

History of the Holy Apostles Church

(1)
(1870)

The church of the Holy Apostles was the first church built in Ellsworth. In 1867 Ellsworth was the terminal of the Union Pacific Railroad. At that time the town was organized by Judge Newton, justice of the peace, Judge Henry, county clerk, and first county treasurer, and Judge Miller, as first mayor.

Judge Miller was a devout churchman, I have been told. Through his efforts an organization was formed to build an Episcopal Church, which would meet the needs of those, who needed a place to worship.

With the assistance of friends in the East, and townsmen, and also officers and clerks of old Fort Harker, a neat church like frame building was erected ^{on site of F&M Drug Store} and finished in 1870. It was furnished by contributions and gifts from friends. The furnishings consisted of an altar and pulpit, a silver communion service, baptismal font, made of native stone, and organ and chairs.

Judge Miller conducted services as a lay reader at first. Services were also held by Bishop Vail, the chaplain at the Fort, and perhaps others. They also held Sunday School. This church was duly consecrated by Bishop Vail as Church of the Holy Apostles. (Date unknown)

In 1874 or 75 Ellsworth was swept by fire and this chapel of hope, bearing tidings of good things to come, was destroyed with its contents, save the chalice, organ, and font.

Ellsworth soon ceased to be the end of the railroad and with the road, most of the population moved on west. No more Episcopal services were held here for years.

Meanwhile the Roman Catholics built a church, followed by the Presbyterians and the Methodists, on lots set aside by the town for all denominations.

{ Major Alden arrived in Ellsworth as a guest of Mr. Sprigg and