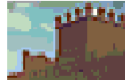


## Brief History of Jehovah's Witnesses



The history of the Witnesses is conveniently divided into four periods which coincide with the four presidents (now five) which have led the movement.

Charles T. Russell (1852-1916) founded Zion's Watch Tower-now The Watchtower-in 1879 and Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society in 1884 (later renamed). In addition to his speaking and editorial work Russell penned six volumes titled Studies in Scriptures (originally Millennial Dawn), which appeared between 1886 and 1904. By the time of his death in 1916, the legal and doctrinal foundation of the Society had been established.

"Judge" Joseph F. Rutherford (1869-1942), the second president-under whose leadership the name "Jehovah's Witnesses" was taken in 1931-was a prolific writer. In addition to his speaking and editorial work, and the publication of dozens of booklets, he wrote an average of one new book each year. A number of doctrinal and Scriptural reinterpretations marked his administration.

Rutherford became the "new oracle of God's message for this age" and Russell's writings and interpretations were often neglected or rejected as not abreast of progressive light. By 1938 the independent ecclesiae of Russell's day were brought under the "Theocratic" control-subservient to the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn.

Nathan H. Knorr -following Rutherford's death in 1942, officially took over the leadership of the Witnesses, a movement then slightly over 115,000. Knorr has demonstrated his organizational ability in that great growth has taken place under his direction in the areas of membership, outreach, buildings and publications (2.25 million members in 1977).

Fred Franz - When Knorr died in 1977, Fred Franz was elected the Watchtower's fourth president. Although now very old he continues to rule with an iron hand. Franz died on Dec. 22, 1992 at the age of 99

Milton G. Henschel - moves up from Vice President to replace Franz. Possibly the last of the "Anointed" to serve as leader of the Watchtower, it may be Henschel's lot to lead 4.5 million JWs through a crisis of authority.