

## George Mayfield, Artist



The Artist commissioned by the Kansas Fever Committee to paint the Edward McCabe portrait unveiled today is George Mayfield, 39, from Kansas City, Ks. Though Mr. Mayfield has studied art at Lincoln University (Mo.) and at Washburn University (Topeka), he considers himself a self-taught artist. He has been pursuing his craft for 14 years in a variety of mediums (pastel, pen and ink, charcoal, oils) and has exhibited

in Art Shows from coast to coast. In the early eighties, Mr. Mayfield's marble etching of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was presented to Mrs. Coretta King at the King Center for Non-Violent Social Change in Atlanta. Mayfield's commissioned portrait of the Hon. John Carlin, former Governor of Kansas, was presented to the Governor on his Birthday.

The McCabe portrait unveiled today will be the first portrait of an African-American elected official to hang in the Kansas Statehouse. It will also be the first portrait by an African-American Artist in the Statehouse. Working from McCabe's photo and scant historical data, Mayfield completed the portrait in a few weeks. The Artist has expressed pride in his contribution to the McCabe Commemorative Observance.

## Clarence "Sonny" Scroggins



A true citizen of Kansas, civic leader Clarence "Sonny" Scroggins, Founder and Chairman of the Kansas Fever Committee, is a man of indomitable energy, commitment and vision, with a keen understanding of the importance of history. His numerous contributions to promoting social justice and racial brotherhood have made his community, his city, state and country a better place in which to live.

The Kansas Fever Committee, a member organization of the National/International African-American History Month Founder's Commission, is but one of many organizations to which Mr. Scroggins devotes his time, energy and resources. He has registered thousands of voters in an effort to increase African-American involvement in the political arena; dedicated himself to memorializing the migration of the Exodusters (freed slaves who settled in the Kansas Territory after the Civil War); chaired the Kansas Committee to Free South Africa; spearheaded the South Africa divestment campaign throughout the State; promoted the education of minorities concerning the dangers of AIDS; demonstrated leadership in Observances of the Juneteenth Celebrations, African-American History Month, in the national campaign to set aside Dr.

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## Edward Preston McCabe (1850-1920)

In 1882, the people of Kansas elected Edward Preston McCabe as State Auditor. In a state where less than 5% of the total population was African-American, this development was nationally publicized. During two terms in office, McCabe held the highest State Office of any northern Black politician. This achievement took place under Republican State Administrations. It was one of the high points of McCabe's distinguished career in public life which spanned more than 35 years.

McCabe was born on October 10, 1850 in Troy, N.Y. Although the historical record is sketchy, his intelligence and administrative skills were exhibited while he was still in his teens when he worked as a clerk for the Wall St. firm of Shreve, Kendrick & Co. At the age of 22, he moved to Chicago where he spent two years working in the Treasurer's Office of the Cook County Courthouse.

McCabe joined the "Exoduster" movement of Blacks to Kansas with his friend Abraham T. Hall, city editor of *The Conservator*, a Black newspaper. Following their arrival in Nicodemus in April 1878, McCabe was elected secretary of the Nicodemus Town Company. In Nov. 1881, McCabe was elected County Clerk, principally by White voters. His leadership abilities and political acumen rapidly won him statewide recognition as the principal Black leader in Kansas, where the Black population increased from 17,000 in 1870 to 43,000 a decade later. His election as State Auditor reflected the Kansas Republican Party's political recognition of the importance of their growing Black constituency.

After two terms in office, McCabe suffered a reversal in his political fortunes. The Republicans nominated "an Irishman" for his post as Auditor. He returned to Topeka, where he worked as a real estate agent and again sought statewide office unsuc-

cessfully in 1888.

By this time, McCabe had been appointed Washington representative of the Oklahoma Immigration Association, formed in Topeka in 1889 by Kansas Blacks intent on settling in the Oklahoma Territory. In April 1890, McCabe moved to Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, where he opened a real estate office. He was appointed first treasurer of Logan County. When the first Oklahoma Council was organized, he was chosen for the post of temporary secretary. McCabe later spearheaded the development of the all-Black town of Langston, named for Virginia's first Black Congressman.

During this period, McCabe was closely associated with the *Langston City Herald*, and continued to successfully promote Black homesteading.

In 1894, the Republican Territorial League elected him Secretary of the Party and later Assistant Chief Clerk.

In 1897, the territorial legislature established the beginnings of Langston University at Langston, and the new Republican Governor conferred upon him the office of territorial auditor. He continued in office for a decade until Nov. 15, 1907, the day Oklahoma became a State. Jim Crow was then nearing its zenith. McCabe was to embark in his declining years upon the struggle against disenfranchisement. With statehood, Oklahoma had become a segregated state.

In Feb. 1908, McCabe took the lead in challenging segregation in railway coaches and waiting rooms. In 1914, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed Oklahoma's constitutional right to legislate "separate but equal" accommodations. He died in Chicago in obscurity and extreme poverty on March 12, 1920. On March 15, his widow, Sarah J. Bryant, brought the body to Topeka for interment.

(Source: Kenneth Wiggins Porter in *Dictionary of American Negro Biographies*, Rayford Logan & Michael Winston, Ed., Norton, 1982)