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A Brief

Historical Sketch

of

Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

in

Northampton County

near

Seaboard, North Carolina

By

W. Spurgeon Clarke

and

Audrey Long

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Foreword

A Brief Historical Sketch of Mount Carmel Baptist Church

Part I

The first part of this history was based on a few records and minutes of activities of the early church. The writer, W. Spurgeon Clarke, also gives his mother, Mrs. Ophelia Clarke, and his grandmother, Mrs. Rachel Wheeler, (who died September 1916 at the age of 88 years) a great deal of credit for furnishing information.

This book is dedicated to the memory of W. S. Clarke, our parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers, past and present, and to generations yet to come, of Mount Carmel Baptist Church.

Part II

The writer of the second part is indebted to the church minutes (all of which are not available) and to Mrs. W. S. Clarke, for allowing her to use the first part. Much of the information was related by personal interviews with members of the church.

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MEMBERS OF THE W. S. CLARKE SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS around 1950. Front row (left to right) Early Boone, Pill Davis, George Johnson, Angus Smith, James Sears, Randolph Barks, Charlie Boone, Charlie Gay, Mahlon Parker, Second row (left to right) W. S. Clarke, (teacher) Millard Gay, John Archer, John Robert Reames, Douglas Pruden, Fred Stephenson. Third row (left to right) Lister Cox, Garland Pruden, Leroy Parks. Fourth row (left to right) Woodie Boone, Roland Maddrey, Emmitt Boyd, Joe Wheeler.

398908

Mac Howell
Henry Sears
Windell C. Long
David Maddrey

History of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church Seaboard, N. C.

R.F.D. No. 1, Northampton County

Part I

One hundred years, one day, four hours and 10 minutes ago the first meeting was held in this building. In other words the first meeting was held here Friday, September 20, 1847 at 11 o'clock.

Friday before the fourth Sunday had been and continued to be for a long time the regular monthly conference day. The inscription "Mt. Carmel built 1847" on the front of this building has greeted the eyes of members, visitors and passersby for a century. Of course this does not mean that our church organization is only 100 years old, for in March 1821 a number of Baptists residing in this part of Northampton County, N. C., petitioned for a dismissal from the church at Meherrin, worshiping at Sturgeon Meeting House, Southampton County, Va., for the purpose of organizing a church for themselves. This request was granted in regular conference at Sturgeon Meeting House on October 21, 1821. From the record it appears that these brethren had already organized themselves into a Mission known as Smith's Church under the guidance of Sturgeon Meeting House. Just how long these Christians had worshiped at Smith's Church prior to 1821 does not appear in the record, however, legend has it that the first church was built at the time that the Tuscarora Indians were being transported (on foot) from Bertie County to the east of us, to the Indian Reservation in the West. Smith's Church which was located at the crossroads about 150 yards south of this spot was being built and the lumber had been placed on the ground. The Tuscaroras camped on the ground one night while going West. That night a big rain fell and the clay dirt around the piles of lumber became very muddy. Many of the Indian children walked barefoot in the mud and then ran many times over the freshly dressed ceiling. When these muddy tracks dried, the footprints were indelibly left on the ceiling. Later when the boards were nailed overhead, the footprints were clearly visible, which left the impression that people had walked on the ceiling with heads downward.

It might be of interest to note here that Sturgeon Meeting House was organized in 1775 when Virginia was ruled by the King of England. It is known today as Hebron Church and is located in Southampton County, Va., just beyond the settlement known as "Little Texas."

The Constitution of Smith's Church was written on June 2, 1821 and was signed by two ministers, Robert Murrell and William J. Newbern. Just how much assistance was rendered the early church by these brethren, or whether either served as pastor, does not appear in the record, however, in September 1837 a Revival of nine days duration was held with services conducted by Brother George M. Thompson and John T. Brice. As a result of this meeting 29 members were added by Baptism, also 13 in October and 12 in November.

In November 1837 the Rev. William H. Hardee, who appears to have been perhaps the first regular pastor, resigned and Brother George M. Thompson accepted and served the church until 1850, a period of 13 years.

In 1844 23 white and 16 colored members requested letters of dismissal to organize a church at Vapors. The request was granted. The writer has been unable to locate Vapors. Many additions were made to the church during Brother Thompson's pastorate, as well as many dismissals. Within a few years or to be exact in 1846 it seems that the membership had outgrown the facilities of Smith's Church Building and under the guidance of Brother Thompson a movement was begun to erect a new building. In May 1846 a committee of seven consisting of George M. Thompson, Green Stancell, Etheridge Edwards, Thomas Gay, Isaac Peele, Wade Garriss and William Stancell, was appointed to solicit subscriptions for the new House of Worship and in July, a committee of five consisting of Nathaniel Stephenson, Green Stancell, William Gay, James T. Maddrey and Cordy Whitehead was appointed to select a site for the new church. The latter committee was to report in August and their decision was to be final. The present site consisting of five acres was purchased from Drewry Strickland for the sum of \$5.00 per acre.

The Herculean task of building a church of this size was begun in 1847 and it seems that progress must have been very satisfactory for in 1847 during the April conference some

brother made a motion that the name, Smith's Church be dropped and a new name selected. The following names were proposed for the new Church: Mount Pisgah, Bethesada, Bethany, Mount Carmel and Emas. In the balloting, the name "Mt. Carmel" won out over all the rest and has remained until this day.

The great increase in membership and the erection of our present building were the highlights of Brother Thompson's ministry, however, it might be of interest to present day members to know that a Baptistry was built under his pastorate. About 75 yards to the north of the building a pool was dug, lined with cypress logs and steps made of cypress boards. Water was run from the swamps and the pool served its purpose for baptising both white and colored for many years. The pool was always referred to by the salves as "Brother Thompson's pool" and baptism therein was considered a sure plan of salvation by them. Mt. Carmel seems to have used some rather unique methods of raising money for according to the minutes of November 1847, it was "Resolved, that the Church here have a fair the object of which shall be to raise a fund sufficient to liquidate the debt due for the building of this Meeting House." Just what type Fair was put on by these good brethren and sisters 100 years ago, or how much money was raised does not appear in the records, however, the amount raised must have been disappointing for in February 1849 to quote from the minutes, "It was moved that Brother Henry Hays be appointed to take charge of the subscription now due for the building of this "Meeting House" and collect the same, and further that said Brother be allowed a commission of 10 per cent on the amount by him collected on all subscriptions as remuneration for his services.

These plans were used a century ago, so let's take a look at more modern methods. In comparatively recent times in order to liquidate a church debt it was agreed that each member contribute one penny for each year of his or her age. The good sisters of the church have always demanded (and rightly so) that they and their organizations be given full credit for all money paid by them to all church objects, however, so far as the records show, the men received all credit for this collection without a whimper of complaint from the ladies.

Church Discipline

The early church was especially stern in its application of discipline as was evidenced by a resolution stating that the Deacons of this church shall be a standing committee on discipline. They shall inquire into and try to properly adjust all cases of unchristianlike conduct that may come under their notice and report same to the church whether it be settled or not. Many members were expelled for drunkenness, dancing, failure to attend conference and for failure to pay church dues. Many committees were appointed to settle differences existing between members or between husbands and wives.

Two cases of discipline might be of interest. On September 20, 1847, at the first meeting in the new "Meeting House" Brother Etheridge Edwards, to quote "who had been cited to appear before the standing committee of this church, now arose and after confession of the charge, expressed his sorrow for the same, being that of drunkenness, and then entered into a pledge not to drink again unless it be in a case of necessity, therefore he is forgiven." Just what constituted a case of necessity for drinking a century ago was not stated.

Again to quote from the minutes of October 23, 1858, "Brother E. C. Davis, who is present admits that he might have been drunk as alleged, and that if he was drunk, he is sorry for it and asks the pardon of the Church. Moved that the pardon be granted."

Tolerance of Members

The members of Smith's Church were not as tolerant toward others as they might have been for in June, 1838, the Conference "Resolved, that if any member of this Church shall hereafter unite himself with the Masons, he shall forfeit his membership in the Church and that no minister of the Gospel, who frequents the Lodge shall be invited into our pulpit to preach."

I have been reliably informed that a member of the Lodge applied to the church for membership, but after his request had been vigorously opposed by a certain brother it was denied, whereupon the lodge member never attended the lodge nor applied for admission into the church again, however within a few years he became the son-in-law of the devout church member who had so vigorously opposed his admission into the church. The ways of love were as strange a century ago as today. This attitude toward secret lodge was somewhat short lived for the resolution was rescinded in May 1846.

In contrast with this spirit of intolerance, we might note the action of the church in recent years. When the church was asked to approve a resolution previously passed by the Pastors of the West Chowan Association it was turned down by a big majority. Said resolution provided that "only consecrated Christian Baptists should be employed as

teachers in our Baptist Schools." According to the minutes, the late G. T. Clark vigorously opposed such a resolution and it was rejected by a large majority.

Mt. Carmel's loyalty to the Confederacy was evidenced in many ways as shown by the church minutes, for on February 22, 1862 it was moved that the church meet next Friday in humiliation and prayer, also on July 28th of the same year it was moved that the church spend 30 minutes in prayer to Almighty God in behalf of the Southern Confederacy and of our wounded sick soldiers in camp. At the same conference it was moved that J. J. Rochelle, Cordy Whitehead, Exum Stephenson and Rev. J. N. Hoggard be appointed a committee to write an obituary notice of Brother Benjamin E. Peele who died from a wound received in battle and that said notice be published in the Biblical Recorder. Similar notices were written of Brother John T. Davis, who died at Camp Lee near Richmond and others. Again in October 1862 it was voted "that the proclamation of Zeb Baird Vance, Governor of this state be read today and tomorrow." By 1864 the cause of the Confederacy was becoming more hopeless for in March it was moved "that we in accordance with Jeff Davis, President of the Confederacy in his proclamation meet and on the 8th day of the next month in prayer and humiliation."

The church was especially generous toward the Confederate Soldiers for in 1863 a collection was taken for the purpose of sending reading matter to the soldiers of the Confederacy. The sum of \$77.00 was realized, which was a huge amount for that time. Just as the church was generous toward the Loyal Confederate Soldiers it was equally hard on the deserter for on April 23, 1864 it was voted "that John H. Renfro be expelled from the fellowship of this church for the sin of desertion of the Southern Confederacy." In October 1865, Brother Renfro attended conference and stated that he had acted conscientiously in leaving the Confederacy, that he was sorry. If he did wrong he wished to be received back into the fellowship and communion of the church, however the church voted against his restoration and so far as the records show he never was a church member again.

The church seems to have been noted for its leniency and Christian Conduct in dealing with its colored members, but not so with runaway slaves during the Civil War for in 1864 we note that Delilah, Jack and Bill, servants of W. J. Taylor were expelled for absconding and leaving the legitimate service of their master. Likewise Harriet, the servant of A. T. Long was expelled from the fellowship of this church for running away from the service of her lawful master.

In contrast with this action let us note the fact that a faithful slave by the name of John Mason and his wife were allowed to return their membership and attend services here until their death, many years after the Civil War.

Sunday Schools

Sunday Schools have always played a vital part in the life of any church and this is especially true here at Mt. Carmel. In March 1852 it was moved that a collection be taken up to purchase a library for use of the Sabbath School and that the church meet here on the first Sabbath in April for the purpose of establishing and organizing a Sabbath School to be conducted here. There seems to be no record of the first Supt. nor officers, however, the Sunday School here has operated continuously for the past 95 years. It has always been the leader in the spiritual and financial life of this church. A vast majority of her members have been led to Christ through its influence and many have been the times that church bills have been paid by the Sunday School Treasurer. For many, many years one Sunday's Collection each month has been sent to the Orphanage and for several years the Mt. Carmel Sunday School supported one child at Thomasville. Space forbids that the long list of officers and teachers that have served faithfully and efficiently be named. Suffice it to say that the Mt. Carmel Sunday School has been most wonderfully blessed throughout the years with capable teachers and officers for a strictly rural church. With apologies to all others, permit me to list the names of four of our outstanding teachers who served the Master here long and faithfully and who have since gone on to Glory. Mrs. T. J. Stephenson for many years taught the young people and did a grand job, while Mrs. C. G. Mathews taught the beginners with equal interest and zeal. In the Adult Department the name of Brother Jeff Joyner, who came from Seaboard by horse and buggy each Sunday for many years, is pleasantly remembered for his able discourse and efficient outline of each lesson. Last but not least, allow me to mention the name of one, who although not a member of our church, loved the church and Sunday School as few people could. This man literally gave his life teaching the Men's Bible Class, for he died on the pew to my right on Sunday, March 23, 1943 while doing the work he loved most. On the pew you will find the name R. L. Pritchard, Teacher, Gentleman, Christian. With apologies to all others, and they are many, we must hasten on.

The Missionary Spirit has long been evident at Mt. Carmel. The first official record shows that on May 15, 1852 the church paid the sum of \$2.87 to the Foreign Mission Fund of

the Association with the understanding to quote "that said amount shall be placed to the credit of this church, when it shall appear that the Association has supplied herself with a missionary for China who shall be entitled to receive same with interest."

J. D. Hufham, pastor of Scotland Neck Church, Dr. J. B. Hartley, Missionary to China, and Elias Dotson, self-styled Missionary enthusiast, did much to promote the missionary spirit in this area and the Association which extended at that time from Washington, N. C., to Louisburg, N. C. I have been reliably informed that Mr. Doston spent much of his time soliciting contributions to the cause of missions. While on one of these trips he fell desperately in love with a well-to-do widow in Oxford, N. C. He courted her for several months and sought her hand in marriage only to meet with a definite refusal. Finally he made the last attempt and upon being rejected again, he told the lady that since she wouldn't marry him, he thought the least she could do was to give him \$10.00 for missions. The widow complied with this request and Mr. Dotson accepted his fate together with the \$10.00 and came back apparently none the worse for his experience. All honor to men who keep missions in mind under such circumstances.

Perhaps the immediate cause of the organization of the Ladies Missionary Society here was a sermon preached by Dr. J. B. Haetley, Missionary to China, during the ministry of Brother Herbert Williams, more than half a century ago. Under his influence and leadership an active and enthusiastic Woman's Missionary Society was organized. Mrs. Henry T. Boyd was the first president. This organization has experienced more than 50 years of active Christian growth and today it is the guiding force for missions in our church.

This society is responsible for the fact that today's collection goes to World Relief. Likewise the Sunbeams organized about 50 years ago under the influence of Mrs. Lizzie Hogan Taylor and all auxiliary agencies are sponsored in our church by the Woman's Missionary Society.

Ministers Gone Out From Mt. Carmel

A total of eight devout ministers have gone out from this church to labor in God's Vineyard. The first, according to the record, was Joseph G. Barkley, reared on the H. T. Boyd farm and granted a license in 1838 to preach "where the Lord may call him." Later we find Brother R. E. Peele who labored in this section for many years and who was widely known and greatly loved. Brother C. E. Edwards who was reared about one mile to the north, held important pastorates in North Carolina and Virginia. Brother Rufus White, who later moved to Conway, acted mostly as supply pastor.

These four have passed to their reward, however, comparatively recent years have found Mt. Carmel sending four others into the harvest fields. Today we find Dr. R. Kelly White, son of Rufus White, after an extended pastorate in Nashville, Tenn., preaching in West Palm Beach, Fla., while Brother Woodie Hasty holds an important pastorate in Brooklyn, N. Y. Brother Otis Pruden serves in nearby Norfolk, Va., while Paul Worrell labors at Colerain in an adjoining county.

Not only has Mt. Carmel sent out ministers but scores of men and women have gone out from here to hold positions of economic, political and educational influence in this and other states.

Many, many could be named but space forbids, however, the name of P. J. Long identified with the school system of Northampton County for half a century, most of this time as Supt. of schools should not be omitted. Likewise permit me to call one other, the name of Dr. J. Kindred Long, who has recently returned from an important school position in Louisville, Ky., to become Dean of E.C.T.C., Greenville, N. C. With apologies to all others, the list must end here.

Mt. Carmel has not had all its path strewn with roses but she has had her moments when they were dark and tragic. The records show that on one occasion a pastor was called and he accepted, however, the next month another pastor was called before the first Brother had had an opportunity to preach. Such action on the part of the church was vigorously opposed by the late J. G. Joyner and rightly so. Again, many of us regretfully recall the time when a mortgage was placed on all church property that we might borrow money to pay pastor's salary for many months due. God forbid that such moments as these should occur again.

We also recall that on March 29, 1938 while Mr. Paul Martin was putting a roof on our building that one of his helpers, Troy Futrell, fell from a stage in front of the church and was seriously hurt with a broken back and other injuries. He was carried to Roanoke Rapids Hospital and then to Memorial Hospital, Richmond, Va. Even though paralyzed from his body downward, he lived for about four years but was finally called to his eternal rest.

Likewise, although previously mentioned, we cannot refrain from referring in this connection to our most recent tragedy when on March 23, 1943 our beloved Sunday School teacher, Mr. R. L. Pritchard, died in this church while teaching the class he loved so much.

"It may not be now but in the coming years, we will read the meaning of our tears, and there up there we'll understand."

It has been previously stated that Mt. Carmel has been especially blessed for a strictly rural church in the quality of its Sunday School Teachers. This is even more true of its pastors. I feel that we can say without fear of contradiction that Mt. Carmel Church has been blessed for well over a century with the finest group of consecrated, well trained pastors that any rural church in America of like size has ever had. Many of these pastors were natives of this county and section, however, two have come from foreign countries, Brother K. D. Studenbrok of Germany, who served 11 years in the German Navy and Brother Richard Lloyd of Wales. Both of these God-fearing preachers became American Citizens by choice and greatly loved their adopted land where religious freedom and freedom of speech prevails. We shall briefly list these consecrated brethren who served as pastors here.

The record states that Brother William Hardee resigned in 1837, however, no mention is made of when his pastorate began. Brother George M. Thompson served, as has previously been stated from 1837 to 1850, W. P. Britton from 1850 to 1853, J. N. Hoggard, a native of this county from 1853 to 1880, a period of 36 years. H. T. Williams from 1889 to 1893, M. L. Green from 1893 to 1895, Archibald Cree from 1895 to 1898, C. E. Gower from 1898 to 1900, R. D. Cross from 1900 to 1903, J. R. Taylor from 1903 to 1907, John F. Cale from 1907 to 1910, Dr. Lloyd Parker from 1910 to 1913, J. U. Teague (supply) from January to June 1914, K. D. Studenbrok from July 1914 to September 1915, Jessie Blalock (supply) from November 1915 to January 1916, J. U. Teague, pastor, from January to December 1916, L. E. Dailey (supply) from January to May 1917, Dr. R. Kelly White (supply) from June to August 1917, Alexander Miller from September 1917 to 1922, J. P. Essex from July 1922 to 1928, Dr. E. H. Potts held revival 1928, call extended but declined, C. M. Billings (supply) fall 1928, Richard Lloyd from 1928 to 1942, C. H. Trueblood from 1942 to 1944, E. J. Rogers from 1944 til.

This history would be most ungrateful to those who built here so well a century ago unless we call your attention to our building today. Here it stands a massive monument to Christianity and to those who built it exactly as it was 100 years ago (the date is on the outside) except the front steps and back door. These huge windows, that make this the most naturally air-conditioned church in the Southland were put here in 1847. The same sashes and many of the same windows are here today. Not one piece of decayed lumber is to be found so far as we know.

A new shingle roof was put on the building in 1906 after the old one had served for 59 years. At that time the building was painted on the outside. In 1938 this wooden roof was replaced with a metal roof and again the church was painted on the outside after the old paint was carefully scraped. This was nearly a decade ago, however, passersby have asked within the last few months if our building had not been recently painted.

Now may I call your attention to the inside. Some changes have been made within. In 1847 a gallery was built in the rear to accommodate the large number of negro slaves who were members of our church. Underneath this gallery were five rows of pews used for many years as a school room. My mother and others attended school here but if one stepped out from under the gallery into the main auditorium a whipping was in store for that pupil.

This gallery was removed about 1900 and much of the lumber was purchased by the late J. L. Pruden and used in building an office now in the L. O. Pruden yard. The columns that supported the gallery are now used as porch columns in the L. R. Davis home. At the same time the present pulpit and classrooms were built largely through the influence of the late Mrs. E. J. Harrell, at that time Anna Erekson. The Rev. Mr. Harrell has recently presented the Sunday School with a library to her memory.

For over 50 years motions were made and committees appointed to look into the matters of buying seats for our church but nothing final was done until 1943 when a committee was appointed and funds raised to buy the pews we use today. At that time the walls were repaired, the entire inside painted and the floors were scraped, waxed and polished. This entire job cost about \$2,400. By way of contrast, the first committee to report years ago on the purchase of pews, stated that some could be secured for \$211.20.

Today we at Mt. Carmel are proud of the heritage left us by our forefathers a century ago and we shall not be true to God and to them unless we and future generations preserve this building for centuries yet to come. God's hand surely must have guided those "Saints of old" in the erection of such a place of worship a century ago. Just how far the beam of Christian influence has shone from Mt. Carmel it is impossible to say, however, in addition to sending out ministers and others, many churches have been organized from here, many others have been aided in their building program, many needy people and causes have been helped and this influence is still bearing fruit in this community, in nearby communities and in other states.

Not only did the Saints of old leave us a commodious House of Worship, but they also left us certain traditions, customs and characteristics that we proudly believe in and maintain today. These early Saints fully believed that "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of" and acted accordingly. Note how many prayer meetings were held for the success of the Confederacy and other causes. Many were the times they held prayer meetings for rain. On one occasion a prayer meeting was held for rain and Brother Berry Stephenson offered a most powerful plea for showers to revive the parched earth. After the meeting adjourned while Brother Stephenson and others were standing on the front steps, a tremendous clap of thunder came from the Heavens and he was heard to utter, "Please, God, don't let it rain until I get home." We still believe in prayer.

More motions were made to have a Revival here beginning Monday after the third Sunday in August than any other motion in the records. This custom still prevails and many of our city friends time their vacations in order to attend this annual meeting. We have not departed from this custom at least in my day. At our last revival 18 were added by baptism and two by letter.

Last but not least, the social habit of staying around the church after services is still carried on as in the days of old. Of course, some farming is discussed, occasionally a joke is told and lovers have time for a few extra words, however, we feel that we profit from these social contacts. The husband says he can't get his wife to leave, while the wife says she can't get her husband to leave, but the truth of the matter is that each is wishing for just five minutes more. As for the lovers they generally take 10 minutes.

Many incidents and names should be included but an end must come. A final word, the Mt. Carmel spirit is not old. We have the youngest Sunday School Supt. perhaps in the state and one of the youngest pastors. We have very few old members. Of course, there are some gray temples and perhaps white, but remember where the snow falls thickest, there nothing can freeze.

We face the future courageously and with Browning in Robbi Ben Ezra "Grow old along with me."

Written by
W. Spurgeon Clarke

Editor's Note: Reproduced below is copy of Centennial Celebration program of Mount Carmel Baptist Church Sunday, September 21, 1947.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

of

**Mount Carmel
Baptist Church**

Sunday, Sept. 21st, 1947



Seaboard, North Carolina

E. J. Rogers, Pastor

Piano Prelude—Largo
 Call To Worship—The Lord Is In His Holy Temple
 Doxology
 Invocation
 Piano Interlude—Melody of Love
 Hymn 198—All Hail The Power
 Scripture and Prayer
 Anthem—Praise Ye The Father—Gounod
 Offertory Prayer
 Piano Offertory—Drifting
 Solo
 Sermon
 Quartette

Handel
 Choir
 Choir and Congregation
 Choir Response
 Engelmann
 Holden
 Rev. J. Otis Pruden
 Choir
 Pastor
 Friml
 Miss Loraine Pritchard
 Rev. C. H. Trueblood
 Messrs. J. W. Hughes,
 Herbert Griffin, C. C. Barrett and A. E. Taylor

Benediction
 Postlude—Pilgrims' Chorus

Wagner

Lunch—1:00 P.M.

Afternoon Service

2:00—Piano Prelude—Consolation In D Flat Major
 2:05—Hymn 249—How Firm A Foundation
 2:10—Scripture and Prayer
 2:20—Quartette
 2:25—Offering and Piano Offertory
 2:35—Recognition Of Guests
 2:45—Reading Of Church History
 3:05—Message
 3:15—Message
 3:25—Message
 3:35—Message
 3:45—Reading Of Messages Of Absent Former Pastors, Friends, Etc.
 4:00—Hymn 87—The Church's One Foundation
 4:05—Anniversary Message
 Solo
 Benediction

Liszt
 (Foundation)
 Rev. P. T. Worrell
 Mount Carmel Church
 Pastor
 Mr. W. S. Clark
 Rev. J. Otis Pruden
 Rev. P. T. Worrell
 Rev. C. H. Trueblood
 Dr. E. H. Potts

S. Wesley
 Mr. M. A. Huggins
 Miss Loraine Pritchard
 Choir

**WE PAY HUMBLE TRIBUTE TO A
 GREAT CHURCH ON THIS DAY**

“Remove Not The Ancient Landmark Which Thy
 Fathers Have Set.”—Prov. 22:28

**The Beautiful Flowers
 In The
 Church Today
 Are Given By The
 Sandlin Flower Shop
 Roanoke Rapids, N. C.**



This picture was made at the Centennial Celebration in 1947.

Part II

In beginning the second part of this brief history allow me to say that practically all of the records of the church have been destroyed. My uncle, W. Spurgeon Clarke, had written his brief history in 1947 for the Centennial Celebration. Since the records were destroyed his handwritten copy of the history was the only thing left until after 1963. He passed away in 1968. During the summer of 1970 Aunt Louise (Mrs. W. S. Clarke) gave me his copy to use. In order to see that some record of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church should be preserved I decided to use his history and add to it some of the events of the past 23 years. The church has had its periods of prosperity and depression but it has never lost either hope or faith.

Over these last 23 years we find that the church has gained many members and as time passed other faithful men and women have joined the ranks of the departed. Still others have transferred to churches near and far.

During the early 1950's, a new dream was born. Our Sunday School enrollment had increased so much that our teaching space was inadequate. Although our church income was small and our expenses heavy we launched a program looking forward to new classrooms and remodeling the Sanctuary.

The Sunday School has long been a strong force in our church. The need for a better grading system became necessary and then we built six new classrooms. The grading of classes and the extra classrooms have caused better attendance and more efficient work.

Improvements

During the past sixteen years more work has been done on the Mt. Carmel Church Building I suppose, than all the rest of the life of the church put together. First, under the pastorate of Dr. F. O. Mixon (supply pastor) a new heating system was installed. Under the leadership of Rev. E. A. Cline the extension of four classrooms, two rest rooms, a small kitchen and a storage room were added to the back of the church.

While Rev. Herman Smith, a student from Southeastern Seminary, was pastor another remodeling program was begun. I have been told that during a conference at the church, the remodeling program was discussed, for and against the idea of beginning the work soon. The idea was finally voted down. Just at that time Rev. Smith came in and expressed his opinion and first impressions upon entering the church. The vote was taken all over again and it was decided to begin the work as soon as possible. Since that time the pulpit was moved, the plastering inside the church was taken out and replaced, a Baptistry added, ceiling lowered, venetian blinds, screens and two more classrooms were added upstairs on the opposite sides of the Baptistry. Carpeting has been put in the two upstairs classrooms, the nursery and the Sanctuary. Lights have been added on the front and outside of the church.

According to J. P. Barnes, chairman of the Fund Raising Committee, the work and cost of the new classrooms joined on to the main building and the fixtures cost \$11,000.00. The two rooms built in the old building, stairway to same, carpeting, fixtures, Baptistry, new choir, new ceiling, walls plastered, new blinds, central heat and the entire building painted cost \$12,500.00. The total cost of the two projects moneywise was \$23,500.00.

This does not include all the extra time and work donated by members led by David Maddrey in electrical work and Gilbert Pruden in the carpenters work, which amounted to approximately \$4,500.00 and lumber cut from the church grounds which sold for \$1,100.00. All this making the total worth of the two projects \$29,100.00. This was a staggering amount for a small, medium income membership.

I would like very much to give honorable mention to all the people who contributed so much of their time and energy to these projects. However, for lack of space and most of all for fear of leaving out some of the people who made wonderful contributions, I will not attempt to mention the names. We would appear ungrateful though if we failed to say that it was really a community project. Many of the men who were busy during the day on their farms or other jobs were found at the church at night and all day on Saturdays lending a helping hand at whatever task there was to be done.

The ladies were not left out of the project either. On Saturdays they cooked food and took to the men working. Many of them were even found painting and contributing their services in whatever way possible. Our special thanks go to all these people who so freely gave so much of their time and energy to the building and remodeling program.

Church Fixtures Contributed

Most of these contributions were given as memorial gifts.

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bathroom Fixtures (one restroom) | Mrs. H. R. Howell |
| Bathroom Fixtures (one restroom) | The D. B. Maddrey Family |
| 1 Classroom furnished | W. S. Clarke Family |
| 1 Classroom furnished | Mr. and Mrs. Lee Long's Children |

1 Classroom furnished
1 Classroom furnished
1 Pulpit Chair
1 Pulpit Chair
The Pulpit
Communion Table
1 Chair on floor
1 Chair on floor
Baptistry Painting
2 Flower Stands
Large Bible for Pulpit

Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Long's Children
Mr. and Mrs. J. Woodie Boone
Mrs. Willie Mathews
Mrs. Rennie Lewter and Mrs. Bernice Smith
J. B. Stephenson's Children
Mrs. Woodie Boone
Lister Cox and son George in memory of George Cox
Donor Unidentified
donated by Audrey Long
by Family of Garland Pruden
Mr. and Mrs. L. O. Pruden

done by Lou Evans

In the first part of this history it was stated that it has been the custom of this church to hold revival services the week after third Sunday in August each year. This custom still stands. So far as I have been able to find out this custom has lasted at least 75 or 80 years.

According to the minutes of the West Chowan Association the second day of the Associational Meeting was held at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Friday, July 26, 1957. The sermon was delivered by Dr. Bruce Whitaker of Chowan College. Other speakers for the occasion were E. H. Cline, H. W. Tribble Jr., Randolph Phillips, Lonnie Sasser, Wayne Scott and Henry W. Stough.

Special Gifts to the Church

In November 1965 the church received from Miss Louise Deloatch's estate by her will—\$1,197.00. It was decided to put this money in the bank on interest to be used at a later date.

July 1968 Miss Kathleen Emerson added \$35.00 to a memorial fund for her brother-in-law—W. S. Clarke.

Odelle and Brenda Vaughan, wife and daughter of Ernest Vaughan, sent a check for \$25.00.

By will of W. S. Clarke through his estate the church received \$485.00.

All these contributions have been greatly appreciated by the members of this church.

As far back as 1955 the church has had a Vacation Bible School. It was started under the leadership of Rev. E. A. Cline and has continued each summer. Other special services held over the years have been Youth Day, Men's Day, School of Missions for both home and foreign missions, and week of Prayer.

Special Helps For Others

Many times Mt. Carmel has been called upon for help for individual families in need. This has been especially true at such times as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Back in 1966 it was brought to our attention the Odom Prison Farm was in need of Bibles. A special offering was taken to buy Bibles for the prison.

November 30, 1967 Rev. Coppage read a letter concerning the burning of the Nebo Negro Church and asked for help. A motion was made that we set aside first Sunday in December as a date to take an offering for that church. A gift of \$34.00 was taken.

In April 1968 a gift of \$43.00 was given to Ashley Grove Baptist Church which was destroyed by fire.

Recent Year Weddings in the Church

Margaret Lee Pruden to William Lee Colson, December 25, 1952 by Rev. Lonnie Sasser.

Edith Holloman to Robert Eugene Drewett, December 1, 1956 by Rev. Woodie Hasty.

Mrs. Betty Hasty Massey to Donald Wayne Barrett, November 13, 1965 by Rev. Max Evington.

Patsy Hasty to Ewell Gay Pearce, July 25, 1966 by Rev. McLean. It is noted that the pastor, Rev. Coppage, refused to marry the couple because Mr. Pearce had been married before. Apparently his opinion is strong against divorce.

Winnie Hasty to Joseph C. Callihan III, December 12, 1966 by Rev. Max Evington.

Pastors and Their Years of Service

| | |
|--|-----------|
| E. J. Rogers | 1944-1948 |
| Lonnie Sasser | 1949-1953 |
| F. O. Mixon (supply pastor) | 1954 |
| E. A. Cline (Southeastern Seminary Student) | 1955-1957 |
| Ross Cadle | 1958-1959 |
| No regular pastor | 1960 |
| Herman Smith (Southeastern Seminary Student) | 1961-1962 |
| Max Evington | 1962-1964 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| No regular pastor | 1965 |
| H. L. Coppage | 1966-1968 |
| Virgil McBride, Dr. Taylor and others | 1969 |
| Nickey Martin | 1969-1970 |

All of these men have left their imprint upon each of us, each, in turn, doing his work well. To each of you let us say, We follow you with our thanks and prayers. May your life be as full as you have helped ours to be.

Damages and Losses

Not long after our remodeling was done and the Memorial Furniture was placed in the classrooms, as many as 25 of the new chairs were stolen. There were suspicions but the thief was never brought to court.

Then it is said that during Hurricane Hazel in October 1954 the church was moved approximately six inches. Sixteen of the beautiful trees were uprooted from the church ground.

Deacons at the Present Time

L. O. Pruden—Chairman
 David B. Maddrey
 James Sears
 Presley Barnes
 Windell Long
 Rupert Hasty
 Fred Stephenson

Officers of the Church

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Nickey Martin | Pastor |
| Mrs. Bernice Long Smith | Clerk |
| James Sears | Treasurer |
| Fred Stephenson | Sunday School Supt. |
| Mrs. Bernice Smith | W.M.U. President |
| Mrs. H. B. Long | Pianist and Choir Director |

Mrs. Long has been a faithful pianist and choir director for approximately 28 years except for a few months of severe illness.

It has been stated in the first part of this history that other churches have been organized from Mt. Carmel. I would like to go back and mention two of these churches mostly organized by transfer of letters from Mt. Carmel, namely: Jackson and Seaboard.

I find in the records of Jackson Baptist Church that in 1876 Mrs. J. A. Buxton called Mr. Samuel Calvert Sr. and asked him to donate a plot of land for a Baptist Church in Jackson and he consented. The record of deeds in book 48, page 141 shows that a deed was signed the first of January to the deacons of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. It was the custom at that time for the deed to be made to the deacons of the nearest Baptist church. So far as I have been able to find out according to the book that deed still stands made to the deacons of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. However, in talking with the Jackson Baptist Church Clerk recently I was told that some lawyers checked into the possibility of having the deed reassigned a few years ago and said it was not necessary. The church building was finally completed and the church was really organized in 1881 with nine out of the 12 charter members coming with their letters from Mt. Carmel namely: Edward I. Peele, Green F. Gay, Susan S. Parker, Pattie Peele, Mary E. Hardee, Pattie Davis, Rosa Belle Gay, Adelia F. Gay and Mary A. Gay.

Then from the Seaboard records I find that on Sunday morning, March 31, 1889 36 people living in or around Seaboard, with memberships mostly from Mt. Carmel, assembled with letters from their churches to organize a Baptist Church. The following brethren and sisters presented letters of dismission from Mt. Carmel to join Seaboard as charter members. They were Samuel B. Stephenson, Mollie Stephenson, Mary Stephenson, Harriet Stephenson, Lavinia Lassiter, Jas. M. Balmer, Charity N. Balmer, Richard T. Stephenson, Ruth Coker, Frank E. Whitehead, John T. Gay Jr., Mattie D. Gay, Julia E. Taylor, Joseph E. Stephenson, Henrietta Stephenson, Mary E. Stephenson, Samuel X. Stephenson, Thomas B. Edwards, Ella M. Edwards, Honor Conner, Joseph T. Maddrey and Rowena M. Maddrey.

It has been noted that the deacons of the church met on April 8, 1962. A motion was made for our church to go in with Jackson Baptist Church and to form a field. We were to get Rev. Max Evington to serve as our new pastor. At that time Mr. Woodie Boone, one of the deacons, was ill in the hospital. On April 10, 1962 the other deacons met in his hospital room for the purpose of getting him to sign the recommendation. He signed it and died 30 minutes later.

Fourth Sunday in November 1963, the first Baptismal Service was held in the newly installed Baptistery. Rev. Max Evington was the officiating minister. The following were the first to be baptised: Kay Archer, Rupert Hasty Jr., Mike Parks, Richard Warrick.

For quite a long time the first Sunday's offering had been put aside for the building fund. On May 1, 1964 it was voted to cease giving this to the Building Fund and allow all but special designated gifts to go to the General Treasury until it was sufficiently built up and then return to giving the first Sunday's offering to the Building Fund.

Choir robes were purchased by the choir members and were first used in the Christmas Pageant December 20, 1964.

A motion was made by Mrs. H. B. Long on April 9, 1965 to borrow the money to complete the classrooms and stairs as needed. The motion was carried.

In April 1965 Rev. Evington asked the church to support its first Youth Day and the honoring of the Youth with a special Banquet. Jesse Lee Long was our first Youth Pastor. He did an outstanding job.

July 1965 Rev. Max Evington resigned as pastor of Mt. Carmel Church to become full-time pastor of Jackson Church. His resignation was to become effective as of September 30, 1965. Realizing what Rev. Evington had done for our church we regretted his resignation but were happy that Jackson could move to a full-time ministry.

September 12, 1965 Elliot Stephenson, Windell Long and Mrs. Dorothy Hedspeth were declared the pulpit committee with Windell Long as chairman. The committee was instructed to investigate the possibility of forming a field with Margarettsville. However, in November 1965 the pulpit committee presented the proposal that Mt. Carmel accept Rev. Harvey Coppage of Galatia as supply pastor for an early service (9:30 o'clock) twice each month until a regular pastor could be secured. He did a great service for our people for nearly four years. On January 19, 1969 Rev. Coppage offered his resignation effective Third Sunday in March. He stated that he had enjoyed his ministry at Mt. Carmel but felt that due to health reasons he should resign.

After Rev. Coppage's resignation Rev. Virgil McBride, assistant to the President of Chowan College, was called to serve as interim pastor. He served until June and after that we had various preachers from the college including Dr. Taylor, the chaplain.

September 1969 the church voted to call Rev. Nickey Martin of Conway as pastor. He was a first year student at the Southeastern Seminary. He is still with us and doing a good service for our church. He is a conscientious and dedicated young man.

Let us not forget to mention our many Methodist Friends in the community, now as well as in the past, who have given so generously of their time, money and prayers for the welfare of our church. Many of them have served as outstanding teachers and leaders. They have always shared in the planning and serving of food at church dinners and picnics. They have been a real inspiration to us over the years. We are greatly indebted to each of them.

These last few years during the building and remodeling of our church have been a struggle in many ways to the people of this community. At times there have probably been hard feelings among the members. However, there have been years in which faith and hope have never failed. For the heroes of the past we give our thanks for so great a heritage. For those who come after us, we can only say, keep it, and build upon it.

Written by
 Audrey Long

