

**Ruth
Monroe**
(Moderator)

posted 5/30/01 4:18 PM

According to the PROCLAIMERS Book, page 576, Charles Taze Russell was NOT the first President of the Watch Tower Society! "... Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was formed on February 16, 1881, with W. H. Conley as president and C. T. Russell as secretary and treasurer.

"... In 1884, Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was legally incorporated, with C. T. Russell as president..."

When the ZWTTS was legally incorporated in 1884, not only was W. H. Conley NO LONGER the President, but he was not even included as another Officer, nor even a Director.

Very little additional material is available on Conley, but the following ZWT Excerpts do tell us more:

The following Excerpt is taken from the April 1880 Zion's Watch Tower. With respect to W. H. Conley, it says that the Allegheny group met at Conley's home to celebrate the 1880 "Passover", because his home was the most "commodious". To have the largest home of anyone in the group would seem to indicate that Conley was someone of financial means.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER.

Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore, let us keep the feast." (1 Cor. 5:7). The passover was one of the most important of the types given to the Children of Israel, and was ever observed by them as one of their most solemn feasts. They kept it in remembrance of the passing over of their first-born when the tenth plague was visited upon the first-born of Egypt. They commemorated it every year on the anniversary of the event, slaying a lamb each year on the fourteenth day of the first month. They saw only the type: We, instructed by the Holy Ghost through the apostles, are able to recognize the antitype as "Christ our Passover Lamb slain for us"--"the Lamb of God." Death would pass upon us, were it not that our Lamb's blood is sprinkled upon us, but in Him we have life.

As the typical lamb was put to death on the fourteenth of the first month, so our Passover Lamb was put to death on the same day. No other day would fulfill the type, and so it was, as we read, Luke 22:7. As they feasted on the typical lamb, we feast on our Lamb. It was on this same day that Jesus gave to the apostles the symbols of His broken body and shed blood, saying: "THIS do in remembrance of me;" i.e., keep this feast hereafter, thinking of me as your Lamb.

It has for several years been the custom of many of us here in Pittsburgh to do this; i.e., remember the Passover, and eat the emblems of our Lord's body and blood, and it has ever been an occasion of solemn pleasure and communion, and was particularly so this year. We met on the night of March 24th, as usual, at the house of Brother and Sister Conley (it being the most commodious); and ate together the unleavened bread--eating, meantime "the truth" which it symbolized, viz: That Jesus was unleavened (without sin), holy, harmless, undefiled, and therefore food "of which, if a man eat, he shall never die." We said, with Paul, "Christ, our Passover is slain; therefore, let us keep the feast." We saw clearly that because we had Christ within, therefore (soon, we believe), all the church of the first-born will be passed over, and spared, as it is written: "I will spare them, as a man spareth his only son that serveth him," and we said one to another, "Watch that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things coming upon the world, and stand before the Son of Man." We read also how that if we are

X.martin-Dupont

posted 2/9/02 11:09 PM

take a look here :

<http://minilien.com/?QmAdJY6t44>

Conley was one's of the board of director of the 3rd national bank in Pittsburg. he was also invloved in various charity organisation.

<http://www.multimania.com/xmd/>

Ruth Monroe
(Moderator)

posted 2/18/02 6:57 PM

Thanks for posting the above.

This confirms that W. H. Conley was a prominent, wealthy gentleman in the Allegheny-Pittsburg community.

He was a member of the Board of Directors at the Third National Bank of Allegheny, as well as a member of the Board of Directors of The Home For Colored Children and St. John's General Hospital.

Bruce

posted 2/1/03 7:22 AM

W. H. Conley was a long time friend of George Stetson and met Russell through Stetson. Conley died in 1897.

Ruth Monroe
(Moderator)

posted 2/1/03 3:21 PM

"Bruce":

Thanks for the excellent info, but would you kindly fill in the gaps?

How did Stetson (a short-termer in Pittsburgh) manage to introduce two lifetime residents, who evidently shared common interests?

Thanks

Bruce

posted 2/2/03 9:50 AM

W. H. Conley was an Advent Christian. He knew Stetson through that association. Stetson and Wendell were well known among Advent Christians. The Advent Christian movement was quite small in the 1870s. In The World's Crisis the active evangelists were periodically listed. The list is quite short. You can find both Stetson and Wendell listed in the April 21, 1869, issue. Most knew each other, even when separated by some distance. Conley's obituary is in the World's Hope (1897). For an understanding of Advent Christian history during the period you may wish to start with Johnson's Advent Christian History.

**Ruth
Monroe**
(Moderator)

posted 2/3/03 8:40 PM

"Bruce":

Thank you very, very much for the above info, as well as the info you have posted in other topics.

I know that it is alot to ask, but would you post Conley's obit?

Either in that obit, or from other info you possess, when you state that Conley was an Advent Christian, can you be certain that He considered himself as such during the early days of the Bible Students?

I'm still absorbing your revelation, but if the first President of the Society was in fact a practicing Advent Christian ...???

I'll have to ponder that info.

Any additional details would be greatly appreciated.

Bruce

posted 2/4/03 9:13 AM

When Russell gathered interested parties around himself for "independent" Bible study, there were initially five individuals, including himself. These included himself, his father, his sister Margaret, and brother and sister Conley. They were strongly influenced by Wendell and by Stetson. Wendell died in short order, and Stetson moved to Edenboro. In 1874 Russell, his father and his sister were baptized. This came as a result of conversations with Storrs, and, I believe, from reading Horace Hastings' tract on Consecration. In various places Russell says that his views, and, hence, the views of the growing group, were the same as those entertained by Advent Christians generally. He was never a member of that Church in a formal way, but adopted many of their views—Especially those of the non-Trinitarian party in the AC church.

When Russell met Barbour and Paton in 1876, he met men who had been for some years active in the Advent Christian Church. Paton was a well known AC evangelist in the Michigan area, and is mentioned for that work in Isaac Wellcome's history.

Barbour's association with the Advent Christians went back to the 1850s. By 1876 Barbour had modified certain AC views. He no longer saw the earth as the destiny of the Bride of Christ, but had come to understand Heaven as the intended home of the 144,000. This was a significant departure from Advent Christian teaching. He had read James Rely, and was influenced by him to a great degree. This led to other slight departures from AC teachings too. This was not particularly unusual in Advent Christian circles, where there was a far greater diversity than usual in a denomination. This continued in that body until after 1903.

When Russell met Paton in (if I remember correctly) February 1876, he was readily convinced by him of the correctness of their views on the heavenly hope. (We taught as they did until 1934-1935.) In the meantime Barbour was expelled from the New York Conference of the AC church. This is reported in the World's Crisis. Partly this was due to his failed predications, and partly this was due to his very abrasive character. In Barbour's obituary in World's Hope, Paton recalled him as having an odd mixture of the Lion and the Lamb about him.

Russell took to the teachings of Barbour and Paton where they differed from standard AC teachings. Most if not all of the Allegheny-Pittsburgh group (now numbering somewhere between 20-30) did as well. Russell became a ready participant and evangelist in the new movement represented by the Herald of the Morning (formerly Midnight Cry and Herald of the Morning) and its prime financial backer. They were not totally distinct from the AC church. Barbour and Russell both attended the AC conference at Alton Bay in 1877. Yet, a new movement was developing. The Advent Christian Times issued a warning against Russell and Barbour's activities, and the rift grew.

Things became more complex in 1878 with the failure of some expectations in that year. The movement fragmented. The Watch Tower started. Some groups that had been associated with Barbour's activity since 1869 began to call themselves Retitutionists. Most of these were left on their own and eventually became part of the Church of God of Abrahamic Faith. Certain long time associates of Barbour—Paton, Keith, Mann, Sunderlin and many others— associated with Russell and Zion's Watch Tower. In 1883 in ZWT Russell remarked that most

Bruce

posted 2/4/03 9:42 AM

From TheWorld's Hope, August 1, 1897, pages 234-235

Brother Conley At Rest

Dear Bro. Paton: Our very dear friend and brother, Wm H. Conley of Allegheny, passed behind the veil at about 8:30 this evening. (July 25). "his end was peace," as became a good soldier of Jesus anointed. You know much of his faithfulness, but we think no one but the Heavenly Father in whose love he lived, and loved and walked, knew how true, and kind, and good a friend he was. He has not been well for a long time, and had been running down for several months. He had an attack of La Grippe four or five months ago, from which he never fully rallied. He has been but twice out of the house in six weeks,--to the house of prayer on both occasions. About noon today, a few of his dearest Christian brothers and sisters had a season of prayer with him, and afterward sung some sweet trustful verses and choruses that he liked. For the first time in weeks his sweet bass voice went out in unison with ours, and he joined in the prayer and praise. You know what a splendid voice he had. I was certainly surprised today--knowing of his shortness of breath, etc.--to hear it once more. It was his last notes of praise in the flesh to the One he loved so well. Toward evening he sank rapidly. His wife, his dear old mother, some other relatives, and Christian friends stood around his bed as he passed over. There was a heavenly atmosphere. One sister said it seemed to her as if angels filled the room. And while there were many tears,-- for human love and sympathy must manifest itself,-- yet there were hallelujahs in loving hearts for the victory that only the faithful win.

He will be greatly missed. His clear cut testimonies as to the faithfulness of God, the integrity of His word, the coming of our Lord, and the restitution of the ages to come, will ong be remembered by many. "Christ in me the hope of glory " was one of his favorite hymns, and typical of the

Bruce

posted 2/4/03 2:03 PM

From The World's Hope, August 1, 1897, pages 235

Remarks

On reaching home today (July 28.)—the day appointed for Bro. Conley's funeral—this word from Bro. Mann was handed me, and the sudden feeling of sadness that filled my heart cannot be expressed. And at the very hour of the funeral service, when brothers and sisters are gathered to mingle their tears of grief and sympathy, I am at my desk writing these lines. Had it been possible, I should have been with the friends in the house of mourning. I loved Bro. Conley, and none who knew him will wonder at this. For over twenty years he has been my faithful friend. Many times during these years I have shared the generous hospitality of that Christian home. Often has the spacious parlor been opened for the purposes of praise and prayer, and for the proclamation of the good tidings. It has been to many a Bethel—the house of God and the gate of heaven.

We cannot but mourn. Tears unbidden starts. But they are not hopeless. Our blessed Lord said, 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' May the Holy spirit bring needed consolation to the hearts of Sister Conley, the aged mother, and the many who have learned to think of the departed one as beloved in the Lord. And while we wait a little longer, until we shall follow him through the vail, may we be encouraged to faithfulness by the memory of his devoted life.."

Editor (J. H. Paton)

**Ruth
Monroe**
(Moderator)

posted 2/5/03 0:40 AM

"Bruce":

I certainly hope that other readers are as appreciative of your posts as am I.

However, as you probably suspect, all this info just creates many more questions.

I will try to not overwhelm you at one time or try your patience.

First, it is my understanding that the documentation of CTR's baptism comes from a quote from his sister (did he have more than one?) published in one of the convention reports in the 1890s? I have not seen such, but I seem to recall that I have read that it indicated that CTR, Joseph, and a/the sister were all baptized at the same time, but no indication as to where, or by whom? Is there documentation elsewhere to answer those questions? I have read various speculations that Storrs and Stetson performed such?

Whatever info you can provide is greatly appreciated as is what you have already provided.

Thanks.

Bruce

posted 2/5/03 7:35 AM

Russell's full sister was Margaret Land. He did have a half sister/niece by his fathers' second wife, who was also his sister-in-law. It made for a complicated relationship. His half-sister called him "uncle."

In the 1907 International Bible Students Souvenir Convention Report is the report of Russell's baptism. At a "Prayer, Praise and Testimony" meeting, Margaret recalled: "About 1874 the true mode of baptism and its import was discerned by him, and he and father, and a number of others including myself symbolized our baptism into Christ by water immersion."

The Russell children were baptized as infants. Russell was baptized in a Presbyterian church. "My parents were Presbyterian. I was duly baptized that I might be one of the elect infants and get to heaven," he recalled at a convention in 1913.

**Ruth
Monroe**
(Moderator)

posted 2/5/03 12:38 AM

"Bruce":

Again, thanks for the documented baptism info.

Can I assume then that the folks that say Storrs or Stetson performed such are "speculating" based on CTR's relationship with these two men?

Thanks.

Bruce

posted 2/5/03 5:06 PM

Though I haven't personally seen it, I believe there is a reference in the Bible Examiner to Storrs baptizing Russell. Some of the later issues are quite rare and hard to find. There are some from the 1870s that haven't been located by anyone I know. I do believe the information on Storrs doing the baptizing is correct.

**Ruth
Monroe**
(Moderator)

posted 2/6/03 1:47 PM

"Bruce":

What are your source(s)/reference(s)/logic for:

Conleys being the first 2 Bible Students besides the Russells?

Conleys introducing Stetson to Russells (considering that CTR's 1869 exposure to Wendell)?

Conleys were AC prior to joining CTR's bs group?

Conleys ceased being AC at some point prior to 1881 (considering that it appears that they continued "some association" with Paton after his split from CTR, and based on what appears to be minimal association with CTR thereafter. Are you basing your thought that CTR, Paton, Conley, etc were not AC because the AC governing body warned against Barbour in 1878[?]? Maybe the proper characterization is that Paton's group, Barbour's group, CTR's group were all offshoots from the ACC????)

Thanks

Bruce

posted 2/7/03 5:11 AM

Russell says that brother Conley was a member of the early study group. In the letters to the editor section of the June 11, 1894, *Zion's Watch Tower* (special issue) entitled *Voice of the Church*, Russell appends a note to a letter from Conley's describing him as "another brother who was a member of the early Allegheny Bible Class." That is on page 176 of that issue.

Stetson introduced Russell to Conleys, if Conleys hadn't met him earlier through Wendell. Conley did not introduce Stetson to Russell. Stetson and Conley were long time friends. I base this on correspondence with a Watchtower researcher.

Russell was never formally an Advent Christian, though he shared many of their beliefs, particularly before 1876. Paton's new doctrine was so different from AC doctrine, that it would be difficult to characterize it as such. Barbour, during the period Russell associated with him, certainly could no longer be characterized as Advent Christian, though he continued to have a sympathetic hearing among some of them. Barbour, Russell, Storrs, and Paton are better characterized as "restitutionists." Paton was a universal salvationist, or became such in 1881. He had been reading books on restitution that also taught universal salvation. Among those who influenced him was Andrew Jukes, who had written the book *The Restitution of All Things*. A new edition had come out in the late 1870s, and Paton read it and began writing to Jukes. They corresponded for some years. (I have a copy of Jukes book, signed by him as a gift to a John Rising).

When Russell wrote of those associating with him who had been Advent Christian, he made a point of saying that's what they WERE. He differentiated between himself and "Second Adventists." Russell felt Advent Christians (second adventists) had disgraced themselves by their frequent prophetic failures. (see ZWT, August 1883) He, consequently, never counted himself as one of

**Ruth
Monroe**
(Moderator)

posted 2/7/03 7:23 PM

"Bruce":

I'm both amazed and delighted with the "education" that you are graciously providing to myself and others (re this thread and the other threads).

Would you mind posting the notice from World's Crisis of Barbour's expulsion from the ACC, as well as the Advent Times' warning against Barbour's/CTR's teachings.

Thanks, as always.

Bruce

posted 2/7/03 7:36 PM

Most of my Barbour files are in storage since a move. I do not have immediate access to most of the World's Crisis material about Barbour. The material is available from the Jenks Memorial Library.

Bruce

posted 2/8/03 10:20 PM

Advent Christian Times -- July 18, 1877:

"One N. H. Barebour, called Dr. Barbour, with his confreres, J. H. Paton and C. T. Russell, is traveling around the country, going everywhere that they can find Adventists, and preaching that Jesus has come secretly, and will soon be revealed and mingling in their lectures a lot of "Age-to-come" trash, all to subvert their hearers. They are not endorsed by Adventists, "Age-to-come" folks, or anybody else, yet having some money and a few sympathizers they will probably run awhile. They have been to Ohio and Indiana and are working westward. We are credibly informed that one of them boasted in Union Mills, Ind., a few days since, that they would break up every Advent church in the land. We guess not. Their whole work is proselytizing. The Lord never sent them on their mission. Give them no place, and go not near them or countenance them"

Bruce

posted 2/8/03 10:28 PM

There are other examples of Advent Christian (Second Adventist) opposition to Russell and Barbour. In 1884 the editor of World's Crisis, Stockman, collected some articles he had written over the previous few years and published them as a book entitled Our Hope: or, Why Are We Adventists? Though not mentioning Russell or Barbour, it is evident that some of this was meant to counter their views. Also, in 1877 a booklet on the return of Christ was published. Again, it does not mention Barbour or Russell, but it is meant to counter their views. Perhaps you would want to start a new folder on this topic for posts on Barbour and Russell and the Advent Christians. These last posts are a little off topic for this folder.

Bruce

posted 2/15/03 7:19 AM

The dedication to George N. H. Peters' three volume Theocratic Kingdom (1884) reads: "This Voume is Respectfully Dedicated to W. H. Conley, Esq., and Dr. J. T. McLaughlin, to whom the author is deeply indebted for sympathy and pecuniary aid in the prosecution and publication of the work."

Sergio

posted 3/8/04 2:22 PM

In the separation suit, it is included a letter from Russell to Brown, of Chicago, with date 15-december-1898 (maybe I'm wrong with some details, since I don't have the information with me). In this letter, Russell stated that 2 or 3 years earlier he had been offered to be the president of a new bank that was being created in Pittsburgh. I wondered who could have thought of Russell for this position, and then remembered that Conley was a member of the board of directors of a bank. Does anyone know when the 3rd national bank was set up or if there was other bank set up in Pittsburgh by 1896?

<http://www.geocites.com/tjdefend>

Spanish defense of JW's

Sergio

posted 3/8/04 2:25 PM

By the way, he didn't accept the offer... ;-)

<http://www.geocites.com/tjdefend>

Spanish defense of JW's

Bruce

posted 3/22/07 10:47 PM

From The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Volume 19, Number 6, August 4, 1897, page 132 Note: Spelling and Grammar of the original are retained. It is with deep sorrow that we are called upon to record the death of one of our most valued fellow-laborers in the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and one of the few princely Christian merchants we have in our Alliance. We refer to Mr. (William) Henry Conley, of Pittsburg, Pa. Who passed away at his home in Pittsburg on Sabbath evening, July 25th, after a brief illness of only about a month. Indeed, he was only confined to his room about a week before the end. Mr. Conley was a business man of very high standing in Pittsburg, and a vast concourse of his fellow citizens gathered at his funeral to pay their last tribute of respect and affection to his memory. The funeral services were conducted at his home in Pittsburg by Rev. A. B. Simpson, Rev. Stephen Meritt, Rev. F. H. Sentt, and Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, of Pittsburg, who referred in appropriate terms to his high character and great usefulness. Mr. Conley was an earnest and loyal member of the Alliance and one of the leading officers of the Pennsylvania Auxiliary. The remarkable progress which the Alliance work has made in this State during the past two years was largely due to his untiring labors and his wise and earnest counsels. He carried the spirit of business enterprise into his Christian work and did nothing by halves. He was one of the few Barabases of the church and it is easier to supply a dozen preachers than one such whole-hearted Christ-filled business man. But God remains and He is equal to every need. Mr. Conley's heart was much in the work of home missions, and his spontaneous liberality has largely helped to keep in operation the blessed mission work which has been so successfully carried on by our Alliance friends in Pittsburg. But his heart had also caught the Master's greater thought for the evangelization of the world. And he has been for many years in the very front of the great missionary movement. Many years ago he supplied the means for planting the present Alliance mission in Jerusalem, and he sustained Miss Dunn's work up to the close of his life. He was a member of the Board of Managers of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He has been from an early day one of the official Board of our late New York Missionary Training Institute and took the deepest interest in its welfare. He leaves a wife, who has long been the sharer of his Christian hopes and plans, to take up the broken thread and finish his life and her's. We are sure the blessed Master will both sustain and use her. The inspiration of Mr. Conley's life and the theme of his constant testimony was the coming of the Lord Jesus. As our loved ones leave us how earnestly we long for that blessed one to break on the night of earth and time. We are very sure that our beloved brethren in Pennsylvania will take up and carry on the work in their State with unslackened zeal, and that God will still prove that while He may bury the workers the work will go on.

Bruce

posted 3/22/07 11:37 PM

E. D. Whiteside: Notes From the Home Field: Mr and Mrs. W. H. Conley: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, November 21, 1908, page 131. In the recent death of Mrs. W. H. Conley we have met with a very great loss. After a prolonged illness borne with hopefulness and courage, Sister Conley entered into rest October 1, leaving the whispered message behind – "It is all right." We comfort our hearts with the reflection of Job – "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Brother and sister Conley became patrons of the Rescue Mission and Prison work at the time the Lord called us to take charge in the year 1889. They faithfully contributed their support, counsel and co-operation until the work blossomed into the Pittsburgh Branch of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1894. Brother Conley was elected the President and retained office until his death in July, 1897, being also President of the State work. His life was a fine illustration of consecrated business talents. He conducted the affairs of his large concern in which he was partner with scrupulous regard to God's will, committing every financial detail to Him and prayerfully following the Lord's leading. His reverence for the Word of God was rare. For years he was accustomed to methodically apply himself to its study and pore over its pages at every spare interval, either while waiting for meals, or traveling by train, or during the many unavoidable detentions in a busy life. As a result he became masterful as a teacher of prophetic truth and a valiant defender of the faith. At his death the tongue of an eloquent champion of Christ's Return was silenced and the Alliance work in Pittsburg suffered a severe shock. However, instructions were left that the work should be fostered in the same way. The Lord gave to Sister Conley a generous heart. Many Christian workers have shared her bounty. She lived for others. Her Christ-like ministries were planned as a daily delight, realizing that it was "more blessed to give than to receive." She was a woman of rare humility. She abhorred recognition, counted it an embarrassment, and thought she was highly favored in aiding a good cause, relieving distress or supplying another's need. After nineteen years of fellowship in Christian work with such hearty co-operation on the part of our beloved Sister Conley it is not strange that we are deeply affected by her departure. We esteemed her for her own sake apart from her unstinted support. In order to adequately honor the memory of her noble husband, Mrs. Conley has left the bulk of her large estate as an endowment for the Wylie Ave. Church and the Pittsburg Bible Institute, a memorial fund by her in 1901, of which Rev. C. H. Pridgeon is Pastor and Dean. The entire estate is estimated to be worth nearly five hundred thousand dollars.

Sergio

posted 3/27/07 12:59 AM

This information is awesome, thank you. But do you know anything about that organization he belonged to? Was it a second adventist foundation?

<http://www.tjdefendidos.org>

Spanish defense of JWs

Bruce

posted 4/5/07 4:20 PM

The Christian and Missionary Alliance promoted the views of A. B. Simpson and eventually evolved into the denomination it is today. Simpson earnestly looked for the return of Christ. The CME was originally non-denominational. There is some indication that Simpson attended the Worcester Prophetic Conference in 1872, taking the floor with L. T. Cunningham to support William Thurman's ideas about Christ's return and in opposition to Barbour. An A. Simpson is listed as attending and speaking. The CME archivist kindly checked for a reference to this conference. She was unable to find one, though she thinks I'm probably right in identifying him with A. B. Simpson. It is "unproven" at this point. A web search of Christian and Missionary Alliance will take you to more relevant material. This was a key event in Barbour's life, but predates his association with Russell.

**Roar
Henriksen**

posted 5/22/07 7:45 PM

[This message has been edited on 05/23/2007]

**BradCham
bers**

posted 7/12/07 6:41 AM

[Post New Topic](#)