

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Built and Forgotten

By LAURA CONRAD PATTON

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Little River had only a brief history, little of which is recorded. Yet it was one of Miami's first churches, and the first of three early Episcopal missions to have a church building of its own.

There were no churches of that denomination in Dade or Broward Counties when Bishop William Crane Gray undertook the establishing of the Episcopal churches in this new area in 1893. The same clergymen ministered to the spiritual needs of people in the three Episcopal missions, Trinity in Miami, St. Laurence's in Coconut Grove (then spelled Coccoanut), and St. Andrew's in Lemon City, later designated Little River. In fact, the church was called Lemon City, and then Little River, before it was finally named St. Andrew's. Obviously any account of one of these must also include reference to the sister congregations.

Father Edgar Legare Pennington wrote in, "The Beginnings of the Episcopal Church in the Miami Area": "That long Atlantic seaboard — a stretch of 225 miles — was thinly settled, difficult of access, and of little promise. The first official mention of a prospect of development along that part of the Florida east coast is found in the Journal of the Second Annual Convocation of the Missionary Jurisdiction (1894) where Coccoanut Grove, Miami, and Lemon City are listed among the mission stations. . . ."

Early Florida citizens first settled in two small communities along Biscayne Bay. One south of the present Miami known as Coccoanut Grove, and thirteen miles to the north was Lemon City. When Miami was beginning to be a town, Lemon City was already a town and the only sizable one in Dade County. All Dade County in 1880 contained only 257 people.

The oldest church in continuous service was built at Lemon City. The Methodist built it in 1893 where an Indian Trail (Northeast 61st Street) crossed Military Trail (Northeast 5th Avenue) south of Little River in Lemon

City. The church was named Lemon City Methodist and the first service was held on the second Sunday in April 1893. Sometimes the Episcopalians held their worship service in this Lemon City Methodist Church.

Often these first religious services were held in the homes of the residents. Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Curry frequently opened their home located near Biscayne Bay and 62nd Street to the Episcopal prayer meeting group.

Into this sparsely populated new territory came a man of great faith: Bishop William Crane Gray, the first Bishop of the new Missionary Jurisdiction who had several characteristics of an ancient prophet: a saintly bearing, a long flowing beard, white hair, tall erect carriage and a good command of the English language. He had been elected by the General Convocation in the city of Baltimore, as Missionary Bishop. At 57 years of age he was consecrated on December 29, 1892 in the Church of the Advent, Nashville, Tennessee (where he was rector). In 1893 on January 3rd, leaving his parish and the city of Nashville, he attended The Southern Convocation at Orlando, Florida. Arriving on January 5th, he was there for a week and then went to Key West to begin a long period of visitation of the counties in his district.

Bishop Gray wrote, "No Bishop had ever been and only once a clergyman of the church made a brief sojourn there." On April 29, 1893, he became the guest of Mrs. Julia Tuttle at Miami. Mrs. Tuttle lived in the remodeled officers quarters of old Fort Dallas on the north bank of the Miami River near Southeast 2nd Avenue. This she rebuilt using the walls, and renovated the first floor by laying the floor with Spanish tile obtained from a sunken ship. A kitchen was added and other buildings as a work-shop, a windmill, a stable, a boathouse, and a wharf.

Bishop Gray thanked Mrs. Tuttle in his convocation address for the careful and painstaking way in which she had prepared for his visit, making it known far and wide, and arranging for the different services he was to hold, and placing her private launch, *Neloa*, at his disposal.

In the first meeting at Lemon City, April 30, 1893, Bishop Gray held services in a school house, (a box-like building twenty by forty feet). It was located just south of the present Northeast 60th Street beside the railroad track near Northeast 4th Avenue. The school board had given D. W. Bloodworth the contract for the building in August 1885. At this service the Bishop had a baptism, and a confirmation and celebrated Holy Communion.

Attending this first Episcopal service were families of some of the men who ran a business, farmed, were retired people, or were tourists. One of the farmers in the area was T. A. Winfield who was known as a "grower." D. R. Knight had a sawmill and general store. W. A. Filer had a grocery store and was an agent for the General Land Office through whom homestead applications might be made. William Mattair ran a blacksmith shop. J. W. Spivey and Jordan ran a grocery store and dealt in acreage. Willie Pent had a barbershop and Roy M. Marvin had a bakery. Frederick Matthaus operated a starch mill making edible coontie starch. Mrs. Carey ran a boarding house, and the D. M. Connelly's operated a hotel.

Bishop Gray writes of this visit: "I ascertained that in a large portion of this region the number of church people, or those who have been more or less under the influence of the church, is greater than that of any other religious body, and they are very anxious to see the church established in their midst."

He spent a week here visiting the people, "by land and by water, visiting them in their homes, talking to them, instructing them, preparing them for Baptism and Confirmation, and in every way possible endeavoring to improve the opportunity before (him)."

Arriving by stagecoach from Lantana along the Everglades on November 28, 1893 in the Biscayne area he says: "The most trying and expensive journey I have to make in all my jurisdiction."

Helen Muir in *Miami U.S.A.* gives us some details of this coach line: "A mule stage line between Lantana on Lake Worth and Lemon City on the bay was opened, making it possible for the first time for men to reach the isolated region by land. Uncle John Clemenson was the first driver and he sauntered ahead of the mule team playing his fiddle. The stage went over uncomfortable rough roads at the rate of three miles an hour, the journey of sixty-six miles took two days and fare was ten dollars. The stage coach was a threat to the seaman's paradise that Biscayne Bay had been until now."

In a personal letter of Will Norton to Mattie Peters dated February 12, 1896 he mentioned the stage and mail deliveries:

"When we first came down here (Lemon City) there was a stage line from here to Lantana but since the canal is finished they do not run it any

now. We have the mail four times a week now, it comes by steamer from Palm Beach the steamer runs from there to Miami."

On December 4, 1893 on his return the Bishop found the children and parents awaiting him in the Biscayne Post Office. He secured two men to act with the parents as sponsors. "I put on my robes in the one room," he said, "and had a brief service and baptized six children."

Bishop Gray did not work alone in this wilderness. The Archdeacon of Monroe, Lee, and Dade Counties, the Reverend Doctor Gilbert Higgs of Key West also came to promote the work. The Journal of the Third Annual Convocation gives an account of Doctor Higgs' follow-up of the Bishop's visit. He reported:

"On the 25th of January, 1894, I took passage in a sailing vessel from Key West to Cocoanut Grove in Dade County, and arrived there on the evening of the 27th. Met with a cordial reception and was entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Kirk Monroe. Made three visits that evening.

"On Sunday, January 28th, I read Morning and Evening Prayer and preached twice in a Union Meeting House, made four visits, attended the Sunday School and addressed the scholars.

"January 29. In company with Miss McFarland, a most energetic and faithful Communicant, made four visits in the morning. In the afternoon I made eleven visits. Was called out twice that night to read prayers with a sick woman.

"January 30. Made two visits. Mr. Kirk Monroe kindly took me in his yacht to Miami, where I met with every attention from Mrs. J. D. Tuttle and her family and was most hospitably entertained by them.

"January 31. Accompanied by Miss Tuttle, made fourteen visits, and arrived at Lemon City late in the evening.

"February 1. Accompanied by Mr. Garry Niles an earnest member of the church, made ten visits. Visited the public school and addressed the children.

"February 2. Returned to Miami to Mrs. Tuttle's who very kindly took me in her naphtha launch the next day to the head waters of the Miami River. I baptized in the evening two adults.

"February 4. Went in the launch to Lemon City. Read Morning and Evening prayer and preached twice. Returned in the evening to Miami.

"February 5. Left Miami at 9 A.M. for Key West. Detained all day, our sloop on the rocks; got off at 9 P.M.

"February 6. Landed at Elliot's Key and made one visit.

"Arrived at Key West February 7 in time for Litany."

Miss Ada Merritt was the teacher in this first grammar school mentioned by Doctor Higgs and it was to her students that Bishop Gray spoke during his visit. Miss Merritt was the sister of Mr. Z. T. Merritt. Two of the first members of Holy Cross Episcopal (which followed St. Andrew's) were Mr. and Mrs. Z. T. Merritt. Ada Merritt school was named in honor of Miss Merritt. Not only was the school house used for church services, but Miss Merritt carried on some of the work of the clergymen. While teaching in Lemon City she organized and conducted, with the help of Mrs. William Fulford, the first Sunday school there, and trained a choir. On one occasion when a nearby family had lost a little child and there was no minister available to act in that city, Miss Ada comforted the stricken parents by conducting the funeral service her self.

Two years after his first visit Bishop Gray came again in March 6, 1895 to this area. He "took sailing vessel (from Key West) for Biscayne Bay at 9 A.M. The wind was 'dead ahead' and the sea very rough. At night we had by tacking gone 60 miles distance, to make 20 miles towards our destination.

"Friday, (March) 8th. Entered Bay Biscayne at 10 A.M., and reached Miami at about noon Sunday 10th. Morning service and sermon at Coconut Grove. Took a launch to Lemon City, where I read service and preached. I baptized two children, and confirmed one person.

"Tuesday, 12. Preached and administered Holy Communion at 10:30 A.M. Nine persons received. They had had no opportunity since I was here a year ago.

"Wednesday, 13th. Left Lemon City on hack at 10 A.M. for two days' trip through the desert region. Reached Camp LaFayette a little after dark. On the way was called on to stop and baptize a child.

“Thursday 14th. Left Camp LaFayette at 7 A.M., and it was after 8 P.M., when we arrived at Lantana. Then went ten miles in a row-boat to W. Palm Beach, where I spent the night.”

Bishop Gray came again to the Biscayne Bay area in February 1896. He arrived after a very rough and irksome trip from Key West, on the *Dellie* (one of the boats owned and operated by Mr. Lewis W. Pierce. The others were the *Ardell* and *Clara*, all three named for his adopted daughter whose name was Clara Ardell and whom everyone called Dellie.) On board there was “a motley crowd” including a party whom the mayor of Key West had surprised in a gambling den.

“Thursday, February 13. Running slowly along the keys. Still very rough. At 3 P.M. only eight-five miles from Key West.

“Friday, February 14th, 9 A.M. — Off Cocomanut Grove. At 2 P.M., last night ran aground. ‘Dead’ low tide and no wind. The sun pouring down upon us makes it very warm and close. At dark the Captain came in to say that we must remain all night, and in the meantime everything has been drenched by a pouring rain. Truly, a trying day.

“Saturday, February 15th, Lemon City. More rain, and again low tide, so we could not reach the dock, but were sent ashore in a boat. Got baggage just in time to perform a marriage ceremony at Hotel Connolly, for Eugene Lee and Mrs. Marion MacDonald. Drove to Miami in the afternoon to arrange for services, and returned to Lemon City.” This was the first recorded marriage performed by an Episcopal clergyman in the Miami area.

On the next day, Sunday, Quinquagesima, Bishop Gray started at eight by way of Miami, for Coconut Grove (13 miles south on the bay) for morning service. After services he drove back to Miami Hotel located on Avenue D (Miami Avenue) and south of the spur railroad track leading to Royal Palm Hotel. Returning that night to Lemon City, he wrote,

“Went over to the Methodist Church, (Northeast 5th Avenue and 61st Street) where services were appointed. Found it all dark. I went in and lighted up and some one came and rang the bell. Had service and preached to a good congregation, mostly men. After service two gentlemen came to speak to me and I found, to my great relief, that they could take me the next

day to Lake Worth in their steamer, in time for my appointment there on Ash Wednesday.

“Monday, February 17th. Took steamer at 9:30, thankful to get aboard, and so escape the tedious two days staging through the sand — in risk, too, of being late for my next appointment.”

Bishop Gray felt the need of a resident clergyman in the Miami area. The Reverend Henry Dunlop was placed in charge of the Biscayne Bay area. He has the distinction of being the first resident clergyman. Having been ordained Deacon in 1867, and was ordained to the Priesthood in St. Matthew's Church (later St. Paul's) in Savannah in May, 1874. Bishop Gray made arrangements in May, 1895 to take Reverend Dunlop with him to Biscayne Bay. In June Mr. Dunlop joined the Bishop at Jacksonville and the next day — an early feast of St. Barnabas — a celebration was held at Mrs. Julia Tuttle's house in Miami.

Mr. Dunlop's ministry lasted only a short seven months. He died on December 5, 1895 at his missionary post of duty. The Bishop paid a touching tribute to him as the first resident clergyman,

“The Reverend Henry Dunlop was stationed at one of our outposts, almost on the very frontier of our civilization. He was at Miami (sic) with charge of the work in the whole Biscayne region. He was living in a small cottage alone, and ‘endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ’.”

A few months after Reverend Dunlop's death the railroad was completed to Miami. Bishop Gray's travels were then made much easier. No longer dependent upon the sailing vessel or the stage line, he could travel to or from Jacksonville in a day.

Another missionary laborer, the Reverend James Otis Sargent Huntington arrived in 1897. He was forty-three years old, six feet tall, and weighed about one hundred and ninety pounds, a man well-remembered by a few of the members of Holy Cross Church to this day. Father Pennington wrote: “In 1897 the Order of the Holy Cross was beginning missionary labours in the Miami area. The headquarters for the Order was then located at Westminster, Maryland, and the members were doing effective service in some of the out-of-the-way places of the country. The planting which was effected in the region around Miami is now a cherished tradition.”

So in late September of 1897 the Father Superior was expected in Southern Florida. His stay was to be three or four months. The Father Superior, the Reverend James Huntington, was born at Boston, July 23, 1854. He received a Bachelor of Arts at Harvard in 1875, and was a student of St. Andrew's Divinity School. He joined the Order of the Holy Cross in 1884, and later became the Superior of the Order.

In an October 12, 1897 letter, Father Huntington wrote regarding Miami:

"It is hard for us to realize you are already having frosty nights and crisp mornings and even perhaps a flurry of snow. Frost never touches this sunny land; the lowest temperature in the two years was 47°F. The mornings are pretty warm but there is almost always a breeze from the sea by afternoon. Our house-boat is really the coolest place in town. We are anchored close to the shore, at the end of a little pier, about five minutes' walk from the (Trinity) church. The *boulevard* runs all along the shore and makes the walk to town easy and pleasant. Looking seaward from the rear of our boat we have first, the broad waters of the bay, its surface ruffled with waves that roll up and break out at our feet, then the sky-line, accentuated by low-lying 'keys,' green in the sunshine or darkened by a passing shadow, and lastly, above it is the wide reach of sky, with clouds constantly changing and shifting and flushing with brilliant colours in the brief sunrise and sunset. To the south-east we can see the 'inlet' where the bay gives place to the ocean and the rippling of these lesser waves is lost in 'the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell.'

"That is the scene before us night and day, (the moonlight has been superbly, I never appreciated the force of Macaulay's 'ivory moonlight' before,) and, in face of it, under an awning that runs all around the boat, we say our Offices with no human presence to distract us save an old coloured man who rows patiently up and down all night, carrying barrels of water for the engine where they are building a dock some way north of us.

"Miami is a recent growth. Two years ago there were only two houses here; now there are about four thousand people and various smaller settlements up and down the coast. The town is well laid out, the main street, really a noble avenue. There is a great hotel, the Royal Palm, with accommodations for nearly a thousand guests.

"The church here is a plain little wooden structure and needs almost everything in the way of appointment and adornment. Even the windows are

not in yet but that is a slight deficiency in this climate. We hope to leave the church more like a house of God than we found it but that depends on what our friends enable us to do. I have had some generous gifts in answer to my letters. There is a splendid field for the church here, the people seem very ready to listen and learn. We have begun to visit them, and hope to build up many souls into the mystical Body of our Blessed Lord. There are a good many negroes from the West Indies, brought up in the English Church here, and these, too, we hope to reach.”

While in Miami, Father Huntington was accompanied by Brother Bernard, a novice who later became a priest. Father Huntington gives us the November 3, 1897 account of another arrival, that of Reverend Colin S. Bassett. He says,

“Two weeks ago today, Fr. Bassett came sailing in at the back door of our houseboat. He arrived in Key West three weeks ago, but tarried over Sunday as the guest of Archdeacon Higgs, and came up here in the *Magnolia*, a sailing-ship, which anchored out in the Bay. We went out on the ‘back piazza’ after service, and suddenly Brother Bernard pointed to a black-coated figure poling towards us in a small row-boat, and a few minutes later Fr. Bassett came aboard. He seems very well, and has taken hold of the work to the south of Cocconut Grove, traveling to and fro, sometimes by a sail-boat, sometimes by gasoline launch, sometimes on land by wheel kindly lent him by a gentleman here. Fr. Bassett goes to Buena Vista and Lemon City, north of here; he has several candidates preparing for Baptism and Confirmation.”

The year 1897 was a most significant one in the life and development of the Episcopal churches. A fourth mission, that of St. Agnes, was created. Father Huntington tells of his work among the Negroes,

“I wrote you last month that there were some negroes here who have been brought up in the English Church in the West Indies. We soon found access to them, and discovered they are not from the West Indies, but from the Bahama Islands, most of them from Nassau. We have the names of over thirty who have been confirmed and there are sixteen or seventeen desiring Confirmation. These Bahamians were rejoiced to have us come to them; they have had no opportunity of attending Church or making their Communion since they came. Most of them are young men and women; there are few families. They are intelligent and thoroughly at home in the Church. We found a rough ‘hall’ in the coloured settlement and hired it for some months;

the men took hold and white-washed it and put in benches, with room for over a hundred people, and now they have built out a neat sacristy, with convenient arrangements for hearing confessions. We ordered an altar from Deland — where we had one made last year — and the people are looking eagerly for its arrival and are preparing themselves to come with clean hearts to the Feast next Sunday morning. Sunday evenings we gather in a good many of the outsiders, and have had congregations of seventy and eighty, two-thirds of the number men.”

St. Agnes celebrated the laying of its cornerstone three years later on February 14, 1900. The Venerable John Edwin Culmer, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Divinity, and Doctor of Laws; present rector of St. Agnes, has written a historical sketch of how this church was born,

“Not in a castle nor in a cabin, but in a washtub.”

“The year was 1898, The Rev. James O. S. Huntington, late Father Superior of the Order of the Holy Cross, was vacationing in Miami, the house guest of Mr. John Sewell, pioneer resident of Miami. Mrs. Louise Newbold, a Bahamian by birth, was Mr. Sewell’s washerwoman. It happened on a day when Mrs. Newbold, while washing the Sewell’s family clothes and trying to lighten her arduous task, was inspired to sing the old familiar hymn, “The Church’s One Foundation.” The lusty singing of this hymn attracted the attention of Father Huntington and approaching Mrs. Newbold, he asked, “What church are you a member of, Louise?” “The Anglican Communion,” was Louise’s proud reply. Father Huntington, with increasing interest, further inquired if there was an Episcopal church in Miami where colored immigrant Anglicans could worship. Louise told the Reverend Father there was not; but hastened to add that there were scores of Anglicans in Miami from the Bahamas who were most desirous of worshipping God after the pattern of worship they were used to in the Anglican church.

“Thereupon, Father Huntington asked Mrs. Newbold if it would be possible for her to invite some of her Anglican Church friends for a meeting on the following Sunday. Mrs. Newbold complied with Father Huntington’s request and on the following Sunday, thirty persons met in a private home on N. W. Third Avenue near Flagler Street where an idea, born in a washtub, was given the name of St. Agnes’ Church.

Regular services were the big change introduced in the Lemon City mission. Father Huntington in December 1897 began these every Sunday evening services in an old school house. He writes,

“I am going to Lemon City every Sunday evening now. It is about five miles north. We have taken an old school-house there. It is being white-washed this week. I had about fifty people (white) there last Sunday evening and they joined heartily in the service. The principal interest in that neighborhood is tomatoes for the northern market. . . . We are putting an Altar in St. Laurence’s Mission Room at Coconut Grove.”

Father Huntington and others who held services in the Lemon City school-house were no doubt gratified at being able to fill the building to capacity with worshippers. But it was totally inadequate for school or Church purposes. A room twenty by forty feet, it was old and in bad repair, and poorly adapted for the fifty-seven pupils there.

A new building and a new location were both in order. The coming of the railroad radically changed the center of interest, and brought about the change of name to Little River, the name given the new railroad station.

Father Pennington writes of 1898:

“Bishop Gray reached Miami on the evening of January 30th, 1898; he was eager to see the results of Father Huntington’s labours. The next morning, assisted by Father Huntington and the Reverend Mr. Bassett, he celebrated the Holy Eucharist in Trinity Church. After breakfast, Father Huntington took the Bishop as far as Lemon City, visiting candidates for confirmation on the way. At 3 P.M., that day, the Bishop confirmed nine persons, Mrs. Julia Tuttle, who had done so much for the church in Miami, being one of the number.”

In 1897 also steps were taken to build churches for the Episcopal missions in Little River and Miami.

Much of St. Andrew’s Church history was shaped by the energetic and continuous efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Turner Ashley Winfield. It was through her influence that William I. Peters and Iona Peters gave two lots for the church. These were located on Northeast Second Avenue and 80th Street where Little River Bank now stands.

Bishop Gray wrote of the property: “Having had two good lots donated at Lemon City for a church, on November 29th, appointed a committee to raise subscriptions, ‘towards the first Episcopal Church to be built on Biscayne Bay’.”

Mr. Winfield financed the construction of this first building and was later repaid by the congregation and friends of the church.

For five months after Reverend Henry Dunlop's death in 1896 there was not a regular clergyman in this area. Bishop Gray appointed Mr. C. Wilbur, an elderly English carpenter, a lay reader to assist in the work of the church. Doctor Higgs, pastor of St. Paul's in Key West came as on May 5, 1897 to work a few days at a time here. On this visit, he drafted plans for a Mission Church under the directions of Mr. Brown, architect, which became Trinity in Miami.

The deed for the Trinity Church property was secured from Mrs. Julia Tuttle — "Lots eight (8), nine (9), and ten (10) of block one hundred and three N. (103 N.), as shown on the map of the City of Miami, Dade County." This transaction took place on February 15, 1898 while Dr. Higgs was spending three days here, celebrating the Holy Communion and making twenty-three visits.

Bishop Gray writes on May 25, 1898 of settling in full the debts on Trinity Mission:

"Dr. Higgs (from Key West) and I went at once to work in the matter of getting all accounts here squared up, and all to be in black and white. Thursday, May 26. We were up till 2 o'clock in the morning. Solution of all in sight by my assuming additional responsibility, which I did."

Mrs. Winfield tells some of the circumstances connected with the building of the Little River Church. On Bishop Gray's visit to Miami, she says:

"A messenger was sent out to me who stated that the Bishop was charmed to know that a church was in progress of construction; and he wondered whether the building was in sufficient readiness for service." Mrs. Winfield replied with an invitation.

"Come right along! We'll be ready." She promptly called her husband, and he secured a carpenter.

Mr. Winfield, Mr. Edward De Vere Burr, and a carpenter went to the church that afternoon and built seats with little back rests on them. Under these conditions, the Bishop conducted his first services in the church.

Lights were secured from private individuals. Mrs. Burr (Lucy) provided an altar by lending a small table for that purpose. The table came from Virginia in 1893 to Bartow, Florida, brought along by the young Lucy Crouch who later became Mrs. Burr in 1896 in Miami. The table is still in use by Margaret Burr Claussen, the daughter of Lucy.

Reverend Robert M. W. Black and his wife came next from Flat Rock, North Carolina. They left a well established and beautiful church to do frontier pioneering here. Mrs. Black gives us an account of their stay in Florida and how difficult it was to travel. Mrs. Black looks back with a great deal of amazement at the changes taking place here in the last sixty years.

“What do you remember of Little River?” I asked Mrs. Black.

“I never was there,” was the reply, and she continued, “my husband went by rowboat with a Negro to do the rowing. It was too dangerous for me to go. I never was allowed to go to Little River or Coconut Grove. There were dense mangrove thickets, all the paths were grown over and snakes were often seen in those places.”

“Where did you live while here?” I questioned.

“On the mud banks of the Miami River in a two room house. The upstairs was reached by a ladder through a square hole cut out of the ceiling. Planks were placed over the mud bank and led to the sandy soil further from the water. Cutting the mangrove trees from the banks of the river in clearing the land for the Royal Palm Hotel caused deep mud flats all around our house. The sticky, suction-like earth was never dry,” recalls Mrs. Black.

Speaking of the hardships Mrs. Black says: “Perhaps the mosquitoes were the worst hazard of all. There were hoards of them and no adequate way of keeping them out of the house, too, our water supply came from a pitcher pump outside the house in the muddy yard.”

“Then you knew Bishop Gray?” I prodded.

“I knew Bishop Gray very well and admired him greatly. He slept on a cot in our upstairs room when visiting here.”

“You did not stay long in Miami,” I stated.

“We could not because of illness, both of us had malaria fever very badly. One day Mr. Black would have a chill and the next day I would have a chill.”

We have the newspaper’s account of a reception given for the Blacks when they were leaving Miami in 1899:

“The members of the Episcopal Church and their friends tendered the Rev. and Mrs. R. M. W. Black a reception in the parlors of the Hotel Biscayne last night.

“The following persons were present: Rev. and Mrs. W. W. Faris, Rev. and Mrs. W. C. Barnes, Collector and Mrs. Featherly, Mrs. Graham, Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Lake, Mr. and Mrs. Bradley, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick, Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter, Mr. and Mrs. Hand, Mr. and Mrs. Bailey, Rev. E. V. Blackman, Mrs. Kolb, Mrs. Dixon, Mr. Lolce, Mr. and Mrs. S. Graham.

“After spending the first part of the evening in pleasant conversation, the dining room doors were thrown open.

“Mr. Black has been pastor of the Episcopal Church here for the past few months, and during that time has accomplished much for the church and the community.

“During the winter he collected nearly a thousand dollars, which has been expended in building a pretty and comfortable rectory, and in improving the church building.

“Mr. and Mrs. Black leave in a few days for their old summer charge at Flat Rock, N. C.

“The best wishes, not only of the members of the Episcopal Church, but all that have been fortunate enough to make their acquaintance go with them.”

Bishop Gray wrote of his visit in Miami, February 3, 1899, and noted that Mr. and Mrs. Black gave him, “a warm welcome to the new Rectory;” and he expressed pleasure at what he learned concerning the work there and in the surrounding places.

On February 5, 1899, the Bishop and Mr. Black held services at Trinity Church. That afternoon, they were at Coconut Grove where the Reverend Mr.

Black baptized one person, and where Bishop Gray preached in the Methodist Church and confirmed two. At 7:30 P.M. that day—Septaugesima—assisted by Mr. Black, the Bishop held services in the new church at Little River. There he preached.

The first Lemon City—Little River—St. Andrew's Church required six long years of work to complete. People living in the surrounding areas attended services there whether or not they were of the Episcopal faith. This church was sometimes referred to as the "Chapel." In building churches in this community regardless of church affiliation, activities were shared by all. Mrs. Winfield, like others on a frontier, shared in all community and religious activities. She wrote and directed a play for the Baptist Church. Mrs. Garrod B. Stephens was the popular soloist of that day. She was a Presbyterian who sang in both the Methodist and Episcopal churches.

A number of gifts in addition to the land were made to the Little River Church. The altar came from Union Episcopal in Coconut Grove. It was a big, heavy wooden unpainted piece. In fact, it was too large for the church building! In order to use it some of the men sawed off part of the original and fitted it into the smaller altar space of the church.

Hymn books and prayer books were given to Little River also by the Union congregation who had a generous supply. A New York church had gathered up the more used books and sent them to the needy mission. They were gladly accepted by the frontier church. Some of these prayer books were so old and so much used that the ladies of the church bought inconspicuous cool green light-weight cotton material and covered the marred backs. Some of the covered cloth prayer books are still preserved sixty years later.

One of the largest gifts which came some years later was an organ. James Whitcomb Riley from Indiana, the world-renowned poet who wintered in South Florida, worshipped here in Little River. After his visit the church received a small church organ from Mr. Riley as an expression of his missionary interest. Mrs. Winfield played the organ with one key sticking. Gertrude Westgaard would often sing in the choir when visiting her sister who lived here. On a number of occasions she would aid the organist by placing a finger under the sticking key on the organ and hold it up while singing. Everyone soon knew the key stuck because Mrs. Winfield would chat about the key, song after song, and Sunday after Sunday.

Still another source of church monies were bazaars. As is still the custom in many Episcopal churches, a bazaar is held once a year to raise money for the church. These were usually held in the home of Mrs. Winfield on an afternoon and evening. Items for sale were collected by the women for the sale over a period of time. Mrs. A. C. Swain and Mrs. Winfield did crocheting for the bazaars. Collars, yokes for gowns, edging for camisoles, and table doilies were made by these women.

Silver companies would give "one of a kind" sample pieces to the bazaar sale which was one way of advertising in a new community. Any item not sold was packed away and displayed the next year. A very pretty Reed and Barton silver tea pot with its handle insulated with bone with an alcohol burner for warming, swinging on its own stand, was priced too high to sell.

This tea pot was packed away but not forgotten by Mrs. Winfield. In late 1904 when Mamie Douthit was married, she was given some money for a wedding present by her Aunt Alice Ecle, "to buy a present for yourself". Mrs. Winfield, being a close friend of Mamie's, knew of the money and immediately suggested the tea pot. Being in the hands of such a good sales-lady, the tea pot was bought.

Next upon this scene was a devout man with religious training, the Reverend Nathaniel Bornwell Fuller. Miss Bessie Fuller, his daughter, has given the following description and account of Trinity Church at the time of her Father's arrival:

"When my Father came to Miami in July, 1899, to take charge of Trinity Church, the church building, which was then situated on the corner of old Avenue B and 10th Street (now Northeast 2nd Avenue and 2nd Street) was very small.

"The altar was a wooden frame covered with red cheesecloth, as were the other hangings; and the windows were covered with the same material and of the same colour. The young men would ask each other where they were going to church; and they would reply, 'We are going to the church of the Holy Cheesecloth.' The cheesecloth altar was soon replaced by a very pretty altar given by Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Garthside; and the wooden shutters replaced by windows with glass panes."

Phenomenal growth was experienced by Miami so that Trinity became the best-known Episcopal Church. Neither Coconut Grove nor Little River were ever again to progress with the same rapidity as Trinity.

In 1902 Chancellor Louis C. Massey reported to the Convocation the conveyance of the Church property at Little River Mission to the Missionary Jurisdiction of Southern Florida. The committee on Finance and Assessments at the time recommended that the Coconut Grove Mission be assessed \$2.40, Trinity, Miami, \$12.00, and Little River, \$3.60, a measure of the relative importance of the three.

Aiding Reverend Fuller to carry the additional church duties was the Reverend Dwight Frederic Cameron who was placed in charge of the missions around Miami. He arrived in 1903, coming from Geneva, Switzerland. He had received his education at Cornell University and at the University of the South. Being only 28 years old, Reverend Cameron has the distinction of "youngest" minister to ever work in this church. Usually the "near-retirement-age" men were sent to South Florida.

The one and only picture of this church was made while Reverend Cameron labored here. He is pictured outside the church building in a black suit wearing a rather large black felt hat. With the Reverend Cameron is a group of women who are: Mrs. Turner Ashley Winfield, Mrs. Edward De Vere Burr with her two children Richard and Margaret, Mrs. B. C. Du Pont, Miss Mamie Douthit, Mrs. Amos Cutler, and Mrs. L. C. Littlefield.

In the year 1904 Messrs. Fuller and Cameron drove to Little River with the Bishop and held services for the St. Andrew's Congregation. The Bishop wrote of this visit, "The church there had been destroyed by a recent hurricane, and we held the services in a hotel. I preached. Gave the offering towards the new church."

The hotel referred to is the McDonald Hotel in Little River, which was owned and run by my mother, Mary Douthit Conrad. It was a two-storied wooden building with twelve rooms. Often Bishop Gray was a visitor at the McDonald Hotel, the largest in the area at that time.

The little handful of communicants at Little River determined not to give up. The frame structure had been destroyed by a storm, but the resolution to conquer was admirable. On the 15th of August, Bishop Gray arrived in the village, and was the guest of Misses Mamie and Senie Douthit at the hotel. Visiting the site of the new church, he found the lumber already on the ground to rebuild the church.

A wedding hastened the completion of the second St. Andrew's church building. Senie Douthit wanted to be married in the Episcopal Church. The walls were up and the roof on, but no floor laid. Mr. Jim Hubel, a family friend, led the movement on flooring the building. Some twenty members and friends banded together and worked diligently at getting the floor finished.

At some later date glass was put in the windows. For the wedding, coconut fronds were tacked across the windows in lieu of glass. Another decorating feature was white sheets used as a covering on the rostrum and down the aisles. Wild ferns and yellow Marechal Niel roses were used in profusion along the sides and back of the altar. Small kneeling pillows were outlined in yellow roses.

Father Fuller, who had known the couple, performed the 8 o'clock ceremony on October 25, 1904.

Besides the storm damage to the church building there were other setbacks in the evangelical work, such as difficulty in securing personnel to do the preaching. The Reverend Cameron moved to West Palm Beach and in 1905 the Reverend George Bernard Clarke was put in charge of the missions around Miami. But he was handicapped by bad health. Under Reverend Clarke the name of Little River Mission was changed to St. Andrew's, thus this church had its third name.

In 1906 another hurricane blew into Little River and again damaged the structure when it was blown from its foundation.

In spite of growing sentiment in favor of moving the church to a new location, the Bishop decided to put the building back on its foundations "as means for securing another lot and moving the church are not in sight."

Reverend Clarke was also instrumental in the founding of Holy Cross at Buena Vista. He saw the need for a church in a growing center of population. It was not designed to supersede the mission at Little River, but it was fated to do so. But he told Mrs. Winfield that he would never consent to the removal of St. Andrew's as long as she lived. And, for a time, the communicants at the original site refused to move to Buena Vista but St. Andrew's survived five years only after the opening of Holy Cross.

Even as late as 1908 the Convocation Journal lists St. Andrew's in Little River and the Buena Vista Church is not mentioned. One of the last services held in St. Andrew's was on March 12, 1910, which Bishop Gray preached.

On March 23, 1912 Bishop Gray definitely decided to make this move. He wrote:

“Saturday, March 23. Went up to Little River. I fear we can do nothing more at this point, and may have to let the building go before it rots down.”

A bit of the history of St. Andrew’s Church is preserved on a plaque at Holy Cross. It reads:

1897

1912

IN MEMORY OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. ANDREW’S CHURCH, LITTLE RIVER, WHO PRIOR TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, BUENA VISTA, BORE WITNESS TO CHRIST IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE MIAMI AREA WITH CONSTANCY, DEVOTION, AND PERSEVERANCE.

ERECTED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICE LEAGUE,
HOLY CROSS EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Even the record of the St. Andrew’s Church is mostly lost. The plaque cited above, a picture of the second church building, and one entry in an old record book, (the marriage of Mary Camilla James to W. Sanford Perry) are the only remains. From other accounts and from diocesan records, it has been possible to learn the names of the ministers. Establishing a list of members is far more difficult, in fact, impossible. However, it seems likely that the following persons were members of St. Andrew’s:

Miss Grace Andrews, Mr. Thomas J. Albury, Mrs. Charlotte Albury, Edward Barnott, Annie Barnott, William Barnott, Jack (John Herbert) Barnott, Alice E. Barnott, Oliver D. Barnott, Albert Sidney Barnott, Thomas Allan Barnott, Mrs. Edward De Vere Burr, Miss Margaret Burr, Mr. W. A. Chandler, Mr. Amos Cutler, Mrs. Annie Cutler, Miss Mamie Douthit, Miss Senie Douthit, Mrs. B. C. DuPont, Miss Annie Fickle, Olive Fickle, Kathleen Dell Hubel, Mr. L. C. Littlefield, Mrs. L. C. Littlefield, Margaret Elizabeth Matthews, Robert Warner Matthews, Agnes Ann Belle Matthews, Mr. Duncan Moffet Niles, Mr. Garry Niles, Helen Agnes Peden, Mrs. Dee Pent, Annie Laura Pent, Annie Geneva Pent, Marie Pent, James Pent, William Harvey Pent, Mr. A. C. Swain, Mrs. A. C. Swain, Martha Swain, Marion Swain.

Nor is it surprising that St. Andrew's should be all but forgotten. It appeared on a rapidly growing and changing frontier. The coming of the railroad shifted the center of population away from the location. The change of name from Lemon City to Little River to St. Andrew's added a note of confusion. But the plaque at Holy Cross always serves as a reminder that a congregation existed earlier at St. Andrew's.