

Florence Parr-Gere Papers

Guides to Special Collections in the Music Division of the Library of Congress



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Collection Summary

Title: Florence Parr-Gere Papers

Span Dates: 1856-1964

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1900-1943)

Call No.: ML31.P37

Creator: Parr-Gere, Florence, b. 1875

Extent: 344 items

Extent: 5 containers

Extent: 3.0 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English and French

Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2012562127>

Summary: Florence Parr-Gere, born in Canada and longtime resident of New York, was a pianist and composer. Her papers contain published music, photographs, clippings, correspondence, a scrapbook, publicity materials, posters and other materials related to her experiences at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau and lifelong musical pursuits.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Parr-Gere, Florence, 1875-

Parr-Gere, Florence, 1875-

Parr-Gere, Florence, 1875- --Archives.

Parr-Gere, Florence, 1875- --Photographs.

Parr-Gere, Florence, 1875- Piano music. Selections.

Parr-Gere, Florence, 1875- Songs. Selections.

Organizations

Conservatoire américain de Fontainebleau.

Subjects

Piano music.

Songs with piano.

Women composers.

Women pianists.

Form/Genre

Clippings (Information artifacts)

Correspondence.

Drawings (Visual works)

Photographic prints.

Posters.

Programs (Documents)

Promotional materials.

Scrapbooks.

Provenance

Gift, Mrs. H. Parr Johnson, 1975.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

The Florence Parr-Gere Papers were processed by Denise Gallo and George Kipper in 2012. George Kipper coded the finding aid for EAD format in July 2012.

Copyright Status

Materials from the Florence Parr-Gere Papers are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions

The Florence Parr-Gere Papers are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Music Division prior to visiting in order to determine whether the desired materials will be available at that time.

Certain restrictions to use or copying of materials may apply.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container number], Florence Parr-Gere Papers, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Florence Beatrice Parr-Gere was born in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, on April 25, 1875 to Henry Anderson Parr (a dentist) and Florence Parr. The 1881 Canadian census reveals that she was the oldest of four children. As a young adult, Parr-Gere traveled to Europe to study music in the 1890s. She is known to have studied piano for several years with Theodor Leschetizky in Vienna, who was the first to recognize her inherent talent in composition, and later with well-known teachers in Paris. After returning to the U.S., she began composition studies in New York with Max Spicker. Soon thereafter, she married James Belden Gere, a New York City physician (1872-1920), on November 26, 1902. Dr. Gere received his license in 1896, and was on the staff at the Presbyterian Hospital, New York City. The couple lived in New York City during the next several decades.

Parr-Gere wrote poems (often used as lyrics for her songs) and began to publish songs and piano works circa 1912. She attended the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau during the summer of 1921 with fellow classmate and composer Aaron Copland. Parr-Gere is known to have been active as a composer during the years 1912-1928. Her songs were interpreted by various well-known singers, including Johanna Gadske and Maggie Teyte. She is known to have composed chamber music and works for full orchestra, including at least one tone-poem. Her works were published by at least five American music publishers: Carl Fischer, G. Schirmer, Inc., Luckhardt and Belder, the Boston Music Company, and C. W. Thompson Company. Other works were published by the firm of J. Hamelle in Paris.

James Gere died in 1920. Florence continued to compose and teach piano pupils at her New York City studio located at No. 15, West 67th Street. During the 1920s and 1930s she submitted several orchestral compositions to local orchestras for performance. Parr-Gere continued her European travels between 1920 and 1938, as indicated by passport records. The latest inscribed photograph in this collection is dated July 1943. There is little biographical information regarding Parr-Gere in existing reference works and she does not appear to have been a member of ASCAP. No date of death has been found for Parr-Gere, although she appears to have been active at least into the mid-1940s.

Scope and Content Note

The Florence Parr-Gere Papers span a period between 1856-1964 with the majority of materials dating from circa 1900-1943. The papers mainly consist of portraits and other photographs of Parr-Gere that may have been used for publicity purposes. There are also candid outdoor photos and a few family photographs. In addition, there are several inscribed photographs, including one of Percy Grainger. The collection includes 40 of Parr-Gere's songs and piano works published between 1912-1928, as well as a scrapbook compiled by Parr-Gere while attending classes at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau during the summer of 1921. The scrapbook contains several photographs and autographs accompanied by musical notations from other colleagues, such as Aaron Copland and the Conservatory's founder, François Casadesus. Also of interest is a small group of five posters publicizing the final two student concerts of September 1921 at Fontainebleau. Other items include Parr-Gere's marriage certificate, a wedding announcement, music publisher brochures listing her compositions, a musical composition inscribed to Parr-Gere, and an 1856 book titled *Genealogy of the Geer Family*, containing an extensive genealogy of her husband's family.

Organization of the Florence Parr-Gere Papers

The Florence Parr-Gere Papers are organized in three series:

- [Music, 1912-1928](#)
- [Photographs, circa 1880s-1943](#)
- [Miscellany, 1856-1964](#)

Description of Series

Container

BOX 1

Series

Music, 1912-1928

Published musical works composed by Florence Parr-Gere between 1912-1928. Includes 22 piano solos, 18 songs with piano accompaniment, and an inscribed song composed by Meta Schumann with lyrics by Parr-Gere. Parr-Gere wrote the lyrics for all of the songs in this collection with the exception of *L'Offrande*, with lyrics by Céleste Wilbur.

Organized into two subseries: piano solos and songs with piano accompaniment. Arranged alphabetically by title of composition therein.

BOX 2-3

Photographs, circa 1880s-1943

Chiefly studio and candid photographs of Florence Parr-Gere, taken from childhood until late middle-age. The majority of photographs of individuals other than Parr-Gere are unidentified, although most are suspected to be members of her family. Also included are several inscribed photographs of well-known personalities.

Arranged in approximate chronological order, then by subject. Inscribed photographs are arranged alphabetically by surname.

BOX 4-5 MAPCASE 3

Miscellany, 1856-1964

Two small portrait drawings, one book, clippings, correspondence, marriage documents, music publisher brochures listing Parr-Gere's compositions, posters (Fontainebleau concerts), programs, and poems.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	<p>Music, 1912-1928</p> <p>Published musical works composed by Florence Parr-Gere between 1912-1928. Includes 22 piano solos, 18 songs with piano accompaniment, and an inscribed song composed by Meta Schumann with lyrics by Parr-Gere. Parr-Gere wrote the lyrics for all of the songs in this collection with the exception of <i>L'Offrande</i>, with lyrics by Céleste Wilbur.</p> <p>Organized into two subseries: piano solos and songs with piano accompaniment. Arranged alphabetically by title of composition therein.</p> <p>Piano music</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Children's laughter</i>; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1921. Printed score; 5 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Deux morceaux our piano. No. 1. Une Pensée</i>; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1924. Printed score; 2 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Deux morceaux our piano. No. 2. Le Chant du voyageur</i>; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1924. Printed score; 3 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Extase</i>; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1926. Printed score; 4 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Idylle romantique</i>; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1919. Printed score; 5 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>An Impression</i>; piano. Boston: Boston Music Company, 1914. Printed score; 6 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Impressions de Fontainebleau</i>; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1923. Printed score; 5 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>In a garden at Naishapar</i>; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1916. Printed score; 5 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>In the Seraglio</i>; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1918. Printed score; 3 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Intermezzo. Her Portrait</i>; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1916. Printed score; 5 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence. <i>Legend</i>; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1915. Printed score; 3 p.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	<p>Parr-Gere, Florence.</p>

Music, 1912-1928

Container

Contents

- La Nuite (Melodie in Gb)*; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1917.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/13** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Reverie nocturne; piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/14** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Romanza; piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1915.
Printed score; 5 p.
Composition is credited to Florence Pau Gere.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/15** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Shadows, a tone-poem for piano; piano. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1926.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/16** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Three silhouettes for piano. No. 1. Impromptu Oriental; piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/17** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Three silhouettes for piano. No. 2. Caprice poetique; piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/18** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Three silhouettes for piano. No. 3. Impromptu lyrique; piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/19** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Trois pièces pour piano. No. 1. Gazouillement d'oiseaux; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1923.
Printed score; 2 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/20** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Trois pièces pour piano. No. 2. Poème de la mer; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1923.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/21** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Trois pièces pour piano. No. 3. Le Temps des Lilas; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1923.
Printed score; 2 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/22** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Trois pièces pour piano; piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1923.
Printed score; 7 p.
No. 1. Patinage à roulettes; No. 2. Notre-Dame; No. 3. Mi-Carême.

Songs

- BOX-FOLDER 1/23** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Arcady's where you are; song with piano. New York: Carl Fischer, 1918.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/24** Parr-Gere, Florence.
The Birth of green; song with piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1916.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/25** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Feathered trees; song with piano. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1925.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/26** Parr-Gere, Florence.

Music, 1912-1928

Container

Contents

- God of the wind. An Apostrophe*; song with piano. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1928.
Printed score; p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/27** Parr-Gere, Florence.
How I love thee; song with piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/28** Parr-Gere, Florence.
I am the wind; song with piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1916.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/29** Parr-Gere, Florence.
My mother when she kisses me; song with piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1924.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** Parr-Gere, Florence.
My song; song with piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/31** Parr-Gere, Florence.
L'Offrande; song with piano. Paris: J. Hamelle, 1925.
Printed score; 3 p.
Lyrics by Céleste Wilbur; music by Florence Parr-Gere.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/32** Parr-Gere, Florence.
A Profile; song with piano. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1923.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/33** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Romance; song with piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1916.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/34** Parr-Gere, Florence.
A Sigh; song with piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1919.
Printed score; 2 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/35** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Thee; song with piano. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1926.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/36** Parr-Gere, Florence.
Two flower songs. No. 1: My garden; no. 2: Where the sweetest flowers grow; songs with piano. Boston: Boston Music Co., 1912.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/37** Parr-Gere, Florence.
I walked with anguish in my heart; song with piano. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1920.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/38** Parr-Gere, Florence.
The Water song; song with piano. Boston: C. W. Thompson & Co., 1914.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/39** Parr-Gere, Florence.
With music on your lips; song with piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1918.
Printed score; 3 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/40** Parr-Gere, Florence.
You Devon maid; song with piano. New York: Luckhardt & Belder, 1920.
Printed score; 5 p.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/41** Schumann, Meta.
Thee; song with piano. New York: G. Ricordi & Co., 1925.
Printed score; 10 p.
Music composed by Meta Schumann; lyrics by Florence Parr Gere.

Music is inscribed to Florence Parr Gere by the composer, dated February 1925.

BOX 2-3

Photographs, circa 1880s-1943

Chiefly studio and candid photographs of Florence Parr-Gere, taken from childhood until late middle-age. The majority of photographs of individuals other than Parr-Gere are unidentified, although most are suspected to be members of her family. Also included are several inscribed photographs of well-known personalities.

Arranged in approximate chronological order, then by subject. Inscribed photographs are arranged alphabetically by surname.

Parr-Gere, Alone, circa 1880s-circa 1935

BOX-FOLDER 2/1

Early photographs, circa 1880s-1900
8 black and white photographs.

BOX-FOLDER 2/2

Inscribed photographs, circa 1890s - circa 1912
6 black and white photographs.

BOX-FOLDER 2/3-19; 3/1-9

Later photographs, circa 1900 - circa 1935
80 black and white photographs.

Parr-Gere, with Others, circa 1890s-circa 1925

BOX-FOLDER 3/10

American Conservatory at Fontainebleau, 1921
1 photograph.

Group photograph at Fontainebleau, 1921, with Nadia Boulanger, Charles-Marie Widor, François Casadesus, Isidor Philipp, Aaron Copland, André Bloch, and many others.

BOX-FOLDER 3/11

Horse-driven coach with large group, circa 1900
1 photograph.

Signed by Florence B. Parr, with the notation: "West Point".

BOX-FOLDER 3/12

Parr-Gere family, circa 1890s - circa 1916
7 black and white photographs.

BOX-FOLDER 3/13

Parr-Gere with unidentified people, circa 1902-1925
6 photographs.

Miscellany, 1911-1943

BOX-FOLDER 3/14-16

Inscribed photographs, 1911-1930 and undated
14 black and white photographs.

BOX-FOLDER 3/17

Unidentified, circa 1915-1930s
4 black and white photographs.

BOX 4-5 MAPCASE 3

Miscellany, 1856-1964

Two small portrait drawings, one book, clippings, correspondence, marriage documents, music publisher brochures listing Parr-Gere's compositions, posters (Fontainebleau concerts), programs, and poems.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

BOX-FOLDER 4/1

Book.
Geer, James.

Miscellany, 1856-1964

Container

Contents

	<p><i>Historical sketch and genealogy of George & Thomas Geer from 1621 to 1856.</i> Hartford: Elihu Geer, Printer and Stationer, 1856. Published genealogy of the Geer family (husband's family). Inscribed to James Belden Gere from Anna Gere Belden, Syracuse, NY, September 28, 1912.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 4/2	Clippings, 1902-1920 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 4/3	Correspondence, 1920-1941 3 letters.
BOX-FOLDER 4/4	Marriage documents, 1902 3 documents.
BOX-FOLDER 4/5	Miscellaneous documents, 1916-1929 and undated Check receipt from music publisher (J. Hamelle, Paris) and one note card from Carl F. Clarke.
BOX-FOLDER 5/2-4	Periodicals, 1913, 1919-1920 <i>The Critic</i> , 1, no. 1 (1919 June) and no. 5 (1920 October); <i>Musical America</i> , 17, no. 14 (1913 Feb. 8).
BOX-FOLDER 4/6	Portrait drawing, circa 1900 Small oval portrait of Parr-Gere within a velvet matted frame.
BOX-FOLDER 3/19	Portrait drawing, 1908
MAPCASE-DRAWER 3/8	Posters, Fontainebleau, September 21 and 23, 1921 5 large posters. Two final concerts given by the students of the American Conservatory, Fontainebleau, France, September 21 and 23, 1921.
BOX-FOLDER 4/7	Programs, Fontainebleau, July-September 1921 10 programs.
BOX-FOLDER 4/8	Programs, general, 1913-1964 6 programs.
BOX-FOLDER 4/9	Publicity materials, 1916-1929 and undated 3 brochures and 1 page taken from a concert program.
BOX-FOLDER 5/1	Scrapbook (Fontainebleau), 1921 Inscriptions, photographs, notes, and programs documenting the period of Parr-Gere's studies at the American Conservatory, Fontainebleau.
BOX-FOLDER 4/10-11	Writings, 1905-1941 and undated 41 poems.