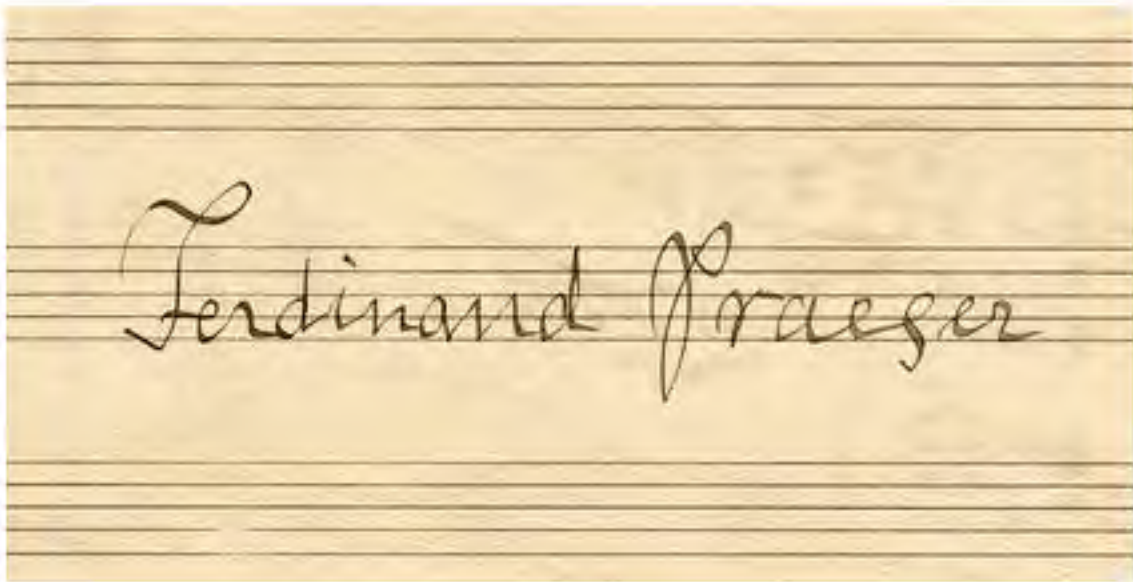


# Rediscovering Pieces of the Past:

*The Manuscript Scores of  
Ferdinand Praeger*



Music Library Exhibit

Curated by Jessica Nay

March 2012 – August 2012

## Case 1

Ferdinand Praeger lived from 1815 to 1891. He was born in Leipzig, but spent most of his life in London after moving there in 1834. In addition to composing, Praeger was also a respected teacher and critic. From 1842 to 1890, he served as the London correspondent for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Praeger also achieved considerable fame as a pianist, through concert tours in England and Western Europe, often featuring his own works.

The Music Library's Ferdinand Praeger Collection of Scores is the largest collection of his musical manuscripts in the world, containing approximately 480 works. The majority of the works are for piano, 334 in total. This exhibit features the piano works, but the collection also includes chamber music for strings, full orchestra scores, piano reductions of orchestra and band pieces, vocal works, and sketches. The dated works range from 1829 to 1891, but many works are undated. These works have not been included in previous works lists or writings related to Praeger.

Two other collections of Praeger's manuscripts exist. One is at the British Library. It is primarily made up of piano works as well, with a total of 93, and also contains 2 string quartets, 2 sets for violin and piano, and a set of songs.

The second collection is located in the Moldenhauer Archives at Northwestern University. This collection includes 51 pieces for piano, 4 string quartets, 2 symphonic poems, 1 symphony, and 1 overture for orchestra.









FRANCIS & SONS, MUSIC PUBLISHERS, 15, BELL STREET, LONDON, W.

A "Jubilee Trumpet Waltz" 1887.  
Allegro vivo (Trumpet Waltz) Ludwig Prager

sempre staccato

cresc.

poco forte.

B

Jubilee Trumpet Waltz (Item 192)

These pieces, all from 1887, were probably composed in honor of the 50th anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901). The celebration of this occasion in London was known as her Golden Jubilee. Queen Victoria's reign lasted 63 years and 7 months, making her the longest reigning British monarch and the longest reigning female monarch in history.

## **Case 2**

Some of Praeger's piano works are dedicated to other significant figures in England's musical culture. Praeger would have made extensive connections with significant contemporaries, through his work as a reviewer for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* and possibly also through his travels as a performer.



Composed for the dedication to Miss Smythe  
*Impromptu* Ferdinand Prosen June 1889

*largo*

*pp con anima*

*rit* *rall*

*Allegro* *Loco*

*trist. rall*

*mf* *mf*

*Allegretto grazioso*

*mf chassante*

*Impromptu*, June 1889 (Item 184)



Composed for & dedicated to Miss Smyth  
1885 / Impromptu.

Dedication on *Impromptu*



From *Ethel Smyth: A biography*, by Christopher St. Johns (London: Longmans Green, 1959)



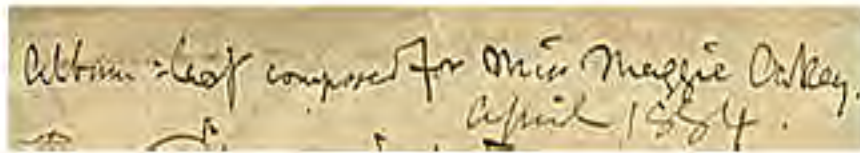
Praeger dedicated this piece to Ethel Smyth (1858-1944), an English composer and writer. She studied composition in Leipzig before returning to England by 1890. Smyth received critical acclaim for her music and her autobiographical and polemical writings. She was also known for demanding equal recognition for herself and other female musicians.

Album leaf composed for Miss Maggie Colley, Ferdinand Praeger  
April 1884

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged, yellowed paper. At the top, there is a title and date written in cursive: "Album leaf composed for Miss Maggie Colley, Ferdinand Praeger" and "April 1884". The music is written on ten staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Key annotations include "p" (piano) at the top left, "risc. molto" (riscio molto) on the right side, "molto squarcia" in the middle, and "rall" (rallentando) near the bottom. There are also some crossed-out sections of music and a signature "W. Praeger" at the bottom right. The paper shows signs of age, including some staining and wear.

Album Leaf, April 1884 (Item 008)





### Dedication on *Album Leaf*

This piece was dedicated to Miss Maggie Oakey (1864-1952, usually spelled Okey), later known by her married name, Marguerite Labori. Okey was an Australian pianist and composer who studied at the London Academy of Music.

### Case 3

Praeger is best known today for his connection with Richard Wagner. He developed a friendship with Wagner and hosted him during his first visit to London. The two apparently remained close; Wagner became godfather to Praeger's second son, whom he named Richard Wagner Praeger. Following Wagner's death, Praeger wrote the book *Wagner, As I Knew Him*, which was disputed by Wagner followers for exaggerating Praeger's role in Wagner's life, and for portraying Wagner in a negative way at times.

Specification of Compositions  
by Mr Ferdinand Praeger, of  
the total value of £ 2,4000, to  
be delivered quarterly for 12 years,  
at the rate of £ 200 per annum  
to  
The Earl of Dysart  
Commencing on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1890.

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Address of Parcel

The Right Honourable,  
The Earl of Dysart  
9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Bertam Esq<sup>r</sup>

34 Norfolk Street

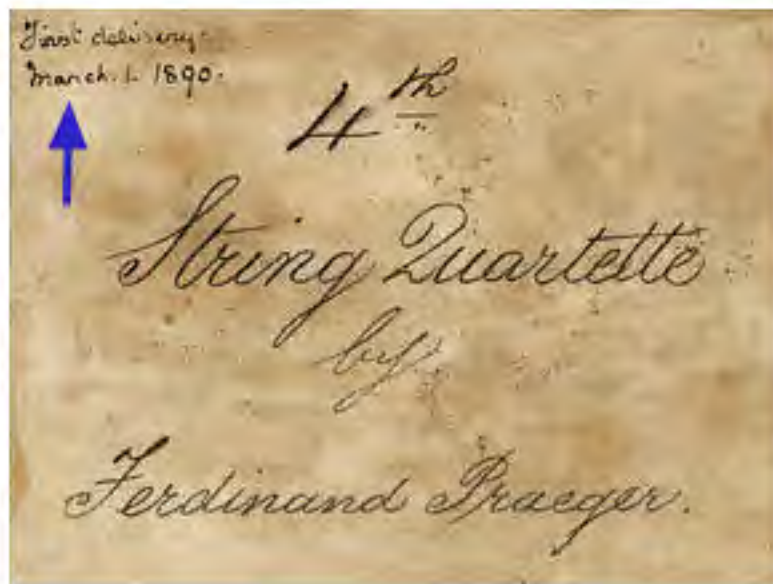
Strand

J. A. Bertam Esq<sup>r</sup>

Contract with the Earl of Dysart, 1890



In this document, Praeger agrees to send new compositions to the Earl of Dysart quarterly for 12 years in exchange for a payment of 200 pounds per year, beginning on March 1, 1890. The Earl of Dysart at the time of this contract was William John Manners Tollemache, who held the title from 1859-1935. Tollemache served as president of the London Wagner Society from 1884-1895, and commissioned Praeger to write his book about Wagner.



*4<sup>th</sup> String Quartet, cover label*

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> String Quartets are marked “First delivery, March 1 1890.” These pieces were probably intended to be delivered to the Earl of Dysart as part of their contract. Each was prepared by a professional copyist and accompanied by a set of parts for performance. Praeger died a year later, before he was able to fulfill the entire contract.

Volkslied

7 June 1891  
Leipzig

The very last piece written by Ferdinand Praeger  
after which he took to what proved his death bed  
Lionel Praeger

Volkslied, 1891 (Item 325)

The very last piece written by Ferdinand Praeger  
after which he took to what proved his death bed  
Lionel Praeger





the other writing on the page, so it could be that the numbers were added later. It is possible that Praeger did not number them at all, but that selections were chosen and numbered by someone else.



*Fleeting Thoughts no. 72, Nordisches Volkslied, 1885 (Item 113)*

Three of the *Fleeting Thoughts* works also have distinctive subtitles: *Nordisches Volkslied* (displayed here), *Stilles Lied*, and *Andante Religioso*. All of these are from the numbered set.



No 10  
of the Bohemian Airs. Chanson Slave par Ferdinand Praeger

Moderato

con brio

dim

*Chanson Slave, No. 10 of the Bohemian Airs (Item 038)*

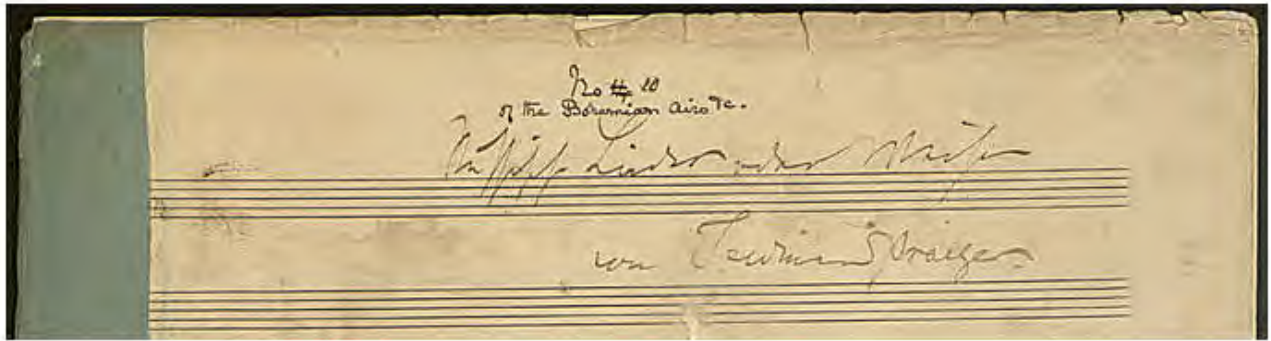
Russische Lieder Slavonic Melodies  
Ferdinand Praeger  
8 August 1861

Moderato

ad lib

ad lib

*Russische Lieder, Slavonic Melodies (Item 039)*



Cover page for *Russische Lieder*, with the Bohemian Airs title and number

Each piece in this set has a distinctive subtitle. The numbering of these pieces is also problematic, because there are two pieces assigned the number 10. One of these looks as if it may have originally been assigned a different number, and was then changed to 10. This piece could have been substituted for the other number 10 to make the set include only 13 pieces, as specified on the title label. The numbering of this set could also have been added at a later time, since the *Bohemian Airs* titles and numbers often seem to be in a different hand than the other writing on the page.



Sonata No. 1.

Seixidivius Praeger. I

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for a sonata. The score is written on ten staves. The top staff begins with the tempo marking "Allegro". The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as "pp", "p", "pp dolente", and "ritardando". There are also some handwritten annotations and corrections throughout the piece. The bottom of the page features a large, stylized signature or flourish.

First Sonata, holograph (Item 284)



A page of handwritten musical notation for a sonata. The page is oriented vertically but contains six systems of music, each consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The tempo is marked 'Allegro' at the top left. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'p', 'pp', and 'f'. There are also some markings that appear to be 'dolente' and 'rit.' (ritardando). The handwriting is in dark ink on aged, slightly yellowed paper.

*First Sonata, manuscript (Item 285)*

The terms holograph and manuscript both refer to items that are written by hand. The distinction is that a holograph is in the author's own writing,



but a manuscript may not be. These two drafts of Praeger's *First Sonata* illustrate this difference. The version on the left is in Praeger's hand, as are the majority of the scores in the collection. The version on the right is in a different, neater hand, probably that of a copyist. This can be seen by comparing aspects of the manuscripts such as the note shapes, the design of the clefs, and the written words between the two versions.

### **Vertical Case – right**

One interesting aspect of a manuscript collection like this one is that it can demonstrate different stages of the composer's creative process. The Praeger collection includes sketches and unfinished works, different drafts of the same piece, pieces that were corrected after they were written, and some pieces that were marked with instructions for engraving and publishing. All these different items can give us insight into how Praeger developed his compositions into completed pieces.



Sketchbook, p.6



*Primo Concerto*

The image shows a page from a sketchbook containing a handwritten musical score. The score is written on ten staves of music. The title "Primo Concerto" is written in cursive at the top. The music is written in a style that appears to be a sketch, with some notes and markings that are not fully developed. There are several annotations in cursive, including "Basso" and "Corno". The page is decorated with a green border and a central vignette. The vignette is a vertical oval shape with intricate scrollwork and a central illustration of a figure. The paper is aged and yellowed.

Sketchbook, p.7

This sketchbook contains sketches that appear to be mainly for piano pieces. Many of the sketches are dated, and some are given titles or tempo markings. Others are simply marked as a formal section of a piece, such as an introduction or coda.





Praeger made edits to his works by pasting inserts over the parts he wanted to change. Many pieces in the collection are edited in this way. These pose unique challenges to the preservation of these works, since numerous inserts have become detached from their original positions over time. It can be difficult to match the pieces to their places on the page or even to determine which work they belong to. This makes it difficult to be sure how Praeger intended the finished piece to appear.



Dedicated to Miss Marie Hecht. *Sonatina in A minor* No. 1 in A minor Ferdinand Praeger

*5* *Flauto* Moderato *65880* I

*plaintive*

*W*

*crise*

*pp dolce*

*trall. & dim.*

*978* *Praeger*

Sonatina no. 1 (Item 312)



Dedicated to Master  
Hoyay *Allegro mod-*  
51

Sonatina No. 2 in C major  
Ludwig Prager

I II

*p* *cresc* *dim* *cresc* *cresc* *W* *cresc* *Tempo* *rall* *p* *p* *cresc subito*

979

Sonatina no. 2 (Item 313)







plates that would have been needed for engraving the pieces for printing. The bottom of the page is marked with “Donaj”, a shortened version of the publisher’s name. These pieces were published by E. Donajowski in London in 1889.



*Chanson à boire* (Item 047)



Engraving instructions on *Chanson à boire*



On this piece, Praeger added instructions for engraving the music onto a plate for printing. Rather than writing out a repeated section, he indicated this by instructing, “Reengrave from A to B then go on here,” or “Reengrave this part, the 2 time put 8va on the treble line”. These instructions are assumed to be Praeger’s own because they appear to be in the same handwriting as the tempo and expression markings throughout the piece.

8va

*fz* *fz* *fz* *Ped.*

8va

*loco.* *p dolente.*

*eres assai*

*f e sempre cres* *sin al ff*

*rallent: assai.*

Morceau brillant pour le Pianoforte a quatre mains, sur deux airs favoris de l'Opera  
Les Huguenots de Meyerbeer (Treasure Room, M 12 P8823-2 m S)



This piece was printed using engraved plates, like the Sonatinas would have been. The outline of the plate can be seen on the page, where the edge of the plate left an impression in the paper. This piece was published in Bonn by Simrock, probably in 1845 or 1846.

**Note:** The Ferdinand Praeger Collection of Scores is Mus. Arc. 46 in the University at Buffalo Music Library. Once the collection has been completely cataloged, the finding aid for the collection will be available online at:

**<http://purl.org/net/findingaids/view?docId=ead/music/ubmu0046.xml>**