

NUGGETS

from the

GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by
Lloyd
E.
Klos



A couple humorous items are included this time. References were *Diapason* (D), *American Organist* (AO), *Local Press* (LP) and *Around the Town* (ATT).

December 1909 (D) . . .

The management of Chicago's Auditorium Theatre denied rumors that the Frank Roosevelt organ is to be torn out during the process of remodeling the building.

December 1909 (D) . . .

The Hope-Jones Organ Co. of Elmira, New York, shipped a four-manual organ to St. Paul, Minnesota for the Church of St. John, The Evangelist, and a three-manual organ to San Mateo, California.

August 1913 (D) . . .

"Dr. Anon Visits the Movies".

One evening recently, having no manual labor at hand, I pedaled down one of our streets with little hope of any great excitement. I had not proceeded far when a sign, "Motion Pictures with Music," met my eye. Mentally adding an interrogation after "music," I entered the building. Aha! A pipe organ? At least, some display pipes. On reaching the third row, I discovered a three-manual console.

The first picture was *The Mine Disaster*. Crash! A big minor chord! Shades of Rheinberger, the moderator movement of the Sonata, Opus 98! Strangely enough, the solemn first theme was appropriate to the impending tragedy. By a little delay, the second theme gave fitting expression to the subsequent mourning. The second film showed travel scenes, and the intermezzo movement of the sonata was very suitable.

Then followed a drama, Scott's *Guy Mannering*; various Scottish airs, such as "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton," "The Campbells are Coming," "Annie Laurie" and others were used. A witch motif was introduced.

Don't laugh, organists! Remember, the umbrella and the aeroplane were derided in their early stages. I admit it's very strange, even bizarre — this new use of the organ — when one is just out of the "dim, religious light."

One more film, the weekly, a suffragette parade in Washington to which was played "Home, Sweet Home." I learned afterward that this caused some feeling

and the next time the sisters appeared on the screen, "The Marseillaise" was offered in propitiation. Following this, the sisters were shown painting their clubhouse; the music was "Work, For the Night is Coming."

We will not take space to describe all the program. I always try to be willing to consider both sides of the situation, so I went up after the performance and gave the right hand of fellowship, as visiting organists always should. Strange as it may seem to the church organist, the young man was not ashamed of his work. He had formerly been engaged in a church where motion pictures were shown and had been heard by a theatre manager who offered three times the salary — a sum sufficient to eliminate teaching. No more of that dependence on the size of the collection, no more "involuntary" choirs, no more music committee; a good organ, always in order.

I felt well paid for this visit, having secured a new viewpoint — always a valuable acquisition. To sum up:

1. Motion pictures have, without a doubt, come to stay.
2. The pipe organ is being installed in many theatres. As you know, the organ is a good "stayer" also. It is seldom supplanted, unless by a better one.
3. These organs will be played, either by vaudeville pianists or by organists. Let us hope, the latter.
4. Instead of injuring the church, the result of all this is a wider appreciation of the organ and a consequent refinement of the average listener.

(Note: this article is founded on fact, not theory, being a page from the experience of one of the brethren.)

October 1914 (AO) . . .

W.H. DONLEY of Seattle was given the alternatives of abandoning his playing in the Colonial Theatre or resigning from his organist post at the First Methodist Church. He chose to continue at the theatre where he is featured, but does not accompany the movies.

October 1921 (LP) . . .

The Chicago Theatre's opening feature movie stars Norma Talmadge in *The Sign on the Door*. JESSE CRAWFORD plays "When Shall We Meet Again?" At the Tivoli, organist MILTON CHARLES is playing a rhythmical medley.

September 10, 1922 (LP) . . .

Rochester's Eastman Theatre is featuring *The Man Who Played God* with George Arliss. DEZSO D'ANTALFFY and JOHN HAMMOND accompany the film and play out the house with exit music on the 4/155 Austin. In Honolulu, Hawaii's Princess Theatre, EDWIN SAWTELLE is at the 4/16 Robert-Morton.

May 26, 1927 (LP) . . .

STEPHEN E. BOISCLAIR will observe his fourth anniversary as organist of WGY, Schenectady, tonight. During that period, he has played over 800 programs,

or approximately 10,000 compositions which is probably a record for any radio organist and very nearly a record for any radio performance.

Mr. Boisclair's playing is as widely known as any radio artist, for not only have his concerts been broadcast by WGY's 56-kilowatt transmission and far-reaching shortwave transmitter, 2XAF, but he has appeared late in the evening when reception conditions are more favorable. Whenever WGY engineers proposed a special program for distanced transmission, Mr. Boisclair has volunteered, no matter what the hour. He has played at two and five a.m., the latter a special program for Australian listening. He has 20,000 letters and cards from radio fans throughout the country. Arnold L.J. Barnes has announced all but a half dozen of the 800 programs, thereby gaining popularity with the organist.

December 7, 1927 (LP) . . .

Rochester's J. GORDON BALDWIN, staff organist of WHAM, has "gone and done it." Only when formal announcement arrived today, have his associates been informed. This will be Baldwin's first intimation that listeners of his request hour of organ music at 11 tonight, have been let in on the secret. "Oh, Promise Me," and the "Wedding March" from *Lohengrin* are suggested as suitable requests under the circumstances. Telephone Stone 1862.

December 1928 (ATT) . . .

Originality always is the trump card, and WILLIAM E. THOMPSON, who has made a study of symphonic jazz, does not have a difficult time in pleasing his patrons. He is the solo organist at the Strand Theatre in Atlantic City, and has been there for the past four years. He was formerly chief demonstrator for the Robert-Morton Organ Co., has several organ novelties to his credit, and has broadcast over WHAR in Atlantic City.

GOLD DUST . . .

2/28 THOMAS AVEY, KTHS, Hot Springs . . . 1/29 EDDIE DUNSTEDTER, WCCO, Minneapolis-St. Paul; FLOYD WALTER, WGY, Schenectady . . . 3/29 W. CHENOWETH, KFAB, Lincoln, Nebraska; GORDON JOHNSON, WGR, Buffalo . . . 4/29 REGINALD WEBB, WCAE, Pittsburgh . . . 7/29 EMIL VELAZCO, WOR, Newark . . . 1/30 TOM GRIERSON, WHAM, Rochester from the RKO Palace; HARRY SULLIVAN, Loew's Rochester; ARTHUR BROOK, WPG, Atlantic City; JOHN ELTERMANN, WBAL, Baltimore; LEW WHITE, WEA, New York . . . 2/30 CHARLES SHELDON, WSB, Atlanta . . . 5/30 JESSE CRAWFORD, WABC, New York . . . 8/30 AL CARNEY, NBC Network from Chicago . . . 3/31 EDWARD C. MAY, Rochester's Riviera.

That's it for now. So long, sourdoughs!
Jason & The Old Prospector