

Stillwater First Presbyterian Church

Stained Glass Windows History



We would like to acknowledge the people who were instrumental in making this project come to life:

- Nancy Houston Beckstrom, project coordinator.
- Mary Woods, layout, design and content.
- Ann Houston and Jason Woods, editors and moral support.
- Tom Fields, photographer.
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Introduction

As the First Presbyterian Church of Stillwater, Oklahoma, celebrates our 100th year since the dedication of our sanctuary, we wanted to honor the history and legacy of our beautiful stained glass windows.

Stained glass windows were originally used to educate people who could not read and became a crucial part of the church architecture, enhancing the beauty and meaning of the worship space.

In 2023, FPC members Nancy Beckstrom and Mary Woods were curious about the plaques underneath the windows in the sanctuary and wanted to learn more about the people they represented, and that's how this project began.

They discovered that the windows were made in St. Louis, Missouri, by the Jacoby Art Glass Company and aren't technically stained glass but "art glass," in which the glass is first painted and then fired.

According to Dr. Eric I. Williams's book *A History of the First Presbyterian Church Stillwater, Oklahoma*, during the period of 1919-1925, FPC struggled financially as they built a new building to meet the growing needs of the community.

Once the main structure was built, there were no funds available for windows. Ladies Aide stepped up to fix that problem and raised \$4,750 by asking donations for memorialized windows. The windows were installed in 1924, and the current sanctuary was dedicated on September 14th of that year.

This booklet shares history of our Presbyterian Church through the stories of the people honored on the plaques. Some of these stories are sad and commemorate people who passed away much too soon through tragic circumstances, and some of these stories are uplifting and inspiring. But all these stories remind us of the legacy of faith and love that we have inherited.

Sources of information for this booklet include church and cemetery records, newspaper articles and online genealogies.

Memorial Plaques on South Wall



Stewart Gorsuch Smith (1883-1907)
Ruby Estelle Smith (1886-1886)
Clayton Sylvester Smith (1854-1924)
Cary Lovell Burdick (1876-1924)
Althea Viola Traver Infant
Juniata Visser Soderstrom (1897 – 1922)
Margaret Elizabeth McPheeters (1851-1917)



Stewart Gorsuch Smith

BIRTH	10 Nov 1883
DEATH	17 Jul 1907 (aged 23)
BURIAL	Mount Olivet Cemetery Frederick, Frederick County, Maryland, USA
PLOT	Area H, Lot 402, Grave 3

YOUNG MAN DROWNED

Stewart Smith, aged 23 years, son of Mr. Clayton Smith, of Stillwater, Oklahoma, was drowned while bathing in the Monocacy at the "Sweet Hole," near Reifersider's mill, between 6 and 7 o'clock last evening.

Young Smith and his father had just arrived from a visit to the Jamestown Exposition, and were visiting his uncle, Mr. Granville M. Smith, who resides about a mile from the Monocacy. Smith and his cousin, Donald Smith, in company with their fathers, went to the river, and the younger Smiths decided to go in bathing. The elder Smiths remained on the bridge to watch them. After getting into the water, Donald Smith swam across the river and back. Stewart Smith was thought to be on a rock when Donald started up the river. The latter heard a cry and looked back, but could not see his cousin, and it soon became apparent that he had been drowned. The river was dragged, in an effort to recover the body, until late last night, but all efforts were futile and search was given up until this morning, when, shortly after 7 o'clock, the body was found about a hundred feet below where the young men went into the water. The body was recovered by Mr. Granville Smith, Mr. Harry Wister and Mr. Andrew Melising, Jr., and taken to the home of his uncle.

It is thought that the young man was overheated, and his going into the water caused the blood to rush to his head and render him powerless. The water is from 10 to 15 deep at that point.

The young man's father, Mr. Clayton Smith, and uncle, Mr. Granville Smith, were upon the bridge when the drowning occurred, and were unable to render any assistance.



1883	IN MEMORY OF	1907
1886	STEWART GORSUCH SMITH	1886
	RUBY ESTELLE SMITH	

Ruby Estelle Smith

BIRTH	2 Jul 1886
DEATH	24 Nov 1886 (aged 4 months)
BURIAL	<u>Iola Cemetery</u> Iola, Allen County, Kansas, USA
PLOT	7/29/4



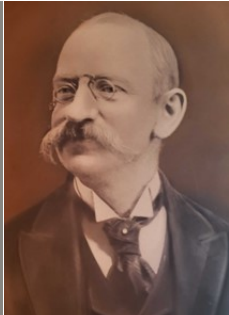
Daughter of Clayton Sylvester Smith & Melcena Virginia Crist Smith.

Ruby died before her parents moved to Stillwater.

IN MEMORY OF
1854 CLAYTON SYLVESTER SMITH 1924

Clayton Sylvester Smith

BIRTH	6 May 1854 Maryland, USA
DEATH	13 Aug 1924 (aged 70) Stillwater, Payne County, Oklahoma, USA
BURIAL	<u>Mount Olivet Cemetery</u> Frederick, Frederick County, Maryland, USA
PLLOT	Area H, Lot 402, Grave 2



AUTO ACCIDENT PROVES FATAL TO C. S. SMITH

**Stillwater Real Estate Dealer, 70
Years Old, Resident of City Since
1898, Dies From Injuries**

Clayton S. Smith, Stillwater real estate dealer, victim of an automobile accident occurring Saturday morning at the corner of Fourth and Duck streets, died at his home, 324 Knoblock street, Tuesday night shortly after 9 o'clock. Mr. Smith was 70 years old.

Driver of the automobile which knocked Smith down, causing him to strike the back of his head on the pavement, was A. J. Thomas, manager at Stillwater Lake. Smith is said to have been nearly blind.

He was attempting to cross Fourth street. Thomas was driving a Ford automobile north on Duck street and turned west at the intersection. An eye witness declares Smith stood still on the curbing a moment apparently listening for the sound of approaching vehicles, then started walking hurriedly across the street. In doing so, he walked in front of the automobile, although the driver swerved to miss him, the witness said. The accident occurred about 9 o'clock. None of the wheels of the car ran over Smith's body, the witness declared. Death was attributed to the blow on the head the old man received when he struck the pavement.

Funeral services were held at the Presbyterian church at 1:15 o'clock Thursday afternoon, conducted by Rev. Allen S. Davis. Accompanied by Mrs. Smith, wife of Clayton Smith, and C. Ray Smith, his son, the body was taken to Frederick, Maryland, his old home, for burial.

Clayton S. Smith was born in Maryland, May 6, 1854. He was a graduate of Millersville Normal school, Lancaster, Pa. He came west when 18 years old, and worked on a cattle ranch in Colorado. Later he lived at Iola, Kan. In 1882 he was married to Miss Nellie V. Crist of Baltimore, Maryland, at Kansas City, Mo.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith came to Stillwater in 1898. For about a year Mr. Smith was in the furniture business, opening the Home Furniture store. Twenty-five years he was in the loan and real estate business in Stillwater, in the last fourteen years being associated with his son, C. Ray Smith, in the firm of Clayton S. Smith & Son.

Three children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Smith. A daughter, Ruby, died in infancy. A son, Stewart, was drowned in Maryland in 1907, soon after his graduation from Oklahoma A. and M. college.



Cary Lovell Burdick

BIRTH	1876
DEATH	1924 (aged 47-48)
BURIAL	Fairlawn Cemetery Stillwater, Payne County, Oklahoma,
PLOT	Blk-A, Lot 12

C. L. BURDICK IS FOUND DEAD AT FARM LODGE

C. L. Burdick was found dead Tuesday afternoon on his farm near Bentonville, Ark., according to information received by his family and friends in Stillwater.

Indications were that Mr. Burdick had been dead probably four days, and that he killed himself with a gun.

Mrs. Lula Young, sister of Mr. Burdick, was in Tulsa Tuesday. She was informed there from Bentonville. She telephoned to C. F. Babcock in Stillwater and he carried the news to Mrs. C. L. Burdick.

Mrs. Young is said to have seen Mr. Burdick on the Bentonville farm Thursday, February 14. He lived alone in a lodge on the farm.

Funeral services for C. L. Burdick will be held Friday afternoon at 3 o'clock at the Presbyterian church, conducted by Dr. Allen S. Davis. Burial, in Fair Lawn cemetery, will be in charge of the Masons.

Pall-bearers were chosen from the Payne County Bar association, the six being W. H. Wilcox, Chester H. Lowry, J. W. Reece and John P. Hickam, of Stillwater, and J. M. Grubbs and S. J. Berton, of Cushing.

The body of Mr. Burdick was brought to Stillwater at noon Thursday, by Mrs. Lula Young, sister. The body was taken to the residence of Mrs. C. L. Burdick, 706 West street.

In addition to his sister, Mrs. Young, Mr. Burdick is survived by his wife, his mother, Mrs. E. A. Burdick, and two daughters and a son, Catherine, Cara and Ben. All except the sister live in Stillwater.



C. L. Burdick, known to his friends as "Cary," came to Stillwater more than twenty years ago. He attained considerable prominence as an attorney. For a time he was a law partner of J. W. Reece, the partnership being dissolved when Reece was elected as county attorney some fifteen years ago. Burdick was city attorney in 1908, and was elected city commissioner in 1915. He prepared the charter under which the city of Stillwater is operated. From 1915 to 1920 he was in partnership with W. H. Wilcox.

In war time, Mr. Burdick was chairman of the Payne County Council of Defense and gave freely of his time to war work. His overwork at that time is thought to have been the cause of his breakdown in health, which came just before the war's end. In 1919 he suffered a still greater decline in health, while in California. For a time he was a patient in the Oklahoma hospital for the insane at Norman. He left the sanitarium several months ago, spending some time in Texas. About three weeks ago he was in Stillwater.

IN MEMORY OF
ALTHEA VIOLA TRAVER; INFANT

Althea Viola Traver

BIRTH unknown

DEATH 21 Jul 1896
 Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, USA

BURIAL River View Cemetery
 Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, USA

PLOT Section 6-C, no plot location recorded. Upper part of section, near main entrance.

Daughter of Alice Bralley Traver, professor of Education at OSU and a divorced mother of Aileen Traver Kitchens Lived at 102 North Orchard Lane. Died of Cholera. Father was Luther Traver.



July 21st 1896

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

Portland, Oregon *July 21st 1896*

This Certifies, that:

Name in full, (Write legibly and spell correct. If children, add mother's given name at bottom.) *Althea Viola Traver*

Aged *Five* years *Twenty* months *Twenty* days

Occupation _____ Male or Female *Female*

Place of Birth (State) *Washington Co. Ore*

Previous Residence *Beaverton, Ore*

Particular Place of Death *465 Stephens*

Date of Death *July 21st 1896* Father's Birthplace *Kans*

Date of Burial *July 22 1896* Mother's Birthplace *Ore*

Place of Interment *River View* Cemetery

Single or Married _____ Race *White*

The Edward Holman Undertaking Co. Undertaker

PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE

I Certify, That I have attended the above described decedent from *July 21st*
 to *1896*; also that the cause of her death was *Cholera*
 to *Infantum* which was contracted at *St. A. Plum* M. D.

See These insert the locality, if known, where the disease was contracted.

Juniata Visher Soderstrom

BIRTH	17 Mar 1897
DEATH	14 Dec 1922 (aged 25)
BURIAL	<u>Fairlawn Cemetery</u> Stillwater, Payne County, Oklahoma
PLOT	Blk-5 Lot 44



Mrs. Edwin D. Soderstrom

Funeral of Mrs. Edwin D. Soderstrom, who died December 14, was held in the Presbyterian church at 3 o'clock Monday afternoon, conducted by the Rev. Dr. Allen S. Davis.

Mrs. Soderstrom was born March 17, 1897, in Chicago, Ill. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Visher, her given name being Juniata. She was married to Edwin D. Soderstrom, assistant professor in shop practice, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical college, August 26, 1917. She was a member of the Presbyterian church and the Lahoma club. She is survived by her husband and one son, Edwin D., Jr., 2 ½ years old, in Stillwater, and by her mother, four sisters and three brothers. Her sisters are Brs. Evelyn D. White, Conner, Mont.; Mrs. Dorothy Slouber, Forrestberg, S. Dak.; Mrs. Grace V. Payne, Teheran, Persia, and Mrs. Lillian Calkins, Muskogee. Her brothers are Dr. John W. Visher, Twin Falls, Idaho; Stephen F. Visher, Bloomington, Ind., and Harvey H. Visher, Forrestberg, S. Dak., the latter being in Stillwater, Friday.



IN MEMORY OF
1851 MARGARET ELIZABETH MCPHEETERS 1917

Margaret Elizabeth *Hunter* McPheeters

BIRTH 1852

DEATH 9 Sep 1917 (aged 64–65)

BURIAL Fairlawn Cemetery
Stillwater, Payne County, Oklahoma, USA

PLOT Blk-10, Lot 87



Death of Mrs. Margaret McPheeters

Mrs. Margaret McPheeters died at Edmond, Ok., Sunday morning, September 9, 1917. Funeral services was held at the Presbyterian church in Stillwater at 10 o'clock Tuesday morning, and interment was in Fair Lawn cemetery.

Mrs. McPheeters left six children, all of whom save one, Archie, who is in Minnesota, were present at her deathbed. The others are:

Mattie, of the extension division of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical college, Stillwater.

William, of Texas Agricultural and Mechanical college, College Station, Tex.

Ralph, superintendent of schools at Porum.

Nell, teacher of home economics at Ardmore.

Margaret, head of the home economics department of Central State Normal school at Edmond.

Miss Elinor Hunter, a niece, made her home with Mrs. McPheeters. The husband and father, Thomas R. McPheeters, died in Stillwater some fifteen months ago.

