

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Music Department

Title: George H. Wilson Collection

Overview of the Collection

Reference Code: Pittsburgh Music Archive #66

Creator: George H. Wilson (1854-1908)

Dates: 1885 - 1908

Extent: 19 scrapbooks

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

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Requested Citation: The George H. Wilson Collection, Pittsburgh Music Archive #66, Music Department,
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Finding Aid Created by: Joelle Killebrew, Mina Belle Wichmann

Related Finding Aids:

- Pittsburgh Orchestra Correspondence
- Kate DeN. Wilson Collection
- William C. Hamilton Correspondence

Notes on the Collection

Historical Note

Wilson came to Pittsburgh in 1895 to serve as manager for the newly opened Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh, as well as for the Pittsburgh Orchestra housed there. He was also the manager for the Art Society of Pittsburgh.

Wilson was the music critic of the *Boston Traveler* for 10 years before he moved to Pittsburgh. He was the Musical Manager of the 1893 World's Fair.

Scope and Content

- Music criticism articles
- Personal correspondence
- Professional correspondence
- Personal scrapbooks
- Newspaper and magazine articles about Wilson's organizations and professional life
- Pamphlets
- Programs of Grand Opera Seasons, 1897-1902
- Programs of the Pittsburgh Orchestra 1896-1904
- Scrapbook of Emma Calvé
- Obituaries

Arrangement Note

Container List

Volume 1

Scrapbook - Musical Criticism, vol. II. July 1885 - July 1886

- A book of newspaper clippings from various locations, addressing musical matters, and a few critiques of summer travel in the New England area. Authors of most are unknown; several early ones are signed "Fidelio."
- First small clipping is titled "Ruskin's Advice to a Student" in Edinburgh in 1854 which ends: "To do as much as you can healthily and happily do each day in a well determined direction, with view to far off results, and with present employment of one's work, is the only proper, the only essentially profitable way."

Volume 2

Scrapbook - Musical Criticism, vol. V.

- April 10, 1890; ending Boston residence November 1891, Beginning Chicago December 1891; ending Pittsburgh May 1897
- Two maps of Boston from The Boston Daily Globe: Sunday, October 4, 1885 - Quadruple Sheet.
 - First map: Boston in 1814 "Giving a Bird's-eye View of the Good Old City Where Our Grandfathers Used to Trade."
 - Second map: Boston in 1885 "Showing the Busy Marts of Commerce Where the Men of Today Put Money in Their Purses."
- Newspaper clippings addressing "Musical Matters." Some detail performances by various Boston musical organizations. Some are signed "G.H. Wilson" or "G.H.W." Also, Stephen B. Wood, and Poco a Poco. Authorship of others is unknown. Several address music in Worcester. The 14th annual meeting of the M.T.N.A. (Music Teachers National Association) in Detroit is reported.
- Of special note is a clipping (loose - not pasted on the pages) from New York, May 5, 1890 (notated "From our Special Representative") with the headlines: "New York's Music Hall. Dedication of Mr. Carnegie's Temple of Music." Subheadings are: "The Initial Concert - Berlioz's

Te Deum performed;" and "Appearance of Tchaikowsky, the Russian Composer." Article is signed G.H.W.

- Beginning February 1892, columns appear from Chicago.
- In May 1892, articles titled "Music of Sixty Days" (Chicago), G.H. Wilson, correspondent, appear surrounding "A Series of Passing Glances in Six Countries - London, Paris, Venice, Vienna, Berlin, and Brussels."
- Articles on the subject of German Opera, appear under title of ELITE - Chicago, Illinois, April to June 1895, authored by George H. Wilson.
- Final article appears to be from Sewickley, PA, and note programs that include prominent players of the Pittsburgh Orchestra.

Volume 3

Scrapbook - Personal Record - vol. IV.

- World's Fair period, 1891 – 1893
- Correspondence surrounding the appointment of George H. Wilson as Secretary of the Bureau of Music, Department of Liberal Arts, World's Columbian Exposition beginning December 1, 1891, in Chicago.
 - Appointment letter of that date from the Director-General (George Davis?) stated compensation of \$300 per month "so long as services may be required."
 - Letter of March 17, 1892, from Selim H. Peabody, Chief, Department Liberal Arts, authorized Wilson to: "...proceed to Europe for the promotion of the musical interests in the forthcoming Exposition." He was to visit England, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Russia and Scandinavia "...with the view of holding personal conferences with leading musicians, composers, and virtuosi..."
 - Announcement dated September 28, 1892, from Chicago outlines a general classification of concerts from May-October 1893.

Volume 4

Personal Scrapbook November 1891 - September 1898

- News clippings announcing George H. Wilson as editor and publisher of *Boston's Musical Herald* - formerly published at the New England Conservatory – as of the November 1891 issue. Announcements were made in many papers, including Boston, Chicago, New York, Washington, and Philadelphia.
- Several pages later (no date given) is this announcement in a Boston paper: "*The Musical Herald* has been transferred to Chicago, where its editor, George H. Wilson, is living, though Boston is still named on the imprint; and the words, of the United States have been added to the title. The number for the current month is largely devoted to music at the Columbian exposition."
- Wilson had moved to Chicago to be secretary of the music bureau for the 1893 World's Fair in that city.
- Under date of January 15, 1894, came the announcement from George Wilson that the publication of the *Musical Herald* has been discontinued.
- Newspaper announcement (and subsequent flyers from the Chicago Orchestra for the 1894-1895 Season) state: "Mr. George H. Wilson, who was Theodore Thomas's alter ego during the World's Fair, has been made the secretary of Mr. Thomas's new enterprise, the Chicago Orchestra."

- While in Chicago, Wilson also acted as manager for leading instrumental and vocal artists of the area, such as The Lehmann String Quartet, Evanston Chamber Concerts, tenor George Hamlin, and organist Wilhelm Middelschulte.
- One newspaper article of April 8 [1895?] is titled: "Girl as a Manager. Chicago Orchestra's tour successful and pleasant." Miss Annie Millar arranged for and toured with the orchestra through twenty-nine concerts in Michigan.
- **In September 1895, George Wilson announces his departure from Chicago to become manager of the new Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh. His appointment as Manager of the Pittsburgh Orchestra began June 7, 1896.**
- Under date of September 22, 1895, is a small article about Pittsburgh, the new \$2,000,000 building given my Andrew Carnegie, and Frederic Archer as first City Organist in the music hall. More complete articles appear on subsequent pages.
- Many pages of newspaper articles surrounding the controversy in the leadership of the Art Society in 1896 (George Wilson, manager).
- January 1897 articles suggested that the Pittsburgh Orchestra would disband because of several managerial conflicts. At the top of one news clipping, George Wilson has written in pen: "Another outbreak! Is it the last effort of the treacherous B.W.?" – referring to Beveridge Webster, one of the directors of the Art Society.
- By February 1897, the financial Guarantors appear to be in control of the Pittsburgh Orchestra and had taken that musical body out of the hands of the Art Society.
- Brochure of The Art Society of Pittsburgh (established in 1873) for the Season of 1897-1898 (its 25th year). A copy of this has been filed with "Concert Programs" collection under "Art Society."
- Invitation to and program from "The Trooping of the Colors" on April 13-14, 1898, by the Sousa Band in Carnegie Music Hall (George Wilson, manager). It was billed as Sousa's Patriotic Spectacle and included two full military bands, fife and drum corps, bagpipers, full chorus, troops of all nations, all conducted by John Philip Sousa.
- At the end of this scrapbook is a full-sized bill-board poster (20" X 32") for Carnegie Music Hall performance on January 3rd (no year given) of (Dame Nellie) MELBA singing the lead role in Rossini's opera, "The Barber of Seville." [Poster pulled for conservation purposes.]

Volume 5

Miscellaneous correspondence, December 26, 1896 - January 31, 1900

- Copies of miscellaneous correspondence from G. H. Wilson to others, such as Walter Damrosch, S. L. Graff, manager of Damrosch Opera Co., and other musicians in (e.g.) New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Boston. Dates of correspondence: December 26, 1896, to January 31, 1900. All copies are on thin "onion skin" paper and many are faded or blurred. Some are handwritten, others are typed. General condition is fair to poor.

Volume 6

- Miscellaneous articles and correspondence
 - From the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* of January 24, 1897, article titled "Nothing Like it in the Country" in which manager George H. Wilson speaks about the Carnegie Music Hall and its mission which "stands without parallel." Interviewer, Grace Mercedes McElroy, states in early paragraph: "Pittsburgh, being in proud possession of the only edifice in the country dedicated solely and absolutely to the cause of music...."

- From the *Pittsburgh Leader* of December 1, 1901, article titled “Mr. Wilson is a Very Busy Man – The Trials, Vexations and Pleasures of an Impresario’s Career.” Coincidentally, on the same page is an article titled “Traffic from the Suburbs” which states that 156,000 people commute to this city daily. *“In other words, Pittsburgh’s population between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. is fully 500,000 souls. When the travelers mentioned leave for their homes outside the city, the tide of population ebbs down to 330,000 or so, the figures as given by the last decennial census.”*
 - Correspondence to and from George H. Wilson
 - From Walter Damrosch (conductor, Metropolitan Opera of New York)
 - Recommendation from James Furber to George Pullman on behalf of George Wilson in support of his application for the position of Business Head of the Department of Music of the World’s Fair (dated September 1, 1891).
 - Letters from C. Saint-Saëns in Paris to George Wilson dated 1892.
 - Correspondence between Wilson and USA consulate General in Rome regarding the Sistine Chapel Choir performing at the World Exposition in Chicago (1893).
 - Letters from industrialists:
 - John Caldwell, Westinghouse Air Brake Co,
 - Andrew Carnegie. New York
 - Henry C. Frick, Pittsburgh
 - Charles M. Schwab, president, United States Steel Corp, New York City
 - Letter from composers and other musicians:
 - G. W. Chadwick of Boston
 - George Chickering
 - Arthur Foote of Boston
 - George Henschel (England)
 - G. Schirmer
 - John Philip Sousa
 - Arthur Sullivan (England)
 - Family
 - Charles Lunt DeNormandie
 - Miscellaneous correspondence (various)
 - Notice of marriage of Margaret Wilson (daughter) to Edward Brown Lee in September 1906
- Scrapbook of Emma Calvé, soprano
 - Announcements made by George H. Wilson (Manager of Carnegie Music Hall) of renowned dramatic soprano from the New York Metropolitan Opera, Emma Calvé, and her appearance on May 11, 1897, in Pittsburgh as reported in DISPATCH. She appeared with the Boston Festival Orchestra (Emil Mollenhauer, conductor) and guest artists G. Campanari, baritone, J. H. McKinley, tenor, and Katherine Bloodgood, contralto – all of New York City.
 - Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh had an overflow audience of about 3,000 for the concert.
 - The *Times* report of her “great triumph” is included.

- The *Post* reported that “Calvé Takes Pittsburgh Captive” with her remarkable demonstration. Other papers reporting were *Gazette, Leader, Press, Telegraph, News, and Bulletin*.
- **Obituaries and tributes of George H. Wilson (d. March 18, 1908)**
 - Notices from Pittsburgh newspapers: *PRESS, DISATCH, LEADER, GAZETTE, INDEX, POST, SUN*.
 - Notices from other newspapers: New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, Washington DC, Buffalo, Baltimore, Ithaca, Titusville, Oil City, Pottstown.
 - Tributes from:
 - The Art Society of Pittsburgh during their Board of Directors meeting on March 20, 1908
 - The Pittsburgh Orchestra during their March 20, 1908, concert in Carnegie Music Hall
 - *Musical Courier* in an editorial of March 25, 1908
 - Carnegie Music Hall in Duquesne PA during an organ recital there on April 5, 1908
 - Newspaper notices of April 22, 1908, that Mrs. Kate de Normandie Wilson will succeed her late husband as Manager of Carnegie Music Hall.

Volume 7

Scrapbook - Miscellaneous correspondence February 1, 1900 - April 3, 1902

- Copies of miscellaneous correspondence begins on February 1, 1900, to Maurice Grau at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, and to others, regarding their appearance in Pittsburgh during the opera season of April 16-19, 1900. Financial arrangements are included, as are general details surrounding arrangements.
- Miscellaneous correspondence continues through April 3, 1902, with sundry persons and events.

Volume 8

Scrapbook 1898-1903

- Folder of The Art Society of Pittsburgh: Season 1898-99 – Celebrating the 25th Anniversary
- Articles from the *PRESS* of November 8 [1898] announcing a dinner party where Andrew Carnegie discloses to the Trustees some of his plans for the Carnegie Library and Institute, including its enlargement, which should be part of one structure in the form of a quadrangle.
- Announcement of the sudden death of 14-year-old Dorothea Blanchard Wilson, youngest daughter of Mr. & Mrs. George H. Wilson, on March 6, 1899, at the family home in Shields, PA.
- Programs of the First Season in Pittsburgh of Opera at the Grand Opera House by the Maurice Grau Opera Co. from New York City on April 17, 1899.
- Numerous copies of programs from The Pittsburgh Orchestra seasons and Grand Opera performances at the Duquesne Garden are included in this collection (beginning 1901).
- Total expenses and receipts of the Pittsburgh Orchestra for seasons beginning in 1900 can also be found.

- Full-page article in *The Pittsburgh POST* of March 3, 1901, titled “Frew, Herbert, Wilson – Aggressive trio who in conjunction with public-spirited guarantors are bringing musical fame to Pittsburgh through its splendid orchestra.”
- Article from *Musical Courier*, a New York journal, reprinted in part in *Pittsburgh LEADER* on July 14, 1901, stated that George Wilson would be replaced as manager of the Pittsburgh Orchestra by Frederick M. Ranken, friend of Victor Herbert (Director of Pittsburgh Orchestra). Wilson denies it is “untrue, sensational and misleading character.”
- Flyers, invitations, programs from the Grand Opera in Music Hall, Cincinnati [Ohio] for the opera season of April 1903 as presented by the Maurice Grau Opera Co. [New York], George H. Wilson manager.
- Newspaper articles/reviews by George Wilson about opera in London and Paris during his 1903 visits there.

Volume 9

Scrapbook - Miscellaneous correspondence May 4, 1903 - May 17, 1906

- Copies of correspondence begin on May 4, 1903, to Wilson’s grandmother, Mrs. C. Y. De Normandie in Kingston, MA. Correspondence continues May 5, 1903, to Wilson’s brother, F. A. Wilson, in New York City.
- Much early correspondence centers on personal matters and travel arrangements to Paris and other destinations.
- Also included are financial statements from the Chicago Grand Opera Season of 1903 when Wilson managed the Maurice Grau Opera Company in concert there on April 20-21. Financial statements from that same company’s appearance in Pittsburgh on April 22-25, 1903, are included.
- Final piece of correspondence, numbered 495 in this book, is dated May 17, 1906.

Volume 10

Scrapbook 1907-1908 - Contains material about Wilson's feud with Emil Paur

- The first page of this scrapbook contains the newspaper article from April 1907 headlined: “Paur or Manager, and the Committee Chose Conductor.” The article further states that George Wilson would cease active management of the Pittsburgh Orchestra on April 13.
- Typed report, (dated May 28, 1907) by George Wilson, of his meeting (about March 1, 1907) with members of the Orchestra Committee, setting forth his often-contentious relationship with Emil Paur, conductor.
- Report of Bank Deposits for the Pittsburgh Orchestra, beginning September 29, 1906, and ending May 6, 1907, as received from the sale of program books and tickets, both locally and out-of-town.
- Typed letter from George Wilson to James I. Buchanan, chairman of the Orchestra Committee, dated December 24, 1906, with this statement: “...I cannot accept another period as manager of the Pittsburgh Orchestra if the present conductor is retained.”
- Letter from Buchanan in response, dated December 26, 1906, followed by Wilson’s to him of December 28, 1906. Correspondence between these two men continued into 1907.
- An article in *MUSICAL AGE* from New York City dated May 25, 1907, is titled “The Pittsburgh Scandal,” and begins: “The disagreeable friction in the affairs of the Pittsburgh Orchestra

occasioned by the rivalry of two representatives of prominent piano manufacturers still continues to be a subject of conversation and press comment.”

- Two letters, 1907 from Mr. William C. Hamilton (piano company) to Mr. Wilson.
- Correspondence, news clippings and reports continue in this thick scrapbook through October 22, 1907, where on the final page, (following a brief note from Buchanan), Wilson has penned: “Is this the end? GHW, January 18, 1908.”

Volume 11

Scrapbook - Miscellaneous correspondence March 5, 1907 - February 12, 1908

- Three-page, typed, proposed Article of Agreement between the Art Society of Pittsburgh by its Orchestra Committee, and Emil Paul, dated only “1907;” unsigned. There follows a typed letter to Mr. E. Z. Smith as president of the Art Society in which George Wilson states he is sending this proposal, as requested, for Mr. Smith’s scrutiny.
- This book contains 199 letters from George Wilson to others, most written by hand, on thin onionskin paper. Because of their age and condition, many are undecipherable.
- A typed letter (on page 53) of March 27 [1907] to Edward A. Woods in the Frick Building (marked personal and private) seeks Woods support in a difficult situation of which he says: “...a very pretty conspiracy exists, cleverly engineered by Mr. Wm. C. Hamilton [pianos] who elected himself as a director of the Art Society...and Mr. Paur, to eliminate me from the Art Society.”
- Typed letter (on page 54) of March 27 [1907] to A. S. Vogt in Toronto, Canada reports that certain persons in Cincinnati are interested in making Wilson manager of its May Festival, of the Cincinnati Orchestra, and the College of Music – although a firm offer has not yet been offered.

Volume 12

Scrapbook - April 1903 - February 1908

- Announcement that Victor Herbert leaves the Pittsburgh Orchestra. In same article [December 4, no year], suggestion is made that Walter Damrosch may take over that post. Damrosch then comments in a news article the next day that he was “astonished” by that thought as he had received no overtures for such an appointment.
- News article December 5 [no year] states that an appeal will be extended (by George Wilson) to Andrew Carnegie to establish a \$2,000,000 endowment for the maintenance of the orchestra. “The name of the musical organization may be changed to the Carnegie Orchestra of Pittsburgh.”
- Wilson quits as manager of Pittsburgh’s grand opera season [December, no year].
- Wilson’s letter to the editor of the Pittsburgh TIMES and editor’s (uncomplimentary) reply of March 23, 1904, titled “Too Much Wilson.”
- Photograph and announcement (no date) of the engagement of Miss Katharine de Normandie Wilson to Mr. Robert Haven Schaufler of New York City.
- Appeals to the public for financial support of the orchestra.
- News article (no date): “Herbert has decided to stay in Pittsburgh.” Many supporting news articles follow.
- March 27, 1904, news article (*DISPATCH*) is headlined: “Emil Paur is selected as conductor. Vienna Musician is chosen to head Pittsburgh Orchestra for three years.” (At the top of this

page in the scrapbook, Wilson has penned: "AT LAST!"). Next article states: "New conductor has accepted."

- Program book for the Pittsburgh Orchestra, Ninth Season 1903-1904 also "contains lists of works performed by the Pittsburgh Orchestra during the nine years of its existence and other information."
- Under headline of April [1904] "He Has Found the Girl" is a report of Wilson's new secretary, Miss Elizabeth Riesner, who is not only an accomplished stenographer, but speaks foreign languages, reads Goethe, Shakespeare and Schiller and quotes Chaucer and Browning.
- Emil Paur's salary is listed at \$10,000 as of April 20, 1904.
- Lengthy article/booklet of October 1904, written by George Wilson, about the Pittsburgh Orchestra, its new director Emil Paur, has photos of Paur and the orchestra plus featured soloists.
- Invitation to marriage of Katharine Wilson to Robert Schauffler in St. Margarets, Westminster, London on December 21, 1904.
- Total expenses and receipts of the Pittsburgh Orchestra. Season of 1905-1906.
- September 1906 press announcement that 90 applications were received for the position of City Organist in Carnegie Music Hall, following tenures of Frederick Archer and Edwin Lemare. Final appointment went to Charles Heinroth in February 1907.
- Invitation to the marriage of Margaret Wilson to Edward B. Lee in The Unitarian Church, Kingston, Mass. on September 15, 1906.
- Printed small cards: "Mr. George H. Wilson in resigning his position as manager of the Pittsburgh Orchestra, wishes to express to Mr. _____ the pleasure he has had in his acquaintance, and wishes him all possible success in the future." Pittsburgh, April 13, 1907.
- Founder's Day celebration for Carnegie Music Hall announced for April 11-12, 1907. George H. Wilson to be general Marshall of the procession which will include Sir Edward Elgar.
- Copy of the Address given by Andrew Carnegie, "At the dedication of the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh on April 11 and 12, 1907." (Also noted as "Founder's Day.") Newspaper photos of parades surrounding these activities, where it is reported that 20,000 people gathered along the parade route to observe.
- Two-page photo of The Carnegie Banquet at the Hotel Schenley the evening of April 12 show "nobility of two continents" in attendance.
- Article from *Harper's Weekly* about the April 11, 1907, event written by Robert Haven Schauffler, special correspondent for *Harper's Weekly* (and George Wilson's son-in-law).
- Elaborate twenty-page Program – *The Carnegie Institute, Dedicatory Exercises, April 11, 12, and 13, 1907.*
- Four-page flyer, *General Program, 11th celebration of Founder's Day and dedication of the new building of The Carnegie Library, April 11, 12, and 13, 1907.*
- A second small flyer with a photo of Andrew Carnegie is titled Guide to the Dedication of the New Buildings. It contains general information plus a list of all special guests – both foreign and domestic.
- Note in Wilson's handwriting: "A separate book containing the record of Mr. Wilson's resignation from the Pittsburgh Orchestra, one year's trial for him, is recorded December 1906 to January 1908."
- Photo of "Bay View Cottage" in Falmouth Heights, Mass., the summer residence of the George H. Wilson family.
- Invitation from Mrs. Wilson inviting women (8 in all) to join her for a three-month summer trip abroad in 1907, including costs and suggested items to pack.

- Letter of February 8, 1908, from George Wilson to Andrew Carnegie requesting a letter of introduction to Otto Kahn regarding Wilson's application to succeed Heinrich Conried as manager of the Metropolitan Opera, following his retirement. Later press notices announced a radical change in opera management at the Met to include a quartet of men to handle that position (not including Wilson).

Volume 13

Scrapbook - Damrosch Opera Company, Pittsburgh 1897

- Letter of request from George H. Wilson to Pittsburgh individuals inviting them to sign a card supporting Walter Damrosch's third annual season of Grand Opera in Pittsburgh. Signatures will be published for all to note. This is not a request for funds.
- Notice: To the Public, from George H. Wilson – announcing the March series of Walter Damrosch's operas and requesting the public's support. First paragraph: "At this time when the art of music is being considered seriously in Pittsburgh, with existing organizations in the field of orchestral and choral music that have already set a standard that has made our city respected, there remains only the field of opera to round out our musical season."
- Articles from *DISPATCH* in January, February and March detailing the Damrosch Opera Season of March 3,4,5 and 6 – including operas to be presented, leading singers, and social events. Venue: The Alvin Theater.
- Articles of reviews of those March opera performances in *DISPATCH*, *LEADER*, *PRESS*, *GAZETTE*, *TELEGRAPH*, *POST*, *TIMES*, *NEWS* and *BULLETIN*.

Volume 14

Scrapbook – Grand Opera season in Pittsburgh, April 1899

- Newspaper articles

Volume 15

Scrapbook – Grand Opera season in Pittsburgh, April 1900

- Notice in *DISPATCH* on February 26, 1900: "Best Opera Season in Pittsburgh's History," as announced by George H. Wilson, Pittsburgh manager of Maurice Grau's Metropolitan Opera Co.
- Photos of eleven soloists, including Scotti, Calvé, Schumann-Heink and others of note.
- Reviews of April 16-18, 1900, concerts by various reporters. One from April 22nd claimed, "This season's opera better than any other," and gave credit to George H. Wilson for "courageously fostering the scheme."
- Other papers reporting: *POST*, *LEADER*, *TIMES*, *PRESS*, *TELEGRAPH*, *NEWS*, *INDEX*.
- Copy of STATEMENT OF EXPENSES for Grand Opera Season April 16-18, 1900, signed by G.H. Wilson.
- Official program for the five operas.

Volume 16

Scrapbook - Grand Opera Productions at Duquesne Gardens, 1901

- The collection begins with articles from *DISPATCH* newspaper surrounding the opening of the Duquesne Gardens, a skating rink, and its conversion to an opera facility, costing c. \$20,000. The building was originally a car barn. Interesting descriptions of the interior conversion, its size and complexity. "The length of the Garden, the arrangement of boxes and sounding board, and all other challenges have been made upon scientific principles of acoustics."

- First performances were the week of April 15, 1901, when Maurice Grau's Metropolitan Opera House Co. were in residence for five performances (through April 19).
- Opera stars named, including Pittsburgh native Mme. Louise Beatty Homer.
- Demand for subscriptions for the five operas was substantial.
- Reviews following performances stated: "Glittering success all through." Productions, scenery, singers, orchestra, new hall, fashions were all lauded.
- Other local newspapers *POST*, *PRESS*, *TELEGRAPH*, *TIMES*, *GAZETTE*, *LEADER* and *INDEX* are also represented in coverage of events in this 1901 opera season.
- One article from the *LEADER*, noted a skirmish on a streetcar between a sleeping Italian on one of the seats and opera patrons seeking space on the seat. He "drew a big revolver from his pocket and flourished it wildly above his head. Women fainted and men tried to wrest the weapon from his grasp." A policeman arrested the man.

Volume 17

Scrapbook - Cincinnati Grand Opera Season, 1901

- Copy of Memorandum of Agreement between the Maurice Grau Opera Company of New York City, and George H. Wilson – Pittsburgh manager of the Grau Opera Company, and president of the Pittsburgh Orchestra Association – covering opera performances in Pittsburgh April 14-18, 1901, and in Cincinnati, Ohio from April 19-20, 1901.
- Articles from the Cincinnati *TRIBUNE*, *INQUIRER*, and *TIMES-STAR* announcing the opera performances there are documented. Reports following the performances are also included. One stated: "...the record for attendance and receipts for any one given performance in the US was broken at Saturday's matinee" in Cincinnati.

Volume 18

Scrapbook - Grand Opera Season, Pittsburgh, April 1902

- Photos in a January edition of *DISPATCH* listing artists who will appear in April.
- Newspaper articles detailing the coming season – artists, singers, conductors, etc. – many by George H. Wilson, manager of the Pittsburgh Orchestra. Photo of Pittsburgh native, Mme. Louise Beatty Homer, one of the principal artists of the Metropolitan Opera Company. Performances to take place in the Duquesne Garden. (Note: Pittsburgh *DISPATCH* sub-heading on page 25, March 30, 1902, states: Society News of the Two Cities [Pittsburgh and Allegheny?]) and from the Near-by Towns.) Other articles from the *GAZETTE*.
- Newspaper reports of the April 14-17 operas, and the society which attended in record numbers. "Society knelt at the shrine of grand opera for four evenings, clad in brilliant raiments, and proved to the world at large its devotion to art for art's sake. Seldom, if ever, has the social side of the opera in Pittsburgh been surpassed by a more magnificent showing..." Then followed were two columns of names of box holders and their guests.
- Short article: "More spent on grand opera than given for churches" quoting from a sermon by The Rev. Dr. William McEwan at Third Presbyterian Church.
- Two statements of April 14-17, 1902, signed by George H. Wilson: a.) Detailed Statement of Receipts; b.) Detailed Statement of Expenses
- Special notice was made of the April 16, 1902, performance of the new opera "Manru" by Paderewski, which was premiered in Dresden in 1901 and at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City on February 14, 1902. Performances were given mixed reviews.

- Listings of society persons who occupied boxes for the various performances.
- Articles from the PRESS of April 13, 1902, stated that ...”the season of five operas to be given by Mr. Grau’s matchless aggregation of all-star artists from the Metropolitan Opera House...” would arrive in Pittsburgh that evening.
- Many reviews of the five operas, which were: *Aida*, *Carmen*, *Manru*, *Lohengrin*, and *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Volume 19

Scrapbook – Newspaper clippings relating to opera in Pittsburgh and other cities 1903

- Newspaper and magazine clippings. Earliest clippings relate to Geo. Wilson and the possible Directorship of the New York Metropolitan Opera.
- Most of the clippings mention Geo. Wilson

See also

- Baynham, Edward G., [*A History of Pittsburgh Music, 1758-1958.*](#)
- Stark, William, [*Emil Paur and the Pittsburgh Symphony. 1904-1910.*](#)
- Wolfe, Richard J., [*A short history of the Pittsburgh Orchestra, 1896 to 1910.*](#)
- [Pittsburgh Music Information File](#)
- [Wilson, G. H. 1854-1908](#) in the CLP library catalog
- [Pittsburgh Orchestra Correspondence](#)
- [Pittsburgh Orchestra Concert Programs](#) - 1st season (1896)-15th season (1909-1910).
- [Programs of Out of Town Concerts, 1907-1909](#)
- [William C. Hamilton Correspondence](#) – Pittsburgh Music Archive #14
- [Pittsburgh Orchestra Tour Programs And Miscellaneous Papers](#) – Pittsburgh Music Archive #32
- [Pittsburgh Orchestra, Out of Town and Extra Concerts, 1901/02 – 1909/10](#) – Pittsburgh Concert Programs vol. #33
- [Kate DeN. Wilson Collection](#) - Pittsburgh Music Archive #17