

# Rev. Samuel W. Bacote

Minister

1866-1946

by David Conrads

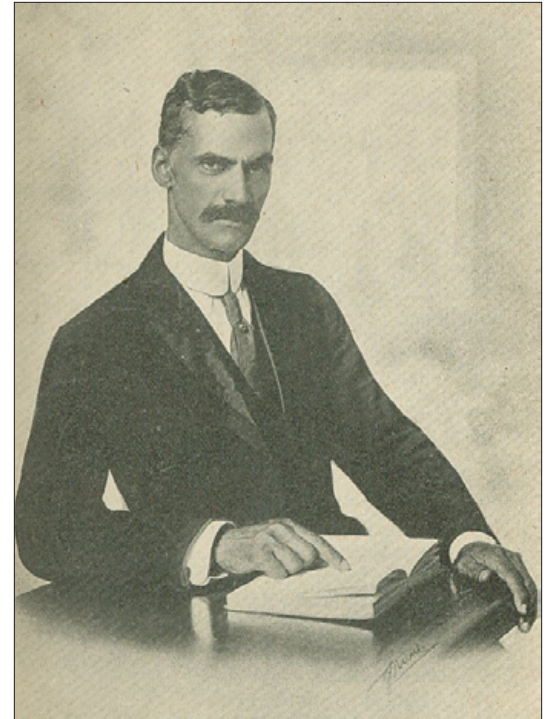
For a half a century, Rev. Samuel W. Bacote was the pastor of Second Baptist Church, one of the oldest and largest black churches in Kansas City. The son of former slaves, Bacote was also a scholar, a writer, and a nationally prominent figure in the Baptist church.

Bacote was born in Society Hill, South Carolina. His mother died when he was three months old, leaving him to be raised by his father and grandmother. Unlike most former slaves, his father was literate and served for a time as the deputy sheriff of Darlington County, South Carolina. Bacote was sent to public school at the age of seven. He graduated from Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1888. He entered the Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, the following year and graduated with honors in 1892. That same year he became pastor of Second Baptist Church in Marion, Alabama, and also served as principal of the Baptist Academy.

In 1895, Bacote was named pastor of Second Baptist Church in Kansas City, a position he held until his death 51 years later. In his first few years as pastor, he retired the church's debt and raised money to build a new edifice at 10th and Charlotte streets.

In 1896, Bacote entered Kansas City University, in Kansas City, Kansas, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. He was the only African American in his class and the first to graduate from that institution. Two years later, he received a Master of Arts degree and in 1904 earned a doctorate in divinity.

In addition to his studies and pastoral duties, Bacote was active nationally in the Baptist church. He served for a time as the editor of the *National Baptist Year Book* and as statistician of the National Baptist Convention. In 1913, he edited *Who's Who Among the Colored Baptist of the United States*. He also served on the board of directors of Western Baptist College, in Macon, Missouri, and was instrumental in moving the school to Kansas City where it became the Western Baptist Seminary.



### **Sources**

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"Bury Rev. S.W. Bacote, Pastor of Second Baptist for 51 Years."  
*Kansas City Call*, 10 May 1946.

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