

Virgil Simpson

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A somewhat mysterious figure of the past, no verifiable data has surfaced regarding some of Virgil's alleged activities. Virgil's parents, Thomas O. and Nancy Simpson, were living in Springersville, Fayette Co., Indiana, when they professed in 1914. The 1910 Census listed two children: Virgil O. (born October 27, 1900) and Charlie Ceber (born January 21, 1903). Virgil entered the Work in Indiana in 1922-23 with Fred Croft; Ceber also went into the Work. On the 1926-27 Workers List, Virgil is shown on the Michigan staff. After World War II, Virgil and Alexander (Sandy) Scott from Scotland went to preach in Italy.

In 1942 while he was in Italy, Virgil was shocked to discover that the Workers' ministry had not started with Jesus sending out the twelve disciples. He returned to the U.S. at least by 1947, according to an Indiana Workers List), and found himself on the wrong side of Andrew Abernethy and Malcolm Graham, possibly due to his being vocal about the short history of the Two by Two Sect he had learned in Italy.

Around 1950, Virgil was forced out of the Work and excommunicated from the Two by Two Sect. Subsequently, Virgil married Bernadine Howard, from Fayette County, Indiana; they had a son named Ceber Thomas (aka C. T.). By 1960, Virgil, his wife, and son were living in Washington, where he had been working for Boeing for near seven years. They were in "fellowship of the few that are still seeking to keep true to the Truth as it is in Jesus." It was rumored that Virgil started his own church and drew some away from the Two by Two Sect.

It was rumored that Montestal Wood and possibly Virgil's bother Ceber and/or Virgil reported the American Workers to the IRS for failure to pay income tax. Reportedly, they provided the IRS with names and addresses of the Workers and a full-scale investigation was launched in 1949. In some states, it was said that every single Worker in the state was called in for an interview. Reportedly, after their investigation, the IRS reached the conclusion that all the money received by the Workers qualified as non-taxable personal gifts; that no tax was owed; and this information was included in official letters from the IRS to the Workers. However, Virgil tells the story somewhat differently in a letter dated Jan. 22, 1960* to Fred Hanowell:

"As soon as I returned from Italy, I began to ask questions about things we taught that I felt I should be clear on before I taught them to others. Then they began to get suspicious of me and began the usual persecution as they do to any they feel are not whole given to their teaching. The thing that opened my eyes was when in the year 1942, **George Walker gave me a copy of the document they sent to Wash. D.C.** I read it over and it changed my whole life. I was taught that anyone to be saved had to come in contact with the true preachers and I had always preached it so strongly. When I read how these like George, Jack, and all the others who were in the different denominations felt dissatisfied and this led to conversations, then led to meetings, then finally some from this group went forth to preach this way. It hit me like a hammer, *HOW DID THESE MEN GET SAVED ?* They got saved different from what I was taught... The thing that brought the climax in the year 1949 was when the Government investigated them in Indiana and found they were far from honest in their money affairs and some were putting money in the lock boxes for themselves...one thing we are very glad for is they treated us like they did and many others, for it drove us to the Lord, and we thus got to know Him for ourselves as we would never have done where we were before."

Another unfounded rumor was that a young (unnamed) Brother Worker attempted to murder Virgil in Indiana; afterwards the Brother Worker fled to the UK.

Apparently, Virgil and family had located some others of like mind with whom they had fellowship in Washington, for **Ralph Derkland** wrote Jack Carroll "and told him that since none of them were gracious enough to answer any of my letters that I was opening up our home to the *Simpsons*, as well as any others who were unwelcome in 'the truth.'"Derkland also wrote Malcolm Graham and Willie Jamieson:

"You have so many verses to substantiate things, where is the verse to substantiate your action against Virgil Simpson? For, when he came out West and went to about three meetings at Dyes, you and your sword caught up with him and told him he was no longer welcome until he got right (whatever that means) back where he came from; and he asked you what he should do and you told him to *write* back there which he did, and Andrew refused to answer; then he came back to you again to ask what next and you told him to go back there, which he did, costing him a great deal and after he got back there, Andrew refused to see him.

"Then he came back to you again; and you told him the rest was up to him but to stay away from the meetings; and you were that

noble person who claimed you never came to a decision without hearing both sides of the story...even the law of our government was more just than you fellows in your communistic practices, which we found out later because you both claimed he turned the Workers in to the Internal Revenue Department, which he did not do, but was called in later to testify as to the workings of the Christian Convention system, and you and your doctrine expected him to lie to his government (who, when your kind cast him out and never even asked him if he had enough money to buy himself a cup of coffee). Who gave him money to live on while they paid his tuition in a watch school and bought him tools and put him in business while your kind was going about telling that he had stolen the Saints' money?" (Sept. 5, 1957, *TTT*)

Virgil died in 1970 and Bernadine in 1965, in Kent, Washington, and are buried in a Cemetery near Brownsville, Indiana.

Virgil's brother, Ceber, died in 1973.

Montestal Wood died in Florida at a relatively young age, cause unknown.

Ralph Derkland Letter Sept. 5, 1957

Major Wherry's reply to Olga Hawkins