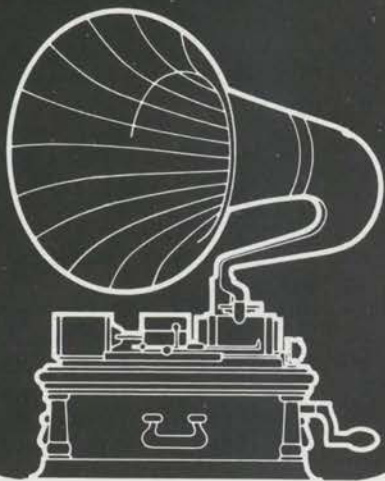


For The Records



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the **Record Reviewer, THEATRE ORGAN, 3448 Cowper Court, Palo Alto, California 94306.** Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.

FIVE ALIVE, Premiere Recording on the Capri Theatre Pipe Organ, Goodwood, South Australia, Digipipe WB 1001. Available from TOSA (S.A.), G.P.O. Box 595, Adelaide 5001, South Australia; price AUS \$12 plus AUS \$2.25 for surface mail or AUS \$7 airmail.

In a corner of the U.S. where bumper stickers proclaim "America's Cup — Don't Leave Perth Without It!" there is a genuine respect for anything the Australians sail in the direction of these shores. Nor should this respect be limited to racing yachts. **Five Alive** is a blockbuster LP crewed by Tony Fenelon, Neil Jensen, John Atwell, David Johnston and Ray Thornley. Any one of the five could wind up "Organist of the Year" in ATOS land one of these days. The digital recording of a fantastic 4/15 sort-of-Wurlitzer is perfection. Generous jacket notes about the artists and organ are interesting, and the front photo of the stunning installation in the Capri Theatre (owned and operated by TOSA) sets new standards for album covers. Bravo, John Thiele! For extra good measure the producer, Wayne Bertram, has assembled the performances in just the right sequence for optimum listening pleasure. There's much in the 14 selections to please every taste. However, rather than following the program, let's consider each of the lively five.

Tony Fenelon is no stranger to theatre organ fans in either the U.S. or Australia and has 14 recordings (four gold records!) to his credit. Oh yes, he happens to be a Medical

Electronics Specialist which provides a steady income! Tony's three selections reveal his awesome diversity of styles. "Anything Goes" gets the novelty treatment with lots of oriental percussions. It is reportedly based on the Temple of Doom arrangement in the recent Indiana Jones movie. A disarmingly clever tour de force, it seems to end much too soon. "When Love Is Gone" is a gorgeous ballad which further demonstrates Fenelon's unflinching taste in registrations. Individual voices sing out the many virtues (and no vices) of the Capri installation. "On A Clear Day" brings out another side of this versatile musician. He can swing and do sensational jazz improvisations. It's a honey of an arrangement with a delightful Count Basie touch at the end. These three cuts do nothing to tarnish the reputation of Australia's foremost theatre organist.

Neil Jensen, the youngest of the five, has also toured the U.S. and has two other albums to his credit. Hammond Australia sees that he eats regularly. Neil is their National Marketing and Promotions Manager. His easy swinging ballad "Georgia On My Mind" has an insistent beat, nice block chord harmonies and figures, a rubato interlude which shows off the romantic voices of the organ, then back to the beat for a final chorus which builds skillfully in excitement. For blues feel, Jensen is in a class with Wright and Larsen. "Le Jazz Hot" goes low down with brass accents, then up tempo for Xylophone flips. Percussions are beautifully understated with some nice drum rim shots to get your feet tapping. Variety of tempos include a suggestion of boogie-woogie. Neil never loses control of his registrations and the brassy are kept smouldering. "Nobody Does It Better" has a nice Buddy Cole treatment under the broadly stated blues line. Listen for the untremmed Clarinet riffs. The tune builds to an unhurried climax followed by a quiet coda. This young man has poise and style to burn!

Adelaide-born John Atwell now lives in Melbourne and works as a Research Scientist in Genetic Engineering. So what's he doing playing a theatre organ? Well, among other things Atwell was mainly responsible for the final specifications for the Capri organ and has a record album to his credit. John's arrangement of "Crazy Rhythm" features full organ ensembles with brass accents. He has a '20s flavor to his playing and improvises a neat second chorus which eventually becomes a stomping, gut-bucket boogie. But don't typecast Mr. Atwell. "Wind Beneath My Wings" is a breathy-voiced beguine with 2' Tibia over-ride. John coaxes beautifully soft ensemble sounds from the Capri before he is finished. A third entry "The Match Parade" uses Clarinet and Glock alternating with Xylophone along with some toothsome ensemble ranks to sell the clever novelty piece. It has a comfortable early '30s ambience.

Ray Thornley works for Yamaha in Australia and is a relative newcomer to theatre pipes. This deprivation has left him with a mere seven record albums to his credit and he was only voted "Best Australian Electronic Organist" three years in a row! How is he on

pipes? The first two guesses don't count! "Taming The Tenor" begins with a wonderfully lugubrious "Vesti La Giuba" which quickly relaxes into a Betty Boop-style Charleston with lots of Xylophone pizzaz. It's great fun with untremmed Flutes band organ style, Bird Whistles, and other toy counter goodies. Thornley is very much at home, thank you! "Fame" is a big production number of the movie theme with lots of Cymbal crashes and 16' pedal voices. The first chorus features a Vox/Tibia ensemble, after which he gets down to rock (as in "rock 'n roll") bottom in earnest. State-side pizza organists should try this one on their younger customers if they haven't already. It's great. After such a protein-loaded entrée comes a feathery light dessert, the lovely "Here, There, and Everywhere." Melody lines in the lower registers are toe curling. Tibias, Kinura and tremos are flawless. This could well be the most beautiful tune in the package.

The fifth artist, David Johnston is a Concert Artist for Technics Organs. He provides the only element missing in the album thus far, a wonderful flair for the absurd. His hilarious reading of Leroy Anderson's "Syncopated Clock" proves that one can be genuinely funny without stooping to cornball tricks. David gets only two hearings in the album, but his second, a full length production number "Mack and Mabel Overture," more than makes up for the loss. Spooky Halloween music ushers in "the chase." A Xylophone does the Charleston and a big, fat Posthorn in the lower registers buzzes impressively. Somehow all of this fooling around gets metamorphosed in the hit tune "I Won't Send Roses." Johnston sells it decisively with lush registrations and a final chorus which literally sparkles with Glock accents. For extra fun he sneaks in some snatches from "My Fair Lady" — just to see if you're listening.

Converting one's money to Australian dollars may pose some problems, and the record shipped via airmail makes it quite an investment. But for one of the best theatre organ records of this or any other year it's worth the red tape and added expense. You could, of course, save a bit by having it shipped surface mail. That way you might receive your copy about the time we win back the America's Cup. Just a little levity there, Mates!

WALTER J. BEAUPRE

I'VE HEARD THAT SONG BEFORE, Phil Kelsall at the Blackpool Tower Wurlitzer, EMI Records, Ltd. Available from Phil Kelsall, Tower Ballroom, Blackpool, England. Inclusive price 8 pounds (sterling draft or I.M.O.).

Resident organist at the Blackpool Tower Wurlitzer since 1977, Phil Kelsall has the unique advantage of recording on the major British commercial label, EMI. Thoroughly professional recording engineers have caught the Wurlitzer's richness and clarity with just enough natural reverb to give it grandeur. The variety of selections and playing styles should please even those who think they have had

quite enough, thank you, of the "Blackpool sound" for this century. And there is another big advantage: Phil Kelsall happens to be a very fine musician who has firmly established his own reputation and loyal following. He doesn't need to do Reginald Dixon imitations.

Every one of the 30 tunes in the album is treated with mastery and respect. For example, Phil opens his program with "March of the Mods," written by a local musician Tony Carr. His reading is sprightly and authoritative all the way with meticulous choices of registrations. The tune may be paste, but Phil's setting for it is pure platinum. He's the Glenn Miller of British theatre organists. Errol Garner's gem quality "Misty" gets an equally inspired reading in a style as far away from the Blackpool zip and dash as one can get. It's a gorgeous Tibia solo over untremmed strings with tasteful and original counter melodies. Listen for his pedal line. It's exquisite. So is the brief Glock cadenza at the end.

"Post Time Galop" and "Can Can" blend nicely as a medley with the Tuba Mirabilis doing the solo honors. Even at its bruising pace Kelsall's playing is sharp and squeaky-clean. Irving Berlin's "Play A Simple Melody" is ricky-tick without being a put down. The Piano arpeggios and clever registration changes save "How Deep Is the Ocean" from being just another heavy-handed ballad. Never one to hide a melody line, Phil reserves his subtleties for the left hand figures.

The organist goes for baroque in "Melanie's Minuet" just long enough to show us how much prettier this 17th century tune can be with theatre tremors a-flying. Variations on the Glockenspiel and Piano give way to a plaintive Flute coda. The medley featuring "Nobody's Sweetheart Now" is hardcore Blackpool effervescence, which really doesn't do any more harm than over-dosing on Alka-Seltzer.

Phil Kelsall confesses in his jacket notes that he missed the American epic TV series *Winds of War*. Just for the record, Phil, this reviewer saw the show, and your beautifully dramatic reading of the "Love Theme" is by far its best moment. Robert Mitchum, Ali McGraw and company were no match for those wonderful happenings at the Tower!

A dab of Piano, a touch of Trombone and masses of Tibias help make Leroy Anderson's "Forgotten Dreams" unforgettable. Kelsall claims that his "Tiger Rag" was "heavily cribbed from Reginald Dixon's famous record." Although high on my personal list of tunes which should be studiously avoided by all amateurs and second-string pros, "Tiger Rag" as sired by Dixon out of Kelsall isn't hard to take. If anything, state-of-the-art recording techniques give Phil the edge.

The space age sounds which usher in Side II were generated, we are told, by both 8' Tibias in the treble range. "Telstar" is an exciting bit of nostalgia for those who remember the Tornadoes as well as for this reviewer who never had the pleasure of forgetting the rock group. Phil Kelsall has a talent for making unfamiliar tunes instantly likable. The "Nun's Chorus" from a Strauss opera *Casanova* is a case in

point. Phil interweaves church and theatre registrations skillfully. He can also roast a chestnut such as "Tico Tico" at break-neck speed and a crisp accuracy seldom heard on pipes. It's no longer a samba, but who cares. Other than "Eleanora," which features a combined Piano/Glock registration, the side is "Phil'd out" with trio medleys of well known tunes rationed to a single chorus each on the Wurlitzer. Melodies are correctly played and harmonic progressions are carefully crafted. These are worth hearing — if not listing.

Everything about this album is thoroughly professional, including the photo of Kelsall impeccably attired in white polyester tux and black tie. For those who want to hear the Tower Ballroom Wurlitzer under ideal recording conditions by the organist who knows it best, the only problem will be converting Yankee dollars to pounds sterling for the transaction. Incidentally, Phil Kelsall has made a very successful commercial videotape of his playing at the Tower. Unfortunately British video is not compatible with our VCR'S, so don't try to order a copy. Now THAT would really be a kick to see and hear. Come on, you U.S. theatre organists, let's get with it!

WALTER J. BEAUPRE

"FATS" WALLER AT THE ORGAN
(from piano rolls). No. MHS 4937Y. \$9.50
postpaid from The Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184.

"Fats" Waller! There was no one like him, nor will there be again. Those of us lucky enough to have been his contemporaries have enthusiastic memories of the quality of his music, often amplified by that infectious, humorous personality. During his lifetime he carried on a love affair with the organ. He served as a silent movie organist in his native Harlem. His best remembered recordings were played on an ancient Estey church organ in the Trinity church, Camden, New Jersey, which Victor Records (now RCA) had taken over for use as a recording studio in the mid-'20s. The Estey never sounded very theatrical, but in the mid-'30s Fats played a series of weekly CBS half hour radiocasts on the New York Times Square Paramount Theatre studio organ, the same 4/21 Wurlitzer often recorded by Jesse Crawford. These almost forgotten broadcasts provided Waller with an instrument worthy of his great ability and if anyone recorded them on his Presto 78 rpm acetate disc recorder, we wish he would make them available to the considerable army of Waller enthusiasts. Until now, the only solo Waller on organ records was the Trinity Church discs plus an album made by Waller on an eight-rank studio Compton during a visit to England in 1938. Of course Fats was also known for his piano stylings, ensemble work with Nat Shilkret's Rhythm Melodists and the Louisiana Sugar Babies, and later on the Hammond organ. But to Waller aficionados there were never enough solo organ records by their idol.



Thomas "Fats" Waller

Enter Ronald Curtis, a noted British organist who has some fine record releases to his credit. Ron had some of the piano rolls Waller had produced between 1923 and 1927, and wondered how those distinctive arrangements would sound on organ. Could such a transfer be made and still maintain the Waller character? Curtis has a four-deck Compton in his studio at Darcy Lever, Bolton. To make it brief he had an 88-note roll player hooked into the organ circuitry. The idea worked perfectly. The enlarged ten-rank organ (plus a Wurlitzer Tibia) provides a very suitable palette for the Waller music but not until Ron had studied all available Waller recordings as a guide to registration and dynamics. The result has a better over-all sound than the Camden Estey and a more satisfying sound than the HMV Studio Compton. Curtis has done much to adapt the combinations used to the Waller style, including Waller's liking for non-trem'd 4' Diapason combinations.

But let's face it: Fats wasn't much interested in the variety of registration available on an organ. His forte was improvisations on themes and any combination which provided a good foundation for his distinctive doodlings was "in." Luckily, the richness of those variations overrides too critical a look at registration. What he does with a melody is what counts, not what stops he plays it on.

So, don't look for a lot of registration variety here; the improvisational ingenuity is the show.

The selections are middle-'20s pops. Most are forgotten now, although the Waller treatments tend to give them new life. Three are Waller originals, including his first "hit" written when he was 16, "Squeeze Me." Many of the titles reflect what used to be called "race music" — tunes written to appeal to the black community. These include "Eighteenth Street Strut," "Papa Betta Watch

Your Step," "Taint Nobody's Business If I Do," "Your Time Now," "Nobody But My Baby," "Do It Mr. So and So," "Clearing House Blues," "You Can't Do What My Last Man Did" and "Don't Try to Take My Lovin' Man Away." Familiar titles might include "I'm Comin' Virginia," "If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight," "Laughin', Cryin' Blues" (Waller), "Midnight Blues" (Waller) and "Squeeze Me."

Some may complain about the lack of variety in style and tempo here, most tunes are played in the bouncing jazz mode associated with Waller. But we must take what Fats left us; he wasn't assembling a program when he made these piano rolls. At the time he probably needed the bucks. Yet he never compromised his artistry. If there is a sameness in the registration the interesting keyboard work compensates. His fillers, innovative intros, abrupt and offbeat endings, variations and general enthusiasm keep the toes tapping and, for some, the opportunity to analyze the Waller musical psyche, which was immense. Just the intense rhythm is enough to cause an aged reviewer to get up and pace the floor while listening. The only other composer who causes that phenomenon is Richard Wagner! Waller's rhythmic emphasis is contagious.

The release of this recording in the USA was undertaken by the Musical Heritage Society and we feel they couldn't have selected a better subject; Waller has never been accorded the credit due him as an organist. This disc will help, thanks to Ron Curtis who recognized the need.

Stereo recording is first rate. Kevin Daly's jacket notes are adequate and generally aimed toward the uninitiated but contain valuable Waller history.

Fats Waller died on a train taking him back to New York after having recorded music for the Armed Forces in Hollywood during World War 2. He was not even 50 years of age. Had he lived he would doubtless have produced more organ music in his distinctive style. Thanks, Ron Curtis, for making part of that hope a reality.

BILL VLASAK AT THE PARAMOUNT, played on the 4/42 Wurlitzer organ in the Paramount Music Hall, Indianapolis. No. WJV-101. Available postpaid from WJV Productions for \$9.75 (check or MO), Box 19746. Indianapolis, Indiana 46219.

A few issues back we reviewed a fine recording played by Donna Parker on this well-conceived instrument. Get set for another pleasant experience. Bill Vlasak is no stranger to this column. We've reviewed his work before but we feel that with this biscuit Bill has really come into his own realm as never before. But first, the organ.

Half of it was the 4/21 Wurlitzer installed originally in the Oakland California Paramount where it was recorded several times by that oriental favorite, Korla Pandit. It was claimed that it was the last "Publix No. 1" built by Wurlitzer. After several eatery engagements it found its way to Indianapolis

where it fell into the hands of Bob MacNeur, a young man with ideas about the commercial possibilities of a pipe organ installation. But Bob wanted a more elaborate instrument than just a plain Publix No. 1, an instrument designed by Jesse Crawford for a theatre chain in the late '20s. But it lacked a Posthorn; Crawford didn't feel that the local yokels could handle this raspy voice (obviously, Crawford had not experienced a Marr & Colton Kinura!). So MacNeur entrusted much of the instrument's enlargement to a gifted technician, John Ferguson, who had made a good name out West. In the end the organ doubled its number of voices — 42 ranks! Many other gifted people have been involved in the evolution of the organ (which employs pure Wurlitzer voices and parts), among them Larry MacPherson, Carlton Smith and Harry Helton (listed as "genius" on some jackets). And these names represent only part of the two-dozen craftsmen who justify Bill's jacket boast: "no finer instrument anywhere."

And he apparently set out to prove it. Bill Vlasak is in a class by himself. He's a veteran of many pizza emporium engagements. Yet there's not one whiff of frying lard or burnt crust in these selections. They are all concert quality performances. Likewise, his selection of tunes is miles away from the nearest pizzery.

Best of all — Bill Vlasak plays like a true theatre organist. That's not to say he sounds "old fashioned." Yet, he uses enough of the theatre musician's endings, modulations and between-phrase fillers to mark his music as the "real McCoy." He just has those qualities in his music which sound so right to the fan who remembers when most theatres featured an organist. Some of our younger crop of keyboard gymnasts could learn much about expression, registration and general approach to pops by hearing this recording, especially those who attempt to transform the pipe organ to something it was never intended to be. Here's a young man whose musical integrity complements the instrument. Let's examine the selections.

An energetic "Zip-a-Dee Doo Dah" (lots of subtle percussions) and a slow ballad "Sooner or Later," both from the movie *Song of the South*, point up the renewed interest in matters Disneyish, especially since the realization of Walt's dreams, Disney World and EPCOT Center in Orlando, Florida (all it lacks is a theatre organ, and we tried!). The ballad has the added attraction of the majestic Baldwin grand which was double-tracked onto the organ track. There's also a percussionist present.

"Puttin' on the Ritz" has long been a favorite of those who record standards on the theatre organ. The percussionist (Jack Gilroy) is back and adds to the lustre of the late '20s nightclub tune which will forever be associated with entertainer Harry Richman.

Bill Vlasak likes the percussions. He gilded the previous selection with tasteful plinks from the pitched percussers and this ancient (circa 1900) march provides a grand opportunity — "The Jolly Coppersmith." Bill has a field day with the old chestnut, one which



Bill Vlasak

only a true devotee of vintage theatre organ would attempt. He does fine.

Bill's *Naughty Marietta* potpourri conjures images of singers Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald, the pair who supplied the romance and fine vocalizing in so many MGM operetta movies of the '30s. Such treasures as "I'm Falling in Love With Someone," "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," "Neath the Southern Moon," "Italian Street Song" and "Ah Sweet Mystery of Life" offer a treasury of Victor Herbert's best known and loved tunes. The one flaw in this presentation is the less than informative jacket notes. For example, none of the above titles is listed (hope we got them right; we winged them from memory). Registration and phrasing are appropriate for each selection, and there are echoes of the stylings of long ago theatre organists in the arrangements. Could Bill Vlasak be a reincarnation of several of the memorable ones?

Bill goes veddy, veddy British with "Rule Britannia," a tune written in 1740 which became an encouraging anthem to the people of Britain immediately and has remained a favorite ever since. Bill gives it a vintage untrem'd 1740 treatment (we won't use the word "baroque!") with the high solo Trumpet and contrapuntal effects associated with music of the period. The Trumpet en Chamade is heard (very posthorny), also the seven ranks of classical voices.

The Vlasak repertoire often reaches back to the '20s (and before) for tunes Bill never heard in their prime periods — but this reviewer often did, and the miracle is the accuracy, authenticity and sensitivity of his treatments of precious oldies. Such is the case of "Just Around the Corner," a 1926 tune linked to vaudevillian Ted Lewis, he of the battered top hat which often rolled down his arm and was caught just in time for the final note. On hearing Bill's rendition it would seem that he could have been Ted's accom-

panist — but we are dreaming a pleasant fantasy. Such is the Vlasak magic.

"Bill," from *Showboat*, is a lovely ballad which becomes even more entrancing in Bill's able hands. There are broad hints of Jesse Crawford styling and registration but no direct imitation. One just knows that somewhere along the line Bill has heard the Crawford version. As the most effective line in the jacket notes states, "Bill firmly believes the world revolves at 78 rpm." The Tibia and Vox often dominate and Bill occasionally uses "stings" on the pizzicato effect (or crescendo). He likes the high-pitched mixtures, too.

Leroy Anderson's "Buglers Holiday" is one of the best of that composer's lighthearted tunes, inspired by such fantasies as a "Waltzing Cat" and "The Typewriter" (with a real four-manual Royal plinking in the orchestra's percussion section.) This selection calls for precision triple-tonguing by three trumpeters. Although electronic organs are reputed to have a faster response than pipe action, this particular instrument is honed to provide action fast enough for triple-tongue effects. It's in fast tempo and the bugle calls are everywhere.

"I'll See You in C-U-B-A" was popular when Lucy's husband, Desi, was better known as a symbol of Cuba than a certain scruffy dictator today. So it sounds old-fashioned and very delightful. Again the Vlasak way with an oldie dominates. Bill is not averse to using re-iterating percussions (as some "modern" players are), and here we have a chorus featuring Marimba and later the Xylophone. The charms of these "woodpiles" is fully realized.

"Concerto No. 1" (Tchaikowsky) is limited to the popular excerpt from the concerto first brought to public notice as the theme of Orson Welles' Mercury Theatre radio series in the late '30s. Later, dance band leader Freddy Martin popularized the theme with his three-minute dance music version with Jack Fina on piano. It was a smash hit and may have helped inspire the no-merit song, "Everybody's Making Money but Tchaikowsky" during the period when all ASCAP music was banned from the networks (Tchaikowsky had long been in the public domain).

So much for ancient history. Bill's version starts "straight," that is, he recreates the symphonic orchestral voices on the organ, then, two Bills perform by the magic of double track recording. He's heard soloing on the concert grand piano accompanied by a very orchestral organ.

Then Bill switches to a chorus of the Freddy Martin pop version. He did so well playing pure Tchaikowsky the listener may feel short-changed by the contrast; we wish he had continued with the concerto. Yet, he performs the pop version faultlessly so we can't complain too much. He's gotta play "popular" and the end result is an effective closer.

The technical end of this recording is very high in quality. An excellent pickup (microphone positioning) coupled with a glassy-smooth surface and precision centering of that all-important hole, add up to a fine overall production. Highly recommended. □



BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF THEATRE ORGANISTS

by Dr. John W. Landon

BLOOD, J. J.

Organist of the Queen Theatre, Muscatine, Iowa, in 1913.

BLUE, ALICE

Organist of the Palace Theatre in Hilo, Hawaii. Became organist of the Princess Theatre, Honolulu, Hawaii, following the tenure of Edwin Sawtelle, famous Hawaiian theatre organist of the 1920s and 1930s. She continued in this position until the early 1930s.

BLUM, FLORENCE (Miss)

Organist at the Strand Theatre in Schenectady, New York, in 1923, and of the Prospect Theatre, Flushing, Long Island, New York, in 1927. Organist on the Reid Circuit of theatres in New Jersey in 1928.

BLUNK, BILL (John William Blunk)

Professional organist in the northwestern United States. Played occasionally at the Paramount Theatre in Anderson, Indiana. Was organist of the Alexandria Roller Rink in Alexandria, Indiana. Leader of a dance combo which held a five-year engagement at a popular Oregon coast dinner club. Staff organist at Portland International Airport's famous Port West Dining Room. Teaches piano and organ at the Day Music Center in Portland, Oregon, and owns the giant 5/24 Marr & Colton theatre pipe organ that was originally installed in Loew's Rochester Theatre in Rochester, New York, in 1927.

BODE, FRANCES

Organist of the Clemmer Theatre in Spokane, Washington, in 1926.

BOCK, SYBIL

Radio organist who played the pipe organ theme for the "Lum and Abner" radio broadcast during a portion of the several years' successful run of this popular radio show.

BODYCOMBE, ANEURIN ("RED")

Perhaps the best known of the organists of Pittsburgh radio station KDKA. Born in the little village of Pontandawe, Wales, in 1899, Bodycombe's childhood was filled with the rich Welsh heritage of music and resulted in his decision to begin to study piano. After serving in the British Navy in World War I he emigrated to Wilkesburg, Pennsylvania,

where his grandfather lived. Upon his arrival in 1922 he found a job as an organist accompanying silent movies, but he didn't enjoy the work because the management wanted him to play popular music of the day. As a recent immigrant he didn't know many tunes popular in the United States.

Bodycombe turned toward the field of church music. In 1923 he became organist of the First Presbyterian Church in Wilkesburg and before long he accompanied some singers from the church on KDKA. It was his first taste of radio and he liked it. In 1929 he joined the KDKA music staff. He played the organ and piano and accompanied singers and groups. The next year he married a Wilkesburg girl, Esther Bothwell. In 1935 he became Musical Director for the station and for nearly 30 years he served the station in various capacities. In 1961 Bodycombe celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary as organist and choir master of the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. During his years there his sacred compositions sold thousands upon thousands of copies. He retired from KDKA in 1964, spending the last few years with the sales department after the dropping of live shows in the mid-1950s.

One of the greatest honors Bodycombe ever received was an honorary Doctor of Music degree awarded him in 1954 by Waynesburg College. For several years he played a series of weekly broadcasts for the Dairyman's Cooperative Sales Association entitled, "DCSA Organ Melodies" and featuring Bill Nesbitt as announcer. These broadcasts demonstrated his sterling musicianship and were typical of the format of organ broadcasts across the country.

BOEHMER, LOUIS M.

Resident organist of the Hilliard Square Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio, in the mid-1920s (2/8 Kimball organ).

BOHR, RAY

Ray Bohr assumed the position of chief organist at Radio City Music Hall following the retirement of Dick Leibert. He served more years on the staff than anyone other than Leibert.

Bohr was born in Nyack, New York, November 2, 1919. He began studying piano at age six, and although he never took a degree