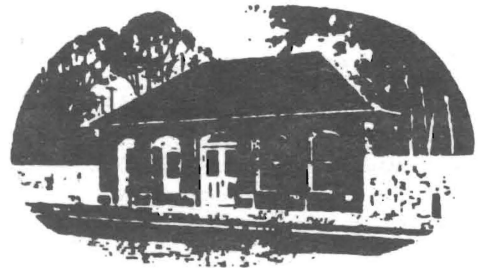


HYDE PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter



Volume 11, Numbers 1 and 2

Headquarters: 5529 Lake Park Avenue
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March, 1989

1889 - 1989

One Hundred Years of Hyde Park in Chicago

The story of the annexation of Hyde Park is told concisely and wonderfully well in Jean Block's book, Hyde Park Houses. The story begins well before 1889 with much discussion and many meetings and certainly with many columns of print in THE HYDE PARK HERALD. In the spring of 1887, annexation was approved by voters in northern section of Hyde Park Village but it was shortly declared invalid by the Illinois Supreme Court.

However on June 28, 1889, despite the continuing efforts of many to establish a city government for Hyde Park, and the opposition to change by others, annexation was approved by voters - though the area of present day Hyde Park-Kenwood voted against it.

Some excerpts from THE HYDE PARK HERALD chronicle these events.

October 14, 1887:

The total indebtedness of Hyde Park: \$434,000; indebtedness of Chicago \$19,000,000. Chicago says, "We will help you pay your debts." YOU help US pay ours!!

October 21, 1887:

We have been wondering for some time why Mayor Roche (Chicago's Mayor) doesn't turn the big bullies off the police force. Last week, a big Irish bully, who weighs at 180 pounds, attacked a little old man at least 70 years of age, and beat him unmercifully, for no crime, except he did not move fast enough to suit the bully. This was done in the presence of a score of people, and when a gentleman expostulated with the policeman and begged him to stop beating the old man, he turned on him and after clubbing him severely, arrested him for interfering with an officer.

Great Scott!! Don't you want to be annexed to the city?

Do you want your taxes increased? Annex!

Do you want to help pay the \$19,000,000 the city owes? Annex!

Vote a straight Republican ticket, without annexation and be happy!

November 18, 1887:

The city (Chicago) officers say it will be at least three (3) years before any improvements can be undertaken in Hyde Park, on account of the large amount of work to be done in the city already ordered. We hope that the good people of Hyde Park, who are in favor of annexation, will recede from their position and let the Saloon Keepers Association fight the battle, for improvements we must have, and that at once!

Some of the saloon keepers are just jubilant and boastful over their annexation victory. Very well gentlemen; we concede you the victory; now get the spoils if you can!

December 9, 1887:

Some of the annexationists are so confident that the city is going to give them a large amount of improvements for nothing, that they are even expecting to have their homes painted at city expense!!

We have always been and are now opposed to annexation, but humbly acquiesce to the will of the people and will endeavor to make as loyal subjects to the city as we have been to Hyde Park, keeping ever in mind that our new situations are dangerous.

February 3, 1888:

Justice Ford, of Cottage Grove Avenue, near 39th Street, has been made Police Magistrate by Mayor Roche. Now the query is being made by those justices who worked so hard to hurl their town into the vortex of Annexation, what are we to have, why gentlemen you have received your reward. It was a privilege of falling after you had shook yourselves off. Be content.

June 22, 1888:

"Saloon Keeper" writes to *The Herald* to know how to defeat the movement to close saloons on Sundays. *The Herald* responds:

The only way we can see for you is to get annexed to Chicago. Trust your interests in the hands of Appleton, Whelan, and Co. and you will not only run on Sundays but you may crowd your saloons up against our schools and churches. That is your only chance. As long as we are under village government, the fanatical idea of a "Sabbath for rest" will likely prevail. Get into line again for annexation again as soon as you can!

Annexation means the abolishing of our prohibitory districts and saloons scattered all over our town!

The Hyde Park Historical Society Centennial Gala

Our Annual Dinner Meeting on March 11th, took us back to 1889, the year that Hyde Park was finally annexed to Chicago. Strolling through Yesterday's Main Street in their Victorian finery, enjoying dinner in the shadow of the woolly mammoth in the South Court of the Museum of Science and Industry, our members and guests celebrated the centennial of that momentous vote.



Kitty Picken, chairman of the Centennial Gala, and Charlotte Vickstrom serenade the assembly with the theme song of many voters, "I Don't Care."



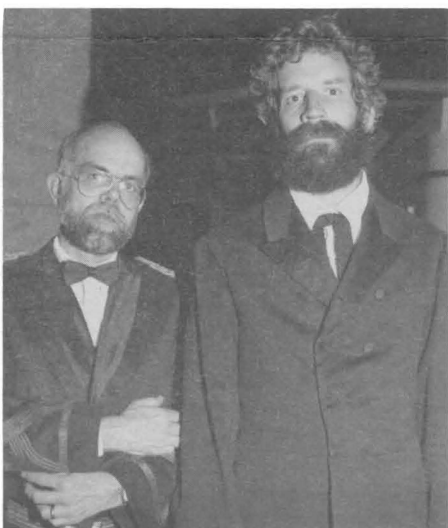
Rita Picken and Vic Obenhaus discuss the pros and cons of annexation.



Peggy Wick and Ed and Eleanor Campbell meet at Finnegan's to await the election results.



Anne Stevens and John McDermott recount "The Annexation Anxieties of Hyde Park."



Colonel Jay Mulberry considers annexation advice from Young Abe (Zeus) Preckwinkle.

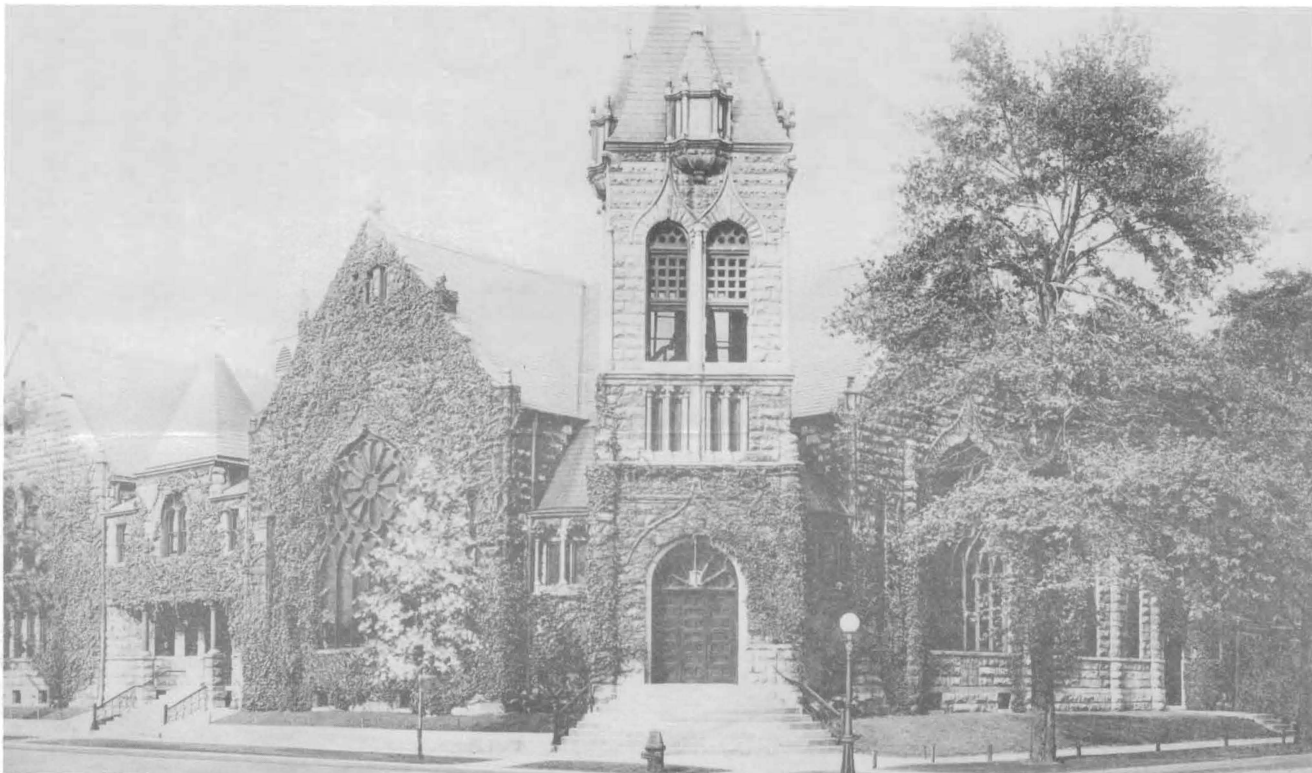


Rebecca Janowitz and Paul Collard slip away to Finnegan's for a sarsaparilla.



Alta Blakely window shops after casting her vote either for or against annexation - she won't tell!

The United Church Celebrates Its Centennial Building



The Hyde Park Presbyterian Church — now the United Church of Hyde Park

By Carol Bradford

Among the centennials being celebrated in this "Year of Hyde Park" is that of the oldest church building in Hyde Park, the home of the United Church of Hyde Park at 53rd Street and Blackstone Avenue. The structure was built by the Hyde Park Presbyterian Church in 1889, over the strenuous objection of a prominent member, namely, Paul Cornell.

In the beginning, Paul Cornell developed a village called Hyde Park out of barren, swampy land south of a larger town called Chicago. He donated a small plat of land and had built on it a small wood frame chapel for the purpose of housing services of Christian worship. The Hyde Park Presbyterian Church was formally organized in May, 1860, and continued to worship in the wood chapel until 1869, when they moved into a handsome stone church which the congregation built at 53rd and Blackstone.

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The members of the United Church of Hyde Park cordially invite their friends of the Hyde Park Historical Society to join with them in a celebration of the Centennial of their church building on Sunday, April 16, 1989, at 3:00 p.m. in the church. There will be a musical celebration of one hundred years of great music in a great space, and an exhibit recounting the history and symbolism of the building.



The old manse, built in the 1880's, demolished in 1962



Paul Cornell

The Trustees

George Bogue, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, was a charter member of Hyde Park Presbyterian Church, transferring his membership from North East Congregational of Chicago on May 6, 1860.

Walter C. Nelson joined on profession of faith on March 5, 1874. He lived at 5120 Harper and was a prominent real estate developer. He built several multiple-unit buildings, including those at 5701-09 Kenwood, 5723-27 Kenwood, 5722-28 Dorchester and 1355-61 East 57th Street.

John C. Welling and his wife, Charlotte, transferred membership from Second Presbyterian of Chicago on March 1, 1878. He was a vice president of the Illinois Central Railroad, and lived at 4950 Greenwood.

William C. Ott and his wife, Nancy, joined the church on June 4, 1880, on transfer from Union Park Congregational in Chicago. They lived at 5146 Harper. It is recorded that Mr. Ott always carved the turkey at church dinners.

Leslie Lewis transferred from First Presbyterian of Waukegan, Illinois, on February 29, 1884. He lived at 5605 Dorchester and was Superintendent of the Hyde Park Schools. In later years, after annexation, he was principal of Kozminski School until his retirement. He later joined the South Park Congregational Church and was responsible for the

preservation of historic records of that church.

William H. Ray and his wife, Martha H., also transferred from First Presbyterian of Waukegan on February 29, 1884. He was principal of Hyde Park High School until his death on July 30, 1889, at age 31. A large stained glass window, inscribed "Service" was placed in the new fellowship hall in his memory. The elementary school at 56th and Kimbark is named for him.

Henry H. Belfield and his wife, Anne, were transferred from Third Presbyterian of Chicago on October 19, 1884. He was on the faculty of the University of Chicago in later years and the Laboratory School's Belfield Hall bears his name. He lived in the duplex at 5726-28 Blackstone.

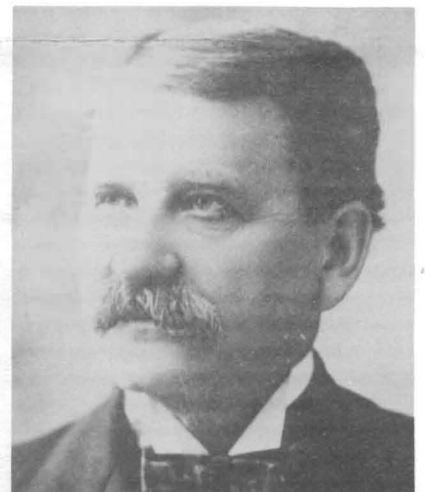
John B. Lord and his wife, Annie E., also transferred from Third Presbyterian of Chicago, on November 30, 1886. They lived at 4857 Greenwood. He was president of Ayer and Ord Tie Company, which manufactured railroad ties.

Robert Stuart joined the church on June 5, 1887. He lived at 5206 Dorchester.

Sources: Membership records of Hyde Park Presbyterian Church
Jean Block. *Hyde Park Houses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.



William H. Ray



William C. Ott



Above — The small frame chapel for Christian worship built by Paul Cornell
 Left — United Church interior



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The ensuing twenty years brought tremendous growth and prosperity to the community and the church. By 1888, there was talk of building a new, larger structure. The Board of Trustees began to consider various options and sought plans from local architects. At the annual congregational meeting in early 1889, the trustees proposed that a new structure be built on the site of the existing building, according to a proposal by architect, Gregory Vigeant. The old building was to be dismantled and some of the materials used in the new church. The total cost was not to exceed \$35,000, excluding the purchase of an organ. Paul Cornell offered a substitute motion that "the present church edifice be enlarged according to the original design, which was to add a transept thereto. Which motion was put and lost. The original motion, to adopt said report of the Trustees, was then put and carried." Additional members were appointed to the Finance Committee. Mr. Cornell proposed another motion that potential contributors be asked whether they prefer a new building or an addition to the

existing building. The members voted to table this motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

(From the Minutes of the Annual Meeting, Hyde Park Presbyterian Church, February 13, 1889)

Despite the lack of support for his proposal, Paul Cornell was not ready to give up. On April 17, 1889, he filed suit against the trustees and secured an injunction to stop construction of the new building. Though we have no record of the original suit, the trustees' sworn testimony in response suggests that Cornell claimed that his longstanding membership and contributions gave him special standing, that the 1869 building was a landmark to be preserved and charged that the trustees had threatened to resign if their plan were not adopted.

The trustees responded that Cornell had no more standing in the court "than is common to all the other members of said church." They said the 1869 building was "plain and ordinary, . . . [the] steeple is more dangerous than ornamental, and is liable to be blown down, as has already

been the case." They denied any threat or coercion of the congregation, saying that ". . . opportunity was given to all persons, but particularly to complainant, to plead, beg, and threaten, all of which complainant thoroughly did, and when vote was taken, the action of the trustees was ratified by an almost unanimous vote, there being but a few votes against it, perhaps not to exceed half a dozen."

(From record of Case #121822, Superior Court of Cook County, 1889).

In the end, the injunction was lifted, construction proceeded, and the first worship service in the new sanctuary was held January 5, 1890. Paul Cornell left the Presbyterian Church and became a charter member of Hyde Park Methodist Church, which was organized in September, 1889. It is ironic that eighty years later, those two denominations were part of a merger (along with Hyde Park Congregational Church) which formed the United Church of Hyde Park.

The author wishes to thank Frank Schneider for his assistance in obtaining the Circuit Court records of this matter.

*From The Fiftieth Anniversary Book
Hyde Park Presbyterian Church
1860 - 1910*

The present church edifice... is it not a typical outgrowth of Protestantism as shown in its architecture? Not now, as formerly, is it sought to embody the reverence and godly gratitude of the community by an edifice of costly splendor... This church edifice is designed to afford helpful facilities for every function of an active church. We have a large auditorium of perfect acoustic properties, a large lecture and Sunday School room, many convenient class rooms for Bible Study, serving rooms for the social entertainments, a special place for little children, and ladies' parlors for all occasions.

John A. Cole, Historical Address

I am very glad I was not born when my father was. He was a Methodist minister in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania. My father said that in his early days he never thought of inviting a Presbyterian pastor into his pulpit; and a Presbyterian pastor would no more think of inviting a Methodist pastor into his pulpit than he would think of flying... My father did not regard any young minister equipped for his job until he could "lay out" the Calvinists... Now we are on friendly terms.

The truth is that Protestants, already bound together by the bond of love, are more a unit in the United States today than are the Roman Catholics, and especially is this true since we formed the Federation of Churches. Today, there are 33 Protestant bodies of America bound together, 16,000 ministers and nearly 20,000,000 communicants.

*Rev. Charles Bayard Mitchell, D.D.
St. James M. E. Church*

The program began with a group of bird songs by Mrs. Charles Robbins, after which there was an address by Mrs. P.L. Sherman, who said, in part: "In 1858 my husband and I were at the Richmond Hotel... when we received an invitation to attend the dedication of the little Hyde Park Chapel. The day arrived and we hired a horse and buggy and drove south to the little church. On our way we stopped at Kenwood, where my husband had recently purchased ten acres of ground on Lake Avenue in the vicinity of 47th Street. I was chiefly impressed by the beautiful wild flowers growing on the place, especially the great clumps of white and purple phlox... The only thing left of the beautiful trees and flowers that used to be there is one sickly little horse chestnut tree in the court of a flat building."

"We drove on to the little church, and the first thing that greeted our sight was the decorated gate posts... around these posts were the most beautiful wreaths of wild flowers, as large as a wagon wheel and as thick as my arm. Inside, the church was most prettily decorated with similar wild flowers. There my memory stops. I do remember though, that before we drove home we stopped at Mrs. Paul Cornell's and she gave us the most delicious cake. The sermon and text have escaped me, but the memory of that cake remains to this day."

Reception for the Ladies



The old Stone Church

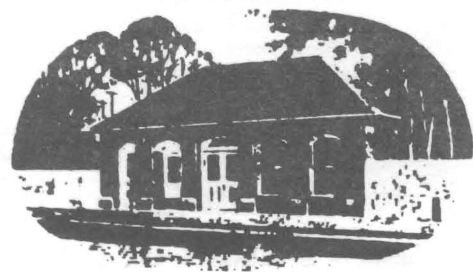
... The Hyde Park Presbyterian Church... was born May 6, 1860. I well remember the bright sunny morning. The little frame chapel, white with green blinds, seemed a fair structure among the oak and hazel at the northeast corner of 53rd Street and Lake Park Avenue. There rested on the gate a generous wreath of the bright wild flowers so plenty then along the paths everywhere... My mother said, "See, there is Grandma Ryan under the trees across the street, may be she brought it." She said, "Yes, I made it for your church. I can't go inside, but Jesus came for all of us and He will bless us all alike." The woman was an Irish Catholic working whenever she could for neighbors' families. Did the humble woman give our young Calvin band a commanding example against living in a narrow creed?

*Hamilton B. Bogue, in an address at
the Men's Banquet*



**HYDE PARK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**5529 S. Lake Park Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637**



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January 18, 1889:

Village Hall was packed Tuesday evening as it was never packed before. Every seat was filled early, and the hallways, aisles and corners were densely crowded by people who stood the entire evening. It was a grand response to the popular idea of city organization. . . .

Governor Hamilton, in taking the chair, made a graceful little speech referring to his interest in all that was for the welfare of Hyde Park and expressed his sympathy for this movement for a more efficient home government. He called on Mr. A. G. Procter . . . to speak on the proposition to be submitted to the meeting for discussion. Mr. Procter said:

“We propose this evening to inaugurate a movement that has for its aim what we believe to be the best interest of Hyde Park. It is a question that concerns this community, and this community alone, and we propose that this community shall have the privilege of settling it for themselves.

“We realize the fact that we have outgrown the conditions that were anticipated by our lawmakers, when they framed the law for the government of villages; and we realize fully that the conditions before us are annexation to the city of Chicago, or a government of our own citizens. . . .

If there are those who think it good policy to exchange a municipality in splendid financial condition for one that is not, they will likely oppose this project. . . . If there are some who are afraid of the criticisms or influence of the Chicago press, they had better pack up now and be getting out. . . .”

February 8, 1889:

Says a leading annexationist: “We do not want any swamp land. Sixty-seventh Street is as far as we want to annex. . . .”

Says a leading annexationist in the city: “Chicago is a doubtful Republican city, but if so much of Hyde Park as is strongly Republican, say from Thirty-ninth Street to Sixty-seventh Street, is annexed, then that would make Republican success sure. The rest of the territory we do not want, as it is about evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans.”

To be continued. . . .

Public Sculptor: Lorado Taft and the Beautification of Chicago
Timothy J. Garvey, University of Illinois Press, 1988, 222 pp.

A Book Review
by Devereux Bowly



This is an interesting new book about one of our most famous residents, Lorado Taft, who lived and worked just south of the Midway. In the introduction the author, Timothy Garvey, a professor at Illinois Wesleyan University, acknowledges assistance from several libraries and institutions in the state, including the Hyde Park Historical Society. He must have been helped by the late Jean Block, and by Adrian Alexander, who mounted a major exhibit on Taft a few years ago at the Society and the Chicago Public Library.

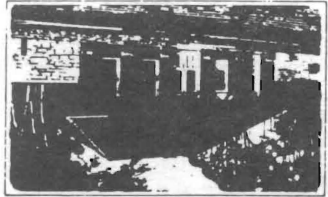
Taft took a broad view of the reason for artistic expression. He viewed public sculpture as a way of establishing values and traditions of American culture. He wrote extensively, as a contributor to the **Chicago Record**, the art journal **Brush and Pencil**, and the author of the standard work, **History of American Sculpture**, published in 1903.

The book discusses at length Taft's Fountain of the Great Lakes, constructed in 1913 in the south garden of the Art Institute, and financed by the first grant from the Ferguson Fund. As a Hyde Park chauvinist I was most interested in the material on Fountain of Time, at the west

end of the Midway, also commissioned by the Ferguson Fund in 1913, and constructed in 1922. His plans included the Fountain of Creation at the east end of the Midway, a canal down its center to connect the lagoons of Jackson and Washington Parks, Midway Bridges with sculpture for the cross streets, and a Hall of Fame including 100 statues of historical figures along the canal. None of this, of course, was realized.

It is a tragedy that at least the Fountain of Creation was never built, to complement the Fountain of Time, but we are probably lucky the rest of the plan was not carried out. Even Daniel Burnham, a friend of Taft's from the days of the Columbian Exposition and colleague in the City Beautiful movement, ventured that the entire scheme was so massive it would prevent the work from achieving a necessary unity and only cause “visual confusion.” We are fortunate to be often reminded of Taft by the Fountain of Time, and the presence in the community of his Midway Studios, although his archives and the ongoing study of his work is at the University of Illinois in Urbana, where he grew up the son of a professor.

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1989 Paul Cornell Winners



Barry and Winnifred Sullivan are winners "for the sensitive remodeling of their house which enlivens the street with a touch of Victoriana."



Richard Collida accepts the award "for developing an urban archaeology course at Kenwood High School using the site of the old landmark Bryson Hotel."



The Convenantal Community of University Church and the Convenantal Development Corporation receive the award "for the rehabilitation of an abandoned apartment building and extending the skills learned to other buildings in the community."



Roger and Madelon Fross accept the award "for the meticulous restoration of the exterior of their home."

This *Newsletter* is published four times a year by the Hyde Park Historical Society, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1975 to record, preserve, and promote public interest in the history of Hyde Park. Its headquarters, located in an 1893 restored cable car station at 5529 S. Lake Park Avenue, houses local exhibits. It is open to the public, Saturdays, 2-4 p.m., Sundays, 2-4 p.m. Telephone: HY-3-1893.

President Jay Mulberry
Editors Theresa McDermott
Rita Dukette

Regular membership in the Society is \$10 per year; contributing membership, \$25; sponsors, \$50; benefactors, \$100.