

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF WINFIELD'S COLLEGE HILL

by Ina Turner Gray and Cindy Goertz

If you live on Soward Street or Janes Avenue, have you ever wondered if someone made a typo or if that name belonged to a long ago bishop? Actually there has been no mistake, and all of the avenue names which go east and west in the College Hill Addition do come from Methodist Episcopal Church bishops. However, McCabe is the only bishop's name to be found on streets running north and south. Other streets were named for prominent Winfield people and those who took a leading part in securing the college for Winfield. So let's find out a little about those folks for which avenues and streets are named in the area bounded on the north by Fowler and on the south by Simpson, on the east by Stevens and on the west by College. Unfortunately we have not found information about all of the people for whom College Hill streets were named.

Simpson is the eastern extension of Fifth Avenue. It is named for Matthew Simpson who edited the *Cyclopedia of Methodism* which provided some information and pictures for this research paper. Bishop Simpson was the valued friend of President Abraham Lincoln and gave the eulogy at Lincoln's funeral in Springfield, Illinois.

Edward Raymond Ames was a corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was the presiding bishop at the second Kansas-Nebraska annual conference in 1857, and he also was in charge of the gavel in 1865 and 1871 after the Kansas Conference was separated from Nebraska.

Edmund Storer Janes served as president of the church's Missionary Society. Appropriately, Grace United Methodist Church is located along an avenue named for this Methodist bishop. By the spring of 1887 "the students and other residents of College Hill had tired of walking the two miles on frozen muddy streets to get to the Methodist Church downtown and started to meet for Bible study in a house in the neighborhood." ("Experience Grace--1888-2008") This group received their first pastor in 1888. The appointment appeared in the conference journal as "College Hill Winfield." In 1903 the College Hill Church officially became Grace Church. After meeting at Southwestern for five years, lots were bought for 4 dollars on the site of a small peach orchard at the corner of College Street and Janes Avenue. A building was erected there in 1904.

Henry White Warren was the presiding bishop at the first Southwest Kansas Conference in 1884. Cowley County formed the southeast corner of this conference. He also presided over two annual conferences held in Winfield—in 1892 and again in 1908.

Fowler, or the block north of it, served as the northern extent of College Hill. Bishop Charles Henry Fowler was born in Canada. He was editor of the church's widely circulated and influential *Christian Advocate*.

Charles C. McCabe may be the most colorful of the bishops. While serving as a chaplain in the Union army during the Civil War, he was taken prisoner. Later as a secretary of the church Extension Society for sixteen years he often sang the song which was written in answer to an agnostic's statement. "Churches are dying out all over the earth.":

"A new church greets the morning's flame,

Another, evening's ray.

'All hail the power of Jesus' name—

We're building two a day!"