

FAIRBANKS, LORENA

Organist of the Queen Theatre in Dallas, Texas, in the 1920's.

F

FALK, LOUIS (Dr.)

Organist at McVickers Theatre in Chicago, Illinois in 1912.

GEIBEL
FALCONER

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*Solo Organist*  
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AT THE
GERMANTOWN
THEATRE

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

1928

GEIBEL FALCONER

One of the very youngest solo-organists is doing remarkably well at the Germantown Theatre where he has been for four years. Geibel Falconer has a brilliant future which his very fine personality will help him attain. He broadcasts over WIP and is very well liked by his listeners and patrons.

Pa. 1928

FARLEY, RUTH GORMAN

Organist of the Capitol Theatre in the late 1920's, broadcast over Radio Stations WGN and WLIB in Chicago, Illinois. In 1931 organist of the Norshore Theatre in Chicago.

In Jacobs Orchestra Monthly for November 1926, we read, "The solo organist at Chicago's mammoth deluxe south side house, the Capitol, is one exception to the general domination of the sterner and homelier sex. In fact with Mrs. Jesse Crawford, she holds the distinction of being one of the very few lady organists holding top positions in deluxe theatres, and Ruth Farley can really play the organ.

"The theatre work does not entirely engross her time. She is broadcasting over WGN and WLIB to countless thousands of admirers in her spare time. She is adding to her technical equipment by study with her maestro, Ambrose Larsen."

FARMER, RUTH

Organist in the Washington, D. C. area in the 1920s. Organist of York Church in 1925. Organist of the Tacoma Park Theatre in Washington, D. C. in 1926 and for several years thereafter.

FARNEY, GUS (FRANCIS)

See pp. _____ to _____.

January 23, 1932



"GUSS" FARNEY (Salt Lake City Capitol) offered an organ novelty last week which was a direct plug for a coming attraction. He presented it in such a clever and interesting manner that the usual "curse" of plugging features just wasn't there.

Farney took the audience on a musical airplane trip to the film studios, where they meet and sing to a few of the film celebrities, whose faces appear on the screen. Scenes from the film are placed upon the screen as audience sings and it is concluded by a shot of Wallace Beery playing the piano, while Farney accompanies him at the organ. Farney, orally, tells the audience that they must return to the theatre, and takes them back via air (with a film of a plane as background) as they sing a final chorus of a popular tune. The added effects and Farney's showmanly handling of this solo brought good applause and was a great plug for the feature picture.

FARR, EMILY

Organist of the Broadway Theatre in Tacoma, Washington in 1928.

FARREN, MAC

**Organist of the Covent Garden Theatre in Chicago, Illinois
in 1920.**

FAWCETT, WALTER

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Received his musical education from Dr. C. N. Boyd and other competent musicians in the concert and church field. He was organist for the shoral societies of Pittsburgh and served as organist of one of the large Pittsburgh area churches. It was said that he rejected the offer of a professorship in a well known conservatory in order to continue as a theatre organist which was his first love.

FAY, ARTHUR

Theatre organist in the Chicago area, active in the Chicago Society of Theatre Organists.

FAY, ROMELLE

Theatre organist in the Chicago area, active in the Chicago Society of Theatre Organists. Did considerable theatre work in the 1920's and appeared on Radio Station WBBm, Chicago.

FEIBEL, FRED

See pp. _____ to _____.

Diapason, Aug. 1989

◀ Nunc Dimittis

years with the Andover Organ Company of Lawrence, MA. He was instrumental in arranging for a restored theatre organ for the newly renovated Town Hall Auditorium in Andover and creating the design for its installation. He was a collector of reed organs and harmoniums and maintained an extensive collection of Baroque wind instruments. In keeping with his interest in Victorian and Edwardian music, Miller collected and catalogued an extensive library of out-of-print music, primarily organ works, but also including choral and piano literature.

William L. Fearnley died April 29 at the age of 84.

Mr. Fearnley began his music career in silent movie theatres in Meriden, CT at the age of 16. In 1921 he graduated from Meriden High School and started a full-time job as pianist at the Poli Theatre, Meriden. In 1925 he began playing theatre organ at the Community Theatre, Meriden, remaining there for several years. It was at this time, after graduating from the Hartford Conservatory of Music, that Fearnley began organ study with Henry Jepson at Yale University.

In 1927 Fearnley was employed as pianist-organist at the Strand Theatre and later at the State Theatre, both in Hartford. During the Depression years, he played with ships' orchestras on European and South American liners, at the Stock Exchange Glee Club, the Allerton Hotels, New York, and the Half Moon Hotel, Coney Island. In 1935 he joined the Meyer Davis organization.

Fearnley started a quarter-century career as organist and pianist at The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, WV in 1954. He retired from that position in 1979, and continued to play private engagements until a short time before his death. His musical interests also included a life-long study of classical

orchestration, four-hand piano literature, and the preservation of historic pianos and organs.

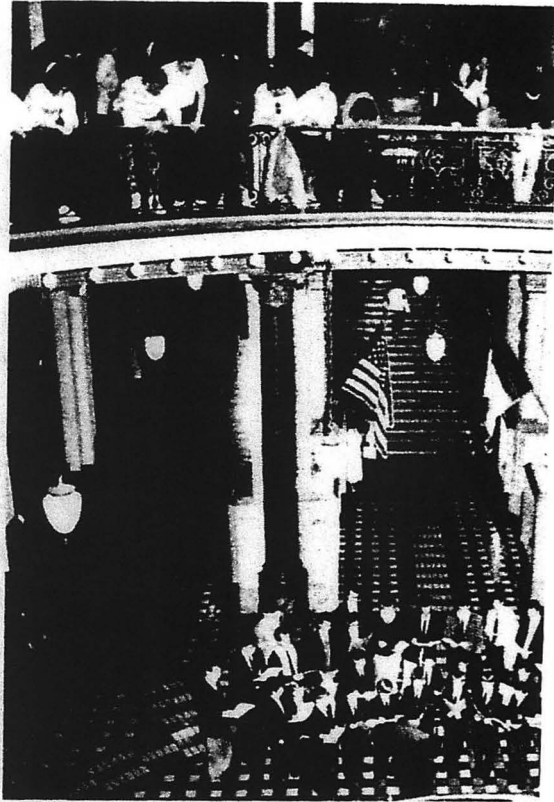
As this issue went to press, THE DIAPASON received word of the death of Keith Chapman, organist of the John Wanamaker Store, Philadelphia. Chapman was killed June 29 in a plane crash in the southwestern Colorado mountains. More information will be forthcoming.

Here & There

The Allen Organ Company has announced the world's largest digital musical instrument. The new five-manual installation will be in Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta, GA, and consists of 123 stops in eight divisions. The audio system includes over 70 amplifiers and 150 speaker cabinets.

Lillenas Publishing Company announces the release of a major new songbook especially for teens, *Dare to Run*. It features 51 contemporary songs, most made popular by leading artists, arranged especially for group singing. Available products include: songbook; words-only edition; stereo listening cassette; split-channel cassette; stereo accompaniment cassette.

Youth leaders are invited to request their free *Dare to Run* Youth Workers Kit, which provides complete descriptive information, an excerpt cassette, and money-saving coupons toward purchase of the cassettes. Lillenas, Box 419527, Kansas City, MO 64141.



The Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford University concert in the rotunda of the Iowa Statehouse in Des Moines on a national tour. The choir had just been introduced to Des Moines natives and later was entertained at the Governor's residence by Mrs. Terry Branstad who served the choir an elaborate dinner. The choir was also featured on National Public Radio and the American Public Radio in performance during the tour, and the choir was recorded by Artists and records for Nimbus Records. Plans are being made for an early performance in Des Moines in the spring of 1992.

New Recordings

Haig Mardirosian (on the Klais organ of St. Eligius, Völklingen). Franz Liszt: *Choralfantasie und Fuge "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam"*, Dante. Mitra 16182. Available from Mitra Schallplatten, Kurfürstenstrasse 65, D-5300 Bonn 1, West Germany. No price given.

The ways of the recording industry are sometimes hard to understand. The well-known American organist Haig Mardirosian travelled to a near-suburb of Saarbrücken to record this repertory. Let it be said at once that the playing is first-rate and the recording and record surfaces excellent.

Mardirosian's account of "Ad nos" seems to me a little lacking in the drive that is needed to impose a convincing unity on this famous work. Other interpretations, of which there are many, provide heavy competition here. The introduction, fugue, and magnificent finale from Liszt's much-used "Dante" music are something of a novelty. The organ version comes from the reworking for two pianos—Liszt added a flourish for full organ to replace the quiet closing

of the motion. This ultimately tures the well and record side. The Völ extraordinary identification, c War II. It with a full couplers. Twenty of pitch! The little trace gung" of some very recording, times too "Ad nos". The early suffers m produces. The fin the main. A Babe Church, and direc Singers, I Available Anglican

The University of Michigan School of Music

29th Annual

Conference on Organ Music

October 8-11, 1989

Performances, Lectures and Workshops

Guest Faculty:

- Pamela Decker
Marsha Foxgrover
Gerard Gillen (Ireland)
John Gouwens
Naji Hakim (France)

Margo Halsted, University Carillonneur

- Ann Labounsky
Allan Mahnke

FERINGER, FREDERICK C.

Organist prior to 1921 of the Alaska (later the Strand) Theatre, 1114
2nd Avenue, Seattle, Washington (E. M. Skinner pipe organ, 3 manual/23 ranks).

FERRARI, LARRY

Born in Boston, Massachusetts. He received some basic piano training at parochial school. While serving as an altar boy of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Boston, Massachusetts, he first had the opportunity to play the organ--an old tracker in the smaller downstairs sanctuary. Eventually, Ferrari worked out an arrangement with the regular organist / ^{on the} 3 manual/60 rank organ in the main church. He acted as substitute organist in exchange for free lessons, since the regular organist was engaged in defense work and sometimes did not make it to church on time. At age 14 he began studying with Doris Tirell, who had been a theatre organist in the Boston area, and by that time was staff organist at the CBS affiliate in Boston WEEI--a position that had previously been held by Lloyd Del Castillo.

FERRARI, LARRY

2.

By the age of 16 Ferrari was being heard regularly at the Paragon Park Roller Rink, Nantasket Beach. At 18 years of age upon graduation from high school, Ferrari began a two year engagement at Cains--a popular seafood restaurant and lounge just outside of Boston.

At the beginning of the Korean War, Ferrari went to Fort Dix, New Jersey, where his talents came to the attention of Special Services. He was one of five performers chosen to represent the United States Army on a show entitled "Fort Dix Presents," aired over Philadelphia's WFIL (since changed to WPVI--Channel 6). Jack Steck, program manager of the station recognized the talents of this young man and hired him. Ferrari is now musical director for Channel 6, and has been with the station for over 20 years. In addition to his own weekly Sunday show he also appears on "Captain Noah," and the popular "Dialing For Dollars."

Throughout the more than 20 years that Ferrari has been known in the Philadelphia area he has appeared at sports events, horse shows, fashion shows, automobile shows, and business promotion events. He has played many concerts at churches, high schools and theatres, including the Tower Theatre in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, the Lansdowne Theatre in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, and the Senate Theatre in Detroit.

He appeared with Lawrence Welk for a two week period on the west coast in 1957. He has made 13 recordings, including those on the 3 manual/8 rank Kimball organ at the Lansdowne Theatre in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, and 2 albums on the Fisher Theatre Wurlitzer in Detroit's Senate Theatre. He has appeared at more than one American Theatre Organ Society Convention.

FERRIS, H. C.

Organist of the Pantages Theatre in Portland, Oregon in 1926.

FILOSA, MRS.

Organist of Loew's New Rochelle Theatre in New York City in 1927.

Some Suggestions on the Organ Scrim Type of Presentation

By CLARK FIERS

Organist, Comerford's West Side Theatre, Scranton, Pa.

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CAN scrim presentations are very new and novel, and a welcome relief to the ordinary song slide solo. I am sure our audience appreciated this type of thing, and it was quite a lot of fun watching them out, although it was long and tiresome at times. However, there are many pitfalls to be sure and avoid in putting on a scrim solo. First—it is best to get a thorough knowledge of the art and of lighting effects. Practically all the artistic and beautiful effects obtainable are made possible by the artistic lighting, more so than settings or costumes.

The scrim itself is a tricky piece of goods, transparent in quality and giving the setting place in back of it a hazy instant touch. When light is thrown on the front of the scrim, anything in back of it becomes invisible.

* * *

Necessary equipment is also very important. Nothing is so hard to achieve as when you have no materials to work with. There should be at least three or four pin spots, and if you plan an elaborate presentation, even more. Then, the scrim should have a dark backing made of a material like sateen, and either a navy blue or black, preferably the latter. The backing should be as large as the scrim itself and hung on the same baton as the scrim—get it just as close to the scrim as possible. It would be a clever idea to get this backing made in the form of a two-piece tab with openings on either side and strings to these openings so that they may be pulled apart at will,

to reveal a person or setting placed behind.

The spots are best when fastened high, on the batons in the flies if you can, because an overhead spot is more effective than one on the level with the subject. If any light from the spot should hit the scrim, the very illusion you wished to



CLARK FIERS, organist at Comerford's West Side theatre, Scranton, Pa.

create would be lost. Hence, pin spots, with a sharp direct ray are by far the best for this sort of thing. If it is found you cannot place your spots overhead, then shoot them from the side, but be sure that you have them as high up as you can. The subject should be at least three feet away from the scrim and thus avoids danger of getting any light on the scrim itself. We did not have enough wire to put our spots overhead, so we extended the flood lights on either side of the stage and put our spots on these. The effect was very good.

* * *

Colors, used in lighting scrim solos mean almost everything. Poor taste in coloring your stage picture will hinder a lot. A very deep shade of blue gelatin, about No. 31, makes an ideal 'body color,' when used with auxiliary colors such as pink, magenta, red, light and dark amber.

In case a backing is not procurable, the next best suggestion would be to have the regular screen placed in front of the scrim and throwing the slides on this. We found by experiment that the scrim absorbed so much of the light that if slides were thrown on it without a backing they were badly distorted as well as the fact that they pierced right through and went as far as the back wall. In this arrangement, after the slides have been run through, have the outer curtains drawn and the screen raised, and the presentation all set, then quick—Curtains open.

FIRESTONE, IRMA (MRS.)

Theatre organist in the Chicago, Illinois area in 1918.

FISHER, DOUG

Filed in special "Sacred music" category after "Z"

Organist who specializes playing sacred music on the theatre pipe organ. Fisher has done countless arranging and accompanying of religious artists on a variety of record labels. He has recorded some organ solos on the WGN Studio Wurlitzer-Kimball in Chicago, Illinois in the 1940's. Among those outstanding religious artists whom Doug Fisher has accompanied and with whom he has recorded would be George Beverly Shea, vocalist with the Billy Graham Crusades.

Fisher has done arranging and composing of sacred music in addition to his organ work.

FISHER, GRACE

Organist of the Belvedere Theatre in Cumberland, Maryland in July of 1926; organist of the Cumberland Theatre in Cumberland, Maryland in June of 1927.

FISHER, LARRY JEAN

Organist of the Strand Theatre in Muncie, Indiana in 1925. Organist of the East Ninth Street Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio in 1927, from which he broadcast over Radio Station WJAY in Cleveland. In early 1928 he moved to the Moreland Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio.

FITCH, EDMUND C.

Organist of the Roosevelt Theatre in Chicago, Illinois in 1921. In early 1924 he became organist of the Stratford Theatre in Chicago. He began broadcasting over Radio Station WTAS in Chicago. In 1926 he became organist of the Colony Theatre in Chicago. On February 12, 1927 he opened the Sheridan Theatre, playing a Wurlitzer. 1930 found Fitch as featured organist of the Regent Theatre in Melbourne, Australia.

FITZGERALD, FLORENCE (Miss)

Organist of Loew's Astoria Theatre in New York City in 1927.

FITZGIBBON, DAVID

House organist for the RKO Boston Theatre (Wurlitzer).

FITZPATRICK, MILDRED (Maginn)

Born in Chicago. Fitzpatrick's family ran the Ashland Theatre, a nickelodeon with vaudeville at Ashland and 49th Street in Chicago. Her mother played the piano while her father managed the theatre and other family members helped out with the rest of the necessary work. When Fitzpatrick became old enough she played relief shift for her mother on Saturday and Sunday. She was eight years of age. It was her mother who gave her her first music instruction, but when Fitzpatrick was eleven she was taken by her mother to Ernest Fristrom at the Metropolitan Conservatory of Music in Chicago for an audition. She took organ lessons from him at a little church where he played on Sundays. Her first professional position was at the Verdi Theatre at 35th Street and Archer Avenue in Chicago. She

FITZPATRICK, MILDRED (Maginn)

2.

played piano to accompany the vaudeville acts here. A year later she became organist of the Pastime Theatre on West Madison Street in the Loop area of Chicago and also doubled on piano for vaudeville (2 manual Kimball pipe organ). She began taking lessons at Chicago Musical College where she studied under such teachers as Carl Reckze and Edward Collins. She was graduated from there and continued to study piano at the American Conservatory. After Fitzpatrick had been organist of the Pastime Theatre for a year, she was hired as organist of the Boston Theatre in Chicago (2 manual Kimball pipe organ). She continued to double at the piano from time to time. She moved on to the position of organist at the Terrace Garden Hotel which was nearby (3 manual/19 rank Hope-Jones Wurlitzer).

FITZPATRICK, MILDRED (Maginn)

3.

During the summers she played some special programs at Chicago's Orchestra Hall, where previews of movies were shown by a New York firm using a 40 piece orchestra. The organ was also used with the orchestra for the overtures. The organ also accompanied most of the feature film and all comedies and short subjects. In 1920, Fitzpatrick was engaged at the Ritz Theatre playing a Kilgen organ. She then went to work for Lubiner and Trinz which owned several of the largest theatres in Chicago. There she played at the Pantheon Theatre and opened the Senate Theatre in Chicago in 1921. After a few weeks at the Senate, she went back to the Pantheon Theatre where she remained for five years (3 manual Kimball pipe organ). One of Fitzpatrick's student's during these years was organist Irma Glen.

FITZPATRICK, MILDRED (Maginn)

4.

Fitzpatrick moved on to the Balaban and Katz chain to open their new Riviera Theatre (3 manual Barton pipe organ). Then to the Piccadilly Theatre (4 manual/19 rank Kilgen pipe organ). The theatre opened Christmas 1926. Actually the theatre opened January 23, 1927. Fitzpatrick played on radio beginning in 1926 on Radio Station WGN. She accompanied such programs as "Sam and Henry," which was later to become known as "Amos N' Andy," and "The Smith Family," which later was to be known as "Fibber McGee and Molly." She also broadcast over Radio Station WHT and WBEM. In 1928, Fitzpatrick began teaching at the Sherwood Music School, a position she was to hold until 1944. The School had three 4 manual and one 3 manual Moller pipe organs. In 1935, Fitzpatrick played the Marbro Theatre

FITZPATRICK, MILDRED (Maginn)

5.

in Chicago. She played requests on a morning broadcast for several years called the "Sunshine Hour," over Radio Station WENR, Chicago. She played piano on Radio Station WGES and Station WEDC. While playing the Marbro Theatre on Chicago's west side, she alternated at the Granada Theatre in Rogers Park on the north side. In 1935 she was introduced to the Hammond organ and went to the factory for two weeks to practice under the guidance of organist friend, Porter Heaps. She took a job playing the Hammond organ at Harding's Restaurant. When another friend organist, Dean Herrick left his job at the Bismarok Hotel for South America, she took that position, too, and remained there for five years, playing in the lobby for the cocktail hour, and alternating with the orchestra for dancing until

FITZPATRICK, MILDRED (Maginn)

6.

1:00 A.M. Fitzpatrick played the Hammond organ in the Chicago area from 1937 to 1943 when she began an engagement with the Chicago Ice Arena which had a 3 manual/18 rank Wurlitzer pipe organ. When the Ice Arena building was sold to CBS in 1954 the organ was no longer used. Fitzpatrick moved to Gobles, Michigan. She began taking private students at a studio in the Wurlitzer store. In September 1962 Fitzpatrick played a special program for the Detroit Theatre Organ Club. She has several compositions which have been published.

FITZPATRICK, WILLIAM

Organist of the Strand Theatre in Los Angeles, California in
1927.

FLAGEL, ARTHUR

Organist with Ruth Linn at the Park Theatre in Washington, D. C.
in 1925. In December 1925 he appeared in the Gaumont Palace Theatre
in Paris, France.

The following item was found in the April 1925 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd H. Klos:

ARTHUR FLAGEL

The new Earle Theater has one of the finest organs in the city of Washington; it is a three-manual Kimball, presided over by Arthur Flagel, an organist of exceptional ability, who has always starred as feature organist. Mr. Flagel reviews his early work:

"I have been practically self-taught. In fact, I was pianist of a headline act on big-time for two seasons, and held a position as organist of a resident picture theater before I had either a piano or organ lesson. However, I do not advocate self-instruction to too great an extent, as one can naturally make so much more rapid progress under the guidance of a good teacher. But whether you have or have not had instruction, you can find your mistakes and correct them. There is the danger in self-instruction of doing a thing wrong, and when the time comes to correct it, the error is too deeply embedded in the mind. Organists, even though doing practical work, should practice each day, if for no other reason than to 'keep fit'. Some feel that they put in so much time playing that practice would be useless, but everyone is bound to run up against certain figures and passages which need slow working out to be played correctly."

Mr. Flagel practices three hours every day, one on piano and two on organ. He is one of the few theater organists playing pedals

with both feet, and his audiences have opportunity to observe his rapid pedal work in the theater as the console is conspicuously placed and an attractive lighting effect arranged.

Questioned about his idea of studying pedals, he says:

"Nearly every organist could profit by 15 minutes^{of} daily practice on pedals alone. And the majority of picture organists today could use this 15 minutes learning to play with both feet. Just because they feel that pedaling with the left foot alone will do, they never take it upon themselves to learn to use both feet. But, after learning, they will all agree that it makes a vast difference and is an absolute necessity in playing legitimate organ compositions.

"Carelessness," declares Mr. Flagel, "spoils many organists. They neglect the little things which really are the finishing touches," and he calls attention to the use of the swell shades, saying: "Organists so often are neglectful of the matter of the expression pedal which operates the shutters. Generally, the expression is marked on the score, but if it is not, the player should use good judgement and not continually pump the shutters for no reason at all."

Mr. Flagel sets up a complete score for every picture, and has little faith in the improvising ability of the average organist. "Do not improvise unless you feel in the spirit of improvisation; it will not be fit to listen to. Even if the picture runs for two days, set up a program.

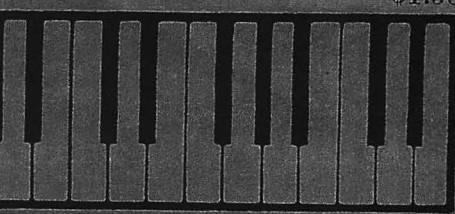
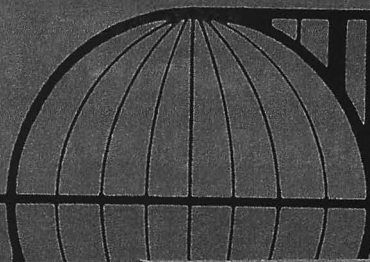
"The standard classics, which fit so well into a picture, and are always liked by the public, are neglected by the average organist. Sometimes, this is so because a suitable organ arrangement cannot be had, but he is not much of an organist who cannot adapt a piano solo. Many of the Chopin preludes can be used, and they are generally of such a nature as to be suitable for a solo on

one manual with the usual accompaniment. The fast movements of the Khulan and Clementi Sonatinas, which nearly every piano student has learned, make the best hurries which can be had. Some of the slower movements make fine numbers for neutral scenes. The pedal part can be easily adapted from the piano score."

Mr. Flagel's recitals are a daily feature of the program and are usually in the form of a novelty which appeals to the audience. The Storm, a most impressive composition written by him, is delightful as a recital number, and shows to good advantage the skill of this organist.

Before being engaged at the Earle, Mr. Flagel was featured as organist at both the Ambassador and the Tivoli, two of the largest houses on the Crandall Circuit. Recently, he had the signal honor to be appointed by the head of the United States Army Music School to demonstrate the Earle Theater organ to the students.

KEYBOARD



Weldon Flanagan From The

Weldon Flanagan will perform only on today. It wasn't always that way. For more he played a theatre organ at the Palace Theatre in Texas. He grew accustomed to the full, rich sound of a real theatre organ and, after retiring from playing in 1970, did not plan on performing in public. Not until he was introduced to the RIALTO II in 1975. Once again he found the perfect instrument to match his playing abilities and temperament.

As a professional organist, he now tours America performing at conventions for music merchants and amateur organists. No style of piece is too difficult for the organist, but he particularly delights in playing Jesse Crawford arrangements.

Perfection on the organ doesn't come easily. It took years of practice and playing to achieve the level of accomplishment of Weldon Flanagan. He started at the age of 12



ABOUT THE COVER

Weldon Flanagan is a devoted family man from Dallas, Texas, travelling as a Gulbransen Keyboard Artist. His quiet, easy-going style wins him many friends along the way. Weldon is in the process of publishing the original arrangements of Jesse Crawford.

There is a richness as well as a variety that used to be found only in genuine theatre organs. But nowadays you can find this kind of excitement in the Gulbransens. It's not just the volume and variety. I have to add, it is the quality of the sound."

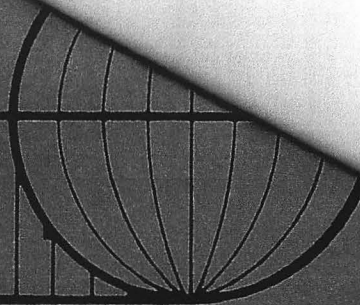
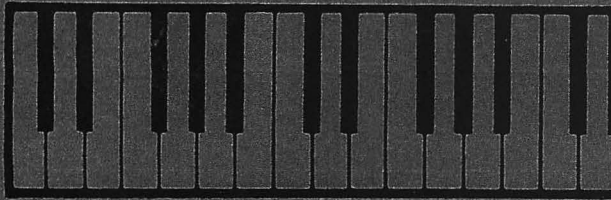
When not travelling for a Gulbransen concert, Weldon lives in Plano, Texas, with his wife, two children, and two Gulbransen organs. □

Weldon Flanagan

Maggie Award Finalist -
Best Instructional
Magazine

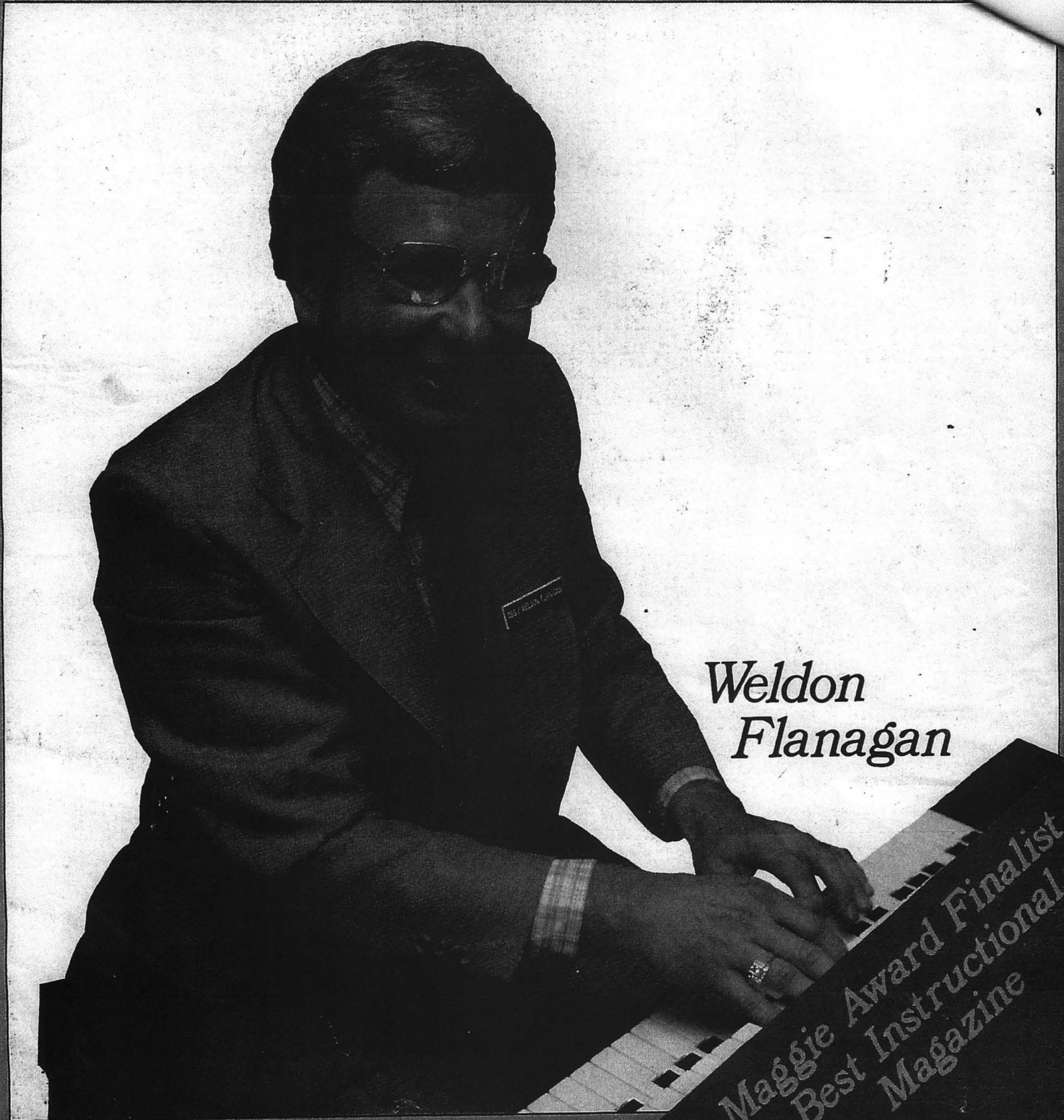


KEYBOARD



WORLD

Volume 7, Number 6



*Weldon
Flanagan*

*Maggie Award Finalist -
Best Instructional
Magazine*

FLANAGAN, WELDON

Organist of the Palace Theatre in Dallas, Texas from 1946 to 1952, occasionally, and from 1952 to 1970.

FLANAGAN, WELDON, JR.

Born Dallas, Texas, May 1, 1934. He began his musical training at Whittles in Dallas around 1944. He studied under Dora Poteet Barclay at Southern Methodist University. He played the Dallas Palace Theatre from 1952 until the theatre closed. He played there occasionally in the years from 1946 to 1952. He taught organ and has worked as a salesperson selling Hammond and Allen organs at Whittles in Dallas, Texas.

FLANDORF, WALTER

Born in Berlin, Germany, February 7, 1893. Parents, Bianca Simonetti and Wilhelm Flandorf. Received his education at Berlinisches Gymnasium Zum Grauen Kloster, Berlin. Married Vera Alexandra Sangernebo. Began his professional theatre organ career in 1914 in the United States. During his professional years he also served as orchestra conductor.

Organist of the Circle and Indiana Theatres, Indianapolis, in the 1920's and early 1930's.

FLATH, P. HANS

A well known midwest organist, who presided at the console for the opening of the Kansas City Uptown Theatre, Kansas City, Kansas which opened January 1928. This theatre was a John Eberson House with atmospheric design.

SIGHT OF SOUND

Once Fine Morton Is Now A Basket Case

by Don Keilhack

Yes, I'm afraid it's finally bitten the dust, or almost, anyway—the KMBC (Kansas City) three-manual Robert-Morton, on which the great P. Hans Flath played a nightly program for years (and also many daytime shows) is a basket case.

When the station moved out of the Pickwick Hotel in downtown Kansas City in 1951, the organ was put in storage and never played again. (The station moved into the big building, with auditorium, which now houses KMBC TV, from which the now-famous anchorwoman, Chris Craft was fired, resulting in the current sex-discrimination lawsuit.)

When John Gilbert, staff organist at the time, heard the organ was to be sent to the dump, he "offered" to take it off the station's hands, and they agreed. He finally got it hauled to his home and packed away in the garage. There it remained through extremes of heat and cold, dampness and dryness, until Thanksgiving 1976, when it was moved to San Diego, California.

I had kept in touch with Gilbert over the years about the organ, having a special interest in it, which I'll explain shortly. John never did anything with the organ, but didn't want to sell it. Then, in '76, I happened to mention to Wayne Gilbert in San Diego (no Relation to John in Kansas City), when we were listening to a tape of Flath playing the Morton, that it was still in storage.

Something sparked his interest and he called John, who agreed to sell the organ to him. Wayne sent Marty Stuhler and Ray Krebs (fellow San Diego organ buffs) in a rented truck to K.C. In no time they had the monster loaded and headed back to San Diego. Wayne put it in commercial storage and I went to see it—for old time's sake. HORRORS! We all know what these organs can look like after lying around in storage for so long, but I remembered how it looked and sounded in the studio. Now it was a DISTASTER! The console looked a wreck—keys all curled up like somebody had taken a torch to them, the pedals wrecked, panels falling off, etc.

Landon Organ Is 'Taking Shape'

Another Lexington organ, the 3/7 Page Dr. John Landon is installing in his residence, is gradually taking shape. "We still haven't sold my three-manual Wurlitzer console which must be moved out before we can bring in the Page console," he reported. "I hope to get the project into high gear as soon as Christmas is over. Meanwhile I've been playing Christmas carols on the Pilcher classic I have installed. It's not very "mighty" but it has real pipes, and a nice sound," he added.

The chests, pipes, and everything else looked like they'd been through the Blitzkrieg for sure.

Wayne kept the organ in storage for a number of years, and not too long ago made some type of arrangement with San Diego Chapter ATOS. They've got what's left of it in storage in a school in suburban Spring Valley, all mixed up with parts from other organs. Wayne kept some of the instrument, and Ray Krebs got some of the Diaphones. The school wants it all out pronto, and the chapter has no immediate plans for it—except to try and sort out everything and see just what IS there.

P. Hans Flath would be shocked and saddened to see this. He told me that he and Arthur B. Church, Sr., founder of KMBC, went to Tulsa, Oklahoma to see about purchasing the organ for the station. It had been installed in the Wade Hamilton Studios there, according to Mr. Hamilton's specifications (see *The Console*, Sept. 1969, p. 14 for photo of it there), and had to be sold when the studio failed during Depression. So this is when KMBC got it, and Flath said

Reader Recalls Final Flath Show In K. C.

Columnist Don Keilhack's recent articles about Kansas City organists prompted Organ Buff Clark Welling, of Montrose, Missouri, to recall his association with P. Hans Flath and Mary Singleton.

"Through John Gilbert I was able to be in KMBC studio many times during Mr. Flath's organ programs. I have a 78rpm recording of his program on September 1, 1955 on a Hammond which was dedicated to John and his wife on the birth of a son who was just five hours old.

"Many yers ago I was active in the Hammond Organ Society in Kansas City. Mr. Flath worked for Jenkins Music Company, and during the Saturday preparation for a monthly meeting the next day, my mother took a lesson from him in his Jenkins studio. He was to be the featured organist the next day during the regular meeting.

"After his introduction he was seated at the console and commented that he had waited many times for the second hand on the clock to point straight up and receive the signal from his engineer to begin his theme.

"He made a gesture indicating the time, played three bars of his theme and fell from the organ bench, a victim of a fatal heart attack. I do not recall the date, but the scene is still vividly etched in my mind.

"I have known Marie Singleton since 1946 when I purchased my first Hammond and she has been a close friend

when it was ready to set up there, he and his wife personally cleaned each and every pipe and other parts. Flath, who was Music Director of the station, and had been a theatre orchestra conductor and brilliant organist from the very beginning (he was born in 1883), played the Morton through the years for so many programs, as well as his own nightly concerts, and it was heard as far away as Texas, due to some special transmitting stations. A photo of the console and its 'slave', and candid photo of Flath was published in *The Console*, Oct. 1968, P. 12.

As a kid in Kansas City, I hardly ever missed Flath's late night program, and finally got to know him and be in the studio for the broadcasts. He did let me play the organ, of course. I still remember the first time I heard it in the studio and was not prepared for the impact!

Over the air, and tempered through broadcast equipment, with highs cut down, and probably a little echo added, the effect was pleasing and mellow, although it could sound full and 'big'. But this was nothing like what I heard that first night in the studio. Flath talked to me until a minute before he went on the air, then climbed on the bench, looked in the mirror above the music rack for the cue from the control booth on the opposite end of the studio, and opened almost full-organ with his dra-

matic theme-BLAST—and I almost fell out of the chair!

Volume in that soundproof studio was almost deafening. The organ sounded totally different than over the air, and while it was thrilling in the studio, I think the overall effect was better after broadcasting equipment tamed it down, and took out some of the 'rawness'. There was a monitor booth outside you could sit in and see into the studio, but you heard the broadcast there through a big speaker system and as it sounded over the air. Many people preferred, apparently, to listen and watch from there. Flath's granddaughter has told me she was "scared to death" as a little girl when she was taken into the studio and that huge, loud organ was played by her grandpa.

Now you see why, with Flath's unmatched ability, and the Robert-Morton, and my exposure to this when growing up there, I am sorry to see the end of the line for "the dear old Organ," as Flath called it.

But who knows, maybe some of it will play again from its own console. I'll sure encourage ATOS here to treat it kindly and find, for what's left of it, a home.

Organist's Death Reported Late

Ann C. Reiling, 79, widely known Kansas City musician, died Friday, April 1, 1983, it has been learned belatedly. In 1928 she became organist at the New Center Theatre in Kansas City. After talking pictures silenced organs she played in musical groups over radio in Kansas City and Chicago. In 1950 she returned to Kansas City and became organist for the Blues baseball team.

In 1980 she once again accompanied silent films at the Jewish Community Center and also played another series sponsored by the Society of Cinephiles.

Organist Starts Service Business

Organist Bill Taber, of Brecksville, Ohio, has recently launched North Coast Organ Service in addition to his organ playing schedule. He already has several church contracts for maintenance and is doing all the Rodgers work for a local dealer.



Tom Wibbels

Theatre Organist

1984-1985

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See
11/10
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11/21/8

P. HANS FLATH - ORGANIST, CONDUCTOR & RADIO ARTIST

By

Lloyd E. Klos

In the first great era of the theatre pipe organ, there were a number of console masters who had an extensive background in the concert idiom. One was Dr. Melchiorre Mauro-Cottone who presided over the ~~Wagon~~ Estey in New York's Capitol Theatre for many years. Another was our subject, P. Hans Flath, who possessed a similar musical background, and was well known in the middle west, particularly in Wichita and Kansas City.

Much of the material on Mr Flath was generously supplied by ATOS member, Don Keillack, who knew the organist quite well, and actually performed with him in a public event as will be related later. The pictures were made available by Claude Dorsey, news director of KMBC in Kansas City. Our thanks go to both.

Peter Hans Flath was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1883, his parents and relatives having emigrated to the United States from Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany. Hans was in music at a very early age, studying violin, piano and organ, and conducting orchestras, beginning this stage of his career at 14. One for whom he conducted was the renowned composer, Victor Herbert.

When the big legitimate shows quit the road, Flath went into vaudeville. He toured the Schubert Circuit and worked with the famous

2
comedy team of Weber and Fields. Flath's first wife, Olive Vail, was an operetta singer whom he accompanied on the Orpheum Circuit.

The late Edith Steele of San Diego (last organist of the San Diego Fox' Robert Morton) told of her seeing Flath and Olive performing in theatres when Edith was young.

While appearing at the Princess Theatre in Wichita, L. M. Miller asked him if he'd leave the road and become musical director of the 1438-seat Palace Theatre (Austin organ), slated to open in January 1916. Flath agreed to take the position for only six months, but ~~he began to~~ like the idea of a permanent home so much that he staved, ~~and in~~ ^{UNTIL} 1922. ^{TO} ^{P.3} When the 1983-seat Miller Theatre (3/11 Wurlitzer) ^{THE HOUSE} opened ^{in Wichita,} he was engaged to form an orchestra. While there, he staged many wonderful presentations with the movies, as well as performing organ concerts.

~~From~~ While ~~at~~ at the Palace, ~~he~~ he produced a verse, entitled "The Wail of the Theatre Organist," which appeared in the August 1919 issue of Motion Picture News:

"I'm still on deck, like the Old Seafarer
Vamping in G for Theda Barer;
Or chasing the cactus all over the chart
On a four-legged critter with William S. Hart.
making the pipes go "fish-fush-fish"
For a bob and a wiggle of Dorothy Gish;
Sounds like a string bean, some folks say,
When I walk down the screen road with Charley Ray;
Then we pull off a stunt which would floor even Barnum,
A sweep of the arm, down go ten with Bill Farnum;
Still we have moments of pleasure and bliss
In the dainty scenes with the sweet Pickford miss;
And loads of others, in variety there's spice,

How I wonder that some actors get their price;
 I'm sure that if there's ever a Judgement Day
 Some of the stars will be made to pay;
 I'm only human, and it's sad but true,
 Some of the things I'm forced to do
 To put pictures over, the tones I must toss
 Are like crankin' a Ford or curryin' a hoss;
 With this mighty organ I can cue any stunt
 From a cootie's bite to an elephant's grunt;
 Though the bench gets harder and the varnish is gone,
 I'll do my durndest till the last reel's done,
 If only the blower will keep on going,
 and the mice stay away so the pipes keep on blowing,
 I'll stick with that phrase, with each picture doth blend

The words which are sweetest: this is

THE END!"

Handwritten signature: "Gordon P." with an arrow pointing to the right.

In 1927, Flath moved to Kansas City where he became production di-
 rector at the new \$3 million, 4,000-seat Midland Theatre (4-manual
 Robert Morton). Later, he went to the 2043-seat Uptown (3/13 Robert
 Morton) upon its opening, ^{AND} ~~where~~ where he began broadcasting
 organ programs over KMBC.

Handwritten note: "(are you sure - don't remember that he broadcast from Uptown, D.K.)"

When sound movies arrived, Flath left the theatre field and in
 1930 became musical director full-time at KMBC, a position he was
 to hold for 24 years. ~~There~~ He did daily and nightly broadcasts on
 the three-manual Robert Morton he and station owner Arthur P. Church
 had acquired from the Wade Hamilton studios in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Until 1951, when the station moved out of the Pickwick Hotel,
 Flath broadcast every week night at 11:05, following the network's
 "Capitol Cloakroom." He opened with vibraharp alone while the an-

Vertical handwritten note: "D.K. WHICH HE PLAYED OPENING NIGHTS FOR THE BIG EXTRAVAGANZA"

nouncer (Paul Taylor during the last few months prior to the move) read:

"In the stillness of the night, from nocturne's rendezvous, vibrant organ melodies--wing their way to you." Then the full-organ dramatic theme would start, and at the bridge Paul continued: "At the console of the KMBC organ, P. Hans Flath presents a program of organ melodies." Then up on the theme for the dramatic finish.

At the program's close, near 11:30, the theme again, and at the bridge: "From out of the night have come organ melodies, the music of P. Hans Flath at the console of the KMBC organ. This is Paul Taylor, speaking for Mr. Flath and bidding you all--good night."

Don Keilback has a transcription of the last broadcast and afterwards, Flath talks with Taylor about the "dear old organ's being moved," on the next day. It was put in storage and never heard again. Don says, "I feel lucky to have gotten the chance to play it and to have been in the studio many times during Flath's broadcasts. The organ ^{Became} ~~is now (1980)~~ the property of Wayne Gilbert ~~and~~ still in storage in San Diego. ^(now donated to the San Diego Chamber) ~~it has been~~ ^{A+OS} ^{D.K.}

"Flath would be saddened to see the Morton. If I had the place to restore it, I'd buy it. Nobody knows what became of the two-manual slave console. The instrument has ^{THAT} beautiful vibraharp which Flath used in the opening of his theme, ^{radio} ~~while Paul began reading~~ ~~the~~

Flath played many daytime programs, on the Morton and later used a Hammond in the new building at 10th and Central where KMBC-TV is located. He provided themes and background for such programs as "Memory Lane of Sports," "Of Health and Happiness," "The Campfire Girls," and "Remember When," during which he played a most fantastic

background (like one for a silent movie), while the announcer portrayed episodes in Flath's life.

Another duty Flath performed while at KMBC was to arrange and conduct symphony concerts which were heard and enjoyed in much of the midwestern area. When NBC broadcast the 97-member Kansas City Philharmonic during the 1934-35 season, Mr Flath, selected by the players, was the conductor, having taken a year's leave of absence from KMBC.

Once, Don Keilhack and Flath performed a duet on a Hammond (with ample speakers) in Kansas City's Music Hall for an Eagle Scout Court of Honor. "The number was Romberg's 'Stouthearted Men,' and we worked out his theatrical arrangement. I played the main chords and melody on the lower manual, plus the pedals. He added very effective trumpet accents on the upper manual.

THIRD D.K.

"I used to sub for him at the ~~Fifth~~ Christian Science Church in Kansas City where he played a beautiful three-manual Austin in a dramatic manner for 16 years. He was a great old-schooler, but ^{an} excellent theatre musician."

Flath's theme, as well as numbers he composed are on recordings made on the KMBC Morton which Don has. Aside from one number, Don has never found anything written out. That number is "Little Coquette," (not to be confused with the song by Carmen Lombardo) published in 1905 by Walter Jacobs and copyrighted. "I have the orchestration--piano copy with instruments cued in, a beautiful little number. He wrote 'The American Spirit March,' which he told me was a tribute to the fighting men of World War I. It's a march you don't forget, and has been performed by orchestras, bands, and by Flath on theatre organ.

"Other numbers he wrote are 'The Golden Butterfly,' a technically difficult but beautiful novelty-type number; 'Raindrops,' another difficult novelty number; and 'Caress.'

"Flath played theatre organ as if he were arranging for a classic theatre-type orchestra of the early 1900's, and you just don't hear that anymore."

Back in 1938, when the writer was taking accordion lessons in Rochester's Wurlitzer store, the firm published a periodical on activities of teachers and students thruout the Wurlitzer realm. In one of these publications ~~XXXXXXXX~~ appeared a selection, written by Flath, entitled ~~XXXXX~~ "Music!"

"Servant and master am I: servant of those dead, and master of those living. Through me, spirits immortal speak the message which makes the world weep, and laugh, and wonder and worship.

"I tell the story of Love, the story of Hate, the story which saves and the story which damns. I am the incense upon which prayers float to Heaven. I am the smoke which palls over the field of battle where men lie dying with me on their lips.

"I am close to the marriage altar, and when the graves open, I stand near by. I call the wanderer home, I rescue the soul from the depths, I open the lips of lovers, and through me the dead whisper to the living.

"One I serve as I serve all; and the king I make my slave as easily as I subject his slave. I speak through the birds of the air, the insects of the field, the crash of waters on rock-ribbed shores, the sighing of the wind in the trees, and I am even heard by the soul which knows me in the clatter of wheels on city streets.

"I know no ^bother, yet all men are my brothers; I am father of the best which is in them, and they are fathers of the best which is in me; I am of them, and they are of me. For I am the instrument of God.

I AM MUSIC

Don continues: ~~XXXXXX~~ "Ted Meyn (my great uncle and another theatre organist) told me that when Flath was ~~organist~~ at the Miller Theatre in Wichita, Ted went in one day when ^{HE THROUGH} nobody was around, and ^(A) turned out the Wurlitzer. In the midst of playing, Flath came roaring in and shouted that 'I left instructions that no one was to touch the organ!' He was furious.

"Gaylord Carter told me that Flath once gave him the ~~burn-off~~ ^{BRUSH} in Wichita, but he was always nice to me. He certainly had the greatest influence over my theatre organ playing.

*He was so modest ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ about his ability, making remarks to the effect that 'it was nothing special,' which couldn't have been further from the truth! He was a very nice person. His second wife, Edna remarked: 'He doesn't know his own ability.'

*In his younger years, he had thick blonde hair which ~~later~~ ^{and} became white, ~~which~~, with his European features, gave him a very distinguished appearance."

Memories of P. Hans Flath are still vivid with other Wichita natives. Russell L. Lowe, who played in the Miller Theatre's orchestra, remembers the white [#]haired conductor. He says that Flath was almost as well known for his "half-block long' Franklin automobile as he was for his music.

"I first met Mr Flath when he came to Kentucky in 1912 with a show called 'Miss Nobody From ^RStaland.' The star of that show was Olive

Vail, who later married Mr Flath and made her home in Wichita even after the two were divorced later.

"I next met him in Wichita in 1917 when ~~Flath~~^{he} was playing the Palace. In May 1922, he became director of the Miller Theatre orchestra. I was first violinist for Flath at the Miller, and became director when he left for Kansas City."

addenda 1

The death of Mr Flath occurred in sudden and dramatic fashion at the Jenk^{INS D.K.} Music Co. Auditorium in Kansas City. On February 27, 1955, he was playing his first number of a program before 225 persons for the Hammond Organ Society. He slowly leaned forward and collapsed, ~~at the console~~. There was no respiration and pulse was irregular, according to a nurse in the audience who ran to his aid. He died before a doctor arrived a few minutes later.

There were a number of honors for the deceased musician. The Kansas City Times in an editorial, labeled Mr Flath as a "sound, all-around musician with catholic tastes and technical equipment which also made him an effective conductor of concert orchestras...His death removes a respected figure from Kansas City's musical scene."

Station WMBC which had employed Mr Flath for 24 years, presented a memorial program of organ music as recorded by Flath and following the format of his many programs over that station.

P. Hans Flath was survived by his second wife, Mildred M Whiting whom he married in 1954, a son, and a sister.

The sponsons of this series, which were commercial in character, asked for music so light, that it did not fall in the province of a symphony orchestra, with Flath's background in light opera, he fitted in perfectly, the musical conductor who obacously re-quisitioned the baton to Flath was KARL KRUGER

FLEEGER, PAUL

Organist of the Cameo Theatre in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
in 1924. Also broadcast over Radio Station KDKA in Pittsburgh.

FLINT, LOUIS R.

Organist of the Warfield Theatre in San Francisco, California
in 1923.



Mildred Fleming

Feature Organist

APPEARING AT

KEYSTONE THEATRE

NEW YORK

1928

CLUBS AND SOCIETY 41

MILDRED M. FLEMING

An artiste of high quality is the feature organist at the Keystone Theatre in New York, Mildred M. Fleming has been there for three years. She is very well liked and has a large personal following. Miss Fleming is very successful in featuring community singing, solos and novelties. She was with Finkelstein and Rubens for ten years.

1928

WILLIAM (Bill) FLOYD

7601 Fernwood Ct. Suite 4423

Richmond, Virginia 23228

14 January, 1984



Greetings John Landon:

Thank you for your letter regarding "Biographical Dictionary of Theatre Organists". I am, indeed, gratified that you give me consideration. I am still working (not very rapidly) on "American Adventure" which is an accounting of the American scene, generally, from the old "silent/Vaude" days to the present- a generally joyous book, I would say for my life at the Mighty Ones was a joyous life to say the least.

Following, a few facts which might be of interest:

First TO appearance, R.K.O. Palace, Akron, Ohio (1931) (age 16)
Went to New York in 1934. Played 5 years at the Beacon Theatre, doubled 3 years between the Beacon and Staten Island Paramount with some shows at Loew's Lexington, R.K.O. Keith's Flushing NY, St. George Theatre, Staten Island and worked Middletown Paramount (NY) on my off day (Weds.) with an afternoon broadcast ($\frac{1}{2}$ hr) on WGY Schnectady and a single evening performance for the theatre.

Originated the Saturday Birthday Club for kids both at the Beacon and S.I. Paramount. Registered nurses in attendance to supervise the kids, nurses kept files, records of birthdates and at appropriate time, kids received engraved invites for themselves and a friend. Birthday cakes were presented on stage as well as prizes (lucky numbers) using Mack Senette races on the screen. Prizes included several varieties with the #1 being a bicycle. Kids entered the theatres at 10 A.M., aside from organ sing-a-longs, 3 features (suitable for the moppettes), a serial, cartoons and comedies and they could remain to 5 PM without seeing the same thing twice!

Following War II, my S.I. Paramount organ had been sold (for 2,500.00) which went to Larry Bray's, Salt Lake City). Thus to Brooklyn Paramount on an every show-every day basis where I was afforded 1/3 of all marquee, lobby and newspaper ad space a first time since the advent of "talkies". This honor was repeated at Paramount's Minnesota Theatre, Minneapolis (re-named Radio City Theatre). Returning East, I worked at time as sub at Radio City Music Hall but did work the 20-25 minute organ logue Sat. midnights when the war-time midnight stage shows were phased out. Final theatre job at Times Square (New York Paramount) which my happiest-of-all times. During that time, with the advent of theatre stereo, I was desirous to bring the magnificence of the Paramount Wurlitzer to theatres, nationally. I had conceived our Paramount sing-a-long on film, TV and records. Harry Levine of ABC Paramount records turned me down "too busy with the new rock and roll".. I spelled out the concepts to A & R man at Columbia. "Gee Bill, we've too many organists on the roster now"..... 4 weeks later the very lucrative "Sing a-long with -----" series, records, TV made the bow.... Too contrived and over-rehearsed to be true sing-a-long.

At 70, I am busier than ever, playing pipe organs in 3 funeral chapels (all up-beat cheerful music, sometimes semi classics), 3 churches which, aside from rehearsals keeps me busy from 7 AM to 1:30 PM on Sundays. Fabricating (with good help) 3/21 Wurlitzer-Gottfried organ for Richmond Symphony at former Loew's Theatre (the Theatre represents a Six-million dollar effort and is totally computerized as is the organ.) Putting finishing touches on 1909 Moller pneumatic in Historic Landmark Church which has been electrified with new solid-state console and relays, unified for additional colors. I think it's a knock-out!

I am practicing, daily on my 3 manual Conn T.O., all the things I should have (over)

PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE

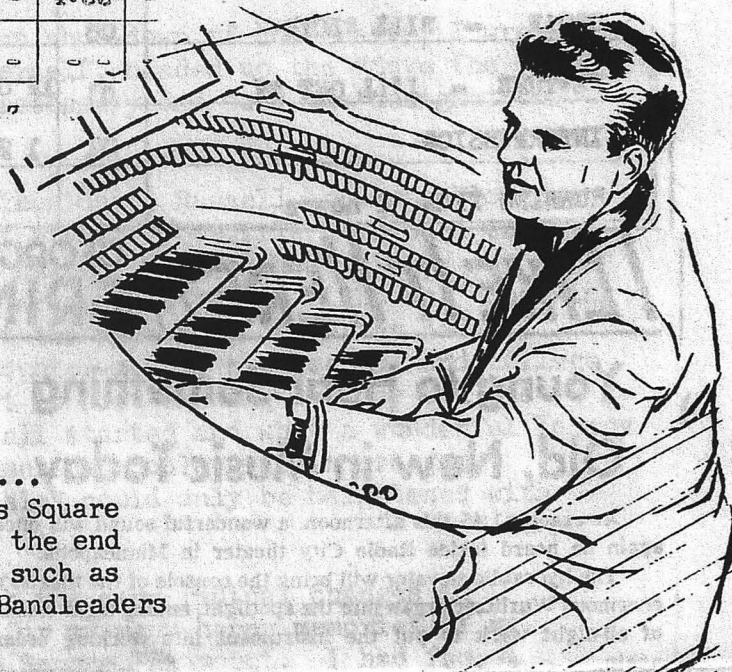
THEATRE	Paramount
CITY	New York

DOORS OPEN

LENGTH OF RUN	1st Week	Thursday - Only	Opens: Wed. 11/4/53
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TIME SCHEDULE OF SHOWS BY UNITS

UNIT AND TITLE OF PROGRAM	RUNNING TIME	1ST SHOW	2ND SHOW	3RD SHOW	4TH SHOW	5TH SHOW	6TH SHOW	H	OT
Organ Solo - Bill Floyd	6		12:31	3:29	6:34	9:32			
Advance Trailers	3		12:37	3:35	6:40	9:38			
UNIT: PUPPI CAMPO & ORCH.	50		12:40	3:38	6:43	9:41			
Intermission (Organ)	5		1:30	4:28	7:33				
Popeye: "Shaving Mugs"	7	10:20	- -	4:33					
Screenliner: "Herring Hunt"	10	10:37	- -	- -					
FEATURE: "CALAMITY JANE"	101	10:37	1:7						
News: Para: #22 - Warner #25	13	12:18							
Booth Note: Sound On Film 10:15 A.M. to 10:									
In Person: Pupi CAMPO & ORCH. - AMES. BROS									



Tattered remnant of a Paramount time-schedule..... the last stage and screen show at New York's Times Square Paramount Theatre. It was difficult to comprehend the end of this great show-place which had been "home" to such as Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Danny Kaye, Milton Berle, Bandleaders Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington.

"Secret Love" sung by Doris Day on the film sound-track had become the dirge.

Precious it was- life at the Paramount. Four, five, maybe six shows a day- ten hours- perhaps fourteen or fifteen -- better sleep in the dressing room tonight- early show tomorrow morning....

Every moment, every hour, every day-- memories to be cherished. Laughter, applause, shrieks of delight as four thousand patrons reveled in the antics of that crazy Ballantine; Joey Bishop; Dave Barry; Jay Lawrence; Stump and Stumpy-- an endless line of very very funny men....

On the Screen the great comedies of Ella Raines, Fred MacMurray, Claudette Colbert, Brian Donlevy, Alan Jones, on and on-- Jack Benny with Mary Martin and "Rochester", Bandsmen Art Mooney, Count Basie, Illinois Jacquette-- singers Sarah (girl) Vaughan; Ella Fitzgerald; Pearl (Honey) Bailey and Louie Armstrong !! All of them saints in our great "Cathedral of Fun and Frolic".....

WILLIAM (BILL) FLOYD

7601 Fernwood Ct. Suite 4423

Richmond, Virginia 23228

11 January, 1985



Mr. Richard Evans, Director
Radio City Music Hall
Sixth Avenue (Americas) at 50th St. (Executive Entrance)
New York, N.Y. 10020

Noting in the newspaper, this date "Mickey Mouse is kicking out Rockettes", I am at a loss that Disney productions lack the ability to assume the girls into their forthcoming production at the Music Hall.

The Rockettes are an integral part of the building, a part of the landmark without which all functional beauty is dimmed.

When the first article appeared re the permanent shut-down of the "Hall", I wrote the Governor of New York. The Lt. Governor, herself, headed up the "Save the Music Hall committee" and did raise the funds necessary and earn the designation of Historic Landmark for the premises.

Has the imaginative prowesses of such as Leon Leonidorf, Russell Markert, Florence Rogge and yes, Walt Disney himself, gone out of style? The girls have been the closing act for every stage show and, for that matter, Macy's Thanksgiving Day parades, delighting millions whatever their entertainment tastes might be. Speaking of the Macy parade, has it occurred to you what the impact of Rockettes had, nationally, as one sees contingents of their counter-parts, high-school and college students developing routines and precision that is most amazing as they emulate the girls of the Music Hall? That's where it all started and what a wonderful legacy to the youth as they perform up and down the American boulevards in pre-game parades. It occurs to me that any Disney "finale" could only be heightened with that "Rockette touch".

At age 70, I admit I'm getting a bit testy with the many radical changes in show business. At the same time, I thank God for my many happy memories of my days and nights at the Music Hall and at Times Square Paramount. I had fun, consequently the audiences did too even in the cavernous Music Hall when I worked the midnight show- a 20-25 minute stint in those post-war times when the midnight stage show had been phased out in favor of an extra feature showing. Well, many things change but I believe it imperative that some traditions must be protected starting not only with our "Showplace of the WORLD" but also the Rockettes ! I must say that even as Russia subsidizes their theatres, so too I believe that President Roosevelt's Federal Theatre should be reactivated to help theatres - (non-profit) turned art centers and the Music Hall should be subsidized as a National monument --- if it weren't contaminated by damnable politics.....

In closing, I challenge the Disney people, if committments are finalized, to JOIN the Rockettes to preserve wholesome family theatre even as Hollywood falls. In reality, it might be easy to accomplish. "A house divided soon falls" and "in numbers there is strength".

Respectfully

Bill
Bill Floyd Sr. (organist)

cc: President Ronald Reagan
Governor, New York State
Mayor Koch, NYC
Eileen Collins, Union Delegate for Rockettes

1
Sent
Bob.
12/21/84

A VISIT WITH BILL FLOYD ✓

By

Lloyd E. Klos

Ever since I became involved in the theatre organ movement as a researcher and writer in 1959, I ~~had~~ heard periodically of an organist, Bill Floyd. His recordings on the New York Paramount Wurlitzer, and his 1981 concert for the Rochester Theater Organ Society convinced me that an interview with this friendly musician should be shared with THEATRE ORGAN readers. He was most cooperative.

"Being born next door to a pipe organ factory, turned me into an organist for life," he said. "That was in Elmira, NY, where the Hope-Jones Electric Organ Co. ^{was located} ~~operated~~. I practiced piano, but under protest. Wanting something bigger, louder, and more impressive, I cajoled theatre managers to let me play their pipe organs ~~in the~~ mornings before the houses opened, ~~at 11:00 AM~~. ^{ALL} ~~Each~~ of six Elmira theatres had a pipe organ^s.

~~I had been~~ intrigued by the ^{SILENT} movies, ~~and~~ ~~my~~ ~~interest~~ in the brightly lighted consoles became ^{much} greater. I visited the Regent Theatre almost nightly, sometimes seeing the film three or four times, yet not really seeing it at all. I hung over the orchestra rail with utter fascination to watch Loretta Ryan or her associate, Lena Lovell, as they followed the cue sheets as provided by the movie studios.

← These scores with but single-note melodies, demanded ~~of the organ~~
^{provide the mood} ~~organist~~ the ability to ~~harmonize, arrange~~ ^{to} and embellish with auto
 horns, steamboat whistles, sirens and doorbells on cue. Much of
 the music used by early movie organists was ~~drawn~~ ^{I believe} from the classics
 and, ~~I look back~~ that the true artistry of cinema organ ~~being~~
 passed ~~on~~ with the advent of sound ~~pictures~~.

"With all the concentration required, Loretta and Lena always
 managed to converse with me. I can still recall Loretta's ^{wildly} playing
 Grieg's 'All of the Mountain King,' ~~brilliantly~~ as an early Tarzan swung
 through a contrived jungle. I can also visualize Lena's playing a
 stately operatic waltz as Corrine Griffith descended a flight of
 steps in a New York ghetto, gowned in her regal robes as a displaced
 and impoverished Russian Countess who finally married a common Amer-
 ican hero. Only in Hollywood could such an ending be contrived!

^{"Theater}
~~The entertainment~~ business was in a transitional state after the
 advent of full-length motion pictures. ~~In the theater~~ The Lafay-
 ette Theatre in Buffalo, NY was one of the first cinemas to discharge
 the pit orchestra, replacing it in 1921 with a 3/15 Wurlitzer (which
~~was~~ generally agreed to have been the finest Wurlitzer in the city).
 The musicians union posted the theatre on the unfair list, and ^{in 1971} ~~was~~
~~20th century~~ it was still listed, tho ~~the theatre~~ razed nine
 years previously!

"In the early twenties, short photoplays were but interludes be-
 tween the eight-act vaudeville shows, but gaude ^{went} ~~was~~ on the decline ^{went}
~~as~~ full-length feature pictures became more plentiful. The names of
^{Gloria Swanson} Monte Blue, ^{Richard Longman} Theda Bara, ^{Harold Lloyd} John Gilbert, Greta Garbo, and Douglas Fair-
 banks, Sr., to name but a few, dominated the marquees. The gaps were
 filled with two-reel featurettes, short subjects, newsreels, and car-
 toons such as 'Aesop's Fables' and 'Felix, the Cat.' There ~~was~~ ^{was}

weekly installments of a 15-episode serial which would leave one hanging in mid-air with an impossible situation--until the following week!

~~Because~~ ^{BIG BUSINESS.} "Movies ~~were~~ ^{not} the thing. Fan magazines, autograph-seekers, and hysteria resulted. Swarms of women wept on the death of Rudolf Valentino, the 'great Latin lover.' News services released photos of the great one, lying in state at Campbell's Funeral Home in midtown Manhattan, while the streets were jammed with mourners.

occasional

"The ~~old~~ Majestic Theatre (2/4 Wurlitzer) in Elmira still hosted traveling stage shows. ~~from time to time.~~ ^{once} On one occasion, I was introduced to the star of ~~the~~ ^a show, and walked with him to the Erie Station to check his baggage. He nervously counted the numbered trunks holding costumes and backdrops. On stage, he was something else as he clowned his way thru 'Springtime for Henry.' I met this actor 30 years later in Worcester, Mass. and after all his film commitments, he was still playing 'Henry.' His name? Edward Everett Horton.

"In school, Sister Leona ~~and~~ ^{Marvin} aroused my interest in classical music, and William Marvin, who had emigrated from England, awakened my interest in liturgical music. Loretta Ryan and Lena Lowell balanced this by giving me the appreciation of cinema and popular music, as I became enraptured by the great sounds emitting from the side recesses of the auditorium. My dream was to play the theatre pipe organ one day."

Following the death of his father, then his mother, Bill lived for awhile with his devoted grandmother. "One summer, we visited great-grandmother's farm in Pennsylvania. It was fine to be among the barnyard animals, but I was glad to get back to friends in Elmira. The first evening home, I strolled over to the Regent Theatre, and as

I walked thru the lobby, I could hear the eerie music and screams of the audience. The heroine was about to be strangled by a claw coming from a paneled wall behind her bed. 'The Cat and the Canary' was a real thriller in its day.

"Just a few years back, there had been ominous talk in the blacksmith shop about the advent of the 'horseless carriage.' Now there was similar discussion in the orchestra pit of the Regent. Loretta and Lena, joined by Bea Scott, the organist at the newer Keeney Theatre, were apprehensive of the new-fangled sound picture which was scheduled at the Strand. The film, ^{with recorded music,} featured a black-faced singer from the Ziegfeld Follies, Al Jolson. 'The Jazz Singer' it was called, ~~and~~ ~~showing~~ ^{showing} ~~presentation~~ ^{presentation} For this the organ was silent, the pit dark.

"The sound was so poor in quality, it could not compete with the silents ^{with} ~~and their~~ organ accompaniment. ~~There was no intention of~~ ^{sound} Keeping the ~~music producing equipment~~ ^{was a Phonofilm,} synchronized with lip movements on the screen. Ballots were passed to patrons on which they noted their preferences: ~~between~~ silent films with organ accompaniment, or the new 'talkies.'

^{To the new medium} Resistance ~~was~~ high, but as the months passed, ~~the~~ Hollywood ~~soon~~ ~~was~~ improved techniques. Orchestra pits became empty, organs ~~was~~ ~~used~~ ^{was} unused except where theatre managers retained the instruments for sing-alongs and spotlight solos. This helped retain the de-luxe atmosphere, ^{even with addition of} ~~and the~~ ~~atmosphere~~ ^{for} sound ~~films~~ ^{films.}

"Loretta and Lena were gone, and I saw them no more. However, in my youthful enthusiasm, I'd show up at Bea Scott's house. Her mother would cheerfully drive us to the Keeney, uncover the console, and give the organ a workout. It was a Marr & Colton, built in Warsaw,

NY, ^{and} one of their many fine instruments.

"There were some lean years following the Stock Market Crash. When I was 16, grandmother passed away, ^{and} I was alone. So, it was decided that I'd visit Aunt Jo in Akron, Ohio. I got a job as a water boy in the Goodyear Zeppelin Dock, and was positively enthralled as the giant ^{US 70m.} dirigible 'Akron' took shape. ~~and~~ when she was launched, ⁱⁿ it seemed a new era in aviation was begun. But, disaster overtook the ship in April 1933, and within two years her sister ship 'Macon' came to grief. With ^{RIB IN A GREAT CONST.} ~~at~~ ended at the Goodyear hangar, I ^{SWITCHED} ~~switched~~ my ^{IN INTEREST BACK} ~~interest~~ to music and the organ.

"I met John Firncoess, manager of the 2080-seat RKO Palace in Akron, and he allowed me to play the organ early in the morning. Eventually, I ^{did} ~~played~~ some 'organlogues' during evening intermissions. Due to John's persistence and his ability to make a sizeable profit, the Palace still featured stage shows. ↗

"One of the most memorable featured ~~the appearance of~~ Gene & Glenn (Jake & Lena), one of radio's cleverest ^{comedy} shows in which Glenn ~~had~~ took ~~three~~ ^{IT BECAME} ~~parts~~ a soap opera of sorts with a five-^{a week} episode ~~story~~ ^{story}. Their home station, Cleveland's WTAM, had ^{TEO POLSTER & BOE WHIPPLE, ORGANISTS} ~~one of the finest staff organizations~~, unequalled in versatility, from classics to jazz, ^{and} ~~they were~~ Ted Polster and Doc Whipple whom I added to my list of idols.

"My debut in show business was short-lived. Aunt Jo, Uncle John and I returned to Elmira and it was decided I should live on Uncle Bart's farm, which I did for a few years. Entering high school, I was determined to make good, especially in music. The vivacious ~~and~~ teacher, Ann, saw I had possibilities, and recommended me to a symphonic conductor-pianist, Frederic Cheeswright. In the twenties,

'Cheesie' ~~was~~ played organ in New York's Strand Theatre in Times Square, and ~~then~~ presented a one-man show at the Rialto. The Stock Market Crash ~~was~~ cleaned him out and he became a teacher. A stern taskmaster, he worked me hard, cramming ^{7 years of} ~~2 years of~~ work into a ^{year} ~~month~~. He forbade me to play the organ or football, preferring that I concentrate on the piano. ^{I disobeyed and we parted company.} In time, he returned to Long Island.

"I joined the Civilian Conservation Corps and my unit was shipped to Florida. The camp was near Sebring, and its recreation hall had an old upright piano. The commandant was impressed, ^{by my playing} and thought he could get me a job in the ^{town's} hotel. ~~the town~~ Entering the place, a Mr Shire showed me around, ~~and then~~ ^{pointed} to a Kilgen console on the landing of the grand staircase. The former organist ~~was~~ was composer of 'The Lord's Prayer' and 'Twenty-third Psalm,' ~~and~~ Alfred Hay Mallotte.

"Salary was an elusive subject at this hotel, which was in receivership, and operating on a shoestring. ~~Double~~ ^{Double} as organist and bellhop, I ^{did pretty} ~~made~~ well with tips, room and board thrown in. Board consisted of grits for breakfast, lamb stew for supper, seven days a week! An occasional treat from Sam, the chef, was pecan pie.

"I next went to New York and ^{was an} ~~was~~ elevator operator, janitor, and assistant to a switchboard operator, ²⁰⁰⁵ ~~The~~ ^{what} ~~employment~~ gave me a chance to stroll about Mahhattan. Sometimes ~~and~~ ^{enter} St. Thomas Church and listen ^{with} ~~to~~ ^{ness} the artistry of T. Tertius Noble, or ~~sometimes~~ a 'jam session' between Noble and Pietro Yon, organist of St. Patricks's Cathedral. Different in their approaches to the organ, they were ~~masters~~ ^{masters} and world-renowned.

~~There was a~~ ^{There was a} ~~call for~~ ^{call for} Scholarship examinations at the Guilmont Organ School, located in my neighborhood. I took the written ^{test} ~~then~~ ^{then} the

playing test in church. Dr George William Volkel at Juilliard ~~was~~ ^{SAW} ~~me~~ ^{in my favor} took me on as a private student. He arranged for my practicing at the organ in the Women's Club Auditorium on W. 85th St., ^{and} instruction ~~was~~ at the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Brooklyn.

"I ^{NET} met Montague Salmon, ~~was~~ the manager of New York's Beacon Theatre at Broadway and 74th St., ~~who~~ ^{THEY} ~~met~~ ^{shortly after his transfer from Philadelphia's Tower Theatre.} ~~He~~ ^{THEY} ~~had~~ ^{HAD PASSED IT MANY TIMES, I NEVER GOT} ~~the~~ ^{THE} ~~Beacon's~~ ^{exterior} ~~was~~ ^{partic- ularly} impressive. ~~and~~ ^{invited inside} on my first ~~meeting~~ ^{meeting} with Monty, I was impressed with the magnificent foyer and auditorium, done in an ~~oriental~~ ^{occidental} motif. ~~and~~ ^{It} was referred to as 'a bit of Bagdad on Broadway.'

often

"~~Features~~ ^{at the} were a mechanical stage and a seven-motor contour curtain which were forerunners of the same features at the Radio City Music Hall. ^{in 1932} The production team ~~was~~ ^{transferred} from the Beacon and the Roxy Theatre to the Music Hall. In the ^{Beacon's} pit was a most impressive 4/19 Wurlitzer console. ~~and~~ ^{ON ORGON ENTHUSIAST,} The instrument, long in idleness, rose to the occasion admirably when I gave it a workout. ^{WHICH} Monty gave me the organist's job, ~~and~~ ^{These} ~~my~~ ^{relationship} ~~with~~ ^{kept me} ~~at~~ ^{at the} ~~Beacon~~ ^{for} a few years.

"Prior to this, the theatre and its equipment were neglected. Unions notwithstanding, the electricians, projectionists, ushers, manager, -all of us, voluntarily spent entire nights repairing equipment, washing crystal chandeliers and dropping the contour curtain to eliminate the ridges of dust which were caked into the folds. In time, the theatre was as good as new ^{JD} Since there was an average of one theatre every three or four blocks on Broadway, we dreamed up extra presentations to attract the public.

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 ← Monty and I devised 'Musicizing' which had to be the first ~~stage~~ ^{entertainment} quiz show in the field, ~~entertainment~~. Community singing and ~~presentations~~ ^{singers} were plentiful, as voice students aspired to theatrical careers.

"I was now 21 and living in the Beacon ~~Street~~ ^{apartment} suite which had been built for Roxy himself. ~~George Walker~~ ^{George Walker} seemed pleased with my work. Visiting me at the theatre, ~~he~~ ^{after a few years} noted the ~~extra~~ ^{work-}manship and materials ~~in~~ ^{in the building} a Wurlitzer theatre organ, as opposed to the average church instrument, ~~or other~~ ^{organ}. 'Probably,' he mused, 'because parents gave their kids a nickel for church and a dollar for the movies!'

"There was a rule of thumb for ~~organ~~ ^{organ} budgets ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~church~~ ^{church} ~~organs~~ ^{organs} --\$18 per seat was the standard allocation for church organs, and \$39 per seat for ^a cinema instruments. Wurlitzer did, however, build a number of large church organs, including one for the Episcopal Cathedral in Buffalo, NY which was tonally designed according to specifications of Dr Audsely, as inspired by ~~the~~ ^{the} Pope Pius X, himself an organ architect.

Harry Blair, THE GHOST & MEN OF ALL THE THEATRES, WITH WIFE ABOVE,

"I got a call from ~~Ira~~ ^{Blair} ~~Kahn~~ who ran an agency in the RKO Building. The Staten Island Paramount had a good Wurlitzer, and the new manager wanted an organist. ~~Kahn~~ ^{Blair} thought I could 'double' between the two houses. No harm in trying, so I boarded the Staten Island Ferry for the half-hour crossing of New York Bay. In spite of my long period in the city, it was the first time I'd seen Miss Liberty.

"~~The~~ great surprise was in meeting the manager of the theatre, John Firnoess, from the RKO Palace in Akron! In his excitement, John insisted on a performance that night--unadvertised and totally unrehearsed! As I entered the pit and sat at the console, my hands

perspired, my heart pounded, and I worried about something ~~to~~ going wrong on ~~the~~ stage or in the projection booth. The newsreel was on, featuring 'Magnascope,' a Paramount innovation using special projector lenses, and ^{moveable} black masking, ^{when} surrounding the screen to increase the picture to full-stage size. This was reserved for outdoor scenes, newsreels and organ sing-alongs.

"The newsreel ended with ^{on Parade with} Paramount's 'Eyes and Ears of the World,' 1960, the curtain closed, lights came up, and the console rose. 'This is it,' thot I as I took a deep breath. My hands hit the manuals, and the theatre reverberated to the organ, one of the largest ~~one~~ built for a theatre of that size. I glanced on the screen as the curtains parted and in big letters was: 'The Paramount Theatre proudly presents Bill Floyd.' There was a burst of applause and then came the sing-along. I no longer felt like a stranger, ^{AND BUILT} The ~~whole~~ presentation ~~and~~ ~~into~~ into a thunderous climax. The Wurlitzer pefformed admirably after years of neglect. The applause was spontaneous, ^{and} ~~and~~ Firncoess was enraptured. ~~I could not doubt~~ ^{this lesson in daily} between the Beacon and the Staten Island Paramount.

"What a mad year it was! Dependent on catching the boat on time, crossing the bay, racing up West Side Highway, cutting across town, sandwiching ~~the~~ performances at the Beacon ~~between shows at the Paramount~~ ^{two shows.}

"There were but a dozen organists working in the entire United States. ^{I was playing two, until the} I ended up with four theatres at one ~~time~~ Paramount at Middletown, NY was added on my off day. The One-day jaunt included a broadcast in the afternoon ^{over} on Schenectady's WGY, and an evening performance. Waiting for the late-nite train back to New York, I visited the tavern across from the station to hear and develop a taste for jazz, Dixieland and progressive.

I WAS HIRED BY

CAME

"Then a fourth theatre! A call from Grace Niles, manager of Loew's Lexington in New York, ~~which had been~~ originally the Hammerstein Opera House. Organist Marsh McCurdy was featured there for a long time. I ~~was~~ sandwich ^{ed} in a few special shows ^{IN THIS} ~~large~~ large theatre ^{WITH HIS} ~~horseshoe balcony~~ horseshoe balcony, not unlike the famed diamond horseshoe of the Metropolitan Opera House. There were ~~other~~ appointments in lounges and the inner lobby which bore evidence of a woman's touch. Grace Niles, like the earlier ~~architect~~ ^{designer} Grace Bailey, had stamped her personality on the place.

"It may have seemed ridiculous to try for a career as a theatre organist in the face of talking pictures which in less than 10 years had grown to the leading entertainment medium. I became dependent on owners and managers desirous of that 'extra something' which ~~was~~ ^{gave THEM} ~~the~~ ^{ARTIST STATUS.} ~~average~~ movie house ~~operator~~.

"Each winter, I played out the New Year's Eve midnight show and headed for Sebring, Fla., returning ^{TO NEW YORK} at Easter. I had great respect for the senior citizens who inhabited the hotel in Sebring. Fred Waring's father was one. Fred, a mechanical ^{GENIUS,} had invented the Waring Blender and the elder Waring often placed ^{ONE} ~~one~~ on the lobby desk and liquified tropical fruits for the guests who stared in amazement.

"When 10 P.M. rolled around, Mr Waring ~~would~~ ^{would} ask me to play Fred's slow, dreamy, theme song, 'Sleep,' on the organ, situated on the landing of the grand staircase.

"Returning to New York to set up the theatre schedules, was a treat. ~~At the~~ ~~Wurlitzer~~ ~~store~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~good~~ ~~friends,~~ ~~Hugo~~ ~~Hellstern,~~ ~~for~~ ~~John~~ ~~Radio~~ ~~City~~ ~~Music~~ ~~Hall~~ ~~organ~~ ~~technician,~~ ~~Louis~~ ~~Ferrara,~~ ~~joined~~ ~~us~~ ~~for~~ ~~our~~ ~~daily~~ ~~ritual.~~
 A DAILY LUNCH MEAL INCLUDED MY GOOD FRIENDS AT THE WURLITZER STORE, HUGO HELLSTERN, AND RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL ORGAN TECHNICIAN, LOUIS FERRARA.

← War clouds were gathering in Europe, but I was content with my work which had taken me also to the Academy of Music Theatre on 14th St. Ted Mack, who succeeded Major Bowes as MC of radio's 'Amateur Hour,' managed the Academy and became a good friend. When he moved on to other things, I concentrated on the Paramount and the Beacon, as the winter winds of 1940 began to blow.

"On December 16, ~~a visitor~~ ^{at Louhuron,} and old friend Dwight Long, met me ^{and said} at ~~the Beacon~~ ~~he had called me two months ago~~ if I'd be interested in playing in Johannesburg, S. Africa. With the draft board breathing heavily, I decided to get the year ^{of service} over with. The 'year' turned out to be five as everyone in the ^{armed forces} ~~service~~ at the time of Pearl Harbor was frozen for the duration.

~~~~~~~~~  
"I saw service with the medics in Europe, <sup>and</sup> had the opportunity to play a few pipe organs, ~~and~~ too. Whenever I had free time, I sought the nearest church to practice on its <sup>instrument</sup> ~~pipe organ~~. My biggest thrill was playing religious music on the 300-year-old organ in Fecamp Cathedral in France."

~~~~~~~~~  
Following the death of ~~Bill Floyd~~ ^{during WW II} Bill Floyd was the first American organist to play in Germany, and consequently was the object of much curiosity. The dust had hardly settled on the wrecked city of Cologne when Bill approached a church in the suburbs, alone, and in what was still enemy territory. Storm troopers looked at him in disbelief as he parked his American jeep. The church filled with townspeople as he played the magnificent classic organ. Performing Bach in combat boots amazed his listeners and there were many encores.

Later, a priest asked him to play his favorite hymn and while Bill loves many, the first ~~one~~ which came to mind was "Glorious Things Of Thee Are Spoken" which the organist launched with gusto. The Germans

1
wept openly--Bill had forgotten that the tune was the German National Anthem, "Deutschland Uber Alles"! Hundreds of friends were made instantly.

~~During a late~~ ^{Another} evening, Bill strolled ~~to~~ ^{75th} another church and heard organ music. He walked in and saw an elderly German, seated at the console. The music was that of Felix Mendelsohn ~~which~~ ^{to be played} which was forbidden during the Nazi regime. In speaking with the kindly organist, Bill raised the question, "Isn't that music verboten; was not Mendelsohn a Jew?" "Yah," the old man conceded. He explained that when the order ~~was~~ ^{was} issued, forbidding all music and art of Jewish origin, he had secreted his volumes of Mendelsohn inside the organ's wind reservoirs!

American soldiers had been forbidden to fraternize or even talk with the Germans which Bill found impossible, and during this period, he came to the full realization that music and the arts are the real ties which bind peoples together. (see addenda)

"Then it was home again to wife, Margie, and our little Penny. The G. I. Bill had guaranteed our old jobs upon our return, but the Staten Island Paramount ^{had Dick Klobanoff, Larry Bhat For his organ left} sold the organ to ~~a restaurant~~ in Salt Lake City. Monty Salmon was transferred to the Rivoli at Times Square. It had a beautiful three-manual Wurlitzer, used for special events, and I played for them. The theatre, being a part of the Louis B. Mayer estate, ^{you the organ weekly maintenance even} ~~was~~ ^{maintained} weekly during its years of silence.

"Jimmy Kolbeck, manager of Loew's Jersey City, wanted me there. He had spent several thousand dollars in rehabilitation of the 4/23 'Wonder Morton.' Then the higher-ups in Loew's, in an impasse with union officials, stated that they'd take their ^{ENTERTAINMENT} ~~intermissions~~ ^{from} in a

film can.

Hellstern

"I checked with Hugo ~~Hellstern~~ ^{Hellstern} and he arranged ^{on} an audition for MCA. From this came a steady flow of night-club engagements ^{for} a much higher pay than pre-war ~~engagements~~ ^{JOB}. I ~~got a call from~~ ^{DID a month of} vacation work at the Music Hall, which was an opportunity to get away from the gin-mill circuit. ~~For a month, I was employed there, and after this venture, I returned periodically.~~

"Two months passed. I ^{DID} ~~went to~~ a show in Buffalo with Sophie Tucker at Murray Altman's Town Casino. ² Back to New York for more work at the Music Hall, including one performance in which I had scarcely time to change into the prescribed outfit. Then came a call from the Brooklyn Paramount. The manager was Eugene Pleshette, a marvelous showman in the tradition of a deluxe operation, and it was a joy to work with him. His daughter, Suzanne, was the future actress we see today on television.

"Came an extended period when I doubled between the Music Hall and the Brooklyn Paramount. I never missed a cue, thanks to the BMT. However, I ^{had the choice} ~~was given the alternative~~ of giving up ~~one of the~~ ^{the} ~~theatres~~ ^{theatres}. Mr Pleshette had given me one-third of all advertising space and theatre art work, plus two-foot high electrics across the marquee. This honor was repeated at the Minnesota Theatre in Minneapolis later. ¹ ~~He was the ONLY ORGANIST TO BE ADVERTISED ON THE~~ ^{PANAMOUNT-PUBLIC CIRCUIT.}

We glean insight from a clipping of a column from a Minneapolis paper which was written the day of Bill's opening at the Radio City Theatre (ex-Minnesota Theatre), by writer George Grim:

"At exactly 1:45 this afternoon, a wonderful sound will once again be heard inside the Radio City Theatre. The hydraulic elevator will bring the console of the theatre's enormous Wurlitzer organ into the

spotlight, ending eight weeks of all-night work to put the instrument into working order again.

"You'll hear the impressive instrument playing 'I Know That You Know,' but the bobby-soxers won't know at all. An entire new generation has grown up since the theatre organ was part of every performance. Growing up just ahead of that generation is handsome, six-foot, 225-pound Bill Floyd, the new organist.

"He was sitting in the front row ~~just before~~ ^{before} the theatre's opening Thursday as the half-dozen tuners tooted one note after another, far up in the organ lofts. At the console, sat another technician with a telephone. You can't tune the Mighty Wurlitzer with a fork and a wrench. Bill wanted to play the instrument for me, but it wasn't quite ready. He's a modest fellow whose story you have to extract. But that pile of pipes is his pride.

"He was playing in New York when Harry French of the local circuit went there to find the best organist to play the reactivated ~~radio~~ ^{here.} ~~city~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ organ ~~in the city.~~ Bob Weitman of the New York Paramount had just the man. At nine the next morning, Bill was auditioning. 'Now play something in thirds,' asked French who knows more about music than most theatre operators. Floyd was hired. He has been marking time while the job of putting the enormous instrument in shape is completed.

"Late last nite, the job was done. And at exactly 1:45 this afternoon, handsome Bill Floyd will come into view, the first organist our theatre ever had who didn't look dwarfed by the hundreds of tabs, keys, pedals and gadgets.

"An older generation will nod happily--the theatre organ is back

with the tuneful music from 'The Student Prince.' A younger generation will listen to music they've never heard.

"But when Bill Floyd turns around---Boingg!"

"At Minneapolis," says Bill, "the opening-day ^{stage} show was headed by electronic organist, Ethel Smith. We hit it off well and the gal proved to be ~~quite~~ ^{good} a crowd pleaser. The audience loved her! I suggested an early-morning session on the Wurlitzer. 'You're not getting me near that thing!', she exclaimed. However, she rocked the theatre on her souped-up Hammond, ^{backed by} ~~with~~ an orchestra ^(the orchestra was separated) of ~~men~~ ^{who} from the Minneapolis Symphony. ~~The boys~~ ^{who} worked like crazy with her arrangements."

It is notable that during Bill Floyd's stay ~~XXXXXX~~ in Minneapolis, the police noted a decided drop in juvenile delinquency and attributed this to Bill's sing-alongs which gave vent to the youngsters' energy.

"Paramount was the magic word in the cinema business. Hugo Hell-
~~strom~~ ^{STEAN} told me about the Wurlitzer salesman who ~~went~~ ^{down} lots to see who would take care of the ~~the~~ store one hot afternoon in July 1924. The Yankees were at the Stadium, ^{only} the public was hardly breaking down doors to buy pianos or organs. A limousine pulled up. The chauffer opened the rear door, ~~and~~ ^{and} three men entered the store, ~~and then~~ ^{and} took the elevator to the organ salon. The shortest man said, 'I want 35 organs for my theatres.' The salesman was flabbergasted ^{at this or the whole} ~~the whole~~ ^{amount} ~~amounted~~ ^{amount} to close to a million dollars. The ~~man~~ ^{Paramount} was Adolph Zukor, president of Famous Players-Paramount Pictures. The salesman retired on his commission!

"I now moved to the New York Paramount. During my years ^{there,} ~~at the~~ ^{appeared} ~~in~~ many Hollywood personalities ~~appeared~~ in a constant parade. In other houses, the stage show was incidental to the movie,

but at the Paramount, the situation was reversed. After the advent of the Depression, ~~the~~ Famous Players-Paramount ~~was~~ suffered greatly. The Paramount Symphony under B. A. Rolfe moved out and into radio. Had it not been for the ~~present~~ ^{Paramount} corporation, Paramount Pictures, the theatre would have died at an early age.

~~At the~~ ^{new} managing director, Robert Weitman, ~~he~~ conceived the house's 'two-for-one' policy with a three-hour show consisting of top-grade, first-run feature films; short subjects (newsreels, cartoons) and a sophisticated form of community sing with organist, Don Baker. ~~He was~~ ^{He} much loved and remembered organist who warmed up the audience for the stage show to follow, ~~he~~ ^{he} was at the Paramount almost 14 years.

"With times tough, the trick was to cut costs. Live performers moved to the raised orchestra elevator, and with Weitman producing, this intimate floor show featured bands of Ellington, Miller, James, the Dorseys etc. ~~in 1930,~~ ^{hasn't} the adage 'A band ~~hasn't~~ ^{hasn't} arrived if it ~~hasn't~~ ^{hasn't} played the Paramount,' was ~~quite~~ ^{quite} true.

"Admission for this three-hour production? Twenty-five cents until 1 P.M., 55 cents until 5 P.M., and 85 cents for the remainder of the evening. In 10 years, the Paramount earned its way from a \$10 million deficit to a multi-million surplus. Then, the courts divorced Paramount Pictures (the producers) from Paramount Theatres (the exhibitors) in a notable anti-trust case.

"Great careers were launched or enhanced at the Paramount: ^{FRANK SINATRA} Frank Sinatra, ^{MAE MURPHY} Georgia Gibbs, ^{GINGER ROGERS} Patti Page, Pearl Bailey, Dinah Shore, Ella Fitzgerald, etc. Dizzie Gillespie, Stan Kenton and others kept interest in jazz high."

During ~~the~~ ^{the} saint there, ~~occurred~~ ^{occurred} a breakdown of ^{the} new projection equipment and ~~the~~ ^{the} sound system. ~~A~~ ^{he} was called upon to play inter-

BING CROSBY

cludes of five to 20 minutes, a half-dozen times during the single performance. Pulling tunes from ^{his} ~~the~~ hat, the Paramount management marveled at the few refunds requested. ~~While on the Paramount public theatre circuit, Bill was the only organist to retain top marquee billing and demand one-third of all display advertising.~~

For one intermission, ~~at the Paramount~~ ^{he} played a toccatta. ~~and~~ a bandsman quipped, "Where do you think you are--Carnegie Hall?" Bill made a retort regarding the music the band was playing and said, "I could write your ^{band's} stuff anytime!" A bet was on and they converged in the rehearsal hall where Bill hastily ~~composed~~ ^{composed} a song, "Unsuspecting Heart." ~~He~~ ^{he} sold the song outright after which it made the top ten on the charts, and was recorded by 13 U. S. companies, 8 in England, 5 in France and 3 in Australia.

"Then came TV. Bands and soloists ~~who worked in television~~ ^{on television on the New York} found they could reach more people in one night, than in a ~~theatre~~ ^{even with} theatre engagement. This caused a decided drop in ticket-buying, New gimmicks such as wide screens, ~~and a reverse the record.~~ The era of the big bands ended, and when Doris Day plaintively wailed 'Secret Love,' it was the dirge for the last regularly scheduled stage show at the Paramount.

~~Following~~ ^{Following} ~~there were~~ formal premieres of pictures, with all the atmosphere--Kleig lights, TV cameras, limousines, notables etc. Dick Clark and Arthur Godfrey interviewed people in the lobby. I played the 4/36 as the \$50-a-seat audience assembled.

~~and~~ "A new traveler curtain, six stories high, was installed, and it had a tendency to bellow outward if opened too quickly. Manager Bob Shapiro ~~and~~ ^{CONTRACT} cautioned the stagehands on this, but when a military ~~band~~ ^{band} was ~~on~~ on stage for the National Anthem, the curtain was ~~contract~~

opened too fast. All the audience saw was a mixture of combat boots and dress shoes underneath. It broke them up!

"I saw a somewhat bewildered Judy Garland standing ~~at~~ ^{at} Shapiro's office. Another time, I ~~was~~ ^{Accompanied} ~~the~~ ~~intro~~ ~~for~~ ~~Liberace~~ ^{on the organ}. He is a joy--loves music and people. Commenting on his sequined jacket, he said, 'Like it, girls?' They applauded like crazy. 'That's good, you paid for it!'"

When Bill cut his LP recording, "The King of Organs" at the Paramount in 1957, he had not touched the instrument in two months. It was an impromptu session from 2 A.M. to 5 A.M., totally unrehearsed. Not without flaws, the recording was hailed by the nation's newspaper and magazine reviewers, and by High Fidelity Magazine as the "best organ recording of the year."

^{September} "In 1964, Don Baker played the farewell concert on the Paramount organ. I ~~was~~ ^{could} have attended, but I preferred to remember the place as it was in happier times. Incidentally, the 4/36 was playable from three consoles, and everyone ~~was~~ ^{was} destroyed by fire ^{as separate}.

~~When~~ "The Paramount ~~theatre~~ became a shattered remnant--shattered as life itself, as the news of the closing ~~was~~ hit us. Precious it was--life in that theatre. ^{mean} Four, five, maybe six shows a day, encompassing 10 to 15 hours. I thought of the times ~~when~~ ^{when} I ~~decided~~ ^{decided} ~~to~~ ~~sleep~~ ^{to sleep} in ~~the~~ ^{my} dressing room because of an early show ~~in the morning~~.

~~As I walked past the edifice, sometime after its closing,~~ The memories ~~of every moment, every hour, every~~ ^{of every moment, every hour, every} persisted, to be cherished forever. Laughter and applause were sounds of delight as 3600 patrons reveled in the antics of Carl Ballantine, Joey Bishop, Dave Barry, Jay Lawrence, Stump & Stumpy--an endless line of very, very,

funny men.

"On the screen, the great comedians of Ella Raines, Fred MacMurray, Claudette Colbert, Brian Dunleavy, Alan Jones, Jack Benny and Eddie 'Rochester' Anderson. Bandsmen Art Mooney, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Illinois Jacquette. Singers Sarah Vaughn, Mary Martin, Ella Fitzgerald, Pearl (Honey) Bailey, and Louis Armstrong. All of them, saints in our great Cathedral of Fun and Frolic.

Converted TO
 "While the Paramount was being ~~demolished~~ for office space, I walked along 43rd St., off Broadway. The famous wavy marquee was gone. I stood at what had been the executive entrance. Shapiro's office, the lobby, staircase, first and second mezzanines, the long top balcony which rose to 11 stories, the stage, all gone. Nothing was recognizable.

"My work would now be concentrated in churches, restaurant-bars etc., playing electronics, a poor substitute for the mighty pipe organ. In time, our family, including five children, moved to Richmond, Va. I played winters in church, summers at Surf City Hotel, the latter featuring the 3/16 Wurlitzer from the old Fabian Theatre in Hoboken, NJ. The latter was a fun place. Tips came in well for requests, thanks to a ~~sympathetic~~ *Appreciative* bar tender. The patrons were my kind of people. I also played ~~as first winter~~ in Fort Lee, Va. for the non-commissioned officers club. Men came and went, some several times during the Viet-Nam conflict. We were "Family" at the piano-organ bar)

"I also concertized in the late 70's and into the 80's. Richmond, Binghamton, Rochester *CONNECTICUT* and Pittsburgh, among others, have ~~some~~ theatre organs, and I've been privileged to play them. It affords one, an excellent chance to see more of this country. *I love meeting folks who ~~play~~ the organ as I do."*

Bill Floyd has more recently turned to the typewriter. "If a Chi-

FLOYD, BILL

See pp. _____ to _____.

FLYNN, KATHERINE

Theatre organist in the Los Angeles, California area. Secretary of the Los Angeles Society of Theatre Organists in 1923 and again in 1926. Organist of the Florence Theatre in Los Angeles in 1925.

FOORT, REGINALD

Biog as in 7-0- book test

FOOSNESS, MARTHA

Organist of the Cheerio Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1927.

Our Featured Artist

SCOTT FOPPIANO

Scott Foppiano is currently one of the most sought after young performers in the theater organ world today. He was born in Memphis, Tennessee. He developed a keen interest in music and began formal study at a very early age and by eight was playing at his church. While in Junior High School, he first experienced the sight and sound of the Mighty Wurlitzer theater pipe organ in Memphis' Orpheum Theater and began learning how to play it well. After completing his studies at North Carolina School of the Arts



he moved to Michigan and began his tenure as Organist and Director of Music at Northbrook Presbyterian Church. He also became senior house organist at the prestigious Fox Theater in Detroit and a regular featured performer at the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor.

Having served many notable churches in North Carolina, Michigan and Connecticut he currently is Organist and Director of Music at the Second Reformed Church in Hackensack, N.J. Currently he studies with his good friend and mentor Tom Hazleton.

In 1995 Scott made his debut at the American Theater Organ Society's National Convention in Detroit and in 1996 he was invited and appeared at the Arlington Theater in Santa Barbara during the ATOS National Convention.

While performing regularly on both theater and classical pipe organs he has been a regular adjudicator for the ATOS's Young Organist competition on both local and national levels. Scott has several recordings on cassettes and CDs. Don't miss this opportunity to hear this young talented performer making his debut before our RTOS audience.

*As Courtesy to ALL Please do not take flash pictures during
this Concert*

FORD, EDDIE (Edgar A.)

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, October 15, 1905. Parents, Ida L. and William H. Ford. Educated at New Haven High School and Yale School of Music. Played at the Roger Sherman Theatre in New Haven, Connecticut in 1926. Played the Tampa Theatre (Publix), Tampa, Florida, the Aztec Theatre in San Antonio, Texas, and the Colony Theatre in New York City in 1930. The Tampa Theatre in Tampa, Florida opened October 15, 1926 with Eddie Weaver as solo organist. It was a Publix Theatre and when Weaver had come to New Haven where Eddie Ford was already playing at the Roger Sherman Theatre they became friends. Weaver suggested that Ford visit the Publix Theatre headquarters in New York at Nathaniel Finston's office where Maurice Press heard him play. They selected him to become organist

FORD, EDDIE (Edgar A.)

2.

of the Tampa Theatre. The Tampa organ was a 2 manual/8 rank Wurlitzer with shallow and well designed organ chambers which added to the excellent acoustics of the theatre made this organ sound much larger and more full than might be expected. Some of the older Wurlitzer organmen referred to this organ as "the baby Paramount," because they ^{believed that} ~~said~~ it sounded somewhat similar to the New York Paramount Theatre organ. Ford spent 14 months at the Tampa Theatre and then took a job at the Aztec Theatre in San Antonio, Texas, but after one summer there he returned to New York City and studied in Emil Velazco's Organ Studio in the Roseland Building across from the Capitol Theatre. Velazco

FORD, EDDIE (Edgar A.)

3.

chose Ford as his assistant and a few days later Ford also landed a job at the Colony Theatre in New York City. When Velazco went to the Roxy Theatre, he took Ford along as his assistant.

Edgar A. Ford is a native of New Haven, Connecticut. He studied at the Yale School of Music and some of his teachers include, Harry Benjamin Jepson, Pauline Voorhees, Emil Velazco, Edward Broadhead, Ernest White, and Edward Linzel. Testifying to his diverse talents he can ^{Count} organist choir director assignments in New Haven, Connecticut, Durham, New York, Tampa, Florida, Lakeland, Florida, and Winterhaven, Florida, in addition to the long list of theatre engagements.

Ford became famous for his work at the Tampa Theatre from 1931 to 1941. In addition to the theatres mentioned he had played the Embassy Theatre in North Bergen, New Jersey and in 1930 he went to

FORD, EDDIE (Edgar A.)

4.

Australia for a twelve months engagement at the Regent Theatres in Sydney and Brisbane. He also did regular concerts at the John Wanamaker Store in New York. He spent a year as organist of Atlanta's Fox Theatre from 1952 to 1953.

One of the high spots of Eddie Ford's life was Jesse Crawford's visit to the Tampa Theatre in the winter of 1927-1928. He was vacationing in Florida with song writer Walter Donaldson and they were both invited by Mr. John B. Carroll, city manager, and manager of the Tampa Theatre to come inspect the theatre and the organ after the closing of the theatre one evening. Crawford played the organ and commented, "you really have to play these smaller organs, the bigger ones will play for you." He liked the sound of the instrument

FORD, EDDIE (Edgar A.)

5.

and suggested some wiring changes to improve the instrument.

Ford broadcast over Radio Station WDAE in Tampa. Ford in later years became organist and director of music at the famous Cypress Gardens in Florida.

FOREST, AL

A theatre organist in the Boston area. He was for a time house organist of the RKO Boston Theatre (Wurlitzer), and who broadcast over Radio Station WBZA, Boston, Massachusetts.

FOREST, AURELE J.

In 1926 organist of the Strand Theatre, Providence, Rhode Island. In 1927 operated the Forest Theatre Organ School in Providence, Rhode Island.

FORSTER, PAUL

Forster was born in Utica, New York in 1892 and started taking piano lessons at age 8. By the time he was 15 he was engaged as pianist at the Theatorium in Utica, New York. After a year he was hired by the local Hippodrome Theatre where he not only played piano for movies, but also conducted the small pit band for four acts of vaudeville. His first position as theatre organist was when he was hired by the Utica State Theatre to play piano for vaudeville and to accompany movies on the large nonunified organ built in the local Barnes and Buhl Factory. Eventually, he was introduced to the Marr and Colton Fotoplayer ~~which was~~ which consisted of a short organ manual attached to a piano for various sound effects. It produced sounds which were much more appropriate to film accompaniment than a church-type organ.

FORSTER, PAUL

2.

Forster was hired by the Avon Theatre in Utica to play feature films on the 2 manual Wurlitzer organ. It was his first experience playing a Wurlitzer. About this time the recently established Marr and Colton firm in Warsaw, New York had installed a 10 rank theatre pipe organ in the Palace Theatre in Jamestown, New York. Casting about for an appropriately qualified organist to open it they selected Forster. It was here that he became familiar with the use of song slides and began community sings, which was to become his stock in trade.

Forster remained at the Palace Theatre for several months, before he was tapped by the Marr and Colton Company again to open a 2 manual organ that they had just installed in the Liberty Theatre in Carnegie, a suburb of Pittsburgh. Forster went to the Liberty

FORSTER, PAUL

3.

Theatre and remained there for/a year. By this time the Marr and Colton Company had come to consider him as their best demonstrator.

In September 1924, Forster was sent to the Piccadilly Theatre on Broadway, New York to play the 4 manual/28 rank Marr and Colton which had just been installed there. Forster played for novelties, organ recitals, and for movies. He also played along with a large theatre orchestra that was conducted by a well known conductor, Vincent Lopez, with B. A. Rolph, playing first trumpet. ^{One day} Forster was visited by a pair of theatre owners named Abe Harrison and Morris Fitzer. They had just completed installing a 10 rank/3 manual Marr and Colton organ in the Empire Theatre in Syracuse, New York, and they had come to New York City to find an organist to open their organ. Once they had heard Forster at the Piccadilly, no one else

FORSTER, PAUL

4.

would do. Forster enjoyed being on Broadway, but the theatre owners made him an offer which was so good that he felt that he could not turn it down. Little did he know that he would be living in Syracuse, New York for the next 31 years.

Forster was later tempted away from Syracuse to open the Wurlitzer (model 235) in the Worth Theatre in Fort Worth, Texas, November 27, 1927. He did not remain in Texas long until he felt homesick for Syracuse and returned there. He broadcast in 1931 over Radio Station WSYR, Syracuse. He became feature organist of the Eckel Theatre in Syracuse. He remained there until 1935. During that time he took a two months' engagement to open the 4 manual/20 rank Wurlitzer in the Loew's State Theatre in Syracuse.

The Forsters bought a hundred year old brick home in Syracuse

FORSTER, PAUL

5.

and had a 2 manual/6 rank Marr and Colton organ installed in it. Here Forster opened his organ studio, conducting classes for theatre organists and giving private instruction. The organ studio was located at 1924 East Genesee Street in Syracuse, New York. Forster's last position as a theatre pipe organist in Syracuse was at the Harvard Theatre (now the Wescot), a small 350 seat house which he was able to fill to overflowing with his fans. He suffered a fall in his home and while he was recovering and his broken leg was healing, he decided that the theatre organ profession was dying and that he should turn to something different. He had always been interested in insurance and so he began studying insurance and shortly passed the New York State insurance examination and opened his own agency. He did not however, give up music. He still played on

FORSTER, PAUL

6.

radio and television and continued to hold a church position, including the Zion Lutheran Church in Syracuse. In the winter of 1956, the Forsters decided to move to St. Petersburg, Florida. Although retired from the insurance business he found a position as organist and minister of music at the Church by the Sea near St. Petersburg.

The organ in the Worth Theatre in Syracuse was later installed in the Casa Manana in Fort Worth, Texas, and Paul Forster came to Fort Worth in the early 1970's to participate in the formal reopening of this organ there. The featured artist on that occasion was Rex Koury.

Forster has been selected as a member of the American Theatre Organ Society Hall of Fame.

PAUL H. FORRESTER

1938

Feature spotlight community singing and solos have made Paul H. Forrester's first year at the Eckel Theatre in Syracuse a success. He also played at the Worth Theatre, Fort Worth, Texas.

(22)

Review 500
3/68

The following item was found in the January 1929 issue of The American Organist by Lloyd E Klos:

HOW ONE ORGANIST KEEPS THE AUDIENCE INTERESTED

Mr Paul H Forster, the Syracuse organist, who recently installed his own studio organ for practice and teaching, has always been resourceful in fighting away the monotony which is likely to surround the work of the organ in the theatre and ultimately sing it out of sight. In the present day, resourcefulness is needed more than ever.

Mr Forster's plan is a direct appeal to his audience. The response of the audience is quite sufficient influence with the box office of any theatre to keep contracts alive for organists. Mr Forster is organist of the Eckel Theatre, Syracuse, NY, and he has worked his audience of laymen into the Eckel Organ Club thru the simple device of inducing them to make requests for him to play their favorite organ numbers on his programs.

First, there is the little pink Request Card, measuring only about two inches by three, and carrying three of the famous dotted lines, upon the first of which, the layman writes the name of his favorite number, using the other two lines for his name and address. This card is available to the audience, on a desk in the Eckel Theatre lobby where it is convenient to fill it in and drop it into the request box.

When the cards are collected each day, Mr Forster determines which request numbers he will play and when he will play them, and

...keeping the signature

of The Eckel Organ Club, Eckel Theatre, Syracuse, NY, with this statement:

"Dear Patron: I thank you for your request.....will be played for you in my Novelty during the week of.....I hope you will be here to sing with the Organ. Cordially yours, Paul H Forster, Organist."

Every patron who sends in a request which is accepted and played by Mr Forster as part of his novelty, becomes a member of the Eckel Organ Club. There were 138,000 of the request cards used during the past year, and of these, there were a sufficient number actually deposited in the request box to require 28,500 acknowledgment cards; manifestly it is impossible for any theatre organist to play more than a few request numbers each week. There is thrown onto the screen, with each of Mr Forster's novelty presentations, the name of the "member" of the club whose number is being played at that performance.

Though the idea has been in force a year, there is an average of about 4,000 requests each week. Naturally, the management and box office are duly impressed. Naturally, an organist is retained as a definite feature of the program. Mr Forster writes:

"The newspapers are helping me with the idea, and are always willing to print any data I send them on the club. It also works out to be a money-getter for the box office, as it goes without saying that the patron receiving a card, informing him of the date his request number is to be played, will be in the audience."

Mr Forster has been elected for another term as president of the Syracuse Society of Theatre Organists, which meets each month for a midnight meeting and dinner when "we all have a real good time together."

There may be some doubt if the plan developed by Mr Forster could be put into effective and successful operation on Broadway, but there is hardly any doubt of its success in the majority of our

smaller cities and towns, where the motion picture theatre holds a much more important place in the scheme of things entertaining. It will be readily seen that two things must be accomplished by any plan undertaken by a theatre organist, if the desired ends are to be achieved. First, the audience must be made to take an interest in the work of the organ and organist in the course of the theatre's program each night; and second, the manager must be brought to a realization of the interest the audience is taking. Mr Forster's plan has been in operation for 62 weeks--a pretty good test for any plan. The acknowledgment card is not a penny postal, but is an attractively printed card, mailed in an envelope for greater emphasis and importance.



"Pepsodent brings you 'Amos 'n Andy'. Following that introduction by the announcer with the dulcet tones, Bill Hay, one of the most popular programs to grace the airwaves was on the radio.

When the show originated on Chicago's WGN as "Sam & Henry", beginning in 1926, a small combo was used for introductory music. From June 1932 until September 1937, organ music was provided by WMAQ's Dean Fossler, playing a studio Wurlitzer. After that until 1942, the show's music was furnished by long-time RTOS favorite, Gaylord Carter.

A Chicago native, Dean Fossler started his music lessons at six. Deciding that playing music was better than studying, he left college after a year to play piano in a small Chicago northside theatre. Next came a several-year stint at the Vista Theatre until World War I service took him into the Navy.

Following the war, he saw service in the larger Chicago theatres: Tivoli Roosevelt, Uptown, Paradise and Chicago (at whose console he's shown above). He opened the 4000-seat Michigan in Detroit, refused a position in St. Louis, and returned to Chicago for the radio era. In the early Twenties, Laurens Hammond was experimenting with his electronic organ and Dean tried out the pilot model. The organist was so enthused with the instrument's sound and response that Hammond was stimulated to continue development of it. It was put on the market in 1935.

Since 1939, Dean Fossler has lived in California, performing on such radio programs as "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes", "The Billie Burke Show" and "The Guiding Light". He's been staff artist on the three major networks and served as a demonstrator at Penny Owsley Music Co. for Allen and Baldwin plug-ins.

He retired in 1964, but keeps busy with a church position at the age of 89.

Program notes: Lloyd E. Klos

Next Concert: DENNIS JAMES 8:15 pm, Sat., Nov. 17, 1984

On Saturday, November 17, long-time favorite, DENNIS JAMES will make his eighth RTOS appearance, featuring a song dedicated to Rochester which was written some years ago.

FORSYTHE, PAUL

Organist of the Florence Theatre in Florence, South Carolina
in 1927.

FOSSLER, DEAN

On the staff at the Chicago Theatre, Chicago, Illinois in the
middle to late 1920's and did considerable radio broadcasting over
Chicago stations. A good friend of the Crawfords with whom he worked.

FOSTER, ORVILLE

One of the regular organists of Radio Station WOWO, Fort Wayne,
Indiana (Page pipe organ of about 12 ranks). ~~Broadcast from~~
~~Radio Station WOWO~~

FOSTER, WILL

Broadcast over Radio Station, WBAP, Fort Worth, Texas in the mid 1920's

FOUNTAIN, MARY

Broadcast over radio station WHP, Harrisburg, Penn. in 1937 *and* 1938.

FRAIN, THEODORA

Organist of New York's Vitagraph Theatre (Broadway and 44th Street) in 1915

FRANK, WILLEM

House organist for the RKO Theatre in Boston, Massachusetts
(Wurlitzer).

FRANKLIN, BERNARD

House organist of the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama in 1975.

FRANKLIN, BARNARD

Born October 5, 1937 in Birmingham, Ala
Was born October 5, 1937 in Birmingham, Alabama. Attended the Birmingham Conservatory of Music and received his Bachelor of Music degree from Indiana University School of Music. Staff organist in the 1970's at the ABC Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama.

Winner of the Birmingham Music Club auditions. Music Director for the Tom York Morning Show, Channel 6 Television, Birmingham, Alabama. Toured the United States for Carlson Artists Corporation as music conductor of the "Spotlight Revue." Played club dates in the New York area. Conducted orchestras and personal management of Meyer Davis, 119 West 57th Street, New York, New York.

FRANKLIN, BARNARD

Born October 5, 1937 in Birmingham, Alabama.

A graduate of Indiana University School of Music and a member of the Music Teachers National Association. Studied in Tel Aviv, Israel, and is a staff member of a magazine publication out of Israel. His first television appearance was in New York City at the age of 14, when he appeared with the Thrasher Trio. He toured the United States making appearances for the Carlson Artists Corporation. Franklin was a musical conductor on the S. S. Atlantic for American Exports-Isbrandtsen Lines. He is a lifetime member of the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity, a member of the American Theatre Organ Society, and a member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. He is founder of the Birmingham Organ Club. At present he operates Barnard Classroom Productions

FRANKLIN, BARNARD

2.

in Birmingham, Alabama. He recently recorded a long playing stereo recording on the 4 manual/20 rank Wurlitzer pipe organ in the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. Franklin is Music Director for the Tom York Morning Show, Channel 6 Television, Birmingham.

FRANZ, ARMIN JACK

Theatre organist who provided organ background music for "The Lone Ranger" radio show. Had played theatre organs during the silent film era in the Detroit area. Franz was organist of the Detroit Fox Theatre from 1928 to 1939. Also played at the following Detroit theatres: the Lafayette, the Strand, the Michigan, the Madison, the Capitol, and the Adams. During and after World War II, Franz played in nightclubs and restaurants. Served as staff organist for Radio Station WXYZ from which "The Lone Ranger" broadcast originated, and also played for another radio show originating on that station, "Name That Tune." Was guest soloist and honorary member of the Detroit Theatre Organ Club. From 1960 to 1975 he taught organ privately in his home. He died March 7, 1975 at Mt. Carmel, Michigan at the age of 72.

1932

ARMIN FRANZ (Detroit Fox) lends his artistry to an advertising tieup with a local amusement park here. The theatre's dancing school is slated for an excursion at the park, and Franz's solo, "A Trip to Jefferson Beach," serves to impress the idea. His numbers parade the features of the park. The Ferris wheel song is "You're My Everything." The merry-go-round revolves to the tune of "My Mom." "My Silent Love" rides on the scenic railway and the roller coaster is labeled "Home." Response and applause were very good despite the exploitation.

ARMIN J. FRANZ

1928

Armin J. Franz, solo organist at the Fox Theater in Detroit, opened that beautiful theater. He formerly filled a successful engagement at the Michigan Theater as associate to Arthur Gutow.

FRAZEE, ROY L.

Son of organ builder who founded the Frazee Organ Company in Boston, Massachusetts in 1910, known successively as Kimball, Smallman, and Frazee, Kimball-Frazee in 1915, and the Frazee Organ Company in 1925 till the late 1960's. Roy Frazee the organist was a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music in 1916 and holder of a Doctorate of Music from Oxford University in England. Like many theatre organists, Frazee started out as a piano teacher and church organist and then became interested in theatre organ playing. He was organist of the Olympia Theatre in Boston in 1920. He played in theatres in Baltimore, Maryland, Washington, D. C., at the Granada Theatre in Malden, Massachusetts, and at the Keith-Memorial Theatre in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1929 he was director of the Boston Theatre Organ Club. Also organist of the New Bedford

FRAZEE, ROY L.

2.

Theatre. Frazee died in February 1965 at North Weymouth, Massachusetts.

1928



Roy L. Frazee
Solo Organist

AT

Granada Theatre
Malden, Mass.

1928

RAY L. FRAZEE

A graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, in 1916, and several published picture compositions to his credit and a following worthy of the son of Mr. L. H. Frazee, the organ builder, is Ray Frazee's record and the patrons of the Granada Theatre in Malden, Mass., may be congratulated upon their choice of solo-organist. He is very well liked and is doing exceedingly well. Previously he was at the Loew State Theatre in Boston.

Lehman

38/4

Roy Frazee

The following item was found in the August 1920 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

Beginning with this issue, Melody is establishing a department devoted to the interests of music in its relation to the motion picture, in which will be related human interest material regarding moving picture pianists, organists, their ideas, preferences and experiences.

The musical accompaniment to the moving picture is now fully recognized as the "life" of the picture--it so adequately portrays human feelings, emotions, and lends an atmosphere to situations otherwise impossible. "Every little movement has a meaning of its own" is clearly carried home to the audience by the musical accompaniment, which, in short, carries one away to "live" the picture. And it can clearly be seen why an excellent accompaniment can sometimes make a mediocre picture excellent in effect, a fact well appreciated by earnest theatre managers everywhere. It is the "what" which makes an accompaniment excellent which we would earnestly discuss for the benefit of readers of Melody.

The motion picture, although comparatively recent, has come to stay with us. Moreover, it has become well recognized as a definite recreational and educative source of which persons of all ages and classes imbibe. The music accompanying the motion picture is so inextricably bound up with the latter that it seems to many

This is especially true in the case of patrons who attend first-class houses where the organ is played by a master of the art, or the piano by an expert pianist.

There is no room for argument, we feel sure, when we assume that just as a general or captain is responsible for the success of his army, an organist or pianist is responsible for the effect of his music.

In this issue, Mr. Royll. Frazee, organist at the Washington Street Olympia Theatre in Boston, and unquestionably reputed as one of the unexcelled interpreters of the photoplay, express his ideas and experiences for the benefit and pleasure of Melody readers.

At the age of one month, Mr Frazee was brought to this country from Canada, where he was born on July 10, 1894. Mr. Frazee has always resided in Boston where he received his education and music training. He may be said to inherit much of his ability as an organist from his father, an organ-builder of note, who has been active in the building of organs in six or eight of the largest theatres in Boston.

Mr. Frazee is also a composer, having written music continuously since the age of nine, when he made his initial debut with a semi-classical piece entitled "Angel's Dream," which was later published by Theodore Presser in 1910. Since then, Mr. Frazee has written many compositions and popular songs, including several hits, but his chief interest lies in photoplay interpretation. One of his latest in the popular line is "You Win," fox trot, which appeared in the May 1920 issue of Melody.

Mr. Frazee says: "Whenever I am invited to express my views on

the subject of photoplay interpretation, I cannot help but feel that too much is being said, and too little is being done. I have closely studied the articles of apparently good writers on the subject, only to be disappointed with their worth.

"We all have some 'cranky' notions about our work, but by plainly presenting them, we might be of considerable help to each other-- unless we choose to cover them up with rhetorical display.

"I was graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1915, having completed the courses in organ, composition, harmony, counterpoint, musical history, etc. During the next two years, I became fairly well known as a concert organist in this country and Canada. When the World War intervened and the interest in organ recitals was greatly dampened, I was obliged to turn to the movies, and in a very short while, my family and myself were again "dining out" occasionally.

"During my three years as movie organist, I have developed several so-called 'cranky' notions on which I bank a great deal in my work. First of all, I feel that an organist should have a responsibility which is two-fold--to his audience and to his humble self. His work in both directions should have two results--satisfaction and education.

"I divide my audience into what I call the "noisy minority" and the "thinking Majority". I have to give a proportionate amount of satisfaction to each. The first is easy. By imitating the grunt or squeal of a pig's being shown on the screen, or by playing a tune with flashy variations--in other words, by being clownish here and there--I can gain the approval of this crowd. Their appreciation is manifested by noisy laughter, clapping, stamping of feet, etc.

"Now, the thinking majority are not so easy to reach. To arrive with them, the organist must be sincere in his attempt to give the picture a clean-cut interpretation. He must be able to play well his library of music, ranging from the trivial to the very deepest classical. If one part of a picture may be considered more important than another, I would suggest that more attention be given to places of dramatic tension. For instance, we have a court scene, in which a man is being tried for murder. Imagine playing some ordinary passive piece of music during such a view. Here is an opportunity for an organist to select the very best of the world's great music, perhaps an andante movement, ~~from a season have been a revelation to me in this respect.~~ All classes of people daily give their closest attention to Mollenhauer's excellent programmes. And the deeper he goes, the better they like it.

"Then again should the picture require it, the organist cannot be too 'jazzy', and a lot of attention should be given to this important feature. Catchy counterpoints should be used a great deal.

"But without trying to go too deeply into so inexhaustible a subject in a short sketch like this, I would sum up these few ventures by saying that the "thinking majority" of people will give the approval which counts to the careful, conscientious fitting of a picture by an intelligent organist, who at the same time must have a well-developed sense of humor.

"Self education is the golden opportunity which presents itself to the moving-picture organist. He may be gifted with a faculty for improvisation, rearranging or memorizing. Whichever it may be, he has a great chance to cultivate it to a high degree.

"If these fragments of thought should awaken anybody to a realization of his responsibility in raising the standard of his work at

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The motion picture, although comparatively recent, has come to stay with us. Moreover, it has become well recognized as a definite recreational and educative source of which persons of all ages and classes imbibe. The music accompanying the motion picture is so inextricably bound up with the latter that it seems to many movie fans that they attend the movies merely to "enjoy the music."

This is especially true in the case of patrons who attend first-class houses where the organ is played by a master of the art, or the piano by an expert pianist.

There is no room for argument, we feel sure, when we assume that just as a general or captain is responsible for the success of his army, an organist or pianist is responsible for the effect of his music.

In this issue, Mr. Roy L. Frazee, organist at the Washington Street Olympia Theatre in Boston, and unquestionably reputed as one of the unexcelled interpreters of the photoplay, express his ideas and experiences for the benefit and pleasure of Melody readers.

At the age of one month, Mr Frazee was brought to this country from Canada, where he was born on July 10, 1894. Mr. Frazee has always resided in Boston where he received his education and music training. He may be said to inherit much of his ability as an organist from his father, an organ-builder of note, who has been active in the building of organs in six or eight of the largest theatres in Boston.

Mr. Frazee is also a composer, having written music continuously since the age of nine, when he made his initial debut with a semi-classical piece entitled "Angel's Dream," which was later published by Theodore Presser in 1910. Since then, Mr. Frazee has written many compositions and popular songs, including several hits, but his chief interest lies in photoplay interpretation. One of his latest in the popular line is "You Win," fox trot, which appeared in the May 1920 issue of Melody.

Mr. Frazee says: "Whenever I am invited to express my views on

the subject of photoplay interpretation, I cannot help but feel that too much is being said, and too little is being done. I have closely studied the articles of apparently good writers on the subject, only to be disappointed with their worth.

"We all have some 'cranky' notions about our work, but by plainly presenting them, we might be of considerable help to each other-- unless we choose to cover them up with rhetorical display.

"I was graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1915, having completed the courses in organ, composition, harmony, counterpoint, musical history, etc. During the next two years, I became fairly well known as a concert organist in this country and Canada. When the World War intervened and the interest in organ recitals was greatly dampened, I was obliged to turn to the movies, and in a very short while, my family and myself were again "dining out" occasionally.

"During my three years as movie organist, I have developed several so-called 'cranky' notions on which I bank a great deal in my work. First of all, I feel that an organist should have a responsibility which is two-fold--to his audience and to his humble self. His work in both directions should have two results--satisfaction and education.

"I divide my audience into what I call the "noisy minority" and the "thinking Majority". I have to give a proportionate amount of satisfaction to each. The first is easy. By imitating the grunt or squeal of a pig's being shown on the screen, or by playing a tune with flashy variations--in other words, by being clownish here and there--I can gain the approval of this crowd. Their appreciation is manifested by noisy laughter, clapping, stamping of feet, etc.

"Now, the thinking majority are not so easy to reach. To arrive with them, the organist must be sincere in his attempt to give the picture a clean-cut interpretation. He must be able to play well his library of music, ranging from the trivial to the very deepest classical. If one part of a picture may be considered more important than another, I would suggest that more attention be given to places of dramatic tension. For instance, we have a court scene^e, in which a man is being tried for murder. Imagine playing some ordinary passive piece of music during such a view. Here is an opportunity for an organist to select the very best of the world's great music, perhaps an andante movement ~~for a reason have been a revelation to me in this respect.~~ All classes of people daily give their closest attention to Mollenhauer's excellent programmes. And the deeper he goes, the better they like it.

"Then again should the picture require it, the organist cannot be too 'jazzy', and a lot of attention should be given to this important feature. Catchy counterpoints should be used a great deal.

"But without trying to go too deeply into so inexhaustible a subject in a short sketch like this, I would sum up these few ventures by saying that the "thinking majority" of people will give the approval which counts to the careful, conscientious fitting of a picture by an intelligent organist, who at the same time must have a well-developed sense of humor.

"Self education is the golden opportunity which presents itself to the moving-picture organist. He may be gifted with a faculty for improvisation, rearranging or memorizing. Whichever it may be, he has a great chance to cultivate it to a high degree.

"If these fragments of thought should awaken anybody to a realization of his responsibility in raising the standard of his work at the organ, I shall be thankful."

FRAZEE, ROY L. (Mrs.)

Wife of Roy Frazee. A theatre organist in her own right. Held several positions in the Boston area, including the organist position at the Alhambra Theatre in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1929.

FRAZIER, NAN

The Hippodrome Theatre in Waco, Texas was a twin of the Hippodrome Theatre in Dallas. Frazier played at the Hippodrome Theatre in Waco and when the 2 manual/19 rank Pilcher pipe organ was removed to the First Methodist Church in Waco, she became their organist. During the 1930's one of more colorful pastors of that church like to burst into song in the middle of the service whenever he would think of a particular hymn. He appreciated Nan Frazier's work at the console because she was prepared to accompany any hymn which he would start any time during the service. She said that her experience in the theatre had really paid off.

FRASIER, TEX

Organist of the Ellensburg Theatre in Ellensburg, Washington in 1922.

FRAZIER, RAY

Student of late theatre organist Floyd Wright. Organ teacher in the California Bay area. Former president of the Bay Area Professional Organists Club. Recorded a long playing stereo record at the Grant Union High School (4 manual/21 rank Kilgen-Wurlitzer) in Sacramento, California.

FRECHETTE, F. LOUIS

Organist of LaPetite in Kankakee, Illinois in 1926.

FREED, WALTER

Freed was born in Spokane, Washington in 1883. He spent ten years as a theatre organist and ten years as an organist at Fraunces Tavern in New York. Freed authored five books on playing the organ and composed and published a number of songs.

FREED, WALTER

FRENCH, DON

Don French was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. At the age of ten, he started piano lessons. His first contact with organ playing was on the 2 manual/8 rank Morton in the Moreland Theatre. This was accomplished through badgering of the manager until he finally consented to let French play.

When he was sixteen, he got his first professional job as relief organist at the Imperial Rink in Portland. This position continued through high school and until he entered the Air Force. While stationed at Sioux Falls Air Base, he played many hours of concert over the Post Broadcasting System. He played intermissions on the 3 manual/10 rank Wurlitzer at the Lincoln Theatre while

FRENCH, DON

2.

stationed at Lincoln Air Base, Nebraska. After his discharge from the service, he opened the "Fun Centre" rink in Gresham, Oregon. He held this position until he entered college and found he could not do both jobs. Once again, he became relief organist at the Imperial Rink and played there until moving to Seattle, Washington.

French attended the University of Washington and then became staff organist at the White Center Rollerdrome. The opportunity came for him to play a 4 manual/15 rank Wurlitzer at the Redondo Arena. This lasted only five weeks due to the Arena being destroyed by fire. French's next position was with the Seattle Rollerbowl.

FRENCH, DON

3.

After three months, the same thing happened. The entire building was destroyed by fire. Five pipe organs went up in smoke, two that were installed, and three being stored. For one year, he played a 3 manual/10 rank Morton at the Tacoma Rollerbowl. French wanted to try his hand in another field and went into insurance for two years. He couldn't break away from music and when he was asked to help out for a couple of weekends at the Kings Rink in Tacoma, he agreed. This lasted from September until the following July. A beautiful new rink was being built at Federal Way, south of Seattle. French / negotiated for the job of playing the 3 manual/11 rank Wurlitzer and got it. This position lasted ten years.

FRENCH, DON

4.

Presently, French, his wife, and daughter live in a wooded suburb overlooking Puget Sound. He is installing a 3 manual/10 rank Wurlitzer in the basement of his home. He currently plays for dancing in Seattle. During the Wurlitzer Regional meeting in Portland in 1965, he played the Christmas Concert and was asked to be one of the featured artists at the National Convention in Portland in 1966. He has been Chairman of the Puget Sound Chapter A.T.O.E. for the past two terms and had been active in the Chapter three years before that.

FRENCH, MARGARET (MISS MARGARETTA)

Theatre organist in the New York City area in the middle to late 1920's. In 1925 she was a trustee of the New York Society of Theatre Organists, while she held an organist position at Loew's Theatre at 83rd and Broadway. In 1928 she adjourned to Paris, France where she became organist of the Magdaleine Theatre.

FREY, EUGENE

Theatre organist broadcasting over Radio Station KSTP in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1928.

FREY, OSCAR

Organ teacher in the St. Paul, Minnesota area in 1928.

FRICKE, ESTHER

Theatre organist broadcasting over Radio Station KTM in
Los Angeles, California in 1930.

FRIEDMAN, HAL (Harold Milton Friedman)

Born in Collinville, Massachusetts, March 18, 1906. Parents, Bessie and Nathan Friedman. Attended Lowell Massachusetts High School. Mastered the violin as well as the organ. In 1926 became a feature organist for Netoco Theatres and has been featured in various houses of that chain. In 1930 he was organist of the Netoco Morton Theatre in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

FRISE, SALLIE

Theatre organist in the Boston area in the 1920's. Secretary of the Boston Theatre Organists Club in 1929. Organist of the Lancaster Theatre in Boston, Massachusetts in 1929.

FRITZ, ARTHUR B. ("ARCH")

Treasurer of the Los Angeles Society of Theatre Organists in 1923. Fritz remained active in the Los Angeles Society of Theatre Organists for many years. Organist of the Carmel Theatre in Los Angeles, California in 1925. In early 1927 he was organist of the Parisienne Theatre in Los Angeles. In the latter part of the year, he became organist of the Rialto Theatre in Los Angeles, California. In 1930 he was broadcasting over Radio Station KGFK in Hallock, Minnesota.

FROMMEL, H. C.

Frommel was on the staff of the Capitol Theatre, New York City where he served with Dr. Melchiorre Mauro-Cottone and Mr. Carl McKinley. Dr. Mauro-Cottone was chief organist. Frommel was a composer of popular music, who was well known in the eastern part of the United States in the mid-1920's. The organ at the Capitol Theatre was a 3 manual Estey with a Luminous Stop Touch console.

Philadelphia Inquirer 2/25/84 (Sat)

Leta Williams Fry, movie organist

Leta Williams Fry, 85, a former organist and pianist in the silent-movie era of the 1920s at the Fox Theater in Philadelphia, died Thursday at West Jersey Hospital's Northern Division in Camden. She lived in Haddon Heights, N.J.

After studying at the Combs Conservatory of Music in Philadelphia, she became organist and pianist at the theater, accompanying feature films and newsreels.

She also composed a classical selection called *Impressions*, which was performed several times, most recently in the late 1950s by the Delaware Valley Philharmonic Orchestra, family members said. She not only wrote the piece, but arranged it for each instrument in the orchestra, they said.

Later in her life, she was the proprietor of Fry's Candies, a former

Philadelphia confectionery business.

She was also a member of the Glenside Plastics Club in Glenside, Montgomery County, a hobbyist group.

Mrs. Fry is survived by a daughter, Carol Kuenstner, and two grandchildren.

Funeral services will be Monday at 10 a.m. at Foster's Funeral Home, Haddon and Lees Avenues, Collingswood, N.J.

FROSA, MRS.

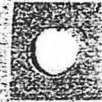
Organist of Loew's New Rochelle Theatre, New York in 1927.

FULTON, ELLET

Theatre organist who broadcast over Radio Station WQAN in
Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1928.

GEORGE H. FULTON

George H. Fulton is being featured as solo-organist at the Carmen Theatre in Philadelphia. He has played at the Carmen for eight years, where in that time he has built up a tremendous following. Fulton features straight organ work.



1928

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