



Photo Plateau, Panama

**The City of Colon, Republic of Panama, aerial view and close-ups.**

First the correspondence school specialist was dismissed. Any lack of gallanage in the words employed was probably compensated by the high temperature of the phrases cast by this aroused Methodist divine—whose patience, needless to say, was still in cold storage. During the long irritating interlude since this caricature of legal procedures started, Mr. Morgan had come to know personally a number of Colon's officials,

including the Governor of the Province. Five minutes of sympathetic audience with him, brought a promise of action; action that was taken within twenty-four hours. Thus the heir was morally and legally entitled to a name—yes, weeks prior to his arrival!

### And Now . . .

The long range housing plans of the Canal administration have resulted in a diminution of the number of U. S. Government employees residing in the immediate parish of the Cristobal Union Church. This, together with changes in Panama's cosmopolitan Colon, present new problems for this church. What the future holds by way of an adaptation in program remains to be determined. If tomorrow's pattern may be predicted on the basis of this church's yesterdays, it will accent the progressive and the basic.

Currently at the helm, facing the future and its puzzling problems is the Rev. Philip Havener. To the task he brings an appropriate geniality, earnestness, an open mind, sound convictions and the balanced progressiveness of his spiritual lineage as a Congregational-Christian clergyman. His Bachelor of Arts degree was earned at Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York, in 1933. Four years later the Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Center, Massachusetts graduated him with a Bachelor of Divinity degree. In order to keep academically



**The Rev. and Mrs. Philip H. Havener, with William and Catherine**

alert Mr. Havener's graduate studies have been augmented with refresher courses. Between two years of his theological studies he invested a year in clinical work and studies under the direction of the Board of Home Missions of his denomination. This involved intimate contacts with workers in mill towns, mining camps and cotton communities in Alabama, Kentucky and Florida. Born in Waltham, Massachusetts, this was the only time, prior to departure for the Canal Zone, that Mr. Havener has wandered from the U. S. A.

His pastorates include Loudon, Danbury and Grafton, New Hampshire, and West Brattleboro, Vermont. One of the churches served was Baptist. Extra-parish energies have been expended in Scouting, County Councils of Churches, Rural Work Committees and service on his own denomination's National Committee for War Victims and Reconstruction. This phase of his service was referred to as follows in an editorial of the *Brattleboro Daily Reformer*, written on the occasion of the departure of the Havener family:

"In addition to his pastoral duties in the West Village, Phil Havener has been a sort of a missionary in the promotion of many good works in the larger community. Whatever tended to improve the relationship of human beings, to build a better society and to encourage a sense of social responsibility, has had the active attention of the young West Brattleboro minister. We are sorry to see him go, but are pleased that he has the opportunity to advance in the profession to which he is devoted."

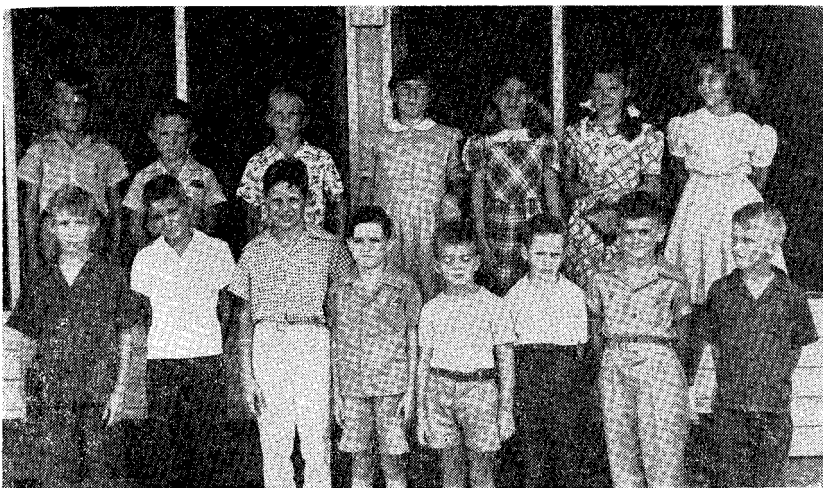
It was on March 13, 1949, that Mr. Havener was installed at Cristobal. Participants in the service were Mr. August Campbell, the Rev. Raymond R. Gregory, Mr. Russell Klotz, Dr. Robert H. Rolofson and Mr. Clifford Utterback. A delightful reception followed for both the Rev. and Mrs. Havener, their daughter Catherine and son William.

## V. THE GAMBOA UNION CHURCH

### Home of the Dredging Division

One of the unpredictables in constructing the Panama Canal was the degree of sliding that would take place in the cuts.

Where there was a bed-rock base, calculations could be made with fair precision. But volcanic soil, when mixed with loose rock and reduced heavy tropical rainfall to the consistency of thick bread dough and under tremendous pressure, was sure to bulge the Canal's banks. How much, and precisely where, could be only partially computed. The rest was a guess. There was, however, no guess about the imperative necessity for immediate action in clearing the channel after the slide came. That meant the maintenance of a force small enough for economy in routine dredging operations, and large enough for efficiency when the slide-created crises came. Also, there must be the world's best dredging equipment. But even these indispensables, together with a know-how that had grown

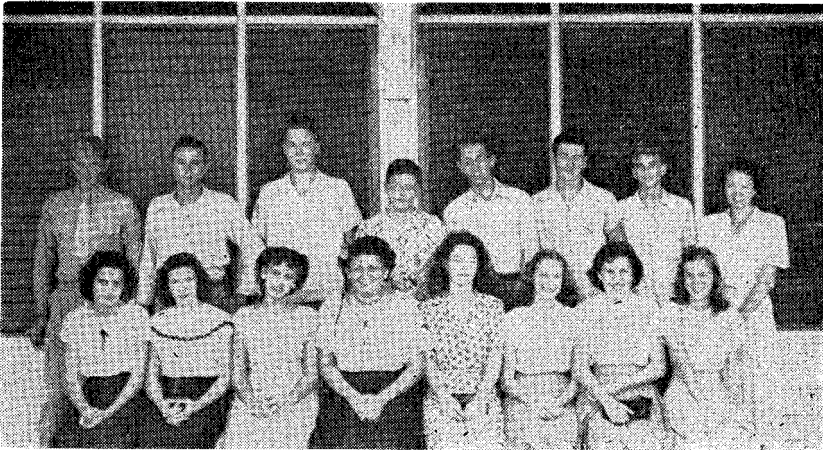


**The Juniors, Gamboa**

Bottom Row: George Figel, James Driscoll, Jeff Goodin, Jesse Crawford, Kit Brazier, Bruce Thompson, John Mother, Billy Eigel.  
 Top Row: James Pedersen, Rex Daisey, Donald Ryter, Diane Hearne, Sheila Gilbert, Mary Glass, Penny Pennington.

through the years, were not enough; the personnel and equipment must be strategically located. Paraiso was not the right place. Subsequently Mr. John G. Claybourn, famous as the Superintendent of the Dredging Division, persuaded the powers-that-be, both in the Zone and in Washington, to establish as

a dredging center a new town on the east side of the Canal, near the big Culebra cut and not too far from the lineal center of the Canal. It was constructed during the years 1935 and 1936, and was named "Gamboa" probably for Don Famon Gamboa, Panama's President in 1858. There the mighty Chagres, principal feeder of Lake Gatun, whose waters fill the huge locks chambers, is lost in the vast reservoir lake it helps to create. Far removed from the noise and bustle that characterizes the Canal's terminal communities, Gamboa is a quiet, highly desirable residential center of some 700 North Americans. As in all other Canal communities the U. S. Government maintains schools, a Clubhouse, Commissary, Post Office, Playgrounds, Swimming Pool and Motion Picture Theatre. During the second World War, nearby military installations brought service men to the community. But there was not enough to warrant the erection of a building by the United Service Organizations to serve the social needs of military personnel. In order to give these lads a welcome and provide for them a touch of civilian life, the enterprising leaders of this progressive town erected a liberal sized hall complete with stage and kitchen equipment. This building is known as the Civic Center.



#### Young People's Class, Gamboa

Bottom Row: Coils Goodin, Catherine Glass, Geri Snodgrass, Wilma Hidalgo, Lois Lucille Hamilton, Edna Mae Curles, Sue MacDonald, Arden Lou Cooke.  
 Top Row: Nos. 1 and 2 are visiting Marines, Wayne Hamilton, Wm. Henderson, Carl Kern, Leon Herring, James Shabe, Mrs. George T. Darnell, Jr., (teacher).

The records show that within a year after the town was constructed, efforts leading toward the organization of a Union Church were begun by the Rev. L. L. Loofbourow, of Balboa. These services were held in the motion picture hall. As of November 16, 1937, there was correspondence with Dr. Roy B. Guild by Messrs. John G. Claybourn and W. H. Kromer, concerning the organizing of a Union Church and the possibility of erecting a church building. On Monday, May 28, 1938, the Local Council of the Gamboa Union Church was created. Mr. Arthur Grier was chosen Chairman; Mr. J. F. Evans, Vice Chairman; Mr. C. F. Browne, Secretary and Mr. T. N. Etchberger, Treasurer. However it was not until June 7, 1942, under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Irwin, that the actual organization of the church was effected. During the rather long interim there was an active Woman's Auxiliary and Church School. These seem to be the two feet upon which almost every infant Protestant Church has learned to walk.

#### **The Woman's Auxiliary**

Before the residential section of the new town was completed, the women of the new families that had moved themselves into a Woman's Auxiliary—complete, save for a parent body, to which they might serve as a subsidiary. However no such minor item daunts Christian women. They identified themselves with the Isthmian Federation of Women's Societies for Christian Service, and in their own community carried the responsibilities normally assumed by church women. It was on Friday, September 3, 1937, in the home of Mrs. Ernest Behlen that the meeting was held to effect an organization. The Rev. Leon Loufbourow was present to offer inspirational help and spiritual guidance. The officers chosen were: Mrs. C. F. Browne, President; Mrs. L. B. Simms, Vice President; Mrs. J. F. Wood, Secretary and Treasurer; Mrs. G. M. Stevenson, Program Chairman. No other officers were reported. In addition to the officers there were present at this first meeting, Mrs. William Bain, Mrs. Ernest Behlen, Mrs. Tom Booz, Miss Blanche Cheney, Mrs. John G. Claybourne, Mrs. J. J. Evans, Mrs. Leon Loufbourow, Mrs. C. B. Jeffries, Mrs. J. J. Murray, Mrs. Relay, Mrs. Marshall Veney, Mrs. P. Wilson and Mrs. Wood.

Both the contemporaries of Mrs. Browne, and those who came later, give her much credit for the splendid launching of this important organization. From the outset it has directed its energies toward the realization of a Union Church in Gamboa. Indeed, the initial "nest egg" in the Union Church Building Fund came from a Thanksgiving Dinner served by these ladies some two months after the group was formed. It was held in the office building of the Dredging Division, with splendid assistance coming from Mrs. John G. Claybourn. Shortly thereafter, the San Blas Mission was selected as a project for benevolences. Within three months the Auxiliary's membership had increased to twenty-nine. Within two years there were three circles. These bear the names of Bible characters, save the one in memory of Mrs. Mary T. Bartlett, who, prior to her lamented death in 1947, had earned by friendship and unselfish service the endearing title of "Mother Bartlett."

The genesis of the Bartlett family's migration to this area is likely to become a Canal Zone saga. It began in 1908 when William J. Bartlett, son of the local Union Church's "Grand Old Lady," left the Boston home of his widowed mother to seek gold in Panama. With him were five other young men. Under the guidance of explorer Baron Van Turber they set out on foot from Colon with Palya Damas as their initial goal. At the Mandinga River an Indian Chief and his men took them, as prisoners, to the Island of Cardi. True to tradition, the San Blas Indians gave these white men no welcome but did them no harm. Four days later, instead of being tortured or put to death as their youthful imaginations had envisioned, the lads, with their leaders, were put on a Colon-bound native trading sloop at the tiny port of St. Isabel. All were in the deep throes of Yellow Fever. Indeed, one of the lads died in Bill's arms before the voyage ended, and Bill had to be carried ashore and to a Colon hospital. Subsequently, he accepted employment in the Pinel Brothers Shipyard in Panama and shortly thereafter began thirty-six years of service with the Canal. Since 1944 he has lived in retirement with his wife, a Zonian, in St. Petersburg, Florida.

During World War II the Woman's Auxiliary gave strong support to the local United Service Organizations' program.



**The Clubhouse, Gamboa.**

Service men were entertained in homes, they were provided with reading materials, welcomed to the church programs and aid was given in promoting for them a wholesome social life. Annually there was a Christmas supper and an Easter breakfast and the Union Church women carried the responsibility for providing a supper one Sunday night each month, for these lads away from home. During the war Government Commissaries eliminated over 1,000 items from their counters as being not sufficiently essential to warrant shipping space and the personnel involved in handling. Among these were most children's toys. In the process of filling this need with wooden toys, made by Mr. C. E. Currier, a hundred dollars was netted by the Auxiliary for the Building Fund. In 1946 a bazaar brought in another \$500.

### **The Church School**

Pioneers in founding a strong Union Church School in Gamboa were Mrs. John C. Claybourn and Mr. W. H. Kromer. An excerpt from one of Mr. Kromer's letters addressed to Dr. Roy B. Guild reads: "Mrs. Claybourn is working overtime to see that Gamboa will have all the civic, religious and social organizations that other towns have. She is taking the lead in each one, personally, not accepting office, but seeing that they are organized." The local theatre housed the Church School's first meetings. They began on September 12, 1937,



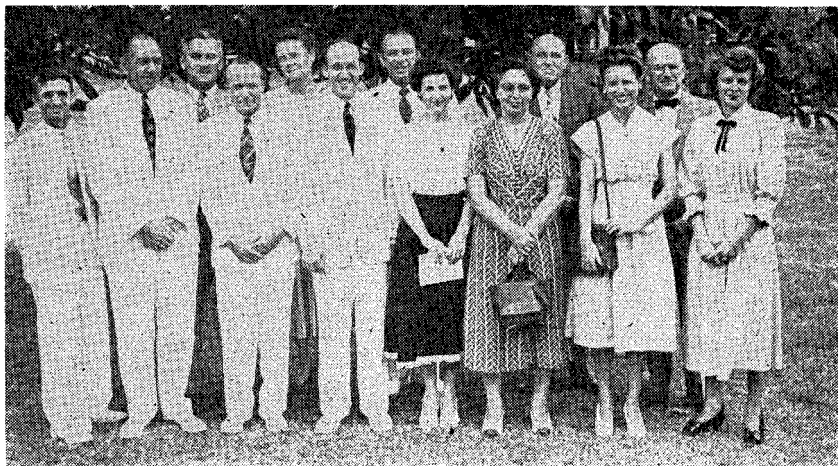




**Proposed Gamboa Union Church—Front Elevation**

Mrs. S. S. Turner; Beginners, Mrs. J. F. Wood; Intermediates, Mrs. Mabel Williams; Juniors, Mrs. J. O. Eckert; Primaries, Mrs. L. B. Simms and the Seniors, Bell Hollowell. Mrs. Claybourn led in initiating a Teachers Association which began the next month. The first permanent Superintendent of the Church school was Mr. Harold I. Tinnin. Through the years classes have found it necessary to meet in a variety of places, including the gymnasium, swimming pool, grandstand and the ball park grandstand. Since December, 1945, the worship sessions have been held in the Civic Center Auditorium, with the Beginners and Primaries meeting there. The current enrollment is 115.

The two leaders who led in organizing the Church School, aided by Mr. Allen Meadowcroft, called together, on October 24, 1937, a group of young folk to start what was first called a Christian Endeavor Society. Like all such groups its fortunes fluctuated from enthusiasm to discouraging depths. In the Spring of 1946, Mrs. George T. Darnall, Jr. and Mrs. C. D. Folger re-organized the group with meetings scheduled for Monday evenings from seven to nine. The time is devoted to worship, discussion and social hour. The attendance grew from twelve to sixty-five.



### The Local Council, Gamboa, 1949

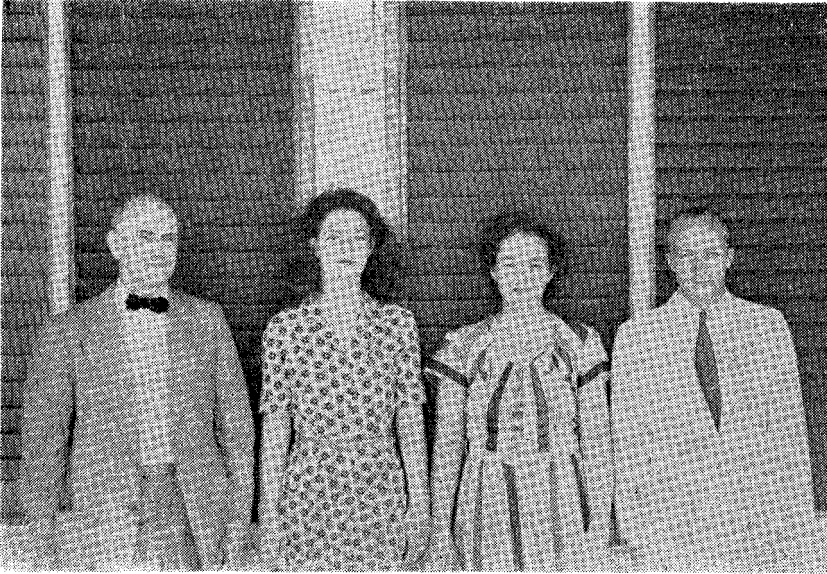
Mr. Franklin F. Pierce, Deacon; Mr. E. M. Kieswetter, Chairman; Mr. B. A. Herring, Deacon; Mr. S. H. Sharpsteen, Deacon; Mrs. J. A. Fraser, Deaconess; The Rev. Raymond A. Gray, Pastor; Mr. George Darnall, Jr., Vice Chairman; Mrs. E. B. Webster, Deaconess; Mrs. P. W. Henderson, Deaconess; Mr. A. R. Grier, Treasurer; Mrs. A. I. Bauman, Secretary; Mr. B. J. Fletcher, Trustee; Mrs. Leonard P. Morrison, Deaconess.

Not Pictured: Mr. J. A. Fraser, Financial Secretary; Mr. S. S. Shobe, Deacon; Mrs. E. M. Kieswetter, Deaconess.

### The Worship Services

For several months the Rev. Christy Schjeveland, of the Pedro Miguel Union Church, conducted Sunday afternoon services in the Gamboa Theatre, and did some pastoral work. In June, 1945, this was discontinued since the afternoon period did not seem acceptable to the people and there were too many competing noises in the nearby playground and swimming pool. In the following November Mr. George T. Darnall, Jr., presided over a Council meeting in which it was decided to resume worship services in the Civic Center building at the evening hour. Chaplain Martin, of Fort Clayton, was engaged. Other Chaplains who served in this capacity for periods of varying length were: Gerald K. Ford, Albrook Field; and George A. Wright, of the Submarine Base. The Rev. V. P. Hulse, of the U. S. Army, accepted the position of pastor to the joint field of Gamboa and Pedro Miguel, beginning April 21, 1946. Upon regaining a position with the U. S. Army as Chaplain, this,

Gamboa's first pastor, on September 15, 1946, notified the two churches of his desire to have the pastoral relationships dissolved immediately. One favorable result of this brief pastoral service was a demonstration to the people themselves of the amazing



**The Church School Officers, Gamboa.**

Mr. B. J. Fletcher, Treasurer; Miss Lois Lucille Hamilton, Ass't. Secretary; Mrs. H. N. Hamilton, Secretary; Mr. S. H. Sharpsteen, Superintendent.

difference made in growth, the broadened base of interest, the optimistic outlook, the increased cohesiveness and the green light of confidence that the presence of a pastor can make in a parish. During this short period twenty-five new members were added to the church roll. Upon the sudden departure of their first pastor, the Rev. H. M. Day, District Chaplain of the 15th Naval District, Balboa, was invited to preach at the evening services each Sunday. This happy relationship continued for almost two years, and was not terminated until the Chaplain's tour of duty in the Tropics was ended. It was the longest period of leadership the church had had up to that time.

When in the Spring of 1948, the General Council of the Union Church of the Canal Zone was conducting a Visitation

Evangelism Campaign some of the Gamboa leaders hesitated to participate. Their hesitancy was based on the lack of a pastor and their alleged inability to get results. Such apprehensions were incorrect. On a percentage basis this small congregation, with a harvest of sixty-four new members, topped the entire list.

### **The Rev. Raymond A. Gray**

The fifth of six children, of Pennsylvania Dutch and Irish lineage, Raymond A. Gray was born in McPherson, Kansas.



**The Rev. Raymond A. Gray**

There he matured, with the influence of the church making its imprint upon him. Very early this young man fell in love with church music. A pursuit of that preference led him into the home of the Rev. and Mrs. Ernest C. Withem. There, particularly in the pastor's study, he spent many profitable and revealing hours. Perhaps it was this warm fellowship that helped him decide to enter Christian service. Untiring leadership in both local and statewide youth work aided in his being chosen as an official youth delegate from his native state to participate in the Northern Baptist Convention held in Los

Angeles in 1938. Mr. Gray's academic training was taken in Ottawa University (Kansas) and Andover Newton Theological School. During the latter course Mrs. Gray, formerly Lorene Turner, was with him. He had the distinction of representing his class on its graduation program. In addition to serving nearby churches during college days, as a Theological student, Mr. Gray was Associate Pastor, in charge of youth work, in the First Baptist Church of Lexington, Massachusetts. For three years he served the South Lyndeborough and Wilton Baptist churches



### The Adult Bible Class, Gamboa

Bottom Row: Mrs. S. S. Shobe, Mrs. Jesse Crawford, Mrs. John Snodgrass, Mrs. H. N. Hamilton, Mrs. J. D. Stephens, Miss Jean Bates, Mrs. Alton Jones.  
 Top Row: Mr. B. J. Fletcher, Mrs. B. J. Fletcher, Mrs. J. H. Pennington, Mr. J. H. Pennington, Mrs. G. T. Darnall, Jr., Mr. George T. Darnall, Jr., Mr. S. H. Sharpsteen.

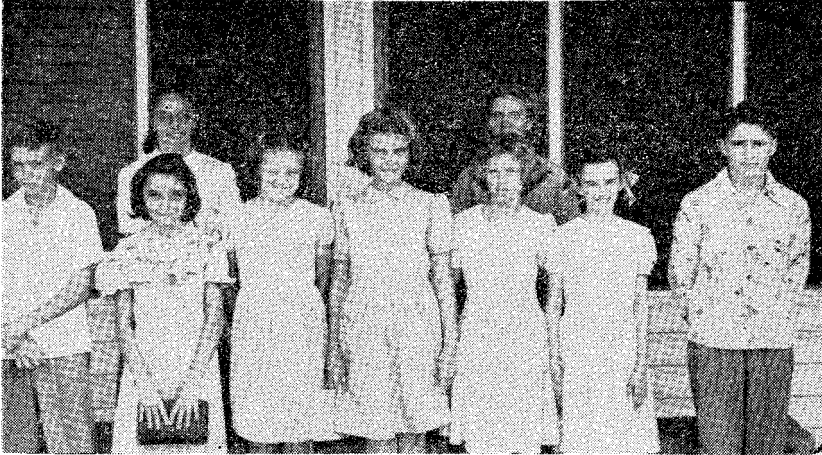


### The Beginners and Primary Departments, Gamboa

First Row: Dennis Laftime, John Laftime, Bill Spencer, Estelle Davidson, Connie Miller, Lynn Sietz, Jeanice Seitz, Linda Herring, Patrick Morrison, Shayne Stroop, Dennis Manske, Connie Walbridge.  
 Second Row: Jerry Crawford, Sandra Spain, Candace Spain, Charles Forrest, Clair Spencer, David Shobe, Nancy Davis, Ronnie Welsh, Penny Catron, Billie Manske.  
 Third Row: Lynette Henderson, Jimmy Saunders, Caroline Brooks, Nancy Webster, Janice Malone, Joyce Herring, Larry Welsh, Judy Felps, Tommy Richardson, Douglas Mac Lean, Robert Fletcher, Brenda Daisy, Sandra McKay, Judy Pennington, James Catron, John Snodgrass.

in New Hampshire. The Gray family, including Mary Elizabeth, six, and Catherine Lane, three, came to the Zone from a parish in Hopewell, New Jersey. There Mr. Gray had been prominent in his denomination's youth program and Moderator of the Central Baptist Association. Music, his first love in the church life, led him into piano and organ studies, and brought a coveted position in the male quartet of the travelling A Cappella Choir of his university.

With Dr. J. Quinter Miller, of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, as intermediary, Mr. Gray was called by



#### The Intermediates

Bottom Row: Richard Shobe, Beverly Crawford, Martha Webster, Nina Brown, Margaret Curles, Martha Fletcher, David Henderson.  
Top Row: Mrs. P. W. Henderson, Teacher; Mrs. C. W. Ryter, Teacher.

the Cocoli-Gamboa field in the autumn of 1948. On the evening of November 14th, he was installed at Gamboa. Among the participants were Mr. B. A. Herring, Gamboa Council Chairman; Mr. Russell L. Klotz, Chairman of the General Council; Dr. Robert H. Rolofson, Balboa Union Church pastor and Miss Virginia Ryter, pianist.

Under Mr. Gray's wise and energetic leadership the work in both of these Churches shows signs of basic and permanent growth. Within a year after Mr. Gray's leadership began, the

Gamboia church was financially capable of venturing the future alone. This, it was agreed, should be subject to adequate provision being made for the pastoral leadership of the other parish as well. The program of large expansion anticipates the early construction of a house of worship, and a parsonage.

## VI. THE GATUN UNION CHURCH

### Beginnings

The name "Gatun" may have been derived from the Spanish "gato" (cat). Prior to the construction of the charming village that is modern Gatun, there was an ancient native village. Its site now lies buried beneath eighty feet of rock that comprises the world famous Gatun Dam. The name is also borne by a small river that originally joined the Chagres at old Gatun. The guess might be ventured that on its banks the early natives saw many jungle cats, and therefore named it Gato.

After sacking Fort San Lorenzo, at the mouth of the Chagres, Sir Henry Morgan started for Old Panama City. He followed the river as far as suited his convenience. Quotations from his journal indicate that his first day's journey ended at a small village about nine miles from the river's mouth. Undoubtedly it was old Gatun. It is interesting to note that the builders of the Panama Railroad found evidence of an old Spanish fort near modern Gatun. The California gold hunters, crossing the Isthmus in pre-railroad days, are said to have found hospitality at a premium in the native village of Gatun. Eggs sold at \$1.00 each—good or bad. Rental on a hammock for one unforgettable night was \$2.00 with no charge for a complete installation of ingenious mosquitoes. During the operations of the Panama Canal Company, Gatun was a residential area known as "Cite de Lessups." Obviously enough the present town of Gatun owes its existence to the world famous Gatun Dam and the huge Canal Locks. The operation and maintenance of these indispensables give employment to



Gatun's 833 North Americans and more than twice that many Panamanians and West Indians.

It was in December, 1916, in the Lodge Hall, that the following officers were elected to the first Local Council of the Gatun Union Church:

President, Mr. V. C. Dillon  
Vice President, Mr. E. T. Gilbert  
Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Thomas Richardson  
Financial Secretary, Mr. E. D. Stilwell.

The first pastor was the Rev. John Abels, who shared his services with the Cristobal Union Church until the Gatun Council called the Rev. Raymond E. Marshall. Within a year he, in turn, was asked by the Cristobal church to give it part of his time and soon was called exclusively to serve the larger community, replacing Mr. Abels.

#### **The Parsonage: Ill-fated**

Perhaps a fatalist would see the Gatun parsonage as having been conceived and constructed under an unlucky star. At much sacrifice on the part of Gatun members it was constructed in order to house the Rev. and Mrs. C. B. Mitchell, the Church's first full-time minister. Construction began in November 1920, and the building was ready for occupancy six months later. The new pastor and his family used it but a year. From that time until its demolition eleven years later the building was never again occupied by the church's pastor. It was, however, a source of income. One of the tenant families was Mr. Arthur R. Lane, together with his mother and sister.

In 1933 the Panama Canal's rebuilding program for Gatun required the removal of the parsonage. Correspondence on file indicates that there had been a possibility that the Canal might purchase the structure for salvage. Precedent for this was found in the purchase of many a native hut and fruit farm, when the Canal Zone boundaries were established. The available data fails to reveal why this was not done. The feasibility of moving the building to another location was also discussed,



**The Rev. J. Wm. L. Graham**

with no recorded action. In a precautionary statement from the Canal's Executive Secretary it was made clear to the congregation that further use of the building as a residence, save for the church's minister, would be forbidden. Several available lots were considered, but none was found to be suitable. Meanwhile the deadline grew nearer. At length, on February 16, 1933, the congregation was officially informed that the lot occupied by its parsonage must be vacated by April 30.

Bids were invited through the public press, but the necessity for removing the building from the Canal Zone forbade an

advantageous sale. The following Bill of Sale was finally executed:

"Bill of Sale:—

"House number 123, Gatun, Canal Zone, known as the Union Church Parsonage.

"Received from one Matthew James the sum of thirty dollars U. S. Currency (\$30.00) in cash, for the above mentioned house and all equipment therein, except hot water tank and heater.

(Signed)

C. W. Duey

Vice President, Ex. Council, Canal Zone Union Church

Matthew A. James."

This sales pittance is tragic in contrast with a cash cost of \$4,000, exclusive of other hundreds of dollars worth of labor donated by the members. The assets of church life in the Canal Zone are many, but here is an illustration of one of its liabilities.

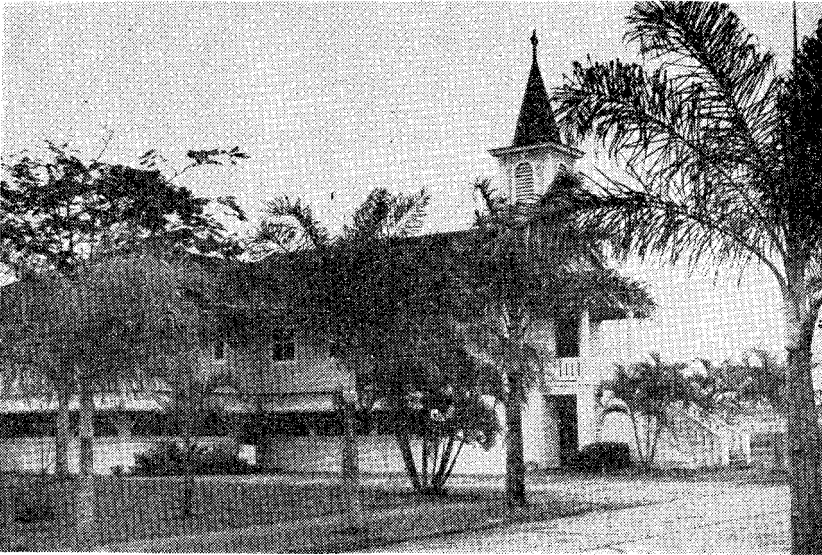
### **A Permanent Church Home**

Like the members of other Union Churches in their early



**The Church School, Gatun, 1939**

days, the Gatun folk worshipped first in a Government-owned structure provided during the construction era for lodges, churches and other non-government groups. In November 1935, almost without warning, this temporary home for the church was razed. The Church School was moved to the clubhouse, but church worship services were discontinued, to be resumed a year later when space in the Masonic Temple became available.



**The Union Church, Gatun**

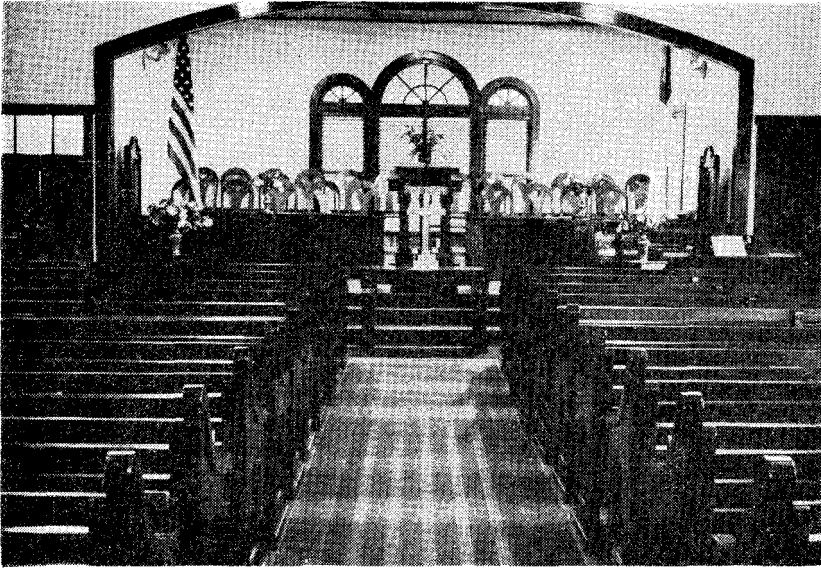


Photo by R. K. Hanna

**Interior, The Union Church, Gatun**

By the autumn of 1936, interest in the construction of a church building had matured to the point of a definite search for suitable ground from the Panama Canal Building Sites Committee. In behalf of the General Council Mr. Wilson Kromer gave aid and encouragement to the local Church Site Committee. This committee was headed by Mr. Arthur R. Lane. The other two members were Mrs. H. M. Lockwood and Mr. H. M. Thomas. Currently there was much grading in progress. This aided the Committee in predicting what topographical changes were in store, and made it easier to avoid deep fills whose settling propensities could not be accurately predicted.

The Local Sites Committee is said to have suspected certain members of the Canal Building Sites Committee of seeking to effect a selection of ground that was generally undesirable and of no use to the Canal. Failure to agree by correspondence brought a committee to Gatun to confer with the local group on February 2, 1937. It was headed by Governor Ridley himself. One of the sites visited was unfavorable to the local folk because of traffic hazards. A member of the Governor's party

while loudly acclaiming the perfect safety of the spot was rescued from a passing bus by the quick hand of a local committeeman. The speech thus interrupted was never resumed. There were sharp differences of opinion concerning the depths of fills on certain sites proposed by the Canal's committee. In these cases the Governor asked that the official grade map be consulted. This so frequently proved the local committee to be correct that the temper of one visiting official reached the sulking point. One location considered was declared by this official to be a very deep fill, but the map proved the local folk correct, in asserting it to be a cut, instead. That was more than the already irate official could endure, so he permanently isolated himself in a nearby automobile. This was the lot desired by the committee, and shortly thereafter it was assigned them.

Mr. Norman Little was the designer of the new building whose cost, with furnishings, totalled \$16,417. This did not include the electrical work done by volunteers within the congregation. The building was constructed by Grebien and Hauke, a Colon building company. Signing the contract on behalf of the church were Mr. H. R. Harris, President of the Gatun Local Council, and Messrs. L. J. Egolf, Robert Hanson and A. E. Wood. Other members of this important committee included Mr. E. Cassell, Mr. W. C. Gavin, P. R. Kiger, Mr. A. R. Lane, Mrs. H. M. Lockwood, Mrs. George D. Poole and Mrs. Russell B. Steele. The contract was let, and the first ground broken during the last week of 1937. On the following February 13 the cornerstone was laid. Participating in this ceremony was the District Grand Lodge of the Canal Zone Masonic District, and Messrs. W. H. Kromer and Harvey McConaughy, President and Vice President respectively of the General Council of the Union Church of the Canal Zone. The building was ready for occupancy on May 3, 1938. It was dedicated, free of debt, on Sunday, January 22, 1939, by the Rev. Roy B. Guild, D.D., of the Federal Council of Churches.

The financing of church properties invariably reveals a liberal amount of nobility on the part of both the committeemen who plan and lead and the members who give of time and means. In this the Gatun folk were no exception. They rallied to the task with fine determination and self-abandon. In keep-



**The Rev. Charles B. Mitchell**



**The Rev. John G. Abels**



**The Rev. and Mrs. Peter Terrace**



**The Rev. Jacob V. Koontz**

ing with its well-established pattern of helpfulness the Federal Council did its full share through its Committee on Religious Work in the Canal Zone. It was during this era that Dr. Roy B. Guild, Secretary of the Federal Council, was mentor and champion to the churches and the interpreter of their needs to this Committee. In consequence, no important move was entertained without his counsel. The data provided indicates that approximately half the building costs were raised in the states through Dr. Guild's leadership. He secured an incentive gift of \$2,000 from the Edward S. Harkness estate. All local contributions were topped by the Woman's Auxiliary, with a total of \$3,000.

Memorial gifts include the altar cross from the Adult Bible Class, given in memory of Miss Mary C. Obold. Mrs. William Heil gave a Pulpit Bible in memory of her husband who had long been faithful to the church with his talents and liberal with his means. Chaplain Ramsden, who served at Fort Davis during the twenties and supplied the Gatun pulpit for a brief period, gave both the Communion Table and the Pulpit stand. They were carved by his own hands and continue to dignify the sanctuary.

A growing need for Church School space was officially considered from many angles, with varying theories of solution proposed. Eventually, in 1948, an addition of five serviceable classrooms was constructed at a cost of about \$2,000. Again the labor on electrical installations was donated. The builder was Mr. E. A. Hauke of Colon.

### **Religious Education**

A major emphasis upon the Church School in all of the Union Churches is rightly taken for granted, it therefore need not be specifically amplified in these pages. This phase of the Kingdom enterprise in the Gatun church has from the earliest days been efficient and forward looking. One of its pluses worthy of mention is the Adult Bible Class, organized in 1929 by Mrs. P. R. Kiger who served as its teacher for over a decade. Subsequent teachers include Mrs. Leon J. Egolf, Mrs. M. L. Nash and Mrs. R. R. Gregory. According to the familiar pattern this class has business and social meetings in addition to its

regular study sessions. Its benevolent giving is worthy of note. By means of an annual bazaar alone, a total of \$1,700 has been raised for worthy projects. On the receiving end were the Bolla Vista Children's Home, Panama City; the Save the Children Federation, New York; the Palo Seco Leper Colony, Panama; the Salvation Army and the work of Mr. and Mrs. Iglesias among the San Blas Islanders. It was this class that initiated the equipment of a dispensary for these neglected folk. During the Second World War the class maintained a weekly "At Home" for service men. Ever alert to help their own church also, this group of earnest Christian people has helped provide such needed equipment as choir chairs, sanctuary pews, a piano, and the kitchen refrigerator.

In the matter of missionary education, at least two of the church's ministers have made appreciable contributions. One of these, the Rev. C. Telford Erickson, D.D., supplied the pulpit for only a few months, but during that time he gave unforgettable emphasis to the ecumenicity of Christ's sovereignty. For nearly half a century this delightfully youthful octogenarian rendered singular service as a missionary in remote Albania. A Congre-



**The Rev. R. Donald Clare**



**The Rev. Leon S. De Smidt**