)

African Methodist Episcopal Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Free African Society (Philadelphia, Pa.)

St. George's United Methodist Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Topic: African Americans

African American churches

Churches
Church history
Religion

Page 50 of 53

Methodism

African American clergy

Clergy Preachers Slavery

Enslaved persons Segregation

Jacob's ladder (Biblical dream)

Place: Philadelphia (Pa.)

Delaware

**United States** 

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Sound recordings

Drama

ACMA AV001152: Climbing Jacob's Ladder, circa 1992

1 Video recording (open reel; 1 inch)

1 Video recording (MiniDV)

1 Item (film; color interpositive; 16mm)

002957 003100 002939

Anacostia Museum Creator:

> Smith, Edward D. Reinckens, Sharon A. Nelson, Stanley, 1955-Caesar, Shirley, 1938-**Smithsonian Institution** 002957 003100 002939

Technical:

Language: English.

**ACMA AV005160** Notes:

**ACMA AV005350** 

Title transcribed from open credits of video recording.

Climbing Jacob's Ladder argues for the importance of documenting and preserving the history of the African American church as explained by church historians, archivists, and curators. The African American church tells the story of African Americans, provides direction and goals for the young, and is the center of African American life. Its history is illustrated through photographs and moving images, which are endangered of being lost and forgotten if preservation measures are not taken. The short documentary also provides an overview of the history of the black church and African American worship from slavery through present day, the role and style of black preachers, black church music and choirs, and clothing worn to religious services.

Short documentary. Part of Climbing Jacob's Ladder Audiovisual Records. AV001152: dated 19920324. AV005160: transferred from VHS, captions burnt into image, dated 1991. AV005350: 16mm Preservation Color Interpositive, no sound, dated 20150317.

Climbing Jacob's Ladder, Exhibition Records AV03-036, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Climbing Jacob's Ladder was based on the Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities, 1740 - 1877 exhibition which explored the growth and central role of African American churches during the 18th- and 19th-centuries in the eastern United States: Boston, Savannah, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond. The exhibition was organized by the Anacostia Museum and held there from October 1987 to October 1988.;The African American church provides the spiritual, educational, social, political, and economic center for the African American community. Because the history of the African American church tells the story of African Americans, the church is the largest repository of African American history.

Developed by the Anacostia Museum. Copyright 1992 - Anacostia Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Producer and Director - Stanley Nelson. Project Director - Sharon A. Reinckens. Project Historian - Edward D. Smith. Narrator - Shirley Caesar.

Names:

Allen, Richard, 1760-1831 Jones, Absalom, 1746-1818 Jasper, John, 1812-1901 Dougherty, Dorothy Boyd, Ruby Chappelle Ross, Benjamin

Epps, Annie James, Harry, Deacon Collier-Thomas, Bettye

Turner, Wesley West, Donald

Ellis, Edward L., Reverend

Freeman, Felder Freeman, Evelynne

Washington, Alonzo, Reverend Anacostia Community Museum Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

St. Thomas' Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

St. George's United Methodist Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

First African Baptist Church (Savannah, Ga.)

Sharp Street Memorial United Methodist Church (Baltimore, Md.)

Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church (Richmond, Va.)

First Bryan Baptist Church (Savannah, Ga.)

Johns Island Presbyterian Church (Johns Island, S.C.)

Topic:

African Americans

African American history
African American churches

Church history
Historic preservation

Religion Preachers Church music

Music

African American choirs

Choirs (Music) Spirituals (Songs)

Slavery

Enslaved persons Segregation

Civil rights movements

Jacob's ladder (Biblical dream)

African American youth

Youth

Place: United States
Genre/Form: Video recordings
Documentary films

Return to Table of Contents