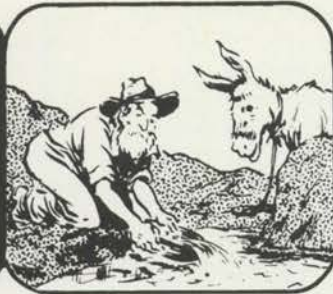


NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



With our season's greetings go some accounts of what the big-name organists were doing way back then. References were *American Organist (AO)*, *Local Press (LP)*, *Around the Town (ATT)*, *Exhibitors Herald World (EHW)*, *Variety (V)* and *Motion Picture Herald (MPH)*.

July 1923 (AO) A native of New London, Wisconsin and a student of Frank Van Dusen, ETHWELL "EDDIE" HANSON has been playing Chicago theatres the past five years and is at the Crystal Theatre where he plays a Bartola. He has been a demonstrator for the Barton Organ Co. His first composition, "Golden Glow," was published by Forster when he was 13. At 14, he had "My Love For You" published, which drew a commendatory note of appreciation from Geraldine Farrar. During the war, he was with Sousa's Band which toured the country for the War Bond drives.

June 19, 1927 (LP) HAROLD RAMSAY was at the 3/17 Barton console when the 3133-seat Indiana Theatre in Indianapolis opened today. (Dessa Byrd and Dale Young were organists later).

September 15, 1927 (LP) Indianapolis' 1032-seat Rivoli Theatre opened today. TIM CRAWFORD was at the Robert-Morton.

September 4, 1927 (LP) Some ten million have passed through the doors of Rochester's Eastman Theatre in the five years since its grand opening. HAROLD OSBORN SMITH and ROBERT BERENTSEN are the house organists, while Victor Wagner, Guy Fraser Harrison and Paul White share conductor's chores.

December 1928 (ATT) A graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music in 1916 with several published picture compositions to his credit, and a following worthy of the son of organ builder L. H. Frazee, is ROY FRAZEE. The management of the Granada Theatre in Malden, Massachusetts may be congratulated upon its choice of a solo organist, as Roy is very well liked and is doing exceedingly well. He was previously at Loew's State in Boston.

March 15, 1930 (EHW) TED MEYN at Jersey City's Loew's, presented a beautifully played spotlight solo which featured a number of "rose" songs. His fine playing, augmented with clever variations and pleasing lighting effects, earned him a tremendous ovation. The selections were "Honeysuckle Rose," "A Red, Red Rose," and "Roses of Picardy." A slide, bearing the words "Everybody Sing" then appeared and Meyn played "Rosecolored Glasses," "Cryin' for Caroline" and "Sunny Side Up" to which the audience sang very well.

Circa 1930 (V) That's some gag JESSE CRAWFORD has thought up for his New York Paramount organ. Whether it is a human voice singing, or the organ playing the portion with the human semblance, Crawford just plays around with exactly enough. It's really difficult to tell for any audi-

ence and that little bit will probably create plenty of discussion. A slide suggests the guess. "A Novelty Concert," Crawford bills it this week, and it is that. His applause was noisy and sincere.

Circa 1930 (V) EDDIE DUNSTEDTER at the State Theatre in Minneapolis, gives his organ interpretation of a number while the words are flashed on a scrim. The selection is tantalizingly catchy as played by Dunstedter. Scrim ascends to reveal a girl, sitting on a cobweb-streaked half moon, suspended in mid-air. A youth in white Pierrette costume, strums a mandolin-like instrument, attached to a broom handle and sings the verses of the song to the girl who later warbles one of the choruses herself. At the end of the song, six State Theatre ballet girls, wearing tight-fitting, colorful Pierrette suits, are on for a clever broom dance to the same melody. Dunstedter, of course, furnishes the musical accompaniment for the singers as well as the dancers. A toe dance by a pair of girls in regulation ballet attire follows.

October 24, 1931 (MPH) LLOYD "WILD OSCAR" HILL's first solo at the Brooklyn Albee Theatre worked out as smoothly as if he had been featured here for a long time. The audience, when told to sing, responded without the least hesitancy and the singing increased in volume, right up to the last number.

The solo opened with the orchestra playing "The Voice of the RKO" as Oscar at the console ascended. Comedy slides with words introducing the solo were shown as the organist played incidental music. Oscar then turned toward the audience and through the mike introduced his "School of Broadcasting," speaking supposedly to the radio audience. His entire announcing was a burlesque on a real broadcast and the audience got many laughs. He first announced the station as JOY, and the Albee Square Mixed Chorus (audience) would do the singing as he accompanied them on the organ. Two choruses of "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain" were first sung, then two of "Through With Love" and the final close-harmony singing of "Sweet Adeline." The applause at the finish was tremendous.

December 5, 1931 (MPH) JOHN HAMMOND at the Brooklyn Strand, is the new organist here and is featuring an original and topical novelty called "Singing the News Away" for his opening solo. Heretofore, the organ console was in the pit; now it is on rollers on the stage, which really seems to be the place for this particular console. Not only does it look better, but it gives the organist a chance to be seen by his audience. Hammond answers some of the questions asked in the "agony" columns of a newspaper by playing tunes with special lyrics. The first is "Million Dollar Baby," followed by "Many Happy Returns." As an interlude, Hammond offers his own arrangement of "Waters of the Minnetonka" which he plays beautifully in concert style. Following this, he surprises the audience by singing in a distinctly novel conversation and whispering style, a popular number entitled "Right Across the Way." For closing, the audience sang "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

February 1942 (V) ADOLPH GOEBEL, musical director of WWRL in Woodside, Long Island, is doubling as organist at the Park Terrace Cafe in Brooklyn.

See you next time with some nuggets about lady organists. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □