

Notoriety Haunts Real-Life 'Sam'

By RONALD SMOTHERS Special to The New York Times

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The New York Times

Samuel Carr, left, in Yonkers with his daughter, Wheat, and son, Michael

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YONKERS, Sept. 20—Earlier this week, Samuel Carr, named by the suspected "Son of Sam" murderer as the subject of his obsession, ventured out of his home with an old friend to go to a Kiwanis Club luncheon. It was one of the first social functions Mr. Carr had attended since the Aug. 10 arrest of David R. Berkowitz as the .44-caliber killer.

As he sat at the luncheon with his friend, the presiding Kiwanis officer saw him and announced that the "real Sam in the Son of Sam case" was among them. As the audience applauded, the 65-year-old Mr. Carr raised a napkin to his face in a vain attempt to hide from the limelight that has changed his life and his family's.

This picture of the Carr family's life in the last weeks emerged in an interview today with the elder Carr, his 26-year-old daughter, Wheat, and his 25-year-old son,

Michael. The Carrs, who live in a white-shingled house just down a hill from Mr. Berkowitz's apartment at 35 Pine Street, sought the interview with The New York Times after weeks of avoiding the media. As part of their fight for privacy, Miss Carr said that shortly after the Berkowitz arrest the family lawyer had been instructed to ask for a \$15,000 to \$20,000 fee for interviews, "just to discourage the press."

The Carrs said they had finally decided to talk with The Times—they asked no fee—to clear up what they considered a misrepresentation by some of their role in the case. As a result of the misrepresentation, Miss Carr said family members had received more than 100 threatening or obscene letters accusing them of being willing accomplices. There have been phone calls too, she said,

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Says Notoriety Is Dogging Him

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"heavy breathers" and those who shout obscenities at 2 A.M.

They have also been approached with numerous offers to turn their ordeal to great profit—most "unsavory offers," said Mr. Carr, that "we consider in bad taste."

The most recent and frightening communication was a Sept. 13 letter from Mr. Berkowitz. Arriving in an envelope bearing the name "D. Berkowitz" and the address of the headquarters of New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation in the upper left-hand corner.

Letter From Berkowitz

"I screamed at first," said Miss Carr, bringing her fist down on the table at Dino's Ground Round restaurant here. "My mother didn't even want to open it, but I was angry that he [Mr. Berkowitz] is sitting up there in a prison ward at taxpayers' expense and still harassing us. Something has to be done."

The letter, which has been turned over to the police, referred to Mr. Carr as "Sam, my Lord," and "Papa God," and railed against the family's Labrador retriever, Harvey, named by Mr. Berkowitz as the messenger who told him to kill. "I got the messages through his [Mr. Carr's] dog," Mr. Berkowitz said after his arrest.

The letter threatened to expose Mr. Carr as the force who made the "Son of Sam" kill six persons and wound seven as well as the force behind other, unrelated killings. That apparently was a reference to a shooting spree in Hackensack, N.J., on Aug. 27 that resulted in the slaying of six persons and the gunman's own suicide.

A spokesman for the New York City Department of Correction, which operates the prison ward at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, where the suspect has been since his arrest, said that prison officials in New York State were prohibited from reading, censoring or interfering with mail sent by or sent to inmates under their jurisdiction. The only exception was when there is a threat to security at a prison facility.

"A lot of people seem to believe that we were connected with the killings—really connected," said Miss Carr. "People don't seem to know that for months before he was arrested he had harassed us with letters and anonymous phone calls and we believe he was the one who threw a molotov cocktail at our house last Oct. 4. We had been nervous and frightened for months before and in the aftermath were still on edge and emotionally upset."

Harassed With Letters

The Carrs said that they had gotten support from many of their friends who were kind enough not to question them about the case and from the Yonkers Police Department, which maintained a guard at the house for three weeks after the threatening letters and calls began coming in.

But still there were acquaintances who "just couldn't leave it alone," said Michael Carr.

"I went into a bar that I frequent shortly after the arrest," said the younger Carr who is a freelance advertising stylist, "and they just couldn't resist introducing me as the 'real Son of Sam.' It was a bad joke."

Miss Carr, growing angry as her brother recounted his problems, said that people had told her that they had heard that she dated Mr. Berkowitz, and asked her if it was true.

In spite of their insistence that they want to forget their ordeal, the Carrs conceded a certain "gnawing" about the case. Miss Carr said she had made copious notes on the letters and events of the preceding months, trying to make some sense of the whole thing.

"Why my father?" she asked rhetorically. "That's what we want to know. Why did he pick my father and my family. It's eating us up. It's not enough to say to ourselves that he [Mr. Berkowitz] is sick."

That anguish, said Miss Carr, makes them victims of the Son of Sam suspect just as the families of those whom he allegedly killed or maimed are victims.

Sensitive on Aggrandizement

The Carrs are also sensitive about suggestions that they are seeking to capitalize on their involvement in the case. That impression, they said, grew after they circulated word of the fee for interviews and applied for the nearly \$15,000 reward for the .44-caliber killer.

Miss Carr said that the family was not seeking to "make money off other people's tragedy and anguish," but added, "We think that we are entitled to some of the reward money."

It was Miss Carr, a dispatcher with the Yonkers Police Department, who on Aug. 9 took a routing call from a New York City detective who wanted the local police to visit a "possible witness" to the July 31 killing of Stacy Moskowitz. That "possible witness" was Mr. Berkowitz who had been given a parking ticket in the Bath Beach section of Brooklyn near the scene of the killing on the same night.

And weeks before that call, Miss Carr, with the help of two Yonkers Patrolmen, Thomas Chamberlain and Peter Intervallo, had come to believe that Mr. Berkowitz had been responsible for harassment of her family and was "as good a suspect as anyone" in the case.

She told the detective of her suspicions and referred him to the two patrolmen whose knowledge of the suspect, his habits, background and movements in recent months convinced New York City police that he might be more than a "possible witness."

Miss Carr said that there had been a "number" of offers to write a book on the experience and other commercial proposals.

There was one, she said that would have somehow involved their dog Harvey, who Mr. Berkowitz said brought him the messages to kill from Sam Carr. It would have involved "Harvey T-Shirts" or television appearances for Harvey—the dog who is supposed to have told the "Son of Sam" to kill.

"They were all silly suggestions in bad taste," said Mr. Carr.