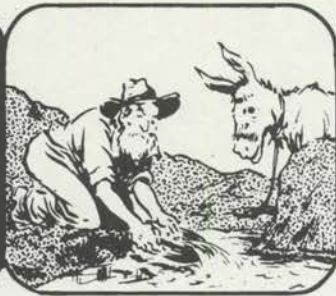


# NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected  
by Lloyd E. Klos



This time we unearth some nuggets on lesser-known theatre organists. References were *Local Press (LP)*, *Around the Town (ATT)*, and *Motion Picture Almanac (MPA)*.

*August 30, 1916 (LP)* WILLIAM S. O'BRIEN opened the two-manual Hook & Hastings organ in the 2638-seat Circle Theatre in Indianapolis.

*December 1928 (ATT)* The patrons of the Fox Palace Theatre in Worcester, Massachusetts really think it worth their while to listen to the magical strains RUSS HENDERSON draws from the organ. He has, during his two-year reign here, established a large following, and broadcasts over WTAG. Previously, he had been featured at some of the houses in Clinton, Massachusetts. He employs solos and novelties which are readily received by the patrons.

*December 1928 (ATT)* MALCOLM THOMPSON is the featured organist at the Sedgewick Theatre in Mt. Airy, Pennsylvania.

*December 1928 (ATT)* WENDELL ENGLISH, solo organist at the State Theatre in Toledo, Ohio, does his own arranging and originates novel ideas. English features solos, slides, and novelties, and broadcasts over WSPD, Toledo. He is the only solo organist in the city.

*December 1928 (ATT)* MILLER SMITH is the solo organist at the Mosque Theatre in Newark, New Jersey. He has been a decided hit since he was first featured there, four years ago. Two of his successful compositions are "I Dream of a Cottage and You," and "A Fantasy." Mr. Smith has devoted three years at the Institute of Musical Art, and is a college graduate from Park, Missouri.

*December 1928 (ATT)* Although this is JERRY THOMAS' first year in Proctor's Grand Theatre in Albany, New York as solo organist, he has created a large following. He features many novelties and adds to his numbers many original arrangements. He formerly filled a successful engagement in Keeney's Theatre in Elmira, New York.

*December 1928 (ATT)* EMILE CATRICALA is solo organist at the Lincoln Theatre in Troy, New York where he has been featured for four years. He is well liked and his novelties and slide numbers are a great hit. WILLIAM A. LEEMAY, associate organist, opened the house seven years ago. He is well liked and is a brilliant player.

*September 1930 (MPA)* EDDIE FORD, who attended the Yale School of Music, is playing at the Colony Theatre in New York. He previously served as organist for 18 months at the Roger Sherman Theatre in New Haven, 14 months in the Publix in Tampa, and the Aztec in San Antonio.

*September 1930 (MPA)* LEONARD SMITH is solo organist in Chicago's Avalon Theatre. Now in his fifth year for the National Playhouse organization, this graduate of the American Conservatory in Chicago has played the Capitol, Stratford, Highland and Jeffery theatres there. He has

written several compositions, best known of which is "Waltz Caprice."

*September 1930 (MPA)* EMIL KOEPEL is featured organist at Loew's Park Theatre in Cleveland after ten years in Toronto and other Cleveland theatres. He does feature presentations and novelties.

*September 1930 (MPA)* HAROLD J. LYON is organist at the Million Dollar State Theatre in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. After attending the University of Pennsylvania and the American Conservatory of Music, he played the Strand and Rialto theatres in Waterloo, Iowa in 1925 and 1926; the Legion Theatre in Marshalltown, Iowa in 1926; went on tour in 1927, and has had several engagements since, including broadcasts.

*September 1930 (MPA)* WILLIAM H. MEEDER is in his third year as organist at the E. F. Albee Theatre in Brooklyn. He served at the Lyceum Theatre in East Orange, New Jersey in 1921 and 1922, and the Regent Theatre in Elizabeth, New Jersey from 1922 to 1927.

*September 1930 (MPA)* EDWARD MEIKEL, who has been an organist in midwest theatres for almost 20 years, is the originator of the "Organ Club" style of solo. In 1911, he was playing piano in a storefront nickel show, and then spent ten years with A. H. Blank Enterprises in Davenport, Iowa. For five years, he has been with Balaban & Katz' Uptown, Tivoli and Harding theatres in Chicago.

*September 1930 (MPA)* MC NEIL SMITH has been solo organist at the Marquette Theatre in Chicago the past four years. He attended Chicago Musical College and has learned much about pipe organs by tinkering with them.

*September 1930 (MPA)* HAL FRIEDMAN is the featured organist at Netoco's Morton Theatre in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Formerly a violinist, he joined the Netoco chain as organist, being featured in several of its houses.

*September 30 (MPA)* LEO WEBER is solo organist at Loew's 83rd Street Theatre in New York. He has had tenures in the Salam (Massachusetts) Theatre, the Branford, Stanley, Newark and State theatres in Newark, and Loew's Jersey City.

*November 2, 1930 (LP)* Loew's Century Theatre announces the return of stage shows, direct from the Capitol Theatre in New York. Featured this week are the Chester Hale girls, the Seven Uyeno Japs, Jans Whalen and June Worth. The show is produced by Arthur Knorr, supervised by Louis K. Sidney, with Allan Rogers as guest master of ceremonies. George Wild directs the concert orchestra and AL HORNIG is the solo organist. On the screen is *A Lady's Morals* with Grace Moore, Wallace Beery and Reginald Denny.

*February 21, 1931 (MPH)* Since Loew's Great Lakes Theatre in Buffalo shifted its policy on December 26, LLOYD "WILD OSCAR" HILL has been using the "radio" idea in his "everybody-sing" programs.

*February 1931 (LP)* HUGH E. WILCOX is organist at Fields Corner Theatre in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

*November 7, 1931 (MPH)* EGON DOUGHERTY, solo organist at Loew's Triboro Theatre in Astoria, Long Island, is resuming community singing.

That should do it 'til next time. So long and Season's Greetings, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □