



Piano and Xylophone fit snugly into the hallway of the Evritt home.



Chinese gong could serve as dinner-bell.

Steam engine made from spare parts is connected to console.



in the installation of the chapter's organ, a four-manual Marr & Colton originally installed in the Toledo Rivoli Theatre.

The dream of Larry and Janet Evritt has become a reality, one which would rival many a theatre installation. Northwestern Ohio is very proud of its own "Theatre Organ Wizard."

**Note:** Author Bill Yaney is the resident organist at the Ohio Theatre in Toledo, Ohio. □



*Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the **Record Reviewer**, THEATRE ORGAN, 4633 SE Brookside Drive 158, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.*

**RAWLE AT THE HALL**, Len Rawle at the Wurlitzer organ of the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. Available from Mr. V.A. Drinkall, 4 High Elm Road, Hale Barns, Altrincham, England. International money order \$12.00 postpaid airmail.

**BRAVO!!**

Rarely does an album of this calibre appear on the organ scene. This is one of the very few that could be called a definitive theatre organ album.

The organ is both typical and not typical of British installations. It is typical in that it is well-regulated and beautifully tonally finished. It is not typical because the tremos sound more like eastern United States than England. It is hard to imagine this organ sounding so good in its original home. This reviewer is sorely tempted to call it virtually perfect. Organists will be waiting in line to record this one. The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust and their 4/20 Wurlitzer have made a most impressive mark on the theatre-organ world.

Len Rawle — unique, creative and well-ex-

ecuted performances and arrangements typify this recording. He keeps you wondering what he is going to do next, and always leaves you wanting more. Rawle is a superb, polished performer who has claimed his place as one of theatre organ's brightest stars. Selections include "Music, Music, Music," "Soft Lights and Sweet Music," "Fame," "Let's Face the Music," and more. There's not a weak one in the bunch.

Microphone placement is ideal. The recording engineer captured the sound of a big organ in a big hall perfectly. The only thing wrong with this recording was a bit of extraneous background noise. Everyone connected with the installation of this organ and the production of this album should be very proud. See THEATRE ORGAN, July/August 1986, for the complete story of this magnificent installation.

Don't miss this recording.

BOB SHAFTER

**GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL**, Paul Quarino plays Old-Time Gospel Favorites at the 4/44 Wurlitzer, PQ 101 Dolby Stereo Tape. Available from Paul Quarino Recordings, P.O. Box 06311, Portland, Oregon 97206. Price is \$11.00 postpaid, \$13.00 outside the U.S.

"Burnout" is considered a threat in many professions these days. Could it also happen to an organist who plays five nights a week in the Portland Organ Grinder, cues for silents at the Sherwood Oriental Theatre, serves as church organist, plays ATOS chapter meetings and national conventions, keeps AGO fans happy and owns his own pipe organ service company? But perhaps "burnout" is not a word we should use around one who has still another activity closer to the Pearly Gates. Paul Quarino has been wowing fans during those slack hours in his schedule (Sunday afternoons) playing Gospel music. This tape is a fitting testament to his success.

As an opener, Quarino proceeds to warm up the devout with "Victory in Jesus." The arrangement begins harmlessly enough. But then the artist turns on a mechanically cycling rhythm section. If, as the album title says, this is to be "Gospel According to Paul," the automated Boogaloo is strictly from St. Elsewhere. Fortunately, the organist only resorts to such plastic fervor at the beginning of Sides I and II (plus one other tune). Remaining selections are "Amen!" all the way.

"In The Garden" is a wonderful evocation of what may well be the loveliest of the old Gospel ballads. Paul rolls out the Vox, Tibias, and Strings and lets them sing. This consummate artist can evoke sentiment without bathos. One of his secret ingredients is pacing — not too slow. Even the half chorus on chimes seems eminently fitting. True, what Paul does is basically theatre style, but it also has the conviction and serious commitment we expect from performances of religious music. No tongue-in-cheek in these performances. The artist genuinely respects what he plays — and it shows.



Paul Quarino

(Claude Neuffer Photo)

Other equally fine slow hymns include "How Great Thou Art," "Softly and Tenderly," "Heaven Came Down and Glory Filled My Soul." Registrations are prodigiously rich but never cloying. When Paul uses a big finish, it is smooth and powerful with no rough edges. He obviously knows the strengths and weaknesses of the Wurlitzer, skillfully avoiding the "warts." Perhaps the most ingenious arrangement in the album is "Take Up Thy Cross." Lush, modern harmonies in the intro show off the masses of strings. The Chrysoglott and Harp are used to excellent effect in the accompaniment, while a subtle Cymbal beat gives thrust and drive to the musical flow of it all. In this reviewer's opinion, Paul Quarino brings the same sort of professional depth and control to theatre organ playing one hears from the best of the British School (i.e. Len Rawle).

Upbeat tunes such as "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder" get the Glock-'n-Shlock treatment, spirited and happy without being too cute. Quarino uses the Piano for added zip and spice. "I'll Fly Away" is Spiritual via George Gershwin. The percussions at one point get out of hand (or is it "out of feet?"). Again, let us concede that the mechanical rhythm device probably works very well on a Sunday afternoon in the heat of a live audience response. In the living room of the reviewer, it has the effect of a reiterating chigger bite. "Do, Lord," which begins Side II, can best be summed up with one word — don't.

"Blessed Assurance" features full church organ sound in 6/8 time. Although the arrangement becomes somewhat introspective as it develops, the Gospel beat is never far away. A very impressive untremmed churchy finale. The final cut of the second side is the traditional "Oh, Worship The King," more mainstream than Gospel — but who's counting! It builds from quiet chamber organ sounds to the roar of the great cathedral. Recording engineering has captured the 4/4 Wurlitzer with a faithfulness ranging from excellent to quite good.

This is a very impressive use of a restaurant

installation to interpret Gospel songs in theatre stylings. If Paul Quarino plays this brilliantly every Sunday afternoon, the engagement may last well into the next millenium.

WALTER J. BEAUPRE

**HAPPY TOGETHER**, Peter Holt plays the Compton organ at the Three J's, Gomersal. Available from the Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184. Cost is \$9.00 plus \$2.00 postage per order.

Peter Holt is a talented young man who shows great promise. At twelve years of age, he demonstrates an understanding of the theatre organ that would belie his youthfulness. As a British organist, he does not play in the typical Sydney Torch-influenced style. The opening medley, "Strike Up The Band/Up With The Curtain," is a well-executed pit-raiser. The most notable selection is the medley of "When Sunny Gets Blue/Lullaby of Birdland," which is simply excellent. "I Know Him So Well" is also worthy of special mention. Most of the rest of the album is very good (there are 15 bands). There are, however, three exceptions: "Sleigh Ride," "The Continental," and "Orpheus in the Underworld Overture" suffer from insecure performance and weak arrangements.

The Compton organ at the Three J's is a fine representation of the British theatre organ. It tends to be bright with a strong orchestral flavor and exceptional reeds. There were some tuning problems at the top of the Tibia that tended to make it sound shrill at times.

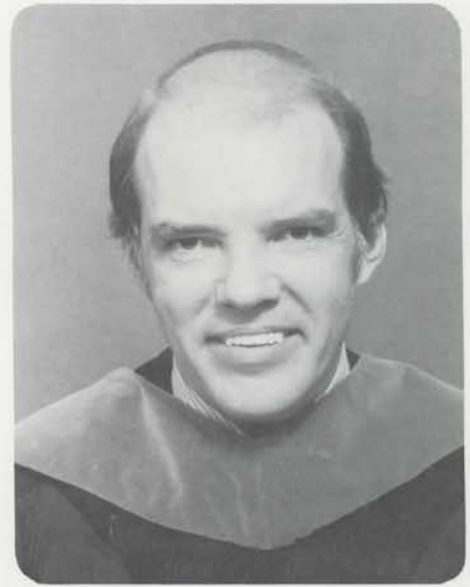
The recording engineer did a good job, and the pressing was clean overall, with only a couple of stray pops in the review copy. A good album.

BOB SHAFTER

**CHRISTMAS AT THE PARAMOUNT**, John Landon playing the Page organ in the Anderson (Indiana) Paramount Theatre. Available only on cassette, \$8.00 postpaid from the Paramount Organ Society, Inc., 902 East 27th Street, Anderson, Indiana 46014.

There is so small a Christmas repertoire that we must choose wisely to avoid repetition and even boredom. This year our choice is played by John Landon on the Page organ in the Paramount Theatre in Anderson, Indiana.

In case the reader is new to the hobby, John Landon is a multiple talent, a lecturer, university professor (social sciences), clergyman and author (his biography of famed organist Jesse Crawford is about to be re-issued). How he also finds time to be an organist is a mystery which has intrigued this reviewer for years. Yet, whatever he tackles, he does well. This applies especially to his recorded efforts. There are several LPs, dating from 1965. His style is theatrical, but he can do a convincing "trem-off" cathedral bit where called for, and the seven-rank Page responds beautifully.



Dr. John W. Landon

The Paramount Page organ would seem to be an extension of John Landon. He discovered it in 1955 when he was a college freshman, and after some refurbishing, he started playing it during intermissions. He is still playing it 31 years later! That's devotion. The instrument has three manuals and a divided seven ranks: Flute, String, Vox and Sousaphone are in the Main chamber and Tuba, Krumet and Tibia on the Solo. It is a well-balanced instrument from the tonal viewpoint, and very well unified (148 stopkeys for seven voices). It has undergone two restorations, one in 1965 by hobbyists Lewis Hodson and Rex Hoppes of Anderson, and again in the early '70s by Hodson, Carlton Smith and Bob Dunn, who still service the instrument.

Let's examine the selections. "O Holy Night" starts with an attractive baritone melody which provides an aura of majesty as the volume builds — nice phrasing. "White Christmas;" what can we say about this more recent addition to the Yule repertoire? John plays it with a gentle, rhythmic lilt, and we can imagine the shade of Bing looking on with approval. "The First Noel" is heard without added embellishment, nor does it need any. Expert phrasing takes care of that. John plays with theatrical zeal throughout this recording, yet manages the majesty of a cathedral organ with only seven well-unified ranks. Nowhere is this better illustrated than during "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear." We have never understood what "The Little Drummer Boy" had to do with Christmas. For those who do, John's rhythmic version will hit the spot.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Joy to The World" add to the festive spirit. The latter gets a partial "trem-off" treatment. The Page organ still sounds good un-trem'd. John uses full combinations, orchestral bells and xylophone to give a crispness to "Jingle Bells." It works. "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks" gets a traditional treatment, and tremes are used sparingly. "Silent Night" is played with the reverence it deserves, especially when the Page Tibia is featured. The ef-

fect is somewhat marred by a solo reed in need of voicing touch-up.

A rhythmic and lighthearted "Winter" opens Side II with the tonal percussions dominating, then back to the majestic for "Birthday of a King" played on an auditorium-filling registration. This is followed by "The Herald Angels" in an often Baroque style. Next, a happy "Here Comes Santa Claus," which is quite reminiscent of "Ain't We Got Fun," and pleasantly so. Then a maestoso "Adeste Fideles" during which that off-key reed is heard briefly. Then on to a gentle "Silver Bells" followed by "Angels from The Realms of Glory." "Away in A Manger" is given a traditional treatment for the verse, but the Tibia takes over for the chorus. A very good Tibia. The closer is, appropriately, Schubert's "Ave Maria," played very sweetly. John is in fine theatrical form throughout these selections. In fact, we have not heard him play better.

Recording is good. The package includes notes about the music, the instrument and the organist in very fine type. Incidentally, the profits from this recording are spent for maintenance and improvement of the Anderson Paramount organ. A good cause, and the cassette is well-worth the reasonable price.

**NICKELODEON THEATRE MUSIC, played on the Robert-Morton "Fotoplayer" by Dennis James. Available only on cassette; \$10.98 postpaid (New York residents add 7% sales tax) from Vestal Press Ltd., Box 97, Vestal, New York 13850.**

The first instrument to be widely used to accompany silent movies was the piano. For a while it sufficed, but was limited in supplying all of the emotional moods called for as film stories became more complex. So, additions were made: first, a battery of sound effects actuated by the pianist's muscle power, hand pulls which acted directly on hammers which

whacked the cymbals, wood blocks, drums, etc.; then short sets of pipes began to appear, usually a 4' Flute or String (or Quintadena) with ranges of 49 to 65 notes, played from the full, 88-note piano keyboard. It wasn't long before the builders discovered that they could obtain a variety of pleasant effects by unifying the abbreviated pipework and later adding mutations to the Flute at 2 2/3' and 1 3/5' (not to mention a 2' Piccolo). Thus the range of the pipework began to expand, first upward (it was cheaper), then downward to encompass an 8' Bass Flute. This model has 31 orchestral bells and one chime — that's about where this Model 25 Robert-Morton Fotoplayer was in the gradual metamorphosis to full theatre organ status a few years later.

Dennis James has been careful to select (or improvise) music in keeping with the times of this model, which graced small movie houses (often converted stores they called "Nickelodeons" based on the price of admissions) in the first quarter of this century. At the stage of development illustrated here, the pipes were extra; the performer still depended on the piano as his mainstay. Thus, we rarely hear the pipes alone, although the piano could be muted. The piano lefthand provided the foundation while the pipes rarely soloed. That's the setting for this interesting look back to the development of the theatre organ. At this point, it hadn't quite arrived.

Let's look at the selections. Side I: An improvisation with titles which don't mean much, except descriptively, a melange of the type of music played in the early movie days which left nothing to the imagination. The titles which Dennis James has supplied are: "The Great Train Robbery," a Strauss-like main theme and a dance-hall scene (borrowed from Stephen Foster's "Doo-dah"); "Ragtime," "Nightingale" (a hurry), "Struggle Music," "Mysterioso," "Furioso," and a second Ragtime tune named "Bobolink." The moods depicted are self-explanatory.

Side II is a bit more complex; it is rolls



Dennis James, ready for the silent movies.

punched out by some long-forgotten roll-perforator, but with embellishments added by Dennis James. The titles are: "Serenade Grotesque," "Sorrow Theme," (organ alone briefly), "Implorations," "Treachery and Vengeance," and the closer is "Gawky Rube" (probably played on the screen by Wesley Barry who specialized in such roles in the 1920s). It isn't as descriptive in the "Rube Department" as "Goofus."

Dennis obviously did much research in the legacy of such prolific silent film composers as J.S. Zamecnik, Otto Langey, Max Bergunker and Scott Joplin and Eubie Blake for the rags. His stylings might be described as "authentic." At no time does he get out of character. Remember, this period in silent film accompaniment might be described as the "shoot-'em-up" era when action dominated on the screen. Subtleties came later. Both the Fotoplayer and Dennis James come out with a large plus.

Incidentally, this music was first released on an LP disc by Concert Recording some years ago. It's worth a second hearing. We might add that this tape is being issued as a companion piece to the new book, *Nickelodeon Theatres and Their Music*, by David Bowers, a noted authority on such instruments. The book is also published by Vestal Press.

**RHAPSODY IN TWO, Howard Beaumont and Byron Jones play the Wurlitzer Style F at the Mechanical Music Museum at Cotton. Available from the Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184. Priced at \$9.00 plus \$2.00 postage per order.**

In a two-hundred-seat, authentic cinema at the Mechanical Music Museum at Cotton, a 2/8 Wurlitzer Style F has found a good home. Originally from the Leicester Square Theatre, it has been modified by the addition of a



Style 25 American Fotoplayer, used for silent movies. Trap pulls operate (L to R) sleigh bells, train whistle, tom tom, bass drum, cymbal, Chinese crash cymbal, pistol shot, wind, bird whistle, trolley gong or cathedral chime. Side chests also contain three ranks of organ pipes and other sound effects. (John J. Young Photo)

piano and the replacement of the Tuba with a Trumpet. The installation and the environment have made this organ sound like much more than eight ranks — a truly superb Wurlitzer. Both artists know how to get the best from this instrument.

Side I: Howard Beaumont. While being a rather traditional theatre organist, Mr. Beaumont brings flair and life to his performances. There are, however, three selections that have weak chord progressions which detract from his solid style.

Side II: Byron Jones. As outstanding a ballad organist as you might want to hear, "Always" has never been played better, and "L'Amour, Toujours L'Amour" is truly outstanding. Ballad organists are not often exciting, but Byron Jones certainly is!

The recording is excellent, and the pressing is good. This album is a must!

BOB SHAFTER

**COUNTRY GARDENS, Nigel Ogden at the organ of Tatton Hall, Knutsford, Cheshire. Available from Mr. V.A. Drinkall, 4 High Elm Road, Hale Barns, Altrincham, Cheshire, England. International money order \$12.00 postpaid airmail.**

Originally built by Henry Willis and Son in 1935, and modified considerably by Alfred E.

Davies in 1938 and 1950, this 3/34 is an interesting example of English residential Romantic/Orchestral organ building. Restoration began in 1975, by the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust, and was completed in 1977. This organ has some incredible lush sounds, but the upper work screams — partly because it is not in tune and partly because it is just too loud.

Mr. Odgen's credits are many and varied, but here it will suffice to say that he has a thorough understanding of classical, orchestral and theatre music. His performances are flawless and tasteful, and he utilizes the resources of this organ to their best advantage. His program is, as the title of the album suggests, "The Flower Dance," "My Wild Irish Rose," "We'll Gather Lilacs," "Country Gardens," etc.

The recording engineer slipped up a bit here. The recording sounds as though the microphone was placed too close to the organ, and that it was recorded too loud. It actually distorts in a couple of places, and there were a couple of rather loud, annoying pops on the review copy.

This album would make an interesting addition to a collection because of the uniqueness of the instrument, or if you happen to be particularly fond of the type of music presented.

BOB SHAFTER

**BURNS, ROBERT ("Bobby")**

West Coast organist in the 1920s. Organist of the Liberty Theatre in Seattle, Washington, in 1926 and organist of the Broadway Theatre in Portland, Oregon, in 1927.

**BURRSTON, PERCY**

Organist in the Salem, Oregon, area, who opened the Elsinore Theatre in Salem in 1926 and remained there as organist.

**BURRIES, MAY W.**

Organist of the Broadway Theatre in Richmond, Virginia, in 1925.

**BURRIS, DOROTHY**

Organist of the Pekin, Illinois, Theatre in 1930.

**BURROUGHS, W. RAY (Wesley)**

Organist of the Regent Theatre in Rochester, New York, in 1914. Organist of the Madison Theatre (Wurlitzer) in Rochester, New York, and Lyndhurst's Kohl organ in Rochester in 1927. Later Contributing Editor to *Diapason*, where he wrote articles and submitted news clips on the theatre organ to that periodical.

**BURTON, HOWARD**

Born August 6, 1901, near Woodburn, Iowa, in Clark County. Burton began playing the piano and organ for silent movies at the Strand Theatre in Creston, Iowa, in November of 1923. He played a winter engagement at the Rex Theatre in Geneseo, New York, in November 1926, then returned to the Strand Theatre in Creston, playing there until August 1929. He then entered the Knauss School of Theatre Organ Playing at Allentown, Pennsylvania, for an advanced seven-month course in theatre organ study. He broadcast over Iowa radio stations KMA in Shenandoah and KSIB in Creston. He played for many special events such as horse shows, clubs and dances. Burton's last theatre engagement was at the Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he was featured soloist on the Wurlitzer from November 1958 to 1961.

**BURTON, MARTHA**

Played the Rembert Theatre in Longview, Texas (a 1/4 Seeburg combination piano-organ).

**BUSHONG, ERNEST**

Played the Ligonier Theatre in Ligonier, Indiana, in 1926.

**BUSWELL, BILL**

Buswell started his professional career at the age of 16, at the Comerford-Public Roosevelt Theatre in Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he was billed as "Scranton's Youngest Organist," and where he gave daily radio broadcasts from the organ console of the Masonic Temple. For 15 years he played intermission solos at theatres in Newark and Irvington in New Jersey, and at Cleveland, Ohio. When sound movies displaced theatre organists, he turned to playing and selling

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1986

**BIOGRAPHICAL  
DICTIONARY  
OF  
THEATRE ORGANISTS**

by Dr. John W. Landon



**BURCHARD, E. (MRS.)**

Vice President of the Cleveland Theatre Organist's Club in 1923.

**BURKETT, BURTON**

Organist of the Strand Theatre in Muncie, Indiana, in 1924.

**BURLAND, HERBERT W.**

Organist of the Rialto Theatre in Los Angeles, California, in 1922 and 1923.

**BURNHAM, FRED**

Organist of the Irvington Theatre in Portland, Oregon, in 1927.

**BURICH, S. J. (Mrs.)**

Broadcast over Radio Station WOC, Davenport, Iowa, in 1922.

Herbert Burland

(Photo from Larry Widman)

