

# Sister Rosetta Tharpe Weds

WASHINGTON, (ANP)—One of the best attended, most unusual and most spectacular weddings ever held in Washington was that of Sister Rosetta Tharpe who was joined in holy wedlock to Russell Morrison last Tuesday night.

Elder Samuel Kelsor, pastor of the Temple Church of God in Christ, performed the wedding ceremony in Griffith Stadium before 15,000 spectators.

The guitar-picking, gospel-singing bride was most picturesque strolling down the long white strip of carpet to the tune of Lohengrin's "Wedding March." The sequin-trimmed three-foot train to her \$1,000 white nylon lace gown glittered brilliantly under the blue spotlight. Her waist-length net veil was held in place by a jeweled crown of rhinestones and pearls. She carried a bouquet of 28 white orchids interspersed with white ostrich feathers.

The long strip of white carpeting down which Sister Tharpe and her bridal party marched, led from the dug-out in the ball park to the improvised stand built in the center of the stadium, a distance of about 200 feet.

The platform was beautifully decorated with white gladiolas,

green ferns and tall palms against a background of white lattice-work, and was draped with American flags.

Madam Marie Knight, beautifully attired in a colorful gown with matching accessories, served as bridesmaid. She carried a bouquet of natural colored orchids set amidst ostrich feathers of the same color.

The "Rosettes" served as maids of honor, Miss Erna Wall wore aqua lace with wide matching hat and gloves; Barbara Johnson wore gold; Oreen Johnson, cerise; Lottie Henry, lime; and Dorothy Holmes, pea green.

Lucky Millinder served as best man; 8-year-old Mary Gibbs, daughter of Madam Knight was flower girl, and 3-year-old Theodore LeMar Summers carried the ring on a huge blue-satin pillow.

Sister Rosetta was given away by her mother Mrs. Katie Belle Nubin of Richmond, Va.

Immediately following the wedding ceremonies, a Sister Tharpe and Madam Knight the two "First Ladies" of Spiritual music presented a thrilling concert. They were assisted by the Harmonizing Four, the Rosettes, Miss Vivian Cooper, James Roots, Jr., and Sister

Tharpe's mother, Mrs. Nubin.

In keeping with the spirit of the July 4, the affair ended with an elaborate display of fireworks including cupid's heart pierced with arrows designed especially for the bride and groom. A most unusual display was a giant 20 foot high framework of colorful fireworks portraying Sister Rosetta playing her famous guitar. Many other unique figures amounting to \$1000 worth of fireworks were exhibited.

Sister Tharpe who is now 34 years old, was born in Cotton Plant, Ark., the daughter of a woman who preached to Pentecostal congregations, where most of her service consisted of singing gospel hymns. Thus, at a very early age, Rosetta absorbed a musical tradition that has formed the basis of her career.

She now lives with her mother in Richmond, Va. Her sister Mrs. Emily Lee Kennedy of Camden, Ark., and a foster sister, Mrs. Jessie Tidewell of Frankfort, Va., attended the wedding ceremonies.

The groom, Russell Morrison, who is Rosetta's road manager, is also 34 years old. He was born in Pittsburgh, Pa. He was on a road tour with Lucky Millinder's orchestra when he met and fell in love with Sister Tharpe. Their romance has been in the bloom for the past 13 years.

In the dressing room where Sister was changing from her elaborate wedding gown to her concert togs she remarked with much jubilation; "I am happier than I've ever been in my life!"

Dressed in gray lace and wearing a huge orchid corsage, Rosetta's mother said, "I think the wedding was wonderful and I thank God for it."