

**PETER CHRISTIAN LUTKIN (1858-1931) PAPERS, 1889-1971**

**Series 19/1/1**

**Box 1**

**Biography**

Peter Christian Lutkin was born on March 27, 1858 in Thompsonville, Wisconsin. His parents, Peter Christian and Hannah Susanna Define (Olivarius) Lutkin, had emigrated to the United States from Denmark in 1844. They moved to Racine, Wisconsin, a year after Peter was born and then to Chicago when he was five years old. He attended Chicago Public Schools until the age of 13 when both of his parents died. He had already been the organist for daily services and occasionally for Sunday services at St. Peter and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Chicago and at the age of 14 he became the chief organist. He had also been a member of the church choir since the age of 9.

In 1871 he began his first formal training in music, studying organ with Clarence Eddy, piano with Regina Watson and theory with Frederick Grant Gleason in Chicago. He joined the faculty of Northwestern University's Conservatory of Music in 1879 as an Instructor in Piano. In 1881 he went to Berlin for further study with Oscar Ralf for piano, August Haupt for organ and Waldemar Bargiel for composition. A year later he was the only foreigner admitted to the musical department of the Royal Academy of Arts in Berlin. While in Europe he also studied piano and composition with Theodore Leschetitzky in Vienna and with Moritz Moszkowsky in Paris.

Upon his return to Chicago he became choirmaster and organist at St. Clement's Protestant Episcopal Church and later served in the same capacity at St. James Episcopal Church. In 1888 he became director of the Theoretical Department of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

In 1891 he came to Northwestern's Conservatory of Music for the second time. Upon his return, the Conservatory was facing discontinuance. Cornelia Gray Lunt, daughter of Northwestern founder Orrington Lunt and an influence in the Northwestern Community in her own right, recommended Lutkin as an individual who was sufficiently talented to salvage the study of music at the University. He immediately began work on restoring the Conservatory to its former prominence, and in 1892 it became a department of the College of Liberal Arts. Its courses were modeled after the German conservatories; all students were required to take the same theoretical studies so that they could attain a comprehensive knowledge of music. Lutkin was a Professor of Music when, in 1895, a separate School of Music was formed and he was appointed Dean. He remained in that position until he became Dean Emeritus in 1928. He also served as Professor of Theory, Piano, Organ and Composition in the School of Music, 1895-1931; Director of the School's Department of Church and Choral Music, 1926-1928; and Lecturer in Church Music at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.

Lutkin's major interest was church and choral music. This is evidenced by his many activities. At Northwestern he founded the Women's Cecilian Choir and the men's Glee Club. He brought national fame to the School of Music by organizing the A Cappella Choir in 1906, the first permanent organization of its kind in America. He composed music for organ and piano, but specialized in unaccompanied vocal music, written mainly for use by the Northwestern choir.

Lutkin's strong interest in church music led him to compose many hymns, especial for use in Episcopal Church services. With Karl Harrington he was co-editor of the official Methodist Hymnal and was also musical editor of the Methodist Sunday School Hymnal. Several of Lutkin's own compositions were included in these hymnals.

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Lutkin also served as a director of the Evanston Musical Club from 1894 to 1915, and the Ravenswood Musical Club from 1896 to 1904. He was a founder of the American Guild of Organists in 1896 and twice served as president of the Music Teachers' National Association, 1911-1912 and 1919-1920. One of Lutkin's most notable accomplishments was the role he played in organizing the North Shore Music Festival. The festival began in 1910 and became internationally known under Lutkin's direction.

Lutkin received an honorary doctorate in music in 1901 from Syracuse University. Among the books he wrote was *Music in the Church* (1910). He also wrote a history of the Northwestern School of Music.

Lutkin married Nancy Lelah Carmen on October 27, 1885. The Lutkins had one son, Harris Carmen Lutkin, who attended and later taught at Northwestern's Law School.

Peter Christian Lutkin died on December 27, 1931 following a two-week illness after suffering a severe heart attack. He was buried in Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago.

**Description of the Papers**

The Peter Christian Lutkin Papers include biographical material, some correspondence and several lectures and addresses that span the years 1889-1928. The biographical material (1859-1971) includes general material, i.e. memorabilia, and miscellaneous printed biographical sketches of and clippings relating to Lutkin. A small amount of material regarding Lutkin Memorial Hall, dedicated in 1941 at Northwestern, is included, but most material regarding Lutkin Hall is filed in a separate series.

The correspondence is comprised of letters written by Lutkin in his official capacity as Dean of the School of Music. Most of the letters are photocopies of the originals sent out by Lutkin to the university's business manager or treasurer concerning the financial business of the School. Also included here is a copy of Lutkin's resignation as Dean in 1928, taken from the minutes of the Board of Trustees. The Christmas cards in the collection were specially prepared for friends by the Lutkins and they include Christmas musical compositions by Lutkin.

The lectures and addresses are arranged according to a list filed at the beginning of Folder 5. Included are his essay on the history of Music at Northwestern and several other essays regarding music education in general. Not all titles on the list are extant.

**Provenance:** Unknown

**Restrictions:** None.

**Processor:** Elisabeth Wittman, February 1978.

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**Container List**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Dates</u></b>
1	1	Biographical Material-General	1889-1964
	2	Biographical Material-Clippings	1929-1971
	3	Correspondence	1891-1928
	4	Christmas Cards	1903-1928
	5	Lectures and Addresses	ca. 1891-1928
	6	Lectures and Addresses	ca. 1891-1928
	7	Lectures and Addresses	ca. 1891-1928