

Volume 1

**PIONEER
PENTECOSTAL
WOMEN**

Pioneer Pentecostal Women Vol. I

compiled by Mary H. Wallace

©1981, Word Aflame Press
Hazelwood, MO 63042-2299

Reprint History: 1981, 1984, 1999, 2007

ISBN 0-912315-18-0

Cover Design by Paul Povolni

All Scripture quotations in this book are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise identified.

All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced, stored in an electronic system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of Word Aflame Press. Brief quotations may be used in literary reviews.

Printed in United States of America

Printed by



WORD AFLAME PRESS
8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042
www.pentecostalpublishing.com

CONTENTS

Preface	4
Foreword.	5
Introduction	7
Opal Jones Blackford	11
Johnnie Ruth Wylie Caughron	25
Berthal Jones Crossno	40
Carrie Powledge Eastridge	50
Oma Francis Ellis.	73
Jewel Eleanor Smith Fauss	98
Lill Horton	115
Katilee Vernon Hosch	130
Millicent Gertrude Gee Morehouse	158
Nellie Knight Morgan	183
Rieka Van Wieren Nelson	192
Rena Moore Pair	207
Opal Taylor Smith	221
Maude Herrin LaFleur Wilkins.	229
Ruth Angela Scott Yadon.	243
The Zimmer Twins.	258



OPAL JONES BLACKFORD

By Kathy White

Never, but never was she or any of her children going to one of those mystical meetings where the preacher threw out some smoke that made the people jump about the floor and jabber in a strange language. Mrs. Jones had given her children strict orders that they were not to go near the only church in McClure, Illinois.

When Aunt Zora came to visit and began to tell her sister about receiving the Holy Ghost, the mother took young Opal and locked her in her room. She did not want any of the “dope to fall on her children.” As Opal sat in her room and tried desperately to hear her aunt’s amazing story, a strange feeling came over her. She felt that she must have more of the Lord.

Pioneer Pentecostal Women

Somehow she must get to that revival. Maybe it was at this revival that she could learn more about this Holy Ghost that she had never seen or heard in the Methodist Church.

Grandpa Jones had been a preacher in the United Brethren Church. Opal's mother had told her about seeing people "mutter" and fall into a trance at services. Of all her relatives, there was something special about her grandfather. She felt extra close to him and dreamed of being like him when she grew up. Even as a child of five, Opal would fantasize of going to Africa to be a missionary.

After much coaxing, Opal's mother agreed to attend the church where Odell Cagle, a seventeen-year-old youth, was preaching and "a'dancing all over the platform."

That night as Brother Cagle was preaching, a fog began to rise across the church. Opal could see no one but the young preacher boy. Although she was sitting on the same pew as her mother, Opal could not see her mother to ask her permission to go to the altar. She wanted to always be obedient to her mother, but she also wanted the Holy Ghost. She slipped from her seat, the fog seemed to clear so that she could find the altar.

As she knelt on the hard floor to pray, she was not sure what she was to do since she had never seen anyone receive the Holy Ghost. She felt a bubbling sensation in her stomach, and the bubble became larger and larger and began to move up her body. When it got to her throat, she suddenly heard herself speaking in other tongues.

Opal Blackford

Young Opal lay on the floor for two hours. With each word and syllable that she spoke, she felt a little more joy. As she became cognizant of the people about her, she could see her father praying and hear her mother speaking in tongues. In that one night, she and her parents were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

The next day she was awakened by the bright sunshine, and with the sunshine came an uncontrollable urge to read the Bible. She spent almost the entire day reading. She did not know exactly where she should read, but as she read, she discovered that there was only one God and only one way to be baptized. With this new insight, she went into the kitchen and read the Scriptures to her mother. The family went down to the Mississippi River and each of them was baptized that very day.

As a fifteen-year-old girl, Opal began to travel with Albert Davis and his wife. They preached around Mississippi, Illinois, and Indiana. They received many requests for revivals. To determine where they should go, they would spread the letters out on the altar and begin to pray.

Opal's routine became to get up and pray all day from nine until four—except on wash day. While she traveled with the Davises, she began to learn about the gifts of the Spirit, especially of healing and interpretation of tongues. She also learned to trust God for her needs including the daily food that she ate.

In Murphysboro, Illinois, the traveling caravan that included the Davises, the Halls, Odell Cagle, and Opal settled in an abandoned cafe. Its owner said that they could use the diner as a place to sleep if they would