

# Guide to the Hudson Family Papers

## 95.3

Special Collections  
Benjamin F. Feinberg Library  
Plattsburgh State University College  
Plattsburgh, N. Y. 12901

By:  
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Revised by Debra Kimok  
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### Introduction

George Henry Hudson was one of the first professors to teach at the Plattsburgh Normal School. Along with his younger brother, Charles F. Hudson, he was a talented musician and played the viola, violin, piano and organ. He was also a prolific amateur photographer and explored stereoscopic photography. But his true passion was for the natural sciences, particularly in the fields of botany and paleontology. He was the first in the world to publish an academic article on fossils.

Hudson was born on October 1, 1855 in North Bangor, New York, to Elizabeth Blake and Rev. Henry James Hudson. His mother was an anti-slavery advocate and kindergarten teacher from Boston. His father was a Unitarian minister. His parents encouraged both him and Charles to explore music and the natural world.

In 1880, the Hudson brothers became business partners and opened a music store. George Hudson eventually attended the Boston Conservatory of Music for two years and received a teaching certificate from the State Normal School of Potsdam. Meanwhile, Charles Hudson was working on establishing a State Normal School in Plattsburgh and in 1888 he petitioned the state legislature to select Plattsburgh as the site for a new school.

Thanks in part to his brother's efforts, George Hudson became the professor of natural science at Plattsburgh and received an annual salary of \$1,500. Throughout his career, Hudson would teach botany, biology, geology, paleontology and zoology to hundreds of students until his retirement in 1926.

Hudson married Eleanor P. Mead on December 8, 1883. They had a son, Erastus Mead Hudson, and a daughter whose married name was Mrs. Charles Heartwell Bonesteel.

At the time of his death on March 19, 1936, Hudson had published over 40 books and pamphlets including: "The Geology of Valcour Island," "Some Structural Features of a Fossil Embryo Crinoid," and "The Organic Field of Nature Study." He had collected thousands of

specimens of insects, shells, plants, and fossils (though much of this was destroyed when the Plattsburgh Normal School burned to the ground in 1929), and his private library housed 6,000 volumes. He is noted for discovering and naming many new fossils in the Adirondack region. In recognition of his teaching merit, he received an Honorary Doctor of Pedagogy Degree from Albany State Teachers College in 1932.

Charles Frederick Hudson, while being partially responsible for bringing a State Normal School to Plattsburgh, was just as influential in cultivating interest in music in Plattsburgh. He and George founded the Hudson School of Music on 84 Court St.— their childhood home. Charles also founded the Plattsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 1911, which he conducted until May 6, 1935, when failing health forced him to step down at age 78.

He helped initiate a week-long annual musical festival for local school children at the Normal School. In addition, he was a music teacher at Chazy High School and Plattsburgh High School, and a choir director at St. John's Church in Plattsburgh.

Charles Hudson had one son, Frederick H. Hudson, and three daughters, Coranell Hudson, Edna Falconer, and Lucy Agnes Hudson, all of whom helped to run the Hudson School of Music.

Lucy Hudson was the most musically talented of the four, particularly at playing the violin. She studied under renowned violinist Dora Becker for three years and those who knew her claimed that she had sufficient talent to be a nationally recognized violinist.

Lucy succeeded her father as conductor of the Plattsburgh Symphony Orchestra. She was also the director of both the junior and senior choirs at Trinity Episcopal Church and she taught piano and violin. The Plattsburgh Community Concert Association elected her as its first Vice President.

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### **Background Sources in Special Collections**

“Charles F. Hudson, Founder of May Music Festival and Symphony Orchestra, Dies.”  
*Plattsburgh Daily Republican*, 11 March, 1937: 3.

Davern, Jeanne M. “Panoramic Portrait, Lucy A. Hudson.” *Panorama*. 12-19 July, 1947: 4-5

“Dr. George H. Hudson Famed Naturalist, Dies.” *Plattsburgh Daily Republican*, 20 March, 1934: 3.

Skopp, Douglas R. *Bright With Promise: From the Normal and Training School to SUNY Plattsburgh, 1889-1989, A Pictorial History*. Norfolk, Virginia: The Donning Company, 1989.

## Contents

The Hudson Family Papers houses flyers, pamphlets, publications, correspondence, and photographs documenting the musical performances and events organized by Charles and George Hudson and works by Charles Hudson on paleontology, geology and teaching.

### BOX 1

#### Series 1- Family Materials

1/1: Hudson, John R.

1/2: Hudson, Henry J.

1/3: Hudson, George H.—Correspondence

Item 1 To: George H. Hudson

From: Charles H. Bonesteel, III

West Point Graduation Announcement, June 11, 1931

Item 2 To: George H. Hudson

From: Henry (nephew)

8/27/1930

Item 3 To: Professor George H. Hudson

From: Lillian I. Flynn (Mrs. Herbert J. Flynn), Lake Kushagua, N.Y.

9/11/1930

Asking whether a friend may purchase some of Hudson's irises

Item 4 To: George H. Hudson

From: Ernest

1/11/1931

Item 5 To: George H. Hudson

From: Henry (nephew)

5/8/1931

Item 6 To: George H. Hudson

From: Bruz

Telegram, 6/11/1931

Item 7 To: George H. Hudson

From: Millard Hudson (genealogy)

4/21/1931

Item 8 To: George H. Hudson

From: Elsie Gibson Whitney

9/15/1931

Item 9 To: Katherine Hudson

From: George H. Hudson (uncle)

9/30/1933

1/4: Mead, Julia

1/5: Hudson, Charles F.--Letter and Receipt

Item 1 To: Charles F. Hudson  
From: Lewis S. Brown (portrait)  
1/18/1932

Item 2 1885 receipt of goods "Bought of L. D. Larkin & Son Fresh and Salt  
Meats, Fish, Poultry, Vegetables, Fruits, Oysters, Canned  
Goods &C"

1/6: Hudson, Charles F.--Heart's Delight Farm Christmas Cards

1/7: Genealogical Information

Item 1: Edward Hilton; Thomas Purchis; George Fox; William, Sarah, and Nathaniel  
Meade; Zachary, Agnes, and John Bicknell; Richard Rockett;  
Rev. [Jouble]? Hull; Mary Dyer

Item 2: Mirriam Bachelder; Robert Moulton; Robert Moulton, Jr.; Abigail [Goode]?;  
Mirriam, Freeborn, and Benjamin Balch; ? Mallis; Elizabeth Fairfield;  
Skipper, Elizabeth, Sarah, Abigail, Tabitha, Rev. William, and  
Mary Balch; Rebecca Stone

1/8: Correspondence - Written in French

1/9: Newspaper clippings, obituaries, etc.

## **Series 2- Hudson Music Publications and Music Store Materials**

1/10: Bulletins--Plattsburgh School of Music, 1882-83

1/11: Third Bulletin of the Plattsburgh School of Music: On the More Common Errors in the  
Performance of Music, ca. 1882-83

1/12: Hudson Music Store Materials

1/13: Hudson, Charles F.--Publications

1/14: Hudson, George H.--Publications

## **Series 3- George H. Hudson Research Notes and Manuscripts**

1/15: Manuscript--The Purgatory Sections: Plattsburgh Bay to Spoon Bay

1/16: Manuscript--The Geology of Valcour Island

1/17: Manuscript-- Astronomy

1/18: Hudson, George H.—Research Correspondence

Item 1 To: Dr. F. A. Bather  
From: George H. Hudson  
1/1/1917 (First page missing)

Item 2 To: Dr. John M. Clarke, State Museum, Albany, N.Y.  
From: George H. Hudson  
1/10/1907

Item 3            To: Professor George H. Hudson  
                      From: New York State Museum  
                      10/21/1927

1/19: Pamphlet—Hudson, George H.--A Syllabus in Zoology  
1/20: Gardening Information

## **Box 2**

### **Series 4- Music Programs, Plays, and Notes**

2/1: Plattsburgh Philharmonic Society Concert Programs, 1883-87; 1889  
2/2: Plattsburgh Philharmonic Society Posters, 1884 and Prospectus, 1885-86  
2/3: Plattsburgh Philharmonic Society—First Annual Convention Program, 1883  
2/4: Plattsburgh Philharmonic Society—Third Annual Festival Program, 1887  
2/5: Plattsburgh Philharmonic Society—Orchestra Programs, 1919; 1929  
2/6: Church Musical Performance Programs, 1881-1931 (with gaps)  
2/7: Keeseville Choral Union—Programs and Posters, 1883-86  
2/8: Hudson, Charles F., Keeseville Singing School—Programs and Advertisements, 1881-83  
2/9: Plattsburgh Area Concerts—Programs and Posters, 1883-1926 (with gaps); includes  
      some conducted by Lucy A. Hudson and Frederick C. Hudson  
2/10: Local Area Concerts (Non-Plattsburgh)—Programs and Posters, 1877-1929 (with gaps)  
2/11: Non-Local Area Concerts- Programs and Posters, 1883-1928 (with gaps)  
2/12: Plays—Programs, Posters, and Script of “The Mikado”, 1884; 1906  
2/13: Newspaper Clippings, 1896-1932

### **Series 5- Miscellaneous Material**

2/14: Miscellaneous Items  
      -Plattsburgh High School Commencement Program, 1883  
      - Nazareth Hall Pennsylvania Prints  
      - “Dedication of Bronze Tablet Commemorating the Battle of Plattsburgh”, 1903  
      - Assembly Act creating Plattsburgh Normal School, 1/26/1897  
      - Katherine Hudson school paper, “Zebulon Pike Expedition, 1805”, written in 1932

## **Box 3**

### **Series 6- Scrapbooks, Journals, and Monographs**

#### **Scrapbooks**

Scrapbook 1: Concert Programs and Posters, 1875-87  
Scrapbook 2: Hudson, Charles F.—“Personal Notes”, 1877-85  
Scrapbook 3: Hudson, Charles F.—“Musical Notes 1885”  
Scrapbook 4: Hudson, Charles F.—“Music and Drama, Plattsburgh”, 1880-84  
Scrapbook 5: Plattsburgh Philharmonic Society Concert Programs and Posters 1883-87  
Scrapbook 6: Newspaper Clippings and Invitations--1932-33  
Scrapbook 7: Newspaper Clippings, 1907-Most from *The Boston Transcript*  
Scrapbook 8: Hudson, Lucy--Plattsburgh Symphony Orchestra

## **Journals**

Journal 1: Hudson, George H.--Music Notes, 1877  
Journal 2: Hudson, Lizzie B.—Poetry, 1865-1892; 1912  
Journal 3: Travel Journal, November 1917-Unknown Author  
Journal 4: Mineral Inventory Journal

## **Monographs**

Monograph 1: Racster, Olga. "Chats on Big and Little Fiddles"  
Monograph 2: Norton, M.D. Hester, "String Quartet Playing"  
Monograph 3: Descriptive Gladiolus Nomenclature

## **Box 4- Oversized Material**

Concert Posters

Hudson, Coranell--Dried Flowers

Keramic Studio Periodicals, 1902-05

Boston China Decorating Works Catalog

Hudson, Lizzie B.--Flower Paintings

Book- Queens of Drama

Newspapers

- Advertisements for Hudson's' School of Music
- Charles Bonesteel graduation from West Point
- Women's Journals

Plaster Cast of George H. Hudson

Metal Printing Plate of George H. Hudson