

## Trotter, John Scott <sup>[1]</sup>

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## Trotter, John Scott

by Rosamond Putzel, 1996

**14 June 1908–30 Oct. 1975**

John Scott Trotter, musician, was born in Charlotte, the son of John Scott and Lelia Bias Trotter. He attended local schools, studied piano under Ida Moore Alexander, and in 1925 he entered [The University of North Carolina](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. In Chapel Hill he joined a dance band formed by his childhood friend, [Hal Kemp](#) <sup>[3]</sup>. Kemp had entered the university in 1922 and was graduated in 1926, but Trotter withdrew near the end of his first year to join Kemp's band as pianist and arranger, a position he held until 1936. In Charlotte Kemp and Trotter provided music for Epworth League meetings and attracted considerable attention because of their musical ability.

In 1936 Trotter was in California orchestrating songs for Paramount Picture's *Pennies from Heaven* when he met Bing Crosby and began a seventeen-year association. Trotter became music director for the Crosby radio show and later for the Crosby television show. He did the arrangement for Crosby's popular recording, "White Christmas." For ten years (1954–64) Trotter was music director for George Gobel's television show. He was also music director of "The Kraft Music Hall," "Philco Radio Time," and "The Chesterfield Show." Trotter was twice nominated for awards: once for an Emmy for his music in a "Peanuts" special on television and once in 1970 for an Academy Award for music in the film, *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*.

He died of cancer in Mount Sinai Hospital, Hollywood, and was buried in Sharon Memorial Park, Charlotte. Surviving him were a sister, Mrs. Margaret Kinghorn, of California, and two brothers, William of Charlotte and Robert of Eugene, Oreg.

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### Additional Resources:

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### Subjects:

[Biography](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

[Musicians](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

[UNC Press](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

### Authors:

[Putzel, Rosamond](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

### Origin - location:

[Mecklenburg County](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

[Charlotte](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

### From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press](#),<sup>[10]</sup>

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- [1] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/trotter-john-scott>
- [2] <https://ncpedia.org/university-north-carolina-chapel-hi>
- [3] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/kemp-james-hal>
- [4] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term>
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