
Inventory of the Arthur Foote correspondence, [1922-1927?]

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Collection number: ARCHIVES FOOTE 1

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Arthur Foote Correspondence,

Date (inclusive): [1922-1927?]

Collection number: ARCHIVES FOOTE 1

Creator: Foote, Arthur, 1853-1937

Extent: Number of items: 22 letters

Repository: The Music Library

Berkeley, California 94720-6000

Shelf location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Language: English.

Donor:

Elizabeth Elkus, wife of Albert Elkus, Berkeley.

Date of Gift:

February 23, 1987.

Access

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Arthur Foote correspondence, ARCHIVES FOOTE 1, The Music Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Remarks:

Helen Farnsworth, former secretary of the Department of Music at U. C. Berkeley and secretary to Professor Albert Elkus when he was Chairman of the Department of Music, transcribed and typed a copy of each letter. These transactions accompany each letter.

Biography

Foote, Arthur (William) (b Salem, MA, 5 March 1853; d Boston, MA, 8 April 1937). Composer, organist, pianist, piano teacher, and theorist. The youngest of three children, Foote was reared by his sister, Mary White Foote, following the death of his mother in 1857; his brother, Henry Wilder Foote, was a distinguished clergyman and minister of King's Chapel, Boston. Arthur Foote began his study of music at the age of 12 with Fanny Paine, a local piano teacher. After two years she took him to play for her teacher, the Boston musician B. J. Lang, on whose advice he enrolled in Stephen A. Emery's harmony class at the New England Conservatory. In 1870 he entered Harvard College, where he studied counterpoint and fugue with John Knowles Paine; he also led the Harvard Glee Club in the two years before his graduation in 1874. That summer, with no thought of becoming a professional musician, he began organ lessons with Lang, who was so encouraging that Foote decided on a career in music rather than proceeding with his plan to enter law school. He returned to Harvard for another year's work with Paine and took piano lessons with Lang. In 1875 he received the first MA in music to be given by an American university. He was influenced by the German born or trained musicians active in Boston during the early part of his professional life, and made eight trips abroad over a 20-year period. He attended the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876, which afforded him the opportunity to hear and meet the leading European artists of the day; he also took a few lessons with Stephen Heller in France in 1883.

On his graduation from Harvard Foote advertised as a teacher of piano, organ, and composition; he opened a studio on Beacon Hill in Boston next door to the Harvard Musical Association, an organization in which he was active all his life. In 1876 he made his piano recital debut in Boston and was appointed organist at the Church of Disciples, moving two years later to the First Unitarian Church, a post he retained until 1910. In 1880 he introduced a series of chamber music concerts in Boston, beginning an active performing schedule as piano recitalist which continued until around 1895. He married Kate Grant Knowlton in 1880; their only daughter, Katharine, was born in 1881.

Foote's first compositions were three pieces for cello and piano op. 1, and a set of three piano pieces op. 3, both of which were published in 1882 by Arthur P. Schmidt of Boston, the firm which became virtually the sole agent for his music. The Gavotte op. 3, no. 2 was the first of his works to receive a public performance when Annete Essipoff included it in her recital of American piano music in Boston in 1877. Foote composed steadily for 45 years, publishing his last numbered work (op. 80) in 1919; he also produced about 160 unnumbered compositions, including 55 songs and 87 choral pieces. Of his entire output, only 42 works were not published. He also arranged and edited 127 solo piano pieces and 15 collections for Schmidt, many of them under the pseudonyms Ferdinand Mayer and Carl Erich. Most of his major orchestral works were given their premieres by the Boston SO, and Foote himself appeared as pianist, often with the Kneisel Quartet, in many first performances of his chamber works.

In his finest works Foote was a memorable composer. His style, firmly placed in the romantic tradition, is characterized by lyrical melodies, expressive phrasing, and clear formal structure suffused with impassioned feeling. Despite his background as a pianist he excelled in writing for strings and achieved particular popularity in his lifetime with the Suite in E major op. 63 and A Night Piece for flute and strings. The chamber music especially shows his indebtedness to Brahms, but deserves hearing on its own merits. Of his works for full orchestra, the Four Character Pieces after the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam op. 48 is noteworthy of its colorful instrumental writing. His strong melodic gift is exemplified in such songs as 'I'm wearing awa' and an Irish Folk Song.

Foote was highly regarded as a pedagogue, earning his livelihood mainly from private piano instruction. He was guest lecturer and acting chairman of the music department at the University of California, Berkeley, during the summer of 1911, and from 1921 until his death in 1937 taught piano at the New England Conservatory. With Walter R. Spalding as joint author, Foote wrote a popular theory text, *Modern Harmony in its Theory and Practice* (1905/R 1978). He wrote two other short manuals, *Some Practical Things in Piano Playing* (1909), and *Modulation and Related Harmonic Questions* (1919/R 1978), many journal articles, and *An Autobiography* (1946/R 1979); he also translated E. F. Richter's treatise on fugue and revised Schmidt's edition of Emery's *Elements of Harmony*. He was one of the founding members of the American Guild of Organists and its national president from 1909 to 1912, and was active in the Music Teachers National Association during its early years. He was elected to the National Institute of the Arts and Letters in 1898, was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and received honorary doctorates from Trinity College and Dartmouth College.

Scope and Content

Correspondence with Albert Elkus, Professor of Music, University of California, Berkeley, probably dating from 1922 to 1927. Each letter is accompanied by a typed transcription made by Elkus' secretary, Helen Farnsworth, when he served as Chairman of the Dept.

item 1.

Letter postmarked March 15, 1927., Newton Center, Mass. 3 leaves.

Additional Note

Brief letter mentioning Elkus' *Concertino on Lezione III of Ariosti*, the Flute Players Concert, Frederick Converse, and Deems Taylor.

- item 2. **Letter dated Amesbury (till September 15), 1923. 8 leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Concerns an unnamed work of Elkus (probably the *Concertino*). Mentions Pierre Monteux, Margaret Anglin, Arthur Bliss, and Katherine Foote Raffy.
- item 3. **Letter dated February 13, (probably 1925), 102 Naples Road, Brookline. 16 leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Principally about Elkus and his urge to compose. Mentions Serge Koussevitzky, Frederick Jacobi, Pierre Monteux, his wife, and Katherine Foote Raffy. Interesting letter.
- item 4. **An incomplete letter (the beginning is lacking). 6 leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Date and place unknown. Remarks about Philip Hale, Katherine and her husband, Henri.
- item 5. **Brief letter dated August 26 (no year or place). 3 leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Concerns unnamed piece by Elkus (Probably the *Concertino*, see above letter no. 1). Reference to Pierre Monteux.
- item 6. **Letter dated Green Street, Coolidge, (?). No year given. 8 leaves.**
 Additional Note
 References to the composition of Elkus' *Impressions of a Greek Tragedy*, Frederick Jacobi, the Chamber Music Society, Oscar Weil, Henri Rabaud, Karl Muck, and Katherine Foote Raffy.
- item 7. **Dated 158 Ridge Avenue, Newton Centre (no year given, prob. 1925). 2 leaves. Reference to the Tavern Club (Boston), Albert Elkus about to visit Arthur Foote.**
- item 8. **Dated 158 Ridge Avenue, Newton Centre (no year given, prob. 1925).**
 Additional Note
 Brief not of one leaf. Concerns the pending arrival of Albert Elkus on a visit; to meet at the Tavern Club (Boston).
- item 9. **Dated 158 Ridge Avenue, Newton Centre, January 8, 1926 (Boston). Four leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Thanks Albert Elkus for his visit (see letters 7 and 8). Refers to Charles Loeffler, George Chadwick, Richard Strauss, Frederick Jacobi, and the "Jew-Gentile business." Also Arthur Foote to donate a composition to the San Francisco Public Library.
- item 10. **Dated Green Street, Brookline, Harvard Club of Boston (no year given). Two leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Brief note concerning the probably visit of Albert Elkus. Prob. dates from 1925 (see item 9).

- item 11. **Dated Tavern Club, 4 Boylson Place (Boston) (no year given).**
 Additional Note
 Concerns impending visit of Albert Elkus. Prob. dated from 1925 (see item 9). Also mentions the key of a piece by Johannes Brahms. Three leaves.
- item 12. **Dated 102 Naples Road, Brookline, Mass., Nov. 19 (prob. 1923). 4 leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Foote returns composition to Elkus. Pierre Monteux decides not to perform it. Probably this was the Elkus *Concertino* (see item 1). References to Rosalie Housman, Frederick Stock, and Henry Hadley. Family reference to Katherine.
- item 13. **Dated 81 Green Street, April 10 (year not given). 1 leaf.**
 Additional Note
 Very brief note about the arrival of a score (not specified) by Arthur Foote.
- item 14. **Dated Green Street, Coolidge (?) (no year given). Three leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Concerns the safe arrival of a score by Arthur Foote (see also item 13).
- item 15. **Date 81 Green Street, Brookline (prob. 1922). Two leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Discusses Elkus' composition *I am a Reaper*, for male chorus. Family references to Henri Raffy, husband of his daughter, Katherine, who is recovering from tropical malaria which he acquired in Macedonia in 1918.
- item 16. **Dated 81 Green Street, Brookline (no year given). Four leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Responds to a letter from Albert Elkus about Alfred Hertz and Frederick Jacobi. Family references to Katherine Foote Raffy.
- item 17. **Dated March 5, (no year given). 81 Green Street, Brookline. Six leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Arthur Foote chides Albert Elkus at length about the cause of the war (probably World War I).
- item 18. **Dated Amesbury, Mass. (till October 6), September 26 (no year given). Two leaves. Comments about the publications of Elkus' "Cello Concertino, after Ariosti" - *Concertino on Lenzone III of Ariosti* and *Impressions from a Greek Tragedy*. Family referemces to his daughter Katherine and her husband.**
- item 19. **Dated November 22, 1922, 102 Naples Road, Brookline. Eight leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Comments about Alfred Hertz, Henry Hadley, Nicolai Sokoloff, Mrs. Arnstein, Camille Saint-Saens, and Edvard Grieg. Family references about his age (70 years), his daughter, Katherine and her husband. Additional comments about Elkus' *Impressions from a Greek Tragedy*.

- item 20. **Dated Amesbury, Mass., R. F. D. (until into October), August 6 (no year given). Four leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Primarily concerns family matters about Katherine and her husband, Henri Raffy, who are living in Constantinople.
- item 21. **Dated Harvard Club of Boston (no date or year, but probably 1923; see item 12). Two leaves.**
 Additional Note
 Brief note stating that Pierre Monteux has had Elkus' composition (probably the *Concertino on Lenzione III of Ariosti*) for the past four weeks, but that he (Arthur Foote) has not heard from him concerning a possible performance.
- item 22. **No date. Letter from Katherine Foote Raffy to Albert Elkus inviting him to visit her in Constantinople (see item 20).**
 Additional Note
 Brief mention of Oscar Weil.