

ARNE OLDBERG (1874-1962) PAPERS, 1917-1976, n.d.

Series 19/3/3

Box 1 (half-size box)

Biography

Arne Oldberg was born July 12, 1874, in Youngstown, Ohio. With his parents, Oscar and Emma (Parritt) Oldberg (see Northwestern University Archives Series 61/1), he moved to Chicago in 1886. At a very early age Oldberg exhibited musical talents and his father taught him to play the piano. He studied music with several piano instructors at the Gottschalk Lyric School in Chicago and in 1892 was graduated with honors. He continued his musical education for two years with Theodor Leschetizky in Vienna. On his return to his family's home, now in Evanston, Illinois, Oldberg was occupied with composing, presenting piano recitals, and teaching piano in Chicago.

He joined the music faculty of Northwestern University in 1897. Oldberg traveled to Europe again in 1898 to study composition with Joseph Rheinberger at Munich's Royal Academy of Art. In 1899 Oldberg accepted an instructorship on the faculty of the School of Music at Northwestern. Subsequent appointments at Northwestern included: Professor of Piano and Composition (1901-1941), Director of the Piano Department (1919-1941), and Director of the Graduate Music Department (1924-1941). The University awarded Oldberg with an emeritus appointment in 1941.

Oldberg possessed a consuming interest in musical composition and wrote a large number of concertos, symphonies, quartettes and quintets for piano, string, and wind instruments. As early as 1908 his compositions were performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Oldberg attained widespread recognition by many of the great orchestras of the United States. For several summers in the 1930s he was a guest professor of composition at the University of California at Los Angeles. Oldberg also taught music at Mount St. Mary's College, again in Los Angeles. One of Oldberg's compositions won first prize at a Hollywood Bowl music contest in 1931.

Oldberg married Mary Sloan on July 2, 1900. Both were honored in 1941 when the City of Evanston named a park near Northwestern's School of Music after them. When this land was used for a University building another property was named in their honor. In 1976 Northwestern University sponsored a recital and reception dedicated to Oldberg's memory. Northwestern and Evanston joined in celebrating Arne and Mary Sloan Oldberg Day on December 10, 1976, a recognition of their many contributions to the community.

The Oldbergs had five children: Eric (see Northwestern University Archives Series 55/30), Karl, Elsa, Richard, and Robert. Oldberg died in Evanston on February 18, 1962. Mary Sloan Oldberg died in Evanston in April 1968.

Description of the Series

The Arne Oldberg Papers are arranged in five folders and include mainly biographical materials and clippings dating between 1917 and 1976. Also included are listings of Oldberg's musical compositions (one such listing features a biographical sketch [Box 1, Folder 3]); a photocopy of

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an original composition, "In the Country;" and a small amount of correspondence. Two letters from pianist and composer Artur Schnabel (1933) may be found in the folder of correspondence.

Letters of condolence relating to Oldberg's death are filed with the papers of his son, Eric (see University Archives Series 55/30, Box 4, Folder 15).

Provenance: Mary Swissler Oldberg donated some of the materials found in this series (Accession #87-237), the remainder came from the University Archives biographical files.

Restrictions: None.

Separations: Nineteen photographs of Oldberg and conductor Frederick Stock have been transferred to the University Archives photograph collection.

Processor: Margaret Faverty; June 19, 1991.

Scanned and Reformatted by: Rachel C. Teuer; August 25, 2004.

Description of Addition to the Series

This Arne Oldberg Papers addition is arranged in two folders. One consists of copies of various compositions of Arne Oldberg. The other is a collection of program notes from performances of his works by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1908 to 1958.

Provenance: These records were separated from Accession # 99-60, transferred from the Evanston Historical Society in March 1999.

Restrictions: None.

Separations: One-half inch of duplicates was separated.

Processor: Kate Mazurek; April 1, 1999.

Scanned and Reformatted by: Rachel C. Teuer; August 25, 2004.

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Series 19/3/3

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Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	General Biographical Materials	1920-1976, n.d.
	2	Clippings and Press Releases	1917-1976, n.d.
	3	Compositions Listings	1961, n.d.
	4	Composition: "In the Country"	n.d.
	5	Correspondence	1933, 1941, 1950, 1954, n.d.
	6	Compositions	n.d.
	7	Program Notes	1908-1958