



## Historic Landmark Nomination Form

The Village of Oak Park  
Village Hall  
123 Madison Street  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272

708.383.6400  
Fax 708.383.6692  
TTY 708.383.0048  
village@oak-park.us

This form is for use in nominating Oak Park Landmarks. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a type-writer, word processor or computer to complete all items.

### NAME OF PROPERTY

A. L. Robbins / George A. Chapman House

Historic name

Common name

### LOCATION

408 N. Kenilworth

Street & number

Oak Park

City or town

Illinois

State

IL

Code

Cook

County

031

Code

60302

Zip code

### CLASSIFICATION

**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)



Private

☐ Public: Local

☐ Public: State

☐ Public: Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)



Building(s)

☐ District

☐ Site

☐ Structure

☐ Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

1 Contributing \_\_\_\_\_ Noncontributing

1 Buildings \_\_\_\_\_ Sites 1 Structures \_\_\_\_\_ Objects 1 Total

**Type of Designation**



Exterior

☐ Public interior

### FUNCTION OR USE

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

Single Dwelling

Category

Subcategory

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

Single Dwelling

Category

Subcategory

### DESCRIPTION

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Prairie/Tudor Revival

Category

Subcategory

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

Concrete

Asphalt Shingle

Wood Frame & Cement Stucco

Foundation

Roof

Walls

Other

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

See attached documentation

Criteria for Designation and separate research document.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

See page 3.

Areas of Significance

1890 & 1910

Period of Significance

Original House - Patton & Fisher, Remodel \_ Tallmadge & Watson

Architect/Builder

## Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

See attached Documentation

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

See attached Documentation foot notes

## Representation in Existing Surveys

Referenced in the Steiner Index (Oak Park Library) as the George Chapman House, a T&W remodel of a Patton & Fisher design. Also listed as the A L Robbins House as a Patton & Fisher design later remodeled by T & W. Listed in the VOP Survey as an early remodel of a Patton & Fisher house by T&W.

## Legal Description (Attach additional pages if necessary)

Kettlestrings Addition to Harlem a Subdivision of the Northern Part of the NW 1/4 of Section 7-39-13. Specifically - the South 58 feet of the west 170.6 feet of Lot 18.

### Form Prepared By

Jack Lesniak AIA

Name/Title

708-524-0880 C 312-560-4059

Telephone

1101 N. Humphrey Avenue

Street & Number

Oak Park

City or Town

Organization

July 22, 2019

Date

Illinois

State

60302

Zip Code

### Property Owner(s)

Myrtle & George Mason

Name

408 N. Kenilworth

Street & Number

Oak Park

City or Town

708-383-4788

Telephone

Illinois

State

60302

Zip Code

### Applicant

Myrtle & George Mason

Name

408 N. Kenilworth

Street & Number

Oak Park

City or Town

708-383-4788

Telephone

Illinois

State

60302

Zip Code

July 22, 2019

Date

Signature

### Official Action

Date of Owner Consent

Date of Public Hearing

Result

Date of Village Board Action

Result

**LANDMARK DESIGNATION NOMINATION FOR 408 NORTH KENILWORTH, OP, ILL.**

**7-9-6: NOMINATION AND PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR DESIGNATION AS AN HISTORIC LANDMARK OR INTERIOR HISTORIC LANDMARK:**

**A. Submission Of Nominations:** Historic landmark and interior historic landmark nominations may be submitted to the Commission by any person, group of persons, or association, including any member of the Commission, on a nomination form provided by the Commission. The nomination form shall include, or be accompanied by, the following:

**1. The name and address of the owner of the property proposed for designation, including the names of the beneficial owners of property held in a land trust, where possible.**

Owners: George & Myrtle Mason

**2. The legal description and common street address of the property proposed for designation.**

Kettlestrings Addition to Harlem a Sub Northern Part of NW 1/4 of Section 7-39-13.  
Specifically - the South 58 feet of the West 170.6 feet of Lot 18

408 North Kenilworth Avenue  
Oak Park, Illinois

**3. An indication of whether or not the owner is in favor of the proposed designation.**

The owner has signed the nomination application and is in full support of seeking landmark status.

**4. A written statement describing the property and setting forth reasons in support of the proposed designation.**

Please see the Criteria for Designation and the Supplementary Information and "EXHIBITS" provided.

**5. Photographs of the property or selected properties within a district.**

Please see the Criteria for Designation and the Supplementary Information and "EXHIBITS" provided.

**6. Such other information as may be required by the Commission.**

Ask and it will be provided. JRL.

## **Criteria for Designation**

According to Section 7-9-6(B) of the Oak Park Preservation Ordinance, the Historic Preservation Commission must make a preliminary determination of eligibility after receiving a nomination. A determination of preliminary eligibility must be based upon a finding that there is a likelihood that a nominated historic landmark will meet one or more of the “Criteria of Designation” set forth in Section 7-9-5 of this article.

The 1890 Patton & Fisher design for A.L. Robbins/1910 Tallmadge & Watson remodel for George A. Chapman at 408 North Kenilworth, Oak Park is nominated under the following criteria:

### **Criteria 1. Significance as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social development or heritage of the Village of Oak Park, the state, or the United States.**

The significance of the 408 North Kenilworth house lies in what was an 1890 wood sided, probably in the Queen Anne style, home that was a popular style of its architects, Patton & Fisher, and a dominate architecture style of the late nineteenth century that created a thread in the fabric of what was to become the historic architecture of the Village of Oak Park.

As trends changed, namely the introduction of the Prairie style, remodeling nineteenth century houses in the early twentieth century to modernize and adopt current style elements became a common inclination for new property owners. Here we have Tallmadge and Watson Architects, a significant firm of the period with many residential designs in Oak Park, providing George Chapman a new more modern design on the bones of the old. <sup>1</sup> There may be other such remodels by Tallmadge and Watson but I am not aware of them.

### **Criteria 3. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social heritage, or other aspect, of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States:**

A. L. (Alfred Louis) Robbins was born on February 3, 1856 in Rocky Hill, Hartford County, Connecticut to Edward Franklin Robbins (1816-1910) and Frances Goodrich (1822-1883). His father was a carriage and harness maker. He grew to adult hood in Rocky Hill and sometime in the 1870's, he relocated with his parents and his three sisters (Emma, Fanny and Addie) to Cicero, Illinois. His father continued his trade and Alfred worked as a clerk for a school furniture company.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright remodeled three residences in such a fashion only a few blocks away from 498. These were the Hills and Beachy houses on Forest Avenue. Both were 1906 remodels of existing houses that that completely changed their original exteriors but utilized their original foundations and “bones” to create a modern masterpiece. Wright had the same intention for the Dr. William Copland house, also on Forest Avenue, but it was 1909 when Wright making other plans and his design for the exterior was never implemented, although his design for an interior remodel was accomplished.

<sup>2</sup> 1870 & 1880 United States Federal Census Records, Ancestry.com.

At the age of twenty-seven, Alfred married Clara M. Vanness (1860-1895) on April 18, 1883 in Ridgeland, Illinois.<sup>3</sup> They resided in River Forest, Illinois and Alfred worked for the National School Furniture Company at 143 Wabash Avenue in Chicago.<sup>4</sup> Alfred and Clara had five children two of which, Asenath (1884-1966) and Edward (1886-?), were born before they moved to their new house on Kenilworth (nee Willis), after which John Talmadge (1891-1972), Ruth (1893-1954) and Frederick Goodrich (1893-1974) Robbins arrived.<sup>5</sup>

Alfred Robbins only owned the house until April of 1894, just four years. A short snippet in a March, 1894 Oak Park newspaper column citing local Oak Park happenings, wrote:

*A. L. Robbins and family left Tuesday for Los Angeles for permanent residence.*<sup>6</sup>

The reason for moving to California is not known, but it may have been that his wife Clara was ill and they moved to a more temperate climate. In any case, Clara died on August 11, 1895.<sup>7</sup> The cause is not known. Alfred remarried on August 17, 1910 to Alice Glendon.<sup>8</sup> They resided in California where Alfred passed on August 7, 1936 in Oakland, California.<sup>9</sup>

George Alfred Chapman was born in Akron, Ohio on May 25, 1871 to Hezekiah S. Chapman (1829-1893) and Martha Toles Peckham (1831-1903). He grew up in Akron, Ohio, attended the University of Wisconsin and on June 6, 1899 married Minnie Florence Taggart (1872-1964). They moved to Chicago, lived in an apartment in Hyde Park with his mother, Martha, and by 1910 they had moved to Oak Park, renting a house at 405 Grove Avenue with their two children – Theron (1902-1964) and Virginia (1906-1993).<sup>10</sup>

George was an early manager for the Quaker Oats Company, specifically the company's livestock feed division in 1905. He was with the company for thirty-five years.<sup>11</sup>

George Chapman died on November 6, 1943 at the age of seventy-two. At the time of his death he was the president of the Riverdale Products Company, an animal feed and agricultural supply company. He also owned and operated a farm near Elburn, Illinois. His wife, Minnie, died on April 2, 1964

#### **Criteria 5. Embodiment of those distinguishing characteristics of significant architectural type, or style, or engineering specimen:**

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<sup>3</sup> Cook County, Illinois, Marriages Index 1871-1920, Ancestry.com.

<sup>4</sup> Oak Park Directory, January 1, 1888, page 74.

<sup>5</sup> Zimmerman Family Tree, Ancestry.com

<sup>6</sup> *Oak Park*, The Oak Park Reporter, Friday, March 2, 1894, p.4.

<sup>7</sup> Zimmerman Family Tree, Ancestry.com

<sup>8</sup> Ancestry.com. Cook County, Illinois, Marriages Index, 1871-1920 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

<sup>9</sup> *Alfred L. Robbins Dies in Oakland*, Berkley Daily Gazette, August 8, 1936, p.8.

<sup>10</sup> 1900, 1910 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com.

<sup>11</sup> *Brands, Trademarks and Good Will – The Story of The Quaker Oats Company*, Arthur F. Marquette, McGraw-Hill Book Company, January 1, 1967. And *G. A. Chapman Dies in Country*, Oak Park Oak Leaves, November 11, 1943, p. 49.

The Chapman remodel is an example of Tallmadge and Watson's fusion of their own Prairie style characteristics and Tudor Revival. The use of stucco on the full house and the patterning of half timbering is more in the Prairie style, not to mention the linear arrangement of windows, horizontal banding, and the horizontal treatment of the front door. There have been very little change to the exterior of the building, the least of which is the enclosure of an open first floor porch at the south east corner of the house.

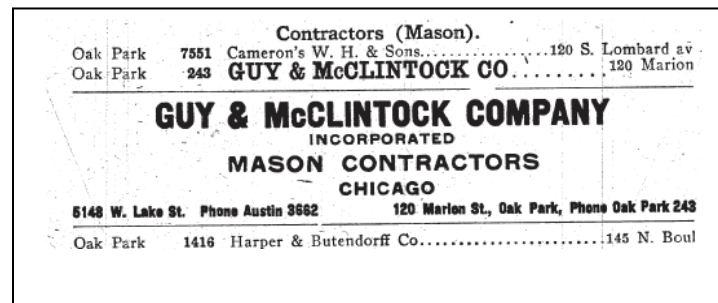
Tallmadge and Watson were noted for their signature two-story linear corner buttresses on most of their Prairie designs. These were also incorporated in the Chapman design.

According to the Tallmadge and Watson drawings, the interior was finished in the Prairie Style. The fireplace and hearth was of brick with a rectilinear opening and a wood shelf/mantle above. Wood ceiling trim strips were applied to the perimeter of the Living and Dining rooms. The entry vestibule still has the prairie trim and art glass doors.

Cabinetry and built-ins had Prairie touches, but much of this was removed during a 1930 Chapman remodel. The current owners recently produced a drawing by Tallmadge and Watson, dated April 29, 1930, that documented the remodel. The ceiling trim, brick fire place and hearth were removed. In its place, a new marble fire place front and mantle was installed, along with a decorative ceiling cornice trim. Other changes were a remodel of the second floor bath and dressing room into a 1930's motif.<sup>12</sup>

**Criteria 6. Identification as the work of a builder, designer, architect, crafts person, engineer or landscape architect whose individual work is significant in the development of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States:**

The contractor for the remodel, Guy & McClintock, were apparently a favorite contractor of Tallmadge & Watson, as they were responsible for at least half of the thirty-one Tallmadge and Watson projects in the Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture Historic District. They advertised in local newspapers and periodicals as mason contractors, see right.<sup>13</sup>



Tallmadge and Watson were not only prolific in the number of designs produced in the Oak Park area, they were also eclectic in their designs. There are over sixty Landmarked buildings in Oak Park, of those four are by Tallmadge and Watson.<sup>14</sup> All four of the Tallmadge and Watson landmarks are examples of Tallmadge and Watson's original works; 408 North Kenilworth has

<sup>12</sup> See the "EXHIBIT" section of the documentation for a copy of the drawing.

<sup>13</sup> The "Guy & McClintock" listing is from the "Classified Directory" of the "Oak Park Telephone Directory", March 1, 1910, p. 95.

<sup>14</sup> See the "EXHIBIT" section of the documentation for more examples of Tallmadge and Watson's work.



the unique quality of illustrating two well-known architects as well as the Oak Park trend to superimpose the Prairie style through remodels in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two of Oak Park's Landmarks were designed by Patton and Fisher.

The four existing Tallmadge and Watson Landmarks:

The Howard W. Jenkins House  
500 Linden Ave, Oak Park  
A 1919 Colonial Revival



The Edward B. Kittles House  
636 Fair Oaks, Oak Park  
1909 Prairie School



The Charles E. Matthews House  
432 N. Kenilworth, Oak Park  
1909 Prairie School



The First Methodist Episcopal Church  
324 N. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park  
1923 Gothic Revival



The two existing Patton and Fisher Landmarks:

WILLIAM A. DOUGLASS HOUSE  
317 N. Kenilworth Avenue, Oak Park  
1893, Queen Anne



PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
460 Lake Street  
1889-99, Queen Anne

