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HARRY SAMPSON

CLARICE MOODY SAMPSON

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manager of clothing department at David's Store

Clarice: Moscow; 1894
homemaker

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with Sam Schrager

August 16, 1976
II. Transcript
This conversation with HARRY SAMPSON and CLARICE MOODY SAMPSON took place at their home in Moscow on August 16, 1976. The interviewer was SAM SCHRAGER.

CLARICE SAMPSON: How we got hold of that, my sister had a friend in California and she wrote and course, she sent it up here so we could read it. I'm going to get out now so Harry will talk to you.

SAM SCHRAGER: I don't want you to leave Clarice. I'm going to ask you some too. But what was the matter with blood on the table and the pig?

HARRY SAMPSON: Well, it's just the idea that there was blood on the table; the pig that he saw in a vision, wasn't it? Of some kind? I never read it, so I don't know about it.

CS: We aren't taping now, are we?

SS: Yes, I just turned it on. Don't stop talking.

CS: I'm not sure though about this- you shouldn't say things-

HS: Is that on now?

SS: I just turned it on.

HS: Well, I first met Dr. Robinson when he came to Moscow, came into the store, David's store, and Mr. David introduced me to him because he'd been interested in Boy Scout work, too and he thought perhaps I could use him in my Scout work. And so that way, I got acquainted with him. Well, Mr. Robinson evidently came up here without any finances to speak of. He got this job at the drugstore across the street, Charlie's drugstore. But Mr. David, in order for him to have a place to sleep, he furnished him a bed and blankets and whatnot, in order to have a place to sleep. Well, it wasn't long after that he got,- I think there were six fellows,- I know that George Benson was one, Oscar Anderson was one, and Anderson of the First National Bank-

SS: Elmer Anderson.

HS: Elmer Anderson, yes. And I don't know just how much they financed him to, but it must have been around $1,000 a piece, and it was through that capital that he got his Psychianna going. Well, it just took like
wildfire all over the world because he advertised in the *Pathfinder* magazine in Washington, D.C. and that had a world circulation. And orders came in. Well, I think he operated about three years and he bought these fellows out, and then is when the money started coming in. And he started giving lectures. He'd go to Los Angeles, or he'd go back to New York and give a lecture and through these lectures he got more—sold more courses. And in these courses, living in Moscow he would not sell them to anyone in Moscow, they had to be out of the city. Well it wasn't long until he bought a home here with the money he had. Put in a pipe organ. He was a musician too, as well, an organist. And then along the way he got into trouble on his citizenship. He was a son of a Baptist minister up in Canada and he came over into this country and I don't know who dug it up on him, but he was not an American citizen and so, he had to leave the country. And, I've forgotten, he went to one of the islands, either Puerto Rico or Cuba or someplace in the islands there and Senator Borah helped him straighten the thing out for him, and he came back into the country and things were alright from then on. Well, the Moscow Medical Building, right back of the First National Bank, he built that and he had his office in there. Well, I was well enough acquainted with him—he only lived a block from us—and he invited me down one day to his office, just to see what it was like. So I went in there and he was telling me all about this citizenship setup that Borah took care of him on. Well, he says, "I'll tell you another thing," he says, "I've got a tape recorder underneath this desk." He says, "anybody that comes in this office that I'm not sure of," he says, "I turn that on, 'cause I'm not going to have them have anything on me." He was very clever about that end of it, he wasn't going to be caught into another lawsuit or something. Well, it wasn't long after that that he—oh, he just kind
of threw money away there for a while in Moscow. He established Robinson's Lake out here. There was a group of men in town here thought that might be a pretty good resort place out there and they'd build summer homes out there; well, he got a hold of that, and he just beat 'em to that and he bought that and turned it over to the county as a recreation area. Well, that was one thing. Well, then the newspapers were kind of tying into him a little here; newspaper, rather. So he decided that he was just going to run that paper himself so he bought 'em out. And he owned the Star Mirror until he turned it over to the got Bill Marineau from Elk River to come over here and edit the paper, and they changed the name to the Idahonian. Well, then there was another setup; he was a pharmacist, and he felt the pharmacists were more or less gouging the people with their prescriptions and their drugs and so on. So, he opened up a- or he bought a pharmacy- opened up Walgren's is now, and he operated that until whatyoucallems took it over. So he was a promoter, from 'way back.

CS: Yes, and tell about the Italian setup.

HS: When I was visiting in his office he was telling me about an Egyptian Shah or prince that had a son that was ill and he'd been taking his course- he had six or eight courses- and after you took them you started another list- you get 'em going on another; kept the finances coming in. Well, anyway, this prince cabled him and told him about his son. He says, "Maybe you can do something for him." And I suppose he wrote him back that he had prayed for him and done this and that, and the son became well. It was a kind of a miracle; the prince. So the prince sent him a check, and if I'm not mistaken it was $5,000 or $10,000, and Robinson told me that he sent that check right back to him and told him that the publicity that he would get on that would far out-
rank what he'd paid him. So that's the unusualness about him in all his affairs.

SS: Did he seem sincere to you, Harry?

HS: Oh, yes. Yes, I think he was sincere in his work because he and Drury used to have confabs, they were good friends, too, and Drury told him that he was getting all his information from Mary Baker Eddy. He revolved his science around Mary Baker Eddy. And he did have a lot of that. But he was a smart promoter.

SS: What about the struggle with George Lamphere? According to Robinson's book, Strange Autobiography, that book of his, he lays his troubles with the citizenship and all that on Lamphere, because George Lamphere hated him so much that he was after him.

HS: Oh, yes. Well, he owned the Star Mirror; the Moscow paper, and he was tying into him and there was nothing he could say but what was detrimental to Robinson. And then Robinson began thinking he'd take over the paper.

CS: Well, I believe, probably- you see, he had so much printing to do with all this- and I think probably they just didn't agree about the printing or something. So that was when Dr. Robinson got Bill Marineau to come from Elk River, he was running a little paper up there, and to start up a paper. And then, of course, for a while both papers were just at each other all the time, you know. But it seemed strange and funny to us, because the Star Mirror finally combined with the other paper. But Lamphere was out of that because Boaz was the editor for Lamphere and then he went in-

HS: When Lamphere sold it he had to take Louis Boaz over as the editor, and he was with the Idahonian up until four or five years ago.

CS: They did all the printing then for Psychianna.
SS: What I wonder about, is why Lamphere disliked him so much as Robinson indicated in the book, was largely because of the printing.

CS: I think so.

SS: And he said that Lamphere was charging twice what Bill Marineau said it would cost, so that he thought he was getting gouged by Lamphere.

HS: Well, he took over the Queen City Printing Company, that's where he did his printing and that's where Bill Marineau took charge there. Then that got to be too small and he opened up a building up where the Weizel Insurance Company is now, and he must have employed, ten, twelve people up there.

CS: He changed the rating of our postoffice here in Moscow, the amount of the mail he sent out.

SS: To what extent do you think there was religious opposition to him, because of his seemingly antidenominational views?

HS: Indirectly I think they were against him, but speaking from the pulpit they weren't.

CS: Well, I think some churches were, Harry, because they thought it was just an ism of some kind. But his wife and his son and daughter came to the Presbyterian Church; they were all members, but still they were in on Psychianna, too. So he had that tie, because when his daughter would appear in Sunday School pageants and so on, why Dr. Robinson always came. But there was one thing about Dr. Robinson, he did an aw- ful lot for poor people. And at Christmastime number of sacks of flour and turkeys and the things that he distributed over Latah County was amazing. And he never boasted about it. It was never told how much he was doing.

HS: Well, you know, when the Presbyterian Church, he pledged money to build the tower of the church; Presbyterian Church. I think he did it because
his folks, or his wife, was a member of the church. He didn't give it, no.

CS: Not that much, no.

HS: That was the thing that was brought up- then he was down in San Francisco; I heard this indirectly, of course, and it came to him that the church were not just satisfied to have him do that, or pay for that tower, and he withdrew his pledge. I heard that, yes. Yes, that was a fact.

SS: This charity that he gave to people- poor people- was it more than just at Christmastime?

CS: Oh, yes, I think he was charitable the whole year. I think he did for people, but I think Christmas was a big time that he just wanted to help people.

SS: Would these names, where people would go, do you think directly to him?

CS: I don't know how he handled it. That was before the days of Christmas baskets and so on. He just had his own Christmas donations that he made.

SS: Then he didn't try to capitalize on it?

CS: No, not to my knowledge at all. Because a lot of people don't even know that Dr. Robinson did it. I want to tell you one thing though, we had been in Dearborn, Michigan and out to Greenfield Village and our car was rifled there, and we drove away from Greenfield Village feeling that the police weren't doing much about it. And we landed that night in Green Rivers- where was it?

HS: That was in northern Michigan some place.

CS: Northern Michigan, a little town, and pouring rain and we didn't know where we were going to stay. Well, we saw this guest house, so we went to the door and told her there were three of us; our son was with us,
that we wanted a place to stay overnight. So she had us come in. It was a nice home; spiral stairway and a very pretty home. And the minute Harry registered in her guest book, she saw Moscow, Idaho and she said, "Do you happen to know Dr. Robinson? Dr. Frank Robinson?" And Harry told her yes, he was a neighbor of ours. Well, right away we were the most welcome guests you ever saw because she was such a firm follower of him.

HS: She was taking the course. (Chuckles)

CS: But when she saw that Moscow, Idaho, she just— we told her we saw him every day go past our house and that his daughter and our son went to the same birthday parties and so on, and oh, she just was so interested.

HS: Wasn't there another incident where he helped? There were some youngsters lost out here around Robinson's Lake and he hired a helicopter to come in here and hunt those kids.

CS: Or a plane, or something.

SS: What about the fact that a lot of people seemed to think that he wasn't sincere? There were people that seemed to have the idea that he was in it just for money. I look at those books of his, I think, that this man must have believed what he was saying, because it seems to heartfelt to me, what he's saying. But there are people that just seem to feel that he couldn't have been sincere.

HS: When you read the book, the first one explains what Psychianna was, you would say he was sincere about it.

CS: Well, what makes me dubious about his sincerity was that— I don't know what position Mrs. Robinson had in his setup—

HS: Bishop.

CS: A bishop. And his son had a certain thing and a title and in order to do that they could escape paying a lot of tax.
HS: Yes, so does a religious organization. Of course, when he passed away, that's when she was made a bishop, and then the son was supposed to take over. He was a graduate of Stanford University, he had a good education. And the son run it for oh, maybe a year or two and he just couldn't go along with it, I guess.

CS: Couldn't swallow it.

HS: And he wouldn't sell it. He could have sold it for thousands of dollars. There was a concern in St. Louis wanted to take it over and he wouldn't sell it, and he just simply closed it up and no one has ever had access to it. It died with Robinson.

CS: All of it is at the University of Idaho; all of that. I don't know if it's open.

SS: I think it will be, I think there's about a twenty-five year limit on it.

CS: A number of years.

HS: If you want contacts, he has a - the girl out here? Is she a daughter? She won't talk.

No, that's Alfred's daughter. You could probably get some information from her, too. She lives right out here someplace on an acreage.

SS: Well, Alfred, do you think he had been a follower before that, or do you think he just tried to--?

CS: I think he tried to. I hate to say these things.

SS: Well, it's the historical truth. I think it's important.

CS: Alfred, he just became almost an alcoholic because he didn't want to go along with that and he felt he owed it to his father or something. So then he- after he would have nothing more to do with the Idahonian why, he sold advertising for the Idahonian. They owned the stock still, he and his mother. And finally though, when Mrs. Robinson moved to California, we know that she sold her stock to the firm as is now because Mr. told us so.

SS: Do you know what made them decide they didn't want to stay any longer?
CS: Well, her health—she needed to be in a warmer climate and Alfred was still here at that time when Mrs. Robinson moved to California but the daughter lived away from here. And now, Mrs. Robinson is living in Texas with her daughter. And I think Florence's husband has retired. He was a career man in the army, but they like it in Texas and Mrs. Robinson is crippled from arthritis. She remarried in California, Mrs. Robinson, and we visited them in their apartment; went to call on them—where was it? Near Monteray, there someplace. Carmel. And we went to call on them and she seemed much better to us then, but after her second husband died, her health went downhill, quickly.

SS: Did you know her very well?

CS: Oh, yes. She was a most charming woman, a most charming woman. And she was delightful to visit with and had a good mind and she was a great worker in the Eastern Star. But she was just a most charming person. And she was a great Daughter of the American Revolution member.

HS: Came from Klamath Falls, Oregon.

CS: Her father was a judge or something at Klamath Falls.

SS: That's what I read. She, according to him, she was really a steadfast helper to him, that she really helped him a great deal, is what he said.

CS: Well, I am sure she never grumbled at anything, she just wasn't that kind of a person. She was a most pleasing person to be with.

HS: He was a family man. He sure did everything in the world for his wife and son and daughter.

CS: Harry used to measure him for suits; custom made suits. And he got one one time, a blue suit with a white stripe through it, you know, and he liked it, so ordered another one just like it. He was very particular. He wore a wide brimmed Stetson or something, always.

HS: Yes, he sent me a picture after I sold him that suit with his daughter
on his lap. It was a picture about this big, and he gave me one of 'em. You gave it back to the daughter.

CS: I gave it to the daughter. Poor Mrs. Robinson to give to one of the grand'ns.

HS: And he liked that suit so well that he ordered a second one just like it. Here's another thing—speaking about his going—he told me, he says, any time that he wanted to raise three or four thousand dollars all he had to do is give a lecture someplace, and Los Angeles was an awful good place to do that. Well, he gave lectures in a lot of places. But the first suit that I sold him, quite early in his Psychianna, he was giving a lecture back in Rochester, New York, and it was when the zippers first came out in men's suits; in the trousers and they didn't lock at the top and you just roll it up there—and he reared out, like this, he did that when he was speaking, he'd rear out like that, and that zipper started coming down and a fellow had to call his attention to it! (Chuckles)

CS: Well, I thought he got his shirt caught in it then.

HS: No, that was somebody else. (Chuckles)

CS: He was a big man.

HS: Yeah, he was about six foot one tall, I guess and a hundred and ninety-five pounds, somewhere around there.

CS: And handsome. Very handsome. We used to see him walk to his office every day past our house.

SS: I heard that he was very outgoing—very forthright, forceful. Is that true? In the way he spoke?

CS: I don't know, I never heard him speak.

SS: Well, just in conversation.

CS: Well, I didn't ever have conversation, Harry did. Was he very outgoing in his conversation, Harry?
HS: Oh, yes. Yes, I would say so.

CS: I never did visit with him, only speaking, of course.

HS: We were pretty good friends. I know one day I was working out in the yard, we lived on the corner of Third and \( \frac{1}{2} \) K. And a fellow came by with a bouquet in his hand, of roses, and he says, "Can you tell me where Doc Robinson lives?" I says, "Yes, just around the corner here." "Well," he says, "I want to present him with this bouquet." He had read a lot about Doc Robinson and he wanted to meet him. What he had in his Psychianna courses took with a lot of people; it must have been convincing to a lot of people.

SS: I have the impression that it was and I'm interested- if I had the chance to study some of the materials that they have, the letters that they got, I'd be interested to try to get a feeling for what kind of people subscribed to his teaching. If there were certain types of people, because they were from all over, weren't they?

HS: Yeah. Well, you know, there's always people looking for- that are not quite satisfied with the religion, the church that they're connected with, and he had something in those lectures that appealed to 'em and those were the people that went along with him. Now Vincent Peale, of New York City got his material; he told me that, too. He may have taken out of curiosity to see if there was anything in it that he could use in his preaching.

CS: Well, I think that was Dr. Drury's forte with Dr. Robinson. He was just interested to know what he felt and how he was doing his teaching. I don't think he was for him or against him, I think it was just an interest in knowing-

HS: Dr. Drury was this type of a preacher, he was always wanting to delve into things. And there was one winter that he had preachers of every
church in town on a Thursday night come out; we had a Thursday night group, and explain their particular church history and their philosophy and so on. And he even got a Catholic priest there.

SS: Was this at the Presbyterian church, that this took place?
HS: At the Presbyterian Church.
SS: And anyone could come and hear this?
HS: Uh-huh.
SS: Did you go to these meetings?

HS: Yep. And that's why he accused Psychianna of copying Mary Baker Eddy. That's where he based his whole Psychianna on-

CS: Dr. Drury was all for research and he'd researched everything.
SS: Robinson claimed in Strange Autobiography that Drury had helped dissuade some of the ministers in Moscow from ganging up on him, because Drury had said, "If there is something behind this movement it'll succeed no matter what you do, and if it's not, it'll fail by itself." He said Drury stuck up for him that way.

CS: Well, yes.
SS: Does that seem likely?
CS: Very likely. To me.
HS: Well, you know, I always feel like- we had a Mrs. Sargent that was a German teacher at the college, and she filled the pulpit at the Presbyterian Church a couple of Sundays, and I'll never forget she made this statement, "There's good in all forms of religion regardless of what is was. Well, there's Mohamadism or Judism or what it is, as long as they have a moral standard." I've always remembered that because, when you go to criticizing a lot of- like Jehovah Witnesses and all those- they have a certain moral standard.
CS: And they appeal to some people. Something of a different nature would
not satisfy those people.

**HS:** Drury's stand was pretty much that, he thought there was a certain amount of good in all of them.

**SS:** Do you think that Dr. Robinson had high personal standards, himself? That he was a very moral person: Robinson?

**HS:** Well as far as any contact I ever had with him, and with the things he did in Moscow, he couldn't help but be. Because he was for anybody that needed help, he was there to do it. And that's a big part of religion.

**SS:** The drugstore deal, where he started his own drugstore; do you think there was a case to be made for what he was saying, that prices were higher than they could have been?

**HS:** Sure. That's the only reason he started it. He was going to put the other drugstores out of business.

**SS:** Because he thought they were gouging?

**HS:** Yes. No question about it. Yeah, he would have bought every drugstore in town eventually.

**SS:** What happened? Did it work?

**HS:** Well-

**CS:** I think he got too involved in Psychianna.

**HS:** Well, probably.

**SS:** Did he ever try to talk to you about religion, and about his ideas?

**HS:** No. Never did.

**SS:** Never did.

**HS:** He didn't try to sell me on it at all, he just told me what he was doing, what he was accomplishing.

**CS:** I think he probably liked to get a good audience; someone who would listen to his point of view.
SS: When he told you what he was accomplishing, was that mostly insofar as the growth of his movement and how he was getting big?

HS: That's right. Because he was just going to town there for a while.

SS: Well, I'll tell you when I read him, I get the impression, and I don't know, sometimes I read it and I feel this guy is more selfcentered - much more so than most people that I've known, because it's as if he's talking himself up big, and then sometimes I feel that he's really humble because he's kind of talking himself down.

CS: No, I think your first judgement is the one.

HS: He was an egotist, I guess you'd say; wouldn't you? Very much so. And I think-

CS: But he was not an open egotist, because he no more than just spoke to me; he had conversation with you, but I never had a speck of conversation with him.

HS: Uh-huh. Well, I imagine one thing, he took a liking to me\textsuperscript{15} I listened, and he wanted somebody to tell of things he was doing.

CS: Well, I think he was building himself up a little.

SS: He comes across in his writings, he has a very- and he seems kind of stubborn, when he tells about some of the ways that he reacted to people who didn't- who were opposing him. It sounds as if he was pretty stiffnecked, and if you crossed him that he wouldn't take it lying down.

HS: That's right.

CS: And I think that's one reason he didn't want his literature out in the town of Moscow, because he felt there was enough opposition against him\textsuperscript{14}

HS: He was a member of Kiwanis Club.

SS: He was?

HS: Yeah. We took him on as a member. I won't tell you the rest of it!
SS: I have the idea that maybe he didn't spread his teaching here partly because he didn't want to arouse too much opposition among the churches. And if he did, wouldn't he have been competing with the different churches then?

HS: No, I don't know that he was.

SS: I mean, if he had sold his teachings in Moscow, that he might have been drawing people away from the other churches.

HS: That could have been, yes. He had a reason for not selling Moscow people, alright.

CS: And with his help, if they did any discussion of the amount of material that went out or anything, they just were fired right then.

SS: He didn't want them discussing it?

CS: No, he didn't want any of his help discussing any of his business.

HS: Yep, it was a closed affair.

CS: When he occupied the building up there at the corner of First and Main that was when he had so many girls working in the offices, that he turned the second floor into a youth center. And I thought that was nice, that was the first youth center in Moscow. And then when he built the Medical Building there on Third Street, why that building was bought and taken down and for a while the youngsters didn't have any youth center; any place to go. And then somebody started one up over Carter's Drugstore, in a room up there for them, and that ran for several years and finally that was closed up, but he did open the first youth center for children in Moscow.

HS: See, our son was how old then?

CS: David never went to that youth center. He went to the one over Carter's Drugstore; he was too young when that building was up there at First and Main.
SS: What about his friendship with Bill Marineau? In the book, in *Strange Autobiography*, it sounds like he counted Bill Marineau as one of his real friends and associates.

CS: Oh, they were very close. They were very close, I know, because we know the Marineaus so well. I'm sorry you can't talk to Mr. Marineau now.

SS: I had the impression that if what Robinson said was true that Mr. Marineau must have thought pretty well of him.

CS: Well, it was a good job.

HS: Robinson's the fellow that put Marineau on the map. Marineau was in this little town of Elk River up here running a weekly paper.

SS: And the mill had shut down, too at that time.

HS: So Marineau owes a lot to Robinson.

CS: That was in the Depression. In the '30's.

HS: Yep.

SS: Because in the trial-- Did you remember that trial here in Moscow? In the 1930's? Do you remember that trial here in Moscow in 1936? He had that trial for the passport. It was a trial right here in town, it was a Federal Court. I looked at the newspaper stories on it and he had a lot of people testifying as to his character; and he was acquitted. And then the Immigration Bureau took it up, and they put the heat on. But he came to trial here. I thought Marineau was one of them that stood by him.

CS: He probably was. He probably was.

HS: I wouldn't be surprised that the paper had something to do about bringing that before - the old *Star Mirror*.

CS: Lamphere.

SS: He thought so, I know.

CS: Course, Lamphere was just as much Lamphere way as Robinson was Robinson
HARRY & CLARICE SAMPSON

way. They were both strong.

SS: What was Lamphere like?

CS: I never knew Mr. Lamphere very well, but he sure was a tough customer, I guess.

HS: Well, he came from this little town of Palouse up over here. I don't know whether he was running a paper there or what, but the paper was for sale and he bought it. And Pete Orcutt was his first editor. And then when we started the golf course out here he was one of the directors of it. And I know I went out to play golf one morning and they needed a fourth; I went out alone, and he says, "Come on and play with us." And I says, "Alright." And I found out they played nickel a hole. Well, I never gambled in golf in my life, and I says, "Well, I haven't even got any money with me at all." "Well," he says, "I'll back you up." So, the first five holes it was costing him— I was losing, and it was costing him money. But when we finished playing golf, I paid him back and had money! (Chuckles) So, I'm sure he always remembered that. He was a kind of a boisterous fellow; he was a loud talker. I remember the women's business club here in Moscow, they invited him to speak, he was president of the Chamber of Commerce that year, and he got up and gave 'em a talk and says, "I want you women to know that the Chamber is back of you." Well, you know, that got to be a joke as a chamber maid! (Chuckles) Pretty good.

SS: Robinson accused him of being a drunkard, among other things. Robinson accused Lamphere of drinking.

HS: He was a drinker, you betcha! Yes, he was. Because he had to have his cocktail every day.

CS: Cocktail? It was more than a cocktail.

HS: Yeah. Yes, he probably had it in his desk.
SS: Do you think that Lamphere was a very obstinate man? Do you think he would be just the type that would start something?

HS: He was strongheaded. Whatever he went out for, he just went all out, and, oh, he'd just get all het up about it. I've seen him pretty hot.

CS: He used a lot of profanity, I think in his speech.

SS: Do you remember anything he ever got mad about?

HS: He'd get mad in playing golf, of course. Hook a ball, you know-

CS: Are you talking about Lamphere or Robinson?

HS: Lamphere.

SS: I was just trying to figure out what kind of a character he had, because I'm wondering how accurate Robinson's view of him would have been. 'Cause Robinson really thought he was— that he had kind of started it against him.

HS: Well, of course, the whole—the feud between Lamphere and Robinson was over getting Bill Marineau over here and the Queen City Printing Company, and then the Star Mirror wasn't getting any of the printing, and that's where the feud started. And then when Robinson started the notion of buying him out.

CS: Of course, I think— I don't know what they called the paper; there was the Star Mirror and what was the Marineau paper first called?

SS: That was the News Review.

CS: The News Review. Well, that didn't have a circulation or anything, of course, that the Star Mirror did because the Star Mirror was a combination of the Moscow Star and something else from 'way back when. And I think there was a great deal of rivalry between the newspapers on the advertising. It sort of amused us when the Star Mirror could be purchased by the lesser paper, when that time came that Lamphere was ready to-
SS: I thought Lamphere died before-

CS: I believe he did probably and it was his family who sold the paper. Louis Boaz and of course and Montgomery had some interest in the Lamphere paper, I believe.

SS: Well, Harry, do you think that the business community in general, do you think the business community supported Robinson and would stand by him, or do you think they were very divided about whether he was a good man or not?

HS: I think that's true. I don't think the downtown was for him very strong. And that may have been one reason why he wouldn't sell any material here.

CS: I think why the town wouldn't go along with him, they didn't know what it was all about. I think it worked both ways.

HS: Uh-huh. No, I think he was kind of a loner, as far as business is concerned.

SS: Did Homer David remain a friend to him?

HS: Oh, yes. You bet.

CS: Well, he was a good customer of David's! (Chuckles) I might say.

HS: Well, they were good friends.

SS: It sounds as though in the Depression that Robinson gave a lot of women work.

CS: I think so.

SS: Because of his business.

CS: Yes, I think that's true. Because he employed many women: Sorting and arranging these courses. I can't think of anyone who worked for him or if I knew anyone or not, but I knew that it was very hush-hush what they were doing.

SS: Well, did people actually speak out against him, that you knew of down-
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town?

HS: Oh, I think you heard a good deal about this tale of—the blood on
the tail of a pig. That kind of—like it was a fairy tale or some-
thing. I think that hurt him some, as far as the Moscow people were
concerned. Because that got out, you know.

CS: Well, that was his book about it, I think. And it was such a simpy
thing. I read it, but I don't remember much about it, but to me
it was just so, like you say, kind of a fairy tale sort of thing that
it didn't have much weight, I don't think.

HS: I think he took a little exception to the Bible; some of the miracles.
And we don't yet understand a lot of them ourselves.

SS: In what I read, he seemed to be saying that he didn't think that Jesus
Christ was divine, rather that he was a human, and therefore, he thought
that Christianity hadn't been telling the truth and leading people away
from God rather than to God. I was just reading this recently, but
that's what I thought he was saying.

HS: Did he say anything about the virgin birth?

SS: I don't think he believed in it.

HS: I don't think he did, no. But there are a lot of people that don't be-
lieve in that yet today, as far as that goes. As far as we're concer-
ned, it's just all on faith. It's just all on faith as far as-

CS: Stop right there. You don't have to expound on your beliefs, on this.

HS: Well, that's true.

SS: It seems to me though that Robinson was—you know, he said, he was
always driving places to help people if they were sick; at least he
had in the earlier years. He would drive a thousand miles to Portland
and back. And he claimed a lot of healing by faith. That people with
faith in Psychianna would become well, a lot of that.
CS: Well, I'm sure this woman where we stopped in Michigan-

HS: He had the first Dusenberg car in this section. I don't know whether he bought it over in Germany or what, but he - oh, it was a big car!

SS: I've always wondered what that car was. I've heard people say he had one and they didn't know what kind it was.

HS: Sure, he did. He was proud of the thing. It was just like one of the family! (Chuckles)

CS: He kept it beautifully, I know.

HS: You remember seeing it, don't you?

CS: Uh-huh. Well, he kept it so beautiful.

HS: Yeah.

SS: I guess he didn't believe that a religious leader needs to live in poverty!

CS: No, indeed. This organ in that home was a huge theatre organ, you know, that he had rebuilt into his-

HS: The organ's still in the house, it was sold along with the house.

CS: Coonrod.

HS: Coonrod lives in the house now. Vice president of the-

CS: But the organ doesn't work.

HS: Doesn't it?

CS: Uh-huh. And to find somebody who knows how to fix it and the cost is prohibitive-

SS: I've heard people say that he used to walk around the streets and he would stand on a street corner sometimes and have a little conversation with God. Did you ever know of him doing that? Walking around and--?

HS: No.

CS: We just saw him stride by our home every morning going to his office.
HS: Did he wear a big hat?

CS: Uh-huh. That's what I told you a while ago; wide brimmed hat. I remember so well because I have a picture the day David and Jack Marineau started to public school, and we wanted to take their picture as they started off to school the first morning, and Dr. Robinson was walking by our house just when the children were starting out and he is in the background in the picture.

SS: Do you think that he was a lonely fellow? A lonely person? I somehow get the idea that he was kind of cut off from a lot of local life here.

CS: I think so, uh-huh.

HS: I think so.

CS: You never met him out at any gathering. I just thought maybe he didn't care about such.

HS: Is he buried out here in this cemetery?

CS: I don't know. I can't remember. I doubt it. I don't even remember the circumstances of his death.

SS: I think he had a coronary. I think.

CS: I wouldn't be surprised.

SS: I think it was a coronary. Did he ever talk about his past life? I guess he had a pretty dissipated life before he found—

HS: He did to Homer David. I never heard any of his past. All I know about it is what Homer David told me.

SS: He said he was an alcoholic— he himself said he was.

CS: I think so, Harry.

HS: Robinson was an alcoholic?

CS: Not in Moscow.

SS: No, back—way back before when he was lost.

HS: Well, this is something I wouldn't want to be printed at all, but the
reason he came here to Moscow; he was an oil promoter down in Los Angeles and he was doing it over radio, and boy, that's why he had to leave. He was kind of railroaded out of California. He was promoting oil stock and it was wildcat stuff. That's one reason why he left down there.

SS: Did Homer David say that?

HS: Uh-huh.

SS: So he had told that to Homer David?

HS: Uh-huh.

SS: That's something he doesn't talk about in his book.

HS: Yeah. Well, that's why I wouldn't want to talk. (Chuckles) But that was his difficulty. But having come to Moscow and in such a short time build up Psychianna and become—well, I don't think he was particularly wealthy, I think he gave away too much. And when he passed away most of the funds was what Psychianna brought in. (recorder turned off)

CS: - studying over at Pullman filled our pulpit for several Sundays and I wasn't there at that particular service, but in his sermon he was making statements about the country and so on, just general izing and she stood up and she said, "You can't talk that way here!" She said, "I won't listen to it!" And she just up and walked out of the church. And that was so different—

HS: Had something to do with patriotism.

CS: It was something about the country, that she didn't like what he was saying. But that was so different than Mrs. Robinson, you know that to stand up in church and make her statement and walk out! People admired her for it. And a lot of people didn't agree with what this young man was saying, but she had the courage and fortitude to stand
up and say, "I won't listen to you talk like that!" And she left.

SS: That's interesting.

HS: He evidently— or she was left enough money that she left Moscow for this place down at Monterey. We visited her. It was a retirement setup, and it was a lovely place, and I'm sure she must have had to pay $400 or $500 a month down there. Then when she introduced us to the man that she married, finally, and the reason they got together: he had an apartment and she had an apartment and says, "Why don't we go together and save one cost of an apartment?" And that's how they happened to get married. They were both taking some of the same medicines and things of that type.

CS: Well, he said Lavoris or something—

HS: What?

CS: He teased her, he said she bought a small sized Lavoris and he bought the giant size, so they saved money on the Lavoris! (Chuckles)

HS: It was a lovely place down there.

CS: She seemed so happy, too. But he died and then she left California.

HS: He was a Merchant Marine. Retired Merchant Marine.

SS: Do you think she still thought a lot about her first husband Moscow?

CS: I don't think so.

HS: How old do you think Mrs. Robinson is now? About eighty?

CS: I judge so.

SS: She sounds like a very interesting person.

CS: Well, she was. She was a lovely person. I just don't know any more lady-like person that I've ever known than Mrs. Robinson. Very gracious.

SS: Always pleasant?

CS: Always pleasant. She didn't entertain and I used to imagine that was because he didn't go along with that, probably. I think he was the
sort, his home was his castle and he wanted it to be that way.

HS: Yes, I guess they didn't have many acquaintances or social life.

CS: Only she was a great Eastern Star.

SS: Do you think that his work was his life, besides his family? Did he spend-- I have heard it said that he spent an awful lot of time working on Psychianna.

HS: Well, he was a meditator, about as near as I can explain. This new meditation program that's on now; I think that's where he got his inspiration, just meditating.

HS: He went back to Washington. He had to have a passport to get out.

SS: My idea is that if Borah hadn't supported him he would have been deported. That's what it sounds like. Borah saved him. I guess Borah must have believed that he was a good man, or I don't imagine that he would have done that, you know.

CS: It would be interesting— I don't know why Borah would take that attitude toward him, but I can remember that— of course, if they'd deported him he wouldn't have had a passport to reenter.

HS: Reenter, yes. I've forgotten how long he was gone. He was gone quite a while.

CS: Several months, I think.

SS: He had a statement from Borah in which Borah said that he wouldn't care who it was, if he thought something was being done against one of his constituents, that he would help them.

CS: And I think Borah was that kind of a man.

SS: Was he active; Robinson, in the Republican Party? He said he was a rock-ribbed Republican in his book.

HS: I've forgotten politically how he stood.
SS: I know he was against the New Deal. He was a Republican. I just wondered if he was active in politics.

CS: Well, I don't know.

HS: I don't remember him promoting anybody at all.

CS: Maybe that was some of the closeness between he and Bill Marineau, they were both such staunch Republicans.

SS: He said he'd been approached and asked to run for the Senate. But he said, no.

HS: I don't think Bill Marineau has always been a Republican. I think before— I think they were Democrats before.

CS: I don't think so. He was Representative from Elk River.

HS: Well, that's afterwards, but I think family were Democrats. His family. His folks.

SS: You know, talking about strange things in the past that remind me— Did you ever know anything of the Klan, the Ku Klux Klan activities in—?

HS: Only what I've read.

SS: Because there were— I don't know if they were in Moscow, but in some of these small little towns, like Elk River, for instance, around in the '20's, there were some people running around with sheets—

CS: I never knew that. There were IWW's though.

SS: I've heard about them, too.

CS: But I don't remember.

HS: We never had, as far as I know, we never had any sheet parades here.

SS: In some of the little towns— that some of the people who were active were Southerners, too. I think maybe it's something they brought out from the South, I don't know.

HS: Well, the only thing now is the Birch Society, you know. There's a
few Birchers around here.

Recorder was shut off for a time

HS: -- what they were interested in when they were around about fourteen years old. And then I followed them through and when they were around sixteen or seventeen, why, entirely different. They were interested in aviation at that time. That was a big field. Most of 'em wanted to be aviators. There was only one fellow that I can remember, and that's Louie Orland—from first he wanted to be a lawyer because his grandfather was a lawyer, and he became a lawyer and he was head of the law school in the Gonzaga University up here until oh, three, four years ago, and he turned it down and he's instructor again.

CS: Of course, in that family, it was the elder family of Orlands that were going to make Louis' father a lawyer and he wouldn't go along with it and he bought a hardware store. Became a hardware man here in Moscow.

HS: But whatever is popular at the age or around that age, the kids want to be. Oh, yes, one wanted to be an architect, I remember; the Session boy, and he turned out to be educator. And this first scout troop I had I followed through with a lot of those kids and you'd be surprised how they're up in the money today. Doctors, lawyers, insurance—vice-president of New York Life, another one, Bell Laboratory; scientist with them. Frank David was a doctor, Kurt David was a doctor.

SS: I wonder if scouting had something to do with getting them on their way?

HS: Oh, I think it helped 'em along. It's a character building program. And then, of course, our merit badge program had incentives in different fields.

CS: Kids didn't have so many diversions then as they do now, too. And
those kids- scouting was their big thing.

HS: This one boy, Harold Waters, he took entomology at the University and he got to collecting bugs. He was chasing all over the country here with a net, and he had a wonderful collection of bugs that he showed me. Had 'em all pinned on boards and so on, and he wound up with the Sherwin-Williams Paint Company because of the field that he was taking. And he had a good job with them but he was killed in an automobile accident.

SS: There's one thing- I was just thinking about- talking about Robinson-you were saying that you didn't think he was very well-all that well-to-do, that he had all that much money. But it occurs to me that his movement; didn't they make an awful lot of money in all that mailing?

CS: Yeah, but spent a lot, too!

HS: Yes, he spent a lot.

CS: I think his charity cost a lot, too.

HS: It was a big item. And then, course, buying the paper-

CS: And then, course, too, he didn't pay very much for his help in those days because the women were so tickled to death to have a job. They picked peas in Moscow or worked for Psychianna, that was the big employment. And they'd come in from Troy and around the countryside to work.

SS: But besides that, they did spend a lot on themselves, too.

CS: Well, yes, . They had a nice home and the family were well dressed. Alfred, Harry said to Stanford, he did but he went to Oberlin first. He was music, music- that's where he should have been and when he was forced into this- felt that he was obligated to take it over why, he drank. And then his wife started drinking, and that particular part of the Robinson family just went from bad to worse.
SS: Do you think that he and his father were fairly close when he was a--
CS: I doubt it. I just doubt it. That little Florence was the apple of Doctor Robinson's eye and I think Mrs. Robinson and Alfred were very close, but I just doubt if Doctor Robinson was ever very close to Alfred. I just doubt it. Alfred just, well, he just didn't go along with Psychianna, that's all there was to it.
SS: I wonder what his thinking was that he was willing to try?
CS: Well, I think that was just probably because of his mother that he was going to try to carry on. But he was smart to stop when he did and shut it out. And, like Harry said, he didn't want to take any money for it. And so I understand all of that is at the University now, it was turned completely over.
SS: Yes, it really was. And, in fact, it's-
CS: And Alfred just finally left Moscow because he was just unhappy here.
SS: Do you think the memories are bad?
CS: I think it bothered Alfred. I judge Alfred was a very sensitive young man, and he played our church organ for several years, and I used to talk to him a lot about music and I think he just couldn't go along with that. And it just got him and so finally they just up and sold everything and left.
SS: He probably could have made a go of it if he'd wanted to.
CS: If he'd been interested, but there was no interest there. To me, it's a lot of hooey! I'm not on the air now?
SS: Actually, you were, but it doesn't matter. Hooey is hooey.
CS: That's what to me, Psychianna is. It was just one of those things—It was a get-rich-quick proposition for Dr. Robinson and it satisfied his ego. He was a big man when he went out. Because I know, this friend of my sister's, she'd watch the papers and this big ad would
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come out in Los Angeles papers, you know, he'd rent the Coliseum or whatever. Just like Aimee Semple McPherson. He had a following.

SS: Did it put Moscow on the map? It seems that he'd get Moscow a lot of publicity, maybe that Moscow didn't want.

CS: Well, I don't know about that. I just know he raised the rating of the post office here, but I don't know-

SS: In all his ads-

CS: But I know the minute we signed that woman's guest book, that just rang a bell quick with her.

SS: Do you think he believed in it, Clarice?

CS: I never knew him well enough to know.

SS: Harry seems to think he did.

CS: I think so, and I think maybe Dr. Drury from little things he said felt that Dr. Robinson was sincere in what he had written. But I never read anything, only The Blood on the Tail of a Pig, and I can't even remember much about it. It seemed such a farfetched thing when I read it that it was just kind of something funny to read, to me.

SS: Do you think the people were ashamed of having him around here?

CS: Oh, no, I don't think that. No, I don't think that at all.

END OF INTERVIEW

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