

What critics said about

Maud Powell, Pioneer American Violinist

The Definitive Biography
by Karen A. Shaffer and Neva Greenwood

"... a masterpiece of scholarship but also a very readable book.... A very warm, vibrant personality comes out of these pages."

Joseph McLellan, *Washington Post* critic, on WETA-FM

"Violinists come and go, to be succeeded by others just as good, or just as forgettable; Maud Powell is certainly one the few who holds a secure place in history. She succeeded in popularising the violin, so long the possession of a few European countries, within a vast new audience. A hundred years after her time she has inspired a remarkable book....

In an era when men dominated the demanding role of violin virtuoso and when travelling facilities were far from easy, a woman was expected to conform to tradition and take the line of least resistance. Maud Powell elected to devote herself to spreading her love of the violin across a whole continent. Her hopes have been more than fulfilled today in an age when the violin is played and listened to throughout the world.

In turn she herself has been well served by this very able biography, a meticulous memoir of the life and times of a loyal and truly gallant woman."

Robert Lewin, *The Strad*

"Original research and an attention to the social, political and artistic complexities of the late nineteenth century make this more than an overview of a violin virtuoso's career and influences. As a history of classical music transitions, it's a compelling link between two centuries; as a biography it paints a detailed portrait of a feminist ahead of her time."

The Bookwatch

"The memory of Maud Powell certainly deserves the careful, hardworking documentation this book provides.... Judging from interviews and her own occasional writings -- all quoted copiously in this new biography -- she was a tough, smart woman who never stopped being a lady."

Bernard Holland, *New York Times*

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"[Maud Powell, Pioneer American Violinist](#) sheds much-needed light on the classical music scene in America from the turn-of-the-century through World War I. To understand the development of America's cultural mind-set at a time of social and technological advances such as the gramophone (about which there is a brief, but fascinating, chapter) is to begin to understand American music and the tradition of performance in America. Making the acquaintance of Maud Powell is an important step in that process...."

Allison A. Alcorn, *American Musical Instrument Society Newsletter*

"Thanks to [this work], we can now be made aware of the true stature of this world class performer and the significance of her contributions...."

**N. Laurence Burkhalter, Professor of Music and Member of
The Ames Quartet, Iowa State University**

"Karen A. Shaffer has lovingly assembled a detailed and extensive memoir which leaves no doubt that her subject was a superb musician, a powerful personality and worthy of a foremost place in our national musical chronicles.... Karen Shaffer has not only compiled a biographical outline of Powell's life, but she has amassed an extensive compendium of notes, recording data, concert schedules, photographs and bibliography which will constitute a gold mine for students and biographers. Her book will rehabilitate a great American artist."

The Hon. John S. Monagan, *Cosmos Club Bulletin*

"Violin fans and cultural historians alike will benefit from this biography of Maud Powell (1867-1920), the first American-born concert violinist of international repute.... Indeed, the story of Maud Powell is nothing less than that of the introduction of serious concert music to vast sections of this country.... Powell's was a reputation worth preserving and polishing, and this book is a noble effort in that regard."

David K. Nelson, *Fanfare*

"I heartily recommend this Powell biography to my readers, women and men alike!"

Henry Roth, *B'nai B'rith Messenger*

“I plan to use your publication as an example in my History of Music Education doctoral seminar as an example of music education research for the practitioner.”

Robert Gillespie, Ph.D., Professor of Music, Ohio State University

“I use the recordings of Maud Powell in my pedagogy class. My wife, who is a singer, thinks that any aspiring woman musician should read the Powell biography. I admire...the [Society], and the several projects you’ve completed. I wonder if I could ask you basically how you did it all?”

David Dalton, Primrose International Viola Archive

“I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the book, *Maud Powell, Pioneer American Violinist*. Congratulations on what had to be an incredible amount of work. . . . Once I started the book I did not want to put it down. Such an amazing woman. I think your book should be required reading for every violin major in college and especially for women. . . . I taught violin for 45 years in Aurora [IL]. . . .”

Stan Smith, violin teacher

Reviews

Maud Powell, Pioneer American Violinist

by Karen A. Shaffer and Neva Garner Greenwood

Iowa State University Press/The Maud Powell Foundation, 1988

Reviewed by:

Bernard Holland, *New York Times Sunday Arts Section*, page one, April 17, 1988

Robert Lewin, *The Strad*, November 1988

Deseret News, Salt Lake City, April 17, 1988

Cleveland Plain Dealer, June 5, 1988

American Musical Instrument Society Newsletter, February 1989

Ovation, September, 1988

The Bookwatch, June 1988

The Tidings, Los Angeles, June 3 and 10, 1988

B'nai B'rith Messenger, June 3, 1988

The Triangle, Mu Phi Epsilon

LaSalle News Tribune, LaSalle, Illinois, March 14, 1988

Cosmos Club Bulletin, Washington, DC, June 1988

Washington Bach Consort Newsletter, Washington, DC, Spring 1988

Ninnau, July 1, 1988

Joseph McLellan, WETA-FM 91, Washington, D.C. Public Radio, August 30, 1988

David K. Nelson, *Fanfare*, November/December 1989

Joseph McLellan, *The Washington Post*, August 26, 1990

John Swan, *Assn. of Recorded Sound Collectors Journal*, Fall 1992

The Art of Maud Powell MPF-1, MPF-2, MPF-3

3-CD set of Maud Powell's recordings

The Maud Powell Foundation, 1989

Reviewed by:

Tim Page, *Newsday*, New York, October 1, 1989

David K. Nelson, *Fanfare*, November/December 1989

Tim Page, *Classical*, January 1990

Will Crutchfield, *New York Times*, March 25, 1990

Tully Potter, *The Strad*, April 1990

Joseph McLellan, *The Washington Post*, August 26, 1990

Jim Svejda, "The Record Shelf," KUSC Los Angeles, 1991

John Swan, *ARSC Journal*, Fall 1992