

**Some Famous  
Violins Owned  
in the U. S. A.**

Remarkable Collections Made Since the Middle of the Last Century—"Strads" and Other Noted Makes Among Them.

THAT the country's army of violin teachers are heroes among American idealists is the belief of Jay C. Freeman, a noted authority upon old violins of master workmanship. Mr. Freeman arrived in New York recently from the heart of Europe's war zone.

At Markneukirchen, in Saxony, the seat of the great German violin-making industry, Mr. Freeman had completed for a musical-instrument house of Chicago the last negotiations for the purchase of valuable fiddles, when the Continental war broke. While the Kaiser's armies were mobilizing about him, he contrived, by dint of clever maneuvering, to get through to the Dutch frontier his baggage containing rare instruments, and eventually crossed the Atlantic to Montreal.

Mr. Freeman is an enthusiastic supporter of the campaign of John C. Freund, the editor of MUSICAL AMERICA, in behalf of American music-teachers. He would give to the violin-teacher a prominent place among those who labor for the musical uplift of the United States.

"Twenty-five years ago, the symphony orchestras of this country were only two—the Boston Symphony and the Philharmonic, of New York," Mr. Freeman told MUSICAL AMERICA. "To-day every one of the large cities of the country has its symphony orchestra devoted to all that is best in music.

"Twenty-five years ago violin instructors were to be found in only a few of the larger cities of the country. To-day good violin instruction may be had in almost every part of the country. And every year witnesses a large increase in the number of violin students. There seem to be from 10,000 to 20,000 studying the violin.

"The younger violin teachers who may be found in any one of the hundreds of smaller cities throughout the country are, as a class, devoted to the highest ideals. The American is nothing if not an idealist, notwithstanding his commercial reputation.

"Mr. Freund has shown that \$600,000,000 per year is paid out for music and musical instruments in the United States. This fact alone demonstrates that there is a high note of idealism in the country.

**Pioneer Work**

"The American violin teacher has done his share in the development of this ideal, and undoubtedly the high place which the violin occupies in America is largely due to his unselfish loyalty to his art. I say unselfish, because many of them have been and still are pioneers in a new country, where the promise of

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*Now is the unparalleled opportunity for America through the circumstances of this tragic and hideous war, to achieve a new independence, both artistically and commercially. May she perceive her chance and goad herself to ever higher purpose and effort.*

*Sincerely  
Maud Powell*



This autograph of Maud Powell, the eminent violinist, is the first of a series of autographs of celebrated musicians which will appear periodically in Musical America.

immediate return has been small, where they have had to depend altogether on their own resources to create interest and build up schools and a musical atmosphere.

"As early as 1840 or 1850, fine violins began to be brought to the United States, largely at that time by the sons and daughters of wealthy Southern planters, who went to Paris to study. About 1860, the first collections began to be formed. John P. Waters, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and R. D. Hawley, of Hartford, Conn., were pioneers in this important movement. The old French Creole families of New Orleans acquired many of these instruments.

"Between 1860 and 1885 Mr. Hawley made what has always been recognized as the most complete and artistic collection of violins ever assembled in this country. The interest which was aroused through the collections of Messrs. Hawley and Waters soon made its appeal to all parts of the country. Artists traveling in this country from abroad stopped at Hartford to see the famous collection and devotees of the violin made Hartford the object of their pilgrimages.

"The difference in the tone quality of a fine violin and that of the ordinary kind is much the same as the difference between the voice of a well-trained singer and that of the ordinary country choir kind, or between raw new wines and old wines. It requires, of course, a little taste to appreciate these differences in their true magnitude. But as the ear becomes accustomed to the quality of a good old instrument, it loses its interest

in anything else. As a consequence of this, a demand was created for good old instruments of all grades, and, as early as 1890, Lyon & Healy, of Chicago, established their department of old violins and I was sent to Europe for the first time to secure the basis of our present collection. Since that time I have made regular trips for the same purpose, and we have brought over thousands of old Italian, French, German, English and Austrian violins.

**Famous Violins in America**

"In this country, while we have a number of very excellent Stradivarius violins, we have only one or two which may be said to approach in value such Strads as the 'Messiah,' dated 1716, owned in London; the 'Betz,' owned in Glasgow; the 'Tuscan,' owned in Manchester, and a number of equally fine ones owned on the Continent. The violins of this class are valued according to their perfection of preservation and beauty, as well as for their tone quality.

"Of all the Strads now existing, there is, I regret to say, but one which has come down to us in a condition which may be described as absolutely perfect. That is to say, its varnish fully intact, no edge nor corner worn, and, in appearance, new. This is the 'Messiah.' This instrument has recently been sold by Messrs. Hill, I believe, to Baron Knopff, of London, for \$25,000. The other famous specimens I have mentioned approximate nearly the perfection of the 'Messiah' and are valued accordingly.

"We have a number of very interesting violins of other makes in this country. For example, there is a violin which belonged to Henry IV. of France, made by Antonius Hieronius Amati, in 1595, which is now owned by Mr. Pitkin, of Hartford. It is in fair preservation and still bears the royal coat-of-arms and insignia. The 'Strad' (1772), known as the 'Earl of Westmoreland,' is owned in New York. The famous 'King Joseph' Guarnerius generally recognized as the most beautiful anywhere, also is owned by a New Yorker.

"The Strad (1723) known as the 'Edinburgh,' which was presented to the Duke by Queen Victoria, belongs to a Mr. Partello, of Washington, D. C.

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"In Colorado Springs, Col., Mr. Schley

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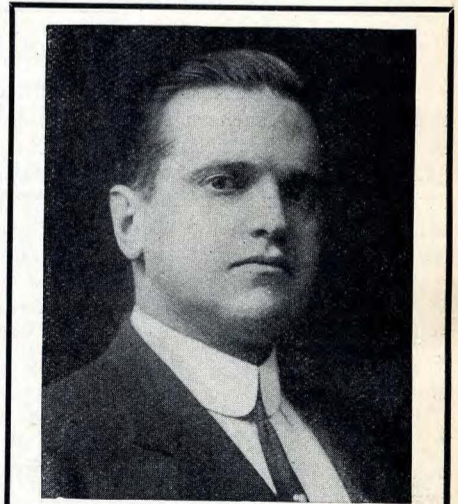
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has formed what is perhaps the choicest collection in the country to-day. It includes a very finely preserved Stradivarius, and splendid specimens of Bergonzi, Amati, Maggini and other celebrated masters.

"Symphonists play instruments of old makes worth anywhere from \$250 to \$2,000, whereas a traveling artist may have an instrument worth many thousands, as in the case of Fritz Kreisler, with his wonderful Guarnerius; Kubelik, with his 'Emperor' Strad; Elman, with his 'Strad.' Ysaye, with his Guarnerius, and Carl Flesch, with his Strad.

"I wish to point out, however, that a 'Strad,' simply because it happens to be genuine, will not necessarily fill the needs of the modern concert artist, for his instrument must be in the 'pink' of preservation in order to possess the requisite tone quality." H. C. P.



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