



## Young Evelyn Oas

*Evelyn Margrethe Oas was the daughter of Oscar Oas and Emma Bakke. She was born in 1910 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and was raised with three siblings in a house on the city's south side. She married Iver Sondrol in June 1934. This note covers the years between her birth and marriage.*

Evelyn Margrethe Oas was born on December 14, 1910 to Oscar Oas, a puncher with Minneapolis Steel and Machinery Company, and Emma Bakke Oas, a housewife. Evelyn was probably born at home at 2023/2103 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South in Minneapolis. Evelyn was likely baptized at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, where her parents were married three years earlier, although the Oas family later became active in the First Norwegian-Danish Methodist Church.



*Trinity Lutheran Church*

- For more about Oscar Oas and Emma Bakke, see [Oscar and Emma Oas](#).

Evelyn was the third of five children born to Oscar and Emma, but brother Edgar Oliver Oas died shortly after he was born due to a heart birth defect more than a year before Evelyn was born. Her siblings included the following:

- Clarence Edwin Oas, born March 27, 1908 at 2021 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis
- Edgar Oliver, born mid-July or on August 28, 1909 at 2021/2101 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and died on August 28, 1909
- Oscar Maurice or Maurice Oscar (records are inconsistent on the order throughout his life, although Oscar Maurice is more common), born January 3, 1914 at 3809 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Marie Eleanor, born October 3, 1916 at 3809 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota

By 1912, the family had moved into a house at 3809 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis, where Evelyn was raised. Evelyn lived here until she got married in 1934.



*Evelyn lived with her family at 3809 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue South from when she was about one year old until she got married in 1934.*



*Oscar and Emma Oas and their children Clarence, Evelyn and Maurice (1914)*



*Emma Oas (right), her sister Milla (middle) and a sister-in-law Marie (left) and their children, including Evelyn, the middle of the standing children (about 1914)*

## Research Notes

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue addresses are odd in that there seems to be two possible sets of numbers for the same residences. The house numbering on the streets in that neighborhood reflects that because the block number changed in mid-block, right at a duplex with two entrances. Numbering from the north would number these entrances 2021 and 2023, but numbering from the south would number these entrances 2101 and 2103.

Two sources indicate that Edgar lived for about 1 ½ months before he died from a birth defect. However, Hennepin County records show a birth on August 28, 1909 for a “Baby Oys” whose mother’s name was Emma, and no such records in June or July of that year that would fit with the 1 ½ months.

## **Growing Up**

Although Oscar and Emma Oas were married in the Lutheran church, at some point, Emma embraced a strict version of the Methodist faith, and the family became members of the First Norwegian-Danish Methodist Church. That meant no card playing, no dancing, no going to the movies, etc. And although the Oas house was as nice as any in their neighborhood, it was Emma who wore the pants in the family when it came to money, keeping Oscar on a strict allowance to cover his streetcar fare to get to work and for the occasional plug of tobacco.

Emma taught Evelyn the following prayer:

Gud bøye mitt unge hjerte  
Til sand Guds frygt  
Lev Kristelig  
Død salig. Amen.

which loosely translates to

God bless my young heart  
To sound devotion  
Live like a Christian  
And die peacefully. Amen.

Bigger city newspapers generally lack the social coverage of people that is more typically found in small town newspapers. That was true with the Minneapolis newspapers, so I found few articles that provided much insight into Evelyn’s early years.

## Final School Essay Prizes to Be Given at Washington Programs

Junior High School Winners of Medals Will Get Prizes Next Wednesday

**P**RESENTATION of silver medals to the best essay writers in the public schools as part of the loyal league work of the Daughters of the Revolution will be completed at programs to be held this week in commemoration of Washington's birthday. Mrs. Webster Tallant, state regent, announced yesterday.

Mrs. W. D. Scrugham, director of the loyal league work, and Mrs. W. I. Fisher will present the medal to Helen MacKenzie of 9C grade at Franklin Junior high school for the best essay on "Valley Forge, the Valley Forge of the Revolutionary Times, the Valley Forge of Today," the topic of the es-

school. At Logan Janet Raymond of the 6C grade won the medal presented by Mrs. Yale and Mrs. G. M. Bleeker. Mrs. Scrugham and Mrs. Merrill C. Smith were in charge of the Sheridan school, where Anna Shima of 8A grade took the honors. At Hiawatha school Mildred Murphy received the medal presented by Mrs. C. L. Spaulding and Mrs. E. S. Griffith.

### Other Medals Given.

Beatrice Larson of 9C grade was the winner at Michael Dowling school, in charge of Mrs. Wallant and Mrs. Meaghers. Mrs. T. R. Shaw and Mrs. A. M. Blaisdale were at Schiller, where Leone Christianson of 8B wrote the best essay. At the Miles Standish school Evelyn Oas of 6A grade received the medal from Mrs. E. M. Conant and Mrs. T. H. Bloxham.

Sarah Eisenberg of 8A grade at Lincoln school was presented with the medal by Mrs. Scrugham and Mrs. Fisher. Thursday evening at North high school. At the Bremer school the loyal league was organized Friday afternoon by Mrs. Schugham, Mrs. Tallant and Mrs. I. E. Meaghers. A large silk flag was given to the school, together with a medal to Helen May of 6A grade.

*Evelyn received a silver medal for writing the best essay among the sixth graders at the Miles Standish School, Minneapolis Star-Tribune, February 18, 1923*



*Evelyn attended the Miles Standish School while in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade*



*Evelyn likely attended Roosevelt High School for a year. Students from her neighborhood attended Roosevelt after it opened in 1923.*

Evelyn completed her first year of high school, but left school after a long recovery from a broken leg kept her away from classes for months. Evelyn enrolled at the MacPhail School of Music, where she studied piano under Edna McLaughlin. She participated in Christmas recitals at the school in both 1925 and 1926.



*Former site of the MacPhail Music School, where Evelyn studied the piano under Edna McLaughlin. Lawrence Welk and actress Ann Sothorn were among the more famous of the school's alumni. Welk graduated with a certificate from MacPhail in 1927, so Evelyn's and Lawrence's time as students at the school overlapped, although their classes probably didn't.*

### MacPhail School

Madame Bailey-Apfelbeck, internationally known pianist and member of the MacPhail faculty, will give a series of recitals in the Unitarian church, beginning in January.

The following pupils from the class of Edna Moffatt of the MacPhail School will appear in recital on Wednesday evening in the auditorium of the school: Josephine Stewart, Bessie Katz, Lillian Kellman, \*Rose Sobo, Mary Chernoff, Celia Cooper, Margaret Leix and Adele Milston.

Judith Ann Williams, Pamela Williams and Eva Lorraine Funk will give a program at the annual Christmas party given by Marion Hutchinson for the junior members of her class on Tuesday afternoon in the MacPhail school auditorium.

Edna McLaughlin of the MacPhail School of Music will present the following pupils in recital on Tuesday evening in the auditorium of the school: Florence Davis, Marvel Halgrinson, Eleanor Rudberg, Jeanette Oliver, Florence Goldberg, Monnie Pinehoff, Betty Jean Glover, Marjorie Ostling, Helen Edwards, Irene Smith, Alice Gross, Katharine Roman, Evon Smith, Sylvia Toberman, Elizabeth Olson, Camilla Aspnes, Ella Baron, Harriet Johnson, Bernice Sholl, Carolyn Brede, Dorothy Hammer, Gertrude Gallagher, Carolyn Cedergren, Edna Christenson, Carmen Starn, Lucille McLeod, Agnes Jaroscek, Olive Anderson, Evelyn Oas, Roslyn Betzold, Alice Wolden, Florence Allison, Margaret Aretz, Marion Whear, Lorraine Karloske, Yvonne Senechal and Gladys Streed.

Edna McLaughlin of the MacPhail School of Music will present the following pupils in recital on Thursday evening in the school auditorium: Alice Gross, Agnes Cedergren, Lillian Turchick, Ruth Werner, Evon Smith, Dorothy Hammer, Harriet Eklund, Irene Forsythe, Camilla Aspnes, Sylvia Toberman, Harriet Johnson, Alice Sparrow, Edna Christensen, Celia K. Marcus, Katherine Roman, Evelyn Oas, Theodore Fischer, Agnes Jaroscek, Bernice Sholl, Margaret Aret, Myra Granger, Alice Wolden, Carolyn Cedergren, Carolyn Brede, Gladys Streed, Yvonne Senechal, Hillard Junyon, Edna Christensen, Leo Kleinbaum, Eleanor Rudberg, Martin Sandler, Celia Marcus, Beatrice Rosenfield, Florence Goldberg, Dorothy Eggan, Clarice James, Catherine MacDonald, Irene Smith, Selma Sallierman, Monnie Pincheff, Bertha Rutman, Florence Dedrick, Sadie Antonoff and Bernice Soposnek. They will have the assistance of Christine Vancura, pupil of James Manley.

*Minneapolis Journal, December 27, 1925 (left); Minneapolis Journal, December 26, 1926 (right)*

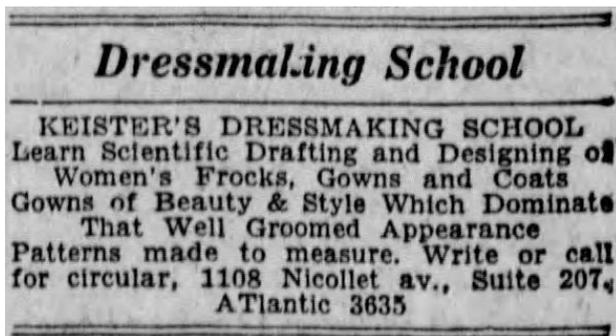
## Working Years

After leaving school, Evelyn got a job as a waitress at F. W. Woolworth Company in downtown Minneapolis. The following year, she was working as a dishwasher at the newly opened Sexton Building's Sexton Lunch Counter Restaurant, also downtown.



*The Sexton Building in downtown Minneapolis; the building still stands, but it has been converted to loft-style housing units*

In the meantime, Evelyn began taking sewing drafting classes. In sewing, drafting is the process of creating custom-fit sewing patterns from scratch using measurements that you provide. Such classes teach various design techniques, how to adjust patterns for different body shapes, and how to translate one's own design ideas into usable patterns for various types of garments. This helped Evelyn go beyond general sewing and mending to become a dressmaker who could design and make custom clothing for her clients, and make alterations to off-the-shelf clothing and patterns to improve their fit for her clients.



*It is not known where Evelyn took her drafting classes, but Keister's Ladies Tailoring and Dressmaking School was the only such school I found that advertised regularly in the Minneapolis newspapers during this time, it offered night classes, and it was close to where Evelyn worked.*

By 1929, Evelyn was working as a self-employed dressmaker out of her parents' home. Evelyn continued with this career off and on for decades.

### **Courtship and Marriage**

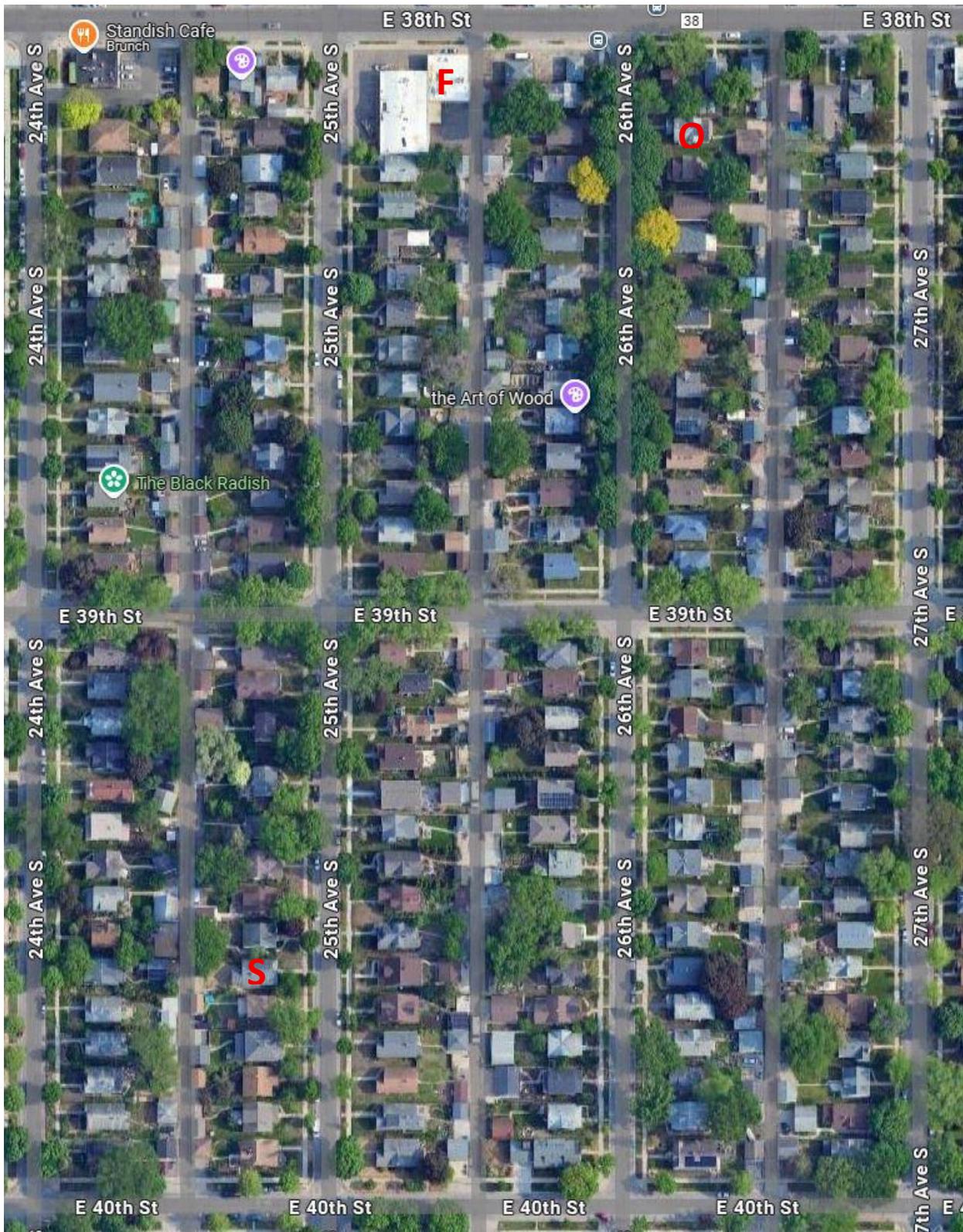
The Oases shopped at a grocery store just around the corner from where they lived that was owned by Nordahl Flaten. In 1928, Flaten hired his cousin Iver Sondrol to work as a clerk at the store. Iver was a recent immigrant from Norway who then moved into the neighborhood.

Then-16-year-old Evelyn met then-19-year-old Iver at the store in 1927.



*Iver at about 19 years old when he was working at Flaten's grocery store (1927-1928 or 1929)*

- For more about Iver, see [Young Iver Sondrol](#).



*Map of Evelyn's Minneapolis neighborhood. Flaten's grocery store was located at **F**. The Oases lived at the house marked **O**. Iver and his brother boarded at the house marked **S**.*

Evelyn had gone into the store to get an ice cream cone. When Iver was scooping ice cream for her cone, she winked at him. He immediately offered her a stick of Doublemint gum. And that started a courtship that lasted for more than six years.

They were both young, and Iver was earning only \$15/week, so marriage wasn't on the table for some time. But Iver bought her a pair of ice skates so that they could go skating together, and he was a frequent guest for dinner in the Oas home where there was great Norwegian food and Norwegian was spoken at the dinner table.

Emma Oas's strict Methodist faith meant that there was no card-playing, dancing or movies, certainly not the values that Iver had grown up with. But that meant that Iver and Evelyn had to sneak around a bit. They did dance and go to movies together. And when Iver and Evelyn won two full bags of groceries at a movie raffle, Emma's views on movies softened a bit. Still, if Iver stayed too long after an evening out with Evelyn, there would be a thump on the floor from upstairs, indicating that it was time for him to go home.



*Undated photo of Iver (left); Evelyn Oas in 1930 (right)*

But marriage did not come up as a topic of conversation, so in the spring of 1934, Evelyn finally asked Iver if they were ever going to get married. That pushed Iver into a decision.

More than six years after first meeting at Flaten's grocery store, Iver and Evelyn were married in the living room of her parents' home on June 30, 1934.

- For more about Iver and Evelyn's married years, see [Iver and Evelyn Sondrol](#).

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