

## A Short History Timeline for "the Truth"

The origin and history of this movement are well documented in public records, in press coverage, through the statements, letters and sermon notes from early workers and friends. Unfortunately, those of us residing outside the British Isles have been told a story which differs radically from the truth. The headquarters of The Impartial Reporter in N. Ireland, one of the newspapers to chronicle Two-by-Two beginnings 1895

William Irvine joins the Faith Mission evangelical organization. He had earlier professed at about age 30 during a mission held by Presbyterian evangelist Jack McNeil in Motherwell Scotland. He had also attended Bible courses at John Anderson College in Glasgow. 1896

William Irvine is sent by the Faith Mission to head its operations in Southern Ireland. Faith Mission headquarters in Scotland 1897

The Beginning: William Irvine establishes his first independent mission in August. The Carroll and Gill families first hear Irvine in Nenagh, County Tipperary, Ireland. Irvine begins to break away from the Faith Mission and to recruit its workers. He meets Edward Cooney, a fabric retailer and lay preacher, who had been preaching independently among various denominations. 1899

Irvine proclaims that he has had a revelation of the "true meaning" of Matthew 10. Along with some companions from the Faith Mission, he begins to preach this revelation, which he dubs: "the Alpha Message." John Long becomes Irvine's first companion. Alex Givan, T.M. Turner and George Walker (an employee of Cooney's family business) join Irvine's new movement during this year as workers. Other Faith Mission workers in Ireland support Irvine, but also continue to serve under that organization. 1900

Irvine begins extensively recruiting workers away from the Faith Mission. Faith Mission founder John Govan receives disturbing reports regarding its Superintendent in South Ireland. Irvine's name is removed from its rolls, and his support from that organization is cut. 1901

William Irvine and John Kelly officially resign from the Faith Mission. Edward Cooney leaves the Church of Ireland and joins Irvine's new group by meeting the requirement of selling all possessions and giving the proceeds to Irvine. The first three female workers are commissioned, including Sara Rogers. 1903

William Carroll, his sister May (another recruit from the Faith Mission) and Mrs. W. Carroll enter the work. The first convention is held in Rathmolyn, Ireland and lasts for three weeks. Seventy attend. All orthodox Christian beliefs are rejected at this conference in favor of Irvine's new revelation. Attendees take vows of poverty, celibacy, submission, self-denial, etc. The first recorded mention is made of the "Living Witness Doctrine" occurs during this convention, in a sermon delivered by Joseph Kerr. Later in the year, the first workers to countries outside the British Isles are sent forth. William Irvine, accompanied by Irvine Weir and George Walker, is the first worker to set foot in North America (September 14, 1903). (left to right) Jack Carroll, May Carroll, Willie Jamieson, Elizabeth Jamieson and William Irvine in 1905 1904

The group's first baptisms by immersion are performed. The growth of the movement causes considerable friction to develop, as many families are being torn apart. Up to this time, it is required that all who profess sell everything and enter the work. Riots break out at meetings and baptisms. Fanny Carroll, followed by brother Jack, enters the work during this year. 1907

John Long, Irvine's first companion, is excommunicated for lacking enthusiasm in his support of the "Living Witness Doctrine." 1908

An official distinction is made between the workers (who must give up all possessions to go preach) and the friends (who are henceforth accepted as professing members without being required to go forth as itinerant workers). Though during the previous few years the preaching had gradually de-emphasized the requirement that all become workers, Irvine's official sanction of the property-owning lay members opens the way for Sunday house meetings and mid-week Bible studies, first held during this year. 1913

The hymnal, Hymns Old and New, is adopted in June. The last of the large, original-style, three to four week long international home conventions is held in Ireland. 1914

Irvine claims a new revelation, which includes prophecies about the future and the return of Christ. The new revelation is called "The Omega Gospel." A group of overseers (the chief workers in each area, reportable only to Irvine) exclude Irvine from preaching at meetings and conventions during this year. Joseph Kerr (who first framed the "Living Witness Doctrine") is excommunicated, along with Irvine's supporters. The overseers set themselves up as independent authorities over their respective regions of the globe. With the outbreak of the First World War in August, the group registers with the British government under the name "The Testimony of Jesus." 1917

Jack Carroll, James Jardine and George Walker personally persuade Irvine to relocate to Jerusalem, in order to remove his continuing influence and to hide his existence. Irvine complies (1919), though he continues contact with his adherents. 1928

The group again splits when Edward Cooney is excommunicated for rejecting the group's organization and the "Living Witness Doctrine." 1942

George Walker officially takes the name "Christian Conventions" for the group in the United States. Jack Carroll concurs, and the group is registered under similar names with governments worldwide, including "Assemblies of Christians" in Canada. 1947

Founder William Irvine dies in Jerusalem, shunned by all but a loyal core of followers. 1948

Irvine Weir, one of the first three workers to set foot in North America, is excommunicated by George Walker for (perhaps among other things) associating with Edward Cooney. 1953

Early worker William Carroll dies at his home in Australia, where he was overseer. 1957

Jack Carroll, overseer of western North America, dies and is buried at Milltown, Washington. 1960

Edward Cooney dies in Mildura, Victoria, Australia among his followers - who continue to this day, albeit without the "Living Witness Doctrine" or the office of worker. 1981

George Walker dies, aged 104. Although for many years it was speculated that Walker would be able to inherit Irvine's mantle, Walker could not muster the support for such a move and had instead remained overseer of the eastern portion of North America.

These items have been extensively documented and verified through newspaper articles of the period; eyewitness accounts; official testimony by workers; government records; letters by elders, workers and friends; statements by workers to the press; etc.