



# Music Review

by Walter J. Beaupre, Ph.D.

**WHILE WE'RE YOUNG, Arrangements for Organ by Dave Coleman (\$1.25) and George Wright (\$1.50), Dave Coleman Music, 1958 (available in music stores or from Dave Coleman Music, Inc., P.O. Box 230, Montesano, Washington 98563; postage 75 cents).**

If George Wright has influenced the art of theatre organ playing through his superb public and recorded performances, it can also be claimed that the late Dave Coleman has influenced the same art form through his elegant published arrangements of popular songs. The only currently available G. W. publication known to this reviewer is an arrangement of "While We're Young" — issued during the same year and by the same publisher as the D. C. treatment of the same Alec Wilder tune. Both are available. Consequently, the temptation to compare "notes" was too strong to resist.

The Wright version is supposedly "simplified" while the Coleman offering is aimed at the "intermediate/advanced" player. Actually this

reviewer found very little difference in the level of expertise required. Both begin in the key of C, but Coleman modulates to F for his final chorus while Wright modulates to E-flat. George suggests a basically slow tempo; Dave, moderately fast. The Coleman 8-bar intro is a bit more sophisticated, but the Wright intro is equally catchy.

Treatment of the first sixteen measures of the waltz by both arrangers is surprisingly similar. The obligato which Coleman uses above the melody line is almost identical to the countermelody pattern below the song line of Wright. Coleman uses more second inversions of chords in the left hand; Wright, more third inversions. Chord progressions of G. W. are slightly more complex.

With the second theme each artist goes his separate way. Coleman relies on sustained block chords with the melody reinforced by the left hand; Wright keeps the waltz rhythm in the left hand and states the melody in thirds with countermelody fills.

Dave repeats the opening theme of "While We're Young" with pretty

much the same notes; George restates the first theme an octave lower and now employs an obligato fill. George modulates into E-flat in one bold measure; Coleman spends a leisurely eight measures to make the transition from C to F.

For the final chorus Coleman uses close harmony in block chords (both hands on the same manual); Wright uses open harmony with countermelody thirds adding variety and rhythmic pulse. George regularly uses pedal notes on the first two beats of each measure; Dave alternates between the first two beats and last two beats of each measure.

Overall, the Wright arrangement is more dreamy and introspective; the Coleman treatment is broader and more expansive — slightly longer by ten measures! Coleman repeats many of his musical ideas for effect; Wright consistently introduces variety of ideas. G. W.'s registration suggestions are Spartan; D. C. suggests tibia plus kinura. Printed measures are more crowded in the G. W. edition; page turning is more of a problem in the D. C. edition.

Now, for the 32' question: Which is the better arrangement? You've probably guessed that it's strictly a matter of personal taste. But if this reviewer has been moderately successful in describing the similarities and differences, each individual music buyer should have an answer. □



## Closing Chord



"I can't remember exactly when I became a musician, but I recall playing the piano when I was seven. That was in Daventry, where I was born," **Reginald Foort** once told the writer. A few years later, the Foorts moved to Rugby and young Reggie (he hated being called "Reg.") discovered the organ and thus began a lifelong association. Encouraged by his teacher, Sir Walter Parratt, 17-year-old Reginald took the examination for admittance to the Royal College of Organists. He made it.

His developing career was interrupted by World War I. Seaman Foort literally "called the shots" during the historic naval battle of Jutland. From his vantage point high

in the rigging of a British battleship, Reggie phoned range corrections to the ship's batteries so they could polish off a larger German fleet. "We British simply out-manoeuvred the Germans" boasted Foort years later. He always minimized his contribution. After the war, he had decisions to make.

At first he had hopes of becoming a concert pianist. Audiences didn't materialize so Foort turned to the theatre organ at a time when the silent film industry had caught the imagination of the British public. After a brief apprenticeship, he hit the "big time" at London's New Gallery Kinema on Regent Street. Came "talkies" and Foort joined the BBC

staff of radio organists. This made his name a household word throughout Britain and he was soon that country's top entertainment organist. After about five years of broadcasting, mostly on the BBC's 4/23 studio Compton, Foort made a bold stroke. Noting that many British theatres had no organs, he conceived the idea of a portable pipe organ which could be moved about in vans. He commissioned the Moller Company, an American firm, to build it after British builders turned him down.

The story of Foort's success with the Moller in England is well-documented. World War II stopped the travel, but the Moller became the BBC studio organ and was some-