

# Key West Baptist Church

to denominational people of today. In April, 1847, Mr. Doolittle returned to his northern home, when Mr. J. H. Breaker became pastor, and preached at the court house, and in the Methodist chapel.

During Mr. Breaker's pastorate the first meeting house was contracted for; the price being six hundred dollars. This house was opened for worship January 2, 1849.

From 1852 to 1890 the records of the church are lost. The church however, was not prosperous, the constant change of pastors preventing any progress.

During the Civil War the white Baptists drifted into other churches, and the church building was taken possession of by the negro Baptists, who held services there until the fall of 1879, when Rev. William F. Wood, who had been a chaplain in the Union Army, came to Key West and revived interest in the Baptist church. He continued as pastor until early in 1900, when he went to Fernandina, where he died. During his pastorate in Key West he served as a missionary in Cienfuegos, Cuba, for about two years. He was the first evangelical missionary to that island.

In 1866 the church building was destroyed by fire, and the present Baptist church was shortly afterwards erected, largely through the generosity of Mr. John White, who was for more than forty years a member of the congregation. A handsome memorial window to him now adorns the front of the edifice.

The names of the succeeding pastors are Reverends H. M. King, W. W. Bostwick, J. L. D. Hillyer, R. F. Hart, W. H. House, T. J. Porter, James L. Rogers, H. H. Sturgis, J. W. Tucker, M. A. Clonts, who served twice as pastor, W. A. Norwood who served a few months in the interim, and Earl D. Sims. Rev. C. E. W. Dobbs, the present pastor came here in September, 1910.

During Mr. White's life, and the pastorate of Mr. Wood the church thrived to a remarkable degree, and became one of the foremost evangelical influences in the city. After Mr. White's death the congregation not being wealthy, funds for the support of the church were hard to raise, and it was difficult to secure and keep the services of a pastor, so the congregation gradually dwindled away.

During the pastorate of Rev. M. A. Clonts it regained its old time membership. Mr. Clonts first came to Key West in August, 1901, and stayed until October, 1902. W. A. Norwood succeeded him and served nearly a year. The church was again left pastorless from August, 1903, until Mr. Clonts returned in April, 1904. It was then that the church started on its present era of prosperity. During his pastorate the old First Baptist Church was formally dissolved, and the Eaton Street Baptist Church organized on March 23, 1905. On March 3, 1901, the old church unanimously voted to transfer the property to the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, but nothing was done towards the transfer until Mr. Clonts' second pastorate, when it was finally consummated. The church was then repaired and improved by the addition of the new front, with its attractive columns, and a pastorium was erected. Mr. Clonts ended his pastorate here September 30, 1908, and had a church for a short time in Jacksonville. He has since been engaged in life insurance, and has prospered.

Rev. Earl D. Sims was pastor from June, 1909, until July 31, 1910.

The church under the pastorate of Rev. C. E. W. Dobbs, has grown in membership and grace, and is now one of the strong religious influences on the island.

The Baptist pastors of Key West have had the hardest tasks of any of our ministers, as each one has found the small congregation badly scattered, and have had to "Watch the things they gave their lives to, broken, and stoop and build them up with worn-out tools."

## Baptists Ask Appointment Be Rescinded

WINTER HAVEN —(AP)— The Florida Baptist Convention yesterday asked Pres. Truman to rescind his appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican.

The request came in the form of a resolution adopted at the Baptists' annual state meeting.

Pres. Truman has named Gen. Mark Clark as ambassador to the Vatican. The senate has not acted on the appointment.

Dr. Albert ■ Carnett, pastor of the Woodlawn Baptist Church of Jacksonville, was elected president of the convention. He succeeds Dr. Earl B. Edington, pastor of the First Baptist Church of St. Petersburg.

Chosen first vice-president was Doyle I. Carlton of Cocoa and the Rev. James L. Rogers, pastor of the First Baptist Church here, second vice-president.

## Minister Returns To Former Pulpit; Absent 27 Years

KEY WEST, Fla., August 6—  
(AP)—Returning after an absence  
of 27 years to the pulpit he once  
filled, the Rev. James L. Rogers,  
Baptist minister of Miami, faced  
familiar faces when he preached  
from the pulpit of the First Bap-  
tist Church here recently.

The visiting minister was pastor  
of the church here from 1898 to  
1900 and had not occupied the same  
pulpit since until his recent visit.