

NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by
Lloyd
E.
Klos



References for this trip to the lode were *Metronome* (M), *Local Press* (LP), *Radio Guide* (RG) and *Variety* (V).

May 1926 (M) . . .

HENRY E. LINGLEY has probably wandered as far away from home as an organist is able without leaving the country. A Boston man, he received most of his musical education at the New England Conservatory of Music. After becoming a professional, he played piano with orchestras in many of the best-known resort hotels in northern New England.

He also served as organist in theatres in Buffalo and Watertown in New York, and in Jersey City. Several years ago, he went west and landed in that mecca of easterners known as California, where he became the organist in a Long Beach theatre. From there he went to Santa Barbara and was playing in a theatre there during the recent earthquake. It was severe enough to shake Mr. Lingley loose from Santa Barbara, and he located in Salinas as featured organist at the California Theatre.

The organ was built by a San Francisco firm. It has two manuals, 14 sets of pipes and produces a very satisfactory tone. Mr. Lingley plays solos, uses song slides, and features requests. He is the fortunate possessor of a very attractive tenor voice and through intelligent study and practice, has used it most effectively in vocal numbers at the theatre, with Mrs. Lingley accompanying on the piano.

There is a tradition that New Englanders are never thoroughly at home in any place except New England. If this is true in Mr. Lingley's case, we are sure of the regret with which Californians would say au revoir to him, but would be more than blessed by the enthusiasm with which New Englanders would welcome him back.

July 1926 (M) . . .

Great Falls, Montana, claims ROSCOE KERNAN as its finest organist. He presides over a beautiful 3/15 Wurlitzer in the Liberty Theatre, which ranks as one of the greatest in the west.

Mr. Kernan began his theatrical playing for repertoire companies at the age of 14. Later, he furnished musical accompaniment for vaudeville. As theatre organs came into use, he deserted vaudeville for the new art. Looking back at the earlier work, he realizes that the experience gained helped him greatly in cueing pictures.

Mr. Kernan has been organist at the Liberty since January 1922. Previously he was at the Imperial and Aleazas theatres in San Francisco where he met with great success. He has won a large following among movie fans for his distinctive playing, having established a reputation for arranging and playing themes which fit superbly the particular action on the screen.

Roscoe studied piano and organ under Herman E. Zook of Minneapolis and since then has devoted his time to the development of his technique and general musical education.

The Liberty Wurlitzer, the largest in any theatre between Seattle and Chicago, is the only one of its kind in the state of Montana and includes nearly every instrument represented in a symphony orchestra.

Mr. Kernan is featured in novelty organ solos daily and a special one-hour concert on Sundays. Besides his picture work, he stages prologues, arranges diversions, and composes good music. His immense popularity can be attributed to his hard work and pleasing personality.

November 1926 (M) . . .

Detroit's 37-year-old ROBERT G. CLARKE, Capitol Grand organist, joined the John H. Kinsky musical organization in 1914 as relief organist at the old Liberty Theatre on Farmer Street.

He began his musical education on the piano at five, then branched out to the old-fashioned reed organ. Playing for high school parties and festivities, Clarke became imbued with the idea of professional work. He secured his first theatrical job in an old "store show" in Providence, Rhode Island, at the age of 18, and received the munificent sum of \$15 a week. His next position was in a vaudeville theatre as leader of a five-piece orchestra. *Variety* did not hold him long, and he became associated with a barnstorming musical comedy show as musical director.

Landing in Detroit, Bobby liked the town and settled down. After playing at the Liberty's reed organ for several months, he was transferred to the new Strand Theatre. The opening of the Adams Theatre in 1917, and the Madison, gave him boosts up the ladder.

With the debut of the \$2 million Capitol in 1921, Clarke was appointed first organist, which he has held ever since. He is one of the most popular organists

in Mr. Kinsky's employ, and up to several weeks ago, featured a number of illustrated songs and community sings which found instant favor with Capitol patrons. With the new policy of stage show with orchestra, Clarke dropped his specialty numbers and now plays accompaniment to the motion pictures.

June 1927 (LP) . . .

"The best organ music in Rochester by Rochester's best organist" advertises TOM GRIERSON at the Riviera Theatre. At the Victoria, R. WILSON ROSS is featuring his presentation of *Lindbergh, the Eagle of the U.S.A.*, while at the Strand, HERBERT HENDERSON from New York City, and local organist HARRY SULLIVAN, are at the "Mighty Organ," a 4/18 Marr & Colton.

Circa 1930 (V) . . .

A Fitzpatrick Music Master Reel on Guiseppi Verdi (Short Films) was followed by one of HENRY B. MURTAGH'S organ specialties. This week, it's an out-and-out novelty "I Dare You to Laugh" by title, sans any song-plugging simulations. Murtagh has taken such prosaic topics as waists, sardines, Fords, etc. and in lyric parody has treated them novelly. The material is excellent and probably the donation of a benevolent music publisher as a token of reciprocity; if not, Murtagh is paying a royalty to somebody because it's genuine material and the humorous dare is aptly pointed.

Murtagh again evidences his genuine box office abilities and possibilities, because the longer he stays, the better his attraction. It has reached the stage where the familiar screen shots of his foot-pedaling are greeted with ready acclaim.

September 1937 (RG) . . .

WJZ, New York, presents a one-hour program from Radio City Music Hall, starting at 12:30 p.m. It features Viola Philo, vocalist; orchestral selections by Wagner, Handel, Debussy and Tschai-kowsky; and organ preludes by DICK LEIBERT.

September 1937 (RG) . . .

Station WORK in York, Pennsylvania, featured organist FRANK RENAUT in a one-hour program, starting at 1 p.m.

September 1937 (RG) . . .

The NBC Network features the Acme Sunshine Melodies with smiling Ed McConnell, organist LARRY LARSEN (of "Little Orphan Annie" fame) and Palmer Clark's orchestra at 5:30 p.m.

September 1937 (RG) . . .

WJZ, New York, presents WILLIAM MEEDER, organist, at 8:30 a.m., while WHP, Harrisburg, is presenting MARY FOUNTAIN, organist, in a 15-minute recital at 10 p.m.

continued ...

GOLD DUST . . .

1/30 HELEN ANKNER, Rochester's WHAM . . . 5/30 HARRY SULLIVAN from Rochester's RKO Palace on WHAM . . . 8/30 ROBERT SALTER, WHAM . . . 9/30 EDWARD C. MAY at Rochester's Liberty Theatre over WHEC . . . 12/34 WILLIAM MEEDER, New York's WJZ; DICK LEIBERT, New York's WJZ; LEW WHITE on NBC Network; JESSE CRAWFORD, WJZ; STANLEIGH MALOTTE, WJZ . . . 2/35 GEORGE SHACKLEY, Newark's WOR; RAY BERRY, Rochester's WHAM; JOHNNY WINTERS, WOR; VINCENT H. PERCY on "Land of Dreams," New York's WABC; HARRY E. RODGERS, Boston's WAAB; GORDON JOHNSON, Buffalo's WBN; HAL BECKETT, WOR; ARTHUR CHANDLER, Jr. on Cincinnati's WLW; MAURICE B. NICHOLSON, Buffalo's WBN; DION KENNEDY, Newark's WOR . . . 9/35 "EDDIE DUNSTED-TER Presents" on CBS Network; CARL COLEMAN, Buffalo's WKBW; ALBERT DOWLING'S Slumber Hour on Buffalo's WBN; LLOYD DeCASTILLO on Boston's WEEI; FRED FEIBEL, CBS Network; FRANCIS J. CRONIN, WEEI; MILTON CHARLES, CBS Network; TOM GRIERSON, Rochester's WHAM; FRANK NEWMAN on England's BBC.

That should do it for this time. So long, sourdoughs! Jason and the Old Prospector

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Bass Notes Make The Difference

Bass notes are important to the sound of all kinds of music. If you will listen carefully to symphonies, choral works and great organ compositions, you will hear that one of the most outstanding features is the melodic treatment of the bass part. Notice that the bass notes do not jump around to the root of each chord. What do they do? It's very simple: THEY MOVE TO THE NEAREST NOTE IN THE NEXT CHORD.

When playing popular music on the organ, whenever the same chord continues for two or more measures, we usually obtain motion by alternating the 1st and 5th of the chord on the pedals. Other patterns are possible depending on the character of the music. When playing 7th chords, it will usually sound better to reverse this pattern and play the 5th first and then the root. When playing "Lover," by Richard Rodgers, play the 5th first on the descending B⁷ - B^{b7} - A⁷ - A^{b7} - G⁷ chords and notice how much better this sounds than playing the root first.

If you will examine the original (not simplified) sheet music of many popular songs, you will find that the composer, or arranger, has written the 5th first on most 7th chords in order to keep it alternating and avoid repeating the same note when the chord changes.

Whenever there is a quick succession of chord changes, try moving the pedal bass note upward or downward to the nearest note in the next chord, whether it is the 3rd, 5th or 7th. There are many frequently used chord sequences in which this automatically occurs. When an unthinking organist jumps around to the root of each chord, the whole effect is spoiled. As you can see: it is possible to hit the right pedal (the one you are aiming for) and still play the wrong bass note.

In my next article, I will explain and illustrate some of the chord patterns with which a "Walking bass" should be used.

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