

San Diego residence known as "Beth-Sarim." For some time it was apparent to his associates and the best medical experts that he could not recover.

Briefly it may be said that Brother Rutherford had a severe case of pneumonia after his release from unjust imprisonment during 1918-1919 because of his faithfulness to Jehovah. Thereafter he had only one good lung. It was virtually impossible for him to remain in Brooklyn, New York, during the winter and still carry out his duties as the Society's president. In the 1920's he went to San Diego under a doctor's treatment. The climate there was exceptionally good and the doctor urged him to spend as much time as possible in San Diego. That is what Rutherford did ultimately.

In time, a direct contribution was made for the purpose of constructing a house in San Diego for Brother Rutherford's use. It was not built at the expense of the Watch Tower Society. Concerning this property, the 1939 book *Salvation* stated: "At San Diego, California, there is a small piece of land, on which, in the year 1929, there was built a house, which is called and known as Beth-Sarim."

Sister Hazel Burford was one of the nurses who cared for Brother Rutherford during his final illness at Beth-Sarim, where he was taken in November 1941. She tells us: "We had the interesting times, for he got to where he would sleep all day and then all night long he was busy with the Society's business and kept us on the move." One morning about the middle of December three brothers, including Brother Knorr, arrived from Brooklyn. Sister Burford recalls: "They spent several days with him going over the annual report for the *Yearbook* and other organizational matters. After their departure, Brother Rutherford continued to weaken and, about three weeks later, on Thursday, January 8, 1942, he faithfully finished his earthly course and graduated into fuller service privileges in the courts of his heavenly Father." Later that day the news was sent to the Brooklyn headquarters by long-distance telephone at 5:15 p.m.

How was news of J. F. Rutherford's death received at Brooklyn Bethel? "I will never forget the day we learned of Brother Rutherford's passing," comments William A. Elrod. "The announcement was brief. There were no speeches."

A SMOOTH TRANSITION

Thursday, January 8, 1942, marked the end of the earthly life of seventy-two-year-old Joseph Franklin Rutherford. For twenty-five years he had been presi-

dent of the Watch Tower Society. When the Society's first president, Charles Taze Russell, died in 1916, the Bible Students were shocked and many wondered how they could carry on in God's service. Furthermore, selfish men sought control of the Society and this posed problems for some time, though their opposition and schemes were completely overcome through divine aid. The death of J. F. Rutherford did not have such effects, however. Of course, foes of God's people thought that the work of Jehovah's witnesses would grind to a stop, but they were mistaken. "The theocratic organization proceeded without a halt or a stumble," remarks Grant Suiter.

On January 13, 1942, all board members of the Pennsylvania and New York corporations used by God's people met jointly at Brooklyn Bethel. Several days earlier, the Society's vice-president, Nathan H. Knorr, had asked that they earnestly seek divine wisdom by prayer and meditation, and this they did. Their joint meeting was opened by prayer for Jehovah's guidance, and after careful consideration Brother Knorr was nominated and unanimously elected president of the Society. "No one that I knew about even questioned the appointment of Brother Knorr," says C. W. Barber, "and everyone was determined to stand shoulder to shoulder supporting him and proving our devotion to Jehovah's organization. There was complete unity also among all the directors of the Society." Many telegrams and letters were received showing that Jehovah's servants world wide were unified and determined to carry on with the preaching work.

Nathan Homer Knorr was born at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1905, of American-born parents. When he was sixteen years old, he became associated with the Allentown congregation of Bible Students, and in 1922 attended the Cedar Point convention, where he made up his mind to resign from membership in the Reformed Church. An opportunity to be immersed in water to symbolize the dedication of his life to Jehovah God came on July 4, 1923, while Frederick W. Franz, from Brooklyn Bethel, was visiting the Allentown congregation. Brother Fred Franz delivered the baptismal discourse, and eighteen-year-old Nathan H. Knorr was among the individuals baptized that day in the Little Lehigh River. This has always been a joyful day to remember, and what a pleasure it has been for Brother Knorr to be privileged to work side by side with Brother Fred Franz for over fifty-one years now!

About two months later, on September 6, 1923, Brother Knorr became a member of the Brooklyn Bethel family. C. W. Barber recalls: "The noontime that he arrived, upon coming home for lunch, we