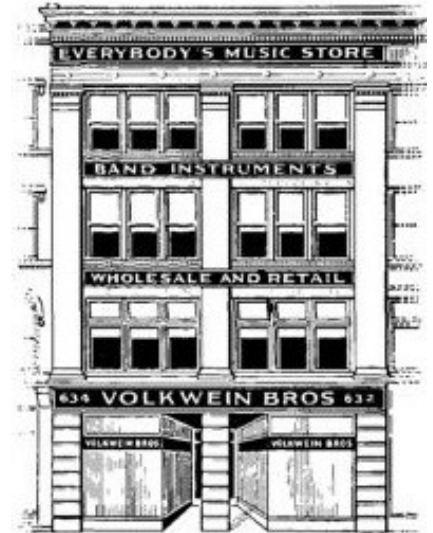


Volkwein Brothers

Pittsburgh, PA

- 1888 Frederick Bechtel opened a music store in Pittsburgh at 702 Smithfield Rd (1921 Volkwein ad & *The New Langwill Index* [NLI]).
- 1893 Jacob Karl Volkwein (1877-1961) and brother Rudolph George Volkwein (1879-1954) emigrated from Germany to Pittsburgh and started working for Bechtel (Naturalization papers & AMIS paper).
- 1905 Volkwein Brothers was formed with the purchase of the small goods and music portion of the Bechtel business on June 15. They opened their store at 516 Smithfield (NLI).
- 1921 Volkwein moved to 632-634 Liberty Ave in Pittsburgh (NLI, photo 1 is from 1921 ad shown below).



PITTSBURGH'S LARGEST MUSIC SUPPLY HOUSE
Established 1888

Complete line of band instruments
All standard makes of string instruments
Everything in tuners' supplies
Artistic repairing
Mail orders solicited.

VOLKWEIN BROS.
632-34 Liberty Ave. Pittsburgh, Pa.
GIVE A THOUGHT TO MUSIC



- 1931 Rudolph's sons Carl R. (1906-1985) and Walter E. (1911-1994) changed from clerks to junior partners in the business (NLI).
- 1930s They are said to have marketed band instruments under the names Fort Pitt, Paragon, Pitt American, Fidelity, and Top Notch (NLI). [Volkwein Music confirmed the Pitt American name through correspondence in 2024.]
- Cornets and trumpets with the Pitt American name are the most commonly found and are stencils from the Ohio Band Instrument Company in Cleveland. These date from 1936 up to WWII (photos 2-6).

1956 Jacob Volkwein retires.

1965 Volkwein moved to 117 Sandusky in March (AMIS). [Brass stencils may have ended at this time.]

1990 Volkwein moved to 138 Industry Dr.

2019 Grandson Carl W. Volkwein (b.1938) dies and the business is sold within a few years to the Dilanni family.

Other Band Instrument names used by Volkwein:

Paragon: These have US made markings and may have also been made by the Ohio BI Co. A trombone (photo 1) is marked "Made in America" and cornet #22928 (photo 2) is an OBIC stencil from c1940 (photos from Horn-u-copia.net).

Fidelity: These have varied designs, but most are marked "Czechoslovakia" so likely made by Bohland & Fuchs pre-WWII and Amati post-WWII (photos 3-7 from auctions).

Fidelity trumpet #39954 stamped "Czechoslovakia"



Match from 1963 Lignatone catalog (Amati)

