

Finding Aid to the Clarence S. Putnam Collection

Putnam, Clarence S., 1859-1952

Clarence S. Putnam Collection, 1899-1944

1 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 24

[Biography](#)

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OVERVIEW

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Compiled by the North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies staff & donation by Mark Strand. *The Academy March* donated by Presentation Sisters Convent, Fargo to NDSU Division of Fine Arts, in turn transferred to the Institute, 2010 (Acc. 2926).

Property rights: The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Clarence S. Putnam Collection, MS 24, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

BIOGRAPHY

Clarence Simeon Putnam was born September 16, 1859 at Barre, Vermont, the son of George B. Putnam. He was educated at Barre Academy and Dartmouth College where he studied for two years. His mother urged him to attend the Philadelphia Medical School and he graduated in 1883 from the Hahnemann Medical College in Chicago. During all this time, Mr. Putnam was active in musical groups, directing a band at the age of 17. Dr. Putnam married Bertha Townsend on November 30, 1898. She was born November 17, 1874 at Rutland, Vermont having come to Fargo in 1894 and later working in a bank at

Casselton, North Dakota. She died in Fargo on July 15, 1963. Dr. and Mrs. Putnam had four children, Donald, Clarence, Emery and Raymond.

Mr. Putnam practiced medicine from 1883 to 1903 at Moorhead and Ada, Minnesota; Superior, Wisconsin; and Casselton and Fargo, North Dakota. In 1904 a fire in the Edwards Building in Fargo destroyed his medical office. He thereupon began teaching various courses at the North Dakota Agricultural College. At the College, he developed the fledging band classes into the Gold Star Band, so named because of the top ratings it received by the national inspectors of the Reserve Officers Training Corps. In addition, he organized at the college a concert orchestra, girl's and boy's glee clubs, and a string ensemble. "Doc" Putnam continued in his work as bandmaster throughout his career at the NDAC until his death. He was also responsible for writing many compositions including the *North Dakota Hymn* and the NDAC school song, *The Yellow and the Green*. Putnam was also active in the Masons, Sigma Chi, and the American Bandmaster's Association. Putnam died in Fargo on February 25, 1944.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Clarence S. Putnam Collection** was artificially assembled by the Institute staff over many years and contains a wide variety of material. The [Correspondence File Series](#) contains only fragments of Putnam's correspondence including several letters to Mrs. Putnam in the 1950s.

The [Manuscripts Series](#) contains three music scores composed by Mr. Putnam. Each includes individual sheets for the various band instruments with the *President Worst March* also containing the music sheets for marching. The *President Worst March* was written in honor of the NDAC's third president John H. Worst (1895-1916). The *Kindred March* was dedicated to the Kindred, North Dakota band. *The Academy March*, dated Jan. 1, 1920 is dedicated to the Sacred Heart Academy Orchestra. It includes the handwritten music parts for piano, 1st and 2nd clarinet, 1st and 2nd cornet, 1st and 2nd violin, viola, trombone, bass, and drums.

The [Subject Files Series](#) contain various concert programs related to Putnam and his bands, two Elk and Masonic publications with mention of Putnam, a certificate awarded to him by the North Dakota Association of Future Farmer of North Dakota, and a general research document done on the Putnam name by Media Research Bureau. Other materials include a good collection of newspaper clippings on Putnam, concert notices and reviews, several poems about him, and a scrapbook of newspaper clippings and programs on his various bands and concerts. The sheet music file contains printed copies of his compositions *The Yellow and the Green* and the *North Dakota Hymn* along with newspaper clippings on the songs, as well as a list of some of his other compositions. The final file is a handwritten, 16-page speech on Growth given by Putnam to the Epsworth League State Convention at Lisbon, North Dakota on June 22, 1899.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	Contents
1/1	Biographical material, and Finding aid
	Correspondence Series
1/2	1911-1952
	Manuscripts Series
1/17	<i>Academy March</i> , 1920
1/3	<i>Kindred March</i>
1/4	<i>President Worst March</i>
	Subject Files Series
	Concert programs and notes –
1/5	General, ca. 1900-1922
1/6	North Dakota Agricultural College, 1903-1906, 1916-1919, 1935-1940
1/7	Fraternal Organizations
1/8	Future Farmers of America certificate, 1940
1/9	Genealogical material on Putnam name
1/10	Music Department, N.D.A.C.
1/11	Newspaper clippings - features on Putnam
1/12	Newspaper clippings - reviews and notices of concerts
1/13	Poetry
1/14	Scrapbook
1/15	Sheet music
1/16	Speech, 1899