

Organists of Yesteryear in the World's Largest Village

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A musical village on the edge of a metropolis

From 1920–1940, the organists at churches in Oak Park, Illinois distinguished themselves, certainly by talent, but also by hard work and a vision that went beyond playing hymns for their congregations. With the resources of Chicago just a few miles away, Oak Park might not be classified as a typical town. But recounting the contributions of a generation of Oak Park's organists shows the extent of the opportunities that were open to professional musicians of this era. In small ways, their legacy lives on in today's churches; in larger ways their musical accomplishments are an inspiration for our generation.

In the mid-nineteenth century, visitors journeying across Illinois by horse and wagon often overnights in Oak Ridge, about 15 miles from Chicago's bustling commercial district. At this crossroads, on the site that grew into the village of Oak Park, the welcoming home of Joseph Kettelstrings had served as an impromptu tavern and hotel from the mid 1830s. Beginning in the 1840s Chicago emerged as a mecca for city dwellers, who could obtain the latest innovations from the east coast on the edge of the prairie via the city's burgeoning freight networks. In a pattern that retraced itself all across the Midwest, the Kettlestrings family gradually divided and sold off property to new settlers. In the case of Oak Park, sales were restricted to those "people who were against saloons and for good schools and churches."¹ By 1851, the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad line connected Chicago southwest to Joliet and soon extended on to the Mississippi River. Hospitality and convenience steadily attracted more residents with a can-do spirit to Oak Park, with the population reaching 4,600 in 1890.

In the early years of the 20th century, Oak Park mirrored the progress that swept across the quickly industrializing North American landscape. By 1940 the village population had reached a high of 66,000, growing more than 100% in the years between the wars. The former settlement earned the nickname "The World's Largest Village," and it could have been, in political jurisdiction and in mindset. However, these villagers were not a common lot; among them are counted many innovative and enterprising scions: Frank Lloyd Wright, Ernest Hemingway, Doris Humphrey, and Ray Kroc. In the economic recovery after the Great Depression, a euphoria of success seemed to waft all across American society, spurring innovation and business growth. The aura of achievement was embodied in Chicago's centennial celebration in 1933 with a hugely popular and privately financed world exposition, "A Century of Progress."

Chicagoans formed and supported an extensive variety of professional and amateur musical organizations. Some were based on ethnic identities, such as the Chicago Welsh Male Choir, and others on business connections, such as the Illinois Bell Telephone company chorus. Organists were connected through the Chicago Choir Directors' Guild, the local Organists' Club, the Chicago Club of Women Organists, and the Illinois AGO chapter, founded as the Western Chapter in 1907.

Although overshadowed by Chicago's museums, cultural centers, performing arts, and industry, Oak Park developed a significant cultural identity in its own century of progress. The Scoville family donated land along the main thoroughfare and funds to construct a public library in 1888. William Corbett conducted a village orchestra in the 1880s, and at about that time, the Congregational Church hosted concerts by the Rubenstein Club. Dr. Methven, as president, and Mrs. Clarence Hemingway, conduc-

tor and mother of Ernest, produced concerts with the Oak Park Choral Society in 1897. Oak Park and its eastern neighbor Austin formed a local chapter to support the vision of Edward and Marian MacDowell's newly conceived colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. By 1935, 100 years after its settlement, Oak Park boasted a semi-professional Civic Symphony Association, the Warrington opera house, several movie theaters open even on Sundays, and a Civic Music Association organizing local concerts.

Home to good churches

Central to Kettlestrings's vision and the community-building ethic that shaped the village was the establishment of churches. The first makeshift church building was an unassuming 1855 frame structure known as "Temperance Hall," shared by several dozen worshippers of varying denominations. Dora Kettlestrings, the daughter of Joseph, led a *cappella* singing for services in this hall. A memoir of early days recounts that Mr. Blackner ran a New England-style singing school in Oak Park and his wife played a parlor organ in Temperance Hall.² The first denominational building constructed in Oak Park was Emmanuel Lutheran Church in 1867, a German congregation.

With the construction of the landmark stone edifices of First Congregational Church in 1873 and First United Methodist in 1874, several congregations anchored Oak Park's central commercial district, just two blocks from the train line to Chicago. The saying went, "When you get where the saloons stop and the churches begin, you are in Oak Park."³ Modeled on European cathedrals, these buildings accommodated several hundred worshippers and symbolized the key role that religion played in the village. By the 1930s, at least seven congregations in the village registered memberships above 1,500. Perhaps largely due to the immigrant population, which in the 1920s and 30s hovered around 50% non-natives mainly from northern Europe, a commitment to maintaining churches in the European style was unquestioned.

Fine pipe organs were *de rigueur* in these churches. E. M. Skinner, Austin, and Casavant each installed large showcase instruments in Oak Park in the first decades of the 20th century. Many of these organs served well into the 1980s. The organists who played them, along with school and private music teachers, provided musical experiences for the whole village. Some of the organists were heard nightly at Oak Park's movie theaters as well as Sundays at the church.

Radio is king for the King of Instruments

Edwin Stanley Seder (1892–1935), First Congregational Church

Seder served as organist at First Congregational Church in Oak Park from 1921 to 1935. This congregation built on the site of the Scoville family's apple orchard in 1873 and in the 1890s they hosted the MacDowell Society's concerts. By Seder's time, the first church had been replaced with a spacious English Gothic revival building.

Seder held a music degree from the University of New Mexico, where he also taught before moving to the Chicago area. His musical accomplishments show him to have a broad command of organ and choral repertoire. At First Congregational, he maintained a choir skilled and balanced enough to present Bach cantatas and *Messiah*. He also accompanied the Chicago Bach Chorus in many Bach cantatas. With this group he performed the *Christmas Oratorio* at Orchestra Hall on Michigan Avenue. In one program of extreme dimensions, the Chicago Bach Chorus performed the *Magnificat*, five cantatas, and the



Edwin Seder and his wife, professional soprano Else Arendt (Archives of First United Church of Oak Park)

Actus Tragicus, according to the *Tribune's* Douglas, "both ardently and with respect." Seder played Bach's *Prelude in E-Flat* and the *St. Anne Fugue* at one Bach Chorus concert. For the Chicago Singverein he accompanied Bruch's *Das Lied von der Glocke*, op. 45. He frequently accompanied his wife, soprano Else Harthan Arendt, in recitals of Baroque music, both in Oak Park and throughout Chicago venues. Upon Seder's untimely death in 1946, Arendt became the music director at the church.

A regular feature of *The American Organist* in the 1920s and 1930s was a listing of service music submitted by members. There is no indication on what basis these lists were selected; many of the submissions are from the same organists on a regular basis. They worked in congregations with some of the country's better-known music programs, such as Lynnwood Farnam at Holy Communion in New York and Ray Hastings at Temple Baptist Church in Los Angeles. From a review of several of the service music submissions, character music and opera excerpts from concert venues were quite commonly heard during worship services, and hymn-based voluntaries only on occasion.

In 1922, Seder reported having played *Festival Toccata* (Fletcher), *Allegro in F* (Guilmant), *Largo* from the Ninth Symphony (Dvorák), *Grand Choeur Dialogué* (Gigout), *Sunset and Evening Bells* (Federlein), and "March" from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner) at First Congregational Church. On Palm Sunday in 1923, he performed "The Palms" (Faure), "Jerusalem" (Parker), *Prelude to Parsifal* (Wagner), and "Palm Sunday" (Mailly). He performed these works on the church's 4-manual Skinner organ (Opus 274) of 69 ranks, which was situated in the front of the nave high above the altar with the console hidden by a carved wooden screen.

Seder played, not only behind this screen on Sundays, but also out of sight for many radio listeners. The advances in broadcasting and electronic technology in early 20th-century America strongly impacted the organ world. Chicago radio station WLS, funded by Sears, Roebuck (the World's Largest Store), began broadcasting in 1924 and from day one employed theatre organist Ralph Waldo Emerson. Early rival WGN (the World's Greatest Newspaper) was financed by the *Chicago Tribune*. The *Tribune's* reviewer Elmer Douglas wrote a daily review of radio broadcasts, which were the new sensation. The public considered musical broadcasts on the airwaves just as much a performance as a live concert. Douglas was particularly enamored of the playing by organist Edwin Stanley Seder, who began playing for WGN radio broadcasts

in 1924. Douglas wrote in great detail about each work—for example, singling out some of Seder's improvisations and the beautiful *Sanctus* from Gounod's *St. Cecilia Mass*, presumably transcribed by Seder for organ. On nearly any given day at 6:30 p.m., listeners throughout Chicago could tune in to WGN and hear a live organ recital by Seder.

Seder performed upwards of 1,000 concert broadcasts, first on an Estey organ at the station, and later on a Lyon & Healy organ constructed specifically for the WGN live broadcast studio in Chicago in 1924. The radio organ was played in a studio designed by acousticians with walls covered in silk brocade to provide optimal tone quality. Reportedly in December 1925 Seder reached the mark of having broadcast his 1,000th piece without ever having repeated a work on the air.

His radio presence certainly brought recognition. He had gained the post of professor in the organ department at Northwestern University in Evanston in 1919 and also taught at Chicago's Sherwood Music School. In 1934, he joined the music faculty at Wheaton College Conservatory, in the far western suburbs of Chicago, where he taught history, organ, and conducting.

In addition to his teaching, broadcasting, and service playing, Seder earned the FAGO certificate and became president (dean) of the Chicago AGO chapter. During his tenure he led the chapter in planning for a series of weekly noonday recitals in Chicago venues. He concertized frequently in Oak Park and Chicago. He was once presented by the Chicago AGO chapter in recital at St. James Cathedral. He was invited to perform at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Evanston, home to a 4-manual Skinner, Opus 327, and at the dedication of the 121-rank Kimball organ at New First (Union Park) Congregational Church of Chicago in 1927. Two representative recitals at First Congregational in Oak Park reveal that much of his repertoire showed off the orchestral organ through recent character music and opera transcriptions:

Concert Overture in B Minor (Rogers)
"Allegro" from *Sonata I* (Guilmant)
Danish Song (Sandby)
March of the Gnomes (Stoughton)
Serenade (Rachmaninov)
Rhapsody (Cole)

A second program opened with a repeat performance of Stoughton's *March of the Gnomes*, followed by:

Overture to Der Freischütz (Weber)
Minuet (Zimmerman)
Bells of St. Anne (Russell)
Brook (Dethier)
Concert Overture (Hollins)

Seder's concerts often featured complex works by Bach, such as *Komm Gott, Schöpfer* from the Leipzig chorales, which he played along with one of the few works he composed, *The Chapel of San Miguel*, on a program in Winnipeg in 1929.⁴

Music for the masses

Edgar A. Nelson (1882–1959), First Presbyterian Church

Philip Maxwell of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* wrote often about Edgar Nelson's many performances for very large audiences in Chicago. He mentions that one of Edgar Nelson's favorite passages in the Bible was "Sing unto him a new song: play skillfully with a shout of joy" (Psalm 33:3).⁵ Maxwell did not document Nelson's shouts of joy, but Nelson's skillful playing is well documented. His career was centered around First Presbyterian Church in Oak Park, in the "church corridor" of the city's commercial district, but his impact went far beyond.

Nelson was born into a musical family of Swedish heritage and followed in



Dr. Edgar Nelson, organist at First Presbyterian Church of Oak Park (Archives of First United Church of Oak Park)

his father's steps as a church musician. Beginning in 1909 and continuing for 47 years, he was music director at First Presbyterian Church, playing an organ by the Hall Company, with whom he may have consulted on the design. Hall had also installed an organ for the Bush Temple of Music, a well-known piano store in Chicago.

While he was working at First Presbyterian in Oak Park, Nelson was also a student at the Bush Conservatory in Chicago, one of several prominent private music schools established in the early 20th century. Nelson later joined the faculty there. As church music director, he presented organ concerts and conducted musical revues, such as a musical arrangement of *The Thurber Carnival*. He also directed children's and adult choirs and composed incidental music for the church's Christmas pageants, which were remembered later by church members as being fabulous. The church music budget provided for a paid quartet of local professional singers, which Nelson conducted for Sunday services. Not until the early 1950s with new pastoral leadership was a volunteer choir and a handbell ensemble formed.

Dr. Nelson played Sunday mornings in Oak Park for a congregation of 1,600 and then for 40 years headed into Chicago each afternoon to Orchestra Hall, where he conducted a choir of 125 voices at the Chicago Sunday Evening Club until 1956. The club was a source of pride for the greater metropolitan area and eventually drew a national audience through radio broadcasts. Every Sunday night local businessmen and travelers would fill the 2,000-seat concert hall for a nondenominational Christian service featuring prominent religious speakers such as Henry Sloane Coffin from Union Theological Seminary and W.E.B. DuBois from Atlanta University. Founded in 1908, the Chicago Sunday Evening Club still produces a weekly cable TV broadcast. "30 Good Minutes" is aired on WTTW, where production moved from Orchestra Hall in the 1960s.

The club's leaders, who included Rev. Clifford W. Barnes, an internationally known church activist and Chicago philanthropist, offered an additional level of status to the CSEC, as did Daniel Burnham's beautiful Orchestra Hall venue from 1904. Dr. Nelson played the Lyon & Healy organ there, Opus 164 also from 1904, which at 4 manuals and 56 ranks was reported to be the largest instrument the Chicago-based company ever built. The CSEC services included performances by the club's own chorale, which pre-dated the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's resident chorus by several decades.

Dr. Nelson was respected and well known in Oak Park through his long tenure at First Presbyterian Church. Also, due to his post as conductor, and from 1938 until shortly before his death, general choral director for the annual Chicagoland Music Festival, his reputation extended much further. Beginning in 1930, the Chicago Tribune Charities sponsored this event annually for 35 years, reportedly attracting more than 10,000 singers at a time to Soldier Field. The outdoor stadium was usually home

to the Chicago Bears football team, but for a few days each August, in Chicago's sweltering summer heat, a musical crew headed by Nelson organized singing contests and performances for choral ensembles from as many as sixteen states. On one occasion, more than 80,000 people were expected in the audience, purchasing tickets at \$1.50 each. Participating choirs were auditioned because the number of choirs that wished to perform was far greater than the organizers could accommodate. The festival presented not only classical choirs, but also represented Chicago's varied ethnicities with African-American gospel choirs, accordion ensembles, and popular country vocalists as well.

When he was only 28 years old, Nelson was honored by King Gustaf V of Sweden with the Order of Valhalla, during a tour of Scandinavia with the Swedish Choral Club of Chicago, which he directed.⁶ In 1930, he became president of Bush Conservatory of Chicago. Two years later, when the Bush Conservatory was subsumed under Chicago Musical College, Nelson continued on as president of the merged school. His legacy was such that the Chicago Conservatory of Music dedicated a concert hall in his honor after his death, naming it the Edgar A. Nelson Memorial Hall.

In addition to his teaching and administrative roles, for 44 years Nelson conducted the 200-voice Marshall Field Chorus, associated with Chicago's landmark department store on State Street. For more than ten years, Nelson was the accompanist for the prestigious Apollo Musical Club. This independent auditioned chorus of about 80 voices sold standing subscriptions to its concerts of oratorios, cantatas, passions, and other large choral works such as Bach's *B-Minor Mass* in Orchestra Hall. A *Chicago Tribune* reviewer referred to Nelson's accompanying there and for numerous vocal recitals as consistently ideal. The Apollo Musical Club's director in the early 20th century was Harrison Wild, notably also a founding member of the American Guild of Organists in 1896 and the Chicago (originally the "Western") chapter in 1907. When Wild retired from the Apollo Club in 1928, Nelson took on the role of conductor and held that post until 1951.

In 1937, living in the technological age that followed the century of progress, Nelson was among the musical experts chosen by the Federal Trade Commission for a panel to review the issue of a new organ. The panel was to advise on the validity of claims by the Hammond Clock Company of Evanston, Illinois that its electronic instruments were organs. No doubt many organists saw the clock company's invention as a threat. Nelson joined the majority opinion of the panel, which concluded that the so-called electronic organ did not meet the accepted definition of an organ. This verdict did not hold back the Hammond Clock Company, nor did it intrude on Nelson's indefatigable musical activity or impeccable musicianship.

Casavant makes their mark in Oak Park

George H. Clark, Grace Episcopal Church

In the early years of the 20th century, Mrs. Linda Holdrege Kettlestrings, who married into Oak Park's founding family, served as organist at Grace Episcopal Church. The building was a gracious English Gothic revival structure completed in 1905 on the "church corridor." Mrs. Kettlestrings also accompanied silent movies at Oak Park's Lamar Theater two blocks away.⁷ In 1922, just a few years after the firm of Casavant Brothers of St-Hyacinthe, Quebec celebrated their 40th anniversary, they installed Opus 940, a 65-rank, 4-manual organ for Grace Episcopal Church. Chicago was already home to a dozen organs by Casavant, but this was only their third in Oak Park, and by far the largest in this village, which THE DIAPASON had declared to be a prominent organ center. The *Chicago Tribune* reported the cost of Grace's new instrument at \$50,000.⁸ In 1947, Marcel Dupré performed a solo



George Henry Clark, Grace Episcopal Church (Collection of Dennis Northway)

recital to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the instrument.

At the time of its installation, the church's organist was George H. Clark. Born in England, Clark was raised in the English choirboy tradition of London's smaller parishes. He studied with Joseph Bonnet—for how long and where is not known, but Clark often included works of Bonnet on his recital programs.

Clark kept good company. He was chosen to be one of three organists performing for a festival AGO service on April 24, 1928 in celebration of the new Möller organ, Opus 5196, at nearby Austin Congregational Church. The other performers were William H. Barnes, the noted author, organ designer, and past dean of the Chicago AGO chapter, and Harold B. Simonds, organist of St. Chrysostom's Church in Chicago.

Clark had a 2-manual organ installed in his Oak Park home in 1926. Opus 1162 was the fourth Casavant organ in Oak Park and featured a 16' Bourdon in

the pedal division. Whether Clark was duly impressed with Casavant's work or due to some other circumstance, he became Casavant's Chicago sales representative in 1932. His first instrument was purchased by Saint Catherine of Siena Roman Catholic Church in Oak Park. This was Opus 1467, a 3-manual instrument of 24 ranks. Clark played the inaugural organ recital featuring repertoire that frequently appeared on concert listings of the period: an excerpt from *Tannhäuser*, Borodin's "At the Convent," an unnamed work by Guilmant, and a transcription of the "Hallelujah" chorus.

A dean and director from Chicagoland's best

Raymond Allyn Smith and Theodore Kratt, First Baptist Church

Just two blocks from the principal church corridor of Lake Street stand the First Baptist and First United Methodist churches. The Methodist congregation was Oak Park's first, formally organized





Raymond Allyn Smith, First Baptist Church (THE DIAPASON, November 1, 1957)

Smith not only performed in the Chicago area; he was invited elsewhere as a soloist. His program in 1923 for the ongoing recital series at the University of Illinois, home to a 4-manual, 59-rank Casavant, follows:

Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (Bach)
Sonata No. 4 in D Minor (Guilmant)
Echoes of Spring (Friml)
Notturmo (Mendelssohn)
Am Meer (Schubert)
Au Convent (Borodin)
Toccata from Symphony No. 5 (Widor)¹²

Smith's colleague and music director at First Baptist, Theodore Kratt, completed his Mus.D. at the Chicago Musical College in 1932. He moved on to other positions, first as orchestra conductor at Miami University of Ohio, incidentally a position organist Joseph W. Clokey had formerly held, and then as Dean of the School of Music at the University of Oregon. Later music directors at First Baptist of Oak Park were Herbert Nutt (1930–34) and Robert MacDonald (1935–39).

Let the organist do it!

Miss Etta Code (d. 1953), St. Edmund's Catholic Church

This Catholic parish, one of two established in 1907 in Oak Park, was served for 49 years by its founding priest, Monsignor John Code, with the help of his sister Etta Margaret, who played the organ. Miss Code, after 46 years as organist, was remembered at her funeral for her love of God and her zeal for His church. She is quoted on her guiding philosophy as having said, "The purpose of church music is to pray in song, not to entertain. It is an office once entrusted to priests. To make it an occasion for mere artistic display is to insult the God who is on the altar."¹³

As a child, Etta grew up with John and five other brothers in a musical family in Chicago's St. Columbkille parish, one of many Irish enclaves that yielded generations of successful Americans. The matriarch of the family was Mary Code. With her children, she formed a family ensemble in the home, playing mandolins, harps, and guitars for the neighborhood.

Miss Etta Code studied piano, harp, and organ at the Chicago Musical College. After graduating, she moved to Oak Park in 1907 to help her brother John nurse along the new Catholic parish in the village's commercial district. The congregation first met in a barn on the old Scoville property in the center of town and then in 1910 moved into a stately English Gothic building about three blocks from Oak Park's "church corridor." Miss Code's duties included managing the parish office, teaching at Chicago's historic Ogden School, directing the catechism classes for the parish school, and helping the needy callers who appeared at the rectory. In a more unusual role, at an outdoor parish fundraiser on the lawn of one of Oak Park's baron-era mansions, Miss Code was described as one of the "Oak Park beauties" who set up the "cigar booth" for entertainment on the lawn.

The parish Mass schedule found Miss Code at least once a day in the organ loft, playing for the liturgy and singing the solo parts while accompanying herself on the church's Casavant organ, and sometimes on harp. The size of the parish, which grew beyond 2,000 in the 1930s, dictated that there would be frequent named Masses and on many weekdays the organist had to accompany as many as three of them. When the church acquired a 16-rank Casavant pipe organ in 1913, Miss Code most likely consulted on this project. That year the church made a partial payment of \$1,155 on the instrument. Casavant installed two instruments in Oak Park in 1913. The other, at 53 ranks, was built for the First Congregational Church but sadly lost when lightning struck the church's steeple four years later. St. Edmund's Casavant, now the oldest remaining in Oak Park, was refurbished in 1952, just one year before Etta Code's death.

Miss Code organized a number of ambitious musical celebrations to com-



Miss Etta Margaret Code, organist at St. Edmund's parish, Oak Park (Don Gianetti, archives of St. Edmund's parish)

memorate events in the parish's life. She was frequently noted as an accompanist and organ soloist outside of regular Masses. In honor of a parish member who donated extensive decorations for the building's interior in 1920, she arranged a sacred concert, featuring William Rogerson and Vittorio Arimondi, soloists from the Grand Opera Company (later the Chicago Lyric Opera). Other performers came from the Theodore Thomas Orchestra in Chicago (later the Chicago Symphony Orchestra) and St. Edmund's choir of 34 voices. Miss Code accompanied and played a "Finale" by Guilmant, presumably from an organ sonata. The male chorus of the Catholic Casino Club sang sacred excerpts in Latin by Gerasch and Kreutzer. The repertoire spanned from Mozart and Haydn to Gounod. A reviewer in the local *Oak Leaves* reported that the church was packed that evening, and "not the least convincing contribution was Miss Etta Code's organ accompaniment of the intricate and exacting scores and her rich and voluminous interpretation of Guilmant's organ recessional."

Miss Code seemed to show an affinity for opera, having directed at the Warrington Opera House in Oak Park, where there was a resident orchestra. The Warrington billed itself as "the only legitimate theater outside of the Chicago Loop" and it was large enough to seat 1,500 people. The following year, since the first sacred concert was so well received, Miss Code organized a repeat performance, again with Messrs. Rogerson and Arimondi of the Chicago Grand Opera Company, and noted Chicago organist Adalbert Hugelot. Hugelot played *Gesu Bambino* by Pietro Yon, many of whose works are frequently found on recital programs of this era. Several vocal solos from Handel ("Where'er You Walk") to Verdi (*Ave Maria*) contrasted with Grieg and Tchaikovsky transcriptions played by a string quartet from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The sacred concerts did not continue on this scale in future years. The church's annual expense for parish music was \$415 in 1921, on a par with the amounts given for European sufferers and Irish relief. This was sufficient to sustain a choir, which met regularly every Friday night, even throughout Oak Park's hot summers. During the school year, students at the parish school presented musical plays and concerts by the student band. Miss Code served both students at the school and friends throughout the parish and the village. Father Code referred to her as his "first assistant" at St. Edmund's. At her death, 95 parishioners and local church and community groups requested memorial masses for her.

Value added

The careers of Edwin Stanley Seder, Dr. Edgar Nelson, George Clark, Raymond Smith, Theodore Kratt, and Miss Etta Code spanned an era in which the organ's standing was as solid as the pillars surrounding their churches. In spite of economic hardships and the staggering scale and speed of world events from 1920–1940, these musicians held on to a constant discipline of planning, practice, and performing that enriched their communities with live music. They may have

worked in a village, but they worked at a level that rivaled larger urban centers like Chicago. Their legacy shows that the society that heralded the era of radio, streetcars, Gershwin, and Guthrie also valued the centuries-old tradition of organ-playing in its churches. ■

Notes

1. Village History, "About Our Village." <http://www.oak-park.us/village_background/village_history.html>
2. May Estelle Cook, *Little Old Oak Park* (no publisher, 1961), p. 18.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
4. James Barclay Hartman, "The Organ in Manitoba" (University of Manitoba Press, Winnipeg: 1997), p. 145.
5. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Pro-Quest Historical Newspapers (1849–1987), August 11, 1952, p. A4.
6. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Pro-Quest Historical Newspapers (1849–1987), July 11, 1959, p. 14.
7. Lee Brooke, *When I Was Younger* (no publisher, 1989), p. 151.
8. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Pro-Quest Historical Newspapers (1849–1987), November 19, 1922.
9. "First Baptist, Oak Park, Ill.," *The American Organist*, Vol. 6 (1923: [488]–489).
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. "Recital Programs," *The American Organist*, Vol. 5 (1923: 251).
13. "In Memoriam," *The Parish Monthly*, St. Edmund's Parish, Oak Park, 1953, 11.

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of local historians Lee Brooke, Don Gianetti, Dan Pietrini, and Connie Schumacher in researching this material. Also Keith Eiten of Wheaton Conservatory assisted with reference advice, and Stephen Schnurr and Dennis Northway provided photographs and historical details.

Note: Four Oak Park churches, including First United Methodist, Grace Episcopal, and the Church of St. Catherine and St. Lucy discussed above will be included in the itinerary of the OHS National Convention, July 8–13, in Chicago and environs. For information: <organsociety.org>.

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