

## **THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST AMONG AFRO-AMERICANS IN DETROIT**

Around 1917 during World War I the first black members of the Churches of Christ moved to Detroit looking jobs and escaping the poverty and discrimination they had known in the South. The first members attended worship in the Warren Avenue (white) church and heard Claud F. Witty preach sitting on the back row. Witty was warm and encouraging to these members but not every one was. The black members then began meeting in the home of Blanche Yowell on Superior Street then, as the numbers grew, rented a storefront at St. Antoine and Alexandrine, the location now swallowed up by Harper Hospital and Detroit Receiving Hospital.

G. P. Bowser likely took this picture as his young daughter, Thelma, is in the photograph and he was known for taking many pictures in his extensive travels in preaching. Bowser first came to preach in Detroit in 1920 and held eight gospel meetings in the next ten years.