

Rosenthal letter to Paul Howard 22/6/40

My dear Paul,

*Petimeter* ↓  
Your delightful letter and enclosure was most welcome. My wife is very angry with me (and rightly) because I have not yet thanked you as I do now for your splendid letter on my behalf to Fischer. I do hope they'll take the work. What a reputation you have! I thought mine was fairly big but you fade me out completely. If we ever meet (which God grant) I shall insist on hearing the Godowsky sonata. I have never yet heard it played in its entirety. Fragments from the master himself – some of the middle part by his hands hastily – and a few pages from Pachmann, who had not the patience to work it all through. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Impromptu is beautiful. But I would hardly add it to my list. I am rather prejudiced against this ~~form~~ form which Grieg used in nearly all his light pieces. I mean the third section, an exact replica of the first. When Godowsky used this form he always revised the third part with some exquisite fifth contrapuntal changes – or something or other – lovely. Appropos of the Dale sonata. Just about the time Dale was with you my wife went in for her L. A.B. exam. She was examined by Dale himself at his house. And played the variations from his Sonata. She passed with flying colors and Dale played most of the work to her after the exam. She never plays now. Trust me, my dear friend, over this work. Get it if you possibly can. You will be amazed.

Now I want to talk about that Godowsky Mss which I sent you. It has twice been suggested by musicians that this Mss is too perfect to be an original and is probably the work of a copyist. If this idea has occurred to you please disabuse your mind of it. This Mss was completed in my flat and in my presence. And I remember the occasion as if it were yesterday. It was on one of those evenings which the maestro had invited me to spend with him. He was to call for me at my flat at 7 pm but he arrived at 6:30 instead as he wanted to finish off the Mss. He put in 3 or 4 bars and nearly all the fingering and then handed it to me. I remember this evening (one of hundreds we spent together) for several reasons.

Some idiot had advised him to try a Greek restaurant in Soho and we were both nearly poisoned. After the first course (which I remember consisted of cold herring smeared with strawberry jam!) he said in his gentle voice, "Not so pleasant, eh?" My reply which seemed to amuse him and which he was always quoting, was "As far as I am concerned the only question is how soon I am going to be sick." We finished up at the Piccadilly Grill.

Now the reason for all this is as follows:

You have done and are doing more than anyone living for the memory of this beloved genius, and I feel that you should possess this little Mss.

Please accept it with my love.

*your friend,*