

Annie May Christian (1866-1941)

Annie May Christian (who went by May for most of her life) was born on November 28, 1866 to Matthew and Elizabeth (Mitchell) Christian in Decatur, Illinois.¹ Her one younger brother, Eben, was born on March 9, 1872—a few years after the family had moved to Springfield, Illinois.²

Sometime around 1876, the family moved to Bloomington, Illinois after an illness made her father Matthew unable to continue work as a dry goods merchant.³ The family moved into a house at 509 E. Front Street, which was built by Christian's maternal grandfather, Ebenezer Mitchell. As of 2019, the house was still standing.⁴ The family continually lived in this house until 1955, when Matthew's daughter-in-law, Anna (Dubeck) Christian (widow of Eben), moved to an apartment.⁵

Christian appears to have been an excellent student, both academically and musically. She was educated in Bloomington public schools, and evidently was a talented performer at a young age, demonstrated by an oration at a school performance on December 5, 1876, held in Washingtonian Hall.⁶ Christian was the salutatorian of her graduating class from Bloomington High School in 1883. She was one of fourteen students (thirteen of whom were women) who graduated that year.⁷ At the graduation ceremony at Durley Hall in downtown Bloomington, Christian presented an oration entitled "Bricks and Brains," as each member of the graduating class was required to present an essay or oration they had written.⁸ She further distinguished herself by completing additional coursework on Latin, which was not required for graduation.⁹

Christian's education did not stop there though. She had already found music to be her calling and went on to be taught by several talented musicians, both locally and farther afield.¹⁰ Her musical studies in Bloomington were conducted under Mrs. Lydia Sherman, who operated a music studio downtown, as well as Mrs. Hunter and Professor Albert Beuter.¹¹ One of her more notable teachers was Amy Fay, a concert pianist who became known for her "piano conversations" where the recital itself was preceded by a lecture.¹² Christian evidently saw the value of this kind of musical presentation, and employed it herself later on.¹³ It is not known exactly how long Christian was taught by Amy Fay, but it was reported in *The Pantagraph* on December 28, 1885, that Christian was "soon to enter upon a course of musical instruction under

¹ Anna May Christian death index, Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths Index, 1916-1947, Ancestry.com, Date Accessed, June 30, 2019.

² Eben Mitchel Christian death index entry, Illinois, Death and Stillbirth Index 1916-1947, Ancestry.com, Date Accessed June 30, 2019; United States Census, 1870, Ancestry.com.

³ "Matthew L. Christian," *Bloomington-Normal City Directory*, 1876; "M. L. Christian," *Pantagraph*, June 28, 1900, 6.

⁴ Greg Koos, *Mitchell/Christian House* (Bloomington: McLean County Historical Society, 1988), 1.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "School Children," *Pantagraph*, December 5, 1876.

⁷ "Finis," *Daily Leader* (Bloomington, IL), June 8, 1883; "Our Schools," *Pantagraph*, June 5, 1883.

⁸ "Finis."

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ "A Leader in City's Musical Affairs," *Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), March 28, 1914.

¹¹ "A Piano Forte," *Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), November 19, 1884; "A Leader in City's Musical Affairs."

¹² "Amy Fay," Wikipedia, accessed June 13, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Fay.

¹³ "Amateur Musical Club," *Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), March 8, 1897, 5.

Miss Amy Fay.¹⁴ Christian seems to have been eager and ambitious in her musical studies, as she also took up voice lessons less than a year after starting piano lessons with Fay.¹⁵

Soon after graduation, Christian was performing piano locally. Her first concert after high school was at the “Author’s Carnival” in 1883. The event was organized by Mrs. Hartman, who was working to open a school of oratory in Bloomington. Christian’s piano teacher, Mrs. Sherman, was the music director for the carnival. As Mrs. Sherman’s students, Christian and her friend Grace Read were scheduled to perform a piano duet.¹⁶ Soon after that, Christian and Read, along with Mrs. Sherman and Mrs. Sophronia Funk, played a piano quartet at another recital of Mrs. Sherman’s.¹⁷ The piece was noted as being rather difficult, but was “rendered in a fine matter” by performers who were “among [Bloomington’s] best instrumental talent.”¹⁸

At the start of 1884, Christian gave another public performance of note—a duet on two pianos with her teacher Lydia Sherman, which was part of a concert organized by the Bloomington Press Club.¹⁹ Of Christian’s performance, *The Pantagraph* reported it was “one of the most pleasing features of the entertainment.”²⁰ Christian and Read also performed another duet later that year, which drew a notable crowd and received favorable reviews.²¹ Both friends also found time in their busy performance schedules to serve as music teachers for young children. Christian was already at this early date taking an interest in growing the musical culture of her local area.²²

Christian continued giving public performances locally for the next two years, despite a collar bone injury she suffered in 1885 when the horse she was riding stumbled, fell, and threw her to the ground.²³ Christian gave one more performance in 1886 before she withdrew from the public spotlight and curtailed her involvement in the civic life of Bloomington for a number of years.²⁴

By 1895, Christian was becoming more active in the community again. She was a member of a variety of clubs, including the History Club—of which she remained a member of for the rest of her life.²⁵ The club began in 1880 as the Philomathean Society, before being renamed the History Club in 1883.²⁶ Throughout her time as a member of the History Club, Christian frequently hosted meetings at her home on Front Street, and gave a variety of presentations on topics such as “Modern Music” and “American Composers,” as well as reviews of new books.²⁷ She also served as president of the club several times and was secretary-treasurer in 1937.²⁸

¹⁴ “Miss May Christian,” *Pantagraph*, December 28, 1885, 4.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; “Harmonics,” *Pantagraph*, November 13, 1886.

¹⁶ “The Author’s Carnival,” *Pantagraph*, November 23, 1883.

¹⁷ “An Interesting Entertainment,” *Pantagraph*, December 19, 1883.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ “A Grand Success,” *Pantagraph*, January 16, 1884, 4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ “A Piano Forte.”

²² *Ibid.*

²³ “Accident to Miss May Christian,” *Daily Leader*, July 24, 1885; “An Enjoyable Concert,” *Pantagraph*, October 27, 1885; “This Evening’s Concert,” *Pantagraph*, April 20, 1886.

²⁴ “The Concert Tonight,” *Pantagraph*, October 14, 1886, 4.

²⁵ “History Club will Entertain,” *Pantagraph*, February 2, 1895; “A Leader in City’s Musical Affairs;” “Social Notes,” *Pantagraph*, September 21, 1935, 6

²⁶ “History Club Starts in 1880,” *Pantagraph*, August 26, 1930.

²⁷ “History Club Meeting,” *The Pantagraph*, April 8, 1915; “History Club will have Music Program Friday,” *Pantagraph*, November 12, 1925; “Social Notes,” *Pantagraph*, September 21, 1935.

²⁸ “A Leader in City’s Musical Affairs;” “History Club Arranges Year,” *Pantagraph*, August 25, 1937.

Christian was also a charter member of Bloomington's Women's Club, as well as its first treasurer after the club officially organized itself in 1897.²⁹ The club aimed to "make it easier for the sentiments and convictions of the women to find expression," as well as increase the political influence of Bloomington's women.³⁰ Christian again demonstrated her talents for writing and speaking by presenting a paper at a club meeting in 1900.³¹

Though Christian was an active member of most organizations she belonged to, it is clear that the Amateur Musical Club (AMC) was her true passion and became her life's work. The Amateur Musical Club was one of the most significant cultural forces in Bloomington-Normal throughout its entire existence. From humble beginnings of a few friends interested in sharing music amongst themselves, to a club that at one point numbered over 1,800 members, the AMC put Bloomington-Normal on the musical map, and brought the best of the musical world to the community.³² The club would, in no small part thanks to Christian's own guidance, grow the musical culture of Bloomington-Normal through the wide influence of its patronage.

The AMC was founded in 1893 by four women: two pianists, Bernice Kidder Green and Mary Sidley Fleming; and two singers, Charlotte Burr Harwood (Christian's friend and former voice teacher) and Florence Eddy Davis. Active and student memberships within the club were limited to women—though men could become associate members—and the general membership was limited by the 1893 by-laws to 175, meaning the club was rather exclusive at its start.³³ Within a year, the membership grew to 13 members.³⁴ Harwood served as club president until 1896 when the club was reorganized away from exclusivity towards increasing opportunities for the citizens of Bloomington-Normal to experience music.³⁵ The club accomplished this primarily through cultivating local musical talent and hosting performances for local musicians. Later, as the club grew, it began booking famous musicians to perform in Bloomington as another way to introduce residents to a variety of musical experiences.³⁶ Christian undoubtedly would have been aware of the club's existence by her and Harwood's friendship, and seems to have seized the opportunity of the club's reorganization to join.

Christian first appears as a member of the AMC in early 1897. On March 6, 1897, she presented a paper on the "Grand Opera from 1800 to Wagner" prior to the meeting's musical performance at Cooper Hall.³⁷ By 1898, Christian was elected recording secretary for the club, a position to which she was reelected in 1899.³⁸ Her involvement with the club continued to grow over time, with Christian being elected corresponding secretary in 1900, a position she continued to hold until 1904.³⁹

²⁹ Mrs. Frank W. Disbrow, "Woman's Club of Bloomington," in *Home Town in the Corn Belt: A Source History of Bloomington, Illinois, 1900-1950 in Five Volumes* vol. 5, compiled by Clara Louise Kessler (Bloomington: 1950), 107.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "Woman's Club Meeting," *Pantagraph*, March 14th, 1900.

³² Torii Moré. "Historical Sketch of Amateur Musical Club Collection," McLean County Museum of History Library and Archives, 2.

³³ Emily Brandicon Snow, "Memories of Past Achievements of Amateur Musical Club," in *Home Town in the Corn Belt: A Source History of Bloomington, Illinois, 1900-1950 in Five Volumes* vol. 5, compiled by Clara Louise Kessler (Bloomington: 1950), 1.

³⁴ Ibid, 2.

³⁵ Carol Straka, Researcher Summary on Amateur Musical Club.

³⁶ Snow, "Memories of Past Achievements of Amateur Musical Club."

³⁷ "Amateur Musical Club," *Pantagraph*, March 8, 1897.

³⁸ Straka, AMC summary.

³⁹ Ibid.

One of Christian's more notable contributions to AMC programming during this time was her organizing the club's annual Charity Day concert in 1902.⁴⁰ This annual concert donated all of its receipts to charity each year, and had in previous years been quite successful.⁴¹ Christian chose to feature a musical adaptation of Lord Tennyson's poem "Enoch Arden" as the centerpiece of the day's program. Christian's handling of the event seems to have been viewed as a success by the membership of the club, as Christian was elected chair of the program committee in 1904.⁴²

By 1904, the Amateur Musical Club had already grown to have a general membership of 270, and was conducting twelve regular recitals and multiple artist recitals (in which famous, non-local musical talent was featured), as well as beginning afternoon student recitals over the course of the 1903-1904 season.⁴³ Much of that year's success was attributed to the work of the previous program committee, meaning Christian had taken on a significant responsibility and had high expectations placed on her when she was put in charge of the program committee for the 1904-1905 season. She evidently had a successful year because she was elected vice president of the club in 1905, a position she held for the next five years.⁴⁴

During her final year as vice president, Christian even assumed the additional responsibility of acting president, while the current president Sophronia Funk was on an extended leave of absence.⁴⁵ Christian made the most of this opportunity, leading the club through one of its busiest and most anticipated years to date. She did such fine job that she was elected president of the club the following year.⁴⁶

Christian continued to maintain a very busy schedule of social and civic activities outside of her increasing involvement and leadership in the AMC. As a way to illustrate her independence and decision to never marry, it appears that Christian created a short, illustrated scrapbook around 1903 (which is housed in the McLean County of Museum of History's archival collection). The text of the document is as follows:

"I often meditate./I am keeping away wrinkles/My mirror still cheers me/Some women have men to work for them./I have to work for myself./The men do not seem to need the women to entertain them now./This is the way some men entertain their wives./I have had chances to marry./But he might have been cross/I can borrow the neighbor's children./My mother still appreciates my society./I never would be spoony/I was always too independent/Still unoccupied./I spend my evening alone/My constant companion."⁴⁷

Despite its few words and short length, Christian makes a clear, feminist argument that neither she, nor any man she could have married, has lost anything by her decision not to marry, and that she in fact has had a happier, safer life as a result. Christian also makes clear in her "manifesto" that she has had chances to marry, but has refused them. Therefore, one can infer

⁴⁰ "Charity Day Program," *Pantagraph*, December 12, 1902.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Straka, AMC summary.

⁴³ Membership breaks down as: 50 active, 200 associate, 20 student; "Club's Eighth Year," *Pantagraph*, May 2, 1904.

⁴⁴ Straka, AMC Summary

⁴⁵ Ibid; U.S. Federal Census 1880, Ancestry.com, Date accessed July 2, 2019

⁴⁶ "Amateur Musical Club Plans Notable Year," *Pantagraph*, October 9, 1909; Straka, AMC Summary.

⁴⁷ Annie May Christian, untitled scrapbook (scrapbook, in collections of McLean County Museum of History, circa 1903); the line "My constant companion" accompanies a picture of a black cat.

that at a young age she considered the various potential risks of marriage in her time and had the courage and confidence to reject such proposals, despite societal expectations to the contrary.⁴⁸

Christian began her first official term as president of the Amateur Musical Club in 1910. She would lead the club for over a decade, and through some of its most illustrious years. During her tenure, the growth of the club allowed for more sponsorship of celebrity artist and orchestra performances. Christian herself put together a list of the most notable performances put on by the club during her lifetime; 25 of which occurred during her tenure as president.⁴⁹

One of the most notable events of all the club's history occurred during Christian's first year as president—the homecoming concert of local opera singer Minnie Saltzman-Stevens in November 1910. A former member of the Amateur Musical Club (between 1899 and 1900), Saltzman-Stevens left Bloomington six years prior to study voice and perform in Europe. The return of a local talent who had found such success made the event one to remember. The AMC began negotiations nearly a year earlier for this concert to be held in Bloomington. Christian worked with fellow AMC members Florence Fifer-Bohrer, May Capen, and Harriet Thomas to secure what was a sold out show.⁵⁰ Saltzman-Stevens repaid the enthusiasm of Bloomington by donating back \$100 of the receipts received from the concert to start a fund that eventually allowed the AMC to purchase a concert grand piano in 1912.⁵¹ Christian's first year as president concluded with the challenge of running the May Music Festival, an event that had only started the year before, but which had already become a community favorite.⁵² Christian evidently was quite fond of this type of festival because she not only assisted in organizing Bloomington's own music festival in 1916, she attended one in Evanston as well.⁵³ Despite the additional responsibility being club president entailed, Christian still cultivated her musical skills through her membership in the AMC, joining the choir that was organized in 1910.⁵⁴

When the United States finally entered World War I in 1917, the Amateur Music Club and the general community of Bloomington used music to support the war effort through community sings. Community sings were already a growing phenomenon across the United States before the war, but the Amateur Musical Club's support of this new form of entertainment helped the practice take root in Bloomington during the summer of 1916 as part of a concert in Miller Park.⁵⁵ At the time, the practice was seen to be an excellent way to bring the community together in patriotic support of the war effort. Six hundred people attended the sings during the first week after war was declared. By the fifth week, 3,200 people were in attendance.⁵⁶

Despite the ongoing war, Christian refused to let it impact the musical life of Bloomington. Christian's speech at the annual meeting of the Amateur Musical Club in May 1917 found hope for a better future in the continued growth of musical culture in Bloomington and across the

⁴⁸ Christian, untitled scrapbook, 8.

⁴⁹ Listing of top fine music events from Amateur Musical Club Collection created by Annie May Christian, McLean County Museum of History Library and Archives.

⁵⁰ "Mme. Saltzman-Stevens in a Brilliant Concert," *Pantagraph*, November 15, 1910.

⁵¹ \$100 in 1910 is approximately equal to \$2600 in 2018; "Amateur Musical Club on Good Basis," *Pantagraph*, May 13, 1912.

⁵² "May Music Festival," *Pantagraph*, April 13, 1911.

⁵³ "Attends Evanston Festival," *Pantagraph*, May 29, 1916.

⁵⁴ "Will Give Concert in the Near Future," *Pantagraph*, November 21, 1910.

⁵⁵ "Community 'sing' at Sunday Concert," *Pantagraph*, June 23, 1916.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*; E. E. Pierson and J. L. Hasbrouck, *McLean County Illinois in the World War; 1917-1918* (Bloomington: McLean County War Publishing Company, 1921), 156.

world.⁵⁷ In line with this, the club resolved not to reduce its 1917-1918 season of programming. But, it did concede to include more patriotic music and to extol patrons to treat that music with the utmost respect.⁵⁸ The AMC did much contribute to the war effort, despite a dip in membership from 467 in 1914 to 300 in 1919.⁵⁹ The club purchased war bonds and stamps, made contributions to the Red Cross, and even donated money to assist an unknown French musical prodigy suffering as a result of the war.⁶⁰ Christian herself was one of the patronesses of Bloomington's "Pageant of the Allied Nations" in April 1918. The pageant, held on April 5 that year, was "part of the recent great movement for the pictorial presentation of historical events," but was different from other events like it since it portrayed the recent history of the entry of the Allies into World War I. The event was organized by Ann Coleman of Peoria and featured dancers in costumes who carried the flags of each of the Allied Nations in the order that they entered the war.⁶¹

After World War I ended, Christian continued her successful leadership of the Amateur Musical Club. In 1920 (the club's twenty-sixth year), the club continue to innovate and grow its work, with the introduction of free Sunday concerts.⁶² The first performance in January was an immediate success, and continued to be one of the most popular programs the club sponsored. Christian was also personally credited with managing the AMC's presentation of the famous pianist Josef Hofmann.⁶³

Christian continued to advocate for new charitable causes for which the AMC could help raise money. In 1921 she wrote an article for *The Pantagraph* encouraging people to purchase tickets to a concert performed by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, of which part of the proceeds would go to begin a fund to purchase uniforms for the Bloomington High School band.⁶⁴

Sometime in January 1922, Christian and her mother Elizabeth became seriously ill, though both were improving by the end of the month. However, it appears that her mother continued to suffer from ill health because Christian was granted a leave of absence from the AMC. Christian had wanted to leave the presidency of the AMC all together, but "so valuable have been her services" to the club, that members unanimously granted her a leave of absence when she was reelected to the AMC club presidency in May 1922.⁶⁵ Despite the leave of absence, Christian remained involved, presiding over a club social, as well as authoring an article for *The Pantagraph* advertising an upcoming concert and praising how well Bloomington had fostered its musical culture.⁶⁶

Christian, however, continued to curtail her involvement in the club; and in 1923, declined to stand for reelection again. In her parting speech after twelve years as president and eighteen

⁵⁷ "Let Music Continue to Inspire People," *Pantagraph*, May 7, 1917.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "Amateur Musical Annual," *Pantagraph*, June 8, 1914; "Amateur Musical Club Annual," *Pantagraph*, May 26, 1919.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ "To Give Pageant as Red Cross Benefit," *Pantagraph*, March 13, 1918.

⁶² "Throng Out for Sunday Concert," *Pantagraph*, January 5, 1920.

⁶³ "Columbia Records," *Pantagraph*, November 14, 1919.

⁶⁴ "Tuneful Program by Symphony Orchestra," *Pantagraph*, February 22, 1921.

⁶⁵ "Miss Christian Improving," *Pantagraph*, January 21, 1922; "Amateur Club Annual Meeting," *Pantagraph*, May 8, 1922.

⁶⁶ "First 'At Home' of Club Lovely Event," *Pantagraph*, November 20, 1922; May Christian, "Lauds Philharmonic Society Enterprises," *Pantagraph*, December 12, 1922.

years total as an officer of the club, Christian praised the work the club had done to create a musical culture in Bloomington, and looked forward to a more musical future, as new technologies like the radio brought music more places more quickly. Addressing the general membership of the club she said, “So many of you have been associates with me for so long that a good part of the journey of life has been together on this musical highway and I want to thank you all for the cordial, loyal support you have given me and the wonderful work you have done.” Christian remarked “that the work done with you in these past eighteen years has been one of the really worth while things of my life.”⁶⁷

One reason for Christian’s stepping down as president may have been her mother’s continued decline in health. Though her mother had been showing signs of improvement early in 1922, Elizabeth Mitchell Christian died on November 23, 1923.⁶⁸ Christian had lived with her mother all her life at the family home on Front Street. The two were evidently quite close, as Christian mentioned how much her mother appreciated her continued company in the scrapbook she created.⁶⁹

Despite stepping down as club president, Christian continued to be an active member of the Amateur Musical Club. For the years of 1927 and 1928, Christian was on several committees in the AMC, most notably as chair of the publicity committee.⁷⁰ In this capacity, she was published in *The Pantagraph* several times, reviewing club work, reporting on happenings in the national musical world, and sadly, authoring the AMC’s tribute to Christian’s friend, and the club’s president, Charlotte Burr Harwood upon her death in 1927.⁷¹ After 1928 though, it seems Christian limited her work in the AMC to serving on the board of directors, in addition to being honored as a life member.⁷²

As Christian became less involved with the Amateur Musical Club, she used her time to pursue other interests. Christian remained involved in the Bloomington chapter of the American Red Cross, which she had joined when the United States entered World War I.⁷³ She also became more involved with the History Club throughout the 1920s and 1930s. In addition to regularly hosting or presenting at meetings, Christian helped prepare for the club’s celebration of its fiftieth anniversary by researching and presenting on the club’s work from 1900 until 1920.⁷⁴ She also served as the secretary-treasurer of the club in 1937.⁷⁵ Similarly, Christian became more involved with First Presbyterian Church, of which she had been a longtime, active member. Adding to her responsibilities with the church’s Sunday School, Christian became involved with the Women’s Missionary Society in the mid-1920s.⁷⁶ She also helped First Presbyterian Church celebrate its 100th anniversary. She, along with several other members of the church, were

⁶⁷ “Retires After Active Service,” *Pantagraph*, May 21, 1923.

⁶⁸ Candace Summers, “Elizabeth Jane Mitchell Christian,” 2007.

⁶⁹ Christian, untitled scrapbook, 11.

⁷⁰ “Amateur Musical Club Announces Committees to Direct Years Work,” *Pantagraph*, September 24, 1927.

⁷¹ “Local Music Club Reviews Work Done During Past Year,” *Pantagraph*, January 1, 1927; “Walter Damrosch Resigns His Baton to gain Leisure,” *Pantagraph*, April 16, 1927; “Mrs. Willis Harwood, Musical Leader, Dies,” *Pantagraph*, November 22, 1927.

⁷² Straka, Summary on AMC.

⁷³ “Red Cross Fund Totals \$2500.” *Pantagraph*, November 25, 1925.

⁷⁴ “History Club to Hold Golden Anniversary at Humphrey’s Home,” *Pantagraph*, May 15, 1930.

⁷⁵ “History Club Arranges Year,” *Pantagraph*, August 25, 1937.

⁷⁶ “First Presbyterian,” *Pantagraph*, March 16, 1925.

appointed to be on the historical committee to “compile data and outline plans for a suitable celebration of the centennial.”⁷⁷

In 1932, in recognition of the breadth and depth of work she had done for the community, Christian was nominated for the Community Service Award.⁷⁸ The anonymous friend of Christian’s who nominated her for the award stated,

“Among the outstanding women of the community working with efficient unselfishness to bring the best in music within the reach of all, Miss Christian ranks foremost. She is a possessor of a peculiarly keen mind, which is of great value in her consideration of civic interests. Her judgment is sought by friends and associates in these enterprises, by which the community has profited through the years. Her labors have contributed an incalculable factor in making our community a better, happier and more cultured one in which to live.”⁷⁹

Unfortunately, she did not win it.

Annie May Christian died on April 14, 1941 at Brokaw Hospital, where she had been a patient for three weeks.⁸⁰ She outlived all of her immediate family, including her younger brother who died in 1935.⁸¹ Funeral services were held at Beck Memorial Home and were officiated by Rev. D.J. Gretzinger of First Presbyterian Church. She was buried in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery. *The Pantagraph* ran a tribute to Christian, stating that, “such a life of service for others in the interest of artistic culture bequeaths to the city and all Central Illinois a name and a memory which shall last long and with undimmed fragrance.”⁸² She was a force in the Bloomington community all seventy-four years of her life and, by her own admission, “was always too independent” for her time.⁸³

By: Logan Janicki, 2019.

Researched by: Logan Janicki, Carol Straka, and Candace Summers

⁷⁷ “First Presbyterian Church Making Plans to Mark One Hundredth Anniversary of Founding This Year,” *Pantagraph*, January 29, 1933.

⁷⁸ “Nominated for Community Service Award,” *Pantagraph*, December 24, 1932.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ “May Christian, Music Leader of City, Dies,” *Pantagraph*, April 14, 1941.

⁸¹ Her father had died early in 1900.

⁸² “Miss Christian’s Life Enriched Many Others,” *Pantagraph*, April 15, 1941, 4.

⁸³ Christian, untitled scrapbook, 13.