

# GEORGE WRIGHT IN BRITISH CONCERT

Organist George Wright, who has a long list of musical "firsts" to his credit, added two more last April in the Granada Cinema located in Tooting, a suburb of London, England. Not only was it his first concert appearance

in Britain, but it was an occasion attended by a record number of professional organists. The concert was sponsored by C.G. Conn (UK) Ltd., the overseas counterpart of Conn Organ Corporation, Oak Brook, Ill.

The Granada Cinema in Tooting, London, at sunset on April 6, prior to George's first British concert there.



Wright's two-part program was presented on the newly introduced Conn Model 651 3-manual deluxe theatre organ, with five sets of electronic pipe speakers and ten tone cabinets.

During comments to the 1300-strong audience, he complimented the British for their many contributions to organ technology such as that brought to America by Robert Hope-Jones. In addition, he recognized the contributions to musical forms such as those created by the Beatles to delight the younger generation.

Wright's performance covered a broad spectrum of musical entertainment. The first portion of the program included his special renditions of "Love for Sale," "This Bird Has Flown," "Sophisticated Lady," "Quando, Quando, Quando," "Goin' Out of My Head," "I'll See You Again," "I Got Rhythm," "Day By Day," "Yesterday," "The Honkey Tonk Train" and a Noel Coward Medley.

The program's second portion opened with Wright's unique interpretation of "Here's That Rainy Day." Other selections included "Frasquita Serenade" and "Auf Wiedersehen" (from "Blue Paradise"). Also included was a Duke Ellington group with "I'm Beginning to See the Light," "I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good," and "Take the A Train." He suitably concluded his program with a musical tribute to the old theatre — "Granada."

In a short week's time following the performance, John Robertson, director of Conn (UK) Ltd. received 40 letters from organists who had attended the performance, expressing delight at Wright's warmth and musical expertise. According to Robertson, many of the letters pointed out that this was





George on stage at the Granada Tooting. He banters with the concert's sponsor, John Robertson, director of C.G. Conn (UK) Ltd. The pipes in the foreground are resonators for the speaker system beneath them.

the first time that a company had gotten so many organists under one roof at one time.

The roster of famous organists attending included Jerry Allen, Ena Baga, Ray Baines, Keith Beckingham, Ronald Curtis, Basil, Cuthbert, Andrew Fenner, David Hamilton, Vic Hammett, Don Knights, Alex Leader, Arnold Loxam, John Madin, John Mann, Bobby Pagan, Douglas Reeves, Robin Richmond, Robinson Cleaver, Joseph Seal, Hubert Selby, Gerald Show, Florence De Jong, Harold Smart, Charles Smitton, John Stewart and Trevor Willets.

Immediately following the concert, 104 guests attended a reception at the Dorchester Hotel in London given by Robertson and Jack Daacon, who represented the American part of Conn Organ Corp. □

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**"THE NOTE-ABLE NINETEENTH"**

1974  
NATIONAL CONVENTION  
DETROIT — JULY 11-15 

## DINNY'S COLYUM

as  
transcribed  
by  
Del Castillo



Don't seem possible that I been lissenin to organs and organ music and organ players for well over sixty years, startin with the time I was a boy soprano in Emanuel Church in Boston. But I don't think I was takin music very serious in them days, in spite of the fack that was my first professional job as a musician. Twicet a week I would hop onto the streetcar in Cambridge and go in for quire practice on a Friday and then two services on Sunday. Good thing carfares was only a nickel, because I only got 85 cents a week and no expenses paid. I guess the organ was a pretty fine organ and I always got a kick out of it when Mr. Hyde would cut loose on it. I musta had a little musical imagination, I guess, because when we filed out for the recession and ended up in the anteroom with the doors shut to sing the Amen, why I could always imagine the way the singin must have got softer and softer until we finished. But the other thing I remember is that we had to stay quiet as mice while we heard the minister in the church givin the benediction, and then we tore out of there lickity-split tearin off our cossacks and catters to see who could get out of the church the fastest.

The worst part was sittin quiet for the sermon, so what we did was to invent a kind of a circulatin liberry. We would cut stories out of the noospapers into strips and past em into a long roll so as we could read em during the sermon. I spose the men singers who was suppose to keep an eye on us made believe they didnt see it because they knew it kept us quiet. For all I know they might have started the idea theirselves. Anyways it worked, and of course we could swap the stories around so as we always had somethin to read. Mr. Hyde he was a

real swell quiremaster and I know he helped me to read real good. He made us do what he called vocalize and he showed us how to breathe so we could hold a note without it goin flat. One Xmas he give me a collecktion of piano music and I still got it even if some of the peaces was pretty hard for me. Anyways pretty soon I had to quit on account my voice was changin and that was real tough because by then I was makin \$1.10 a week. But I always remembered Mr. Arthur Sewell Hyde. He was a good egg.

About the time I got out of high school they was beginnin to have organs in the movie theayters, and I got so as I would sneak off to lissen to the organs as much as look at the movies. I got so as I knew what kind of organs was in the different theayters. They was a old church organ in the Park Theayter that I could see wasnt no good for playin pitchers, but they was a fine Skinner pipe organ that a jim dandy organ player name of Francis Cronin played at the Allston Theayter and then they was a Wurlitzer at the Fenway that was buried on account some dim wit of a architeck put the pipe chambers way in the back of the stage, and then they was a big Skinner pipe organ that Mr. Arthur Martel played at the Metropolitan Theayter and he could make the audience sing pretty good with song slides, and I always got a kick out of hearin him play a overture, because he would bounce up and down on the organ bench when he got to the fast part at the end.

Later on, after Mr. Castillo had came there and left to start his Theayter Organ School and Mr. Martel came back, they decided the Skinner organ wasnt the right kind for a theayter organ, so they threw it out and put in a big Wurlitzer, and I read a wile back that it's still there but they is a lot of pipes that don't play and they got it covered over with boards. But back in the days when the players like Mr. Crawford and his Missus and Mr. Gaylord Carter and Mr. Lew White and Oliver Wallace and Eddie Dunstedter and Ann Leaf and Henry Murtagh and Milton Charles and a lot of others whose names I disremember was comin up on their ellyvaters in a spotlight was the days I remember best until Mr. Al Jolsen come along with the first talkie called The Jazz Singer and put them all out of business. □