

Bethinking of Old Orleans

Vol XXI

C.W. Lattin County Historian

No.47

KENT BAPTIST CHURCH

4-24-99

The earliest documented religious society in what is now Orleans County was established by Baptists in the hamlet of Gaines in 1816. This also served people from the Town of Carleton to the north. When enough members from Carleton felt they could support a church of their own, they withdrew in 1832. They formed the First Baptist Church of Carleton and met at a little schoolhouse at Baldwin's Corners, now the intersection of Rt. 98, Park Avenue and Rt. 18.

In 1845 when it was decided to build a meeting house, members could not agree on a location. Those living in the western and central part of the town wanted it erected near the center. Members from the eastern part of Carleton wanted it over there. In early 1846 thirteen members withdrew to form a new church. As a result, they secured a lot at the southwest corner of the Kent Road at what is now Rt. 18. This intersection was known then as East Carleton. In 1846 a wood frame meeting house was erected here known as the First Baptist Church of Carleton.

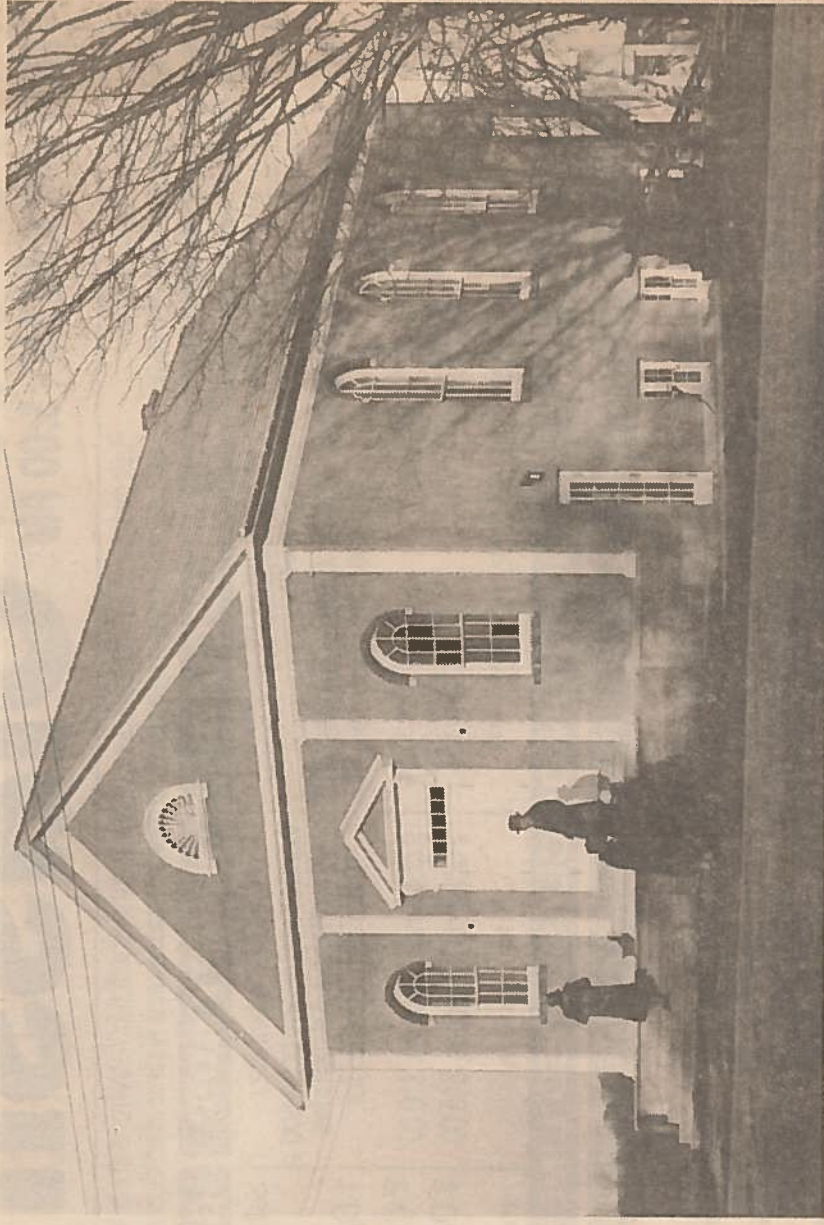
Likewise, the remaining Baptists formed a church known as Central Baptist Church of Carleton and built a meeting house at The Bridges on Marsh Creek Road which was dedicated on New Years Day 1847.

Around 1920 the East Carleton Church congregation began to think about moving their building to Kent, the little hamlet to the south which had

grown up at the railroad after 1875. In 1922 it was voted to move the church to Kent with instructions to the trustees to procure a lot. A site was obtained from the Edward Reed farm just north of Kent. A basement was excavated and foundation walls constructed. On August 19, 1922 the church was moved to its new location. Much work was then needed in finishing the project including furnishing new basement rooms and redecorating throughout which was completed in 1924. However, on December 5, 1926 the old church which so much labor and money had been spent on burned down.

Under the guidance of their pastor at the time, the Rev. Alfred Pollock, the members rallied together and undertook to build a new church. The building committee consisted of William Corbin, Ralph Reed and George Clack. A new church was constructed on the existing lot and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies on Nov., 13 and 14, 1927.

The photo shown here taken by Fred Holt, depicts this Colonial Revival building soon after its completion. It was made of hollow terra cotta tile and stuccoed. A stack of unused tile and a ladder may be seen beside the church. At the corner we see the cornerstone which noted: "Kent 1927 Baptist Church". Outside lights were not yet mounted on the pilasters either side of the front entrance when this picture was taken. I am therefore assuming this photo was done in mid November 1927 as the hats the women are wearing also



suggest that time frame.

In 1935 the Bridges Baptist Church, the Kent Baptist Church and the East Gaines Baptist Church organized what was known as the Gaines-Carleton Community Church. All three former church structures are still standing and are used as residences today.

their respective church facilities. In 1969 the three congregations agreed to consolidate and in 1972 dedicated what is known today as the Gaines-Carleton Community Church. All three former church structures are still standing and are used as residences today.