



Soldiers of the Cross



A History of the Bible Student Movement

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Foreword

It has been said that even a lie has a little truth to it, and that seems to be the case with the *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society* and its adherents the *Jehovah's Witnesses*.

Go to any bookstore or library and look up "Jehovah's Witnesses" and you will find nine times out of ten the statement; "Jehovah's Witnesses, a sect founded by Charles Taze Russell". But nothing could be further from the truth.

Indeed, the late Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) was the founder and organizer of the *Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society* and served as the editor of *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* from its inception in July 1879. But to claim him as their founder is a gross misinterpretation. And yet to deny that there is a link between the two is also a gross misinterpretation. The Jehovah's Witnesses are a product of one man, and Charles Taze Russell it was not. Joseph Franklin Rutherford, a lawyer and pilgrim in the service of the Watch Tower Society, gained control of the Society shortly after the death of Russell in October 1916. It was Rutherford who reorganized the Society to its current organizational structure, to the dismay of many. The reorganization went contrary to Russell's last will and testament and caused a schism in the group. Thousands upon thousands left the Society feeling they had been betrayed. The goal was set to continue the work of Pastor Russell, independent of the Society he founded.

By 1930 three quarters of the original *Bible Students* associated with the Society defected to function independently. Those who gave up their Christian freedom stayed and in 1931, Rutherford, in deciding to differentiate between the two groups renamed his; and thus the *Jehovah's Witnesses* were born. By then, the mold had been set and the dye cast. The Jehovah's Witnesses would flourish under the leadership of Rutherford, and succeeding leaders. Jehovah's Theocratic Organization was now in existence.

The Independent Bible Students, although a fraction in comparison to the Jehovah's Witnesses, were rejoicing in their Christian freedom, and were functioning as they had since the days of Russell. Studying, holding Conventions and building each other up in faith and love. In the 30s, 40s and 50s as the Society tightened its grip, many former Bible Students along with Jehovah's Witnesses were returning to their roots and seeking out their former brethren, who were welcomed with open arms.

Much has been written in regards to the Jehovah's Witnesses. Very little has been written about the Bible Student Movement, who have divorced themselves from the Society and have functioned independently since 1917. Perhaps because many view them as Jehovah's Witnesses. After all, both groups claim Russell as their founder.

Yet Bible Students are looked upon by their "cousins" the Jehovah's Witnesses as "evil" and "apostates". The Society has even gone as far as stating that the Bible Students no longer exist. Why the charade? Why has the Society chosen to deceive their followers in regards the truth? Why are they forbidden to read Russell's writings?

The following will hopefully answer these questions and many more. Although not claiming to be an exhaustive account of the life and work of Charles Taze Russell. It will

fill in the gaps of history that the Society in their own version, *Jehovah's Witnesses: Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* left out.

And so this work goes out in hopes of shedding some light on a dark subject.

Note: This work will from time to time be updated as new data is collected.

Rolando Rodriguez

In the beginning ...

The Bible Student Movement had its humble beginnings in the 1860s, however what led up to that humble beginning, began much earlier. Early Christianity began to be eclipsed after the year 100 by a creeping spiritual darkness of Babylonish religious teachings, Grecian and Roman pagan philosophies and rank apostasy. The adversary ever so active to crush Christianity, had produced apostates, false shepherds, "wolves in sheep's clothing," eventually to bring about extinction to the once spiritually flourishing Christian congregation. In spite of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, the shadow of darkness continued over the minds of misled Christians until the time came for the almighty to send forth his Liberator, Jesus Christ, to deliver the true Christians from their Babylonish bondage.

The period from 1870 to 1900 proved to be destiny-shaping years for this twentieth century. Forces political, religious and commercial began to maneuver for position to control the incoming new scientific era. Men and organizations were filled with fear of the unknown as to the fast-moving days of the future, which some even visioned correctly as being cataclysmic. At the Vatican Council of 1869-70 the Roman Catholic church began to strengthen its organization for the immediate future by declaring its autocratic head, the pope, infallible. The leading Protestant religious organizations became spiritually unprogressive in their ways. Their clergy sought to consolidate their power over the laity. This clerical assumption of greater authority over their flocks meant a backward step from freedom of Christian thought and worship on the part of the masses of professed Christians. Infidelity, higher criticism, evolution, spiritism, atheism and communism began to invade and decimate the great world religious organizations. Many of the evangelical churches began to "modernize" their false religious doctrines, not according to restored Bible truths, but according to theories of higher criticism and evolution. The paganized modernist form of theology inundated the churches.

Politically great forces were stirring. The United States of America was just recovering from its Civil War (1861-1865) to regain its strength rapidly for phenomenal expansion into a great world power. Germany had won the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, to be further built up into a powerful European colossus. Britain was passing through golden years of her Victorian era, sparring for future bids of world control. Industrially, the United States, Britain, France and large portions of Europe were undergoing a revolution in consequence of the invention of the steam engine. The industrial revolution was augmented, as the years progressed, by the discovery of electricity, invention of the telephone, the motorcar and the dozens of other "miracles" of this age. Commercialism likewise rose to new heights as a consequence of the industrialization of leading nations and the creation of new "gold mine" business enterprises. Labor unionism also came to the fore to become an antagonist of advancing capitalism. All this meant a wave of materialism, moneymaking and pleasure-seeking. The invisible demonic powers of this old world produced glittering snares of new enticements to blind the peoples to the incoming higher and finer values of restored Christian truth.

Amid these rumblings of industrial, commercial, social and religious changes early voices of small religious groups were heard in their efforts to read the signs of the times and predict the imminent second coming of Jesus. Various Adventist groups were busy in the United States and Europe, proclaiming a visible return of Christ for 1873 or 1874, even though the American founder of their movement, William Miller, had acknowledged his error and disappointment as to the former set dates of 1843 and 1844. Earlier, the German Lutheran theologian Bengel (1687-1751) had fixed upon 1836 as the marked date for the beginning of the millennium of Revelation 20:6. In Scotland and England others, commonly known as "Irvingites," raised their voices to announce 1835, 1838, 1864 and finally 1866 for Christ's return. Christian writers such as Elliott and Cumming looked for the end in 1866, Brewer and Decker predicted 1867 and Seiss favored 1870. In Russia, Claas Epp, a leader of the Mennonite Brethren (*Bruedergemeinde*), and his associate fixed upon the date of 1889 for a great cosmic happening. But all these widely proclaimed predictions came to complete disappointment. Christ's return was destined to be, not a physical manifestation as they had assumed, but rather, as the Scriptures now clearly indicate, an invisible presence of glory and power to provoke the greatest crisis ever experienced by man on earth.

Still other voices were heard, but these began to proclaim an impending invisible return of the Messiah. One of these groups was led by George Storrs of Brooklyn, New York. He and his associates after 1870 published a magazine entitled *The Bible Examiner*, setting forth their views that Christ's return would be an invisible one. Another group headed by H. B. Rice of Oakland, California, published a magazine called *The Last Trump*, heralding an invisible return as occurring in the 1870's. A third group comes to our attention, this time of disappointed Second Adventists who forsook that movement because of the failure of the Lord to return in 1873 as the Adventists had further predicted. This group was led by N. H. Barbour. They radiated their activities from Rochester, New York, performing a preaching service by sending out speakers to whatever churches would open their doors to them. They also published a monthly, *The Herald of the Morning*. One of this group came into possession of B. Wilson's *The Emphatic Diaglott* translation of the "New Testament," noticing in it that, at Matthew 24:27, 37, 39, the word the *King James Version* rendered *coming* is translated *presence*. This was the clue that led this group to advocate an invisible presence of Christ, claiming it began in the fall of 1874.

Yet a fourth voice of proclaimers of an invisible presence of Christ comes to view, a group of sincere students of the Bible at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, with its Elder, C. T. Russell.

Russell: The Early Years

Like our Lord Jesus, whom he emulated, very little is known about the childhood of Charles Taze Russell. We know from secular sources that Russell had at least five other siblings. The second of two sons, Charles was born of Scottish-Irish descent to Joseph and Elisa Birney in Old Allegheny, Pennsylvania, on February 16, 1852. It seemed Charles was destined for greatness from the time of his birth.

Charles Taze Russell was born with a most exceptionally fine religious endowment. It was stated that before he was born his mother consecrated him to the Lord, and afterwards gave him the most careful religious training within her ability. [ZWT 08/01/05; R:3608] Although his mother died when he was but a young child of nine, she no doubt instilled in him the fear of the Lord. As he spent a lot of his free time pouring over the Scriptures with concordance in hand. He often stated that he could not remember a time from childhood's first memories onward when he was not consecrated [ZWT 11/01/04; ZWT 06/01/14; R:3456; R: 5477].

Inculcated in the doctrines and creeds of Calvinism, His Godly zeal led him as a youth to "Go out at night to chalk up words of warning in conspicuous places, where working men passing to-and-fro might see them, that peradventure I might save some from this awful doom..." [Pastor Russell's Sermons p. 517] He later joined the Congregational Church because it was more liberal.

Joseph Russell operated a clothing store; "Russell's Haberdashery." Young Russell dedicated his time to his father's business, he learned the business well, so well, that his father would send him on business trips. At fifteen years of age Charles was in partnership with his father in a growing chain of men's clothing stores throughout the Allegheny-Pittsburgh area. But while things went well for young Russell in business, he was troubled in mind. When he was but a lad of 16 years old, his zeal led him to convert an infidel acquaintance. The question was posed to young Russell if he believed God to be perfect in wisdom, justice, love and power. To this Charles answered "yes," his acquaintance asked him how such a God could have absolutely predestined the vast majority of the race to eternal torment. The boy answered that he could not understand it. Up to this time young Russell had not given this doctrine much thought.

Troubled by the question young Russell raised it in the circles of his church. Unable to get any satisfying answer, he expressed his doubts on the matter. The report spread in the church that he was on the way to becoming an infidel. The pastors and elders of the church appointed a special meeting to solve his questions. But instead, they only increased his doubts. They told him that the Bible taught the absolute predestination of the bulk of the race to eternal torment, quoting such passages as they thought so taught. They convinced him that the God of the Bible did in fact teach such a doctrine. Russell stood up and motioning to his pastor and elders stated; "I believe God is perfect in wisdom, power, justice and love, and I will not believe anything contrary to His character

to be a revelation from Him. Therefore I do not believe He gave the Bible as His revelation; for if He had given it as such, it would agree with His wisdom, power, justice and love." With those words he left their presence never to return. [The Parousia Messenger, p. 433].

Yet these doctrines of predestination and eternal punishment still gave him particular difficulty, as time passed, he just couldn't fathom how a god of love could predestinate persons to a fiery hell of torment. We now find Russell as a child of 16 a unbeliever, not totally, though ostensibly, in the Bible, but in the Calvinistic creeds, which he was mistaught to be the right interpretation of the Bible. Russell was of too religious and logical a mind to be content without a revealed religion. He therefore set out to learn what the true religion was, and so to this end decided to investigate all religions until he would search out the one true faith. His hunger for truth was so strong that he endeavor to study the doctrines and creeds of both the great churches and those of the heathen faiths. He began with that of the Chinese, whose idea of the creation is this: In the beginning all was water. Then a god with a handful of earth boarded a boat and threw this earth into the water, where it grew into our present earth. That was enough of the Chinese religion for him! Worse absurdities than this made him reject Hinduism and Buddhism. The fact that Mohammedanism was partly based on the Old and New Testaments impelled him to reject it. And because Judaism was based in part on the Old Testament, this he too rejected. Thus his rejection of all non-Christian religions left him for a while stranded high and dry on the shores of unbelief, though all the while he devoutly held to God as perfect in wisdom, justice, love and power and trusted Him as such. To his dismay he was disappointed.

He then began studying the creeds of the great churches. Russell would later comment in regards his research among the creeds: "Gradually I was led to see that though each of the creeds contained some elements of truth, they were, on the whole, misleading and contradictory of God's Word." [ZWT 07/15/06; ZWT 06/01/16; R:3820]. by the time he was seventeen, young Charles although a firm believer in an Almighty Creator, became skeptical, discarding the Bible and creeds of the great churches. But not for long.

During the next few months Russell continued to reflect over the subject of religion, unable to accept it, and yet unwilling to let it go. His religious disposition could not be content with no religion; and what to do troubled him. Finally he reasoned; I can at least believe so much of the Bible as is contained in the Golden Rule Godward and manward: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul and with all thy strength;...and thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37, 39).

Stumbling onto Adventism

One day in 1868 while taking a stroll he dropped into a dusty, dingy little basement hall near his Federal Street store - "to see if the handful who met there had anything more sensible to offer than the creeds of the great churches. There, for the first time, I heard something of the views of Second Adventists, the preacher being Mr. Jonas Wendell...Though his Scripture-exposition was not entirely clear, and though it was very far from what we now rejoice in, it was sufficient, under God, to reestablish my wavering faith in the divine inspiration of the Bible, and to show that the records of the apostles and prophets are indissolubly linked. What I heard sent me to my Bible to study with more zeal and more care than ever before, and I shall ever thank the Lord for that leading." [ZWT 07/15/06; ZWT 06/01/16; R:3821; Harvest Siftings, 1894, pp.93-95].

And back to the Bible young Russell went to unlearn error and find the truth. Whatever he studied he made sure that it was in harmony with God's character. When he stumbled upon Jesus' explanation of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," as meaning: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them: (Matt.7:12), he rejoiced. Thus he said, "I believe that much of the New Testament." This prompted him to look up the context of Matt. 7:12, which he found to be a part of the sermon on the Mount. He studied this in the light of God's character and recognized it to be in harmony therewith. Therefore he accepted it. This moved him to desire to study more of Jesus' teachings, which, accordingly, led him to study these as they found elsewhere in the four Gospels. Always finding them in harmony with God's character. This moved him only to accept all of Jesus' teachings in the Gospels as he understood them, but also greatly to appreciate Jesus as a teacher Divinely inspired. Such appreciation of Jesus' teachings prompted him to a study of the Gospels historically, resulting in his recognizing Jesus as a perfect human being and the Son of God. But until then he rejected the New Testament, except the Gospels. One day he noted the passage wherein Jesus said that the Spirit would reveal to the Apostles such truths as Jesus would give them, and which they were as yet unable to bear. He desired to know what those teachings were. Hence he began to study the Acts, the Epistles and Revelation; and as he understood them he recognized their harmony with God's character. Thus gradually, and that upon a right foundation, he came to believe that the New Testament was the revelation of the God of wisdom, power, justice and love, in whom he had always believed. But the Old Testament he continued to reject. The following things gradually led him to believe in the Old Testament: He noticed that not only did Jesus and the Apostles quote from the Old Testament, but used such quotations to prove their doctrines. Hence he concluded that whatever they quoted from the Old Testament was true. He later

decided to study the connections from which these quotations were made; and these he found to be in harmony with the quotation themselves and God's character. Hence he accepted the connections of these contexts, and thus more and more of the Old Testament became clear to him until his faith was confirmed in the prophetic writings and in the historical writings which were closely interwoven with the prophetic writings. Still he suspected the books of Moses, except those parts quoted by Jesus and the Apostles; because he mistakenly was led to think that Moses made himself a dictator to Israel and established a priesthood that tyrannized over the people. But deeper study convinced him of his mistakes on these points; and he came to see that the Mosaic legislation was the most benevolent, and freedom, equality and fraternity-inspiring legislation ever inaugurated. Accordingly, he accepted also the Pentateuch as Divinely inspired; and thus his faith accepted the whole Bible.

In 1870 young Russell began associating with a small Bible study group in the Pittsburgh area. It is not certain if this is the same study group whom he stumbled upon a few years prior, or if he started this group as a result of his experiences with Jonas Wendell. Convinced that we were living in a time definitely marked in the Scriptures, when the Lord would acknowledge to His children on the watch, His divine plan, this small band of Bible students began between the years 1870-1875 to see constant growth in grace, knowledge and love of God and His Word. During those years of Bible study, they also began to see God's love, and its provisions for the whole of mankind. Although it would be too lengthy to list all of the Bible Student beliefs, the basics will be discussed in detail in the chapter titled: The Divine Plan of the Ages.

In brief the class came to believe according to their Scriptural understanding, that mankind came to his present state of degradation through Adam who sinned. Jehovah God then made provisions for Adam and his offspring to reconcile themselves to Him. This came in the manner of His Son, Christ Jesus, who had been spoken of by the Holy Prophets of old.

Unlearning Error

Russell was able to refine his thoughts with the spiritual aid of such pioneers of the Adventist Movement as George W. Stetson an earnest student of the Bible and pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Edinboro, Pennsylvania and George Storrs, editor of the Bible Examiner in Brooklyn, New York. Concerning these two and their assistance in helping him and the Pittsburgh class unlearn errors he wrote:

"...We were then merely getting the general outline of God's plan and unlearning many long-cherished errors, the time for a clear discernment of the minutiae having not yet fully come. And here I should and do gratefully mentioned assistance rendered by Brothers Geo. Stetson and Geo. Storrs...The study of the Word of God with these dear brethren led, step by step, into greener pastures and brighter hopes for the world." [R:3821]. It was from Storrs that Russell learned the true condition of the dead and the mortality of the soul. Russell contributed articles that were published in the Bible Examiner.

The Herald of the Morning

In 1876 at the age of 23, Russell received a copy of the *Herald of the Morning*, a paper by Nelson H. Barbour. [Barbour previous to 1874, published a monthly paper title, *The Midnight Cry*, pointing to 1874 as the second advent of our Lord, its circulation reached 15,000. But with the failure of Christ's physical return many were disenchanted in time prophecies. And so in re-examining the prophecies, Barbour concluded that Christ had indeed returned in 1874, but invisibly, Thus the title of his monthly journal was changed from *The Midnight Cry* to *Herald of the Morning* in 1875]. He automatically associated its contents with Adventism, by its style and pictures. With curiosity as to the new date for the burning of the earth, as promulgated by the Adventist, Russell carefully poured over the magazines contents. To his surprise he learned that Christ was not to return to destroy, as many believe and associated His return with destruction, but to bless all the world. The Herald also taught that Christ was to return invisibly, as a spirit, not in the flesh as many believed, and that His return was not future but had already begun since 1874. This thought interested young Russell, and so immediately he contacted Barbour informing him that his thoughts were in harmony with his views, but that he wanted scriptural evidence as to why he believed Christ returned invisibly in 1874, before he accepted it. This Barbour did convincingly, when Russell paid his traveling expenses to visit him. Discussing the time prophecies, Russell inquired of Barbour what was being done by him in the Herald. Barbour stated that the Herald was practically suspended due to a lack of interest. To this Russell encouraged him not to give up hope and sent Barbour with the needed finances to continue the Herald and to start preparation of a book detailing the Bible truths and chronology as they believed it to be.

Russell then closed out his Philadelphia business and dedicated his remaining time engaging in the work of traveling and preaching. Russell learned much from Barbour in regards to time prophecies as did Barbour from Russell in regards to Restitution. So in 1877 they released a 196 page book titled, *The Three World, and Harvest of This World*. The book was published by Barbour and financed by Russell. It's sale was enough to supplement Russell's income so as to travel and preach. It was decided that Barbour would stay behind in Rochester, New York and publish the Herald while Russell would travel and preach as well as contribute an occasional article for the columns of the Herald. Russell took along with him as a traveling companion John H. Paton, a gentlemen who responded to their message to assist him in keeping up the interest shown from both the book and earlier speaking engagements. Paton also had experience in the publishing business, which later proved valuable.

In the same year (1877) while on their preaching tour, Russell and Paton met a young Methodist minister by the name of A.P. Adams, who after discussing the scriptures was convinced of its accuracy and heartily accepted it. Russell then proceeded to introduce him to other individuals in the area who had like dispositions.

Russell was later surprised and elated to find that A.D. Jones, a clerk in his clothing business in Pittsburgh had also accepted the message and joined them in promoting it. Sad to say he did not last long in their company. As ambition got the best of him and he soon departed on his own.

Disappointment, Disagreement and Separation

In the book, *The Three Worlds*, on page 108, Barbour had this to say concerning the resurrection: "We now purpose to show that the time was due, and therefore the resurrection began, in the spring of 1875. Not the resurrection of the great mass of mankind, who are to be raised in the flesh, with the earthy, natural, or animal body; but the resurrection of those who, "sown a natural body, are raised a spiritual body;" and therefore, as invisible to us as the angels, or as Christ himself. This is what we understand to be the "second birth," viz: an entrance into a second and higher life...the resurrection is now due, although it does not now all occur at one and the same time, but 'every man in his own order.'"

N.H. Barbour and C.T. Russell came to believe as did the Adventist and many other Christian churches then and now, "that at some time the living saints would be suddenly and miraculously caught away bodily, thenceforth to be forever with the Lord. And, now, our acquaintance with time-prophecy led us to expect this translation of the saints at the point of time in this age parallel to the Lord's resurrection." [ZWT 07/15/06; R:3823]. Although they believed the resurrection had begun in 1875 they also concluded that the last feet members would be caught away by the end of 1878. Russell went on to explain: "We did not then see, as we now do, that the date (1878) marked the time for the beginning of the establishment of the kingdom of God, by the glorification of all who already slept in Christ, and that the "change" which Paul mentions (1 Cor. 5:51) is to occur in the moment of dying, to all the class described, from that date onward through the harvest period until all the living members ("the feet") of the body of Christ shall have been changed to glorious spirit beings. But when at that date nothing occurred which we could see, a re-examination of the matter showed me that our mistake lay in expecting to see all the living saints changed at once, and without dying--an erroneous view shared in by the whole nominal church, and one which we had not yet observed or discarded...So this re- examination showed further light upon the pathway and became a good cause for encouragement, as evidencing the Lord's continual leading." [ZWT 07/15/06; R:3823].

In the spring of 1878, Nelson H. Barbour disappointed in the seemingly failure of 1878 didn't recoil as did Russell. Instead as Russell later stated Barbour began rejecting his plain, simple solution: "Mr. Barbour seemed to feel that he must of necessity get up something new to divert attention from the failure of the living saints to be caught away en masse." [ZWT 07/15/06; R:3823]. Barbour decided to introduce "New Light." According to Russell:

"Mr. Barbour soon after wrote an article for the Herald denying the doctrine of the atonement-denying that the death of Christ was the ransom-price of Adam and his race, saying that Christ's death was no more a settlement of the penalty of man's sins than would the sticking of a pin through the body of a fly and causing it suffering and death be considered by an earthly parent as a just settlement for the misdemeanor in his child." [ZWT 07/15/06; R:3823; Herald of the Morning, July 1878].

Russell, after reading this article was astonished and so decided to set matters straight by contributing an article in support of the ransom doctrine; John Paton convinced too that Barbour was in error also contributed an article in support of the ransom. And so from July through Chapter 1878, went an ongoing battle in the pages of the Herald in regards the ransom doctrine.

After some thought, it was clear to Russell that he would have to withdraw his support from the Herald and Barbour, both editorially as he served as co-editor and financially since he was the Herald's financier. And so in the spring of 1879. Charles Taze Russell withdrew all support from the magazine, Herald of the Morning. In a letter to Barbour dated May 03, 1879, Russell explained his reason:

"There has arisen a difference of view between us as to the teaching of our Father's word, and while giving you credit for all sincerity and honesty in your views, which I claim for myself in the opposite view, yet I must be guided by my own understanding of our Father's word, and consequently think you to be in error...The points of variance seem to me to be so fundamental and important that the full fellowship and sympathy such as should exist among publishers and editors of a paper or magazine, no longer obtains between you and me, and because this is the case, I feel that our relationship should cease." [Jehovah's Witnesses--Proclaimers of God's Kingdom, p. 48]. In a follow-up letter dated May 22, 1879, Russell wrote:

"Now I leave the Herald with you. I withdraw entirely from it, asking nothing from you...Please announce in next no. of Herald the dissolution and withdraw my name." [Jehovah's Witnesses--Proclaimers of God's Kingdom, p. 48].

Starting with the June issue, Russell's name no longer appeared as an assistant editor of the Herald. Barbour continued to publish the Herald until about 1903, when, according to available library records, it ceased publication. However Barbour did publish a book in 1907, he later died in 1908.

Zion's Watch Tower: A New Beginning

In the year 1879 it became evident of the many early voices announcing Christ's second coming were being chosen by the Lord. Looking back it clearly appears that in those early days the Lord's hand was upon the small Pittsburgh ecclesia under C.T. Russell's Eldership. For eight years prior to 1879 these "layman" students of the Bible had gained much experience as to right Christian doctrine, prophetic time, and in preaching to the public as well as in printing their new found truths. They were tested, too, as to their loyalty to the Bible on the issue of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus, even though it meant severing of company with former religious affiliates.

By 1879 they had become sure that Christ's second coming would begin his invisible presence; that a hard time of world distress was ahead; that there-after would follow a millennium - the thousand-year reign of Christ, to bring about restitution of paradise conditions on earth with everlasting life for men of good will from all nations; and that the glad tidings of such restitution blessings should be heralded the world over. Their field experiences taught them that, as people soon forgot sermons and lectures they heard, it was advisable to add an educational service with the aid of books, pamphlets and magazines. They also came to realize that it was necessary for them to become better equipped to do their own writing, printing and publishing instead of leaving these operations to other so-called "Bible groups."

Having now withdrawn their editorial financial support from the Rochester group's monthly, "The Herald of the Morning", the Pittsburgh ecclesia decided to embark upon a great project, in regards to this project, Russell stated:

"I therefore understood it to be the Lord's will that I should start another journal in which the standard of the cross should be lifted high, the doctrine of the ransom defended, and the good tidings of great joy proclaimed as extensively as possible."

Russell's field experience taught him that, as people soon forget sermons and lectures they heard, it was advisable to add an educational service with the aid of books, pamphlets and magazines. He also came to realize that it was necessary for the class to become better equipped to do their own writing, printing and publishing instead of leaving these operations to other so-called "Bible groups."

So Russell with the aid of the Pittsburgh class began publishing for the first time their own monthly magazine. And so, July 01, 1879, saw release of the first issue of *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*. Soon 6,000 copies had been distributed. [ZWT August 1879, P. 2] Class chairman C.T. Russell was chosen to be the editor, with five other mature Bible students serving as regular contributors. The new journal's first word's were-

"This is the first number of the first volume of "Zion's Watch Tower," and it may not be amiss to state the object of its publication. That we are living "in the last Days" - "the day of the Lord" - "the end" of the Gospel age, and consequently, in the dawn of the "new" age, are facts not only discernible by the close student of the Word, led by the spirit, but the outward signs recognizable by the world bear the same testimony, and we are

desirous that the "household of faith" be fully awake to the fact." [ZWT July 01, 1879 p. 1]

Here, then, we have the story of the birth of "The Watch Tower" Magazine. In 1892 it was changed from a monthly to a semimonthly, to keep pace with the ever-expanding flow of new Scriptural material. The record of its circulation is most interesting. From its initial copies of 6,000 in 1879, to 25,000 by 1904 (Z 12/15/04, p. 371)

Russell having spent the years 1877 and 1878 largely in preaching afield, zealously going from city to city, and also by this time having closed out most of his previously successful business interests, which had netted him more than a quarter of a million dollars, it became necessary, in 1879, for him permanently to locate in Pittsburgh. (A Great Battle in the Ecclesiastical Heavens, J.F. Rutherford, pp. 16-18). Furthermore, in that year he was married to Maria Frances Ackley, who had become a co-laborer and a contributor of articles to the Watch Tower magazine. They came to have no children. Nearly eighteen years later, in 1897, due to Watch Tower Society members' objecting to a woman's teaching and being a member of the board of directors contrary to 1 Timothy 2:12, Russell and his wife disagreed about the management of the journal, Zion's Watch Tower.



Thereupon she voluntarily separated herself from him after they had arranged a financial settlement to enable her to live apart from the Society's headquarters. This agreed separation, however, had absolutely nothing to do with a much later divorce proceeding (1906), charging "adultery," as clerical enemies of Russell slanderously tried and still try to maintain. The court records plainly fix the lie to all those who falsely accused and even now accuse Russell as having been an immoral man, divorced for adultery. ("That Mrs. Russell herself did not believe and never has believed that her husband was guilty of immoral conduct is shown by the (court) record in this case where her own counsel (on page 10) asked Mrs. Russell this question: "You don't mean that your husband was guilty of adultery?" Ans. "No." - A Great Battle, p. 19; Z 07/15/06. pp. 211-227)

During 1879 and 1880 efforts were made to organize small ecclesias of interested ones, that is, Watch Tower subscribers. More than thirty Bible study groups had come into existence in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Delaware, Ohio and Michigan. In 1880 Russell visited these ecclesias, spending at least six hours of study with each group. (Z 06/80 p. 8; 09/80, p. 8; 11/80, p. 8) A special songbook had been prepared, called "Songs of the Bride." (Z 09/79, p. 4) By this time it had become understood from the Scriptures that the Lord's "evening meal" should be celebrated as a Memorial only once each year on Abib (Nisan) 14, the Passover date, (reckoned as the nearest full moon after the spring equinox as determined in Palestine. (Z 03/15/97, p. 86). This was quite contrary to the unscriptural custom of churches that held the "Lord's Supper" or "Mass" many times each year. In 1879 and for a few years thereafter all the interested associates traveled to Pittsburgh to meet with this first and largest of the early ecclesias to celebrate jointly what they called the "Anniversary Supper." At the same time they conducted a small convention for Christian study and fellowship, which annually

strengthened the growing association, (Z 04/15/92, p. 14; "Believers' Convention, attendance 400.)

These early ecclesias were organized on the congregational and Presbyterian style of church government. All members democratically voted on certain matters of business and also elected a board of seven or more "elders" (presbyters) who directed the general governmental interests of the class. These ecclesias were loosely tied together merely by accepting the leadership and pattern of activity of the Pittsburgh ecclesia where Russell and other watch Tower writers were elders. The Pittsburgh class held meetings on Sundays from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. to hear Bible lectures; on Wednesday evening from 7:30 to 9:00 "Cottage Meetings" for prayer and personal testimony were held, and Friday evenings "Dawn Circles" were conducted for Bible Study (Z 01/81, p. 7; 04/81, p. 8; 06/97, p. 158).

During 1880 Russell and his helpers were further busy in writing several tracts, each being numbered. After 1891 this tract series first regularly marked "Bible Students Tracts" also were called "Old Theology Quarterly." They were provided free for general public distribution by Watch Tower readers to expose fallacies of church doctrines (Z 12/80, p.8; 01/81, p. 3; 03/89, p.7) Soon it was recognized that there was need for organizing a definite society to guide and direct the growing publishing work. So early in 1881 Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was established as an unincorporated administrative agency with Russell as its manager. Russell and others liberally contributed \$35,000.00 to get this tract-publishing organization going, (Z 01/82, p. 2). They then moved from their 1879 headquarters located at 101 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, to new and larger premises in 40 Federal Street building from where he had formerly directed his early chain-store enterprise. Through this new arrangement began to flow millions of Bible tracts and the printing of additional Watch Tower issue put out as pamphlets. By 1881 Russell had completed writing the large pamphlets entitled "Tabernacle Teachings" and "Food for Thinking Christians," the latter being a 162 page booklet which was printed and distributed as a special edition of the Watch Tower for September, 1881 ("This Society (Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society) is organized for the purpose of spreading literature similar to this pamphlet, published by Zion's Watch Tower, an eight-page monthly journal. This pamphlet is a number of said journal put into more convenient shape, and during the last four years this Society has paid for and circulated over a million copies of it free of charge." - Food for Thinking Christians, 1881, p. 162)

Russell, still under thirty years of age, and his enthusiastic associates were eager to get their message spread broadcast as quickly as possible. This is manifest in the following 1881 Watch Tower announcement, especially so when one recalls that there were only about a hundred active associates with the movement:

"Wanted 1,000 Preachers. A vast field is open for the employment of the time and talent of every consecrated man and woman to whom the Lord had committed a knowledge of His truth ... To those situated that they can give one-half or more of their time exclusively to the work of the Lord, we have a plan to suggest... viz: That you go forth into large or small cities, according to your ability, as Colporteurs or Evangelists, seek to find in every place the earnest Christians,... As few could afford to travel, pay their board and clothe

themselves without some income, we propose to furnish the tracts and Day Dawns free, and to allow any such person to take subscriptions for the Watch Tower, using the money obtained from both of these sources,...in defraying necessary expenses." (Z 04/81, p. 7)

Eventually by 1888 fifty had volunteered for this full-time service toward the "1,000" eagerly desired. They were requested to submit weekly reports to the Pittsburgh office (Z 10/92, p. 301) An effort also was made to get all Watch Tower reader and especially all congregation-meeting attendees to commence a share in the field witness work by distributing tracts to their friends and neighbor. Note the following early instructions of 1881 as to field preaching:

"To those who would go forth to use either much or little of their time, we would say: It is a matter of great importance not only to teach the right thing but to present truth in a proper manner and order...Present first the Restitution and the beauties of God's unfolding plan; then show that all this awaits and is dependent on the King and kingdom coming. Then, when your hearer or reader has come to love the King and to long for his kingdom, may be quite soon enough to present the manner of His coming- that it is not Jesus the man but Jesus a spiritual man, who comes, unseen,...And lastingly present "the time", that now we are "in the last Days of the Son of Man." (Z 04/81, p. 8) In this way gradually hundred of Christian Bible Students were trained to have a share in the work of witnessing for Christ.

Other manner of witnessing were also undertaken, Russell later commented:

"The manager of the principal paper of New York City agreed to send a copy of the Tract to their entire list of subscribers, and several other papers of Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia and New York favored us similarly in the work, for which they have our sincere thanks." (Harvest Siftings, 1884, p.114; Z 10-11/81, p. 5) Additionally, other methods used:

"from an apparently small beginning, the tract work has spread to the immense proportions of 1,200,000 copies, ...employed hundreds of men, women and boys in preparation and distribution, nearly 500 boys being employed to distribute in London, and about 300 in New York-other cities in proportion. The distribution was made in the larger cities at the church doors on Sundays." (Harvest Siftings, 1894, p. 10-11/81, p. 5)

Also in 1881 two brothers were sent to Britain to augment spreading the work to Europe and they reported the distribution of 100,000 pamphlets in London and 65,000 in Scotland's Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen, (Harvest Siftings, 1894, p. 10-11/81, p. 6).

Expansion

Many letters kept coming to the Society's head office showing the heart reaction of
Because of continuing expansion of its work, legal incorporation of the Society
established in 1881 became necessary. After proper application, finally on Chapter 13,
1884, Judge F.H. Collier of the Court of Common Pleas for Allegheny County,
Pennsylvania, granted a legal charter that was duly recorded Chapter 15, 1884, thus
giving the Society life, (Z 01/85, p. 1). Its original corporate name, Zion's Watch Tower
Tract Society, was changed in 1896, by court-sanctioned amendment, to its present name,
Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The Society's general purpose is stated in its
charter's Article II:

"The purpose for which the corporation is formed is, the dissemination of Bible truths in
various languages by means of the publication of tracts, pamphlets, papers and other
religious documents, and by the use of all other lawful means which its Board of
Directors, duly constituted, shall deem expedient for the furtherance of the purpose
stated." The Charter provided for a board of seven directors, three to serve as officers.
The original officers were:

Charles Taze Russell, President
William L.. Mann, Vice-President
Maria F. Russell, Secretary-Treasurer

While the Society had been circulating a bound book entitled *Day Dawn*, written by an
early associate, J.H. Paton, it was decided for Russell to become writer of a new book to
be called *Millennial Day Dawn*, which after many difficulties appeared in 1886 as
Volume 1 of a promised series. Later this became known, instead, as Volume 1 of *Studies
in the Scriptures* as well as *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. More than six million copies
were distributed over a forty-year period. It covered more clearly subjects previously
explained in *Food for Thinking Christians* and in *Tabernacle Teachings* (later called
Tabernacle Shadows of the Better Sacrifices. (Harvest Siftings, 1894, pp. 107, 114, 115;
Z 07/86, p. 1; 08/86, p. 1.) Its sixteen chapters (352 pages) included "Our Lord's Return,"
"Ransom and Restitution," "Plan of the Ages," and "The Kingdom of God," Chapter 15,
"The Day of Jehovah" had this to say:

"The 'Day of Jehovah' is the name of that period of time in which God's kingdom, under
Christ, is to be gradually 'set up'...while the kingdoms of this world are passing away and
Satan's power and influence over men are being bound. It is everywhere described as a
dark day of intense trouble and distress and perplexity upon mankind...That some of the
saints will still be in the flesh during at least a part of this burning time seems possible.
Their position in it, however, will differ from that of others, not so much in that they will
be miraculously preserved (through it is distinctly promised that their bread and water
shall be sure), but in the fact that, being instructed from God's Word, they will not feel
the same anxiety and hopeless dread that will overspread the world...The troubles of this
'Day of Jehovah' will give opportunity for preaching the good tidings of coming good,
such as is seldom will follow the footsteps of the Master, and be the good Samaritans
binding up the wounds and pouring in the oil and wine of comfort and cheer." (DPA, pp.
307, 338, 342; Z 08/15/11, pp. 320, 329.)

By the end of the 80's they had outgrown the quarters at 151 Robinson Street (earlier designated as 44, and then 40, Federal Street), Allegheny, Pennsylvania. (Z 12/84, p. 1; 03/87, p. 1) They decided to build, and in 1889 they moved into their own large, handsome four-story brick structure costing \$34,0900.00, located at 58 and 60 (later renumbered as 610-614) Arch Street, Allegheny (North Side, Pittsburgh), containing quarters for a small "Bible House Family," printing works, shipping rooms, an assembly place for about 200, an office, an editorial department and a store front. They named it the "Bible House," (Z 01.90, p. 1; 09/01/00, pp. 260, 272) Years later, the Society's board of directors accepted the donation of title to this plant, the board valuing the building's net equity and all of its equipment at \$164,033.65. (Originally this property was legally held by the Tower Publishing Company, a Private Concern personally managed by C.T. Russell. In April, 1898, the Ownership of this plant and real estate was transferred to the legal corporation, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Z 04/15/98, p. 114; Z12/15/98, p. 369.)

By 1890 there were about 400 active associates of the Society. The only report available shows the placement of 841,095 tracts, 395,000 extra copies of the Watch Tower magazine, and 85,000 Millennial Dawn bound books between 1886 and 1891. (Z 01/01/92, pp. 9, 10)

Through the years five other powerfully written bound volumes of the series called *Millennial Dawn* were produced by Russell, each playing its part in gathering more of the Little Flock members. Volume 2, *The Time Is At Hand*, was released in 1889; Volume 3, *Thy Kingdom Come*, in 1891; Volume 4, *The Battle of Armageddon* (originally called *The Day of Vengeance*), in 1897; Volume 5, *The At-One-Ment Between God and Man*, in 1899; and finally Volume 6, *The New Creation*, in 1904. A seventh volume the author had promised but did not survive to write it was released in 1917 called *The Finished Mystery*, this was written by C.J. Woodworth and George Fisher.

Particularly from the early 1880's Russell's writings had been circulating in Europe where small groups of Bible students were being gathered together. So in 1891 Russell as the Society's president made his first trip abroad to stimulate and expand the interest in countries outside the United States and Canada. Two months were set aside for this missionary tour. From New York City Russell's party sailed for Belfast, Ireland. From there, after a meeting with friends, they went on to visit other groups and historic places in Scotland, Glasgow and Edinburgh; then to Copenhagen, Denmark; Germany's Berlin and Leipzig; Vienna, Austria; Ischenev in Russia; Constantinople, Turkey; Athens, Greece; Jerusalem in Palestine; Egypt's Cairo and the Pyramids; Rome, Italy; Berne, Switzerland; Paris, France; Brussels, Belgium; Amsterdam, Holland; and then to London and Liverpool, at each of which Russell spoke to 150 before returning to New York. Of this tour he reports:

"We saw no opening for the truth in Russia...nothing to encourage us to hope for any harvest in Italy or Turkey or Austria or Germany...The Italians have been so long under the baneful influence of the Papacy that they, like the French, are rapidly turning to open infidelity...But Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland and especially England, Ireland and Scotland are fields ready and waiting to be harvested." (Z. 11/91, p. 148; Z. 07/91, p. 956) At London a publications depot was set up following Russell's visit; and then in

1900 the Society's first branch office was established there at 131 Gipsy Lane, Forest Gate, East London. (Z. 05/00, p. 146)

Also after this foreign trip arrangements were made to begin publishing various books and pamphlets in German, French, Swedish, Dano-Norwegian, Polish, Greek, and later in Italian. With its January 01, 1892 issue, the Watch Tower began to publish in each issue the "International Sunday School Lessons" whereby a short commentary study was made of the Protestant-denominational chosen "golden text" for each Sunday's scheduled lesson.

"Suggestive thoughts designed to assist those of our readers who attend Bible classes, where these lessons are used; that they may be enabled to lead others into fulness of the Gospel." (Z. 01/01/92, p. 13)

Now it became apparent that there was a need to hold conventions in various parts of the country other than at Pittsburgh with the annual Memorial celebration, as had been the practice of several years. So in 1893 a convention was arranged for Chicago, August 20-24, where the Columbian Exposition (World's Fair) was being held that summer. Those traveling to Chicago for that assembly thus were enabled to obtain special rail fare rates.

"The number in attendance was about 260...Following the manna text came a discourse of about an hour and a half, then an adjournment for dinner, after which the afternoon, from 2 until 5, was devoted to the public answering of questions. The last day was devoted to the interest of the colporteur work; and on the day after the close of the Convention, some of the experienced colporteurs remained with some of the less successful and beginners, and held a school of colportuering- giving instructions, pointing out good and bad methods, manners and expressions...(about 50 colporteurs attended). The Calvary Baptist Church of Chicago very kindly granted us the use of their baptistry; and, in all, seventy symbolized their baptism into Christ's death by immersion into water. The proportion of brethren and sisters was about equal, and their ages ranged from 17 to 70 years." (Z. 09/01 and 09/15/93, p. 280)

Many letters kept coming to the Society's head office showing the heart reaction of those being called to associate with the Lord's people. Historically, the activity of C.T. Russell through the activities of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society from 1909 to 1914 must be viewed largely with respect to the warning work of proclaiming the fateful year 1914. For thirty-two years since 1877 the Bible Students had publicly set forth the chronological proof and the physical facts indicating that the "gentile times" were due to end in the fall of 1914. (Z. Oct/Nov/81, p. 3)

During the two decades prior to 1914 explosive forces had been generating among the Gentile nations that had become dynamos of nationalism. Under an enlightened liberalism there might have been a period of great advancement for the general welfare by man's harnessing and utilizing all new inventions, by industrial build-ups, by scientific developments, and by acquired natural wealth usable for the common good. But, no, the Devil was at the helm of these ships of state. Instead, an armaments race had begun among the nations, each side striving to outdo the other for offsetting the balance of power. Old-world thinking, religious and political, was forced to adjust itself to this pattern of national rivalries. Truly the masses of mankind were being herded for the

twentieth- century global debacle of nations. Amid such feverish Gentile madness these dedicated servants of the Lord embarked upon their final, all out warning work concerning 1914.

Relocating to Brooklyn, New York

To undertake an all-out campaign of world-wide proportions the Society's twenty-year old four-story "Bible House" headquarters in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, had become inadequate, besides being not strategically located for world shipping and communication. In 1908 representatives of the Society, including its legal counselor, J.F. Rutherford, (W 1919, p. 18) were sent to Brooklyn, New York, to negotiate the purchase of more desirable quarters. Those quarters Russell himself had found on an earlier trip to New York. They bought the old "Plymouth Bethel," a mission structure completed in 1868 for nearby Plymouth Congregational Church. This mission, at 13-17 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, had long been used in connection with Plymouth Church (built in 1849 on Orange Street, near Hicks) where about half a century earlier antislavery sermons were preached by the noted Brooklyn clergyman, Henry Ward Beecher. They also purchased the old Beecher residence at 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, where other notables, even Abraham Lincoln, are said to have conferred with Beecher in the 1860's. On January 31, 1909, some 350 attended the dedication of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, the new name for the now-renovated former "Plymouth Bethel." Its second-floor auditorium, seating 800, gleamed in soft color, olive green prevailing, with tastefully artistic Bible text wall decorations. The street floor was altered to be the Society's headquarters operating office. The large basement floor had been turned into a small printery, stock and shipping department. Soon, too, the home at 124 Columbia Heights had been readied for occupancy by more than thirty full-time members of the headquarters staff. "The new home we shall call 'Bethel,' and the new office and auditorium, 'The Brooklyn Tabernacle'; these names will supplant the term 'Bible House.' (W 1909, pp. 67, 68) By 1911 a spacious new dormitory addition had been completed , adjoining the rear of Bethel and fronting on Furman Street, further enlarging the facilities. (W 1917, p. 53)

To hold this new property in New York state and to do business as a recognized religious body within this state it was necessary to form a New York Corporation. Such corporation came into legal existence February 23, 1909, under the name, *PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION* as decreed by then New York Supreme Justice Isaac N. Miller. This New York corporation was structured similar to that of the Pennsylvania corporation, Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society.

From 1909 onward a monthly tract - first called "People's Pulpit ," then "Everybody's

Paper," and still later, "The Bible Students Monthly" - was widely distributed annually in millions of copies, clearly explaining vital Bible truths and warnings the Gentile nations of the fateful year 1914. And so during several years these earnest united workers became more and more widely known as Bible Students, or International Bible Students. In fact, in 1914 the identical work in the British field was legally established under law of Great Britain, being incorporated under the name *INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION*. All three of these corporations were organized for identical purposes and they harmoniously work together. (W 1917 pp. 327-330, W 1914, p. 71)

The Watch Tower Society now in its Brooklyn headquarters had become equipped to keep abreast with the continually expanding gigantic publishing work then under way. The years from 1909 to 1914 saw an ever-increasing output of tracts, pamphlets and bound books running into many millions. The 1914 warning work was augmented by the organizing of an international newspaper syndicate service that sent Russell's sermon for each week to approximately three thousand newspapers in the United States, Canada and Europe. Ten million people were reached each week in this manner it was estimated. (PRS pp. 3, 4; W 1909, p. 269; 1916, p. 388; 1912, p. 26)

The public platform also was geared to expanding witness about the nearing year 1914. In 1911 alone, as officially reported, 12, 113 public and semi-public lectures had been given all over the world. fifty-eight pilgrims were regularly sent on assigned routes from the Society's Brooklyn headquarters to serve in this public-speaking campaign, in which also many hundreds of local resident speakers carried on the "Class Extension Work," endeavoring to organize new Bible classes. (W 1911, pp. 453, 454) Much growth resulted. Finally by 1914 there were 1,200 ecclesiastical or classes operating in union with the Watch Tower Society at home and abroad. For 1915 the partial number reported as attendees of the annual Memorial celebration of Christ's death was 15,430, and by this time there were 55,000 Watch Tower subscribers, thus indicating the approximate number associated in the warning and witness work. (W. 1915, pp. 127, 372).

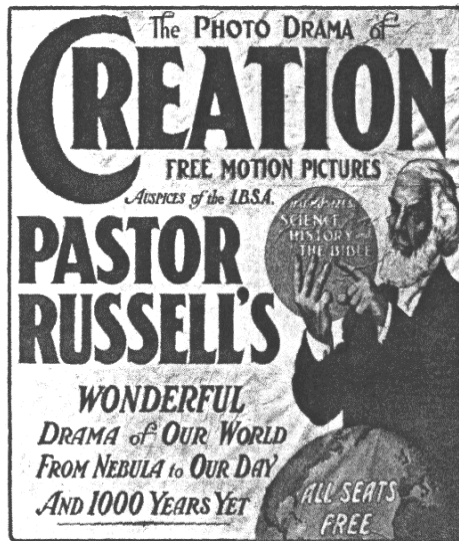
In this period of witness the demand for personal appearances of the Society's president, C.T. Russell, to address public gathering in large centers, also was exceedingly insistent. To Europe he went every year for speaking engagements; and in North America he traveled extensively on "convention tour" special trains, accompanied by scores (once 240) of eager fellow workers, visiting all large cities in the United States and Canada. (W 1909, pp. 183, 196, 259, 298). Thus he personally addressed thousands in many parts of the English-speaking world. (W 1913, p. 218) From Chapter, 1911, to March, 1912, Russell, as chairman of a committee of seven men, made a round-the-world- tour, spreading seeds of truth that in time brought into fruitful action additional groups of anointed Christians in far-flung areas of the globe. For local lectures and for study of foreign missions the committee called at the following places: Honolulu, Hawaii; Yokohama, Tokyo, Kobe and Nagasaki, Japan; Shanghai and Hong Kong, China; Manila, Philippine Islands; Singapore and Penang, Straits Settlements; Colombo, Ceylon; Trivandrum, Kottarakara, Calcutta, Benares, Lucknow and Bombay, India; Aden, Arabia; Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt; Piraeus, Athens, Corinth and Patras, Greece; Brindisi and Rome, Italy; Paris, France; and then London, England, and finally New York. (W 1911, p. 434; W 1912, pp. 123-138. CR 1912, pp. 7-387). Truly an extensive journey to gird the

earth with the warning message of the approaching end of "Gentile Times" in 1914. Before Russell's death in October 31, 1916 it is said that he traveled more than a million miles, preached more than 340,000 sermons, and wrote books totaling over 50,000 pages. (Pittsburgh Press, August 23, 1953, Magazine section, p. 286) By this time the Society's publications were appearing in 15 languages.

To offset any private wild speculations as to 1914, Russell published the following in the Watch Tower; he stated:

"There surely is room for slight differences of opinion on this subject and it behooves us to grant each other the widest latitude. The lease of power to the Gentiles may end in October, 1914, or in October, 1915. And the period of intense strife and anarchy 'such as never was since there was a nation' may be the final ending of the Gentile Times or the beginning of Messiah's Reign. But we remind all of our readers again, that we have not prophesied anything about the Times of the Gentiles closing in a time of trouble nor about the glorious epoch which will shortly follow that catastrophe. We have merely pointed out what the Scriptures say, giving our views respecting their meaning and asking our readers to judge, each for himself, what they signify. These prophecies still read the same to us ... However some may make positive statements of what they know, and of what they do not know, we never indulge in this; but we merely state that we believe thus and so, for such and such reasons." (W 1912, p. 377)

The Photo-Drama of Creation



From 1912 to the beginning of 1914 Russell spent a small fortune (over \$300,000.00; W 1914, p. 375) in preparing the Photo-Drama of Creation, to spread Bible knowledge to the masses of people during and after 1914. Although use of recorded talks and music synchronized with projected moving and still pictures was an art then in infancy, nevertheless Russell boldly proceeded to pioneer this field. In primitive studios in New York it produced a combined movie-film and picture-slide show of rare beauty, synchronized with which was a large variety of choicest musical recordings and 96 phonograph-record talks, each 4 minutes long explaining the principal features of the Bible. Describing it, The Watch Tower of 1914 said:

"Naturally our readers are deeply interested in the Photo- Drama of Creation. All of you have heard more or less concerning its preparation during the past two years. The work has been more tedious than we expected. All who have seen it concede that it is very beautiful. A minister, after seeing two parts, said, 'I have seen only one-half of the

DRAMA, but already have learned from it more about the Bible than I learned in my three years' course in the theological seminary." ... It includes everything appertaining to the creation of earth-animals, man, the experiences of mankind for the past six thousand years and work of the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom. It divides these into four parts- four Entertainments with appropriate music, etc. Part I carries us from star nebula to the creation of the world and down to the deluge-down to Abraham's time. Part II reaches from Israel's deliverance from Egypt, wilderness experiences, etc., down through the periods of the Kings to the time of Elisha, the Prophet. Part III continues the story from Daniel's time down to the time when the Logos was made flesh at the birth of Jesus, his boyhood, manhood, baptism, ministry, miracles, crucifixion, death, resurrection. Part IV begins at Pentecost and traces the experiences of the Church during the past nineteen centuries to our day and beyond for a thousand years to the glorious consummation." (W 1914, pp. 105, 106)

Many complete and unabridged sets of this colorful sound drama were produced, trained traveling supervisors and operators taking it to millions of people in free showings at the largest auditoriums and pictures places of North America, Europe and Australia. This new medium for Bible education was ready in time to be shipped to Germany and other foreign countries where showings during the first world war brought comfort to multitudes of bewildered peoples. (W 1914, p. 142) A truly great witness was given in this manner. Incidentally, the Supreme Court of Idaho granted the Bible Students a victory over opposers who objected to Sunday showings of this Photo-Drama. (State v. Morris, February 23, 1916), 28 Idaho 599' 155 P. 296). During the first few months of 1914 the clergy and others poured considerable ridicule upon Russell and the Bible Students Movement for failing to see anything happening to the Gentile nations. But all this ridicule stopped when nation after nation and kingdom after kingdom began cascading into what now is called the first world war. From July 27 onward into August of that year was a time of world-shaking surprises. A typical public-press reaction to the situation was published August 30, 1914, by a leading New York City newspaper, THE WORLD. "End of All Kingdoms in 1914 -'Millennial Dawners' 25 year prophecy" was the arresting headline of a long feature article in that journal's Sunday magazine section Pages 4 and 17), from which we quote:

"According to the Calculations of Rev. Russell's 'International Bible Students,' This Is the Time of Trouble' Spoken of by the Prophet Daniel, the Year 1914 Predicted in the Book 'The Time Is at Hand,' of which Four Million Copies Have Been Sold, as the Date of the Downfall of the Kingdoms of Earth. "The terrific war outbreak in Europe had fulfilled an extraordinary prophecy. For a quarter of a century past, through preachers and through press, the 'International Bible Students', best known as 'Millennial Dawners,' have been proclaiming to the world that the Day of Wrath prophesied in the Bible would dawn in 1914. 'Look out for 1914!' has been the cry of the hundreds of traveling evangelists who, representing this strange creed, have gone up and down the country enunciating the doctrine that 'the Kingdom of God is at hand.' ...

Although millions of people must have listened to these evangelists, although one of their books, "The Time Is At Hand," has had a circulation of more than four million copies, and although their propaganda has been carried on through religious publications and a

secular press service involving hundreds of country newspapers, as well as through lectures, debates, study classes, and even moving pictures, the average man does not know that such a movement as the 'Millennial Dawn' exist ... Rev. Charles T. Russell is the man who has been propounding this interpretation of the Scriptures since 1874. ... 'In view of this strong Bible evidence,' Rev. Russell wrote in 1889, 'we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God will be accomplished by the end of A.D. 1914.' ... But to say that the trouble must culminate in 1914-that was peculiar. For some strange reason, perhaps because Rev. Russell has a very calm, higher-mathematics style of writing instead of flamboyant soap box manners, the world in general has scarcely taken him into account. The students over in his 'Brooklyn Tabernacle' say that this was to be expected, the world never did listen to divine warnings and never will, until after the day of trouble is past ... And in 1914 comes war, the war which everybody dreaded but which everybody thought could not really happen. Rev. Russell is not saying 'I told you so'; and he is not revising the prophecies to suit the current history. He and his students are content to wait-to wait until October, which they figure to be the real end of 1914."

And so it proved to be that about October 1, 1914, the 2,520 years of divine tolerance of the Gentile nations' assumed sovereignty over the earth came to a legal end. C.T. Russell and the Bible Student Movement were right in their thirty-year public campaign of warning the Gentile nations of the fateful year 1914. (W. 1914, p. 371) Individually, however, some who had shared in giving that warning were disappointed in that their incorrectly thought of themselves as due to go to heaven in 1914 to be with the Lord. Many also inaccurately thought that the world war which began in 1914 would merge into the "battle of the great day of God Almighty," Armageddon, and thus cleanse the earth of all opposition to righteousness.

C.T. Russell and his associates gave all of their strength and fortunes in prosecuting as vigorous a campaign as was possible in their time under the guidance of the Lord's holy spirit. The years 1915 and 1916 saw a decline to the period of witnessing activities amidst growing opposition, ridicule and world-wide disruption. (W 1915, p. 371) Toward the end of 1916 Russell began to fail rapidly; and finally, on a return speaking trip from California, he died aboard a train near Pampa, Texas, October 31. (W 1916, p. 338) By the fruits he brought forth in his multitude of labors as a minister of the Gospel, Brother Russell surely proved to be that faithful and wise servant. He had fought valiantly in defending Bible truths. During his 32 years as President of the Society, his many devoted Christian associates supported him to perform a phenomenal work under the leadership of the foremost faithful servant, Christ Jesus, to the praise of the creator. (W. 1917, pp. 131-136, 323-326; W 1916, pp. 356- 359).

A Servant is Taken

On October 31, 1916, on a railroad train eastward bound through Texas, Pastor Charles Taze Russell, Familiarly known to thousands of his brethren in Christ the world over as "Brother Russell", passed away. The news of his death spread rapidly, and for a time those who knew and loved him for his work's sake thought and spoke of little else as they met one another except that "Brother Russell is dead." Somehow many of the Bible Students felt that Pastor Russell would remain with the Church in the flesh as long as there was work to do, and it was difficult to grasp the hard fact that now he was gone.



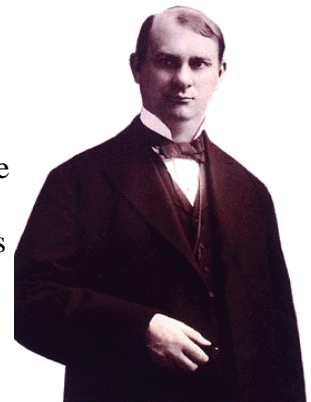
Forty years of missionary effort by a group who were thus inspired to the love of God resulted in thousands accepting the message and becoming "truth people." Nearly a hundred thousand subscribed to *The Watch Tower*. Twelve hundred local groups of Bible Students elected him as their pastor. Some of these groups numbered more than a thousand, many of them in the hundreds. The Brooklyn and London Tabernacle congregations were outstanding among them.

But now Brother Russell was dead! That he died while still active in the missionary field did not alter the fact that he no longer could be the pace-setter for the zealous workers who loved the truth they received through him and who wanted to lay down their lives to give it to others. He was dead, and the brethren were stunned. What now?

Siftings, Schisms and Separation

After the death of Pastor Russell, the Watch Tower Society began to fall apart. 1914 failed to bring about the glorification of the Saints, many of the Bible Students were still somewhat at a loss. Some had even fallen away from the association in disappointment. But if this were not enough, a bitter power struggle occurred at Watch Tower headquarters over control of the Society.

In 1917, Joseph Franklin Rutherford, the Society's lawyer, succeeded Pastor Russell as Watch Tower president. He tried and succeeded in gaining complete control over the Society's activities. Rutherford's first act was to have by-laws introduced and signed, giving the President, full control over the affairs of the Society. However, this was not Russell's wishes. In his [Last Will and Testament](#) he had provided for a seven man board of directors to succeed him. Thus four members of the Society's Board of Directors, a majority of the Board, took strong exception to what they regarded as Rutherford's high-handed behavior and opposed him. Eventually tension between Rutherford and the directors grew and on July 17, 1917, Rutherford simply announced to the Bethel family in Brooklyn, New York, during meal time that he had replaced the four



directors with his own appointees, using his legal jargon that the directors who had opposed him did not hold their positions legally under Pennsylvania law.

The Society would later claimed that a heated, five hour debate that followed his announcement was caused by the deposed directors' opposition to the publication of *The Finished Mystery*, a book released to the Bethel family immediately before Rutherford took charge. That book was styled the seventh volume of Pastor Russell's *Studies in the Scriptures* and advertised as his posthumous work. Rutherford could falsely claim that the four directors and others with them were refusing to cooperate with the Society. Hence till this day the Jehovah's Witnesses are told that the four directors who were expelled from Watch Tower headquarters were wicked and self-serving individuals

True, the four directors as well as other Bible Students did reject *The Finished Mystery* as being the work of Russell. In fact, the "seventh volume" contained very little from Russell's pen, it was the work of two of Rutherford's supporters, Clayton J. Woodworth and George Fisher. To add insult to injury, it was passed off on those loyal Bible Students as the "penny" in Jesus' parable of the penny at Matthew 20:1-16 and Luke 12:42-48. At a Bible Student convention in Boston in 1917, C.J. Woodworth would described Rutherford as the "steward of the penny" With the view that the last "messenger" to the church was dead, many of Rutherford's Bible Student critics could not accept *The Finished Mystery* as "new light" nor could they regard Rutherford's violation of Russell's will and his single-handed publication of the "seventh volume" as anything but an unwarranted usurpation of power.

Those who did not accept the "seventh volume" were excommunicated, yet the Society would later discard the volume for a fresh interpretation. Those who were loyal to the "seventh volume" were excommunicated for not accepting the new interpretations. An interpretation which has changed several times over since then, and an inconsistency that the Society still carries with them today!

As early as 1917, Bible Students were withdrawing their support from the Society to function independently. The four directors would form an institute to continue the work of the Pastor independent of the Society. Others would form corporations of their own. Some Bible Students followed the lead of their favorite elder or teacher. Still others, leary of Societies and organization decided to stay independent of all others.

As the years went by, more and more Bible Students seeing a change of direction and attitude within the Society soon departed and thus the exodus started. By 1930 some seventy-five percent of the original Bible Students left the Society. By this time, all of Russell's writings were discarded for the writings of Rutherford. Writings which contradicted each other. By 1929 over 100 changes in doctrines alone were made by the New Society. The Society no longer resembled that which was started by Russell and his early associates. The Society had taken a new look and a new attitude. No longer was it a publishing house for the dissemination of Bible literature. Now it was God's Theocratic Organization. To disagree with it was tantamount to treason against God Himself

In 1931, Rutherford decided to make a distinction between the *independent* Bible Students and those loyal to him. He changed their name to "Jehovah's Witnesses." And

thus from this year were Jehovah's Witnesses born. The Society had become what they themselves abhorred in Christendom. They became a little Babylon. And so, those Bible Students remaining within the Society, heard the admonition, "Get out of her my people!" and fled.

Till this day the Watchtower describes members of the Bible Student community of that day as "wearing unclean garments", were "contaminated by apostasy", "were guilty of wrong practices", "displayed characteristics that were weed-like", "manifested fear of man", "sold themselves because of wrong practices". Today, although many of the original Bible Students have left this earth, their children carry on. Children and grandchildren born decades after the events of 1917, even new comers have no mercy from the Society. These are considered evil and apostate, and Jehovah's Witnesses are to have nothing to do with them. The Society has even gone so far as to state that Bible Students no longer exist, that they have all died out and none remain.

Daughters of the Tower

After the death of Pastor Charles Taze Russell, it was clear that the work he started had to be continued. But who would continue it and how? Since it was obvious that the Society had abandoned the thought of carrying out Russell's wishes as set forth in his [Last Will and Testament](#). The four ousted board of directors having failed to secure their position on the board, along with other prominent Bible Students as individuals, congregations and publishing houses, decided to do the job.

There are many viewpoints about C.T. Russell's works. Some groups and individuals feel that Pastor Russell's teachings should be strictly adhered to; while others have felt, he was wrong in some of his doctrines. Others have taught they know the time when the Church would be completed. Still others believe the Church does not at this time have any special work or "harvest" message. Some Bible Students in the past have felt they have received direct revelations from God or Christ. These beliefs generally generate literature espousing their views or revelations.

Although Bible Students do not take "roll call", it is difficult to say how many there are. Although it is safe to say the total number of Bible Students outside of the Watchtower Society is probably under 10,000, of whom over half are overseas.

These various groups who split from the Watchtower between 1917 to 1931 are very difficult to classify. Some, like the Dawn Bible Students Association, and the Pastoral Bible Institute, in contrast to most offshoots, have a general sense of group cohesiveness. Almost all consider themselves independent Bible Students, and, while they adhere to their doctrinal particularities, they do not let this adherence interfere with their widespread intermingling and swapping of speakers and each other's literature.

These various movements are usually organized around a periodical, a personality, or both. The periodicals serves as a means of communication and group cohesiveness and is often the major polemical organ. Most groups publish books, a voluminous number of booklets, pamphlets and videos and audio cassettes.

Much of the literature list no author or publishing house, unless published by some of the larger groups (i.e. Dawn, PBI or Laymen) There are a number of reasons Bible Students tend to write anonymously. As many feel the writings should be judged on its own merit, aside from the fact that C.T. Russell's name often did not appear anywhere on his own works. It also allows the publications to freely move from one group to another without reference to the group or the author.

Laymen's Home Missionary Movement [1918 - Present]

On August 15, 1918, some of the former members of the board along with Pilgrim, Paul S.L. Johnson, published *The Bible Standard and Herald of Christ's Kingdom*. They would eventually have a falling out, and Johnson founded what is today called *The Laymen's Home Missionary Movement* [one of the unincorporated names used by Russell and the early IBSA] would publish independently of all Bible Students, introducing new views and doctrines. In December 1918, he published *The Present Truth and Herald of the Christ's Kingdom* and in 1920 would publish *The Herald of the Epiphany* [later renamed *The Bible Standard and Herald of Christ's Epiphany*.] Johnson taught since Russell was the *Parousia Messenger* during the Lord's parousia, he must be the *Epiphany Messenger*, during the Lord's Epiphany. Johnson was a prolific writer, he penned the 15 volume set *Epiphany Studies in the Scriptures*, two volumes would later be added after his death in 1950. [The LHMM continue to publish their journals and publications].

Epiphany Bible Students Association [1955 - Present]

LHMM pilgrim John Hoefle, a Bible Student who left the Society in 1928, and disagreed with the new LHMM leadership, he was disfellowshipped in 1956. He started publishing as early as 1955, a newsletter, under the heading of "Epiphany Bible Students Association", This group is headquartered in Florida. And is presently being run by his wife Emily Hoefle, and former LHMM pilgrims.

As is often the case, after the death of a charismatic leader, a number of schism usually occur. This was true of the *Laymen's Home Missionary Movement*. After the death of Paul Johnson in October 1950, Raymond Jolly took the reigns, no sooner than he did, that disagreements occurred between Jolly and John Hoefle of Mount Dora, Florida, a Laymen's pilgrim. Hoefle was eventually disfellowshipped from the Laymen's in 1956. He began publishing a newsletter under the *Epiphany Bible Students Association* heading. John Hoefle died in the 1980s, his wife, Emily Hoefle, survives him and continues the Epiphany work.

Laodicean Home Missionary Movement [1957 - 1990]

And yet another disgruntled LHMM pilgrim, John Krewson, disfellowshipped in 1955 along with Hoefle, he started the "Laodicean Home Missionary Movement". Since Russell was the "Parousia Messenger", and Johnson was the "Epiphany Messenger" Krewson must be the "Apokalypsis Messenger", since we are now living in the apokalypsis' stage of the Lord's presence, so he believed. He published a three volume set entitled...what else? "Apokalypsis Studies in the Scriptures", and a monthly journal "The Present Truth of the Apokalypsis." The gist of his literature was mainly directed at the LHMM and EBSA and not to outside Bible Students. Krewson died in the 1970s, the work continued till 1990 and folded.

In 1955 disagreements began between Jolly and another pilgrim, John W. Krewson, another Laymen's Pilgrim. Krewson was led to believe since Russell was the Parousia Messenger and Johnson the Epiphany Messenger, than he must be the *Apokalypsis Messenger*, and started publishing a monthly paper entitled: *The Present Truth of the Apokalypsis*. Krewson published a three volume set entitled: *The Apokalypsis Studies in the Scriptures*. Other schisms throughout the years have occurred but are of little significance to mention here. [This group is now defunct as of January 1990]

Pastoral Bible Institute [1918 - Present]

The 1917 problems in the IBSA resulted in an expulsion of four members and others, including R.H. Hirsh, I.F. Hoskins, A.I. Ritchie and J.D. Wright. Part of this schism was caused by a power struggle and part by opposition to volume VII of *Studies in the*

Scriptures: The Finished Mystery, which was supposedly the posthumous work of C.T. Russell but was actually written by Clayton J. Woodworth and George Fisher. The seventh volume expounded a number of new theological ideas which many considered unscriptural; thus opposition to this work developed. This group opposed Rutherford's attempt to control the Society until the decisive elections at the convention in 1918.

After Rutherford's conclusive victory, a number of prominent brethren withdrew and with about fifty colleagues and supporters, began the *Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc.* In 1918 the periodical *The Herald of Christ's Kingdom* was established, edited by R.H. Streeter until his death in December 1924. This periodical is still published today.

The first Bible Student Convention held independent of the Watchtower Society took place on July 26-29, 1918, in Asbury Park, New Jersey. A few months later two to three hundred persons attended the second convention, at Providence, Rhode Island, in November 1918. It was at this meeting that the *Pastoral Bible Institute* was formed in order to resume Russell's work independent of the Society. Today the Institute still continues, publishing its journal along with booklets and books. Making available the *Studies in the Scriptures* authored by C.T. Russell and other writings.

Watchers of the Morning [1937 - 1957]

Formed by I.F. Hoskins, one of the original Board of Directors. The Pastoral Bible Institute, began to reject some of Russell's ideas, such as the presence, the 1914 chronology, there was a split among PBI directors, Hoskins and others withdrew their support and formed "Watchers of the Morning", a monthly journal by the same name was also produced. This was a true blue Russellite group! Faithful to the end.

In the 1930s, influenced by the writings of both E.C. Henniges and M.L. McPhail, [two prominent pilgrims who left the Society in 1909, because of some doctrinal disagreements with C.T. Russell] some prominent members of the P.B.I. began to deny the Presence of Christ and other important doctrines held by the Bible Students Association. This led to still another schism within the movement, and in 1937, Isaac Hoskins, a former director of the Society began publishing *The Watchers of the Morning*. This journal was published until it ceased in June 1957.

The Dawn Bible Students Association [1932 - Present]

By 1931, most of the Bible Student groups were falling apart or functioning as independent classes, or one man shows. Along came Norman Woodworth, he created the Society's Radio program and left in 1928 to form his own radio program with the help of the Brooklyn Ecclesia of Bible Students. they produced a little journal, "The Bible Students Radio Echoes" highlights of their radio program, it evolved into the "Frank and Earnest Radio broadcast" . In 1931 a board of directors was elected. "Radio Echoes" evolved into the *Dawn and Herald of Christ Presence*, a BI monthly journal in 1932. The Dawn was responsible for re-gathering all the Russellite Bible Students, and for a while gave the Society a run for their money, especially in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. They republished the *Studies in the Scriptures*, countless books, booklets, and tracts. Today they continue their ministry, producing, video and audio cassettes, the Dawn journal and other literature for the mass of Bible Students. They still have their Radio and television programs, seen throughout the USA, Canada, Europe, South America, etc.

The Christian Millennial Fellowship [1928 - Present]

This was originally the Italian Bible Students Association, and Millennial Bible Students Church, in Hartford, CT's little Italy. This group is currently associated with one of the earliest offshoots of the Watchtower Society. They withdrew their support in 1928, and in 1940, they produced the *New Creation - a Herald of Christ's Kingdom Journal*. However a few years later, Gaetano Boccaccio, began to be influenced by the writings of E.C. Henninges and M.L. Mcphail, two pilgrims who left the Society in 1909, due to some doctrinal disagreements. The CMF eventually discarded most of Russell's writings as error and converted to "New Covenant Bible Students". Gaetano Boccaccio was it's leader since it's inception, having been with the Society since 1917, he died in 1995. For over fifty years he led this group from Hartford, Connecticut. Today the group is international, has been relocated to New Jersey and is headed by Elmer Weeks.

The Standfast Bible Students Association

[1918 - ???]

The Stand Fasters are so called from their determination to "stand fast on war principles that our dear Pastor Russell announced." Charles E. Heard of Vancouver and many others felt that J.F. Rutherford's recommendation in the spring of 1918 to buy U.S. war bonds was "cowardice" and a sacrilegious perpetuation of the harvest work. They felt that the Society reneged on its earlier stand on Liberty Bonds and non-combatant service. The Stand Fasters felt that a Christian should not support in any way, either the military, the buying of Liberty Bonds or by involving himself in non-combatant service. In response to this The Stand Fast Bible Students Association was organized on December 01, 1918, at Portland, Oregon. It published *Old Corn Gems* and organized conventions throughout the United States. Many, mostly non-doctrinal divisions followed a Seattle convention held on July 25-27, 1919. Interestingly, the Stand Fasters accepted the Seventh Volume - one of the main reasons for the splits (and in 1919 a split from the Stand Fasters occurred over the Seventh Volume). At first they were quite successful, especially attracting adherents who did not accept what they saw as compromises over the war issue.

They believed that everything that the Watch Tower Society taught up to Easter of 1918 was correct, but after that date the *separation of Elijah and Elisha* had begun and the Stand Fasters were the Elijah class who *stood fast* on Pastor Russell's teachings. Of course, all the schismatic groups, at first at least, claimed to be following Russell's wishes and, therefore, to be *true followers of Russell*, but the Stand Fasters claimed to follow *only* his teachings, i.e., that did not claim that they were legitimate messengers of His or *God's organization* as did some of the other splits. The Pastoral Bible Institute, for example, came to believe that the Watch Tower Society apostatized from the *truth* and that they only, The Pastoral Bible Institute, taught the *primitive truth*. The Stand FASTER, on the other hand, felt that leaders and organizations were relatively unimportant. They were organized simply to help others learn about Russell's teachings. Their loose organization was probably one of the main reasons that they were one of the first groups to disintegrate.

An interesting aspect of their history was the *westward movement*, when Stand Fasters were encouraged to move to the west because the rapture would take place in 1920, and only in the western states. Thus, if one did not live in the correct state, he or she would not be a part of the rapture. In 1923, E.C. Heard and Isaac Edwards led a movement of about 300 Stand Fasters which according to Paul S.L. Johnson, "degenerated into communism."

In 1923, Edwards and Heard organized into the *Star Construction Company* in Victoria B.C. Fearing the time of trouble, in 1924 Edwards took over 300 followers to Stookie and the Gordon River to live a communal existence. When business failed in 1927, it was shut down by Alec McCarter and Oscar Kuenzi. From the original twelve hundred adherents in 1919 in the Northwest and near Wisconsin, this *Seventh Volume Movement* dwindled to non-existence and no organization today.

The Elijah Voice Society **[1923 - ???]**

In 1923, John A. Herdersen, C.D. McCray and about 300 persons from the *Stand Fasters Bible Students* organized the *Elijah Voice Society*, to effect an ambitious regathering and witness work. For several years they published the *Elijah Voice Monthly* and numerous tracts. This group became the most prominent Seventh Volume group.

They felt they "called to smite babylon," similar to the Stand Fasters, only they were more extreme - so extreme they refuse to salute the flag, buy liberty bonds, and contribute to the Red Cross, long before the Jehovah's Witnesses. This group also, eventually dwindled to non-existence.

The Servants of Yah **[1925 - ???]**

Probably the strangest of all Bible Student groups. Headquartered in Brooklyn, NY, and led by C.H. Zook, they believed that Satan's name was Jehovah, so that Jehovah's Witnesses were really Witnesses of Satan. They are Universalist, who deny armageddon, the flood, water baptism, the ransom, restitution, etc. They had branches in Levittown, New York and Vienna, Austria. Their doctrines are very similar to the Jehovah's Witnesses; only the 144,000 are destined to discover the hidden meaning of the scriptures and enter heaven. The meaning is hidden partly because they believe that our Bible texts were altered. They see the Bible as primarily prophecy, most of which relates to the present century. They believe that everyone who ever lived will live forever on a paradise earth except the 144,000 who live in heaven. This group also dwindled to non-existence.

Bible Fellowship Union **[1917 - Present]**

This group was formed by the British Board of Directors. They withdrew their support and hijacked the "London Tabernacle". They began publishing a journal in 1924 "Bible Students Monthly" some years later, Rutherford told them "that's our title", so they changed it to "The Bible Study Monthly" still produced today. A.O. Hudson, who still has all his marbles and knew Pastor Russell was the general director until about two years ago, when he decide to semi-retire. He is in his late 90s. One would never know this was a Russellite group, since they never mention Russell, nor sell his books. They produce their own booklets and tracts, etc.

New Jerusalem Fellowship **[1922 - 1992]**

Because what transpired in America in 1917 didn't really hit home in other countries, many Bible Students had no idea what was going on in the USA, so it took time for some to figure it out and leave. In 1922, the "New Jerusalem Fellowship" was formed, it recently folded in 1992. They produced a monthly journal, and numerous books and booklets.

Old Paths Publications **[1925 - 1961]**

An original member of the British Board of Directors, William Crawford, was a staunch Bible Student, he caused the first split among the British Board of Directors. And founded "Old Paths Publications" and produced the monthly journal "Old Paths". Countless, booklets, books, and tracts were produced.

Forest Gate Church **[1920s - 1979]**

At the time of the split in 1917, this was the second largest Bible Student group in England. F.G. Guard, father-in-law of William Crawford, led the class to divorce themselves from the Society, and that they did. However in wasn't until 1939, when they started publishing their own journal. "The Forest Gate Church Bible Monthly", along with booklets and tracts. This group folded in 1979.

Bible Student Publishing Co. **[1914 - 1924]**

This was a break away group in 1914. Although not a Russellite group, this group published a quarterly journal "The Bible Student" which was critical of both Russell and Rutherford, and there were certain IBSA officials who joined after the split in 1917. Many "New Covenant Bible Students" joined forces with this group.

Goshen Fellowship **[1951 - Present]**

This group was formed as a result of the ministry of Jesse Hemery? Hemery served as Vice President of the IBSA, a position he held until 1946, he was appointed by Russell in 1901. The most prominent Bible Student in England. He was disfellowshipped by N.H. Knorr in 1951. Although he accepted much of Russell's interpretations. He did however reject the 1914 presence. Believing Revelation was to be fulfilled in the future, he wrote a few commentaries on Revelation and other books of prophecy, published by outside publishers. He died in 1955, not without founding the "Goshen Fellowship" in 1951. The group is currently headed by aging Frank L. Brown, a man in his 100s! They publish "Zion's Herald" a monthly journal since 1965.

The Institute of Pyramidology **[192?- Present]**

Adam Rutherford...(no relation to Joseph) a pyramidologist started this group. A Bible Student who got most of his inspiration from the Great Pyramid rather than God's Word. He published an extensive 4 volume set on the Pyramid and its teachings, along with a journal called....what else? "Pyramidology Monthly". Still published today, he wrote numerous books, booklets and tracts. He had a worse tract record than the Society for the end of the world. No, really!

The Angel of Jehovah Bible and Tract Society **[1917 - Present]**

Founded by Alexander F.L. Freytag. Branch manager of the Swiss Society, he disagreed with some of Russell's views even while Russell was alive. Yet he was appointed by Russell in 1898 as Branch Manager. In 1917 he started publishing his views, using the Society's presses and paper. What gall! He was ousted in 1919 by Rutherford. He published a four volume set of scriptural writings, mostly published in French, his writings were translated in English, Spanish, French, German, and just about every other language of that day. He published his own hymn book, to which he wrote and composed all the music, as well as his own devotional book (which in my opinion, is very uplifting). He also wrote numerous booklets and tracts. He published two journals, the monthly "The Monitor of the Reign of Justice" and the weekly "Paper For All". They have branch offices in Switzerland, France, Germany, Belgium, and Italy. Members of this group view Freytag as "that Faithful and Wise Servant" of Matthew 24:45-47. This group also goes by the name *Philanthropic Assembly of the Friends of Man*.

Berean Bible Institute **[1917 - Present]**

This Bible Student group officially separated from the Society in 1918, and published the monthly "The Voice", and since 1917, have published the monthly "People's Paper". As well as other books, booklets and tracts.

New Covenant Fellowship [1909 - 1944]

In 1908/1909, E.C. Henninges, the Australian Branch Manager of the International Bible Students Association, and M.L. McPhail, Pilgrim for the IBSA and a members of the Chicago Bible Students, withdrew their support causing the second largest split in the Society's history, next only to the 1917 split. He produced a monthly journal *The New Covenant Advocate and Kingdom Herald* and numerous books, booklets and tracts. After Henninges death, his work continued on for some years, the group and magazine folded by 1944. Most of the New Covenant Bible Students were left to fend for themselves. Many of them did not survive, and splintered off into non-existence. The New Covenant Bible Students do, however, make up the largest Bible Student group in Australia.

The Christian Truth Institute

Founded by Frederick Lardent of Melbourne Australia, with branches in England, they published the monthly "Gleanings for Truth Seekers", as well as various booklets and tracts. This group is now defunct)

The New Covenant Believers [1909 - Present]

Former Watchtower Pilgrim, M.L. McPhail, supposedly the most loved Bible Student next to Russell, led the "New Covenant" Bible Students in the United States. He published a few books independently, mostly relying heavily on the writings of E.C. Henninges. In 1908 they began publishing *The Kingdom Scribe*, which ceased publication in 1975, they also published the *Berean News*, a small newsletter since 1956, which continues till today. Today, this group publishes under the imprint; *Berean Bible Students Church*.

Associated Bible Students

[1917 - Present]

Various independent classes throughout the USA, Europe, Canada, Asia, South America, Middle East and African countries. The oldest of all Bible Students groups is the "Jersey City Bible Students" having been formed in the 1880s as a result of Russell's ministry. Most Bible Students are now independent of each other. Congregating during conventions and such, exchanging speakers and literature. Many Bible Student classes publish their own monthly newsletters, tracts and booklets, some have their own journals and ministries. There are many Bible Student committees made of Bible Students of various classes, to help out the needs of others, in poorer countries. There are various "Bible Student Retirement Centers" in both the USA and Europe. These are like little communities of townhouses, condos and apartments, complete with one's own bedroom, living room, kitchen, etc., and a congregation for studies and fellowship. Nothing like Brooklyn Bethel.

Every year there are International Conventions, held throughout Europe, in 1996, Budapest, Israel and Africa, in 1995, France and Israel in 1994, Israel. etc, etc. Bible Students are well respected and loved by the Jewish community because of their Zionist teachings.

There are various Bible Students Camps, for children during the summer. Just about every Bible Student class, sponsors their own convention each year. These are usually two and one day each, except the General Convention sponsored by the DAWN which is usually five days. So there are plenty of conventions to attend, there is at least one convention a month somewhere in the USA.

At one time, the Dawn, the PBI and the LHMM, had their own congregations affiliated with them, as the Society does with the JW's. Today the only group to have their own congregations is the LHMM. The Dawn, today, is only a Bible Student publishing house. Their journal is mainly read by outsiders. The PBI is mainly a tool for the Bible Students, their journal is mainly for insiders, Bible Students. Yet at the same time, all Bible Students, pull their resources together and help each other out, despite some of their differences, (including the LHMM, although to a lesser degree.)

Association of Free Bible Students of France

They've published the Bi-monthly "Zion's Journal and the Message of Christ Presence" since 1951. They have produced most of Russell's writings in the French language.

German Bible Students Association

They currently publish the monthly "Herald of Christ's Kingdom". In the 1930s they published the monthly "Der Pilgrim" which was suspended when Hitler took power. They then published "the Burning Lamp", but then the light went off. This groups was still associated with the Watchtower, contact had been lost during the 1st and 2nd World War, when contact was finally made and Watchtower Literature was allowed into Germany, the Bible Students noticed the changes, and decided they were better off without the Society. They began publishing "the Christian Watchtower" in 1949 and 'The Tagesanbruch". As well as numerous books and booklets, and Russell writings were translated in the German language.

Greek Bible Students Association

These Bible Students are affiliated with and publish a Greek version of the Dawn.

International Bible Students of India

This group has been independent of the Society since 1921, and publishes their own monthly "Zion's Express" as well as the "India Bible Students Monthly" and other writings. There are currently seven eclesias [congregations] in India.
[Side note, Russell was so influential in India, on his visits there and to leper colonies, there are currently several towns and streets named after him.]

Polish Bible Students Association

Another one of my favorites stories. The original Polish headquarters by the society, was hijacked by the Polish brethren. Mind you they did not know Russell was dead until 1925. When the Changes occurred, they stayed with Russell's teachings. A few years

later the Society incorporated *The International Bible Students Association II* because the first one was lost to the Polish Bible Students, Somehow that was lost to the Polish Bible Students when the branch manager joined the Bible Students, a few years later the Society tried unsuccessfully to incorporate *The International Bible Students Association III*. And they say Poles are dumb! The Polish Bible Students bagman publishing as early as 1921 *The Watchman* although up until 1919, there were two Polish language "Watch Towers" with the same name, one produced by the Society the other by the Polish Bible Students in Chicago, IL same title, same cover. Rutherford put a stop to that. In 1930 they began publishing the monthly *Dawn of a New Era* and in 1948 published the monthly "The Watch". In 1958 they published the monthly *DayBreak*. Every year they hold a convention in which some 2,000 Bible Students attend.

Conclusion

Other Bible Students have been found in other parts of Europe since the fall of communism. Romania and other parts of the former communist block nations, have found Bible Students still intact, including Russia. There are also Bible Students in Mexico, Argentina, Belgium, Sweden, Africa, China, Japan, etc.

When the Curtain fell in Europe, the Society was eager to see what was left of the Romanian Jehovah's Witnesses. They were quite disappointed. Because of the loss of communication from the war, the Bible Students had adopted the name "Jehovah's witnesses", but were still reading and studying Russell's writings and discarding the current literature from the Society. When the Society came in, they were dumbfounded at what they saw. Bible Students going under the name "Jehovah's witnesses".

What the Watchtower also found in the Romania/Poland area were up to 10,000 *Rutherfordites*. Jehovah's Witnesses, who were not comfortable with the changing doctrines and organizational structure of the Society since the death of J.F. Rutherford. They study nothing but Rutherford's writings, as "the greatest Bible Expositor in the world."

In recent years many Jehovah's Witnesses, (Bethelites, Elders, Servants, Pioneers, etc.) have found their way into the Bible Students Association, from all over. There are of course and were many other Bible Student groups, individuals and classes that have come and gone, and have published extensively, much of the literature was lost. But this list pretty much tells what was out there, except for some misc., items, too numerous to list.

Revised 10/05/97 by Bro. Rolondo Rodriguez