

NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



This time we run some reviews of organists' presentations. You will notice the organists have one thing in common: They were destined for the Hall of Fame. Sources were *Variety (V)*, *Motion Picture Almanac (MPA)*, and *Motion Picture Herald (MPH)*.

1926 (V) (*Theatre unidentified*). A corking organ solo was "Melodies on Trial," written and played by STUART BARRIE. It was an exposure of the practice of stealing the music of the old masters for the popular numbers of today. First, the original composition was played, then its 1926 version. Once the procedure was switched, the audience being asked to guess the original form of a late jazz number. Seven combinations were used. The best were Le Mare's "Andantino in D Flat" and "Moonlight and Roses;" Linke's "Wedding Dance March" and "Swanee River Moon;" and Chopin's "Minuet Waltz in D Flat" and "Castle of Dreams." That the folks liked the piece hugely was attested by the rousing hand the organist got at its conclusion.

September 1930 (MPA) DON MILLER is now in his fourth year for Kansky-Publix in Detroit. Educated at Jones College of Music in Perry, Iowa and Drake University in Des Moines, he started as a pianist in a small theatre and worked his way up. His first featured organist appearance was at the Des Moines Theatre, having appeared as guest organist in several theatres previously. In 1926, he was at the Hollywood Beach (Fla.) Hotel. For the past three years, he served at the State, Fisher, Paramount and Michigan theatres in Detroit. Now at the Paramount, he does classical and popular numbers, and has had great success in community singing.

January 17, 1931 (MPH) JOHN HAMMOND at the St. George Theatre in Staten Island, N.Y., has become exceedingly popular by giving his audience clever novelties, singable songs, a most pleasing personality, and best of all, real good organ playing. He lives up to his reputation in the current organ presentation.

Opening with a very well played special arrangement of "Sweet Jennie Lee," which he played as a straight spot solo, he followed with an organ invitation for the audience to sing. "Tears" was attractively set in a colorful E-Fect Slide, and though comparatively new, this audience sang it very well. "Cheerful Little Earful" was played, first with the audience contributing the "earful" and then lustily singing it. During and between each number, John cheerfully chats and most pleasantly emits little chuckles which are the delight of the audience who are steady patrons of the house.

Later, when John started to announce something, he was interrupted by a pretty usherette, who after being asked what she wanted, was introduced as Gertrude Kohler, who had a song to sing. To the amazement and pleasure of the patrons, Miss Kohler beautifully sang

"Something Missing In Your Eyes." This audience liked her so well that she was forced to sing another chorus of the number. For the finale, Hammond played "You're Driving Me Crazy," and the audience sang this song even louder than the others.

November 28, 1931 (MPH) JOHN GART is just about the youngest organist-musical conductor in the business. He is 23, born in Poland, and received his education at the Conservatory of Music in Moscow. His stage experience started at ten when he was a piano accompanist to his father, an opera singer in Europe. John's career as a theatre organist started when he was assigned to Loew's 83rd Street Theatre in New York City. Since then, he has been featured in a number of Loew's theatres in the Metropolitan area. A few months ago, he was assigned as both organist and musical conductor at Loew's 46th Street Theatre in Brooklyn. Not only an accomplished musician, he is a very good arranger as well.

September 10, 1932 (MPH) ARSENE SIEGEL at the Detroit Fisher, offers an organ recital of typical Chopin music, somewhat bewildering to most of his audience, but nevertheless in the best of musical taste. His selections are "Prelude in A Minor," "Minute Waltz," and the "Polonaise Militaire." Slides carried titles and explanatory notes.

September 24, 1932 (MPH) BERNIE COWHAM at New York's RKO Flushing, continues to please the patrons with his clever and well-thought-out novelties. Whenever these people hear "The Voice of the RKO," they know that Bernie is opening his presentation and it invariably calls for lusty applause. Bernie gave them "We Just Couldn't Say Good Bye," "Hearts At Ease," "It Was So Beautiful," "In a Little Spanish Town," and "Valencia" for them to sing. He also offered a playing of Spanish numbers which drew well. The finish was the newsreel, accompanied in rhyme to the tune "Snuggled On Your Shoulder."

September 24, 1932 (MPH) DICK LEIBERT at the Brooklyn Paramount, offered a pleasing novelty this week and had no difficulty in having the audience sing. Opening with a chorus of "The Night Shall Be Filled With Music," Leibert then presented a laughable parody chorus to "Hummin'" and followed with an intimate talk which got laughs and applause. The audience then sang "Loveable" and "Thrill to Hear It From You." Comedy was injected in a parody, written with the titles of billboards seen along any road. Dick closed with a stirring rendition of "I Love a Parade."

GOLD DUST: 1/28 HARRY SULLIVAN at Rochester (N.Y.) Theatre . . . 2/28 J. GORDON BALDWIN, Monroe in Rochester . . . 12/28 LEO TERRY, Piccadilly, Chicago; BUDDY WEBBER, Plymouth, RUS HENDERSON, Fox Palace, and ERNEST H. JOHNSON, Capitol in Worcester, Mass.; FRANCIS J. CRONIN, Capitol in Boston; ROY L. FRAZEE, Granada in Malden, Mass.; EARL WEIDENER, B. F. Keith's Memorial, Boston; EDWARD EIGENSCHENK, Clichy Palace in Paris, France . . . 1/29 JOHNNY McCARTNEY (Mack), Pantages in Portland, Ore. . . . 1/30 NELSON SELBY opens 3/15 Wurlitzer in Shea's Seneca, Buffalo . . . 3/31 GLENN GOFF, Varsity in Palo Alto, Cal.; ELMER VINCENT in San Mateo, Cal.;

That should do it until next time. So long, sourdoughs!
Jason & The Old Prospector □