

Holy City Father Ricker and the Holy City

About 10 days ago, Trudy Plate telephoned me from Arizona. She said that her late husband, then connected with the San Jose newspaper, researched Father Ricker and Holy City for a long time. There was a large box of information in her closet on these subjects. She ran across an article I had written about Holy City, found out who my publisher was and called him for my telephone number.

When I answered her call, she wanted to know if I would like to have all of her husband's material in the box. I said 'Yes, that would be wonderful' and she said she would send it to me. A very large box arrived filled with pictures, pamphlets, research material, etc., plus Ricker's very large diary.

Harry Plate had gathered an enormous amount of information and it was all stored in many, many folders. Enclosed were 15 small booklets containing information Ricker had written about. Ricker in his "divine" mind had written the following: "He claimed that California is a white man's home and declared that he had the solution for the 'World's Perfect Government.'"

He founded Holy City in the Santa Cruz Mountains in 1919 under the doctrine of the "Perfect Christian Divine Science." Some wag said he must have named it that because it was neither Christian, divine nor scientific — and if improved, what could it have been originally? He was completely for the "white" man saying: "The gentle white race people can speak to God without any drawbacks. He signs his sayings as the Comforter and healer for all white people." The 15 booklets are really as bigoted as one can get.

Ricker ran for California Gover-



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nor four times and Melvin Belli was his attorney.

All of this material will be given to the San Jose Museum when I am finished with it. The folders with the entire material stack about a foot high on my extra office chair. Also enclosed is a sheet of music written by Mother Lucille, Ricker's third wife. She wrote a song titled "Please Don't Leave Me Daddy," which was published in Holy City.

All of this material was really awesome and I am so delighted that Mrs. Plate was kind enough to send this collection to me. Also around at the same time were Father Divine and Aimee Simple McPherson. Ricker may have been a smaller fish, but he was certainly well known in Santa Clara County.

"Holy City is the comforter and the New Jerusalem, the city is place where we claim we solve all problems. It's a philosophy based on wisdom, not education. There is nothing to study. You just lay quiet and learn what you already know in you. Some religions claim you go to heaven when you croak. Well that's a fish story." — Father William Ricker

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