

## Biography of Frederick A. Williams (From *History of the 2100 Block Lafayette Street*, 1987)

"...The Board expresses its deep appreciation to the family of Mr. Frederick A. Williams for his long and valuable service to our hospital, and the deep regret of his passing, and that the tribute paid to Mr. Williams at his memorial service be a part of this resolution and placed in the minutes, and copies of the same sent to the family." Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Managers of the Presbyterian Hospital Association of Colorado, June 22, 1943.

Frederick A. Williams was born on November 17, 1846, at Feeding Hills, Massachusetts, son of Rev. Dillon and Mary Freeman Williams. Through his mother he was a direct descendant of Elder William Brewster of the Mayflower. It was the custom of that family in each generation to dedicate one son, at least, to the ministry. His ancestry dates back through a long line of ministers.

Williams early boyhood was spent in New England where his father held different pastorates, the last being at Cleveland. There Frederick grew to manhood. He attended the public schools and also studied with his father, a graduate of Yale University. He would not let his father sacrifice to send him to college, but chose to educate himself, and in the finest sense of the word was a self-made man.

He became Superintendent of Schools at Dover, Delaware in the late eighteen seventies and while there studied law with Judge Smithers. He also farmed. In 1882, at the age of 36, he entered the practice of law in Denver, practicing for 61 years. He exemplified, in his long service, the best traditions and the highest ideals of his profession. His active interest in civic affairs persisted throughout his professional life. During his two terms in the City Attorney's Office he drafted legislation destined to have a profound effect on the future of the city, including the enabling legislation for the Colfax Viaduct, and the ordinance making Denver a "red brick" city. He fathered and fostered much of the Parks system of the city and was a leading figure in securing Denver's Mountain Parks. He cleared the title by act of Congress for Cheesman Park, first called Congress Park. He also made possible Washington Park and many of the playgrounds of the city. He was farseeing, and always on the lookout for good things for Denver. He proved to be one of the ablest, and most altruistic and constructive builders of the City.

He served in a leadership role in most of the civic organizations that he joined. He was a member of the Denver and Colorado Bar Associations, the Denver Chamber of Commerce and the Denver Athletic Club where he served three terms as president. He was an active Mason. In 1889, he was made Master of Union Lodge No. 7, and in 1921, was Commander of Colorado Cammandery No. 1--Knights Templar.

Upon his arrival in Denver, he joined Central Presbyterian Church, and was an active member for 61 years. He held essentially all of the lay offices of the church at one time or another. He was Secretary of the church in 1930. He was the fourth Sunday School Superintendant in the history of the church, and frequently held Sunday School activities at his home at 2159 Lafayette. In 1929 he was elected elder and in 1936 he was elected to life Eldership in the church. He served for many years as Vice Moderator of the Session, and served on the Board of Trustees. He was very regular and faithful in attendance at the worship services of the church, and the Sunday before he died, he was with his niece in his pew at Central.

Mr. Williams was a small man physically, but was a man of rugged individualism. Long after most of the neighborhood had become tenements, and his was one of the few white faces left, he held on in his magnificent house. The Cazin family remembers "the Judge" as an active, gentle old man who enjoyed driving the large car which he kept protected in the carriage house. He worked every day to the time of his death. He was an outdoorsman, and loved to hunt and fish.

In his own mind, the culmination of his illustrious career occurred after the age of 75 with the establishment of Presbyterian Hospital. The hospital arose, as did many of the city's Presbyterian congregations, and the Westminster College, from Central Presbyterian Church. Rev WH Wray Boyle, the pastor, convened a meeting including 100 Presbyterian ministers and laymen representing every Presbyterian Church on May 20, 1919 at Central. Plans were made to build a 1000 bed non-denominational sanitarium, supported by the Presbyterians of the nation. A campaign was started to raise money. The hospital was to be built at the crest of Grasshopper Hill, part of the old McCullough farm, overlooking the city of Denver. The property was donated, and fund raising begun. The cornerstone was laid on June 26, 1921, and the first patient was admitted on the day before it officially opened on March 17, 1926. The nursing school opened before the hospital, and students trained at Children's Hospital until Presbyterian Hospital opened.

The building of the Hospital and its early operation was beset with financial difficulties. Williams served as Secretary for the Presbyterian Hospital from its beginning in 1919 until his death in 1943. He was a member of the Board of Directors during all of that time. During the struggle to establish the hospital, many of his contemporaries believed that it would have closed its doors or even been taken over by others had it not been for the generosity and perseverance of Fred Williams, who, in the darkest hours and in the greatest crises, never gave up. He surely would have resisted the recent acquisition by American Medical International, as this Hospital was to be a monument of Presbyterian philanthropy.

"Frederick Augustus Williams won his victory for humanity and the token and symbol of it is the Presbyterian Hospital on Grasshopper Hill. If an institution is "the

lengthened shadow of a man," then our Presbyterian Hospital is certainly the lengthened shadow of Mr. Williams."

Frederick A. Williams died at Presbyterian Hospital on May 24 1943 at the age of 96. He died of a ruptured heart secondary to a major heart attack. He was survived by a sister, Miss Elizabeth A. Williams, and a niece, Miss Susan T. Williams.

### Denver Directory listings for the Williams family

- 1905 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. 16th corner of Lawrence r Denver Athletic Club
- 1905 Williams the sisters no listing
- 1906 Williams Fredrick A same as 1905
- 1907 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. r 1646 High
- 1908 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. r Denver Athletic Club
- 1909 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. r 2159 Lafayette
- 1909 Williams Miss Mary C r 2159 Lafayette
- 1909 Williams Miss Rebecca T. r 2159 Lafayette
- 1909 Williams Miss Elizabeth A r 2159 Lafayette
- 1910 Williams Fredrick A same as 1909
- 1910 Williams Elizabeth Rebecca & Mary no listing
- 1911 Williams Elizabeth A Mary C and Rebecca r 2159 Lafayette
- 1911 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. 16th cor Lawrence r 2159 Lafayette
- 1913 Williams Frederick A -Monmouth Investment Co 1760 Stout (listed in regular listings - not business listings)
- 1913 Williams sisters r 2159 Lafayette
- 1913 Williams Frederick A vice president Monmouth Inv. Co. r 2159 Lafayette
- 1914 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. 16 cor Lawrence r 2159 Lafayette
- 1914 Williams Frederick A -Monmouth Investment Co 1760 Stout
- 1914 Williams sisters all on 2159 Lafayette
- 1915 Williams Frederick A -Monmouth Investment Co. still just listed in regular listing - not listed under Investment Securities or Investing or Mine Brokers or Stocks and Bonds
- 1915 Williams Fredrick A same as 1914
- 1915 Williams sisters same
- 1916 Williams Frederick A -Charles Connor Stone Crushing Co not listed under Stone Breakers but under regular listing its address is 3262 Blake
- 1916 Williams Fredrick A sec. Charles Connor Stone Crushing Co. r 2159 Lafayette
- 1916 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Continental Bldg. r 2159 Lafayette
- 1916 Williams sisters same
- 1917 Williams Elizabeth only Elizabeth is listed - Mary and Rebecca are not
- 1917 Williams Fredrick A lawyer is the same
- 1918 Williams Fredrick A lawyer 412-414 Interstate Trust Bldg. 16th cor Lawrence r 2159 Lafayette
- 1918 Williams Elizabeth and Rebecca r 2159 Lafayette
- 1919 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1919 Williams Elizabeth and Rebecca same
- 1920 Williams Rebecca and Elizabeth same
- 1920 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1921 Williams Rebecca and Elizabeth same
- 1921 Williams Fredrick a same
- 1922 Williams Elizabeth and Rebecca same
- 1922 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1923 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1923 Williams Elizabeth & Rebecca same
- 1925 Williams Elizabeth & Rebecca r 2159 Lafayette
- 1925 Williams Frederick A lawyer 412-414 Interstate Trust Bldg. 16th cor of Lawrence h 2159 Lafayette
- 1926 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1926 Williams Elizabeth A 2159 Lafayette
- 1926 Williams Elizabeth (no Rebecca) same
- 1927 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1928 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1928 Williams Eliz. A same as 1926
- 1929 Williams Elizabeth same
- 1929 Williams Fredrick A for the lawyer all the information is the same
- 1930 Williams Fredrick A the lawyer - same info

- 1930 Williams Eliz A same
- 1931 Williams Elizabeth no listing
- 1931 Williams Fredrick A the lawyer - same info
- 1932 Williams Eliz A no listing
- 1932 Williams Fredrick A the lawyer - same info
- 1933 Williams Fredrick A same info for the lawyer
- 1933 Williams Elizabeth A r 2159 Lafayette
- 1934 Williams Eliz A same
- 1934 Williams Fredrick A the lawyer - same info
- 1935 Williams Eliz A same
- 1935 Williams Fredrick A lawyer - same info
- 1936 Williams Eliz A no listing
- 1936 Williams Fredrick A lawyer - same info
- 1937 Williams Fredrick A the lawyer- same info
- 1937 Williams Eliz A r 2159 Lafayette
- 1938 Williams Fredrick A the lawyer- same info
- 1938 Williams Eliz. A r 2159 Lafayette
- 1939 Williams Eliz A same
- 1939 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1940 Williams Eliz A same
- 1940 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1940 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1941 Williams Fredrick A same
- 1941 Williams Eliz A same
- 1942 Williams Fredrick A no listing

## References

- Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Managers of the Presbyterian Hospital Association of Colorado, June 22, 1943.
- Jones, Amy, The Early Years of Presbyterian Hospital (1919-1926). Document prepared for internal distribution to the Board of Directors, Presbyterian Hospital, 1985.
- Barnett, William L., A tribute to the late Frederick A Williams, Esq, at his Memorial Service in Central Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado, May 27, 1943.
- F.A. Williams, 96, Denver lawyer 60 years, is dead, Denver Post 25 My 1943.
- Hill, E. S., An authorized and complete history of the Central Presbyterian Church of Denver, Colorado, 1860-1930.
- White, J.H., The first hundred years of Central Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado, 1860-1960.
- Autopsy and medical records from Denver Presbyterian Hospital Archives of the Presbyterian Hospital School of nursing