Summary

Creator: Braun, Edith Evans, 1887-1976

Title: Edith Evans Braun collection

Date: 1916-1976

Source: The Edith Evans Braun Collection was given to The New York Public Library by Mrs. Polly Middleton, Edith Evans Braun's grand-niece.

Abstract: The Edith Evans Braun Collection highlights the history of American music in the early and mid twentieth century. The collection shows various details of the lives and careers of notable music figures of the period through the memoirs and diaries of Edith Evans Braun, a pianist and director at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Of strong interest in the collection are the music manuscript sketches by emerging composers (Deems Taylor, Samuel Barber) of the period, and signed and dedicated published scores. There are also letters and photographs from Taylor, Barber, Gian Carlo Menotti, Josef Hoffman, and others. The period covered in the collection is from 1916 to 1971.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in the NYPL's online catalog for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult: https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials

Conditions Governing Use: For permission to copy or publish please contact the Music Division.

Preferred citation: The Edith Evans Braun Collection, JPB 91-96, Music Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: Multiple languages

Processing note: Processed by Angela Doane. Processed by Angela Doane.

Creator History
Edith Evans Braun was born in Marysville, Ohio on August 7, 1887, and died November 7, 1976 in
Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania, age 89. Her father, Dr. O. H. Evans, was an influential teacher and leader of the local musical community and supervised his daughter's musical education. Somewhat of a child musical prodigy, in her early teens Edith Evans became a regular piano accompanist for the Marysville Choral Union, impressing people in the field such as Evan Williams, Dr. Dufft, and Frank Ormsby. Edith Evans graduated from Oberlin with a B.A. after four years of study, and continued study for one additional year to graduate in music (piano and organ). She then went to New York, entering the Von Ende School of Music where she soon became a faculty member. She also continued to be an accompanist on tours, notably with the contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink. On December 11, 1918, Edith Evans married John F. Braun, a Philadelphia businessman, art collector, and tenor vocalist who died in 1939. The couple performed a joint recital in the opening to the Foyer of the Academy of Music, renovated by Edward Bok. Edith Evans Braun was a close friend of Mary Louise Curtis Bok Zimbalist and with her became friend and semi-patroness to composers such as Samuel Barber, Gian Carlo Menotti, and Deems Taylor. Edith Evans Braun continued to play piano professionally, such as being the pianist in a performance of the Beethoven Triple Concerto under Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1940. She was also director of the Mary Louise Curtis Bok Foundation from 1934 until 1972, and was an instructor of theory and composition at the Curtis Institute of Music from 1942 until 1969: the Institute awarded her an honorary doctorate in music in 1957. Edith Evans Braun was a founder of the Cosmopolitan Club and a life member of the Art Alliance.

Scope and Content Note
The papers and scores in the collection represent the activities and observations of Edith Evans Braun in the American musical scene from 1916 to 1971. The bulk of the collection falls between 1921 and 1957. The collection has been arranged both chronologically and alphabetically, depending on the needs of each particular series grouping. The files in the collection contain personal correspondence; notes, memoirs, and a diary all referring to performances, musicians, conductors, commissions, rehearsals, and social occasions; ephemera, such as a biographical synopsis, stock certificate in a Menotti work, and flyer for one of Braun's works signed by the many musicians central to the collection; photographs of these same people and more; published scores signed by the composers and inscribed to Edith Evans Braun; and holograph music manuscript sketches. The correspondence is divided into three groups: first, three letters written by Edith Evans Braun to her mother Mrs. O. H. Evans in the period from 1921 to 1925, and letters written to Edith Evans Braun; secondly letters written to Edith Evans Braun by a variety of people; and third, two letters in the collection neither by nor to Edith Evans Braun. The letters by Braun contain information about Deems Taylor, describing such notable occurrences as his wedding dinner at the Braun's, his composition of “Circus Day” at their home in 1925, and mentioning his commission to the Metropolitan Opera House and the symphony (#1) he was composing with Walter Damrosch. The bulk of the series is contained in the letters to Braun from Barber, Menotti, Hofmann, Taylor, and various others. Many of the Menotti letters relate to the founding of Spoleto Festival U.S.A., and the Barber letters are full of news from Capricorn (home of Barber and Menotti) and also about the progression of various Barber compositions. The diary covers Edith Evans' 1916 tour as piano accompanist with the contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink. It contains descriptions of the concert performances and social activities of the group during the tour, with personal information and commentary about Madame Schumann-Heink. There is an inserted looseleaf sheet with a tour itinerary. The notes and memoirs are recountings of the social and musical doings of Edith Evans Braun, usually in the company of Mary Louise Curtis Bok (later Zimbalist). The professional and personal lives of Samuel Barber and Gian Carlo Menotti are frequent subjects in these reminiscences, as Braun and Bok were friends and supporters of the two composers from an early age via the Curtis Institute of Music and the Curtis Foundation. The memoirs, diary, and notes date from 1916 to 1958, primarily focusing upon the 1930s. The small ephemeral section of the collection consists of xeroxed biographies of Edith Evans' early years and of her husband John F. Braun, and a program of the 1957 commencement ceremony of the Curtis Institute of Music in which Edith Evans Braun received an honorary music doctorate. From her 1953 trip to Europe there is a postcard, perhaps from the place
where the group Zimbalist-Menotti-Braun photograph was taken. Included also is a flyer of Braun's work, and a notecard from Bruno Walter to Mary Zimbalist. The twelve photographs are of Efrem Zimbalist and Mary Zimbalist and Efrem, Jr., Samuel Barber, Anna Moffo, Edith Evans Braun, Gian Carlo Menotti, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Rosini Scalero and Andrea Della Porte, Eugene Ormandy, and Josef Hofmann. A few are inscribed to Braun by the subject of the photographs. The collection of published scores by Deems Taylor and Samuel Barber are all presentation copies, signed and inscribed to Edith Evans Braun by the composers. The use of the address “Gnädige” (German for “gracious lady”) in many of the inscriptions from Barber illustrates the congenial and supportive friendship between Barber and Braun, already apparent from her memoirs. The scores range in publication date from 1918 to 1963. The sketches are early drafts of works by Deems Taylor and Samuel Barber given to Edith Evans Braun. The discarded pages from Barber’s Symphony #1 may be of particular interest to those concerned with the history of this work later withdrawn and repudiated by the composer. There are also two major works by Deems Taylor in early-draft sketch form, “Circus Day” and “Peter Ibbetson”. The sketches date from 1925 to 1930, with one undated. The Edith Evans Braun Collection is a valuable research tool through its portrayal of the lives and professional developments of Menotti, Barber, Taylor, and Schumann-Heink from the perspective of a near associate, in addition to mentioning other important figures of the day such as Josef Hofmann and Arturo Toscanini, as they came in contact with the major players in Braun's memoirs. The sketches in the collection are an estimable resource for anyone with interest in the original intellectual development of these composers' musical works, and the letters give an intimate view of the lives of their subjects. As a whole, the collection is an intimate view of the American musical scene of the time seen through the eyes of a knowledgeable and experienced musician.

**Arrangement:** I. Correspondence, 1921-1971; II. Memoirs and diary; III. Ephemera; IV. Photographs; V. Manuscript music sketches and scores; VI. Published scores

**Key Terms**

**Subjects**
- Composers -- United States
- Music -- United States
- Musical sketches

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**
- Diaries
- Letters (correspondence)
- Memoirs
- Musical scores
- Photoprints

**Names**
- Braun, Edith Evans, 1887-1976
- Barber, Samuel, 1910-1981
- Hofmann, Josef, 1876-1957
- Menotti, Gian Carlo, 1911-2007
- Schumann-Heink, Ernestine, 1861-1936
- Taylor, Deems, 1885-1966
- Zimbalist, Efrem
- Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1876-1970
- American Music Collection
## Container List

### Series 1: Correspondence

MAI numbers are for internal Music Division use and can be ignored.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b.</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>7/1921</td>
<td>Braun, Edith Evans</td>
<td>Merion Station PA</td>
<td>to Mrs. O.H. Evans, Marysville OH</td>
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<td>Braun, Edith Evans</td>
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<td>10/6/1960</td>
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<td>to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA</td>
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<td>8/2/1968</td>
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<td>Bolzano Italy</td>
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<td>Spoleto Italy</td>
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<td>New York NY</td>
<td>to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA</td>
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<td>Davenport, Marcia</td>
<td>New York NY</td>
<td>to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA</td>
<td>Autograph letter, signed; (1 p), with name card.</td>
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Series 1: Correspondence (cont.)

b. 1 f. 17  Davenport, Marcia. New York NY, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. 1/18/1966 [MAI-20062] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p), with name card.)

b. 1 f. 18  Eto, Toshiya. Camden ME, to Edith Evans Braun, Rockport ME. c.9/4/1951 [MAI-20063] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 19  Hofmann, Josef. New York NY, to Edith Evans Braun, Merion PA. 2/7/1940 [MAI-20064] (Typed letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 20  Hofmann, Josef. Los Angeles CA, to Edith Evans Braun, Merion PA. 12/17/1959 [MAI-20065] (Typed letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 21  Hoiby, Lee. Stoughton Wisconsin, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. 5/13/1950 [MAI-20066] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 22  Hoiby, Lee. Rowe MA, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. 10/30/1954 [MAI-20067] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 23  Menotti, Gian Carlo. Paris France, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. c.7/26/1946 [MAI-20068] (Autograph letter, signed; (2 p).)

b. 1 f. 24  Menotti, Gian Carlo. Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Rockport ME. c.6/16/1955 [MAI-20069] (Autograph letter, signed; (2 p).)

b. 1 f. 25  Menotti, Gian Carlo. Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Rockport ME. c.7/27/1957 [MAI-20070] (Autograph letter, signed; (3 p).)

b. 1 f. 26  Menotti, Gian Carlo. Bolzano Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Rockport ME. c.7/7/1958 [MAI-20089] (Autograph postcards, signed; (3 p).)

b. 1 f. 27  Menotti, Gian Carlo. Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. 8/28/1958 [MAI-20090] (Autograph letter, signed; (2 p).)

b. 1 f. 28  Menotti, Gian Carlo. San Christina Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Rockport ME. 8/26/1959 [MAI-20091] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 29  Menotti, Gian Carlo. en route to Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. ?/1957? [MAI-20092] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 30  Menotti, Gian Carlo. San Christina Italy, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. 9/18/19? [MAI-20093] (Typed letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 31  Moffo, Anna. n.p., to Edith Evans Braun, n.p. n.d. [MAI-20094]

b. 1 f. 32  Serkin, Rudolf. Philadelphia PA, to Edith Evans Braun, n.p. 2/7/1959 [MAI-20095] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p).)


b. 1 f. 34  Serkin, Rudolf. n.p., to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. n.d. [MAI-20097]

b. 1 f. 35  Taylor, Deems. New York NY, to Edith Evans Braun, Rockport ME. 8/4/1940 [MAI-20098] (Typed letter, signed; (1 p).)

b. 1 f. 36  Taylor, Deems. New York NY, to Edith Evans Braun, Merion PA. 3/9/1940 [MAI-20099] (Autograph card, signed; (1 p).)
Guide to the
Edith Evans Braun collection

Series 1: Correspondence (cont.)

b. 1 f. 37 Taylor, Deems. New York NY, to Edith Evans Braun, Merion PA. c.3/26/1940
[MAI-20100] (Autograph card, signed; (1 p.).)

b. 1 f. 38 Zimbalist, Efrem. USSR, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA. c.7/12/1966
[MAI-20104] (Autograph postcard, signed; (1 p.).)

b. 1 f. 39 Zimbalist, Efrem. Reno Nevada, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA.
2/3/1970
[MAI-20101] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p.).)

b. 1 f. 40 Zimbalist, Efrem. Reno Nevada, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA.
3/15/1970
[MAI-20102] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p.).)

[MAI-20103] (Telegram (2 p.).)

b. 1 f. 42 Zimbalist, Efrem. Reno Nevada, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA.
2/20/1971
[MAI-20105] (Autograph letter, signed; (1 p.).)

b. 1 f. 43 Zimbalist (?), Maria. Reno Nevada, to Edith Evans Braun, Philadelphia PA.
c.7/11/1970
[MAI-20106] (Typed letter, signed; (1 p.).)

b. 1 f. 44 Scott, Henri. Germantown PA, to Mr. Channell, n.p. 9/12/1928
[MAI-20143] (Typed letter, signed; (1 p.).)

b. 1 f. 45 Walter, Bruno. n.p., to Mary Louise Curtis Bok Zimbalist, n.p. 2/1/1944
[MAI-20144] (Autograph card, signed; (1 p.).)

Series 2: Memoirs and Diaries

b. 2 f. 1 Braun, Edith Evans. 1916
[MAI-20107] (Diary, (146 p.).)

b. 2 f. 2 Braun, Edith Evans. Reminiscences. 6/6/1926 - 3/9/1937
[MAI-20108] (Memoirs from notebook, ink; (26 p.).)

b. 2 f. 3 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 4/9/1937
[MAI-20109] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (5 p.).)

[MAI-20110] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (4 p.).)

b. 2 f. 5 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 12/19/1937
[MAI-20111] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (5 p.).)

b. 2 f. 6 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 2/1/1938
[MAI-20112] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (3 p.).)

b. 2 f. 7 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 2/1938
[MAI-20113] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (10 p.).)

b. 2 f. 8 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 3/5/1938
[MAI-20114] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (2 p.).)

b. 2 f. 9 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 3/19/1938
[MAI-20115] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (3 p.).)

b. 2 f. 10 Braun, Edith Evans. Notes on Musical Matters. 11/6/1938
[MAI-20116] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (8p.).)

[MAI-20117] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (4 p.).)

[MAI-20118] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (2 p.).)
Series 2: Memoirs and Diaries (cont.)

[MAI-20119] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (9 p.).)

[MAI-20120] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (50 p.).)

b. 2 f. 15 Braun, Edith Evans. European Trip Notes. 5/13-30/1953
[MAI-20121] (Looseleaf memoirs, pencil; (8 p.).)

[MAI-20122] (Looseleaf memoirs, pen; (3 p.).)

[MAI-20123] (Xeroxes of files 2-16.)

Series 3: Ephemera

b. 2 f. 1 Braun, Edith Evans. Biographical material.
[MAI-20124] (Newspaper clippings and typed biographies.)

[MAI-20125]

b. 2 f. 3 Postcard (unsent). from Taverna Della Giarretiera in Italy. 1958
[MAI-20126]

b. 2 f. 4 Zimbalist, Mary C. Limited Partnership Agreement with Edith Evans Braun as producers of Menotti's The consul. 1950
[MAI-20127] (Typed partnership document; signed (1 p.).)

b. 2 f. 5 Braun, Edith Evans. Flyer/Program for Braun's The Harpweaver, signed by Braun, Efrem Zimbalist, Rosario Scalero, Gian Carlo Menotti, and Samuel Barber.
[MAI-20128]

b. 2 f. 6 Schumann-Heink, Ernestine, tour itinerary. 1916
[MAI-20129] (Autograph document in unknown hand, ink; (1 p.).)

Series 4: Photographs

b. 3 f. 1 Ernestine Schumann-Heink. 1916
[MAI-20130] (Photograph, 10 × 8 inches.)

b. 3 f. 2 Ernestine Schumann-Heink and Edith Evans. c.1916
[MAI-20131] (Photograph, 6.5 × 8.5 inches.)

b. 3 f. 3 Josef Hofmann and pupils including Edith Evans Braun. c.1929
[MAI-20132] (Photograph, 8 × 10 inches.)

b. 3 f. 4 Hofmann, Josef 1940
[MAI-20133] (Photograph, 10 × 8 inches.)
Inscribed to Braun by Hofmann.

b. 3 f. 5 Siegel, Adrian. Eugene Ormandy, Efrem Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok Zimbalist, Edith Evans Braun, Efrem Zimbalist Jr., Mrs. Ormandy (?). c.1940s
[MAI 20134] (Photograph, 8 × 10 inches.)

b. 3 f. 6 Efrem Zimbalist. 1947
[MAI-20135] (Photograph, 10 × 8 inches.)
Inscribed to Braun by Zimbalist.
Series 4: Photographs (cont.)

b. 3 f. 7 Rosario Scalero and Andrea Della Corte. 12/18/1950
[MAI-20136] (Photograph, 7 x 9.5 inches.)
Inscribed to Braun.

b. 3 f. 8 Anna Moffo. n.d.
[MAI-20137] (Photograph, 8.5 x 5.75 inches.)

b. 3 f. 9 Erneste Schumann-Heink and Edith Evans. c.1916
[MAI-20138] (Photograph, 4.5 x 6 inches.)

b. 3 f. 10 Gian Carlo Menotti, Mary Louise Curtis Bok Zimbalist, Edith Evans Braun, Tommy Schippers? or Lee Hoiby?. c.1953
[MAI-20139] (Photograph, 4 x 5.75 inches.)

b. 3 f. 11 Moffo, Anna. n.d.
[MAI-20140] (Photograph, 6 x 4 inches.)
Don Pasquale inscribed on reverse of photo, unidentified hand (Moffo's?).

b. 3 f. 12 Samuel Barber in Italy(?). c.1960
[MAI-20141] (Photograph, 4 x 2.5 inches.)
Inscribed on reverse in Barber's hand “If you look carefully you can find SAM BARBER in this picture. Isn't it a sweet house?”.

b. 3 f. 13 Unidentified woman on horseback. c.1916
[MAI-20142] (Photograph, 5.5 x 3.25 inches.)

Series 5: Holograph Sketches

b. 4 f. 1 Barber, Samuel. Symphonies, no. 1, op. 9. n.d.

b. 4 f. 2 Taylor, Deems. Circus Day 9/19/1925, 9/25/1925
[MAI-20072] (Autograph sketches (13 p.).)
Pencil ms. sketches, first drafts of Circus Day.

b. 4 f. 3 Taylor, Deems. Circus Day 10/10/1925
[MAI-20073] (Autograph sketch (1 p.).)
Pencil ms. sketch dedicated “To The Brauns - John and Edith- who furnished such a heavenly crèche for the brain-children!”

b. 4 f. 4 Taylor, Deems. Peter Ibbetson 1/27-30/1930
[MAI-20071] (Autograph sketches (4 p.).)
Pencil sketch ms. of Peter Ibbetson, Act I and “Ma sille, veux-lú un Banquet Accompanimeur.”

b. 4 f. 5 Zimbalist, Efrem. Laudate Dominum 1951
[MAI-20088] (Reproduction of handwritten score (16 p.).)
Dated and location noted by Edith Evans Braun.

Series 6: Published Scores

b. 4 f. 1 Taylor, Deems. Circus Day: Eight Pictures From Memory. op. 18 New York: J. Fischer and Bro. 1934
[MAI-20075] (Score (144 p.).)
Printed dedication “To Edith and John Braun”, inserted holograph underneath “with love and gratitude to two who made Circus Day possible. Deems Taylor, New York, January, 1934”
Series 6: Published Scores (cont.)

b. 5 f. 2  
1918  
[MAI-20077] (Score (9 p.).)  
Inscribed copy “For Mrs. Braun, with the cordial regards of Deems Taylor”.

b. 5 f. 3  
[MAI-20076] (Piano-vocal score (329 p.).)  
Blue quarter morocco-grained sheep with blue marbled paper boards, numbered and signed edition (6/110), original cover bound in. Inscribed “For John and Edith with love Deems Taylor Mar. 2, 1931”

b. 6 f. 4  
Barber, Samuel. *Serenade*, string quartet, op. 1; arr. New York: G. Schirmer  
1942  
[MAI-20081] (Score and parts (28 p.). Score for String)  
Quartet or String Orchestra: parts for two violins, viola, violoncello, double bass. Inscribed copy “the first copy an d. lieber Gnädige Sam Christmas 1942”

b. 6 f. 5  
[MAI-20080] (Study score (97 p.).)  
Written on title page “Given to me by Sam Barber -EEB”

b. 6 f. 6  
[MAI-20087] (Violoncello and piano score (49, 13 p.).)  
Piano score and violoncello part. Inscribed “for darling Gnädige Sam Capricorn. Nov. 1950.”

b. 6 f. 7  
[MAI-20083] (Score (16 p.).)  
Inscribed copy “for dearest Gnädige always affectionately Sam Capricorn Sept. ’52”.

b. 6 f. 8  
[MAI-20085] (Score (43 p.).)  
Inscribed copy “for Edie to practice up! S.B.”

b. 6 f. 9  
[MAI-20084] (Score (11 p.).)  
For voice and piano. Inscribed “for darling Edie- famous student of Finnegan's Wake!! as ever Sam”.

b. 6 f. 10  
[MAI-20078] (Piano-vocal score (269 p.).)  
Inscribed copy “for dearest Gnädige- a late happy birthday and much love always Sam Capricorn- Sept '58”.

b. 6 f. 11  
[MAI-20086] (Score (28 p.).)  
For four solo voices with chamber orchestra. Inscribed copy “for Gnädige with much love Sam Philadelphia Feb. 1960”
Series 6: Published Scores (cont.)

b. 6 f. 12  
[MAI-20079] (Study score (60 p.).)  
Inscribed copy “for Gnädige to learn some bad orchestration! love Sam”.

b. 6 f. 13  
**Barber, Samuel Concertos, piano, orchestra, op. 38. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1962**  
[MAI-20082] (Two-piano score (87 p.).)  
Inscribed copy “for dearest Gnädige after so many years! love Sam Nov. '63” Some margin notes in Barber's hand on early pages of score.