
Guide to the Harry Plate Collection: The Rikers and Holy City, 1900-1970

Box number: 2007-30

History San Jose Research Library
San Jose, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Harry Plate collection: The Rikers and Holy City, 1900-1970

Dates: 1900-1970

Bulk Dates: 1960s

Collector: Plate, Harry

Collection Size: 2 ms boxes, 1 flat box

Repository: History San Jose Research Library.

San Jose, California 95112-2599

Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the History San Jose Research Library.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

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Preferred Citation

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Acquisition Information

Gift of Trudy Plate (Mrs. Harry Plate), Scottsdale, Arizona, 2007

Biography: the Rikers, the PCDW, and Holy City

"Father" William "Ed" Riker (1873 Oakdale, Ca – 1969, Agnews State Hospital, Santa Clara Co., CA) and his wife, "Mother" Lucille Schutrum Jensen Riker (1874 Nebraska – 1950 Holy City, CA), lead a utopian communal cult, The Perfect Christian Divine Way (PCDW). Incorporated in Los Angeles in 1918 by Ed Riker, Irvin Fisher and Anna Schramm, the PCDW established Holy City in 1919 in the hills above Los Gatos. Riker later claimed it was a revelation in the hills above San Jose in 1906 that led him to change from palm reader to "The Comforter." A former San Francisco waiter, salesman and con-man, Riker, and later Ohio-born mechanic Irvin Fisher (1881-1980), drew many of their followers from among financially struggling and marginally educated middle-aged throughout the Midwest. (Riker first met Fisher in Indianapolis in 1913). Counter to rumor, they were not all single, nor was "free love" a common practice. Riker, charismatic and all-knowing, offered simple answers to life's many complex questions.

Holy City flourished during the 1920s and 30s as a popular road stop along the difficult mountain road from San Jose to Santa Cruz, where the curious could stop for a bite to eat or help with an overheated radiator, or take a peek at a strange array of attractions or debate “perfect government.” Although the PCDW itself probably never numbered more than about 30 confirmed disciples, the population of Holy City and the surrounding neighborhood peaked at around 300.

Holy City’s small population declined rapidly after the 1940 construction of Highway 17, which bypassed the village. The real death knell, however, was Lucile Riker’s death in 1950. While she had not been able to keep her husband’s political ambitions in check (a career move that had divided the PCDW community), her very pragmatic business sense had kept the community self-supporting. Riker lost control of the property in an attempt to revise Holy City’s fortunes by transferring ownership to an alleged, and very minor, Hollywood producer, Maurice Kline, in 1956-57. Subsequent legal battles left the PCDW dispossessed and Holy City in the hands of a land development company. By the early 1960s, little was left after arson and bulldozers destroyed most buildings.

(see also [appendix 1, “The Whole Truth Right Here in Holy City,”](#) by Roxanne Nilan (History San Jose, 2007); [appendix 2: chronology](#), and [appendix 3: cast of characters](#))

Summary of Collection

Harry Plate, journalist and writer, served as Associate Editor of California Today, the Sunday magazine section of the San Jose Mercury News. He subsequently moved to Arizona. These files were compiled in 1970 to support what Plate intended to be a series of three feature articles on the life of William Riker (1873-1969), and the evolution of Holy City, California, home of the disciples of Riker’s Perfect Christian Divine Way.

To get beyond the “tidy collection of vignettes” that made up most popular accounts of Holy City, Plate interviewed Riker family members, aging disciples, and Holy City neighbors and critics. Riker’s niece, Helen Dunning, and nephew, Ray Riker, helped Plate pin down elusive details of Riker’s early life and background. “First disciple” Irvin B. Fisher, then approaching 90, provided additional details about The Philosophy, while Joe Albert, an early disciple and one of the few remaining PCDW residents of Holy City, allowed him limited access to the Riker house. The PCDW’s youngest disciple and self-proclaimed heir, Wallace Stovall, gave Plate access to early documentation and photographs.

Plate’s extensive correspondence with Robert Alexander Clogher provides special insight. Clogher, a local surveyor and self-styled “Passing Paladin of the Holy Citizens,” had helped the remaining eight elderly PCDW disciples protest Riker’s illegal “sale” of Holy City to an alleged Hollywood producer, Maurice Kline, in 1956. Fourteen years later, Clogher still held the San Jose Mercury News culpable for siding with Riker and Kline in dispossessing the elderly disciples. Clogher found Plate a sympathetic ear, however, and he shared much of what he’d learned about the community and helped correct many apocryphal stories.

Included among Plate’s research and interview notes are many original Riker letters, 100 photographs and postcards, other early PCDW documents and printed material. In addition to the original material, several sources (particularly Wallace Stovall) allowed Plate to photocopy their originals. Also included are news clippings, and a notebook kept by postmistress and bookkeeper Winifred Allington.

Plate’s “Riker: From Mechanic to Messiah,” California Today (San Jose Mercury News) (30 August 1970), pp. 6-10, about Ed Riker’s early years, was the only article he completed on the topic. “I’ll probably do two or three other installments, covering the subsequent years—but not right away,” he wrote Helen Dunning. “First, we’ll wait to see if this brings any new witnesses out of the woods.” Local and national events of this busy summer apparently intruded. Nevertheless, Plate’s collection remains a rich source for further study of Holy City’s community.

Related Material at History San Jose

William E. Riker, “Notes of “Father” Riker (ca. 12 pages of notes, n.d.), accession no. 1997-237-666.

News clippings collection: Cities and Towns: Holy City (1 folder)

Charles J. Allard, *‘Father’ William E. Riker and his Holy City*, Unpublished Masters Thesis, San Jose State University, 1968.

Joan B. Barriga, *The Holy City Sideshow* (San Jose: Santa Clara County Pioneers, 1988). Unpublished paper submitted to the Santa Clara County Pioneers.

Betty Lewis, *Holy City: Riker’s Roadside Attraction in the Santa Cruz Mountains, a Nostalgic History* (Otter B. Books, 1992). Reference Coll: F868.S33.L49x.1992

Eleanor Mauro, *William E. Riker and Holy City: An Historical Study of One Man’s Utopia*, Unpublished Masters Thesis, Dept. of Librarianship, San Jose State College, 1971.

Manuscripts, Correspondence and other Documents

Physical Description: 1 ms box

box 1, folder 1

Harry Plate: Drafts

The Making of a Messiah n.d.

Physical Description: 8 leaves, carbon copy

Scope and Content Note

Plate's story of William E. ("Ed") Riker up to 1919, based on his interviews and other research. Includes typescript and two additional photocopies of first two pages of introduction.

Riker n.d.

Physical Description: 2 leaves

Scope and Content Note

Two inserts: "Free at Last," and "He began reading more."

Holy City n.d.

Physical Description: draft, 4 typescript leaves

Scope and Content Note

May be a draft of a proposed second article in series.

Letter, William Riker to "My Dear Ones" September 21, 1919

Physical Description: 1 leaf, transcribed, photocopy.

box 1, folder 2

Harry Plate: Miscellaneous Correspondence 1970

Scope and Content Note

Letters about his research/article with Holy City disciples and others, not included in separate folders below (eg. see also his correspondence with Helen Dunning ([folder 4](#)); Robert Clogher ([folders 11-12](#)), and Wally Stovall ([folder 16](#)).

Plate to Mr. Wally Smith February 25, 1970

Physical Description: Photocopy, 1 leaf.

Plate to resident September 3, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Plate to post master September 3, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Plate to Helen Long September 14, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

John B. Heintz, postmaster, to Plate September 25, 1970

Physical Description: Typescript, 1 leaf.

Plate to John B. Heintz October 5, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Plate to Carolyn Holt October 6, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

John B. Heintz, postmaster, to Plate September 8, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Scope and Content Note

On back of Plate's letter.

Plate to Heintz September 11, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

box 1, folder 3

Harry Plate: Legal Research 1970

Scope and Content Note

Riker and other PCDW members were often involved in property related lawsuits, and more serious legal actions, including alleged fraud, sedition, and murder (most of which are covered in correspondence and newsclippings elsewhere in the collection). Plate was especially intrigued with Riker's interaction with Melvin Belli, who defended him from sedition charges in 1942 by downplaying Riker as crazy, and the 1956-59 controversy over Riker's inappropriate "sale" of Holy City to Marvin Kline. (see also notes and correspondence about probate of Lucille Riker's will, [folder 8](#), and Robert Clogher correspondence on this battle, [folders 11, 12](#)).

Plate to Melvin Belli, San Francisco February 6, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Riker v. Kline 1956-1959

Physical Description: 7 leaves.

Scope and Content Note

Notes.

Lists of grantors and grantees

Physical Description: 10 leaves.

Scope and Content Note

Original and Copies.

Assembly Journal April 6, 1961

Physical Description: Photocopy, pp. 2212-2213.

Scope and Content Note

Includes letter from Robert Clogher regarding Riker's fraudulent transfer of title to Kline, and revealing disciples' disenchantment with Riker and distrust of Kline.

box 1, folder 4

Helen Dunning

Scope and Content Note

Plate's letters to Riker's niece, Helen Dunning, and interview notes, regarding William Riker's biography and family. Dunning, the daughter of Ed Riker's younger sister Agnes (1876-1967), helped him fill in much about Riker's mysterious background and life before 1930.

Plate to Mrs. Helen Dunning August 28, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Plate to Mrs. Helen Dunning July 2, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Plate to Mrs. Helen Dunning May 8, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 2 leaves.

Plate to Mrs. Helen Dunning May 4, 1970

Physical Description: Carbon, 1 leaf.

Notes

Physical Description: 5 leaves, typescript, annotated.

Scope and Content Note

Plate's notes from Helen Dunning regarding William Riker, including an extensive biographical chronology.

Interview February 25, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, annotated.

Scope and Content Note

Transcript of Plate's interview via telephone.

box 1, folder 5

Lucille and/or William E. Riker: Correspondence and other documents 1918-1922

Arrangement

Chronological Order

Articles of Incorporation of the Perfect Christian Divine Way September 24, 1918

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

Incorporation to promote friendly, benevolent, spiritual and beneficent association and feeling, with directors W.E. Riker, chairman, Anna Scramm, secretary, and I. E. [sic] Fisher; with Los Angeles as principal place of business, for fifty years.

Note, "Received from Wm. E. Riker, the sum of ten (10) Dollars as a deposit on store 490 Hayes Street, San Francisco January 7, 1920

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Lists lease terms and conditions, and signed by agent for Gendotti Estate Co.

Letter, Lucille Riker, I. B. Fisher and Sam Hanson, San Francisco, to Our Sacred Leader and Most High [W.E. Riker] March 25, 1920

Physical Description: 1 leaf (two pages), typescript, signed. Letterhead: The Perfect Christian Divine Way Teachings: the Fruit of All Religions, Headquarters at 657 Hayes Street, San Francisco.

Scope and Content Note

Re: "business pertaining to Sams place of business.." Sam, "a plum real live one" was too valuable to waste on a sick business (which, despite Sam's work, has turned little or no profit), but he seemed to believe the Rikers and Fisher were "trying to put some thing over on him as he terms it, that is not as clean cut and open as a book."

Letter, Sam Hanson, Burley, Idaho, "To the Most High My Dear Father God" [Riker] February 25, 1921

Physical Description: 1 leaf, pencil holograph, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Has completed the job he was sent to do, and is ready to return "home", with Mrs. Hanson willing to "try Mrs. Riker." Has no money to bring back Mrs. Hanson, and their three children.

Postal Card, C.O. Grant, 376 Eureka St., San Francisco, to Mother Lucille, PCDW, 557 Hayes St., San Francisco September 19, 1921

Physical Description: 1 Postal card.

Scope and Content Note

"I will not be able to be at class..."

Letter, Dr. Herbert Clemmens, San Francisco, to Whom It May Concern November 2, 1921

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

Testifies that he has been doing some \$2000 in dentistry work for PCDW, finds the Rikers "people who take great interest in all their associates."

Letter, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Riker, San Francisco, to Mr. Marshall November 8, 1921

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript carbon, not signed.

Scope and Content Note

"The black mailing gang in the Leakley case are busy at this end again... said that your lawyer at Los Angeles had given Leakley a copy of the receipt which she signed, but that she was not satisfied...if we did not have this other complicated case on our hands, I certainly would go after that woman and have her up as a black mailer...whatever settlement you can come to at the least figures...will be satisfactory with us."

Letter, Mrs. W. E. Riker, to Cousin Lillian, Muscatine, Iowa June 20, 1922

Physical Description: 1 leaf [2 pages], typescript, carbon.

Scope and Content Note

"...so busy in various channels...my time is not my own..hard for me to explain my situation and affairs to you...I belong to an organization composed of a class of people who all work in common together." Busy with land trouble, continual business "We as an organization are preparing a little country home up in the mountains and a great deal of our time and attention is taken up there also."

Letter, W.E. Riker, San Francisco, to Sam [Hanson?] July 13, 1922

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Scope and Content Note

Angry Sam is leaving and taking "this old wornout machine." "You [and his family] were a constant expense to the order...you are in debt to us, not us to you" Also about Frieda Schwartz, who "got on the witness stand and testified to a lot of lies about us and then committed suicide."

Deposition, Fred [Schwarz] October 6, 1922

Physical Description: 1 legal leaf, holograph, signed.

Note

Notary public, San Francisco

Scope and Content Note

[Note: his spelling:] "Fred Schwarz being duly sworn deposition say: I wish to state testify and confess at my own free will that [I] heard Pearl Archer converse and influence my mother and father to testify against Mr. and Mrs. Riker for no other purpose that to do them up. I also know that Pearl Archer holds the power over my father. Of all the years I was associated with the PCDW I never once have seen or heard anything immoral. I positively believe [sic] my mother suicide [sic] was cause the evil influence of Pearl Archer and if she had been left alone under the care of Mrs. Riker were she was always happy while there she would be alive and happy to day."

Letter, Dr. G. B. Wilson, 504 Haight Street, San Francisco to Mr. and Mrs. Riker and the PCDW Family, Hayes Street, San Francisco December 22, 1922

Physical Description: 1 leaf, holograph, signed.

Scope and Content Note

"I wish you would not send me any money. I feel that I have been amply paid for all I have ever done for you. Besides I am well aware that the past year has been one of great trials and expense to you..."

box 1, folder 6

Lucille and/or William E. Riker: Correspondence and other documents 1923-1925

Arrangement

Chronological Order

Letter, Mrs. W. E. Riker, to John E. Alexander, Atty, Mills Building, San Francisco January 13, 1923

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript carbon, not signed.

Scope and Content Note

Concerns her "leg work" re: Wolf and Company, legal action about the lease with Mrs. Archer, Archer's suit for damages, "I have searched high and low for the lease of that Hayes Street property (Wolf and Co., agents) and unable to find it. Is it not in your possession?"

Letter, R. B. Leland, principal San Jose High School, to Mr. William Riker October 29, 1923

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

To introduce teacher Bessie I. Cole.

Letter, Mrs. William Riker, to R.B. Leland October 29, 1923

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Scope and Content Note

Miss Cole's request for animals for San Jose High's animal exhibition gladly granted.

Letter, John E. Alexander, Attny, San Francisco, to Mr. W. E. Riker, Alma, California January 15, 1924

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Re: pending case Layne v. PCDW, bring "exact names and addresses of witnesses you wish to call in your behalf so that I can have subpoenas issued for them."

Letter, John E. Alexander, Attny, San Francisco, to Mr. W. E. Riker, Alma, California September 24, 1924

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Re: upcoming Layne v. PCDW trial, Asks him to bring "two or more of your members here – those who can testify as to the condition of the building at the time you took it over and as to any changes alleged to have been made. Pick out those who would present the best appearance and who would be able most intelligibly to answer the questions."

Letter, Assunta Denicole, Lafayette, to "My dear Master Teacher," [William Riker] Holy City November 18, 1924

Physical Description: 1 leaf [2 pages], signed, with cover envelope: 306 S. 27th Street, Indianapolis, to WE Riker Holy City, PO Alma California.

Scope and Content Note

Assunta was the mother of Donald Dencole, listed by Plate as an employee following an auto accident. [Note: her spelling:] "Please tell mi wat ken I do for you my Dear Brother? ..I nid your precious help in everi ten now ..I send to you my little moni \$25"

Letter, Assunta Denicole, Lafayette, Indiana, to "My Dear Mother and Queen of the Entire World," [Lucille Riker] December 11, 1924

Physical Description: 2 leaves [2 pages], signed.

Scope and Content Note

"I see your Divine eyes wide open lok upon mi I want to do for ever my Divine and sacred duty... I Read again your great Nun Book and I fand on forteen and nineteen page about sex forse..."

Letter, J[oe]. A. Wagner, Managua, Nicaragua, to My Dear Friend Mrs. Riker December 25, 1924[?]

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript.

Scope and Content Note

Wagner working at a sugar refinery, encourages her to come "just to put more knowledge to you I have got enough...Everything in its nature state even the people are born natural without fathers... Hoping you come and start a zoo in Holy City...No one writes to me so I hope you write when you have time."

Letter, Lillian Koll, Muscatine, Iowa, to Luciell [sic] January 15, 1925

Physical Description: 3 leaves, holograph, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Got Lucille's poem opening KFQU; Asks for news, did she move "to the house on the hill that you were going to remodel." Sister in Oceanside, and friends in Muscatine can sometimes hear Holy City radio. "Wonderful thing radio is. Wish we had one." Heard from Lucille's mom, who is now living alone and didn't say where May was living [California].

Letter, Joe Wagner, Managua, Nicaragua, to Mr. and Mrs. Riker February 27, 1925

Physical Description: 4 leaves [7 pages], holograph signed.

Scope and Content Note

Encourages them to put good material into building Holy City, "you want to have what others havn't got and then they would wonder where you got it...Mrs. Riker, I am right up against it have not got a home or clothes or nothing so I am out of work and no friends... What I would like to do it to buy for you and take care of your interest...I want to kane myself a PC and I want to be a leader a/man with brains not with mussles. I want Mr. Riker to teach me what he knows and help the PC. The animals here are just the thing for your zoo. What I would like is a debate with Mr. Riker and win \$10,000 being he hasn't seen things that happened 5,000 years ago like I have seen here and see it now. ..."

box 1, folder 7

Riker, Lucille and/or William : Correspondence and other documents 1926-1929

Arrangement

Chronological Order

Postal card, San Francisco Public Library, to Mother Lucille Riker, Holy City, CA June 2, 1926

Physical Description: Card.

Scope and Content Note

Re: gift of publication to library

Postal Card, US Post Office registered return receipt December 27, 1926

Physical Description: Card.

Scope and Content Note

For goods received from Mrs. W. E. Riker, to A. W. Watt, Sydney, Australia.

Postal Card, US Post Office registered return receipt December 23, 1926

Physical Description: Card.

Scope and Content Note

For goods received from Mrs. W. E. Riker, to C. M. Schwab, Bethlehem, PA.

Letter, Mrs. A[ssunta] De Nicole, Louisville, to "My Dear Lovely Mother" [Lucille Riker] September 28, 1927

Physical Description: 1 leaf (two pages), holograph, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Asking if she can bring her 11 year old daughter with her when she returns, "the other children can find work in San Francisco or some where near when they come later." Husband will remain long enough to get straightened out concerning the house (which isn't yet paid for.)

Letter, Lucille Riker, Holy City, to "My Dear,"[Assunta De Nicole] October 4, 1927

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript. Letterhead: Holy City, Santa Clara County, California, with PCDW emblem (Angel woman embracing PCDW and Holy City circle).

Scope and Content Note

Bring your daughter, the others can come too and decide what to do. "Of course younger people in order to be happy and contented in Holy City have to be lovers of Wisdom, and as you know young people are so inclined they have so many material things that stand before them which they have to pass through" California is beautiful, but also "is a spot where the majority of truth seekers congregate."

Letter, James J. Bulger, atty, San Francisco, Calif, to Mr. W. E. Riker, Holy City January 31, 1928

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

"...Ruby Landgraf has warrants for Evelyn [Rosencrantz] and a number of new checks, some of which were forgeries, and your name used." Advises letting "them" get her in Los Angeles for check fraud, "Just keep in the clear now. Don't talk about the matter...she might be able to have you arrested, or something, claiming that you violated the law in Los Angeles and San Diego...We will work the thing and get the suits dismissed and then we will have the Surety Company to deal with."

Letter, [Lucille Riker?] to District Attorney, County Court House, Oakland, California June 13, 1928

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, not signed.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Rosencrantz case: "I believe you have in your possession a letter; also that \$5,000 Rosencrantz note and possibly checks etc., pertaining to this case, for which you will have no further use ...it might be well for us to lay them safely away on the shelf" and invites him to Holy City.

Letter, Earl Warren, District Attorney, Oakland Calif., to Mrs. W. E. Riker, Holy City, Cal June 15, 1928

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed by Maurice J. Bleuel, deputy.

Scope and Content Note

Re: People vs. Evelyn Rosencrantz. Re her request for return of forged checks and documents "delivered to me by your husband during the trial of the above entitled case, please permit me to advise that these papers can not be delivered to you at this time, as an appeal has been taken by the defendant and your papers will remain in evidence until the matter is determined by a higher court." Thanks for the invite to Holy City, "I shall be only too glad to drop in to see what a Holy City looks like at the first opportunity I get."

Letter, Helen May, Wrights, California, to Mr. and Mrs. Riker July 31, 1928

Physical Description: 1 leaf, holograph signed, with cover envelope, to Mrs. Riker of the Holy City Los Gatos.

Scope and Content Note

"Please tell me if you have room for one more it is utterly impossible to stay where I am, also I wish to know if you have a truck I have a washing machine sewing machine and a few boxes and a large trunk..."

Letter, Mrs. W. E. Riker to Helen May, Wrights [Station], Cal July 31, 1928

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript carbon, not signed.

Scope and Content Note

"Your letter received but it will be absolutely necessary for you to come and see me and have a talk with me before I could decide as to whether we have room for you or not. We always have room for one more of your own kind, but it is up to us to decide whether any one is or not as it is the understanding and the spirit that governs the entire situation and not the personality..."

Letter, J. W. Ehrlich, Ehrlich and Henderson, San Francisco, Cal to N. D.[sic] Riker, Holy City, Los Gatos, Calif December 14, 1928

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Layne vs. Riker. Layne attorneys asked him to produce the lease in question. "Please see if you and Mrs. Riker will make every attempt to find it."

Letter, J. W. Ehrlich, Ehrlich and Henderson, San Francisco to W.D. [sic] Riker January 14, 1929

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript signed.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Layne vs. Riker. Jan 17 trial.

Letter, S. D. Dodge, President, Aero Development Association of America, to To W.E. Riker April 3, 1929

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript, signed. With enclosure.

Scope and Content Note

"The following information covers our proposal to construct an airport at Holy City." Lists men involved. Proposed airline from San Francisco to Holy City will be established by "Americas Airways."

Agreement between W. E. Riker and Sumner D. Dodge and Fredrick Bowerman April 1929

Physical Description: 3 leaves, legal typescript, not signed.

Scope and Content Note

For \$15,000, to establish an airport and 1000 foot runway, hanger for two 3-seat airplanes, etc.

Letter, Earl Warren, District Attorney, Oakland, to Mrs. Lucille Riker, Holy City December 21, 1929

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed by J. F. Loakley, assistant.

Scope and Content Note

Maurice Bleuel, who prosecuted the Rosencrantz case, no longer with this office, he doesn't understand what papers and notes you refer to; please identify "with more certainty, and then, providing the ends of justice permit, we shall take the necessary steps to return them to the proper parties."

Letter, Harry, New York City, to Lulu [Stewart] n.d. [ca. 1920s]

Physical Description: 1 leaf, holograph signed.

Scope and Content Note

Writing for Calista that Harry passed away.

box 1, folder 8

Riker, Lucille and/or William : Correspondence and other documents 1930-1962

Arrangement

Chronological Order

Letter, Earl Warren, District Attorney, Oakland, to Mrs. Lucille Riker, Holy City January 24, 1930

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed by J.F. Loakley.

Scope and Content Note

Loakley was not familiar with the case; if documents were introduced in evidence, are in the custody of the Clerk of the Court and can be withdrawn only with the joint permission of the Judge and District Attorney. If delivered to DA for preparation, should communicate with Capt of Detectives George Helms of DA's office.

Letter, [R. M. Rise?], Assistant Physician, Eastern Oregon State Hospital, to Holy City Information Office May 22, 1930

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Former patient Mary Felder, or Mary Jesus, committed January 29, 1929 from the Dalles State Hospital; restless and delusional, "and had peculiar ideas of personal and spiritual relationship. She was never violent or suicidal." Released October 10, 1929, to her father, of San Antonio, Texas.

Letter, [Lucille?] to The Dalles State Hospital, Oregon May 29, 1930

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, carbon (no header or signature).

Scope and Content Note

Mary Felder/Mary Jesus/Mary Branch Jesus is presently with us and acts very strange and mysterious. Can not remember where she was institutionalized.

Letter, Mr. and Mrs. [Ella] Gardiner, Omaha, to Mr. and Mrs. Riker September 10, 1930

Physical Description: 1 leaf, holograph signed.

Scope and Content Note

Thanks for book. "We still have our meetings only we have moved" Card attached: Mrs. Ella Gardiner, spiritual medium.

Letter, S. Crawford, Castledery, Co. Tyrone, Ireland, to Dear Friend July 28, 1930

Physical Description: 1 leaf, holograph signed.

Scope and Content Note

"I hope you have made good progress in every way with you City. I wrote you at Christmas but did not hear from you since." Living alone in a cottage, looking after bees and bee business and garden.

Letter, W. E. Riker, Holy City, to V. W. Hallinan, Attny, San Francisco, California October 14, 1944

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

Re: "next move" [in suit against Melvin Belli] "I know that you know that Belli is a professional crook...This may be a big turning point in your life."

Letter, Melvin M. Belli, San Francisco, to W. E. Riker, Holy City December 26, 1944

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

Sorry to inform him that he was sent a Christmas card by mistake.

Letter, W. E. Riker, Holy City, to Herman Talmadge, Gov. of Georgia June 4, 1954

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Scope and Content Note

Sends a copy of his letter to Earl Warren, "that supposed-to-be Supreme Court Judge," views Talmadge as a man "picked on by God and His plan, to do a supreme job," and offers to come to Georgia to help him, since "the time is now ripe to get busy as never before, in getting rid of all of the Race Crime that is bloomingly going on..."

Letter, W. E. Riker, Holy City, to the Honorable [Chief Justice] Earl Warren June 4, 1954

Physical Description: 6 leaves, typescript (carbon). Holy City Letterhead: A Friend to Every Man and Region on Earth; Headquarters for Perfect System of Government: The Holy City: The New and Only Holy City of the World.

Scope and Content Note

Re: the "Racial Problem" (miscegenation), and Warren's "unbelievable mistake" in allowing racial mixing as constitutional "according to your interpretation and not of Abraham Lincoln, who is acclaimed a real and a better man."

List April 1, 1959

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

List of Nieces and Nephews of Lucille Riker, deceased, as obtained from several of the below listed relatives...

Letter, Evelyn [Krenz], Pasadena, Calif., to Father Riker April 25, 1959

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Recommends that Gladys "would be the logical one of us to appear in court Friday...since she has the backing of sisters and brothers to prove relationship" to Aunt Lucille. [Gladys was one of Lucille's many nieces].

Petition n.d. [1959?]

Physical Description: 2 leaves, pencil.

Scope and Content Note

"Petition for Determination of Heirship, in the Superior Court of the State of California in and for the county of Santa Clara, No. 47139 In the matter of the estate of Lucille Riker, deceased." [note: Lucille died intestate].

Letter, Frank M. Jordan, Secretary of State, California, to Father W. E. Riker, Holy City May 10, 1962

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Can't help him get an adjustment of the cancellation of his driver's license.

Automobile orders n.d.

Scope and Content Note

Signed by "general manager" [Joe Albert].

Natal horoscope February, 1952

Physical Description: 5 leaves, handwritten.

Scope and Content Note

Chart and analysis, for William E. Riker by Maldwyn Evans.

Daily Cash Reports December 21, 1957 - February 8, 1958

Scope and Content Note

Signed by Jean Kline and Joseph Albert, for receipts and disbursements (mostly \$60 to \$90 per day, on sale of beer and wine).

box 1, folder 10

Disciples, Relations and other Informants: Lists and Notes

Scope and Content Note

Plate's list and biographical notes, including information derived from interviews, and news clippings.

Harry Plate's Notes

Physical Description: 6 leaves, holograph.

Nephews and nieces of Lucille Riker, deceased

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript.

Holy City

Scope and Content Note

List of disciples and others, including Robert Clogher and Willis Riker.

Biographical notes

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, each, except where noted.

Scope and Content Note

- Albert, Joseph
- Allington, Winifred
- Bachman, E. R.
- Catts, D. L.
- Clogher, Robert Alexander (2 leaves)
- Dencole [DeNicole], Donald
- Fisher, Irwin Bryant
- Harme, Charles
- Kastner, Arthur
- Nelson, Carol
- Northy, Charlie
- Pommel, Fred
- Rechsteiner, Emil
- Reynolds, Harry
- Riker, Francis Villon (aka Willis)
- Rommel, Frederick William
- Rosencrantz, Evelyn
- Rozum, Stephen
- Stovall, Wallace E.
- Strauss, Marguerite
- Thiele, Albert
- Watkins, Isaiah M (DD)
- Witzig, Joe
- Wood, James Milton

Newsclipping April 24, 1965

Physical Description: Clipping and photocopies.

Scope and Content Note

Re: John Arthur Landstrom, "Holy City 'Disciple' Dead at 75."

Obituary n.d.

Scope and Content Note

Re: John Arthur Landstrom

box 1, folder 11

Clogher, Robert Alexander (1917-1984): Correspondence November 1969-August 1970**Scope and Content Note**

Mostly Harry Plate's correspondence with Robert Clogher, 1969-71, as well as copies of Clogher letters to other editors regarding not only Holy City and the PCDW, past and present, but current topics such as women's liberation, the Nixon administration, the role of the press, and national and local politics. Born in New York City in 1917, Clogher received his undergraduate degree from Columbia, did graduate work at the New School for Social Research in Social Psychology (1948-50), and moved to California in 1952. In 1954, he first met Riker—who piqued his curiosity, not his loyalty. In December 1956, his car broke down in Holy City, and he was invited to stay by James Milton Wood (1905-1968), service station attendant, former journalist, and allegedly Riker's "chief scribe" (confidential secretary). Although he was not a disciple (he rented a room behind the gas station), Clogher enjoyed their anti-establishment stance, but remained highly critical of Riker as a bigot and self-proclaimed prophet. Clogher and Wood were evicted by Riker (who considered them "troublemakers") in 1957, after they promoted a disciples protest in late December 1956 and early 1957 against Riker's alleged sale of the Holy City property to Maurice Kline. Clogher continued his fight for legal and public recognition of the PCDW's corporate title) to the Holy City property in this 1970 correspondence. Clogher, a local surveyor, was also founding director of "Prometheans" in 1950, and subsequently a publicity director and an early president of the National Nudist Council. He ran unsuccessfully, but in good humor, for various local offices.

Robert Clogher, Holy City, to Editor [Ted Bredt or Harry Farrell?], California Today November 22, 1969**Physical Description:** 3 leaves, typescript (photocopy).**Harry Plate to Robert Clogher February 3, 1970****Physical Description:** 1 leaf, typescript.**Harry Plate to Robert Clogher April 7, 1970****Physical Description:** 1 leaf, typescript.**Robert Clogher to Harry Plate April 10, 1970****Physical Description:** 1 leaf, typescript, signed.**Scope and Content Note**

Re: Holy City's fraudulent "sale" and "resale," the truth as published in the Holy City Clarion, Jan 4, 1957, by James Milton Wood, re PCDW incorporation #87117.

Robert Clogher to Harry Plate April 10, 1970**Physical Description:** 4 leaves, typescript, signed.**Harry Plate to Robert Clogher April 13, 1970****Physical Description:** 1 leaf, typescript.**Robert Clogher, Holy City, to Editor [Ted Bredt], California Today July 28, 1970****Physical Description:** 4 leaves, typescript (2 copies, typescript and carbon, both signed).**Robert Clogher to Harry April 17, 1970****Physical Description:** 8 leaves, typescript annotated and signed.**Robert Clogher to Harry April 18, 1970****Physical Description:** 1 leaf, typescript signed, with attachment: "The Voice of Prometheus," by Robert Alexander Clogher, 7 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Robert Clogher to Harry Farrell, San Jose Mercury News April 21, 1970

Physical Description: 7 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed (cc: Harry Plate).

Harry Plate to Robert Alexander Clogher July 2, 1970

Physical Description: 3 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Robert Clogher to Harry [Plate] July 6, 1970

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript, signed.

Harry Plate to Robert Clogher July 15, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Robert Clogher to Harry Plate July 20, 1970

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript, signed.

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse, to The Editor, Santa Cruz Sentinel July 20, 1970

Physical Description: 5 leaves, typescript (photocopy).

Robert Clogher to Harry July 26, 1970

Physical Description: 3 pages (1 leaf), typescript, signed.

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse, to The Editor, California Today July 28, 1970

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Harry Plate to Bob Clogher August 7, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse, to Harry Plate August 11, 1970

Physical Description: 6 leaves, typescript, signed.

Harry Plate to Bob Clogher August 12, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse, to Harry Plate August 19, 1970

Physical Description: 6 leaves, typescript, signed.

Harry Plate to Robert Clogher August 19, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Robert Clogher to Harry Plate August 17, 1970

Physical Description: 3 leaves, typescript, signed.

Lease, Brookdale Lodge May 2, 1969

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript (photocopy).

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry August 24, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse, to Max Frankel, Washington Bureau, New York Times August 24, 1970

Physical Description: 3 leaves, typescript.

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] August 25, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Cassie Sinclair, Santa Cruz, to Robert Clogher August 13, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Harry Plate to Robert Clogher August 27, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse, to the Editor, Santa Cruz Sentinel August 26, 1970

Physical Description: 8 leaves, typescript (photocopy), initialed.

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] August 29, 1970

Physical Description: 3 leaves, typescript, signed.

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] August 31, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaves, typescript, signed.

box 1, folder 12

Clogher, Robert Alexander (1917-1984): Correspondence September 1970 to March 1971

Robert Clogher to Harry [Plate] September 5, 1970

Physical Description: 3 leaves, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

Copy for Harry Plate, "for his enlightenment."

Robert Clogher to Irvin B. Fisher September 5, 1970

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript.

Robert Clogher, Brookdale, to Wallace Turner, New York Times September 8, 1970

Physical Description: 6 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Scope and Content Note

Copy for Harry Plate.

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] September 18, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript.

Robert Clogher to Editor, Women's Wear Daily September 18, 1970

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Robert Clogher to Harry Plate, California Today September 20, 1970

Physical Description: 7 leaves, typescript, signed.

Robert Clogher to Harry Plate, California Today September 20, 1970

Physical Description: 7 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Scope and Content Note

"Copy to Hugh Van Dusen, with Harry's imprimatur."

Bob Clogher to Harry Plate October 3, 1970

Physical Description: 5 leaves, typescript, signed.

Bob Clogher to Harry Plate October 15, 1970

Physical Description: 5 leaves, typescript, signed.

Robert Clogher, Editor, Holy City Apocalypse to the Editor, Santa Cruz Sentinel October 25, 1970

Physical Description: 5 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] September 18, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Scope and Content Note

With note, Hallowe'en, 1970

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] October 31, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Robert Clogher, Holy City Clarion, to Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, President, New York Times November 1, 1970

Physical Description: 10 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Scope and Content Note

Sent as enclosure to Harry Plate, above.

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] November 30, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon), signed.

"Little man, deputy minister of information, The Perfect Christian Divine Way, to Big Man, Deputy Minister of Information, Black Panther Party" November 29, 1970

Physical Description: 6 leaves, typescript (carbon), signed.

Scope and Content Note

CC: Associate Editor, California Today, San Jose. Sent as enclosure with above.

Harry Plate to Bob Clogher December 3, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] December 9, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon).

Bob [Robert Clogher] to Harry [Plate] March 13, 1971

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (carbon), signed.

Bob Clogher to Bill Broom March 13, 1971

Physical Description: 13 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Scope and Content Note

Copy for Harry Plate, enclosed with above.

box 1, folder 13

Fisher, Irwin Bryant (1881-1980)

Scope and Content Note

"First disciple" and one of the three original founders of the Perfect Divine Christian Way, the Ohio-born Fisher was a mechanic and carpenter, and superintendent of Holy City's "Mechanical Engineering." Fisher first met Riker in 1913 in Indianapolis, and was among the three 1918 trustees incorporating the PCDW in Los Angeles. He established two schools and headquarters in Los Angeles and San Francisco, and received the official title of Reverend from Riker; he was the only disciple to be deemed "Father." He moved to Holy City in the early 1920s. In 1942, Fisher murdered Joseph Witzig and seriously injured Arthur Kastner in an argument over a location of a fire ladder. Sentenced to five years in San Quentin, he was paroled in 1944, and cautioned not to return to Holy City. He subsequently moved to a Quonset hut on Summit Road in the Santa Cruz Mountains, not far from Holy City, where he lived until his death at age 98.

Letter, Harry Plate to I.B. Fisher September 14, 1971

Physical Description: 1 leaf (carbon).

Letter, I. B. Fisher to Robert Couchman, Mercury Herald, San Jose February 1, 1928

Physical Description: 4 leaves, typescript (photocopy) signed.

Scope and Content Note

"An account of Holy City, its philosophy and activities, also his connections with it." Includes his background, and early PCDW history, and the Holy City philosophy.

Christmas letter to Larry Auzene November 6, 1968

Physical Description: 6 leaves, typescript (copy).

Scope and Content Note

Fisher's religious interpretations.

Newsclipping [San Jose Mercury?] October 31, 1942

Physical Description: Photocopies.

Scope and Content Note

"Colony Carpenter Faces Murder Charge in Court."

box 1, folder 14

Kidwell, Constance J.: Correspondence with Ted Bredt, San Jose Mercury-News 1969-1970

Scope and Content Note

Constance Kidwell, a Holy City resident (not a disciple), had many stories about Riker ("a con man through and through") and life at Holy City. Unfortunately, many are based on rumor or otherwise unsubstantiated, with facts awry and names misspelled, but her comments are revealing of beliefs held by Holy City's neighbors. (Plate's April 13, 1970 interview suggests her sources were limited to Holy City postmistress Helen Long, a senile Harry Ryan, and local journalist Jim Edmunson.) Her manuscript, "The End of a Utopia," was offered to and purchased by the San Jose Mercury-News, but not published).

Constance, J. Kidwell (Mrs. Ralph)

Scope and Content Note

by Harry Plate of his April 13, 1970 interview.

Letter, Kidwell to Bredt December 14, 1969

Physical Description: 3 leaves, typescript, signed.

Letter, Kidwell to Bredt December 21, 1969

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Letter, Kidwell to Bredt January 23, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Letter, Bredt to Kidwell January 28, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed contract and copy.

Letter, Kidwell to Bredt January 29, 1970

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript, signed.

Constance Kidwell, "The End of a Utopia," n.d. [1969]

Physical Description: 16 leaves.

Scope and Content Note

Manuscript of article submitted to San Jose Mercury; note editors questions regarding unsubstantiated accusations and statements.

box 1, folder 15

Riker, Ray Gifford (1911-1988)

Scope and Content Note

Plate's notes and transcript of his two interviews with Reginald Gifford Riker (aka "Ray" Riker), son of William E. Riker's younger brother Daniel. Ray provided family background and other information (and some misinformation) on both Ed and Lucille Riker.

Biography: Ray (Gifford) Riker.

Interview February 13, 1970

Physical Description: 5 leaves, typescript transcript.

Interview February 20, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript transcript.

box 1, folder 16

Stovall File Info: Materials provided by Wallace E. Stovall

Scope and Content Note

Miscellaneous notes and letters, photocopied by Harry Plate from the files of Wallace E. Stovall of San Jose. Stovall first met Riker in 1937 as a child, and later as a radio repairman. Although he did not live at Holy City, he was named President of Perfect Christian Divine Way in 1968 when it was reincorporated. He then moved the PCDW to San Jose, where he operated his TV repair shop. (At this Holy City election, William Riker was elected secretary, and Joe Albert, James Wood, and Irwin Fisher were named board members; Stephen Rozum joined board in 1969. Riker, who had been in and out of rest homes, died that year. Both Stovall and Joe Albert were allegedly writing up the story of Holy City, but only Stovall agreed to help Plate, on the basis of quid pro quo. NOTE: this folder includes photocopies of Riker and PCDW materials similar to those in folders 5-8.

Plate-Stovall Correspondence

Harry Plate to Wally Stovall, Church of the Divine Way, San Jose June 23, 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, typescript (carbon).

Assembly Journal April 6, 1961

Physical Description: pp. 2212-2213, photocopy.

Scope and Content Note

Enclosure with above. Includes letter from Robert Clogher re: Riker's fraudulent transfer of title to Kline.

Notes, Harry Plate 1970

Physical Description: 2 leaves, holograph.

Riker Correspondence

W. E. Riker, San Francisco, to "My Dear Ones," September 26, [no year, ca.1919]

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

"I will close the doors to the public and use no more energy in trying to find any more P.C.D.W. Christ Blooded people...our energy will be used for our own crowd and we as a whole will tell the world something through our deeds as never before."

"Your leader" [W.E. Riker], Los Angeles, to "Hello Dear Ones," n.d.

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

"I am fixing things to do something big, so let me do it and you can have all the praise. Here is a list of a few things I want to do at once."

Lulu Stewart to Lucille [Riker] August 10, 1928

Physical Description: 4 leaves, photocopy, envelope postmarked Los Angeles, September 11, 1928. With typescript transcript, 1 page.

Scope and Content Note

"I am writing you this at the urgent request of Grace Bishop, to tell you you [sic] are now the only one that can lay absolute claim to the name of Mrs. W. E. Riker. She says to tell you she has done as you asked her and got I, and son to give up the name..."

"Your loving daughter," New Hotel Plaza, Newburgh, NY, to "Mother dearest" n.d.

Physical Description: 2 leaves, holograph (photocopied), signed. With envelope (photocopy) addressed to Mrs. Lucille Riker, Alma, California, postmarked Kansas City, MO, August 12, 1923.

Scope and Content Note

Harry Plate's note: "Handwriting on envelope not same as on letter inside. Envelope address appears to be handwriting of Lulu Stewart – per letter 8/10/28 from LA to Lucille Riker." Also note: California State Death Records reveals that Lucille's family name was Schutrum, thus Jensen was probably a married name. RLN

Agnes (Riker Fauk) to Ed (W. E. Riker) October 1944

Physical Description: 1 leaf, holograph, signed. With envelope postmarked October 17, 1944.

Scope and Content Note

Agnes Riker (1876-1967) was Ed Riker's younger sister.

Lucille [Riker], Holy City, to Mae [Schutrum Foster] February 15, 1945

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Riker/PCDW miscellany

Card

Physical Description: 2 Photocopies.

Scope and Content Note

Good for One Reading: Prof. W. Riker, Hold Your Ticket, Good at Any Time.

[Mind reader's cheat sheet]

Physical Description: Four copies of two pages each, slightly different.

Scope and Content Note

List of words to suggest object.

P. C. D. W. Disciple Book For Real Disciples of Final Law and Wisdom n.d.

Physical Description: 15 leaves, typescript and photocopy.

Scope and Content Note

Includes letter from "The Leader" to "Dear Ones," Palms [Calif.], October 20, 1920.

[List of principles?] n.d.

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

Includes letter from "The Leader" to "Dear Ones," Palms [Calif.], October 20, 1920.

[Questions] n.d.

Physical Description: 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy).

Scope and Content Note

"Emma Phillips Asks: Is it necessary for the boys to pass through the dining room and kitchen when going from the backyard to the street?..Is it necessary for the boys to lean back in their chairs which keeps me from passing when serving?"

P.C.D.W. Testimonials

Physical Description: photocopies.

Omaha April 15, 1914

Scope and Content Note

"I wish to testify in regards to Mr. W. E. Riker and his teaching, they are exactly as represented in every particular." (Signatures include Mrs. Lucille Jensen, 2551 Farnam St.)

Minneapolis July 25, 1914

Scope and Content Note

"I wish to testify and confess that the teaching of Mr. W. E. Riker entitled the Perfect Christian Divine Way Teachings are exactly as represented,..." (Signatures incl. Arthur Landstrom).

Minneapolis, Minn August and September 1914

Scope and Content Note

"I a Student and a Investigator of Mr. W. E. Riker's Teachings, entitle the Perfect Christian Divine Way Teaching...I wish to give my signature in this behalf..." Signatures include Irwin B. Fisher, Miss E. W. Allington, Miss Elsie Burch, Stephen Rozum.

San Francisco, California Oct. 13, 1914

Scope and Content Note

"I wish to openly testify that I was one of the attendits and a critical investigator..." Signatures include Ed Caulfield, J. Grace Bindt, Lulu Stewart (both at 1103 O'Farrell)

San Francisco, Cal October 1914

Scope and Content Note

"...I wish to testify after taking lessons of the Higher Wisdom of the PCDW Teachings..." Signatures include Mrs. Lulu M Steuart, Edward Caulfield, Burnett Atherton.

Los Angeles and San Francisco, Cal September 20, 1918

Scope and Content Note

"I Myself being a thorough investigator, student and Disciple of the Perfect Christian Divine Way philosophy..." Signatures include Lucille Riker, L. Nothingham, L. Stewart, W. Wallington, S. Staube.

Petition January 11, 1919

Physical Description: 1 leaf taped together, photocopy.

Scope and Content Note

To Dr. A. T. Hoisholt, Supt, Napa State Hospital, in re: Arthur Kastner. Signatures include W.E. and Mrs. W.E. Riker).

[San Francisco?] n.d.

Scope and Content Note

"I, the undersigned, do hereby affix my signature as a symbol of my word in bond, that I am leaving the P.C.D.W. order, because I am unable at the present time to be a sister to those who are willing to be and in a position to be by me..." Signed by Aurelia Kruhm [Amelia Krahn?]. (Witnesses: Sophie Staub, Frieda Schwarz, E.W. Allington, Emma Phillips, Anna Schrahm, Katherine Yarger, Lucille Riker). No date. Note: Amelia Krahn is listed in 1920 U.S. Census at this address.

[Statement] n.d.

Scope and Content Note

"In our last lesson we made clear that we have discriminate between the worms of the dust and those who claim to be intelligent and otherwise...anyone who goes to the extreme measure of deviation make themselves subject to being barred from future lessons since the former lessons did them no good." No date. 1 leaf, typescript (photocopy), signed. Signatures include A. Landstrom, Albert Thiele, Stephen Rozum, F. Rommel, Anna Schramm, E. W. Allington, L. E. Nothingham, David Capp, J. Albert, Joe Witzig. [22 disciples]

box 1, folder 17

Stovall File Info: Newsclippings 1913-1930

Scope and Content Note

Photocopies of Newsclippings, most unattributed and undated; see also Plate's collection of Mercury newsclippings, [folder 18](#).

"New Religion a Cure All 'Stops All Aches, Pains' Former Drummer is Leader." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* 1913

Physical Description: 2 copies.

Scope and Content Note

With photo of W. E. Riker and Villon Riker.

"Listener in a Tilt with Street Talker: Takes Issue With Speaker's Assertions, But Fails to Hold Up Under Fire" n.d.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Riker, who "represents a cult promoting spiritual, mental and physical life," counters a heckler in cold night street talk, saying the Jew is "rightfully the ruler of the world, chief in finance, commerce and intellectual development."

"'Let Your Soul Absorb Your Body,' Cult Says" *St. Louis Star* October [1913?]

Scope and Content Note

"'Perfect Christian Divine Science' Has New Road to Happiness; Much Love Necessary; At So Much a Lesson Anyone Can Evaporate and Cheat the Undertaker." Note: "Perfect Christian Divine Science" used before 1914.

"'Cult 'Murder' Scene Described by Woman"

Scope and Content Note

Photos of Riker in "altar robes."

"'Woman Lays Murder to Riker" *San Francisco Chronicle* April 26, 1929.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Rosencrantz Accusation. Jump page, continuation from page one, column one, not available.

[headline unreadable] *San Francisco Chronicle* April 27? 1929

Physical Description: Front page, and jump page.

Scope and Content Note

"Castoff Wife Slain, States Appeal of Prison Lifer; Mrs. Rosencrantz, Former Cult Head's Secretary, Tells of Quicklime Burial; San Quentin Inmate Feared She Would Be Next If Victim's Fate Told."

[headline unreadable] May 3, year unknown

Physical Description: Front page, and jump page.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Fred Rosencrantz, alias C.A. Reid, injured while evading police (son of Evelyn Rosencranz, herself awaiting trial in Oakland)

San Francisco Call-Bulletin March 31, 1930.

Scope and Content Note

Photo and caption re: Five San Francisco dancers led by Estelle Reed.

[headline unreadable] *San Francisco Examiner or Call-Bulletin?* April 1929.

Scope and Content Note

Re: accusation of Evelyn Rosencrantz, "life prisoner at San Quentin." "William E. Riker, 'king' of Holy City, mystic cult in the Santa Cruz Mountains, was taken into custody by police at Culver City today and grilled in connection with a sensational accusation that he murdered a 'cast-off' wife, Mrs. Margaret White, in 1927."

box 1, folder 18

San Jose Mercury: Newsclippings 1937-1970.

"War Veteran's Widow Sues to Get Insurance: Santa Cruz Woman Says Husband's Relatives 'Disliked Her.'" January 22, 1937.

Scope and Content Note

Re: Helen A. Long.

"Father Riker's Philosophy, Inc. Files Articles" March 23, 1937.

"'Father' Riker Enters Self in Governor Race" December 17, 1937.

"Riker Changes Name of Party" December 28, 1937.

"Half-Interest Deal: Holy City Sold, Going 'Modern'" September 18, 1956.

"Shopping Center for Holy City!" September 18, 1956.

"Holy City 'Faithful' Carry On" December 28, 1956.

"Dissent in the Mountains!" January 9, 1957.

"Law Looks In at Holy City Discord" January 10, 1957.

"Bypass ...Holy City Figure ..." May 2, 1963.

Scope and Content Note

"The Brotherhood has shrunk to one." (Winifred Allington).

"Father Riker of Holy City: Led Religious Cult" December 4, 1969.

Scope and Content Note

Obituary.

"Famed 'Father Riker' of Holy City is Dead" December 5, 1969.

Scope and Content Note

Obituary.

"Funeral S..." [Riker] December 5, 1969.

"Father Riker, Hippies, and A Mobile Buddha; Holy City!" n.d.

Scope and Content Note

By Gil Bailey.

"Holy City is a []" n.d.

Scope and Content Note

By Starr Perrin. Faint copy – magazine article.

box 1, folder 19

Watkins, Rev. Isaiah M.

Scope and Content Note

A Santa Clara Adult Education teacher of general semantics, psycho-cybernetics, and other "new age topics," and "Bishop" in the PCDW, Watkins conducted services at the "Church of the Divine Way," 525 E. Santa Clara, San Jose. In 1970, he taught a course in black history and race relations and was an activist in projects for racial understanding. Credit report reveals a good character and generous nature, and membership in a "self-realization" organization that meets every Friday (PCDW).

Newsclip. *San Jose Mercury* April 15, 1970.

Two handouts.

Business Card.

Scope and Content Note

Church of the Divine Way, Rev. Isaiah M. Watkins, DD.

Credit/character report May 9, 1970.

box 1, folders 20-22 **Riker: Flyers and Handouts**

Scope and Content Note

Includes photocopies of posters and handouts from "Santa Clara County Museum."

box 1, folder 23

Additional Secondary Sources

Physical Description: Photocopies.

Richard A. Beal, *Highway 17: The Road to Santa Cruz* 1991.

Scope and Content Note

"Holy City," pp. 25-28.

Robert V. Hine, *California's Utopian Colonies* 1953.

Scope and Content Note

pp. 154-157.

Eugene T. Sawyer, *History of Santa Clara County California with Biographical Sketches* 1922.

Scope and Content Note

p. 1553.

Erwin G. Gudde, *California Place Names* 1998.

Scope and Content Note

p. 168.

John V. Young, *Ghost Towns of the Santa Cruz Mountains* 2002.

Photographs and Negatives

box 2, folder 1

Street scenes: Holy City, California 1930s-1950s

Scope and Content Note

See also [Folder 8](#), for Holy City 1920s (Stovall copy prints).

Holy City, Headquarters for the Worlds Perfect Government ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, matte (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

"Headquarters for the Worlds Perfect Government" (two story clapboard structure, with tower. Next door, "High Class Printing" [ca 1925-35 – see car]. [Accessioned 05/07 2007-30-6].

Holy City, Information Booth ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, matte (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

Sign: City Principle, All Mysteries Answered, open. White garage-like building.

Holy City, three buildings ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, matte (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

Three buildings, including "Holy City Speaks the Truth" (on signboard), building with angels on top ("Holy City is the Comforter and the New Jerusalem"), and "Public Comfort Station" on right.

Holy City market ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

Two story clapboard Market building. "Red and White," with white "Made-Rite, San Jose, Cal." With truck, and slope back car.

William and Lucille Rikers' house ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

The Rikers' house and garden, as seen from road below.

Holy City billboard ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

Billboard into town: "This is the great symbolic building to be erected in Holy City...Free Literature Explains." In background, Market (at left), garage (at right). [Accessioned 05/07 2007-30-5].

Headquarters, with Riker in truck ca. 1935

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (4¾"x 7½").

Scope and Content Note

"Headquarters for the World's Perfect Government"; sign over door: "Father Riker, the King of all wise men, gives to the world a new and perfect form of government," and signs, paintings at sides of windows and doors. [Accessioned 5/07 – 2007-30-2].

Holy City signs and headquarters ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

Signs -"The Whole Truth Right Here and at Holy City and Nowhere Else" surrounded by wire fence; headquarters "The Comforter", behind picket fence. Larger white building may be the garage. Note post-war cars. (scrapbook album page). [Accessioned 05/07 2007-30-8].

Closer view of Sign ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

"The Whole Truth Right Here and at Holy City and Nowhere Else," surrounded by wire fence. Note post-war cars. (From scrapbook album).

Closer view of headquarters ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

"The Comforter", behind picket fence. Cars. (On same scrapbook album page as #9).

Riker and Cadillac ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

Riker in his Cadillac, with sign on top: "Go to Holy City Learn the Truth, for only there can it be found about religion, a perfect government, world peace and the racial problem, free lecture Sunday 3pm at Holy City." Parked in front of sign: "Holy city Speaks the Truth: It's only the white race WOMEN of all nationalities of the White Race People who magically reflect and demonstrate the true spirit of Christ and Christianity and not any Church—or any preacher." Gift shop in background. Cars. (On same scrapbook album page as #12).

Riker and van ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

Riker and van, with signage (Riker in back with loudspeakers), parked in front of Gift Shop. Cars. (On same page of scrapbook as 11, on back are nos. 13-14).

Riker and van ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

Riker in back with loudspeakers, [Stovall?] standing; Cadillac parked next to truck. In front of "Holy city is the comforter and the New Jerusalem." Ca. 1950-54 (note cars) (from scrapbook album). (Top, On same leaf of scrapbook as 14, on back 11-12).

Riker's car ca. 1950-1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (3½"x 5½").

Scope and Content Note

Car, with sign on top, parked in front of comfort station and "Holy city is the comforter and the New Jerusalem." Ca. 1940's car. (From scrapbook album, photo on bottom of page, on same leaf of scrapbook as 13, on back 11-12).

Santa Claus statue ca. 1954

Physical Description: 2 prints. BW, glossy (6"x 7¾").

Scope and Content Note

Santa Claus statute, with "Holy City is introducing a new world of Freedom and contentment. It is called a new Jew and Gentile World." On back "Stovall."

Observatory ca. 1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (faded) (6"x 9¾").

Scope and Content Note

Observatory telescope, with signs, gas station at right.

Santa Claus statues ca. 1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (faded) (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Santa Claus statues and their shed, with sign: "The Gentile White Man is the King of the Entire World – Read what the wise men say."

Peep-in churches ca. 1954

Physical Description: BW print, glossy (faded) (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

"Peep in the Churches." Line of at least eight churches, with young man peeping in. Sign behind: "Golden Glow Beer." [Accessioned 5/07 2007-30-4].

box 2, folder 2

William E. Riker (1873-1966) ca. 1900-1929

William Riker portrait ca.1900-05

Physical Description: BW copy print of [albumen] print cabinet card (3 1/8" x 5 3/8" on 3¼" x 5¾" card).

Scope and Content Note

Head and shoulders portrait of Riker, bearded, in turban, frock coat, white waistcoat, black tie. On front: [-] Portrait Co., 11067 Market St., San Francisco. [Accessioned 05/07 2007-30-7]

William Riker portrait ca.1900-05

Physical Description: BW Copy print, glossy, (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, with turban and beard.

William Riker portrait ca.1900-05

Physical Description: BW Copy print of [albumen print cabinet card] (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, bearded, in broad brimmed hat, frock coat, white waistcoat, black tie, standing. On front: [-] Portrait Co., 11067 Market St., San Francisco.

William Riker portrait ca.1900-05

Physical Description: Copy print, glossy (4"x 10").

William Riker portrait, seated ca.1900-05

Physical Description: Copy print of hand colored portrait. (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, bearded, in white waistcoat, and long black frock coat, seated in wicker chair. No hat.

William Riker portrait, standing ca.1900-05

Physical Description: BW print (silver/sepia), (3 5/8" x 7 1/4").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, standing with hand on chair. Three piece business suit, fore-in-hand tie, hat. Unknown studio. Photo upper left corner damaged, print silvering.

William Riker portrait, standing ca.1900-05

Physical Description: Copy print, 5"x 8¼".

William Riker portrait ca. 1913

Physical Description: Oval BW print (1 1/2" x 3 3/8", set in 3"x 5¾" cabinet card).

Scope and Content Note

Riker in high crowned fedora, bow tie, and suit (that looks too big for him). On front [studio]: Stone, 64 ½ Wabash, Terre Haute [Indiana]

Riker mind reading ca. 1900

Physical Description: Albumen print (3½"x 3½", on black card).

Scope and Content Note

Riker, in boater hat, with right hand to forehead, and left holding client's hand, both seated, gentleman looking away. On back "Ed Riker doing mind reading."

Riker mind reading ca. 1900

Physical Description: Albumen print (3½"x 3½", on gray card).

Scope and Content Note

Riker, in boater hat, with right hand to forehead, and left holding client's hand, both seated. Variation of previous, signs and stall more visible, gentleman client looking at Riker.

Riker mind reading ca. 1900

Physical Description: Albumen print (3½"x 3½", on gray card).

Scope and Content Note

Riker, in bowler hat and long coat, standing, with right hand to forehead of seated gentleman. Signs and stall visible.

Riker mind reading ca. 1900

Physical Description: Albumen print (3½"x 3½", on gray card).

Scope and Content Note

Riker, in boater hat, with holding lady client's right hand, both seated. Signs and stall visible.

Riker and gentleman, at mind reading stall ca. 1900

Physical Description: Albumen print (3½"x 3½", on gray card).

Scope and Content Note

Riker, left, and unidentified gentleman in bowler hat, standing at Riker's mind reading stall.

Copies of Riker mind reading photos ca. 1900

Physical Description: 5 copies, glossy prints.

William E. Riker 1929

Physical Description: BW silver print (6" x 8").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, smiling, in suit and hat. Associated Press photograph, Los Angeles. On back: "Associated Press Photo LA763, Caption watch credit, from Los Angeles. 'King' William E. Riker, cult leader of Palms, Cal., who has been accused of murdering Mr. Margaret White there in November, 1927. Riker, who was questioned, denied the accusations, which were made by Mrs. Evelyn Rosencranz, a San Quentin prison convict. No charges have been filed against Riker. -JH-4/25/29 (Miss R.West) (CX1NV1)."

box 2, folder 3

William E. Riker (1873-1966) 1942-1966

William E. Riker 1942

Physical Description: BW print (7½"x 6").

Scope and Content Note

October 30, 1942 newspaper photo (Date on back). On Back (Newspaper clipping): "Arrested. Calmly unruffled and philosophical, "Father" William E. Riker, Holy City cult leader, holds a \$7500 cashier's check crumpled in his hand as he awaits his release on bail here last night, following his arrest on charges of having made seditious statements to U.S. soldiers. The eccentric patriarch, who this year for the second time is a candidate for governor and announced himself as a presidential candidate in 1940, declared that his war record will stand up to government scrutiny. He said he has a son in the army, has purchased war bonds, and collected scrap metal." [Accessioned 5/07 2007-30-1].

Riker and Cadillac ca. 1950

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 6").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, seated in his Cadillac, with sign, parked in road below his Holy City house. Sign on top: "Go to Holy City Learn the Truth, for only there can it be found about religion, a perfect government, world peace and the racial problem, free lecture Sunday 3pm at Holy City."

Riker and Holy City Van ca. 1950

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 6").

Scope and Content Note

Riker standing in back near loudspeakers. Parked in front of comfort station, Holy City.

Riker and van ca. 1950

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 6").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, at back of van, with sign reading: "Get ready for the Armageddon; suffering and trouble unlike any other time in History; says the comforter and the savior; get free literature."

Riker and van ca. 1950

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 6").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, at back of van, right arm raised, with sign.

Riker and van ca. 1950

Physical Description: Copy print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Closer view of Riker, at back of van, both arms on sign: "Get ready for the Armageddon; suffering and trouble unlike any other time in History; says the comforter and the savior."

Copies of Riker and van photos ca. 1950

Physical Description: 2 copies, glossy prints, 8"x 10".

Riker baptism 1966

Physical Description: BW print (5¼"x 5¼").

Scope and Content Note

Date on back: July 29, 1966, San Jose Mercury. Newsclip pasted on back "Baptism—'Father' William E. Riker, founder of Holy City, listens and touches candle as the Rev. Henry Tomei recites Roman Catholic baptism ritual. Also holding candle are Mike Steffani, left, and Mrs. Edward Steffani (not visible), Riker's godparents. Two of Riker's disciples, Irvin Fisher, 85, facing camera, and Stephen Rozum, 81, back to camera, witnessed the ceremony." [note: Father Tomei, St. Mary's, Los Gatos]. [Accessioned 05/07 # 2007-30-11]

Riker baptism 1966

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 5¼").

Scope and Content Note

On back: San Jose Mercury, Fri Jul 29, 1966. [Newsclip:] "Grateful—William E. Riker, 93, "father" of Holy City, kisses hand of the Rev. Henry Tomei after Riker was baptized Roman Catholic Thursday at St. Mary's Church. Mike Steffani, friend of Father Tomei's, acted as godfather to Riker."

Riker baptism 1966

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 5¼").

Scope and Content Note

On back: Fri Jul 29, 1966 San Jose Mercury. Riker anointed by Rev. Tomei.

Riker baptism 1966

Physical Description: BW print (3½"x 5¼").

Scope and Content Note

On back: Fri Jul 29, 1966 San Jose Mercury. [Newsclip:] Followers Watch Rites: Irvin Fisher, 85 (standing left background), and Steven Rozum, 81 (partly hidden), faithful followers of the long-defunct Perfect Christian Divine Way, Inc., watch as the Santa Cruz Mountain's cult founder, William E. Riker, 93 (center), is baptized a Roman Catholic in Los Gatos by the Rev. Henry Tomei."

Riker in sickbed 1957

Physical Description: BW print (3¾"x 4½").

Scope and Content Note

On back: "Wed Jun 1957." [newsclip:] "Holy City Leader—In his sick bed in a Los Gatos rest home, 'Father' William E. Riker calmly took the news that Holy City's main 'spiritual' building had been leveled by fire. He said a new structure, shaped like a human, will be erected but Holy City's co-owner said plans are indefinite."

Riker with US Commissioner Marshall Hall 1942

Physical Description: BW print.

Scope and Content Note

On back: Oct 30 1942. [newsclip:] United States Commissioner Marshall Hall, left, informs 'Father' William E. Riker of the sedition charges against him, as Riker posts \$7500 bail.—San Jose News photo."

Riker with US Commissioner Marshall Hall 1942

Physical Description: BW print.

Scope and Content Note

On back: Hearings of (Riker), Wm E. Riker, Oct 30, 1942. [newsclip:] "'Father' William E. Riker, 68, cult leader and founder of Holy City near Los Gatos, is shown above as he appeared with federal officers before U.S. Commissioner Marshall Hall of San Jose and posted \$7500 bail, following his arrest on charges of making seditious utterances to soldiers. Left to right, are Commissioner Hall, 'Father' Riker and U.S. Deputy Marshalls Warren D. Cain and Joseph J. Kennedy."

box 2, folder 4

William and Lucille Riker, and disciples

Riker and Fisher, PCDW House, Los Angeles 1917

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

On front: "Father, William E. Riker, and Father, Irvin B. Fisher, (in Los Angeles, 1917). Close up on front of house, with Riker and Fisher shaking hands, Fisher looking at camera.

PCDW House [Hayes Street, San Francisco?] ca. 1918

Physical Description: BW postcard.

Scope and Content Note

Perfect Christian Divine Way-World's Greatest Philosophy. In front, left to right: [?] Anderson, Ed Caulfield, William Riker. [Accessioned 05/07 #2007-30-9].

PCDW street speaking, San Francisco ca. 1914-1919

Physical Description: BW postcard.

Scope and Content Note

Identified on back as : Ed Caulfield, Speaker; Charles Northy, with sign left "PCDW" (attached to shoulders); ? Anderson, with sign right (the Devils News Paper); between signs, Tommy Davidson; right of Anderson, in hat (with unreadable sign attached), is William E. Riker. [Accessioned 05/07 # 2007-30-10].

Riker portrait ca. 1900-1905

Physical Description: Copy print, (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Riker with hand on chair.

Riker, Fisher and Lucille, and class, San Francisco 1915

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

On front: "Father Riker, Father Fisher, Mother Lucile and Class, In San Francisco, 1915." On back: From left to right: Irwin Fisher, William Riker, Lucile Riker. Back row: T. Balthasar Kundert, Ed Caulfield, J.H. Baer (?) Front row: F.L. Spears, Burnett Atherton, ?, ? 1915 San Francisco.

Irvin B. Fisher portrait 1970

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

On front: Father, Irvin B. Fisher, Master Teacher, of the P.C.D.W. 1970.

Elsie Burch portrait ca. 1915

Physical Description: BW copy print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Seated; in white shirtwaist and tied scarf at collar, ca. 1918 from dress. On back: disciple Elsie Burch, 1041 24 Ave SE Minneapolis, Minn.

Stephen Rozum 1954

Physical Description: BW copy print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Standing beside back of Holy City Van

Unknown [Joe Albert?] n.d.

Physical Description: BW copy print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Disciple, with "Holy City" white cap, attending grocery store

Unknown [Stephen Rozum?] n.d.

Physical Description: BW copy print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

In print shop, with green eye shade. Rozum was Holy City's printer. Could be James Milton Wood.

box 2, folder 5

Lucille Riker and disciples, family

Lucille Riker and Winifred Allington 1939?

Physical Description: Color print, (7"x 9").

Scope and Content Note

Miss Winifred Allington (left) and "Mrs. W. E. Lucille Riker" (right), with gold cloth crowns, long gowns with nun-like collars, and rosary-like crucifixes. Pencil, half-erased on back: 1939.

Lucille Riker portrait 1939?

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10"), 2 copies.

Scope and Content Note

Studio portrait by Hartsook, of Lucille, standing by chair, dressed in cloth crown, long gown, and crucifix.

Lucille Riker portrait ca. 1940

Physical Description: Sepia print (7"x 5").

Scope and Content Note

Studio portrait, San Francisco?, head and shoulders, with large fur collar, natural pearl necklace, and jeweled butterfly broach.

Lucille Riker portrait ca. 1940

Physical Description: Copy print.

Scope and Content Note

Same sitting as above, but without fur collar.

Mr. [-] Jensen n.d.

Physical Description: Portrait, copy print (8"x 10" glossy).

Scope and Content Note

On back: Lucille Riker's father, copy of portrait by A. W. Neihart and Co., Elmwood, Cass Co. Neb.

Mrs. [-] Jensen n.d.

Physical Description: Portrait, copy print (8"x 10" glossy).

Scope and Content Note

On back: Lucille Riker's mother, copy of portrait by A. W. Neihart and Co., Elmwood, Cass Co. Neb.

Lucille and Mae Jensen 1899

Physical Description: Studio portrait (3 5/8" x 2 1/4", on 5 1/4" x 3 1/2" card), 2 copies.

Scope and Content Note

On back: Lucille and Sister Mae, Aug. 14, '99. Alexander Grossheim, Berlin Studio, Muscatine, Iowa.

box 2, folder 6

William Riker, Bessie Zetty Riker, and Willis Riker

"Riker's Son" ca. 1914

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Presumably Francis Villon Riker (Willis) born 1909. Boy about 4, studio prop back of train car with sign "Leaving Minneapolis."

Riker and Son ca. 1911

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

Riker, seated, with boy (about 2) at his side, studio portrait. On back, "Riker and son" Presumably Francis Villon Riker (aka Willis).

Bessie Zetty n.d.

Physical Description: BW print (5 1/4"x 5 3/4").

Scope and Content Note

On front: "Bessie Zetty, as the second Mrs. Riker, bore him a son in 1909." Woman, in suit and hat, standing near tree in park.

Bessie Zetty Riker n.d.

Physical Description: BW print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

On back: "Bessie Zetty Riker—second wife. Stovall [source]."

Bessie Zetty Riker n.d.

Physical Description: Copy print (8"x 10").

Scope and Content Note

On back: "Bessie Zetty, Riker's second wife. ... [also] Bessie Zetta Riker. Stovall." Woman near flowering bush.

Willis Riker and airplane n.d.

Physical Description: BW print (7½" x 9 3/8").

Scope and Content Note

Accession No. 2007-30-3.

[Willis?] and airplane n.d.

Physical Description: BW print (3"x 5¼").

box 2, folder 7

Miscellaneous Holy City, and unidentified

Holy City van ca. 1950

Holy City van ca. 1950

Holy City headquarters ca. 1950

Scope and Content Note

The "Mystery Spot."

Holy City ca. 1939

Physical Description: BW Postcard (cut down on both ends).

Scope and Content Note

View from hill, with house/knoll on left, main buildings center, tree-covered mountains in back. Few cars (only one truck is clearly visible). Same photograph was used in pamphlets "The New World of Tomorrow," (1939) p. 1, and "The Light of The World; True Solution Book" (1939), inside back cover.

Holy City van ca. 1950

William E. Riker ca. 1910

Physical Description: 2 copies.

Scope and Content Note

In hat, copy of original print on wall or board.

Unidentified woman ca. 1895

Physical Description: BW albumen image (3¾"x 5 3/8") on cabinet card (6 3/8"x 4 1/8").

Scope and Content Note

Studio identification on card: Weber, Ogden, Utah. Written on back: "One of Ed's Women."

Unidentified woman and child ca. 1950

Physical Description: BW (5"x 3½").

"Wild Cat Dew" July 10, 1899

Physical Description: Albumen print (3 7/8"x 4") on card (4¼"x 6½"). 2 copies.

Scope and Content Note

Identification from handwritten note on front.

box 2, folder 8

Holy City ca. 1928

Scope and Content Note

Eight copy prints, on two proof sheets, made in 1970 from originals shown to Plate by Wallace E. Stovall.

Proof sheet one ca. 1928

Scope and Content Note

(top left) Holy City Observatory and radio KFQU tower, with billboards and "This is Holy City" sign next to gas pump. (top right) Holy City garage, grocery store, with tree, "Buy Here, Gasoline, Oils and all Auto Necessities. (lower left) Radio station KFQU, with tower. (lower right) Restaurant and dance floor.

Proof sheet two ca. 1928

Scope and Content Note

(top left) Looking down hill, from print shop to restaurant. (top right) Holy City billboard on hill. (lower left) Rikers' house, Holy City Fire Department, and Holy City trucks. (lower right) Holy city from hill (observatory?), including garage, grocery store, print shop, headquarters, comfort station, dance hall and restaurant.

box 2, folder 9

Negatives

Scope and Content Note

7 strips of 35mm negatives of Holy City, ca 1970, with two contact print sheets (33 images), showing Holy City as Harry Plate and his photographer saw it when they interviewed Joe Albert. Also 28 negatives (4x5), all copies of above images (for use in Plate's articles)

Books and Pamphlets

box 2, folder 10

Lucille Riker

Mother, Be a Man 1945

Scope and Content Note

New York: The Exposition Press.

box 2, folder 11

Holy City Press publications

Scope and Content Note

While presumably narrated by Father Riker, it is likely that these were often "ghost-written" and/or edited by the comparatively better-educated "Mother" Lucille Riker, Stephen Rozum, printer, and/or "Father" Irvin Fisher.

The Cause of Infantile Paralysis Explained; The Aura about his head, symbolizes his various 100 per cent arguments and true solutions to all major and your concerned problems n.d.

Physical Description: 12 p. Illus. (8 leaves, no separate cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City: Literature Department. Original price \$1.00.

Christ Promised to Send the Comforter and He is now Among Us in Tangible Form and Herein , He Speaks to You—Read Carefully n.d.

Physical Description: [1], 8, [2] p. illus. (6 leaves, no separate cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City: Literature Department.

Copies of three very Important Letters That have been sent to some very Important People in U.S.A. and Europe [1952-1956]

Physical Description: 11 p. (6 leaves inside yellow paper cover; with proof marks).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City: Literature Department.

Includes letters to President Dwight Eisenhower, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Earl Warren, and Soviet Prime Minister G. M. Malenkov.

Crime: Hickman and His Kind Discovered to Be Perfectly Innocent, if Society is Innocent; A New Intelligence Introducing Itself in this New and Final Holy Age 1928

Physical Description: 16 p. illus. (8 leaves inside salmon colored paper cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City Press. Original price 25 cents.

Lecture delivered over Radio Station KFQU, Holy City, October 8, 1928. William E. Hickman was convicted of the kidnapping and murder of Marion Parker in 1928.

The Great Jewish People; the Contents of this Book Will Be Accepted; there is no Other Way Out! n.d.

Physical Description: [3] 15 p. Illus. (10 leaves within yellow paper cover).

Scope and Content Note

Original price 25 cents.

Holy City Tells: How to overcome the last enemy; How to become a real Christian and to Grow out of old age; How to become all-wise and go free n.d.

Physical Description: 8 p. (4 leaves within yellow paper cover).

The Light of The World; True Solution Book...This World Is All Yours [ca. 1948]

Physical Description: 19 p. Illus. (10 leaves within white paper cover).

Scope and Content Note

Original price \$1.00.

Includes letter to Pres. Harry S. Truman.

A Message Direct from God to You: This is a Believe-It-Or-Not Book 1947

Physical Description: 12 p. (6 leaves within white cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City, CA: Literature Department

Includes "The New World," poem by Lucille Riker.

The New World of Tomorrow Is Now Being Introduced and Is Soon to Become Eternally Established [1939?]

Physical Description: 10 p. Illus. (5 leaves, no separate cover).

Scope and Content Note

Includes "The Royal Family of God," poem by Lucille Riker.

The Perfect Government; I Openly Challenge the World to Find a Flaw in My Perfect System of Government; the Old World Ways Have Come to an End and the New World Ways are Now Being by My coming [1937?]

Physical Description: 32 p. Illus. (18 leaves, within cover).

Scope and Content Note

Original price 25 cents.

Cartoon has Riker bludgeoning EPIC, Marx, Isms, and Townsend Plan.

This is...The Book of Books That Surely Sizzles with the Final Wisdom of GOD n.d.

Physical Description: 12 p. (6 leaves within yellow cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City, CA: Literature Department.

This is the God Almighty's Truth so Says the Comforter; Our Gentile White Race Women are the Only Non-Conscious Ministers of Christianity Through Their Sanctity, Beauty and Inspiring qualities, and Not any Priest or Preacher n.d.

Physical Description: [8 p.]. Illus. (4 leaves, no separate cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City, CA: Holy City Literature Department.

The Two Great Men of God, Who are divinely functioning in a spiritual , wise and Divine Wedlock as herein explained, that challenges and defies the Elite in this world n.d.

Physical Description: 12p. Illus. (6 leaves, no separate cover). Some pages uncut.

Scope and Content Note

Holy City, CA: Holy City Literature Department.

Presents Father William E. Riker, the Promised Comforter; and "King David Aaron, The New Jewish Messiah."

Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done on This Earth as It Is in Heaven; So says The Comforter, whom The Savior promised to send, (and is now among us in tangible form) n.d.

Physical Description: [7 p.] Illus. (4 leaves, no separate cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City, CA: Literature Department.

The White Race is Supreme; Racial Education Based upon Spiritual, Scientific fact and General Observation; a White Woman's Soul Turns Black; the White Man's Toleration is All to Blame n.d.

Physical Description: 37 p. illus. (20 leaves, within yellow cover).

Scope and Content Note

Holy City, CA: Holy City Press. Original price 50 cents.

Oversize

Physical Description: 1 flat box.

box 3

Oversize account book 1929-1965

Scope and Content Note

Kept by E. Winifred Allington, early PCDW disciple and citizen of Holy City (1919-197?) and post-mistress for Holy City from 1938 to 1953.

Appendices

Scope and Content Note

By Roxanne Nilan.

"The Whole Truth Right Here in Holy City"

Chronology

Cast of Characters