

WILLIAM FENIMORE GRAY

Born: April 19, 1862

Otter Creek, Tama County, Iowa

Parents: Allen H. and Louisa Sophia (Morse) Gray

Brothers: Amos Hezekiah, Edwin Appleton

Sister: Lula Eugenia Morse

Married: Annie Electra Erasted, September 1, 1886

in Annie's parents home at Schaller

(Schaller), Iowa by Rev. Heilner

Died: January 30, 1954 in Pueblo, Jefferson

County, Colorado

William Gray was born to teachers and farmers in Iowa, Allen H. farmed during the season and taught school during the winter. Louisa was also a teacher. Will grew up on the farm and while plowing received the call to be a preacher.

In 1884 William entered the University of Chicago. In the next few years he became a student pastor and then a pastor. After marrying Annie he again went to school for a year.

William met Annie when he went back to his parents' farm to settle the estate after the death of his father. William organized a revival meeting and Annie, a school teacher, was one of the converts. They married shortly after they met.

Seven years after William and Annie were married the couple and the children left a pastorate in Iowa to go to Hankow, China as missionaries of the American Baptist Missionary Union. In 1897 They relocated to Rangoon, Burma as pastor of the English speaking Immanuel Baptist Church. Allan Brasted Gray liked to tell that his father William played the piano and the people sang sometimes in the style of the Salvation Army. The missionaries also fed the people. This was to attract people to the church. I suppose this is where we get the expression "rice Christians."

During the family's stay in China William had the experience that he titles "The Ambush" and writes about it in his diary.

"The Ambush" Early in 1896 wife's health became impaired because of expectant motherhood and I joined with other missionaries in Hankow and Kieuking to open Kuling as a permanent resort for people who needed to get away from the extremely unhealthy conditions in the low Yang Tse valley cities and mission stations during the hot summer season.