

Eric Norelius papers, 1851-1916

Size: 10.25 linear feet, 25 boxes

Access: The Collection is open for research. A limited amount of photocopies may be requested via mail. Photographs can be reproduced and purchased upon request.

Processed by: library staff

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Biographical Sketch

Eric Norelius (1833-1916) was born on October 26, 1833 in Hassela parish, Gävleborgs län, Sweden. He received his early education at *Hudviksvall's allmänna läroverk*. In 1850, at the age of 17, Eric Norelius immigrated to the U.S. and after 11 weeks at sea he landed in New York City. After having worked as an errand boy for a bank in the city, Norelius went to Chicago where he met Gustaf Unonius who encouraged him to attend the Nashotah Seminary in Wisconsin. Instead, Norelius continued west to Andover where L.P. Esbjörn received him. With assistance from Esbjörn, Norelius enrolled at Capital University in Columbus where he spent 4 years studying. Norelius was ordained by the Northern Illinois Synod in 1855 and his first call came from Tippecanoe County in Indiana. From Indiana, he moved to the newly formed congregations in Red Wing and Vasa, Minnesota in 1856. In 1858, Norelius assumed the editor-ship for the Swedish-American newspaper *Hemlandet*, a position he held for about a year when he was called to serve the Swedish Lutheran congregation in Attica, Indiana. In 1863, he was called back to the Vasa and Red Wing congregations in Goodhue County, where he spent his remaining years. Norelius was one of the founders of the Augustana Synod and he served as its president between 1870-1881 and 1901-1910. Norelius was also the founder of the Minnesota Conference.

Norelius was active in the publishing field and begun the publishing of *Minnesota Posten*, which after a year was forced to merge with *Hemlandet* due to lack of finances. Norelius and P. Sjöblom (Swedish pastor in Red Wing) published and edited together *Svensk Luthersk Tidskrift*, which became *Skaffaren* after the first year of existence. He was also the editor of *Augustana* for a brief period of time and the synod calendar *Korsbaneret*.

He married Inga C. Peterson of West Point, Indiana on June 10, 1855. They had four sons and one daughter. Eric Norelius died on March 15, 1916 in Vasa, Minnesota.

For further detail on Eric Norelius career as a Swedish Lutheran pioneer pastor please see: *Early life of Eric Norelius (1833-1862) : Lutheran pioneer / his own story rendered into English by Emeroy Johnson, published by the Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island Illinois, 1934.*

Scope and Content

The bulk of the letters in the collection were received during the period 1851-1916 when Norelius served as the Augustana Synod President, served as pastor in various pioneer

churches in Minnesota and was active in the publishing field. The letters in this collection are mostly from other pastors and leaders active in the Augustana Synod, but individual Swedish immigrants concerned with the establishment of new Swedish congregations and the administration of the Synod are also represented. Included are also letters from family members.

Arrangement

The letters are arranged in chronological order. A card index arranged by writers' last name exists to each individual letter at the Swenson Center. For further questions please contact sag@augustana.edu

Box 1

Letters received 1851-1864

Box 2

Letters received 1865-1871

Box 3

Letters received 1871-1875

Box 4

Letters received 1875-1877

Box 5

Letters received 1877-1879

Box 6

Letters received 1879-1881

Box 7

Letters received 1882-1886

Box 8

Letters received between 1887-1890; Vista, MN Church Speech; Spring Garden, MN history; Draft Constitution for Augustana Synod; Almanack Utgifven af Amerikanska Emigrant Kompaniet, NY 1891

Box 9

Letters received 1890-1893

Box 10

Letters received 1893-1894

Box 11

Letters received 1894-1895

Box 12

Letters received 1895-1896

Box 13

Letters received 1896-1899

Box 14

Letters received 1899-1901

Box 15

Letters received 1900-1901

Box 16

Letters received 1901-1902

Box 17

Letters received 1902-1903

Box 18

Letters received 1904-1905

Box 19

Letters received 1905-1906

Box 20

Letters received 1906-1907

Box 21

Letters received 1907-1908

Box 22

Letters received 1908-1909

Box 23

Letters received 1909-1911

Box 24

Letters received 1911-1916; undated letters, autobiography, "Memoirs of Eric Norelius." West Coast Missionary Journey, 1885-1886. Trs. by Emeroy Johnson (1933-1934). With separate intro. and name index (1983).