

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Music Department

Title: Adolph M. Foerster Collection

Overview of the Collection

Reference Codes:

- Published Sheet Music Collections (5 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vols. 1-5
- Music Manuscripts (2 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vols. 6-7
- Photographic Album (1 volume): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 8
- Scrapbooks (6 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vols. 9-14
- Music Manuscript "Songs": Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 15
- Music Manuscript: "Tristan and Isolde," by Richard Wagner. Copied by Foerster in Leipzig, ~1872. Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 16
- The Music-lovers calendar, vol. 3, 1908. Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 17
- Catalogue of manuscripts and printed music of Adolph M. Foerster, 1960. Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 18

Creator: Adolph M. Foerster (1854-1927)

Dates: 1870 - 1925

Extent: 5 volumes of bound, published sheet music, 4 volumes of bound music manuscripts, 1 photograph album, 6 scrapbooks (3 are folio sized), "The Music-lovers calendar," 1908, and "Catalogue of manuscripts and printed music of Adolph M. Foerster," 1960.

Language: English

Repository:

Music Department, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh-Main, 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Acquisition Information: This collection was donated to Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Photographic Album presented to the archival collection of The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh by Adolph Foerster.

Copyright: none

Restrictions: none

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Finding Aid Created by: Joelle Killebrew, Mina Belle Wichmann

Related Finding Aids:

- [Dallmeyer Russell Collection](#)
- [Carl Retter Collection](#)

Notes on the Collection

Abstract

Historical Note

Adolph Martin Foerster (1854 – 1927), an internationally known composer, music teacher, music historian, and conductor, was born and resided most of his life in Pittsburgh. He taught privately at the Pittsburgh Female College. He became the conductor of the Symphonic Society in 1879 and was elected conductor of the Musical Union in 1882. After 1883 he devoted himself to teaching, composition, and writing articles about the music history of Pittsburgh, fellow musicians in Pittsburgh, and other topics. His articles were featured in *The Musical Forecast* and other national periodicals.

Scope and Content

- Published sheet music of compositions by Foerster, bound in 5 volumes
- Handwritten manuscripts of songs composed by Foerster, bound in 2 volumes
- Photograph Album
- 6 Scrapbooks containing articles and programs, many pertaining to the history of music and musicians in Pittsburgh
- Handwritten manuscript of "Tristan and Isolde," by Richard Wagner. Copied by Foerster in Leipzig, ~1872.
- The Music-lovers calendar, vol. 3, 1908. Contains an article written by Foerster in 1907 about the history of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.
- Catalogue of manuscripts and printed music of Adolph M. Foerster in the Music Library, University of Pittsburgh, by S. Philip Kniseley, 1960.

Arrangement Note

Container List

1. **Published Sheet Music Collections (5 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vols. 1-5**
 - Published sheet music of songs composed by Adolph M. Foerster, bound in 5 volumes (Binder's Collections).
2. **Music Manuscripts (2 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vols. 6-7**
 - Music manuscripts of songs composed by Adolph M. Foerster.
 - Handwritten in Foerster's own hand in pencil, fountain pen, pen, or marker.
 - Volumes contain many separate pieces bound together.

- The pieces include piano/vocal and choral songs in English and/or German, and piano solos.
- Dates on some of the pieces are from the late 1800's and early 1900's.

3. **Photograph Album: Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 8**

- A handsome dark leather photograph album containing 60 formal photographs of well-known international musicians from the late 19th and early 20th century.
 - Photo of informal gathering of men in a room (restaurant)? in Detroit, Michigan in 1890. The men are identified in writing on the reverse side of photo, including Edward MacDowell and Adolph Foerster.
 - Photo of a bronze bust of Franz Abt on a marble pedestal in Darmstadt
 - Note: from Foerster's Scrapbook, Volume 5 (PMA #53, vol. 13): Article titled "Famed Names, Famous Faces. Fine Collection of Autograph Photographs Owned by Mr. Ad. M. Foerster. An Original Letter from Patti." (Date and newspaper not given.)

4. **Scrapbooks (6 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vols. 9-14**

- **Volume 9**
 - Programs, newspaper articles and reviews originating in Pittsburgh, Boston, New York and other select cities from 1870-1872. Includes the Commencement program from Western University of Penna., June 28, 1872, at Third Presbyterian Church (12 graduates and the titles of their orations.)
- **Volume 10**
 - Excerpts from a newspaper article in Fort Wayne, Indiana of August 1875 when he became a member of the Conservatory music staff in that city.
 - "Adolph M. Foerster (c. 25) is a German by parentage, born in Pittsburgh, PA where he now resides. His father is a portrait painter. He began music study at an early age and eventually was sent to the Conservatory at Leipzig, Germany for three years. He is a pianist and tenor, and teaches voice, harmony and composition. A second article from June 1876 indicated he was leaving Fort Wayne and returning to Pittsburgh."
 - Notice of his marriage to Henrietta M. Reineman on October 17, 1878
 - Newspaper item: Died - Alvin Karl Foerster, aged 2 years, on August 8, 1881 (born May 19, 1879.)
 - Program in which Foerster sang two tenor arias, from Pennsylvania Female College in Pittsburgh, dated December 18, 1879 (noted as being the college's Tenth Year).
 - Foerster succeeded Carl Retter as director of the Symphonic Society.
 - Elected to the Directorship of the Philharmonic Society in 1882.
 - Many of his compositions are featured in local programs.
- **Volume 11**
 - First page noted: Scrapbook of Adolph M. Foerster: Musical and Literary
 - A compendium of assorted vagaries such as doggerel, amusing stories, "A Cross Almanac" for 152 years, newspaper clippings of articles such as: "Beecher on

Calvinism," The Name of God in 48 Languages," Victor Hugo on Voltaire," "How George Sand took her name."

- Death notices of famous musicians, (etc.) for 55 pages.
- Newspaper columns of musicians and their photos such as: Adolph and Emil Foerster, Carl Retter, George and Fred Toerge, Louise Homer Beatty, Charles Mellor, Fidelis Zitterbart, Beveridge Webster, and many more for 30 pages.

- **Volume 12**

- Scrapbook dated May 16, 1907.
- Numerous articles, concert programs, and photos surrounding Foerster's success as composer and teacher, his professional associations, and his productive life as a Pittsburgh musician.
- Latest date noted is 1925. (His death date is August 1927.)
- This volume also contains a multi-part newspaper article that Foerster wrote for the Pittsburgh Dispatch, from March - May 1920, about "*Pittsburgh Music and Musicians.*"

- **Volume 13:** Collection of Newspaper Articles, many about the history of music in Pittsburgh from *The Pittsburgh Dispatch* beginning August 1900. Written for *The Dispatch* by Mrs. Henry B. Birch.

- First article under date of August 12, 1900: "Musical Successes of Old Pittsburgh."
 - Subheadings:
 - ❖ Comprehensive Review of the More Particular Events Leading to the Rise, Growth and Development of Musical Talent in This City.
 - ❖ Reminiscences of the Efforts of 30 Years.
 - ❖ The First of a Series of Historical Articles Treating of Musical Pittsburgh from the Time of the Cantata Society to the Present Day.
 - ❖ Account of the Organization of the Gounod Club in 1872.
 - Photographs of persons discussed:
 - ❖ Clement Tetedoux, Carl Retter, Chas. C. Mellor, Henry Kleber, Mrs. Henry Kleber, Paul Zimmerman, Miss Josie Smith, Miss Jean Wallace, G. F. Muller, Miss Effie Stewart, Mrs. C. I. Wade, Mrs. M.A. Woodward.
- Second article under date of August 19, 1900: "Musical Pittsburgh in the Olden Days."
 - Subheadings:
 - ❖ The Troubadours and Stephen C. Foster Serenaders Were all the Rage in the Seventies – Rare Minstrel Entertainments.
 - ❖ Local Popularity of the Foster Melodies.
 - ❖ The Earlier Orchestras. Their Organization, Leadership and Personnel.
 - ❖ Notable Concerts and Piano-Forte Recitals
 - ❖ Miss Nancy McIntosh's Initial Appearance in Public.
 - ❖ The Von Kunits of Twenty Years Ago was an Italian.

- Photographs of persons discussed:
 - ❖ William J. Diehl, Miss Nancy McIntosh, Fred Toerge, Miss Ida Kleber and Miss Augusta Manns, B. N. McLain, Cassius B. Gillespie, A. L. Nevin, Mrs. Rosa Schaarschmidt, Frank G. Paulson, Enrico Audicio, Fred Bussman, Edward F. Jackman.
 - Third article under date of August 26, 1900: "Growth and History of Music in Pittsburgh"
 - Subheadings:
 - ❖ Modest Beginning of the Art Society in 1874, and Initial Performances of Many Musicians Who Afterward Became Famous.
 - ❖ Origin of the Orchestra in Pittsburgh.
 - ❖ The Proposition of a Symphony Orchestra Met with Many Discouragements at the Start.
 - ❖ Jealousy of Out-of-Town Performers: Archer, Von Kunits and Herbert.
 - ❖ A Highly Amusing Lawsuit Over One Twilight Reverie.
 - Photographs of Persons Discussed:
 - ❖ Mrs. Christopher Lyman Magee, William Thaw, Henry Holdship, William B. Edwards, Mrs. J. Sharp McDonald, Mrs. Charles C. Mellor, Ethelbert W. Nevin, Charles Woodruff Scovel, Isaac Craig, Jr., Vance Thompson, Rev. S. F. Scovel, Horace Wadham Nicholl, J. F. McCollum, Madame Lucie Loheyde, Adolph M. Foerster.
 - Fourth Article under date of September 2, 1900: "History of the Work of Pittsburgh Musicians."
 - Subheadings:
 - ❖ The Wonderful Series of May Festivals, Their High-Priced Soloists and Great Home-Trained Choruses.
 - ❖ Due to Carl Retter's Energetic Labors.
 - ❖ Amusing Incidents Connected with Choral Training; Many Financial Difficulties; The Principal Church Choirs of the Last Three Decades.
 - ❖ Review of Musical Progress from 1870 to the Present.
 - Photographs of Persons Discussed:
 - ❖ Henry Rohbock, George M. Alexander, Dan Bullock, J. N. Bebout, Madame Sidney Homer, S. S. Amberson, John Q. Everson, Simeon Bissell, Stuart Colville, Joseph H. Gittings, Ethelbert W. Nevin, H. W. A. Beale, Linard C. Webster, Mrs. J. Sharp McDonald, Miss Hughes, Paul Boehme, Louis Brecht, Paul Boehme, Barclay Everson.
 - Page from *Pittsburgh Leader*, October 20, 1901: Autographed photographs from the collection of Adolph Foerster: Charles Dickens, Adelina Patti, Franz Liszt, Katharine Klafsky, Richard Wagner, Clara Schumann, Henry W. Longfellow, Jenny Lind.
 - Article titled "Famed Names, Famous Faces. Fine Collection of Autograph Photographs Owned by Mr. Ad. M. Foerster. An Original Letter from Patti." (*Date and newspaper not given.*)

- Articles about The May Festival 1894
 - From the *East End Bulletin* of May 17, 1884: A review of the Festival and sketches of the soloists. (Author unknown.)
 - From *Pittsburgh Dispatch* of May 14, 1884: An enthusiastic review of the Festival. (Author unknown.)
 - Miscellaneous newspaper articles beginning with *Pittsburgh Leader* of October 20, 1895: Schedule for Dedication and Opening of the new Carnegie Library and Carnegie Music Hall, November 5-9, 1895.
 - Several articles which Foerster wrote for *The Musical Forecast* journal in 1921 and 1923 centering on musical history in Pittsburgh.
 - The collection continues through the years to the obituaries for Adolph M. Foerster on August 10, 1927.
- **Volume 14:** Scrapbook of Programs.
 - A massive collection of printed musical programs beginning in 1888 as performed in cities such as Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Detroit, Lafayette, Leavenworth, Milwaukee, New York, Pittsburgh. This is a representative listing and is not meant to be complete or comprehensive.
 - It is unclear if Foerster attended all these musical events, or if some programs were sent to him by colleagues and/or his former students, especially when his compositions were performed, but it gives an overview of musical activity by various groups and individuals and repertoire being performed during the late 19th century.
5. **Music Manuscripts (2 volumes): Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 15-16**
 - **Volume 15:** "Old Manuscript Songs by Adolph Foerster" 1874-1877
 - **Volume 16:** "Tristan and Isolde," by Richard Wagner. Copied by Foerster in Leipzig, ~1872.
 6. **The Music-lovers calendar, vol. 3, 1908.: Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 17**
 - **Volume 17:** Contains an article written by Foerster in 1907 about the history of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.
 7. **Catalogue of manuscripts and printed music of Adolph M. Foerster, 1960: Pittsburgh Music Archive #52, vol. 18**
 - **Volume 18:** Catalogue of manuscripts and printed music of Adolph M. Foerster in the Music Library, University of Pittsburgh, by S. Philip Kniseley, 1960.

See also:

- Baynham, Edward G., [A History of Pittsburgh Music, 1758-1958](#)

- [Musical Forecast](#)
- [Adolph M. Foerster](#) in the CLP library catalog
- [Adolph M. Foerster Collection](#) at the University of Pittsburgh