

ARE YOU WASHED

The city was surveyed and mapped by Mr. William A. Whitehead in February, 1829, and like all new cities was more pretentious on the map than in reality. None of the streets extending southeasterly were cleared beyond Caroline street. On the 8th of October, 1831, the city council adopted a resolution giving free commission to the inhabitants of the town to cut and remove the woods standing on Eaton street, which caused it to be cleared of trees from Duval to Simonton streets. As late as 1837 Eaton street beyond Simonton was covered with its original small trees, heavy underbrush, vines, cacti, etc., but in that year the woods were cleared and the brush burned off on all that part of the island lying between Whitehead and Elizabeth streets, as far out as Fleming street.

The first street opened through to the South Beach was Whitehead street. Duval street was only cleared about half way between Eaton and Fleming street as late as 1836, and the only house on it at that time, after crossing Caroline street, was one belonging to Captain Francis B. Watlington. This house is still occupied by his immediate family, and though built in the early thirties, weathered the great hurricanes of 1835, 1846, 1909 and 1910, and sustained little damage.

A large part of this work was accomplished in one day by a party of fifty or more United States sailors sent on shore for this purpose by the commanding officers of the United States sloop Concord, and other vessels then lying in the harbor. Prof. Coffin, instructor in mathematics to the midshipmen, and leading townspeople, among whom were Judge Marvin, Mr. Jos. B. Browne, Mr. Stephen R. Mallory and Mr. Asa F. Tift, assisted in the work, which was done with a view to take away from the Seminole Indians, who were at war with the whites on the mainland, the means of concealing themselves, should they attempt an attack on the town.

The following from the pen of Judge William Marvin, for many years United States district judge at Key West, is interesting reading of the old days:

"About the persons I found living in Key West when I first landed there in October, 1836, from a little mail schooner, which sailed from Charleston (the whole population was then not very far from four hundred souls), James Webb, then about forty-five years old, was the judge of the Superior Court. He had been appointed by President Adams from Georgia. He was a good lawyer, an impartial judge and a genial gentleman. He resigned his office in 1839 and moved to Texas, where he was appointed by President Lamar, secretary of State. Texas had not then been admitted into the Union—it was the Lone Star. Mr. Alden A. M. Jackson was clerk of the court and Mr. Thomas Easton was marshal. They told in that day a good story of the marshal. He had been only recently appointed. He was calling in the court the names of the jurors. He did not know the sound of a single letter in Spanish. He had come from

Tennessee. He came to the name on the list—Joseph Ximinez. He called 'Joseph Eks-im-e-nez.' No person answered. Some one whispered to him to call 'Joseph He-ma-nes,' which he did. Whereupon Mr. Ximinez answered 'here' and walked up to the clerk's desk to be sworn in. 'Phoebus! What a name!' exclaimed the marshal.

"The only lawyers at that time at the bar were Mr. Adam Gordon and Mr. Wm. R. Hackley. Mr. Chandler had, a short time before, resigned the office of United States attorney and moved away. I had succeeded to his place. Mr. Wm. A. Whitehead was collector of the port, Mr. Adam Gordon deputy, and Mr. S. R. Mallory, inspector.

"The principal merchants were Mr. Fielding A. Browne, a Virginian; Mr. Pardon C. Greene,* from Rhode Island; Mr. Oliver O'Hara, from South Carolina, and his partner, Mr. Charles Wells, from New York. Mr. Wm. Shaw, Mr. Geo. E. Weaver and Mr. Philip J. Fontane were grocers and ship chandlers. Mr. Amos and Mr. Asa Tift kept a dry goods store. Mr. Alexander Patterson was an auctioneer, and kept a store located near a cocoanut tree at the foot of Whitehead street. Mr. William H. Wall kept a little store, had been married a short time before to Miss Mabritty and lived in a small house on Whitehead street a little beyond Jackson Square, the farthest house out on that street. Mr. Lewis Breaker, the father of Mrs. James Filor, was a justice of the peace. Mr. John Geiger was pilot, captain of a wrecking vessel, a man of decided character and a sort of commodore among his compeers. Mr. Charles Johnson and Mr. Francis Watlington, both bright and intelligent men, were pilots and wreckers. I am not quite certain whether Mr. William Curry was living in Key West at the time I am writing of or not. I am inclined to think he came there at a somewhat later period. He was at one time clerk in Mr. Wall's store. At a still later period he formed a partnership with Mr. George Bowne in the business of buying and selling wrecked goods, and made money. But few people came from the Bahamas before 1836. Among the first to come were Mr. Wm. Curry's family, Mr. Samuel Kemp, Mr. John Braman, Mr. Benj. Albury, and Mr. John Lowe, Jr.'s family.

"Among the young men about town are to be named Amos and Asa Tift, Stephen R. Mallory, Joseph B. Browne, John P. Baldwin and Lieut. Benjamin Alvord, United States Army, afterwards paymaster general of the army. I do not know that these young fellows ever 'painted the town red,' for they were a well behaved and orderly set of young gentlemen; but they, or some of them, were known to be in the streets very often in the small hours of the morning, serenading some one or more of the young ladies of the town. Among these young ladies were Miss Mary Nieves Ximinez, who married Mr. Joseph Beverly Browne, Miss Whalton, Miss Breaker, and at a very

*Appendix E.

ARE YOU WASHED IN THE BLOOD?

Dear friend if you are trusting in a religion
a church, your good works
else you must

little later period, say in 1837-38, Miss Mary and her sister Miss Nona Martinelli. Nothing pleased Mallory better than to take his flute and get one or two friends, and Roberts, a colored man with his fiddle, to join him and go out into the beautiful moonlight nights and serenade some lady or ladies. Among the married ladies were Mrs. Wm. A. Whitehead, Mrs. Adam Gordon, Mrs. Wm. Randolph, sister of Mr. Fielding A. Browne, Mrs. George E. Weaver, Mrs. Joseph Ximenez, Mrs. Alexander Patterson, Mrs. Francis Watlington, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Whalton and Mrs. Ellen Mallory.

"Messrs. Charles Howe, Winer Bethel, Stephen J. Douglas, James Curtis, Thomas Ferguson, Walter C. Maloney, James Filor, Fernando J. Moreno, Senac, Charles and Asa Tift, James C. Clapp, Rev. Osgood E. Herrick and James Hicks all came to Key West after 1836. Mr. Howe was living at that time at Indian Key."

The first permanent settlers in Key West were Mr. Joseph C. Whalton and family, Mr. Michael Mabritty and family, Mr. Antonio Girardo and family from St. Augustine, Fla., and Mr. William W. Rigby and family and Mr. Richard Fitzpatrick.

A territorial government was established in Florida in 1819 and Key West then began to feel the benefit of an influx of population. Probably few new cities have ever started out with as high a class of population as Key West. Nearly all who came here had some means, and were people of culture and refinement. St. Augustine, Virginia, South Carolina, New York and Connecticut furnished their quota of the early population. Wrecking and fishing for the Havana market were the almost exclusive sources of revenue, and as they were both very lucrative occupations, many substantial fortunes were made.

The little colony at Key West was not without excitement at times. On December 7, 1831, the *Key West Gazette* said:

"Considerable excitement has existed here during this week occasioned by the riotous conduct of a number of the passengers from on board the wreck of the ship Maria. As soon as they arrived here, every accommodation which the place could afford was granted them; fifteen or twenty tents were pitched for their convenience, and a number of them were taken into different houses.

"On Thursday last, after a rather free indulgence to Bacchus; they, from some imaginary cause, became dissatisfied and threatened the lives of Captain McMullen and some of his crew. They evidenced their feelings that night, by the most boisterous behavior; in consequence of which the inhabitants at the lower end of the town were prevented from sleeping and were in momentary expectation of having their homes assaulted. On Friday afternoon they collected in such numbers on Browne's wharf that the proprietor was obliged to suspend business. Here a general battle ensued among them, in which it was difficult to tell who or how many were engaged, and a disfigura-

tained a healthy and normal growth, and been in the forefront of the most aggressive evangelical work in Key West.

MEMORIAL CHURCH

In 1886 a small band of earnest Christians, members of the First Methodist church and Sparks Chapel, who lived too far to attend services with much regularity, organized a congregation, and met for the worship of God in Russell Hall school. Their first pastor was Rev. John A. Giddens, who was then living in Key West on account of ill health.

In 1887 they bought a lot on the corner of Watson and Virginia streets, and the old Sparks Chapel building moved thereon, and Memorial Church, M. E. South, began its mission for good. In 1903 they bought an adjoining lot, and erected a pastor's home.

Among the members of this church were Mr. T. J. Pinder and family, Mr. Blake Sawyer and family, Mr. William McClintock, Mr. Hubert Roberts and family, Mr. E. E. Archer and Mr. Benjamin Carey.

The membership is now one hundred and ninety-two, and two hundred and fifty scholars are enrolled in the Sunday school.

The Rev. T. H. Sistrunk, the pastor in charge, is a gifted orator, with the courage of his convictions, and aggressive in all movements toward civic uplift.

CUBAN METHODIST MISSION

The Methodists were among the first of the Protestant churches to make converts among the Cuban refugees, and the Rev. H. B. Someillan was ordained minister and placed in charge of the Cuban Mission. It was not until 1877 that they had a church of their own. In that year Rev. J. C. Ley, pastor in charge of the First Methodist Church, interested Bishop Pierce in the importance of providing a place of worship for this congregation, and through him a thousand dollars was furnished by the Missionary Society, and a lot purchased on the corner of Duval and Angela streets. The small house situated on the lot was remodeled and furnished, and has since been the place of worship of the Cuban Methodist congregation. Rev. H. B. Someillan was the pastor for many years. He was succeeded by Rev. A. Silveira. Miss Annis Pyfrom, a highly cultured, talented, Christian woman, devoted some of the best years of her life in work connected with this mission. She conducted a parish school which wielded a great influence on the Cuban population.

One of the first preachers to the Cuban Mission was the Rev. Van Duzer, who died of yellow fever in the epidemic of 1875.

CHAPTER VI

BAPTIST CHURCH

THE earliest recorded data of any Baptists meeting for worship in Key West, was on December 20, 1842, when "agreeably to appointment, after prayer and deliberation, the brethren met at the residence of J. H. Breaker for the purpose of ordaining Brother Charles C. Lewis to the gospel ministry. Prayer was offered by Brother Breaker on behalf of the candidate, during which the laying on of hands was performed by Brothers Elim Eldridge, J. A. Wolfe and O. T. Braman. Charge was then given by Brothers Breaker and Asa Sawyer, and the right hand of fellowship by all the brethren present."

This method of ordination was not strictly in accord with Baptist usage. After leaving Key West, Rev. Mr. Lewis was pastor of the Asia Minor Church, as it was locally designated, but properly, the Second Baptist Church of North Stonington, Conn. At the first meeting, this church acquainted the North Stonington Baptist Association with the manner of Mr. Lewis' ordination, and inquired if a reordination would be necessary. The old fathers after mature consideration, decided that Mr. Lewis was scripturally and regularly ordained, and thus placed the stamp of regularity on the acts of the little band of Baptists on the island, and established Mr. Lewis' title to being the first pastor of the Baptist church in Key West.

As there were no Baptist churches in Florida with which the Key West church could be associated, they applied for membership in the North Stonington, Conn., Association, and were willingly received. For many years they annually corresponded with this association, until it was ascertained that the church in Key West had a member who owned slaves, and they were notified that if they permitted slave owners to be members of their church, they could not continue their membership in the association. The Baptists here saw no reason to exclude from membership a person who was holding property sanctioned by the constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Florida, and upon their refusing to comply with this demand, were dropped from the North Stonington Union Association.

Subsequently the church sent Pastor-elect J. H. Breaker to Mobile for regular ordination. On December 23d of the same year they met for covenant meeting at the residence of Mr. J. H. Breaker, who was chosen clerk. Articles of faith and covenant were read, and ten persons examined and received

for baptism, Catherine and Lavinia Johnson, John Pent, William Richardson, John Park, Reason Duke, Druscilla Duke, Mary Arlege, Martha B. Arlege and Susan Sands, who were baptized on Sunday, Christmas day, 1842. This was the first baptism by immersion performed on the island.

The formal constitution of the church took place March 11, 1843. Six persons, members of churches in Connecticut, Mr. J. H. Breaker, Mr. Ben Sawyer, Mr. O. T. Braman, Mr. J. A. Wolfe, Mr. Asa Sawyer and Mr. Elim Eldridge, with several others, solemnly entered into a covenant as the "Key West Baptist Church."

The first celebration of the Lord's Supper by the Baptists occurred March 26, 1843. There is no record of the election of any pastor at this time, but the records state that "in April, 1843, Elder Lewis left the church to go north on account of the ill health of his wife, and the church was left without a pastor."

In November, 1843, Elder Tripp assumed the pastoral care of the church. He preached twice on Sundays at the court house.

The first movement towards building a house of worship was made April, 1844, and the pastor was sent north to solicit funds for that purpose. He met with little success, abandoned the work, and never returned to Key West. The church, though pastorless, maintained regular prayer services. In 1845 Rev. Mr. Doolittle took charge, and it is recorded that "He preached twice on the Sabbath in the Episcopal church." This did not seem strange to the Christians who were in Key West at that time, although it may appear so 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. Mr. 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."

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The First Congregational Church is one of the later institutions of worship in Key West. Like some of the others it had its origin in a disagreement among the members of an older