

NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

Jason and I have found some unusual and some humorous nuggets this time. Sources were American Organist (AO), Diapason (D), Jacobs (J), Melody (M) and Metronome (Met.).

June 1922 (AO) The Howard Organ Seat has been the subject of examination by an efficiency expert, and through more efficient production methods, the price has been cut almost in half. It is now within the reach of modest-salaried players and will be an improvement over the old-style bench.

Feb. 1923 (D) *The Marr & Colton Organ Co. of Warsaw, N. Y. sent to its friends a very tastefully engraved calendar for 1923. Its workmanship and appearance are taken to indicate the quality of M&C craftsmanship in their factory.*

Sept. 1924 (Met.) The Standard Slide Corp. of New York is the originator of novelties called "Orgologues", which are proving of exceptional value to theatre organists. A complete set consists of 38 slides with appropriate music. Most recent production is "War Is Hell." Many leading theatres, including the Metropolitan in Atlanta, are showing these slides. Cost is \$10 a set; \$25 for three complete sets.

April 1925 (D) *The Wurlitzer Co. has shipped in 12 freight cars to Los Angeles, the organ for the Roosevelt Memorial Park. A year went into its building. Wind pressures are 25, 35 and 50 inches, with a Spencer Orgoblo and 55 HP motor used. The 32-foot CCCC diaphone is 42" square at the top. An automatic player attachment is included.*

Apr. 1926 (M) ERNEST KRAUTER, organist at the Empress Theatre in Cordova, Alaska, plays each evening from 7:50 to 9:30 on a Kimball. Sourdoughs demand not a faker, but a musician who can play good stuff, plus latest "red hot" jazz. Ernest, who has time for teaching, hunting and winter sports, likes Alaska and intends to stay there.

March 1927 (J) Chicago's HENRY FRANCIS PARKS is dismayed over a phenomenon which "plagues" Chicago theatre organists. "Why is it impossible to play in a movie theatre and use both feet? Chicago is famous for that. With possibly two exceptions, none of its organists uses more than the first octave and a half on the extreme left of the pedalboard. I started an investigation awhile back, running a quarter-page ad in the Chicago Musicians' Union paper for 60 days, announcing a special course for 10 weeks for left-footed organists to develop their right-foot technique. How many replies? None! I would like to argue the point with anyone who wants to defend the one-foot method."

March 1928 (D) BILLY GANZ, organist of the Isis Theatre in Kansas City, played a hero's role on January 24 when, upon seeing flames break out in the left wing of the stage, continued playing a lively tune while summoning the manager via an usher. The latter calmed the audience in its move to the exits. Meanwhile, the organist, who had been accompanying the film "That's My Daddy," struck up a march while flaming curtains and drapes fell about him. No one was hurt.

June 1929 (D) *The Philadelphia Fraternity of Theatre Organists had 200 at its annual dinner, April 28. OTTO SCHMIDT voiced a warning against "canned music", stating that "immediate and outspoken public sentiment can save the organist from oblivion. The more cultured type of theatre patron is opposed to synchronized scores, but they are served and he must swallow them unprotestingly." Conflicting opinions were voiced by a few of the picture industry promoters present.*

Sept. 1930 (D) Los Angeles organist ROLAND DIGGLE says he stopped at the United Artists Theatre recently, and found the organist using songslides in an effort to get the audience to sing. "It was this dismal stuff which helped put the theatre organist onto the shelf," says Diggle, "and the first chance he has to come back, the same thing over again. The audience, of which 80% were retired people who wanted to pass a cool, quiet afternoon, were being goaded to sing 'Happy Days Are Here Again!'"

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July 3-7

Sept. 1931 (D) CARL PARKER, a motion picture organist, and his roommate, Stanley Wilson, 19, were sentenced in Chicago to terms of one year to life, following their conviction for armed robbery of 10 drug stores. Parker's attorney asked for leniency, because his client had been influenced by gangland pictures he watched while working in various theatres.

GOLD DUST, Oct. 1915: J. E. LORD, concert and church organist, will preside at the new organ in the Strand Theatre in Meridian, Miss. . . . June 1916, LOUIS DORFMAN at the Alhambra in Stamford, Conn. . . . June 1917, in New York, C. STARLING is at the Royal, while DR. ALFRED G. ROBYN and PROF. FIRMIN SWINNEN are at the Rialto . . . April 1918, RALPH A. BRIGHAM and HERBERT SISSON at the Strand in N. Y., while L. E. MANOLY is at Keith's in Washington, D. C. . . . Aug. 1918, J. VAN CLEFT COOPER at the Rivoli, New York . . . Feb. 1919, F. HOBBS at the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec . . . March 1919, FRED HERMANN at the Dixie in Galveston, while L. B. RIGGS is at the Hotel Astor, N. Y. . . . June 1919, HERBERT HOLTZ at the Hotel Bond, Hartford, Conn. . . . Sept. 1919, WALTER STEELY plays the Cort in Chicago . . . March 1920, EDWARD NAPIER and F. W. HAMMON at the Strand, N. Y. . . . Aug. 1920, ROY L. FRAZEE at the Olympia, Boston . . . Sept. 1920, JOHN PRIEST and FRANK STEWART ADAMS at New York's Rialto . . . Oct. 1920, MAC FARREN is at Chicago's Covent Garden . . . Nov. 1920, HOWARD Z. LONG at the Lyric in Reading, Pa. . . . Dec. 1920, MAC SEAVER at the Beacon, Boston . . . Jan. 1921, LEON E. IODINE at Loew's Valentine, Toledo . . . Feb. 1921, G. RAY SMITH at the Lyric in Redfield, S. Dakota . . . Feb. 1922, EARL MORGA at the 3-manual Hilgreen-Lane in the Fulton, Cleveland . . . June 1922, LEO BATH in the Grand in Faribault, Minn.; TEX FRASIER at the Ellensburg (Wash.); CHARLES W. HAWLEY, Rex in Eugene, Ore.; JAN PHILIP SCHINHAN, Liberty in San Jose, Cal.; T. WILLIAM STREET, Rialto in San Antonio; EMIL TRACHEL, Lyric in Duluth; ADELAIDE GARDNER, Rockville (N. Y.) theatre . . . Dec. 1922, EUGENE H. GORDON at the Strand, Columbus, Ohio.

See you sourdoughs in June with a salute to Chicago, our convention metropolis.

— Lloyd and Jason