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Emmy Temianka Correspondence

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1-22-1946

### Emmy Temianka Correspondence; (Cowden)

Emmy Temianka

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## Emmy Temianka Correspondence; (Cowden)

### Description

This collection contains material pertaining to the life, career, and activities of Henri Temianka, violin virtuoso, conductor, music teacher, and author. Materials include correspondence, concert programs and flyers, music scores, photographs, and books.

January 22, 1946 -  
New York.

Dear Mama —

Well. there's so much to say. I'm in bed this morning - with a cold again. Henri used to always say that he was always fighting germs in New York - and now I believe it. The weather is trecherous - and I am continually - as is everyone else - dosing with aspirin. to combat a chronic fluish feeling. Every third person has sinus. everybody has - or has had the flu.

It has been bitterly cold - Two days ago. when Henri was in Canada - I went to the Village to see Rosemary, Jemmes' Sister. Karen - It was one of those days - I flew up the streets of

the Village - madly propelled by  $\frac{2}{2}$   
stinging winds - and out of breath and  
tempers from the cold. Even with mittens, my  
hands hurt - and were red with cold. She was  
out - and I hurried again through 4 quiet  
blocks to begin my bus ride back. It was  
strong sunshine - but so very cold. Sight-  
seeing was out of the question. The next  
day it snowed. The ~~day~~<sup>evening</sup> of Henry's concert for  
the Composers Society - We came out of the  
hall - and it was softly powdering the streets  
and sidewalks and automobiles and roof-  
tops. What a lovely sensation it is - The side-  
walks are soft satiny white carpets - How  
delicious when it settles lightly on your nose  
and coat - and with the soft radiance of the  
muted neon signs - the cold in the snow is  
wonderful - it makes you want to sing.

Yesterday it drizzled - and the streets were  
grey snow and yellow snow and black  
snow - depending on the type of dirt or soot

2/ that happens to color it - The streets  
turn shiny in the wet and this is really  
naughty weather - The snow remains - and is  
still white in the Park, however - The pond  
is frozen over - and from our window we  
see a nice little piece - filled with skaters.

I have wonderful news. Something  
so fantastic you can hardly  
believe it! I wonder if I should write it  
as it is not completely settled. But  
I am so bursting with the secret -  
I must! This is a dead secret.

It begins with a tall - bald Belgian  
'celist. His name is Robert Maas - and he  
is one of the great 'celists of the world - having  
played for years & years with the Pro Arte  
quartette. These quartettes you know are  
made up of first grade European musicians  
20 years gone by all the great musicians  
automatically had quartettes. And they compete

with each other - somewhat like baseball leagues - And everybody knew who the individual members were - and compared the bowings of one violist with the technique of the other. There is a certain section of the musical world - The real connoisseurs to whom music means only chamber music - by quartettes.

Robt. Maas - is Monsieur Maas - He speaks French beautifully very mediocre English - has charm - had a terrible time in Belgium during the war (he's half Jewish) - just came to this country 2 months ago - And met a woman.

From here on. This sounds like a Fairy Tale. This woman's name is Mrs. Clark. An American - who speaks French - She is 69 - looks 59 - has bangs - straight black hair and glasses - and is Stone Deaf - She carries a little box - which looks like a head bag - This is delicately wired to her under the bangs. She is always in company with a Belgian Aristocrat named Mme. Belle de Lobel. And she worships Music. She met Robt. Maas - and asked him to

2/  
play for her one after noon. She inquired  
whether \$300 would be enough compensation.  
This was 2 months ago - Mr. Maas brought  
his cello and played half a dozen times  
but received no fee. One day Mrs. Clark  
asked him what <sup>were</sup> his plans in life - and  
Robt. spoke his heart - and said his dream  
was to have a really marvellous quartette.

"And why don't you go ahead and do  
so" - and Robt. explained that a really  
great quartette requires musicians who can  
be free from other jobs - to devote their  
lives to it - Mrs. Clark asked how much  
money that would take - and Robt. replied  
lightly that it would require a backing for  
at least 2 years - and perhaps \$5,000  
guarantee a year per musician.

Mrs. Clark left the room for a moment -  
and came back to ask him whether he would  
like his \$40,000 in cash - or by check.

!!!!

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Maas said he would like to wait - and find the perfect musicians - and then have a lawyer's agreement. Each time he came they talked about various musicians - and discussed this plan. One day Maas told about seeing the four quartette instruments owned by Paganini - a Stradivarius quartette - instruments which came out of vaults and private collections - valued at \$150,000 one hundred and fifty thousand dollars - Mrs. Clark bought them last week. This quartette, by this time you have guessed that Henri is to be the first violin - will be called then the Paganini quartette (four Stradivarius instruments - and a 5 thousand dollars a year guarantee for each member! Mrs. Clark turns out to be Mrs. William A. Clark, wife of The "Copper King".

For Henri it is a dream come true. Now the only thing is the absence of a second violin - a Belgium violist is coming

from abroad - should be here by May -  
he is still having visa trouble. And in  
May the whole thing is to jell.

God - but life is really stranger than  
fiction. Suddenly our lives revolve  
around a Mrs. Clark - we are going to  
private musicales - of Maas - playing for  
Park Avenue dowagers - We leave  
several times a week - in tuxedo - and I  
in my evening dress - and we return in  
Mrs. Clark's limousine - with a maid  
lap robe!

I will not return early in February.  
There is too much in the air here for Henri.  
This is the center of the world. There are too  
many potential opportunities for him to miss  
and not try to develop - We have the  
promise of an apartment of a touring  
musician - and I think we will move  
there on February 1<sup>st</sup>

How I wish that I could just drop into the Cowden living room for a week - and see you and talk to Jimmy - Writing is such a bore - and never does give a true clear picture.

The news about the washing machine is swell. That's a great step forward!

I will go to see about Jim's package at the post office today - It was insured - maybe they can trace it.

I haven't worn my Chinese coat yet - but will know every body for a loop one of these days - I'm glad I bought those expensive long lace gloves - They look equally well with my short black dress - and evening dress - Really complete my outfit.

You know - this is a funny thing to say - but I owe you so much Mama! I'm so glad that I know how to say "please" and thank "you" to the Park Avenue dowagers and that my English isn't too seedy. In short, that I possess some breeding - and all credit to you! What an asset it is to have poise. How much I have yet to learn! (You ought to see this Belgian aristocrat

8/

I forgot to say Maas -  
didn't receive his \$300 - but  
when he got home on Christmas Day  
and opened a box of records he received  
from Mrs. Clark - he found a  
check for \$2,000.



[[Wendy Gonaver 12/12/19]]

[[Henri Temianka papers, Correspondence, Emmy Temianka, Box 12, folder 10, letter 09]]

January 22, 1946—

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