

About 1861, Lardner as we knew him, with his family migrated to Fort Green, Florida, where they raised cattle on the pioneer frontier. Lardner's mother passed away May 3, 1899 and was buried in New Zion Cemetery.

His father, James M. Hendry, remarried to Martha Francis Wingate, who was born December 24, 1870. To this family were born three boys and three girls, making a total of 17 brothers and sisters. We are sure there is much to be written on the Christian life of Reverend Lardner Hendry but we do not have it at this time.

It was during this period that a Mrs. Elsie Foot Hawkins, who passed away August 22, 1912, was laid to rest. She was the first person to be laid to rest in Bethany Cemetery. There were two others that year, one was a two year old child, Jessie Thompson, who died October 14, 1912. Another child was entered that year, "Leffie Taylor" died December 31, 1912, and was the third person to be interred. At that time the developing of the cemetery plot began in earnest, which consisted of very strenuous work as it was all done with hand tools.

#### REVEREND JOHN ALTON ROBERTS

August 12, 1917, Bethany Church called Reverend John A. Roberts as pastor and he pastored until 1921. Afterwards he served two other terms. Reverend John was the son of

Henry Carson Roberts. Henry Carson Roberts was born in 1820, and was married to Nancy Ann Norris, who was born in 1830.

Henry Carson was a Civil War soldier and a very popular wrestler and a farmer. Many of the Roberts of DeSota, Hardee, Manatee, Lee and Hillsborough Counties were/are descendants of Henry Carson Roberts.

After the death of Henry Roberts in May, 1882, a wagon train left Bainbridge, Georgia, bound for South Florida. It included many of the Roberts families, including Reverend John who was about 12 years old at that time. Brothers and sisters of Reverend John were Mary, Martha, William, Enoch, Charity, Nancy, and Burrell. John Alton Roberts was born in Decatur County, Georgia, September 17, 1870 and lived with Brother Brown Roberts after his parents died.

John A. Roberts married Edna V. Albritton, daughter of Asbury Albritton, and to this union were added four sons: Alton, Owen, Sidney and Leland. Reverend John joined with the Union Baptist Church at Lily, and was ordained in 1911. Afterwards he moved to the community of New Zion, on the west prong of Horse Creek, where he farmed citrus and truck farmed, and raised his family. Soon after moving here he and his wife moved their membership

to New Zion Church in the year of 1898.

Reverend John Roberts pastored many churches through the Association and many converts accepted the Lord and were added to the Lamb's Record Book of Life.

Reverend John was a faithful pastor to his flock at Bethany and will always be remembered with affection.

Reverend John was followed by one son and two grandsons in the ministerial services.

Brother John departed this life to be with Jesus and his loved ones May 27, 1938, and was laid to rest in the New Zion Cemetery in Hardee County beside his wife, Edna.

Obituary of Reverend John Roberts:

Death Claims Rev. John Roberts

New Zion Baptist Church has suffered a great loss in the death of Brother John Roberts who was called to his reward on May 27, 1938. Brother John was born in Decatur Co., GA., September 17, 1870. (He) moved to Florida when about 12 years of age, living with his brother Brown Roberts as his parents died when he was quite young. He grew to manhood, joined the Baptist Church at Lily, later was ordained to ministerial work and for many years pastoring many churches throughout this Association and with the approval of the Lord in great power of the spirit brought many souls into the Kingdom. After moving to this community, he and his wife moved their membership with us in the year of 1898 till time of death. His place in this church can't be filled. We miss him with bowed heads and humble hearts we say goodby to meet him again in that city where all is peace and joy and we shall know each other there. Brother John leaves to mourn his going,

Brother Alton, Sydney, Owen, and Leland Roberts, their families and relatives and a host of friends.

Committee	E.H. Roberts
	A.M. McLeod
	G.W. Stephens
	J.E. Roberts, Clerk

REVEREND JOHN COKER

Reverend John was called to pastor Bethany Baptist Church October 9, 1921. He was about 50 years old when he surrendered to his call to the ministry.

Reverend John was a very dedicated servant to the Lord and His churches in the difficult times the frontier ministers faced in that era. It is said Reverend John and Reverend P.O. Miller teamed together and conducted successfully many revival meetings. Reverend John, as most all of our pastors, supplied for other pastors when he was not obligated to another church. We know Reverend John was pastor at a number of the older churches but we do not have that record at this time.

Reverend John's people came to Florida from the Carolinas in the early 1800's and settled first around Old Town on the Suwanee River and afterwards further south.

Reverend John is thought to have been born near Jasper, Florida, on December 22, 1854, and passed away June 2, 1925.

Reverend John's father, Jonathan Coker, who drowned

# BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

~~RTT BOX 500~~ 26604-SR 64E

MYAKKA CITY, FLORIDA 34251

## A CENTURY

1888



1988

## OF MEETING

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## PREACHING

A.O. HENDRY, Pastor

116130

FLORIDA BAPTIST  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY