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INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

PRESEDENT
Dan C. Brown
N. 4828 Monroe Street
Spokane, WA 99205-5354
509-325-2626
E-mail: pianola@ect.com

PAST PRESIDENT
Linda Bird
3300 Robinson Pike
Grandview, MO 64030-2275
Phone/Fax 816-767-8246
E-mail: OGM Bird@kc.rr.com

VICE PRESIDENT
Mike Walter
65 Running Brook Dr., Lancaster, NY 14086-3314
716-656-9583
E-mail: mikew_1352@yahoo.com

SECRETARY
Christy Counterman
544 Sunset View Drive, Akron, OH 44320
330-864-4864
E-mail: stumpf@earthlink.net

TREASURER
Wesley Neff
128 Church Hill Drive, Findlay, OH 45840
419-439-4827
E-mail: rwsleyneff@aol.com

PUBLISHER
Dr. Michael A. Kukral
216 Madison Blvd., Terre Haute, IN 47803-1912
812-238-9656
E-mail: Kukral@Rose-Hulman.edu

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
William Chapman (Bill)
53685 Avenida Bermudas, La Quinta, CA 92253-3586
760-564-2951 – Fax 775-923-7117
E-mail: shazam32@earthlink.net

—— COMMITTEES ——

AMICA ARCHIVES
Stuart Grigg
20982 Bridge St., Southfield, MI 48034 - Fax: (248) 356-5636

AMICA MEMORIAL FUND
John Motto-Ros
P.O. Box 908, Sutter Creek, CA 95685-0908
209-267-9252

AUDIO-VISUAL & TECHNICAL
Harold Malakinnan
2345 Forest Trail Dr., Troy, MI 48098
312-946-8417 — Fax 312-946-8419

CONVENTION COORDINATOR
Frank Nix
6030 Oakdale Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367
818-884-6849

HONORARY MEMBERS
Jay Albert
904-A West Victoria Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101-4745
(805) 966-9602 - e-mail: bkmeeder@aol.com

WEB MASTER
Meta Brown
400 East Randolph Street, Apt. 3117, Chicago, IL 60601
312-946-8417 — Fax 312-946-8419

CHAPTER OFFICERS

NORTHERN LIGHTS
Pres: Phil Baird
Vice Pres:
Sec: Jason E. Beyer - (507) 454-3124
Treas: Howie O’Neill
Reporter: Dorothy Ols
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Pres: Carl Kehret - (360) 892-3161
Vice Pres: Peg Kehret
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Pres: Jerry Bacon - (214) 328-9369
Vice Pres: Bill Boruff
Treas: Vicki Brady
Sec: Janet Tonnesen
Board Rep: Dick Merchant
Bulletin Reporter: Haden Vandiver

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

ATOS
President - Fr. Gus Franklin
6508 Willow Springs Road
Springfield, IL 62707-9500
Phone: (217) 955-1707 Fax: (217) 585-0335
E-Mail: franklin@atos.org
Editor - Dale Baker
P. O. Box 51450
Indianapolis, IN 46251-0450
Phone: (317) 838-9345
E-Mail: baker@atos.org

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
Division of Musical History
Washington, D.C. 20560

-- COMMITTEES --

INTERNATIONAL PIANO
ARCHIVES AT MARYLAND
Performing Arts Library, University of Maryland
2511 Clarke Smith Performing Arts Center
College Park, MD 20742
Phone: (301) 405-9224
Fax: (301) 314-7710
E-Mail: dm137@email.umd.edu

INT. VINTAGE PHONOC/MECH.
MUSIC SOCIETY
C.G. Nispen, Secretaria General
19 Mackaylaan
5631 NM Eindhoven, Netherlands

MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
Alan Pratt, Editor
P. O. Box 299
Waterbeach, Cambridge CB4 4PJ
England

MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
Rosanna Harris, Editor
5815 West 52nd Avenue
Denver, CO 80212
Phone: (303) 431-9033 Fax: (303) 431-6978
E-Mail: mbsbi@estreet.com

NETHERLANDS MECHANICAL ORGAN SOCIETY – KDV
A. T. Meijer
Wijnenstraat 24
NL-4462 VS Goes, Netherlands

NORTHWEST PLAYER PIANO ASSOCIATION
Everson Whittle, Secretary
10 Smiths Road, Darcy Lever,
Burnley, Lancashire, England
Home Phone: 01204 529939
Business Phone: 01772 208003

PIANOLA INSTITUTE
Clair Cavanagh, Secretary

 AFFILIATED SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

AMICA ARCHIVES
20982 Bridge St., Southfield, MI 48034 - Fax: (248) 356-5636

AMICA MEMORIAL FUND
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P.O. Box 908, Sutter Creek, CA 95685-0908
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400 East Randolph Street, Apt. 3117, Chicago, IL 60601
312-946-8417 — Fax 312-946-8419

website: http://stlouis.missouri.org/fsjoplin
fsjoplin@stlouis.missouri.org

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NORTHWEST PLAYER PIANO ASSOCIATION
Everson Whittle, Secretary
10 Smiths Road, Darcy Lever,
Burnley, Lancashire, England
Home Phone: 01204 529939
Business Phone: 01772 208003

PIANOLA INSTITUTE
Clair Cavanagh, Secretary

43 Great Percy St., London WC1X 9RA

PLAYER PIANO GROUP
Julian Dyer, Bulletin Editor
5 Richmond Rise, Workingham,
Berkshire RG41 3XH, United Kingdom
Phone: 0118 977 1057
Email: jrd@ngcsc.demon.co.uk

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
Division of Musical History
Washington, D.C. 20560

SOCIETY FOR SELF-PLAYING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente (GSM) e.V.
Ralf Smolne
Emmstr. 56
D-45130 Essen, Germany
Phone:**49-201-784927
Email: president@musica-mechanica.de
As my term in office as AMICA President draws to a close, I remain a defender of the player piano (maybe not quite as dramatically as in the photo). Since my last message, I've received a number of responses from members with suggestions about building membership and strengthening the organization. This will be a major topic for the Board at the convention this year. It's clear that the strength and growth of the organization is directly dependent on the chapters and that those which make efforts to welcome and involve new International members as well as the general public produce interested and involved new AMICAns.

Reminiscent of the performances by our late President Molly Yeckley, the Pacific Can-Am Chapter and member Dick Spady recently supported a live performance/Ampico performance at the recital hall at Seattle's Benaroya Hall, where the Seattle Symphony performs. Nathan Bello, who became known to us at last year's convention, was the concert pianist. The enchantment of the public with the abilities of the Ampico was obvious and I was again reminded that those instruments which are so familiar to AMICA members are quite unknown and exotic to the general public. Watch for details of the concert in a future Bulletin.

Thanks for all of the support during my term of office. Overall, it’s been a lot of fun and I look forward to continuing my active involvement with this great organization.

Dan Brown
AMICA President

“Your publisher and Edwin Welte’s personal Steinway in the Augustiner Museum, Freiburg, Germany.”
Hi Dan,

I especially enjoyed the most recent AMICA Bulletin (March/April 2004). It was very informative and especially entertaining. I particularly enjoyed the article about you and the tongue-in-cheek article about the Reproducing Rollmonica.

I have been a member for about 2 years and am among your "new" target demographic - I am in my mid-30s and have a foot pedaled player piano and a Rollmonica. I also completed building a Castlewood busker organ kit about a year ago.

On the positive side, I recently played my monkey organ in my daughter's kindergarten class and did a demo of how it worked. A buddy had made me an extra demo bellows and a pipe that opened up so you could see inside. The kids were fascinated by the fact that the monkey organ required no batteries or a CD! The kids LOVED it and told their parents all about it. I also played at a school carnival last weekend. It was a huge hit there as well. Maybe people with portable instruments could volunteer to share their instruments in school classrooms or assemblies and get another generation interested so that the love of automated instruments continues.

Sent in By Robin Pratt

Rome did not create a great empire by having meetings; they did it by killing all those who opposed them.

If you can stay calm, while all around you is chaos... then you probably haven't completely understood the seriousness of the situation.

Doing a job RIGHT the first time gets the job done. Doing the job WRONG fourteen times gives you job security.

Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines.

Artificial Intelligence is no match for Natural Stupidity.

A person who smiles in the face of adversity... probably has a scapegoat.

Plagiarism saves time.

If at first you don't succeed, try management.

Never put off until tomorrow what you can avoid altogether.

TEAMWORK... means never having to take all the blame yourself.

The beatings will continue until morale improves.

Never underestimate the power of very stupid people in large groups.

We waste time, so you don't have to.

Hang in there; retirement is only thirty years away!

Go the extra mile. It makes your boss look like an incompetent slacker.

A snooze button is a poor substitute for no alarm clock at all.

Karen Hefter
karenhefter@alum.pomona.edu

Hi Mike

I really enjoyed the article on Musical Boxes for New Collectors in the March/April 2004 issue of THE BULLETIN. Authors Ron Bopp & Angelo Rulli are to be commended for their simple straight-forward talk about music boxes. What a great article.

That same issue also had an article on one of my favorites--Busby Berkeley. We have a Laser Disc with shorts from many of his Warner Bros. productions. It was great to see his piano.

Keep up the good work.

John Motto-Ros

continue . . .
When the going gets tough, the tough take a coffee break.

INDECISION is the key to FLEXIBILITY.

Succeed in spite of management.

Aim Low; Reach Your Goals, Avoid Disappointment.

Maharishi Fattifatbastards Guide to Zen

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a broken fan belt and a flat tire.

The darkest hours come just before the dawn. So if you're going to steal your neighbor's milk and newspaper, that's the time to do it.

Sex is like air. It only becomes really important when you aren't getting any.

Don't aspire to become irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.

Remember, no one is listening until you fart.

Never forget that like everyone else, you are unique.

Never test the depth of the water with both feet.

If you think nobody cares whether you're dead or alive, try missing a couple of mortgage payments

Before you judge someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you do judge them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.

If at first you don't succeed, avoid sky-diving.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.

Have you ever lent someone $20 and never seen that person again? It was probably worth it.

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Some days we are the flies; some days we are the windshield.

Don't worry; it only seems kinky the first time.

Good judgment comes from bad experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it back in your pocket.

A closed mouth gathers no feet.

There are two theories about how to win an argument with a woman. Neither one works.

Generally speaking, you aren't learning much if your lips are moving.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

When we are born we are naked, wet, hungry, and we get smacked on our ass. From there on in, life gets worse.

The most wasted day of all is one in which we have not laughed.

Remember not to forget that which you do not need to know.

---

Sent in By Karl Ellison


(AP) -- Dan Koster was unpacking some of his more than 2,000 CDs after a move when he noticed something strange. Some of the discs, which he always took good care of, wouldn't play properly.

Koster, a Web and graphic designer for Queens University of Charlotte, North Carolina, took one that was skipping pretty badly and held it up to the light.

"I was kind of shocked to see a constellation of pinpricks, little points where the light was coming through the aluminum layer," he says.

His collection was suffering from "CD rot," a gradual deterioration of the data-carrying layer. It's not known for sure how common the blight is, but it's just one of a number of reasons that optical discs, including DVDs, may be a lot less long-lived than first thought.

"We were all told that CDs were well-nigh indestructible when they were introduced in the mid '80s," Koster says. "Companies used that in part to justify the higher price of CDs as well."

He went through his collection and found that 15 percent to 20 percent of the discs, most of which were produced in the '80s, were "rotted" to some extent.

The rotting can be due to poor manufacturing, according to Jerry Hartke, who runs Media Sciences Inc., a Marlborough, Massachusetts, laboratory that tests CDs.

The aluminum layer that reflects the light of the player's laser is separated from the CD label by a thin layer of lacquer. If the manufacturer applied the lacquer improperly, air can penetrate to oxidize the aluminum, eating it up much like iron rusts in air.

But in Hartke's view, it's more common that discs are rendered unreadable by poor handling by the owner.

"If people treat these discs rather harshly, or stack them, or allow them to rub against each other, this very fragile protective layer can be disturbed, allowing the atmosphere to interact with that aluminum," he says.

Part of the problem is that most people believe that it's the clear underside of the CD that is fragile, when in fact it's the side with the label. Scratches on the underside have to be fairly deep to cause skipping, while scratches on the top can easily penetrate to the aluminum layer. Even the pressure of a pen on the label side can dent the aluminum, rendering the CD unreadable.

continue . . .
Koster has taken to copying his CDs on his computer to extend the life of the recordings. Unfortunately, it’s not easy to figure out how long those recordable CDs will work.

Fred Byers, an information technology specialist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, has looked at writeable CDs on behalf of government agencies, including the Library of Congress, that need to know how long their discs will last.

Manufacturers cite lifespans up to 100 years, but without a standardized test, it’s very hard to evaluate their claims, Byers says. The worst part is that manufacturers frequently change the materials and manufacturing methods without notifying users.

“When you go to a store and buy a DVD-R, and this goes for CD-R as well, you really don’t know what you’re getting,” he says. “If you buy a particular brand of disc, and then get the same disc and brand six months later, it can be very different.”

This renders the frequently heard advice to buy name-brand discs for maximum longevity fairly moot, he says. DVDs are a bit tougher than CDs in the sense that the data layer (or layers -- some discs have two) is sandwiched in the middle of the disc between two layers of plastic. But this structure causes problems of its own, especially in early DVDs. The glue that holds the layers together can lose its grip, making the disc unreadable at least in parts.

Users that bend a DVD to remove it from a hard-gripping case are practically begging for this problem, because flexing the disc puts strain on the glue. Rewriteable CDs and DVDs, as opposed to write-once discs, should not be used for long-term storage because they contain a heat-sensitive layer that decays much faster than the metal layers of other discs.

For maximum longevity, discs should be stored vertically and only be handled by the edges. Don’t stick labels on them, and in the case of write-once CDs, don’t write on them with anything but soft water-based or alcohol-based markers.

Also, like wine, discs should be stored in a cool, dry place. Koster’s friend Mark Irons, of Corvallis, Ore., stored his CD collection in a cabin heated by a wood-burning stove. The temperature would range between 40 degrees and 70 degrees in the space of a few hours. Now, the data layer of some of his CDs looks as if it’s being eaten from the outside.

Irons is still pretty happy with CD technology, since it beats vinyl LPs and tape for longevity. Now that he’s moved his discs to an apartment with a more stable temperature, he’s noticed that the decay has slowed.

“I’m hoping they’ll hold out till that next medium gets popular, and everyone gets to buy everything over again,” he says.

continued...
Dean Randall refers to this type of action in his article ‘Farrand, Cecilian and Bush & Lane Player Actions... Comparison’. He refers to this action as the “the very late and very scarce ‘Unitype’ action, a single-tier stack in which the valves work on an entirely different principle from the norm”.

I was awe struck when comparing the Cable Carrola Inner Player (which takes up every square inch of available space) to this remarkable, small, and simply designed Unitype system. As with the AMPICO “B”, very few of these systems were manufactured due to the fact that by the time these systems were refined and perfected, the player piano lost favor to competing forms of home entertainment, the radio and phonograph.

Submitted By Mike Kukral
From Musical America, 1912

M. E. Burnham conducts Unique Demonstrations at Welte-Mignon Studios-1912

Interesting programs of piano music are given semi-weekly at the studios of the Welte Artistic Player Piano Co., at No. 273 Fifth Avenue, New York, being presented on the Welte-Mignon, a type of automatic piano which reproduces actual interpretations by contemporary masters of the pianoforte.

These recitals are invariably well attended and are conducted by M. E. Burnham, a protégé of Bertha Baur, directress of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Mr. Burnham was a scholarship pupil of that institution and studied pianoforte under Theodore Bohlmann.

The programs for these recitals are carefully arranged, much thought being given to the formation of a series of recitals revealing in chronological order the contrasting characteristics of the greatest pianists in the world.

The liveliest interest has been evinced by the discriminating audiences that gather at this studio, in listening to the differing interpretations of the same compositions, as played by several artists and reproduced through the medium of the Welte-Mignon; and the variations in touch, phrasing and pedal effects thus shown in the work of the virtuosi are noted appreciatively.

Through the medium of this instrument the characteristics of the art of a Paderewski, a Hofmann or a Carreno are preserved and reproduced with absolute accuracy.

The entire scheme for the season’s series of recitals at this studio has been worked out by Mr. Burnham with great care and with particular reference to presenting well-balanced programs that shall have distinct educational value. The

Welte-Mignon is used in such famous schools as the London Conservatory, the Imperial Conservatory of Music, Vienna, the Royal Conservatory, Budapest, and other large educational institutions.
Original

2nd Master Roll

used as the master stencil in the Freiburg factory

(Note the faint pencil recording date)

This roll was from Edwin Wellle's home in Freiburg, given to me by Richard Simonton
To Ken Caswell, the most dedicated Weltphilharmonic deserves this the most.

Richard E. Simonett

Toluca Lake, California
August 1968

M. Welte & Söhne
G + M + B + H
Fabrik pneumatischer Musikwerke
New York + Freiburg 1/BR

80. Avenue du Bois de Boulogne

1. May 19.

Cher M. Simonett,

Il est impossible d'atteindre à pareil perfection sans la représentation que celle des apparais Welte.

Ce que j'ai entendu surkkant L'Étoile et sur vos harmonie de calm d'affirmation dans ces quelques mots,

Rue de Scusa, avec soumission, l'expression de mes profonds sentiments

Claude Debussy
PARIS, den 1. November 1913.

Es ist unmöglich, die Welte-Apparate in ihrer vollendeten Wiedergabe zu übertreffen.

Was ich davon gehört habe, hat mich wirklich in Erstaunen gesetzt, und ich schätze mich glücklich, Ihnen dies mit diesen wenigen Worten zu bestätigen.

Mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung

Claude Debussy.

80. AVENUE DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE

PARIS, 1st November 1913.

Dear Sir,

It is impossible to attain a greater perfection of reproduction than that of the Welte apparatus.

I am happy to assure you in these lines of my astonishment and admiration at what I heard.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Claude Debussy.
I have today after making a concert tour of the United States for the first time heard the compositions which I played for "The Welte-Mignon" reproduced upon "The Welte-Mignon." Player with absolute accuracy as to tempo, touch, and tone quality, and with exact graduation of expression. In fact it reproduces my exact interpretation of the compositions which I played as above noted.

Josef Sélíčka
Herrn Welte

Ich weiss tatsachlich nicht lob genug für Ihre Instrumente.

Ich habe diese Musikstücke nicht nur zu hören, sondern auch zu spüren gekonnt. Es ist mir durchaus unmöglich, die Eindrücke, die man aus diesen Musikstücken gewinnt, zu wiedergeben, wie man sie empfindet.

Ich kann nicht anders, als Ihnen zu danken für die Mühe, die Sie getan haben, um mich zu verpflichten.

Meine herzlichsten Glückwünsche.

BARCELONA, 14. September 1913.

J. Granados.
I ch beglückwünsche Sie zu der wunderbaren Erfindung, die eine enorme Bedeutung für die musikalische Kultur hat, und wünsche ihr weitgehendste Verbreitung.

A. Scriabin.

Mes sincères félicitations de cette invention merveilleuse, d'une importance énorme pour la culture musicale, et je souhaite qu'elle se répande partout.

A. Scriabin.

I congratulate you on the wonderful invention, which is of enormous significance for musical culture, and I wish for it the widest adoption.

A. Scriabin.
The “fourth dimension” in the field of reproduction of pianistic interpretation – that is the Welte Mignon!

To the genius of its inventors, the pianovirtuoso is deeply indebted, for now, a bit of immortality is vouchsafed even to him.

Coming generations will be grateful to Messrs. Welte and Böckvoth for preserving to them in an authentic manner the best tradition of the art of pianistic interpretation.

Fannie Bloomfield Zeislcer
Treuburg, 18 Aug 7’08
Leavenworth, Kansas

The town of Leavenworth can now buy a $15,000 band organ, thanks to rocker Melissa Etheridge.

 Etheridge, who grew up in Leavenworth, donated the $15,000 needed to buy an organ the town had its eye on for a long time.

 Jerry Reinhardt, a carousel aficionado who’s worked with the Leavenworth Historical Museum Association for years, was ecstatic last week when the check for the band organ arrived.

 He said people restoring a small 1913 carousel that will be on display during the Taste of Leavenworth next month had been wanting a band organ to go with the carousel.

 “But we also knew we did not have enough money to buy one,” he said.

 The one they wanted was in the Kansas City area. They expected to have to scrounge for money for several years, until a group member suggested contacting Etheridge.

 When Reinhardt learned she would pay for the organ, he offered to engrave a brass plate, as she wished. The plate, which will be on display at the Feb. 28 event, will say: “Given to the Great People of Leavenworth, with much appreciation. From Melissa Etheridge.”
No one from the more than 2200 passengers and crew of the Titanic could ever have thought that after 86 years, the film of the sinking of this ship would produce such gigantic profits. But that is another story.

The English Oceanic Steam Navigation Co., Ltd—the White Star Line—had ordered the largest passenger steamer in the world to be built. It became a ship of 46,328 gross register tons and everyone was convinced that it was unsinkable because of its watertight compartments. Therefore, the name Titanic was chosen in relation to its size and strength. The maiden voyage was planned as a sailing from Southhampton in the south of England to New York. But the seagod, Poseidon did not like such a large ship in his imperium. So, he sent an iceberg to intersect with the Titanic just off the coast of New Foundland. The collision with the iceberg took place at 41 degrees 46' latitude north and 50 degrees 14' longitude west. There was insufficient life-saving equipment and after about three hours the ship sank on April 14, 1912. 1503 people lost their lives from a total of 2206 passengers and crew. In peace-time, this number has never been surpassed in any shipping disaster.

In the well known museum of mechanical musical instruments in the splendid Castle of Bruchsal (near Karlsruhe in Germany) you can see and hear a Welte organ. The claim is that it was saved from destruction because it was not delivered in time to be installed on the Titanic. The Welte Philharmonic Organ in the Castle of Bruchsal plays from paper rolls with 100 holes. There are 260 pipes. It has 7 stops. The dimensions are: 232 cm (7’7”) side, 125 cm (4’1”) deep and 302 cm (9’11”) tall. The instrument cannot be played by hand. It is powered by an electro-pneumatic system and at some time it came into the hands of a manufacturer in Aalen (Wurtemberg). Ultimately it was bought by Jan Brauers, whose magnificent collection is displayed in the Castle at Bruchsal. The instrument cannot be played by hand. It is powered by an electro-pneumatic system and at some time it came into the hands of a manufacturer in Aalen (Wurtemberg). Ultimately it was bought by Jan Brauers, whose magnificent collection is displayed in the Castle at Bruchsal. Jan Brauers wrote about the organ in his book, Von der Aolsharfe zum Digitalspieher (Klinkhard & Biermann, Munich, 1984). On pages 218-219 he wrote that this organ was ordered on behalf of the Titanic. To add weight to this statement he reprinted a letter from Ilse Bockisch, the wife of Karl Bockisch (1876-1952). She was the only daughter of Berthold Welte (1843-1928). Berthold also had a son, Edwin. Karl Bockisch was a technically gifted man who was involved extensively with the creation of the reproducing piano. In the year 1900, he became co-partner with Welte and with his brother-in-law, Edwin.

The above mentioned letter from Ilse Bockisch is undated. The translated text of the letter is: “This organ was saved from the sinking of the Titanic! How was that possible? The firm Michael Welte & Sohne in Freiburg im Breisgau had built the instrument by order of the White Star Line on behalf of the Titanic. Several delays caused the organ not to arrive timely in England. Karl Bockisch, who was already in Southampton, was, however, invited for the maiden voyage of the Titanic. By a happy (unhappy) coincidence he eluded fate. He received a telegram calling him back home because a close relative was perilously ill.” So, both survived—the organ and its builder. The disaster and the outbreak of World War I also frustrated the plan to place the organ on later ship on order from the White Star Line.

Such a remarkable letter—does it match the facts? The Dutch pressman, Edward P. deGroot has written a lot of articles and also a leading book about the Titanic. In 1980-81, he conducted a detailed correspondence with Jan Brauers who could not produce any clear proof that the organ which he had acquired was really the organ ordered for the Titanic. One the contrary, in reference to the matter, Mr. deGroot wrote to Mr. Jacques Gerssen the following on April 26, 1987: “Mr. Brauers could only show a small letter written by Ilse Bockisch. From this letter, it is apparent that Mr. Brauers was led by the nose by her and a clever salesman to get a substantially higher sum for the organ. Neither in the building plans of the ship nor in the specifications of the ship-builder in Belfast can anything be found about plans for an organ (e.g. in
having ordered an organ for the third-class day-residence, because an organ would be unthinkable in the first or second class). A similar organ was never placed on the sister ship, Olympic, and it was still in service until 1935! The Welte organ should have been installed on the Olympic had it been ordered.”

In the available archives, nothing can be found concerning any correspondence or contact between the White Star Line and the Welte firm! But there are more questions.

In the letter of Ilse Bockisch, it is mentioned that her husband stayed in Southampton. The question is, why? If the organ was not finished in time for installation, he had no reason for remaining in Southampton.

Ilse writes that the organ was built in 1911/1912. World War I started two years later on August 1, 1914. So there would have been sufficient time to place the organ on another ship, e.g. the Olympic.

Would not the Welte firm have claimed the deposit money and final payment (or at least a good part of it) had the White Star Line refused to place the organ on a sister ship?

In conclusion the White Star Line never ordered an organ for any passenger steamer. It is quite clear, then, that in the Castle in Bruchsal you can see and hear a magnificent Welte organ. But it is not clear for whom the organ was originally built. It is not even clear how it was acquired by the manufacturer in Aalen. The story mentioned by Jan Brauers in his book has to be consigned to the realm of fancy. Unfortunately many serious authors have quoted this fairy-tale in books and articles without any real research on their part. But it is, as you know, fairy-tales last forever!

The author has stated the following:

"In regard to the White Star Line never having ordered an organ for any passenger steamer-Mr. Edward P. deGroot has made extensive research into the archives and he could not find any trace of an order for an organ or orchestrion.

The letter from Ilse Bockisch-Mr. Brauers could not prove that this undated letter was authentic.

The conclusions arrived at in the article are the opinions of the author after doing extensive research into the subject.

ADOPT-A-PIANO CAMPAIGN LETTERS

Hi Mike,

I am enclosing some updated information for the Bulletin re: Adopt-a-Piano campaign. Also the following info about two of our Founding Chapter members:

In the past year two of our Founding Chapter members passed away. Both were long-time members who were active some years ago. Dr. Luis Chardon had a charming, rambling 1920's home down the peninsula from San Francisco and was noted for the spirited local meetings he hosted. Elmer Klein also was active with the chapter assisting his wife Lou who was our local treasurer for a number of years. We will miss both of these individuals.

I am enjoying the bulletin and have had a couple of very enthusiastic comments from local members. One is a neighbor across the street who is a relatively new member, has just had his J. & C. Fischer restrung and thoroughly restored and can't say enough good things about the Bulletin. So, cheers to you.

If things ever quiet down a bit around here I will get something down about the early days of AMICA. Dale Lawrence was a house guest here for a week when his daughter was in the hospital here in S.F. so we had some good times talking about how he and Sally got involved with the hobby and helped found AMICA.

Keep up the good work. Hope to see you at the convention in Denver.

Richard D. Reutlinger

AN UPDATE ON THE ADOPT-A-PIANO PROJECT

With the publication of the article “Adopt-a-Piano” in the AMICA bulletin I have had several inquiries from chapters wishing to take part. The Founding Chapter voted at our March meeting to pledge $3,000 toward the fund and at this point I am suggesting that chapters wishing to participate make a pledge to Wes Neff who will establish a separate fund for this project.

I have been in touch with the Montana Heritage Commission which oversees the preservation and restoration of structures and artifacts in Virginia City and Nevada City, Montana. At one point they asked if AMICA would be interested in establishing an endowment fund for present and future restoration of instruments but under their administration. I declined for two reasons: (1) that AMICA is not a large enough organization to establish a sizeable endowment fund, and (2) we would not be inclined to fund something not under our direct control. Too often money in such a fund can be siphoned off for administration costs.

Because of this inquiry, I produced our actual proposal to the Commission. Jeff Tiberi, Executive Director of the Commission, had accepted our proposal by letter (copy included). I am going to Virginia City in late July on my way to the Denver convention to meet personally with Jeff and other representatives of the Montana Heritage Commission. I will report to the Board at the Denver meeting.

Once we have a list of instruments needing restoration I will make it available so that individual chapters may choose one to fund or perhaps join
with another chapter to fund a more expensive instrument.

NOTE: If members attempted to contact me via e-mail, the e-mail address in the new Directory is incorrect. My correct e-mail is Reutlingerags@aol.com

Richard D. Reutlinger

This is a modest, grass-roots proposal from the Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors’ Assn. (AMICA) to the Montana Heritage Commission. One of the primary goals of AMICA as stated in our Bylaws is “to encourage the restoration of automatic musical instruments to a condition consistent with the original intent of their manufacturers”. With this in mind, one of our Founding Members, Richard Reutlinger, proposed an “Adopt-a-Piano” campaign to help finance restoration of instruments in the Nevada City Music Hall. He introduced the idea at last year’s National Board Meeting and received an enthusiastic response. He then put an article in the National AMICA Bulletin to inform the general membership about this campaign. To date, he has received favorable comments from several chapters.

OUR PROPOSAL

To establish a separate fund administered by our national treasurer to fund restoration of one or more instruments in the Bovey Collection.

Individual chapters could contribute funds to restore a particular instrument or band together to fund restoration of more complex, larger instruments.

Art Reblitz of Reblitz Restorations would handle the actual restoration work as he is very familiar with the collection and has the trust of the Montana Heritage Commission from past involvement.

Once restoration work is completed, AMICA would pay Reblitz Restorations directly including costs of transport and insurance. This keeps the focus on the work and minimizes any administration costs.

Instruments to be considered would first be chosen by John Ellingsen, Curator of History, Jeff Tiberi, Executive Director of the Montana Heritage Commission, and Art Reblitz. Once candidates for restoration are chosen AMICA chapters could choose which instruments to “Adopt”.

Art Reblitz, early on, had proposed that the restoration of these instruments be solid mechanical work so that the instruments can remain in good playing condition for the general public to play with their own coins. We are not concerned here with expensive “cosmetic” restorations where the finish is flawless and every screw is replated. Your collection is displayed in an environment not unlike their original locations.

One of the goals of this program is also to make the public aware of AMICA and it’s involvement in this restoration program. We expect some recognition in the form of a plaque or sign stating this.

We (AMICA) hope that this proposal meets with the approval of the Montana Heritage Commission.

20th April 2004

Richard D. Reutlinger
824 Grove Street
San Francisco, California 94117

Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter of 14th April 2004 concerning the music machines. It is always a pleasure to hear from you and I look forward to working with you on this project.

The endowment idea represents the ideal situation for us, but it sounds like this approach is off the table at this point. There are options that I believe could address your concerns and hopefully we can continue the discussion this summer. Nonetheless, we want to move forward with your proposal.

Jim Carpita, our Site Manager, and I will meet with John and other staff to discuss the first candidates for the program. We will prepare a list in the next few weeks and send it to you. Hopefully Art will have time to doctor our first patient sometime this summer.

It gives us great pleasure to know that this partnership is underway and that we are setting up a program that will protect these unique machines well into the future. Hopefully this program will last for years, and both organizations will be able to take pride in the respective roles we play to look out for the future by taking care of the past. Future generations will appreciate the work that we are able to accomplish today.

Thank you for your kind and generous offer. We look forward to working with you on this exciting project.

Best regards,
Jeffrey Tiberi
Executive Director
Montana Heritage Commission
AN AMERICAN INSTRUMENT THE BANJO

– PART TWO –

The choice of building a custom instrument over a replica was a personal decision. To me, either choice would present equal difficulties, but the challenge of building something unique is somewhat offset by the flexibility afforded in the design, layout, and parts that could be used.

PARTS THAT WERE ADAPTED INCLUDE:
1. A restored Duo Art pump and motor for the vacuum supply.
2. Valve plates, stems, bleeds, etc. from discarded player stacks.
3. Transmission and spool box parts from an upright player action.
4. Piano Roll spools.

CUSTOM-MADE OR CUSTOMIZED PARTS
1. Walnut case.
2. Customized banjo.
3. Walnut spoolbox and tracker bar.
4. Drive train from the pump to the transmission.
5. All valve and pouch boards.
6. All pneumatics with various fittings.
7. And the most difficult, the picking mechanism with all its parts.

From the beginning I thought the picking mechanism would pose the biggest challenge, and indeed it did.

My first thought was to use ramps or cams; but a few sketches revealed too many complications. My next idea, the use of a race, was rejected because it would require machine shop work, and I had decided to fabricate everything myself. (A race is a groove or channel that forces moving parts to follow a prescribed course.)

My third attempt made use of a crank and was successful. (See Figures 1 & 2).

When adjusted properly, the mechanism works flawlessly.

Solving the mechanical operation did not solve the speed problem. As shown in Part 1, Figure 2A, the roll limits the repetition to 6.4 notes per second. To gain more speed in the rolls I cut, I used an oval brass insert in the four tracker bar holes for the picks, reducing the heights of the holes from 1/8" to less than 3/32". I also made a special oval punch for the pick perforation under 3/32" in height. This raises the roll limit to 8 notes per second, but getting the pouch, bleed, valve and pneumatic train to operate this fast presented the real challenge.

The demands on the picker pneumatic are different from those of a player piano, demanding more of the time allotted per note be devoted to keeping the valve in play position.

TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE REQUIRED THE FOLLOWING:

1. Adjustable bleeds-setting the bleeds identical (as far as possible) on the bench did not result in satisfactory performance, only by individual adjustments did each picker reach test speed.
2. The use of double valves (not a primary and secondary)-the need for the least possible resistance in transferring vacuum/atmospheric pressure between valve and pneumatic required a large valve or two smaller valves. I opted for two valves.
3. Valve return springs-the slowest...
action in the complete cycle from the opening to closing of a port (in this case, the tracker bar hole) is the return of the valve from the outer seat, where the pouch has forced it, to the inner seat. The vacuum/atmospheric pressure that returns the valve is not as efficient as the pouch, so a return spring helps this operation.

4. Efficient pouches—pouches are governed by the same laws that govern pneumatics, so the least possible pouch dish along with the largest practical pouch disks are used.

5. Sufficient vacuum pressure and volume—although I hoped for a mechanism that would work at 10 or 12 inch pressure and assure quiet operation, the energy requirement of the mechanism as I designed it requires between 18 and 20 inches vacuum so sound baffles were used when possible. The Duo Art pump supplies adequate volume and pressure.

The expression mechanism also posed a challenge. The Encore roll is of the endless variety with 5 to the inch spacing. By eliminating double OFF perforations (one on each edge), approximately 1/2 inch of blank paper per edge was available for use. Each 1/2 inch edge was used for 3 perforations (8 to the inch), the resulting 6 tracker bar holes are used for off, rewind, wood block, tambourine jingles, bass expression and treble expression.

Having separate base and treble expression was desirable; and with bass and treble pickers already separate, the availability of only 1 tracker bar hole for bass and 1 hole for treble presented the main problem. Using chain perforations that could possibly be several feet long close to the roll edge was not an option. Changing vacuum pressure was also not an option.

After some thought, I came up with this solution, the use of 2 pneumatics, a fast acting pneumatic and a slower acting adjustable pneumatic, both working from the same valve. With one tracker hole, loud, medium and soft are possible. (See Figure 3)

The banjo I selected for my project was a six-string tenor banjo tuned and fingered the same as a guitar. The wide neck allowed the correct spacing for the 4 strings and 40 finger buttons needed for my instrument. (See Figures 4 & 5) The normal narrow neck of the 4 or 5 string banjo would not work without building up the width of the neck.

Particular care was needed in the drumming of the 40 holes through the neck, and the guide block (center, Figure 4) was clamped behind each fret in succession for this purpose. In preparation for this operation, the neck was removed from the banjo head, the nut knocked off (that’s the piece that spaces the strings) and the tuning pegs removed. The neck also had a metal tensioning rod imbedded, which had to be hacksawed apart before it could be removed. The last operation before the drilling could be done was to band saw the rounded bottom portion off the neck, providing a flat area needed to hold the neck stable. This work, of course, was done on a new banjo that had never sounded a note!

OTHER REFINEMENTS INCLUDE:

1. Soft, medium and loud playing by positioning the curved glass lid.
2. A switch in the spool box for single or multiple tune selection.
3. A clutch using the off perforations between tunes to tighten the paper on the take-up spool avoiding annoying tempo hesitation.
4. An area for roll storage.
5. For the child in all of us, a view of the spoolbox and transmission/roll tracking system and planned moving figures.
The months spent on this project were some of the most enjoyable and productive I’ve ever spent. The advice I would give anyone contemplating a project—large or small—is to do it now! No time to spare is not a valid excuse. TV screens, computers, cell phones, pagers all use up precious time but leave little tangible results. This is not the case when time is spent on a musical instrument. Enjoyable results are immediate and enduring.

Figures 11 & 12 - Cutting my own rolls did not present the insurmountable problem I thought it would, even not reading music wasn’t an excuse! Figure 11 is a photo of the marking/punching jig. The paper, which has been slit to roll size, is a snug fit between the fence guides, as is the marking guide #1. The sheet music is enlarged, then cut into strips; and by placing panels #2 and #3 to cover all but one measure, mistakes are almost eliminated. The marking guide #1 slides up and down between the fences and is marked with the music staff (the 5 horizontal lines); and with notes and letters in their appropriate places. As can be seen in Figure 12, the note D, circled on the sheet music strip, can be found on the marking guide (2 circles) in two places. The note D can be transferred to the music roll by placing a pencil point in the hole directly below either of the circled notes, and scribing a line by moving the marking guide #1 up or down. This procedure can be done without knowing the note is a D; but since the notes are all lettered below the staff, it isn’t long before the notes on the sheet music are known by letter.

Before note marking, the roll paper is marked in sub-divided measures (horizontal lines), and vertical lines for the 4 pickers, the latter made with the marking guide #1. The lines made by using the marking guide are used as centers for the hand punch. Before using a hand punch or exacto knife, a punching surface, (in my case scrap 1/8" birch plywood), is placed between the paper and marking jig.

Figure 5 - The finger button pneumatics shown mounted beneath the finger board. Another tier of pneumatics are below those visible for a total of 40 pneumatics. Careful alignment allows the finger button wire to go through the bushed hole and screw through a dowel in the pneumatic finger, allowing easy adjustment to the string and each other (Figure 6)

Figure 6 - As seen in the photo, the pneumatic fingers were made in groups, bushed, then sawn apart. At left is seen how the holes for the threaded wire were drilled. At right the assembly complete except for the leather punching glued to the bottom of the finger button.

Figure 8 - The customized pneumatic boards ready for assembly. As some have probably guessed, the dark wood used for all pneumatics and many other components inside the case is walnut. After re-sawing a large amount of 1” thick stock into various thicknesses for several projects, I used the excess of remaining thin stock wherever practical.

continued...
Figure 7A & 7B - Figure 7A shows the 2-pouch boards, one face up and one face down. The small brass nipples are tubed to a junction block, then to the tracker bar. Figure 7B shows the 2 valve boards, one face up, one face down. The aluminum nipples are tubed to the finger button pneumatics.

**Figures 9 and 10**

1. Motor mound and motor
2. Vacuum Pump
3. Transmission drive pulley
4. Belt tension arm
5. Cone-shaped pulley
6. Belt guide shaft
7. Tubing junction box
8. Valve chest for off, rewind, etc.
9. Finger button valve chest
10. Roll storage compartment
11. Governor
12. Valve chest with picker and expression components

Figures 9 and 10 are photos taken from the right and rear. The sides and back can be removed from the banjo case for easy access to various components. The complicated-looking drive chain (3, 4, 5, and 6) deserves an explanation. The Encore uses an endless roll and has no problem with the tempo, which is fixed. My instrument uses spooled rolls, and I thought the 5 tunes on each roll could pose a built-up problem on the take-up spool (causing objectionable tempo speed up.) The drive train (3, 4, 5, 6) was designed to solve this problem and would work thus:

The shaft at #6 has a pulley (not seen) that guides the belt to a position on the cone #5. The cone shaft has a sprocket and chain (visible to left of cone) that drives the transmission. Using the off signal that occurs after each tune, shaft #6 would ratchet slightly moving the belt up the cone, causing each tune to start at 80 tempo. The rewind signal would cause shaft #6 to return to start, and the first tune on the next roll would start at 80 tempo.

I have held off attaching the ratcheting mechanism until I get more 5 tune rolls to see if it is needed at all. I have limited my hand-cut rolls to two tunes per spool.
Addenda

Additional paragraphs to be inserted in sequence directly under the existing subheading – “Resolution Of Interference #40,391” on page 149

One major bone of contention in Interference #40,391 revolved around the Welte legal team’s assertion that the invention depicted in Stoddard’s December 9th (1913) application (#805,488, for the Ampico Type 1A, presented in evidence as Stoddard Exhibit #4) could not function (“is inoperative”). This allegation was quashed by Stoddard himself when, during his testimony, he personally demonstrated a Chickering piano equipped with a Type 1A Ampico (presented in evidence as Stoddard Exhibit #2). Thereby, Stoddard proved that the Type 1A did, indeed, work quite well!

Stoddard’s lawyers had countered earlier that the Welte legal team was hypocritical in making such an assertion (that the Type 1A could not function) in light of the fact that the invention (i.e., cheek’s clone) depicted in the ‘Welte’ application (#840,912) is, in actuality, itself non-operative (i.e., phony). Clearly, the Welte side was using the timeworn ploy of falsely accusing an opponent of the very trick they (Welte) were guilty of themselves.

Claude Debussy
The composer as Pianist

Recorded for M. Welte & Soehne
(1 November 1913)

1. Prélude. Perluck [3:400]
2. La cathédrale engloutie [6:50]
3. Les萘des de Paris [2:09]
4. Mouton [1:48]
5. Le vent dans la plaine [2:00]
6. La plus que lente [3:28]
7. Estampes
   - La sérénade [3:14]
10. Pavane for the Dead [1:44]
11. Pas de deux [2:09]
12. Les Trilles [1:47]
13. Clair de Lune [2:53]
14. Dans le calvaire [4:30]
15. Follies et Mélodies
   - Ave Maria choral [1:47]
16. Ariettes Oubliées [0:10]
17. Gruen [1:36]
18. L’air du temps [1:22]

Recorded for G & T
(1904) with Mary Garden, soprano

Thanks Russell Raitis, Earl Wood III, Peter Kermack, Paul Loche, and Carolyn Curtis-Alderman.

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Continued...
ENRIQUE GRANADOS: The Composer as Pianist

The Composer as Pianist
His Recordings For M. Welte & Soehne
Paris, 1913

The Cornell Collection
Volume 2

Pierian
0002

FANNIE BLOOMFIELD ZEISLER
1863-1927

"For many years she was considered the greatest American pianist: a powerful technician with a staggering repertoire."

Harold C. Schonberg, "The Great Pianists," Simon and Schuster

WOMEN IN MUSIC, VOLUME ONE

This is the first time in a series devoted to the contributions made by women to the art of music.
Henriot Lévy  Pianist and Composer

Henriot Lévy
1. Variations on an Original Theme WM 7323/4 (April 1926) [11:07]
2. Waltz No. 1 WM 6567 (November 1923) [3:48]
3. Waltz No. 2 WM 7365 (May 1926) [5:09]

Frederic Chopin
4. Études ("Trois Nouvelles") (Rachmaninoff) No. 1 WM 6537 (November 1923) [2:17]
5. Waltz Op. 64, No. 1 WM 7280 (April 1928) [3:13]
6. Étude Op. 25, No. 5 WM 6538 (May 1924) [2:47]
8. Mazurka Op. 33, No. 4 WM 7534 (November 1926) [4:46]

Johann Sebastian Bach
9. Organ Prelude and Fugue in a minor Prelude (tr. by Litolf) WM 6697 (December 1923) [3:10]

Henriot Lévy
Piano Trio No. 3 in a minor Henriot Lévy, piano Dorothy Minty, violin Sidney Edwards, cello (19 April 1943)
10. I Moderato [8:43]
11. II Leggiero [10:02]
12. III Allegretto con moto [4:26]
13. IV Allegro Deciso [4:14]

Front:

Welte-Mignon Piano

Welte-Mignon Piano

Hotel WALDHAUS SILS MARIA

5/6
2:14
7:00
3:56
11:27
2:40
3:28
2:35
2:13
8:40
3:06

Front:

Hotel WALDHAUS SILS MARIA

Hotel WALDHAUS SILS MARIA

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continue...
MAURICE RAVEL

The Composer as Pianist and Conductor

As Pianist
Recorded for Welte-Mignon

1 7  
Valses nobles et sentimentales (1911); recorded in Paris, 1913  [13:29]

8  
Sonatine (1903-05); recorded in Paris, 1913  [4:42]

9  
Madrigal  [2:40]

10  
Mouvement de menuet  (Ravel recorded 1st and 2nd movements only)

Recorded for Duo-Art

Minstrels

11  "Ouvertures triomphales" (1904-05); recorded in London, 1922  [4:11]

12  "La Vallée des clochettes" (1904-05); recorded in New York, 1928  [5:55]

13  Perrette pour une infante défunte (1899); recorded in London, 1922  [5:45]

As Conductor
Recorded for Polydor

14  Bolero (1928); recorded in Paris, 1930  [16:08]  Lamoureux Orchestra; Polydor 66947/8

The Caswell Collection
Volume 4
Pierian 0013

The Piano Artistry of Silvio & Isabel Scionti

Silvio Scionti / pianist / Welte-Mignon reproducing rolls
2. Claude Debussy: Reflets dans l'eau, Op. 16,1 (1:45)

Silvio Scionti / pianist / Ampico reproducing rolls

Silvio and Isabel Scionti / duo pianists / commercial 78 RPM recordings
12. J. S. Bach: Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, arranged by Mary Howe, (3:28)
13. J. S. Bach: Preludio in E Major (from the sixth sonata for violin), arranged by Louis Victor Saar, (2:55)
14. Ludwig van Beethoven: Turkish March, arranged by Charles Thomas, (1:52)
16. Emmanuel Chabrier: Espagnole Rhapsody, arranged by Chabrier, (5:44)
17. Manuel Ponce: Idilico Mexicano (dedicated to Isabel and Silvio Scionti), (2:49)
18. Johann Strauss: The Blue Danube Waltzes (based on the Schubert-Everst transcription), arranged by Alphonse Chausson, (5:42)

The Piano Artistry of Silvio & Isabel Scionti

Silvio Scionti / pianist / Welte-Mignon reproducing rolls
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18. Johann Strauss: The Blue Danube Waltzes (based on the Schubert-Everst transcription), arranged by Alphonse Chausson, (5:42)
Imperial Industrial Co.
699 East 135th St.,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

A neighbor of mine has a Duo-Art Player Piano, 88 Note, and desires to obtain some music rolls.

If you carry any music rolls in stock, would you please send a catalogue with quotations to me?

Might mention that I was once associated with Mr. George Gittens who purchased the M. Welte & Sons Inc., factory located at Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and at the same time acquired the collection of hand played piano rolls played by famous pianists. Mr. Charles Kohler, the founder of Kohler & Campbell and also the Auto-Action Company, manufactured more player pianos in his day than any other outfit. Mr. Gittens was associated with him, as also Mr. Lawrence, Deuguard; Mr. Kohler died in Paris several years ago; whether Mr. Gittens is still alive, I cannot say.

The Welte firm was well known for the manufacture of the Welte Mignon Reproducing Pianos. Perhaps you heard of them?

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

P.S. Is your company the successor to the Charles Kohler combination? Please reply.

This interesting Welte letter contributed by Jeffrey Morgan.
3. Michael Welte and the 19th Century Beginnings

The Black Forest area of Baden in southwest Germany was a center of mechanical clock making when Michael Welte was born in the town of Vœhrenbach in 1807. Regarding the family name, there continue to be differences in its pronunciation. The German manner is approximately “VELteh,” with accent on the first syllable. There are German-Swiss colonies which spell the name Welty. As the name spread into the English-speaking world, the pronunciation which evolved may be expressed phonetically as “WELTea,” again, with the accent on the first syllable.

The making of clocks in Baden progressed from a simple striking of hours or quarter hours to the playing of little tunes on the chimes. Pipes were added in time, and this type of clock was capable of playing more sophisticated melodies operated by a cylinder or barrel with pins. In 1827, at the age of twenty, Michael Welte became an apprentice to Johann Blessing in Unter-Kirnach. Blessing was a noted maker of musical clocks. During the next five years, Michael learned his trade well from Blessing and from an uncle, also a mechanical clock maker. Michael then left Unter-Kirnach and opened his own business in Vœhrenbach, his birthplace. This move in 1832 marked the beginning of the future firm of M. Welte & Soehne.

A talented inventor as well as a craftsman, Michael began adding more pipes and instruments to his clocks. He increased interest in these creations to the point where people were purchasing the mechanisms for their musical performances, not for their time keeping. He began dropping the clocks entirely and built larger units, though the music was still triggered by wooden cylinders and their pins. Filled with more imitations of the orchestra, the units grew to include various drums and percussion instruments. It was a simple step for these creations, offered in a growing number of sizes and in finely carved cases, to be called “orchestrions.” Princes and kings, including the Sultan of Turkey, ordered instruments, and over time the Welte orchestrions won prizes and awards at industrial and world expositions wherever they were shown.

Many of the quotes in this historical overview are from letters written in the later 1940s and early 1950s by Edwin Welte, Michael’s grandson, to the late Richard C. Simonton of North Hollywood, California. Richard Simonton became acquainted with and a friend of Edwin Welte after World War II. The following description of the early instruments was made to Dick Simonton in a letter from Edwin dated August 20, 1947. It and others herein included are edited on occasion only to give flow to Edwin’s sometime awkward ability with the English language.

“Before 1914, I had the intention to get a collection together of the most characteristic automatic musical instruments my grandfather, my father and uncles and myself built . . . I intended to exhibit in our music hall in Freiburg the following instruments of Welte make.

“1. A Blackforest ‘Spieluhr’, a clock containing a small set of pipes which would by means of a wooden cylinder play at certain times little dances (about 1800-1840). . . . The letter of apprentice between Johann Blessing, Unter-Kirnach Schwarzwald, and my Grandfather to learn how to make ‘Spieluhren,’ is still hanging at the wall of my smoking room (1827).

“2. An Orchestron playable with wooden cylinders. With the musical part of the Spieluhr more and more completed, the clock was left off, and the instrument called Orchestron. A large instrument of this kind built by my grandfather and exhibited in Frankfurt and Karlsruhe, 1848-1849, received the highest reward, the gold medal. [This was by far the largest Orchestron at that time, and it took Michael Welte three years to complete. It was operated by three cylinders.]

“3. A small, a medium, and a large size orchestron with paper-music rolls (1887). The three brothers, Emil, Berthold (my father) and Michael (Jr.) Welte developed the Orchestron playable by paper music rolls. They were a great success.”

After thirty years in Vœhrenbach and the business having gone so well, it was prudent to consider other markets. Therefore in 1865, Michael’s eldest son, Emil Welte, moved to the U.S. to found a branch of the firm. Other than visits to Germany, Emil stayed in the States for the rest of his life, becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen.

It is said he opened a “wareroom” on East 14th Street in New York City opposite Steinway Hall; also in July of that year, 1865, he registered the firm in New York State as M. Welte & Sons. The first orchestrion was imported that same year; it was sold to William Kramer and the Atlantic Garden, the Bowery, New York City.

Before long a showroom was opened, located per one report at 557 Fifth Avenue, and soon the Welte orchestrions were as well accepted in America as in Europe. Emil’s son, Carl Welte, was born in August of 1871, four years before Edwin. Cousin Carl, who through his inheritance later became part owner of the original firm as well as the New York branch, visited Germany on occasion. But he remained in New York City until the outbreak of the Great War. At some point he retired with his father to Norwichtown, Connecticut, and into a home on East Town Street which had been built in 1770.
The town of Voehrenbach, Germany, was somewhat isolated. In 1872, Michael Welte moved his business to Freiburg, a prosperous hub city in the lower southwest of Germany near the borders of France and Switzerland. Michael selected a location across from the railway station. This gave his factory access to the world at large. Although the Freiburg location of M. Welte & Soehne is usually cited as being older, the Fifth Avenue site of the firm and its showroom established by Emil Welte pre-dated the Freiburg factory by some seven years.

In 1880, eight years after moving his business to Freiburg and when grandson Edwin was just four years old, Michael Welte died. Now the firm was vested in the hands of Michael’s three sons, Emil (father of Carl and residing in the United States), Berthold (father of Edwin), and Michael, Jr. there were other children as well; Carl Welte wrote in a letter of pleasant visits with his aunts, his father’s married sisters. But this was an era when women were home-bound and rarely inherited or managed property. The sisters are not known to have played a role in the business.

By the late 1880s, the three owner-brothers had reportedly invented and patented new uses for the paper roll. Punched cardboard was already in use in weaving mills, and there are suggestions that the paper roll was already used with reed organs. If so, the use was little noted. It is not questioned that the Weltes were the first to promote and exploit the musical paper roll. Whether or not they knew of earlier experiments, there was an application which could be patented. No protests are known against their claim and thus it stands as a first. This landmark use of the paper roll by a major firm signaled its importance to the entire mechanical musical instrument industry. Perforated paper thereafter was used to perform the functions of the older wooden cylinders, and by the 1890s had entered its most widespread and lasting use: first in paper rolls for push-up piano players, then for interior-action player-pianos. Indicative of the growth: as of October, 1904, Pianola catalogs, bulletins and supplements promoted 12,978 selections as available on paper rolls.

Again quoting Edwin Welte:

“In 1887 we originated, patented and built the first organs and orchestrions on the pneumatic system with paper music rolls and, being protected by patents, remained sole manufacturers thereof for years.” (Note: Actually patented in the United States in 1883. U.S. Patent No. 287,559 was granted to Emil Welte of New York, New York on October 30, 1883. The application for this patent was filed January 2, 1883.)

Some sources, Edwin included, attributed the “we” above to all three of Michael’s sons, while others gave credit for the paper roll invention, “Die Papiermusikrolle mit Pneumatischen System,” to Emil Welte. This may seem strange with manufacture said to be in Freiburg and Emil busy in the States. But the possibility of his sole contribution exists. He was a talented inventor as was his son, Carl. They applied over the years for several U.S. patents covering mechanical organ and orchestration inventions. The last known application was in 1913 about the time Emil wrote that he retired. An undated company brochure gave credit to Emil.

“In 1887, a patent of Mr. Emil Welte startled the world, and this invention, the use of paper music-rolls in connection with a pneumatic action, revolutionized the trade, as it did away with the expensive, bulky wooden music cylinders, and gave to the instrument an unlimited repertoire.”

From *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*:

[Emil Welte] improved the then newly invented paper roll (taking the place of the earlier wooden cylinders), and was the first to use it, in connection with a pneumatic action, in a large orchestration built for Theiss’ Alhambra Court (N.Y.)

This orchestration was later said to have been the equivalent of the Welte firm’s huge Concert orchestrion style No. 10. There is no reason to believe that the Alhambra Court orchestrion was fabricated in the States, but this source also points to the paper roll pneumatic valve control accomplishment as Emil’s, and that it was created for a specific customer in the United States. This was typical Welte procedure for decades. They placed demonstrators in their warerooms but did not stock large inventories. Quite often they built their instruments on order in accordance with a particular customer’s wishes as to instrumentation and case style. With increased interest in their product, they issued illustrated brochures which in time presented ten styles of cottage and concert orchestrions. Even then, individual product variations could be requested and supplied.

Later information from an Estey-Welte Corporation brochure issued about 1923 added that there was “an exact duplicate [of the instrument] which he installed a few years later in Patti’s residence, ‘Craig y Nos.’” Adelina Patti (1843-1919) was a famous soprano soloist who retired in 1906: “When Adelina Patti was the world’s ‘Queen of Song’ every audience demanded this of her [the song, “Home, Sweet Home”] as one of her encores.” Freiburg literature also spoke proudly of Emil’s instrument, the “Welte-Orgel im Schlosser der Soengerin Adelina Patti in Craig y Nos Castle.”

Before the century ended, many hundreds of Welte instruments of various sizes were purchased by the rich and the famous around the world. These orchestrions, at times all but one of a kind, found homes in town houses and on estates, in castles and aboard yachts, in the best of hotels, in large entertainment areas and even aboard steamships. Welte brochures began to include for publicity purposes lengthy, impressive lists of the noble and rich – kings, queens, sultans, tycoons, opera stars, etc. – who owned the Freiburg factory’s instruments.

In some sources, Emil is credited with the invention of the paper roll two years earlier, or in 1885. Whichever date, it occurred about twenty years after Emil’s arrival in America. This accomplishment brought additional recognition of, and
prominence to, the Weltes in the field of mechanical musical instruments. This major position in the mechanical instrument field of organs, orchestrions, and then in the reproducing piano, gave the company an overall presence in Europe and North America that was rarely surpassed for another thirty years. It allowed the Weltes to establish and hold to prices that were premiere as well. Then, a victim of the Great War and the U.S. Alien Property Custodian, the branch in the U.S. disappeared into a new American firm, the Welte-Mignon Corporation, in 1920. The Freiburg factory remained in business into the Great Depression, but M. Welte & Soehne never again held the presence, on both sides of the Atlantic, which it held for over fifty years, from 1865 to 1918.

4. Karl Bockisch, 
Edwin’s Brother-in-law

Michael’s second son, Berthold, fathered a son, Edwin Welte, in 1876. There was also a sister, who seemingly was adored by Edwin.

He evidently later could not bear to say her name and it has never been found in his letters. In time she married a Karl Bockisch, which various sources also spell Bokisch and Bockish. The following is quoted from Q. David Bowers’ definitive Encyclopedia of Automatic Musical Instruments:

Karl Bockisch, son of a family of Alsace vintners, spent his childhood in Anaheim, California, a community founded by German immigrant farmers. Success eluded the Bockisch family in California, so Karl and his parents returned to Germany. Bockisch married Edwin Welte’s sister, thereby gaining a foothold in the Welte firm. Bockisch quickly demonstrated his business and technical abilities.

The Alsace region lay just west of Baden and the Black Forest. Perhaps the Bockisch family returned here and lived near Freiburg. However, a brother, Heinrich Bockisch, listed himself as a resident of Austria-Hungary. Heinrich moved to the U.S. by 1913 and joined M. Welte & Sons, Incorporated at Edwin’s new factory in Poughkeepsie, New York. Whether by purchase or through his brother, Karl, Heinrich secured an interest in the firm. During the Great War years he served as president of the company, then factory manager, then was interned by the U.S. government. After World War I he created inventions which were assigned to the successor Welte-Mignon Corporation.

In 1950, Carl Welte, Edwin’s cousin, who along with his father had been a director and stock owner of the New York branch, M. Welte & Sons, Incorporated, wrote briefly about Welte and Bockisch family history to Richard Simonton:

In 1901, the grandsons, Edwin and Carl [himself], were admitted into the firm plus Karl M. Bockisch who had married Edwin’s sister. Karl Bockisch was born in 1878, Edwin 1876, and Carl [again, himself], 1871, so I am the oldest survivor of this firm.

Carl explained not too clearly the ownership arrangements made in 1901 as follows: the preferred shares were divided amongst the “older Weltes.” Carl did not list this distribution, neither the specific amounts nor to whom they were given. The “surplus,” explained as that “after the 5% for preferred shares,” was divided as follows: three-twelfths to Karl Bockisch, four-twelfths to Edwin Welte, and five-twelfths to Carl M. Welte as the eldest grandson.

5. Edwin Welte, 
and the Welte-Mignon

A work published in 1903 helps place the music industry at the turn of the century in perspective. “Paul de Wit’s Welt Adressbuch der Musikinstrumenten Industrie” covered the world (“Welt”) and contained an impressive 796 pages. Items within are short, and the type average, with space unwasted and tightly filled, so that an estimate is that this catalog listed names and addresses of a minimum of 25,000 concerns and individuals. This display of musical instruments, firms and people as of 1903 is astonishing. It illustrates that before cars, home appliances, oil, the radio, aircraft, movies, records, television, electronics, waste disposal and sophisticated defense, the music industry reigned supreme in overall industrial size, and in its contribution to personal entertainment and pleasure. The Welte position may not have been primary in quantity, but its product quality and its market share with the upper classes placed it high among international musical firms.

Edwin commented on his life with the company when he was some nineteen years old:

[In] 1895 in fall I had to place and tune an orchestrion . . . in Louisville, [Kentucky, USA]. I stayed a day longer to make a trip to the Mammoth Cave.

Whether this was his first trip to the United States (probably it was) it was far from his last. He said that for some time, “I did travel in America every fall and spring.” And to other places as well. In 1948 he wrote about his life when twenty-two:

50 years ago, I was in the Isle of Crete (Greece) just after the long fight between the Turks and the Greeks for independence . . . I had to place an orchestrion in the residence of Prince George of Greece, the nominated governor of the island. I liked such interesting trips.

In the above quotes, Edwin used the phrase that he “had to place” an orchestrion, both regarding the work in Louisville and that in Greece. He always spoke with great love about his Mignon but referred to organ and orchestrion endeavors more as a job. Possibly for this reason, Karl Bockisch in Germany, together with Emil and Carl in America, more often saw to those phases of the business. His reproducing Mignon would remain Edwin’s active interest for some thirty years, and then an icon in his memory.

In the 1890s, the Freiburg firm developed one of the earliest piano players using the paper roll, but like continue...
the orchestrations and organs of the time, it played a mechanically-produced product. These instruments lacked the subtleties and dynamics, the effects of someone actually playing the instrument. There was a growing conviction within Edwin and others that the public would purchase and enjoy a piano instrument totally reproducing the artist. At a date unknown, but about the turn of the century when he was some twenty-five years old, Edwin and his brother-in-law, Karl Bockisch (himself all of twenty-three years), began the co-invention of an automatic artist-reproducing, piano-playing mechanism. Who contributed what and how much will remain a mystery. Edwin’s cousin, Carl Welte, wrote to Dick Simonton:

Whenever I visited Freiburg, my visits lasted several months at a time, enjoying the hospitality of the Weltes, among them my father’s married sisters. The surrounding countryside is very beautiful. . . .

I was in Freiburg in 1901 [at the time when he became one of the owners of the firm, as described above] when Edwin was working on the device, later known as the Welte-Mignon, which reproduced the exact interpretation of the pianist when his playing was recorded.

There will always be a doubt as to who initiated the idea of a reproducing piano, Edwin or Karl. Or, Hugo Popper. An Austrian by birth, Popper had moved to Leipzig by 1891. This city was an important hub of art, science and industry. With a partner, he founded Popper & Company. At first dealing in the exporting of general merchandise, the firm gradually turned to the field of music, especially mechanical instruments. By the turn of the century, Popper & Company was a distributor of music boxes, and distributed a growing variety of orchestrions and violin-playing instruments of their own manufacture. Popper also held major distribution rights to Welte organs and orchestrions.

The association of the three men added difficulty in saying who decided what in the development of the reproducing piano. David Bowers stated in his Encyclopedia: “Together with Edwin Welte, Bockisch worked on the reproducing piano.” And also: “It was Hugo Popper who furnished encouragement to Bockisch during the development of the Welte reproducing piano.” At this point Bowers gave no credit to Edwin.

However, Carl Welte spoke of Edwin’s early participation. He observed his cousin “working on the device” three years before the first public display which occurred in 1904. In Edwin’s letters, one can note his great pride in the Mignon, almost as if it were his own child. He was probably an equal in the invention, and perhaps even more. Though others had an initial input, they also had other demands on their time. Edwin’s interest remained particularly strong. Over the years he continued to think of changes and improvements. He applied for a number of U.S. patents, all in his own name and no other. Some of these important patents were a foundation for the future American 11 1/4 inch Welte Mignon systems. There must be a reservation regarding views which tend to dismiss Edwin’s role and omit mention of his continuing inventiveness over the next ten years.

The Welte-Mignon was not a one-time thing but under Edwin, and especially in America, continued to evolve. Illustration through a single quote is not possible, but Edwin’s letters to Dick Simonton and Simonton’s contacts with Edwin and Karl after World War II can cause a growing conviction that Karl’s primary interest was in organs, not in the reproducing piano or its masters. Karl Bockisch attempted to re-establish an organ business in the late 1940s, but the production of the Welte-Mignon had ceased in 1932. As the Depression deepened, and with Edwin’s retirement, what was left of the firm after bankruptcy became Karl’s and his son’s, for Karl to manage as he pleased.

The following is also from Mr. Bowers:

Sometime around the turn of the century Bockisch conceived the idea of what was to later become the Welte-Mignon reproducing piano. Together with Edwin Welte, Bockisch worked on the reproducing concept. By 1904 a successful instrument was produced. Most of the inventive ideas were Bockisch’s, but credit was officially given to Karl Bockisch and Edwin Welte on an equal basis.

What should the instrument be named? Edwin Welte proposed that it be called the Welte Mignon. Karl Bockisch, long resentful that his name was virtually unknown to the public, objected vigorously – and a heated argument resulted between the two men.

The Welte-Bockisch argument produced a stalemate in 1904. As a compromise the instrument was offered simply as the Mignon – without the Welte prefix.

The concept involved two creations: a mechanism, the recording piano, which would record the live playing of an artist, from which a master could be made; and another invention, later called the Welte-Mignon, which would operate the piano action, recreating the performer’s art by way of a copy of the master.

The completed inventions resulted in an “autograph” performance, a musical signature of the artist as individual as the performer’s written signature. Indeed, in the US, “Autograph” would become over time one name for Welte-Mignon product.

The following is from Musik Instrument Zeitung, July 11, 1905, in a purposefully literal rather than literary translation from the German as made by collector Mark Reinhart. The Feurich, a well-known instrument of quality, is here in 1905 tied to the Mignon apparatus. In a letter by Hugo Popper of November, 1906, he appears to use “Feurich,” the name of a popular piano, as a synonym for the Mignon. The first version of the Mignon was as a cabinet piano without keyboard, with the piano encased inside, invisible and unnamed. The two references indicate that in 1905-06, most or all interior pianos were supplied by the Feurich firm of Leipzig. The year 1905 was one of Mignon recording in a quantity probably never surpassed. It was also, as this mid-year release shows, a year of introduction probably more than sales.

continue . . .
Mignon-Reproducing-Piano. This from the firm of M. Welte & Soehne in Freiburg in Baden and Popper & Company in Leipzig and now on the market. The “Mignon” reproducing piano reported in [Musik Instrument Zeitung] number 17 contains a description with a picture. At all places where the music loving public and music critics have become acquainted, acclamation and excitement for this great invention has developed. Weeks of invitations from the impresario Ludwig Gruenfeld in Vienna to about 400 persons including music critics, professors from the conservatories and numerous faculty from smaller music salons have as a whole found a practical guide in this medium. The top piano manufacturer in Leipzig, Julius Feurich, is building pianos for the ‘Mignon.’ The production of this medium has without oral commentary become a portrait of the regal right of concert for whom a series of known pianists have become acquainted. The result that is forthcoming is praise worthy of a star acknowledged from all sides. We have learned that the firm of Albert Gutmann of Vienna is to be the representative of the “Mignon” for Austria.

The earliest known publicity about the invention had come in March of the previous year, 1904. A pictorial announcement and description of its display at a Leipzig trade fair was published. It was also shown at this time in the U.S. Carl Welte wrote in a letter that his cousin, Edwin, “brought the first ![!] Welte-Mignon to New York City in 1904 where it was exhibited in our New York Studio and later in the same year, at the St. Louis World’s Fair [or, The Louisiana Purchase Exposition]. Edwin’s simple comment in later years: “We had a large exhibit in St. Louis [Missouri, USA].” This exhibit included Welte organs and orchestras, the primary interests of Emil and Carl Welte.

In 1906 when Edwin moved to the U.S. to direct the marketing of the invention in the States, the copyright to the name “Mignon” was held by another. Wm. Knabe & Company, “of Baltimore city,” earlier applied for, then received registry for the trademark “Mignon” as of August 1, 1905. Edwin could not use the term in America. Thus, from 1906, the instrument was titled in full in the States, “The Welte Artistic Player Piano – In Europe, the Mignon.” This was only one of numerous names applied over time in the United States to the Welte-Mignon apparatus with instrument, “Artistic Player Piano” being the earliest.

The ongoing problem of a name rested in the fact that the Welte-Mignon was the reproducing mechanism. It was not the total instrument in its various manifestations. When Edwin’s Mignon was combined in whatever manner with a piano of some make, be it the keyboardless cabinet, upright piano, the push-up type or a grand, the naming became difficult and inconsistent. The Welte-Mignon was a specific unit, a keyboardless cabinet piano. Over time, this became a generic term covering all versions. Edwin, in his late writings, used Welte-Mignon, Welte Mignon without hyphen, or, the Mignon interchangeably. The term to be avoided is that which refers to piano instruments as a “Welte,” as done in more contemporary circles. This can be meaningless, since “I have a Welte” defines nothing. Welte Orchestron, Welte Philharmonic Organ, Welte-Mignon, or Mignon, does properly differentiate the subjects.

In 1904, people had long known of the Welte orchestras, as well as the larger mechanical pipe organs, both of which the firm would continue to build. This new invention was aptly named the Mignon, the little, petite or small Welte, to distinguish it from the larger instruments. In Europe, the various versions were sometimes called as a group, “Welte-Mignon Reproduktions – Piano und Flugel” (reproducing upright and grand). In America, among various names in use before the Great War, in addition to Artistic, was that of Welte-Mignon Autograph-Piano.

The American public tended to call every mechanical piano a player-piano. Edwin stressed that his Mignon was not a player-piano, and yet named his early U.S. firm The Welte Artistic Player Piano Company and the instrument, The Welte Artistic Player Piano. Whether or not there was an argument with Karl Bockisch, in America the name Welte was prominent from the beginning.

The 1904 exhibition of an original Welte-Mignon cabinet piano in America was indicative of Edwin’s early and continued interest in the U.S. Edwin found his niche in America as early as his teens when he “placed and tuned” orchestrians in the U.S. In the States, away from Freiburg and Bockisch, Edwin created his own firm, his own Fifth Avenue studio in which to sell, and then his own Poughkeepsie factory in which to manufacture the Welte-Mignon. With owners Edwin, Emil, Carl, and for a time even Berthold Welte active in the U.S., Karl Bockisch probably assumed more and more of the decision making at the Freiburg factory.

And, it would seem, this decision making and its ramifications were not simple. A letter appearing on stationery of “Popper & Company, Leipzig – Orchestrionfabrik,” was sent from Hugo Popper “by courier” to a Herm. C. Moehle on November 27, 1906. Because it opens a door wherein we can see into the ordinary business of the firms and the Mignon in its early stages, it is quoted almost entirely, again in translation courtesy of Mark Reinhart. The position of Herr Moehle is not known, whether a member of the firm or an interceding representative on Popper’s behalf. The term “Welte” is used but it is unclear in which cases it refers to the firm and, if and when, to an individual unnamed.

This afternoon we received a letter from Welt in which they inform us that everything is becoming so expensive that essentially a surcharge on Feurich of M 30 is required, and on the rest they are consulting. The Welte firm will thence increase the manufacture price for the Mignon by 10 percent, and would like us to agree to this price rise. Welte wrote that they earn absolutely nothing on the Mignon. You will find enclosed a copy of the whole letter. In any event, I proposed that both Herr Bockisch and Welte reduce their enormously
high licensing fee of M 139, that is only painful to Welte that it does not earn. You know very well that the customers positively scream over the price of the Mignon and that when the manufacture price increases by 10 percent then must the sales and retail prices become higher. I will first wait for your full report on the matter before responding in case I am agreeable to the price increase, so that we do not intercede at the same time. In summary, the customers will promptly inform us of what must come.

Of interest to you, the senior manager of the REGINA-BOX [sic] Company was here, and would like to be our general [Popper] representative in the USA. Their company could sell our orchestrions. We have time for reflection to decide. The manager also had some interesting facts to tell with regard to other matters. The Mignon is sold in New York from Welte for only $1500, not for M 6000. The extreme calculation of freight and duty charges come to M 700. So you know you are right in calculation, and that the Mignon does not cause the Welte firm to grow poor. This is all a very confidential communication.

As our orchestrion sales broaden I need not mention that we suffer with our own manufacturing problems. We recently had a whole pack of salesmen here who told tales of competition having lower prices and that the end is coming. Basically, we have an IDUNA [large orchestrion] promised for delivery in February. Feurich just sold a Mignon to Bielefeld and delivery in February. Feurich just promised for recording levels accomplished during the first sixteen months.

Other complaints sound typical of a distributor or dealer. A rise in price usually causes an automatic reaction: It just can’t be – nothing will sell. Perhaps it wasn’t the Mignon price increase that upset Popper as much as the prospect that “on the rest they are consulting.” He probably wished to lodge his protest before increases were announced for all Welte products. It was undoubtedly an untruth on Welte’s part to say that the Mignon earned nothing. It was wrong of Popper to assume Welte’s profit was his business. Neither position is unusual.

Comment will come later about the fact that Welte-Mignon rolls in the United States were very expensive, selling for $15.00 and more. But the U.S. selling price of the Welte-Mignon itself is impressive. Yet, Popper used the phrase “for only” $1,500.00 as though this was a bargain. This American price for the original cabinet piano version in today’s value of the dollar would be in excess of $25,000. Add to that a motor to fit the varying local electrical systems, perhaps a transformer or in areas a storage battery, plus roll selections, and the Welte-Mignon was indeed intended for a select clientele. Nevertheless, Popper’s statement is somewhat puzzling because the exchange rate at that time was 4.2 Reichmarks per Dollar. Thus, the $1,500 in New York would have been equivalent to M 6,300, very close to the M 6,000 figure.

In 1950, Karl Bockisch wrote to Dick Simonton, evidently in answer to a question from North Hollywood: “Brahms has never been recorded by us. He died already in 1897 in Vienna and our first records has [sic] been made 1904.” This probably dates the first of the Freiburg experimental recordings. January, 1905, is the earliest date so far located on collector roll labels. Known issues with this month’s dating present performances by Gruenfeld, Roessel, Krah, Reinecke, and Friedheim.

The recording system which Edwin and Karl created was evidently built into a Steinway grand, and quite possibly into a Feurich grand. Surviving pictures of artists performing at recording pianos show a straight leg grand, which is perhaps a Steinway. In other photographs the grand has a turned leg, possibly a Feurich.

During a recording performance, the motion of the piano keys played by the artist was sensed by a carbon rod attached to the underside of each key. When a key was depressed, its rod plunged into a bath of mercury making an electrical contact which in turn energized an electromagnet. This electromagnet pushed one of a series of inked soft rubber rollers, one for each key, onto a moving paper roll. Each note played was registered in this manner; as long as the key was depressed, the roller remained on the moving paper.
same rod. As the rod submerged deeper into the liquid metal, the resistance in the electrical circuit it made steadily decreased until the key became fully depressed. At this point the resistance in the circuit became constant, providing maximum current flow to the appropriate electromagnet.

When a key was swiftly depressed, as in a loud blow, its circuit resistance quickly dropped to its low constant, rapidly energizing its electromagnet and forcefully driving its roller onto the moving paper. When a key was more slowly depressed, as in a soft blow, its circuit resistance took longer to drop to its low constant. Hence, its electromagnet was energized less abruptly and drove its roller onto the paper more languidly.

The corresponding differences in slope between initial and final widths of the ink markings gave indication of the dynamics of the notes struck. These dynamics were then encoded into punched holes placed at the edges of the master roll and any subsequent copies. These holes in turn controlled the expression devices within the reperforming Welte-Mignon action.

There has been talk over the years of a “secret process” involved, although the mechanics of the inventions as well as their patents were general knowledge. Perhaps the mystery element resided in the ability to interpret correctly the ink markings. A careful reading of all recordings is thought to have been done in the early years by Edwin and Karl themselves. Edwin mentioned that great care had to be spent in translating the images. It has been said that a Lydia Reinbolde was the noted master dynamic editor at Freiburg over many later years.

Since so much discussion and even doubt has been cast on this subject, the following view is quoted from Player-Piano – the History of the Mechanical Piano and How to Repair It (Arthur W. J.G. Ord-Hume, 1970).

The methods by which Welte rolls were recorded are shrouded in mystery. In an article contained in the Journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound, John Farmer states that, unlike Aeolian and Ampico, Welte always insisted that their recording system was fully automatic and did not ask for the services of the pianist in the later stages of preparation of the master roll. It seems that the recording piano had a trough of mercury beneath the keyboard. Each key had a light carbon prong suspended from its lower side which dipped into the mercury when that note was played. This was said to have enabled the recording of the exact force and duration of the note. This does, however, seem unlikely, but Mr. Richard Simonton, who befriended Edwin Welte during his later years, told John Farmer that the carbon prongs were in fact suspended form the key by a fine coil spring and consequently the depth of penetration of the carbon rod in the mercury would have varied with the force with which the key was depressed. From this, it would follow that the resistance to the flow of current would vary lightly with this depth of penetration and if this could be traced against each note, a fairly good idea of the pianist’s dynamics would be obtained. But, as John Farmer rightly asserts, the techniques of electrical measurement with the limited knowledge available at the time makes this a little doubtful.

Undoubtedly this is not as reliable a recording system as one which directly measures hammer velocity and Farmer suggests that this may be one reason why some of the passages in Welte rolls tend to sound a little rough.

Other collectors occasionally mention that Welte-Mignon rolls can at times seem a little “rough.” With questioning, the recordings to which they refer include either Poughkeepsie war-time issues or Freiburg 5500 series popular rolls. The latter were often performed by classically-trained European artists not in tune with the American ragtime or jazz styles they were playing. Any noted “rough” selections seldom encompass parts of the early classical recordings created under the responsible supervision of Edwin Welte and Karl Bockisch. They also rarely include the recordings by De Luxe in the 1920s using seismograph principles. Roll companies put varying amounts of time into roll coding, with the popular selections overall receiving the least care, for they were expected to be saleable only for months, not years. Popular product from all reproducing roll companies often was inconsistent in quality of both arrangements and editing.

The measuring of hammer velocity came late in the era of reproducing recording, often when classical performance totals were minor in comparison to the many popular new releases. Even after later methods such as the Ampico spark chronograph came into being they weren’t always used. Works of only passing interest, especially popular titles, might still be subject to “drawing board” production as the 1930s hand-cuttings by the prolific Frank Milne bear witness.

As for the “limited knowledge” of electrical measurement, and the statement that John Farmer “rightly asserts” electrical measurements were primitive, and the Welte-Mignon recording system for this reason a “little doubtful”: surprising capabilities in the measurement of electrical current were well advanced by the first decade of the twentieth century. Moreover, the Welte-Mignon recording system did not rely upon the precise measurement of electrical current.

The electric components and uses within the Welte-Mignon recording system, and in the reperforming instruments, were relatively simplistic in comparison to industrial uses, rapidly expanding in what some think a primitive era. The marvel of the Welte-Mignon was not in its use of electricity, but in the total invention, in recording and reproducing artists to the satisfaction of performers, critics and public. What the two men did while still in their early twenties seemed impossible then and to some even now. But it happened, and their invention remained a match for all later reproducing systems, which never managed to bypass the basic Welte-Mignon patents.

Perhaps in part the problem was that the inventors were young, too young to create something of that magnitude. All eras have mistrusted youth. It is an accepted canard that greatness is a result
of suffering and age, and musicians are often pictured in the histories as aged and gray. It is refreshing to look through Welte-Mignon catalogs and see so many young faces, to read biographies of people already recognized in their teens. Still, an Edwin Welte in his twenties was not likely to be trusted in the musical world of the time. It was fortunate that Hugo Popper was interested, a man nearing fifty years, whose age and status in Leipzig undoubtedly helped to secure the interest of the great classical artists of the day. Most of the performers would have been senior to young Edwin, and probably superior in attitude, with artistic temperaments difficult for one so young to handle. Popper had the age and experience to enlist the greatest names.

The quantity of issues recorded in the first sixteen months, titles long recognized as having excellent coding, would seem to belie laborious hand editing. No names other than Edwin and Karl have been mentioned as involved at this time in the secretive “holy of holies.” If all dynamic editing had been done by hand without any guidance, without the assistance of a recording system, the intrinsic artistic merit of these records would have required the full time efforts and more of these two men. But during this time they were not only managing an international business, as well as organizing and supervising the recording in Freiburg, Leipzig and perhaps elsewhere, but traveling and demonstrating their product as well. The capability of dynamic recording helps account for the beginning record quantity and quality. More than 1,000 titles were recorded in the first sixteen months. The perfection included in these recordings became the foundation for the later copies issued under Licensee and Purple Seal labels. Even “reading” that many marked masters seems a major task. Adding dynamic coding to that many titles from scratch would seem impossible. It would surely have cried for artist assistance, something the Welte people publicized they didn’t need to do.

The recordings were considered faithful to their performer, a musical “autograph.” The firm often secured letters and signatures which verified the roll as the authentic intent of the artist. The firm placed copies of these signatures on roll labels, in catalogs and in literature. Many of the comments, with pictures and signatures, were published in catalogs, promotional booklets and in complete books devoted to the same. Ever stressing accuracy, Edwin made a clear distinction in a letter that the testimonials were “written to Mr. Edwin Welte and Karl Bockisch, the inventors, and not to M. Welte and Soehne.” Though not easy to state flatly, there are indications in Edwin’s own words, such as the above, that Edwin considered himself and the Welte-Mignon apart from the parent firm and its multiple ownership. Edwin was an inventor and an entrepreneur, who worked best not hamstrung by corporate structure.

Ever protective of his rights, Edwin later recalled an “8-day patent investigation I made in Washington in 1904.” Stressing the strength of his patents, Edwin wrote the following. Whether his memory was wrong about the royalties, or whether Aeolian paid for a time and then ceased is not clear. It is known that they were finally forced to pay fees to the new American owners, the Welte-Mignon Corporation, in the 1920s.

In 1905 my uncle, Emil Welte, who successfully managed our branch in New York since 1865, came to Freiburg and explained that he did not want to have anything to do with the selling of the Welte-Mignon in America. He declared that no competition against such firms like the Aeolian Company was possible... Aeolian tried to bluff me. I turned around and made them pay me a royalty for every reproducing piano they sold.

When Emil declined to market the Welte-Mignon in the U.S., Edwin soon arranged to do it himself. Thus, he went to the States in 1906, a move which probably reflected itself in the meager amount of new recording at Freiburg from the spring of 1906 into 1909. Also, it seems evident that relations were not the same with Hugo Popper, and recording at his Leipzig salon may have ceased by 1906. With his salon no longer available and his influence with artists mildly offered at best, it took time to establish an admired Freiburg studio and trusting new relations with performers. Less than two dozen artists made recordings in that two-and-a-half years, 1906 and into 1909, with some of these names seemingly “in-house” and of dubious stature.

6. Instruments, Four Choices

There is little disagreement regarding the initial instrument. It consisted of the Welte-Mignon action built within a keyboardless cabinet piano. This instrument was sold in Europe from 1905 and by 1906 in the United States, when Edwin arrived in America to launch its sale. Feurich supplied most of these pianos. Steinway also made some. This initial cabinet model without keyboard was first called the “Mignon,” then gradually the “Welte-Mignon.”

At some point, perhaps by 1907, the Welte-Mignon apparatus was adapted to fit rather awkwardly within an upright piano case with keyboard. This appeared in a tall-case model with the reproducing action above the keyboard. Somewhat later, certainly by 1912, it appeared in a standard-height upright with part of the reproducing action placed in front of the piano action above the keyboard and the rest below the keybed. When these self-contained uprights with keyboards appeared they were called the “Welte-Piano.”

An early U.S. catalog appeared about 1907 titled a “List of Music for the Welte-Mignon Piano.” The July, 1908, supplement was more simply titled: “The Welte-Mignon Piano.” These titles were not limiting, but offered rolls for both keyboardless cabinets and the latest style with keyboard.

There is disagreement regarding which came next in order, the grand piano (“Fluegel” or, literally, wing) with interior installed Welte-Mignon action, or the push-up “Vorsetzer,” i.e., that which sits before or in front of, but it was probably the Vorsetzer. In regard to the latter, it was designed to be used with almost any piano. “Fingers” operated the piano keys with varying touch as directed by the mechanism inside, and levers operated the sustaining and soft pedals, all on command from the paper roll. The
cabinet piano (keyboardless), and cabinet (Vorsetzer), have often been confused because of their similar names. In the 1920s, the Welte-Mignon Corporation began marketing an 11 1/4-inch cabinet (push-up) instrument, but – perhaps to avoid this confusion – later used their own designation of “Console.”

An undated but earlier Freiburg brochure described the four instrumental stylistic variations in which the Welte-Mignon might appear. It is thought to have been published about 1910-1912. The first three styles it described, as listed below, “will be delivered upon demand with pianos built by the famous makers: Steinway & Sons, Bechstein, Bleuthner, Ibach, Feurich, Berdux.” The following is taken from the version printed in English.

1. The “WELTE-MIGNON” without keyboard. . . This Model is specially built for reproducing artist’s playing, but as it has no keyboard it cannot be played by hand. This instrument is particularly suitable for rooms or halls in which an ordinary piano is already placed, or in which for some architectural or decorative reason the form of an ordinary Upright or Grand piano is not desirable . . . The Welte-Mignon can be supplied in any special or period designed case.

2. The “WELTE-PIANO” with keyboard . . . In outward appearance is an ordinary Upright Piano, with keyboard, and can be used with equal facility as a reproducing instrument or for hand-playing.

3. The “WELTE-GRAND” . . . This is the Ideal combination as it consists of the Welte-Mignon, fitted inside a Grand Piano, and, like the Welte-Piano, can be played either by hand, or as a reproducing piano. One of the main principles in the construction of this instrument is that the mechanical apparatus in no way interferes with the tone quality of the piano, while at the same time keeping the symmetrical lines of an ordinary grand piano. The motor and blowing gear are placed in a separate case, which can be supplied either in the cabinet form to be placed somewhere near the Grand, or in a box, which can be put into a separate room, the only connection between the Grand and the box being a rubber tube and two wires for the electric current. The case designs for the Berdux and Feurich Grand are very similar to the case of the Steinway Grand. In addition to the regular cases, these instruments can be supplied in any special or period design as described.

4. The “WELTE-CABINET-PLAYER” . . . Can be attached to any existing piano, Grand or Upright, and faithfully reproduces the tone, touch and personality of the Artist who made the record. The small electric motor is placed inside the case. When the Cabinet Player is to be used in connection with an Upright or Grand in special or period designed case, same can be supplied in a case to correspond with.

The comment above that the instruments “can be supplied in any special or period design” generally applied to all Welte instruments. Examples and demonstrators were available for customers to view and enjoy. Product in that period, however, was often special ordered, with individual details provided to satisfy that particular customer.

Another Freiburg brochure, undated, listed “Die Drei Arten Welte Reproductions Instrumente”: 1.“Der Welte-Fluegel.” The grand with the Welte-Mignon. 2.”Das Welte-Piano.” The upright keyboard piano with the Welte-Mignon. 3.”Der Welte-Vorsetzer.” The cabinet, or push-up, style. German names were many: “Das Welte-Mignon”; or “Welte-Mignon Reproduktion Instrumenten”; or, the “Welte-Mignon Reproduktion-apparates.”

In the United States, the pre-Great War names in use included the original Artistic; The Autograph; The Welte-Mignon; The Welte-Mignon Piano; The Welte-Piano; Welte Cabinet Player; and the Steinway-Welte-Piano.

Although the Welte-Mignon apparatus interior-built into grands seems to have appeared by the second decade in Germany, the United States brochures as late as 1913 only offered the Welte-Mignon cabinet piano, the Welte-Piano upright, and the Vorsetzer, not a grand. The American product will shortly be discussed in added detail.

To enlighten the novice, as well as hopefully prevent confusion and error by the otherwise knowledgeable individual, additional explanatory comment will be made concerning the naming and styles.

1. The earliest version, keyboardless, was later known as the Cabinet Piano or Kabinett Piano. It was “ohne Spielklaviatur,” with keyboard. This instrument was the original Mignon, or Welte-Mignon, Little Welte, or, Das Welte-Mignon. It was the demonstrator in 1904, and appeared over time with various internal pianos. It was available in America from 1906 to 1918, and probably almost any time at Freiburg.

2. The upright piano with Mignon was listed in Europe as Das Welte-Piano, or “mit Spielklaviatur,” with keyboard. It was also described as “Spielen von hand,” and instrument playable by hand. Upright in style, the “Welte-Piano” appeared in Europe and in the U.S. in tall cases and later in regular-height cases. These sometimes were named to include the piano brand, especially Steinway-Welte-Piano or just Steinway-Welte. In America, brands included the Mason & Hamlin and Krakauer Welte-Pianos. The Welte-Piano of standard height is the most common version of Red roll player in the United States today.

3. The grand piano appearing with the Welte-Mignon action was called Der Welte-Flugel, and again was noted “von Hand gespielt,” or playable by hand. The grand from 1916, with the creation of the 11 1/4-inch format, became the Welte-Mignon instrument of choice in...
America. The Freiburg wide roll grand was rarely available in the U.S. If wanted, it could be ordered from Europe but this was seldom done. Instead, the Poughkeepsie factory produced the Vorsetzer. Customers could then select any grand of their choice, or add the push-up apparatus to a grand or upright already in the home.

4. Der Welte-Vorsetzer, the push-up Cabinet Player, would perform with almost any piano, either a grand (usually) or an upright, “var jades Pianino, oder Flugel.” This version of necessity relied heavily upon the quality of the piano to which it was wedged for its results.

In 1923, the Auto Pneumatic Action Company commented on early Welte-Mignon history as follows. Here again, the term “cabinet” is applied to the two different instruments: one keyboardless, the Cabinet Piano, and the other the push-up Cabinet Player.

The original Welte-Mignon was a large cabinet containing an upright piano with the mechanism placed in front instead of the usual keyboard, giving the instrument the appearance of a big sideboard, and its great disadvantage, apart from its clumsiness, was, of course, that it was of no use at all as a piano. They therefore brought out a Cabinet Player, similar in appearance to other cabinet players of that period, which could be pushed up to any piano, and this instrument in combination with a grand piano created a sensation wherever exhibited.

After being given the name Artistic in the United States, by the second decade and into the third, Edwin’s invention was often called the Autograph. But although Mignon was copyrighted by Knabe and could not be used singularly by Edwin in the U.S., during the first decade it did appear casually, probably from the European example. The following is from a program note for a Paderewski recital in Pittsburgh, November, 1907. It quotes this famous artist:

The only objection I have to the ‘Mignon’ [Little] is founded exclusively in its name, as the latter is not in keeping either with its powerful effect or its enormous importance.

It could have been statements such as this which led to the search for a specific and more meaningful name for the apparatus. Other than Welte-Mignon, none was ever found. Instead, there was a proliferation of names in use then and now. Many of these will be mentioned as this history progresses.

An ad in the same program gives additional insight into the viewpoints held in the year 1907. The ad was for “S. Hamilton Company, Hamilton Hall, 531-533 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, Mason & Hamlin Pianos.” It publicized the original Welte-Mignon Cabinet Piano. The Welte-Piano and Cabinet Player lie in the future, with the upright thought to have been available in the United States by 1907-08, and the Vorsetzer by 1909 or possibly 1910. The ad also shows that by 1907 the Welte name had been added. Despite Karl Bockisch, Welte-Mignon had come into its own, at least in the United States.

The Welte-Mignon is the most marvelous and ingenious musical instrument the world has known. It is a piano of beautiful tone quality and power enclosed in a cabinet which also contains a wonderful reproducing device . . . The Welte-Mignon is not sold for use in any public place. Price $1,500.

In a letter to Simonton, Edwin stated strongly that his Welte-Mignon was not marketed for public entertainment. Evidently, as in the above, he requested that dealers state this in their ads. Also of interest, this ad, as published a year after the earlier quoted letter by Hugo Popper, indicates that Hugo was given the correct price for the Mignon in America.

An ad published sometime about 1910-1911 by “The Welte-Mignon Artistic Piano Company, 273 Fifth Avenue, New York,” presented “The Steinway-Welte Reproducing Autograph Piano, Manufactured In These Styles: Steinway Welte Piano, Steinway Welte Mignon, Cabinet Player For Steinway Grands.” The first is obviously an upright, and the last the Vorsetzer. However, “Steinway Welte Mignon” is vague and could mean a smaller Cabinet Piano or, less likely, an interior-built grand.

Another ad from about 1912-1913 for “M. Welte & Sons, Incorporated, 273 Fifth Avenue, N.Y., Opposite the Holland House,” listed “Steinway Pianos Incorporated In the Welte-Mignon – Demonstrations Daily At Our Studio . . . The Welte-Mignon Autograph Piano Is the Living Soul of the Artist.” Of strange wording, a more accurate phrase would have been the reverse: “The Welte-Mignon Incorporated In Steinway Pianos” – unless the ad was publicizing the Cabinet Piano with keyboard in which case the piano and player mechanism were both “incorporated” into the one instrument.

Elsewhere an exclusive agreement between Steinway and the Aeolian Company is discussed. The authority after June, 1910, to offer Steinway Welte product as in the ads above, cannot at this time be explained: except if all the above product were imported from Hamburg and without connection to Steinway & Sons, New York.

From the beginning, the Welte-Mignon in its various styles was outfitted with what is called the T-100 or 100-hole tracker bar. The paper rolls were in a “Wide” or “German” roll width of about 12 7/8 inches. They were perforated in a scale of eight holes to the inch. The paper was generally Red (“Rot”). Rolls manufactured in Poughkeepsie, New York also appeared in various color tones, including red, pink gray-green, and cream. The original red paper caused the 12 7/8-inch scale instruments to be named by some the “Red Roll Welte,” or, as often will be used herein, the Red T-100 mechanism and roll.

The instruments with Welte-Mignon action operated from the beginning under electrical power and the mechanism was activated by a simple lever, after which the owner could relax and enjoy the “live” performance. In the pre-Great War era, where the major mode of local transportation was still the horse or bicycle, where the hand pump probably
brought water to the sink, and the outhouse would continue to be a familiar sight for many years, the Welte-Mignon was all but beyond most people’s comprehension. In the present era of electronic sophistication, the turn-of-the-century creation of metal, rubber, wood and leather which operated on vacuum can still be judged incredible. It is too easy for knowledgeable individuals of today to dismiss as of small import the creativity of one generation removed, much less one of nearly one hundred years in the past. But it remains astounding, the individually creative and inventive genius in their day of an Edison, a Marconi, a Henry Ford, the Wright brothers, or the Weltes of Freiburg. And of Edwin Welte, whose lasting wish was to have remained in Poughkeepsie, New York.

APPENDIX C

Welte-Mignon Recordings – Numbering and Estimated Quantity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Type</th>
<th>Issue Dating</th>
<th>Record Numbers</th>
<th>Possible Numbers</th>
<th>Known Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red (T-100) (12 7/8 inch)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>1905-1920</td>
<td>1-3499</td>
<td>3,499</td>
<td>2,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie</td>
<td>1913-1919</td>
<td>3500-3961</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie</td>
<td>ca.-1916</td>
<td>8001-80??</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie</td>
<td>ca.-1916</td>
<td>8500-85??</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
<td>1919-1920</td>
<td>3962-4062</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>1920-1930</td>
<td>3601-4205</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>590</td>
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<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>1922-1932</td>
<td>5500-6052</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green (T-98) (11 1/4 inch)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>ca. 1922-1932</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>4,637</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pianon (T-98/T-100) (11 1/4 inch / 12 7/8 inch)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>ca. 1922-1932</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>4,637</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>ca. 1922-1932</td>
<td>9000-90??</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>ca. 1922-1932</td>
<td>9500-95??</td>
<td>?</td>
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“Licensee” Label (De Luxe Reproducing Roll Corporation) (11 1/4 inch)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type/Width</th>
<th>Dating</th>
<th>Record Numbers</th>
<th>Possible Numbers</th>
<th>Known Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copied</td>
<td>1916-1930</td>
<td>1-3958</td>
<td>3,329</td>
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<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>1920-1930</td>
<td>6000-7925</td>
<td>1,926</td>
<td>1,919</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renumbered</td>
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<td>50000-50152</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>153</td>
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<td>New</td>
<td>1926-1928</td>
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<td>Renumbered</td>
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<td>New</td>
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<td>75199-75496</td>
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<td>297</td>
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<td>W-M/D-A</td>
<td>1930</td>
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<td>W-M/D-A/Amp</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>75502-75535</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>W-M/D-A</td>
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<td>75536-75571</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5,035</td>
<td>3,484</td>
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“Purple Seal” Label (Welte-Mignon Corporation) (11 1/4 inch)

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<th>Dating</th>
<th>Record Numbers</th>
<th>Possible Numbers</th>
<th>Known Titles</th>
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<tr>
<td>Copied</td>
<td>1920-1928</td>
<td>1-4062</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>172</td>
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APPENDIX D

Welte-Mignon Recordings – Technical Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type/Width</th>
<th>Paper Color</th>
<th>Tracker Bar Holes</th>
<th>Tracker Bar Holes/Inch</th>
<th>Notes Played Reproducing</th>
<th>Notes Played Non-Repro</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T-100 Red / 12 7/8 inch</strong></td>
<td>Red, pink</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>1905-32</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>1913-20</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>None</td>
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</table>

**T-98 Green / 11 1/4 inch**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type/Width</th>
<th>Paper Color</th>
<th>Tracker Bar Holes</th>
<th>Tracker Bar Holes/Inch</th>
<th>Notes Played Reproducing</th>
<th>Notes Played Non-Repro</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freiburg</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>88*</td>
<td>88*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. “Standard” / 11 1/4 inch</td>
<td>Light buff, green</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie</td>
<td>1916-19</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1920-30</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>De Luxe coded</td>
<td>1930-32</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purple Seal</td>
<td>1920-28</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Some T-98 Green pianos have been found with 80-note stacks. Also, since T-98 rolls were made from 80-note T-100 masters, most do not contain 88 notes. Additional notes were added to a small percentage of T-98 rolls.
APPENDIX E

US Roll Numbering Prefixes and Corresponding Prices

“Licensee” Label (De Luxe Reproducing Roll Corporation):
From 1916. After about December, 1922, only A, X, B, Y and C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>W</td>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>$1.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$1.25</td>
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“Purple Seal” Label (Welte-Mignon Corporation):
1920-1928

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>$2.75</td>
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APPENDIX F

Welte-Mignon T-100 and T-98 Library Summary

A study of allotted numbers, years, and artists, based on present knowledge from numbering order, and/or label dating, as well as on known catalogs and bulletins. Also based on a study of recording studio photographs. Assumptions, where necessary, were by compiler.

A. 1905 through 1912:

European Red T-100 Masters

1905: Numbers 1 through 1060.
Probably recorded at Popper & Co., Musiksalon, Leipzig. Adam, Eug.; Adam-Berard; d’Albert; Ansorge; Bose; Brockhaus; Brzezinski; Burmeister; Busoni; Carreno; Cionca; Conne; Dohnanyi; Dreysock; Droucker; Edelsberg; Elmoeh; Elvyn; Friedheim; Gabrilowitsch; Galston; Gernsheim; del Grande; Gruenfeld; Hambourg; Hegner; Hermanns & Hermanns-Stibbe; Hofmann; Humperdinck; Jonas; Kienzl; Kirsch; Kleeberg; Koch, E.; Krah; Kupfermagnor; Lambrino; Lamond; Landowska; Lesser; Leoncavallo; Mahler; Marx-Goldsmith; Maurina; Meroe; Meyer-Helmund; Moehle; Motta; Neitzel; Pauer; Petri; Popper; Pugno; Reger; Reinecke; Reisenauer; Ripper; Roessell; Saint-Saens; SAPellnikoff; Sauer Scharwenka, Schillings; Schnabel; Schnitzer; Schumann, G.; Schytle, Slivinski; Stavenhagen; Stebel; Stenhammer; Weingartner; Weiss, J.; Wendling; Weitzig; Wurmser; Zadora; Zoelner; Zschernick

1906-A (January-April): Numbers 1061 through 1277.
Probably recorded at Popper & Co., Musiksalon, Leipzig. Adams, Eug.; Adams-Benard; d’Albert; Ansorge; Bose; Brockhaus; Brzezinski; Burmeister; Busoni; Carreno; Cionca; Conne; Dohnanyi; Dreysock; Droucker; Edelsberg; Elmoeh; Elvyn; Friedheim; Gabrilowitsch; Galston; Gernsheim; del Grande; Gruenfeld; Hambourg; Hegner; Hermanns & Hermanns-Stibbe; Hofmann; Humperdinck; Jonas; Kienzl; Kirsch; Kleeberg; Koch, E.; Krah; Kupfermagnor; Lambrino; Lamond; Landowska; Lesser; Leoncavallo; Mahler; Marx-Goldsmith; Maurina; Meroe; Meyer-Helmund; Moehle; Motta; Neitzel; Pauer; Petri; Popper; Pugno; Reger; Reinecke; Reisenauer; Ripper; Roessell; Saint-Saens; Sapplinoff; Sauer Scharwenka, Schillings; Schnabel; Schnitzer; Schumann, G.; Schytle, Slivinski; Stavenhagen; Stebel; Stenhammer; Weingartner; Weiss, J.; Wendling; Weitzig; Wurmser; Zadora; Zoelner; Zschernick

1906-B (August & October): Numbers 1278 through 1305.
Probably recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg. Fichter; Lhevinne

1907: Numbers 1306 through 1458.
Probably recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg. Busoni; Fryer; Kuehn; Mott; Orlando; Pugno; Raphaelsohn; Schelling; Schilling; Starke; Timanoff

1908: Numbers 1459 through 1527.
Probably recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg. Orlando; Puckler; Samaroff; San Galli; Utz; Ziesler

1909: Numbers 1528 through 1536.
Probably recorded in England, at Steinway Hall, London, but could include some Freiburg-recorded issues. Bird; Brightwell; Brown; Buftaleti; Buhlig; Cory; Davies; Fichter; Fischer; Francklyn; Fryer; Haley; Keith; Kohlberg; Lambelet; Margolies; Meroe; Peppercorn; Pinet; Roland; Scott; Taylor; Vogrich; Webbe; Wolf; Utz

1910-A: Numbers 1937 through 2171.
Probably recorded in Russia: Moscow & St. Peters burg, but could include some Freiburg-recorded issues. Barinova; Beklemisheff; Berlin; Borowski; Brick; Chariton; Doulloff; Droseff; Eneri-Gorainoff; Evann; Feldman; Glazounow; Goldenweiser; Hill; Hoffmann, N.; Igumnoff; Kaschperow; Kaula; Khvostchinsky; Kimontt; Koenemann; Korestenko; Lebba; Leipounow; Mehtschick; Michelsohn; Nicolaieff; Pawlow; Pokrowski; Pychhoff; Romanowsky; Schorr; Schriane; Seiliger; Stember; Wengerowa; Zaleska

1910-B: Numbers 2172 through 2300.
 Probably recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg. Adam, Eug.; Berick; Burkard; Coloma; Ebenstein; Epstein; Fieldman; Goodall; Margolies

1911: Numbers 2301 through 2531.
Probably recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg. Adam, Eug.; Berick; Burkard; L. Daziger; Dubois; Ebenstein; Grande & Utz; Hhevinne; Mackle; Sarrazin

1912: Numbers 2532 through 2777.
Probably recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg, although certain artists possibly recorded in Paris. Adam, Eug.; Angieros; Battala; Benici; Berick; Brown; Burgstahl; Cretien; Debussy; Delacroix; Diemer; Ebenstein; d’Egville; de Falla; Faure; Goodall; Loehr; Meroe; Paur; Sarrazin; Weiland; Zesler

B. 1913 through 1918:

Separated German (Freiburg) and U.S. (Poughkeepsie) recording facilities.

Note: an asterisk is used throughout this compilation to indicate number-titles recorded in Poughkeepsie, New York.

M. Welte & Soehne (Freiburg)

No evidence that masters after about 3097 came to Poughkeepsie, NY

1913: Numbers 2778 through 3096
Adam, Edw.; Adam, Eug.; d’Albert; Baker; Cor de Las; d’Equille; Epstein; Ganz; Gayraud; Goodall; Granados;
1914 through 1918: Numbers 3097 through 3288

Welte-Mignon Corporation
(the Bronx, NY)

1919-1920: Claxton; Elliot; Fairman; Gershwin; Lhevinne; Mann; Perry; Smith, M.; Ullrich

D. From 1922: Red T-100 masters recorded at M. Welte & Soehne, Musiksalon, Freiburg

Classic & Salon

1922 through 1926: Numbers 3786 through 4064

G. About 1916: Red T-100 issues created to accompany Victor and Edison phonograph records.

These issues from the Poughkeepsie facility were not listed in known literature, and the time and extent of their distribution is not known.

“Victor” record Accompaniment Rolls: Numbered in 8000s. Burkard; Spross

“Edison” Record Accompaniment Rolls: Numbered in 8500s. Burkard; Spross


Selected titles were issued from the Freiburg Red T-100 library in an 11 1/4” Green T-98 format using the same numbering as the corresponding master. No special catalogs are known, but any Red T-100 roll title could evidently be requested in the Green T-98 format. The total library of titles issued in the Green T-98 format most likely will never be known. In this listing, Red T-100 titles reported by collectors as issued in the Green T-98 format are indicated thusly. “(GN)”.


The “Pianon” mechanism and its rolls, based on Red T-100 masters, was...
produced in either (both) a 12 7/8” Red, or an 11 1/4” Green spooling. Single selections were labeled with the corresponding Red T-100 number. In addition there were “combined” rolls available for these automatic instruments, probably to lessen the need for roll changing in the commercial settings for which the instruments were intended. In addition to those titles in the 9000s and 9500s, collectors report a few combined rolls numbered in higher 3000s conflicting with Red T-100 master numbers. How many, when and why this was done is not known, but those reported are listed in the “Pianon” section, as are the titles and corresponding numbers for the 9000 and 9500 series.

Kombinierte Konzert-Musik (Combined Rolls): Numbering from 9001 through at least 9037

Kombinierte Tanz-Musik (Combined Rolls): Numbering from 9501 through at least 9592

APPENDIX G
Welte-Mignon Licensee Library Summary

A. 1916 to 1919


De Luxe Reproducing Roll Corporation, 1918-1919.

The first company was formed at the 1916 “Alliance” between M. Welte & Sons, Inc., and Auto Pneumatic Action Company. The rolls were produced by the Poughkeepsie factory for use on “Auto De Luxe Welte-Mignon” player actions, the later-known “Licensee”. By 1918, the Welte-Mignon Music Company was melded into the De Luxe Reproducing Roll firm.

Selected cuttings (classic, salon, popular and accompaniment) from Freiburg T-100 masters, 1 through 3068, and the Poughkeepsie T-100 masters from *3500 through *3961, were manufactured by M. Welte & Sons for Auto Pneumatic Action Company in “Licensee” format, and distributed initially by the firm, then its successor. They appeared in what has become known as the “Welte” or “Poughkeepsie” black box.

B. 1920 through 1930

The De Luxe Reproducing Roll Corporation, New York City

This company, created in 1918, was a division of Auto Pneumatic Action Company, a division of Kohler & Campbell Industries, Inc. Numbering and years below are approximate listings, except where they could be verified from available literature. These were new, original reproducing recordings: except, early on, when a number of the “Licensee” rolls were codings of the Republic Player roll Corporation’s division of 88-note hand-played performances. Known performers appearing on both “Republic” and De Luxe labels are coded below with (+). In addition to the new recordings issued for ten years, De Luxe continued to cut “Licensee” rolls from selected T-100 roll masters: Freiburg numbers 1 to 3068, and Poughkeepsie *3500 to *3958, the asterisk denoting the latter. All De Luxe “Licensee” issues or copies were numbered with a price code prefix, and issued in the De Luxe striped label black box, 1920-1926, and brown box, 1926-1932.

From September, 1920: Numbers 6000 – 6050. Carroll(+) & Johnson(+); Delcamp (+); Delcamp(+) & Carroll(+); d’Giovanni(+) & Foster(+) & Rallini(+); Shannon(+)

1921: Numbers 6051 – 6152.
Adams(+) & Ashton; Carroll(+) & Foster(+) & Rollini(+); Collini; Conradi; Davis; Delcamp(+); Delcamp(+) & Carroll(+) & Fabre; Foster(+); Lane(+) & Lane(+) & Adams(+) & Rollini(+); Shannon(+)

1922: Numbers 6153 – 6320.
Adams(+) & Asherfield; Bingaman; Billings; Cesare; Carroll(+) & Rollini(+); Collini; Conradi; Davis; Fabre; Foster(+); Gregory; Hart; Kahn; Klein; Koehl; Lane(+) & Lutter; Martin; Mitzski; Narinska; Notaehe; Overstreet; Remden; Robertson; Rosoff; Washburn; Watts; Wirtz

1923: Numbers 6321 – 6604. Bailhe; Carter; Chapman; Conradi; Davis; Dodd; Fabre; Friedman; Gregory; Hamilton; Hart; Horvath; Koch; Koehl; LeClair; Leonard; Levin; Levy; Locust; Lutter; Lutter & Spencer; Martin; Masson; Mitzski; Narinska; Netzorg; Nikoloric; Oswald; Perkins; Reid; Remden; Rosoff; Roth; Scioni; Spencer; Sollitt; Tollefsen; Van Straten; Vollenhoven; Ware; Webb; Whittington; Wolf; Yagodka

1924: Numbers 6605 – 6953. d’Albert; Ashton; Bacon; Bailhe; Berger; Bilotti; Bingaman; Boyle; Brenton; Cady; Clair; Conrad; Cox; Davis; Duckwitz; Fabre; Farnum; Gregory; Criselle; Hamilton; Hart; Horodyski; Horvath; Jansen; Jentes; Johnson; Koenemann; Lawnhurst; LeClair; Le Grand; Leonard; Levin; Levy; Loscalzo; Lutter; Mitzski; Narinska; Netzorg; Nikoloric; Oswald; Patricola; Redel; Remden; Rosoff; Roth; Scioni; Singer; Sollitt; Spencer; Todd; Tellefsen; Volavy; Vollenhoven; Webb; Whittington

1925: Numbers 6954 – 7301. Alcuri; Ashton; Bacon; Bailhe; Berger; Boyle; Brard; Burt; Cady; Casella; Caskey; Conradi; Cornelissen; Cox; Dickinson; Duckwitz; Duret; Erlebach; Farnum; Gieseking; Giron; Grand; Gregory; Haase; Hamilton; Horvath; Jansen; Johnson; Lawnhurst; Le Grand; Londry; Levin; Liebling; Luebtow; Lutter; Magnuson; Mendez; Milinowski; Mitzski; Narinska; Netzorg; Norden; Oswald; Packman; Parker; Patricola; Pepper; Perkins; Perrella; Poushnoff; Rechltn; Reichman; Reid; Robinson; Saar; Serli; Singer; Stanley; Sturgis; Thatcher; Tollefsen; Valasquez; Volavy; Walter; Ware; Whittington; Zeisler

1926: Through October: 7302 – 7512. Classic & Salon, November...
1928: Classic and Salon: 7513 – 7574. Reissued Popular rolls, November: 75000 – 75198. New Popular, November-December: 75199 – 75215. Reissued Accompaniment, November: 50000 – 50152. Bacon; Berger; Boguslawski; Brad; Casella; Cox; Dickinson; Duckwitz; Duret; Elwood; Fabre; Farley; Farnum; Gieseking; Giron; Gregory; Haase; Hamilton; Hampden; Harris; Hart; Horvath; Jessup; Johnson; Kiselik; Lawnhurst; Lendry; Levy; Liebling; Lutter; Magnunson; Maier; Maier & Pattison; Menzel; Mitzski; Morey; Netzorg; Patricolo; Pattison; Perrella; Pouishoff; Rapee; Reichenthal; Reichman; Rodney; Saar; Scott; Serli; Singer; Singer & Reichmann; Sishler & Lutter; Stanley; Thatcher; Volavy; Wehrlen; Yeargain

1927: Classic and Salon: 7575 – 7749. Popular: 75216 – 75314. Accompaniment: 50153 – 50165. Banta; Bergere; Blumen; Brad; Carreras; Casella & Respighi; Curtis; Deering; Desbois; Elwood; Fabre; Gieseking; Gray; Gregory; Haase; Hallett; Hamilton; Hampden; Harris; Headen; Howard-Jones; Horvath; Jenkins; Johnson; Johnson & King; King; Kiselik; Kreutzer; Laros; Larrimore; Lawnhurst; Lawnhurst & Lutter; Lee; Lendry; Liebling; Linderman; Lutter; MacGregor; Maier; Marshall; Milhaud; Narinska & Singer; Netzorg; Pattison; Perrella; Pouishoff; Rapee; Reid & Ashton; Robinson; Rodnay; Serli; Singer; Singer & Reichmann; Smedley; Steward; Tollefsen; Turner; Volavy; Yeargain; Ward; Weiss; Zardo

1929: Classic and Salon: 7859 – 7919. Popular: 75408 – 75481. Ashton; Burrows; Carreras; Davis; Gray; Harris; Hart; Horvath; King; Kiselik; Kreutzer; Lawnhurst; Lendry; Lutter; Maier; May; Netzorg; Pattison; Perrella; Robinson & Singer; Serli; Singer; Sturgis; Ward; Wehrlen; Zardo; Zelaya

1930: Classic and Salon: 7920 – 7925. Popular: 75482 – 75496. Ashton; Davis; Deering; Gray; Howard-Jones; Milhaud; Netzorg; Sturgis; Ward; Wehrlen

C. 1930 through 1932: Duplicate Issues

Issues coded for both Welte-Mignon and Duo-Art, and in some cases triple coded, including Ampico versions. Distributed by an Aeolian division, Standard Pneumatic Action Corporation, Garwood, New Jersey and Meriden, Connecticut.

“Twin” Popular Issues: Welte-Mignon/Duo-Art. November & December, 1930, numbers 75497 through 75501. Addison; Armbruster; Ferguson; Kerwin; Leith

“Triplet” Popular Issues: Welte-Mignon/Duo-Art/Ampico. January through July, 1931, numbers 75002 through 75535. Nos. 75503 & 75532 known for Welte-Mignon and Duo-Art only; Nos. 75519 & 75520 known for Welte-Mignon only. Addison; Arden; Arden & Carroll; Carroll; Chase; Kerr; Lawnhurst; Milne; Pollock

D. From 1932: Imperial Industrial Corporation (QRS), East 135th Street & Walnut Avenue, Bronx, New York.

This firm secured “Licensee” inventory in 1932, and had rights and was capable of creating new “Licensee” rolls. They sold Welte-Mignon “Licensee” rolls from stock taken over from Auto Pneumatic Action Corporation to as late as about 1947 when much was said to have been destroyed. They seemingly did some additional cuttings as needed to replace the stock which sold out. Contrary to rumor of new titles being created as well, none from this period are known.

E. 1920 Through 1928: Welte-Mignon Corporation

“Purple Seal” label issues.

Selected issues were copied from T-100 masters for performance on the “Original” and “Licensee” type actions, using Red roll numbering with their own price prefix: J. L. M and P. From perforating dating marked on under side of leaders, “Purple Seal” issues appeared by September, 1920, and continued to be perforated through December 1928. The corporation stamped “De Luxe” bulletins and catalogs with its name, and these were available to the “Original” player owner as well.

APPENDIX H

Piano Brands With Welte-Mignon Actions

This is a list of piano manufacturers and brands which did come, or possibly came, equipped with a Welte-Mignon reproducing action. Brand names were gathered from various collectors and sources, and could not always be verified.

T-100 (12 7/8 inch) Red Roll Format

Player actions manufactured by M. Welte & Soehne, Freiburg, Germany. The T-98 11 1/4" format Green roll action as well as the “Pianon” appeared in an unknown number of European brands including those from manufacturers below.

European Manufacturers (Brands)

Bechstein . . . . . . . . . . . . . Berlin, Germany
Berdux AG, V . . . . . . . . . Muenchen, Germany
Bluethner, Ju . . . . . . . . . Leipzig, Germany
continue...
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
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<td>Acoustigrande</td>
<td>Chickering Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ahlstrom</td>
<td>Ahlstrom Piano Co. (Jamestown, N.Y.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alden</td>
<td>Alden (Lester Piano Co., Philadelphia, Pa.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acorus</td>
<td>Kohler &amp; Campbell (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto-piano</td>
<td>Auto-piano (Kohler &amp; Campbell New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Bacon</td>
<td>Kohler &amp; Campbell (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baldwin</td>
<td>Baldwin Piano Company (Cincinnati, Ohio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bauer</td>
<td>Julius Bauer &amp; Co. (Chicago, Illinois)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baus</td>
<td>Jacob Doll &amp; Sons (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becker Bros.</td>
<td>Becker Bros. (New York City)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behning</td>
<td>Kohler &amp; Campbell (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behr Bros.</td>
<td>Behr Bros. &amp; Co. (Kohler &amp; Campbell, N.Y.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belleville</td>
<td>Lester Piano Co. (Philadelphia, Pa.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bennett Bretz</td>
<td>Chas. M. Stieff (Baltimore, Md.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bjur</td>
<td>Bjur Bros. Co. (Kohler &amp; Campbell, N.Y.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boardman &amp; Gray</td>
<td>Boardman &amp; Gray (Albany, N.Y.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogart</td>
<td>Bogart Piano Co. (The Bronx, New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond</td>
<td>Packard Piano Co. (Fort Wayne, Ind.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowen</td>
<td>Bowen Piano Co. (Kohler &amp; Campbell New York City)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bradbury</td>
<td>Bradbury, William G. (New York City)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brambach</td>
<td>Brambach Piano Co. (Kohler &amp; Campbell, N.Y.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braumuller</td>
<td>Braumuller Piano Co. (West New York, N.J.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Briggs</td>
<td>National Piano Mfg. Co. (Boston, Mass.)</td>
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<td>Brinkerhoff</td>
<td>Brinkerhoff Piano Co. (Chicago, Ill.)</td>
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<td>Bush &amp; Gerts</td>
<td>Bush &amp; Gerts (Chicago, Ill.)</td>
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<td>Bush &amp; Lane</td>
<td>Bush &amp; Lane Piano Co. (Holland, Mich.)</td>
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<td>Butler Bros.</td>
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<td>Cable</td>
<td>The Hobart M. Cable Co. (Chicago, Ill.)</td>
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<td>Cable &amp; Sons</td>
<td>Cable &amp; Sons, Inc. (New York City)</td>
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<td>Cable-Nelson</td>
<td>Cable-Nelson Piano Co. (Chicago, Ill.)</td>
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<td>Cameron</td>
<td>A. B. Cameron Co. (New York City)</td>
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<td>Channing</td>
<td>Lester Piano Co. (Philadelphia, Pa.)</td>
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<td>A.B. Chase</td>
<td>A.B. Chase Co. (United Piano Corporation, Norwalk, Ohio)</td>
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<td>Chase Bros.</td>
<td>Chase-Hackley Piano Co. (Muskegon, Mich.)</td>
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<td>Chickering Bros.</td>
<td>Chickering Bros. (Boson, Mass.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patterson &amp; Sons (distributor)</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schimmel, Wilh</td>
<td>Leipzig, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seiler GmbH, Ed</td>
<td>Liegnitz, Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinway &amp; Sons</td>
<td>Hamburg, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Welte &amp; Soehne</td>
<td>Freiburg, Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**United States Manufacturers**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Krakauer Bros.</td>
<td>The Bronx (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason &amp; Hamlin</td>
<td>Boston, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinway &amp; Sons</td>
<td>Manhattan (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Welte &amp; Sons</td>
<td>Manhattan (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Welte &amp; Sons, Inc.</td>
<td>Poughkeepsie &amp; Manhattan Welte-Mignon Corp. (The Bronx, New York City)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**“Licensee” Action, 11 1/4 inch Format**

Manufactured by Auto Pneumatic Action Company, Kohler & Campbell Industries, Inc. In some instances, parts of player action mechanisms were supplied for their piano by the piano manufacturer, with other parts supplied by and per arrangement with Auto Pneumatic Action Company. A few names have been omitted when there appeared to be spelling errors of known names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Christian Piano Company, Inc. (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarendon</td>
<td>Haddorf Piano Co. (Rockford, Ill.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conover</td>
<td>Francis Connor (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conover Co. (The Cable Co.)</td>
<td>Chicago, Ill.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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“Original” Action, 11 1/4 inch Format
Manufactured by Welte-Mignon Corporation, Bronx, New York.

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EL TE-MIGNON:  
PATENTIERT IN ALLEN CULTURSTAATEN

During 2004, the Welte-Mignon celebrates its 100th anniversary. This remarkable device was ready for its debut one century ago. Edwin Welte and Karl Bockisch co-invented what would revolutionize automatic piano playing. They also understood the value of such an instrument and sought to protect their intellectual property just as Edwin Welte’s Uncle Emil had done with his paper roll orchestrion roughly 20 years before.1

To protect against infringement, Edwin Welte and Karl Bockisch applied for patents in countries in which they would later sell these instruments. This was something that Emil Welte also did years before. The first patent applications for the Welte-Mignon date from or had priority to May 1904. The US application was filed in August 1904.

Many of the Welte-Mignon rolls bore the ink stamp “Patentiert in allen Culturstaaten.” Edwin and Karl wanted to make certain that users of their device knew that they intended to protect their rights. The later patent litigation in the US would bear out the value of this foresightedness.

The entire US patent is presented here. The German, French, British and Austrian patents all used the same first two figures as the US patent but figures 3 to 6 appear only in the US patent. The first page of the specification for the German, French and British patents are also presented to illustrate their filing, priority, and publication dates.

This year marks the centennial years for what is still a machine that can render playing with startling realism. Edwin and Karl gave the musical world a device with lasting value as evidenced by the interest still shown today.

1. Patents to Emil Welte US 287,599 issued 30 October 1883; DE 48741 issued 22 March 1889; CH 1216 issued 25 June 1889. These are representative patents and not intended to be a comprehensive list.

continue...
PATENTSCHRIFT

M. WELTE & SÖHNE IN FREIBURG I. BADEN.

Vorrichtung an mechanischen Tasteninstrumenten zur Abstufung des Tastenanschlages.


Erfindungsgegenstand ist eine Vorrichtung an mechanisch spielbaren Tasteninstrumenten, durch welche in vollkommener Weise die Anschlagstärke der Tasten abgestuft werden kann. Man hat bereits Vorrichtungen, durch die die Tonstärke des Gesamtspiels verändert werden kann, doch eignet sich diese teilweise nicht für die Verwendung bei mechanischen Tasteninstrumenten, oder sie sind nicht unabhängig vom Windverbrauch. Bei Einstellung der Vorrichtung auf eine gewisse Tonstärke wird diese nicht erreicht, wenn beispielsweise mehrere Tasten angeschlagen werden, da diese entsprechend mehr Wind gebrauchen, so daß ihr Anschlag auf Kosten der Tonstärke vonstatten geht. Würden andererseits weniger Tasten angeschlagen und die Vorrichtung zur Erzielung einer bestimmten Tonstärke nicht entsprechend verstellt, so erzeugte der im Überfluß vorhandene Wind eine größere Tonstärke, als beabsichtigt.

Beim Gegenstand der vorliegenden Erfindung dagegen soll, sobald einmal die Vorrichtung für eine gewünschte Tonstärke eingestellt worden ist, sich der Windverbrauch der Anzahl der angeschlagenen Tasten sofort anpassen, so daß unabhängig von der Anzahl der angeschlagenen Tasten die gewünschte Tonstärke erhalten bleibt.

Die Vorrichtung ist in den Fig. 1 und 2 dargestellt. Es zeigen Fig. 1 einen Schnitt durch den Hauptbalg, Steuerungsbalg und Regelungsbalg, Fig. 2 einen Schnitt durch einzelne Relais zur Einschaltung und Auschaltung der Forte-, Piano-, Crescendo- und Mezzofortwirkung.

Im Balg a (Fig. 1) wird in bekannter Weise stets gleichbleibendes Vakuum erzeugt. Von dem Hauptbalg a gehen Windleitungen b aus, die durch je einen regularen Schieber c mehr oder weniger geöffnet bzw. ganz geschlossen werden können. Dieser Schieber befindet sich zwischen dem Hauptbalg a und einem Regelungsbalg d, der wiederum mit dem Relais der Klaviatur in Verbindung steht.

Schließer c und Regelungsbalg d sind in ihren Bewegungen dadurch voneinander abhängig gemacht, daß sie mit einem Seilzug, der über eine Rolle g geführt ist, miteinander verbunden sind. Der Schieber c öffnet sich also weiter, sobald sich der Boden des Regelungsbalg d senkt, d. h., sobald mehr Töne erklingen als bei der kurz vorhergehenden Stellung des Regelungsbalg d, und bedingt durch die davon abhängige, verschiedene Stellung des Regelungsbalg d und Schiebers c die verschiedenen Tonstärken des Tasteninstruments.

Befindet sich beispielsweise der Steuerungshebel oder die untere bewegliche Klappe f eines Steuerungsbalg e. Die verschiedenen Stellungen des Steuerungsbalg es oder Steuerungshebels ergeben eine verschiedene Höhenstellung der Rolle g und bedingen durch die davon abhängige, verschiedene Stellung des Regelungsbalg d und Schiebers c die verschiedenen Tonstärken des Tasteninstruments.

Befindet sich beispielsweise der Steuerungshebel oder die untere Klappe f des Steuerungsbalg es in ihrer tiefsten Stellung, so bedeutet dies die Pianostellung. Der Schieber c...
Dispositif pour obtenir les nuances avec les appareils servant à actionner mécaniquement le clavier d’un instrument de musique.

Société : M. WELTE & Söhn résidant en Allemagne.

Demandé le 11 mai 1905.
Délivré le 19 juillet 1905. — Publié le 30 septembre 1905.
(Demande de brevet déposée en Allemagne le 20 mai 1904. — Déclaration du dépôtant.)

L’invention a pour objet un dispositif qui est destiné à être adjoint aux appareils servant à actionner mécaniquement le clavier d’un instrument de musique, et qui permet de graduer, de façon parfaite, l’action exercée sur les touches de l’instrument.

On a bien imaginé déjà de nombreux dispositifs pour nuancer le jeu, mais, ou bien ces dispositifs ne sont pas tout à fait propres à être appliqués aux claviers, ou bien ils ont l’inconvénient de ne pas être indépendants de l’utilisation de la quantité d’air mise en jeu. Un semblable dispositif étant réglé en vue de l’obtention d’une certaine nuance, celle-ci n’est pas donnée d’une façon correcte si plusieurs touches sont frappées à la fois, parce que, la frappe de l’ensemble de ces touches absorbant une quantité d’air relativement grande, la force du son se trouve diminuée.

De même, si le nombre de touches frappées est faible et si le dispositif n’a pas été réglé en conséquence pour donner la nuance voulue, de l’air se trouve en excès et il y a émission de son plus fort qu’on ne le veut.

Avec le dispositif du présent système, au contraire, une fois que celui-ci a été réglé pour une nuance donnée, la quantité d’air mise en jeu devient immédiatement exactement ce qu’elle doit être pour le nombre de touches frappées, et on obtient ainsi la force de son voulue, quel que soit le nombre de touches frappées.

Le dessin ci-annexé permettra de bien comprendre l’invention.

La fig. 1 de ce dessin est la coupe verticale de la ventouse principale, de celle de commande et de celle de réglage, et la fig. 2 la coupe, également verticale, des divers relais qui commandent les «forte», «piano», «crescendo» et «mezzo-forte».

De la ventouse a (fig. 1) dans laquelle est produit, à la manière connue, un vide qui reste toujours uniforme, partent des canaux b qui possèdent chacun un registre réglable c. à l’aide duquel ils peuvent être ouverts plus ou moins complètement ou même fermés, et qui est intercalé entre la ventouse principale a et une ventouse de réglage d, laquelle, à son tour, est en communication avec le relais du clavier.

Le registre c et la ventouse de réglage d sont reliés l’un à l’autre par un cordon qui passe sur une poulie g et qui rend interdépendants les mouvements des deux pièces. De la sorte, dès que la joue inférieure de la ventouse de réglage d s’abaisse, c’est-à-dire dès que plusieurs sons résonnent, le registre c s’ouvre davantage que pour la position précédente de ladite joue de la ventouse. La poulie g est montée sur un levier de commande on, 6f.

Prix du fascicule : 1 franc.
N° 10,219 A.D. 1905

(Under International Convention.)

Date claimed for Patent under Patents Act, 1901,
being date of first Foreign Application 20th May, 1904
(in Germany),
Date of Application (in the United Kingdom), 15th May, 1905
Accepted, 8th June, 1905

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION.

"Apparatus for Graduating the Striking of the Keys in Mechanical Piano Playing Apparatus".

We, BERTHOLD WELTE, EMIL WELTE and MICHAEL WELTE, trading under the Firm of M. Welte & Söhne, of 7 Lehener Strasse, of Freiburg, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, Germany, Manufacturers, do hereby declare the nature of this invention and in what manner the same is to be performed, to be particularly described and ascertained in and by the following statement:

The subject of the present invention is an arrangement in mechanical piano playing apparatus, by which the striking of the keys can be graduated as desired, in the most perfect manner. This is obtained according to this invention by the different arrangement of bellows, which are operated dependently on each other by relays.

The arrangement is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1 shows a cross section through the main bellows, governing bellows and regulating bellows.

Figure 2 shows in section the various relays for actuating and disengaging the "forte-piano", "crescendo" and "mezzo forte"-action.

A constant vacuum is produced in a bellows a, Figure 1, by an electro-motor or by pedal action. Several air channels b branch off from this main bellows and are closed by slides e adapted to be regulated. These slides e interrupt the connection between the main bellows a and small regulating bellows d, which are connected with the corresponding divisions of the relays of the keys.

The slides e and the regulating bellows d are dependent on one another in their movement in the following manner.

Above the slide e of the regulating bellows d is situated a small governing bellows c, on the lower movable flap f of which is arranged a roller g. A wire or the like is carried from the slide e over this roller and is then fixed to the bottom of the bellow d.

The arrangement is adjusted so that, as soon as the governing bellows e is out of action, i.e., when the bellows is not exhausted and the flap f is in its lowest position, the slide e occupies such a position that the channel b is slightly open.

In consequence the regulating bellow d is exhausted by the main bellows a, the

[Price 8d.]
E. WELTE & K. BOCKISCH.
MECHANISM FOR REGULATING THE EXPRESSION IN APPARATUS FOR PLAYING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.
APPLICATION FILED AUG. 17, 1904.
1,008,291. Patented Nov. 7, 1911.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Witnesses:

Inventors

Attorney
E. WELTE & K. BOCKISCH.
MECHANISM FOR REGULATING THE EXPRESSION IN APPARATUS FOR PLAYING MUSICAL
INSTRUMENTS.
APPLICATION FILED AUG. 17, 1904.
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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, EDWIN WELTE and KARL BOCKISCH, both subjects of the Grand Duke of Baden, and residents of Freiburg, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, German Empire, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Mechanism for Regulating the Expression in Apparatus for Playing Musical Instruments, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a section through the main bellows, the expression bellows and the regulating bellows of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a vertical longitudinal section through a portion of the pneumatics for controlling the pressure of the fingers or levers upon the keyboard of the piano. Fig. 3 is a diagrammatic view showing the connection and relative arrangement of the main operating parts, the expression actions and tone-producing actions being shown in vertical longitudinal section, one regulating bellows and one pumping bellows being omitted. Fig. 4 is a vertical transverse section on the line 1—4 of Fig. 3. Fig. 5 is a detail view of means that may be employed for operating the slide or valve c by hand. Fig. 6 is an end view of the parts shown in Fig. 5.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in the different figures of the drawings.

This invention relates to that character of mechanical devices for playing pianos and other musical instruments wherein the tones of the piece of music are produced through the medium of air currents controlled by a perforated note sheet. These currents are described herein as produced by lowering the pressure within the instrument below atmospheric pressure, and it is usually better to produce them in this way rather than by raising the pressure in the instrument above atmospheric pressure. The invention more especially relates to the expression means of such devices.

The principal object of the invention is to provide such devices with means whereby the piece may be reproduced with more accurate or artistic expression than at present, which expression is automatically controlled by the note sheet.

In the accompanying drawings we have shown the mechanism of the player mounted in a casing A outside of and separate from the piano or other musical instrument X, but we wish it understood that this is merely exemplificatory and that the invention is not restricted to such arrangement, it being within the spirit and scope of the invention to arrange the mechanism of the player within the casing of the piano or other instrument to operate upon the inner ends of the keys thereof or upon any other suitable part of said instrument. In the form shown in the drawings, the casing A has within its interior a tracker board A' which is formed with a series of ducts a' which communicate with the pneumatic actions B. The actions whereby the sound is produced we herein term "tone-producing actions" to distinguish them from the actions which control the expression. These tone-producing actions in the present exemplification of the invention operate the strikers of the keys of the piano, but considered in its broad aspect, the invention is not restricted to such specific relation of parts.

Any suitable pneumatic actions for the strikers may be employed, but we prefer the construction shown in the accompanying drawings, wherein each of a series of compartments 1 is connected with a strike pneumatic C having a finger lever C', by means of a passage 2 which leads from said compartment 1 to the interior of said strike pneumatic, as shown best in Fig. 4. It will be understood that there is a different compartment 1 for each strike-pneumatic C and that there is one of such strike-pneumatics and fingers for each key of the instrument within the range of the player. As indicated in Fig. 3, each compartment 1 is provided at bottom and top, respectively, with air ducts 3 and 4, and with a pair of valves 5 and 6 for opening and closing said ducts. The valves 5 and 6 are connected so as to operate in unison, each closing its duct while the other is open. Through the duct 3 the interior of the compartment 1 communicates with the wind trunk 10, while the duct 4 affords communication of the interior of said compartment with the atmosphere. Each pair of valves 5 and 6 is controlled by a diaphragm 7 which is mounted in said wind trunk above a chamber 8. Air conducting tubes 9 lead to the respective air ducts a' in the tracker board A' from these chambers 8.
For the purpose of producing the necessary air currents through the apparatus, we preferably provide an air chamber and advantageously employ therefor a main suction bellows \( a \) having strong springs \( \alpha \), from which the wind is pumped by means of bellows \( R \) which are operated by foot power, or by a motor or the like. The tone producing actions are connected by a suitable air passage or passages with the means for producing the air currents, and means for varying or governing this passage as well as operating means therefor are provided.

It being understood that the note sheet is caused to travel over the tracker board and the main bellows \( a \) is pumped out and maintained constantly in a highly exhausted condition, and it being further understood that the tracker board has channels or passages and that the note sheet is formed with corresponding openings for said channels or passages, the operation of the parts thus far set forth will readily be seen to be as follows:—When a note opening is brought into registration with a duct or passage in the tracker board, atmospheric air will be admitted to the chamber \( b \) connected with said duct, which air raises the diaphragm \( 7 \) in said chamber, thus raising and elevating to their respective seats the valves \( 5 \) and \( 6 \) connected with said diaphragm \( 7 \). Communication of the particular compartment 1 containing said valves with the strike-pneumatic \( C \) connected therewith and with the wind trunk 10 is established whereby said strike-pneumatic \( C \) is exhausted by the suction produced in said wind trunk and controlled by the regulating bellows \( d \), hereinafter described, causing its striking device \( C' \) to strike the corresponding key of the instrument hard or soft according to the position of the movable board \( d' \) of said regulating bellows, that is to say, according to the degree of vacuum produced therein by the main bellows \( a \). When said note opening has passed out of registration with said duct or passage in the tracker board, the admission of atmospheric air through the latter is cut off, the diaphragm \( 7 \) and the valves \( 5 \) and \( 6 \) connected therewith return to their former positions, thus cutting off communication of the strike-pneumatic \( C \) with atmospheric air, which enters the compartment 1 through the duct 4 and passes thence through the passage 2 to said strike-pneumatic \( C \) and inflates it, thus raising the striking device \( C' \) from the key of the instrument \( X \).

Through very small passages 11c (Fig. 4) the chambers 8 are placed under slight suction to facilitate the downward movement of the diaphragm \( 7 \) and consequently of the valves \( 5 \) and \( 6 \).

It will be understood that the strength of the touch of the fingers or other striking devices \( C' \) on the keys or other parts of the piano or other instrument being played depends on the intensity of the suction to which their pneumatics are subjected, and in order that this may be varied without varying the degree of vacuum or the suctional force within the main bellows \( a \) the latter is employed to deflate the regulating bellows or other suitable air chamber \( \beta \) which has communication with the wind trunk 10 through the wind passages \( b \) and pipes or other suitable ducts 11. Each regulating air chamber or bellows is connected by an air passage \( b' \) with the main bellows, and suitable means is provided for varying or governing this passage, as a slide or other valve \( c \). This valve, in the form illustrated, is arranged in the air passage \( b' \) between the main and regulating bellows and is connected to the movable board \( d' \) of said regulating bellows and to a movable device \( e' \). This movable device \( e' \) in the specific arrangement illustrated supports the connection \( e' \) between the valve \( c \) and the regulating bellows. A pulley \( g \) or other suitable antifriction device is preferably provided to engage said connection and said pulley is preferably carried by said movable device. The connection is preferably a wire or other flexible means, and, for reasons which will hereinafter appear, the movable device \( e' \) is preferably the movable part or board of an expression chamber or bellows \( f \). The regulating bellows \( d \) is provided with a spring \( f \) the power of which increases to an extent corresponding to the extent of deflation of the regulating bellows.

The words "lower," "raise," etc., in the following description are used for convenience and clearness and with especial reference to the relative arrangement of the various parts of the apparatus as illustrated in the drawings, and not as limiting the invention to the said arrangement.

When the expression bellows \( e \) is out of action—that is, when it is fully inflated—its board \( e' \) is in its lowest position and the slide \( c \) is adjusted to nearly close the passage through the wind channel \( b' \) between the main bellows \( a \) and the regulating bellows \( d \). This position of the parts is shown in Figs. 1 and 3, and is the pianissimo position. If now suction is produced in the main bellows \( a \), the regulating bellows becomes somewhat deflated, its movable board \( d' \) rises and moves the slide \( c \) to further restrict the passage \( b' \) and practically cut off the main bellows. The movable board \( d' \) of the regulating bellows is now, however, raised but little, so that the tension of the spring \( f \) is weak, and there is a low degree of tension in the regulating bellows. The movable board of this regulating bellows 120
falls according to the demand made upon the suction by the pneumatics of the tone-producing actions, and in so doing correspondingly moves the slide to open the passage from the main bellows; but the low degree of suction is maintained at the tone-producing actions, because the expression bellows $c$ has already set the valve or slide $c$ to very much restrict the passage $b'$. Thus though the slide $c$ is moved, in accordance with the demands made by the pneumatics of the tone-producing actions, the tension of air to produce the pianissimo volume of tone is maintained by the action of the regulating bellows $d$.

To produce a stronger tone volume the section in the regulating bellows has to be brought to a higher tension. This is accomplished by moving the movable device $e'$ upward, thus correspondingly raising the slide $c$ and opening the channel $b'$. Consequently the regulating bellows becomes somewhat deflated, lowering, at the same time, the slide $c$, and again allowing, as soon as the movement of the movable device $e'$ ceases, only the passage of the suction used to produce tones of the desired volume, whereby the movable board $d'$ is kept in this predetermined raised position. In this position the spring $f$ is under stronger tension than before, whereby the increased power of the suction in the regulating bellows is maintained.

To change a stronger volume of tone to a softer one, the movable device $e'$ is moved downward; the slide $c$ more nearly closes the channel $b'$ and, consequently, the suction consumed in the striking of the keys is not so rapidly renewed. The regulating bellows likewise becomes inflated and the degree of suction in it becomes reduced. When the movement of the movable device $e'$ ceases the movement of the regulating bellows $d$ also is stopped and said regulating bellows by reason of its connection with the slide $c$ and also its free communication with the pneumatics of the tone-producing actions is enabled to replace the suction consumed in the striking of the keys.

Thus it will be seen that upon the position of the movable device $e'$ depends the momentarily normal position of the movable board of the regulating bellows and that upon the latter depends the quantity of the tone volume produced and the maintenance of that volume.

One of the purposes of the present invention is to provide means for raising said movable device $e'$ to produce the tone volume desired automatically under the control of the note sheet. It is obviously advantageous to provide means operable to produce the expression automatically and the structure herein shown embodies this advantageous feature. The mechanism shown is adapted to produce automatically all the various expressions, pianissimo, piano, mezzo forte, forte, fortissimo, forzando, crescendo, decrescendo, etc. and to permit the same to be produced manually. For purposes of automatic regulation, the movable device $e'$ is preferably, the bottom board of an expression bellows $e$ which bellows is controlled by pneumatic expression-actions, which, in turn, are controlled by special openings in the note sheet and special ducts in the tracker board.

Any suitable construction of expression actions may be employed without departing from the spirit of the invention, but we prefer that shown in the accompanying drawings, wherein there is one set of expression actions for each expression bellows $e$ and each set of such actions, in the form herein shown, comprises one action, $r'$, for sudden forte effect, another $r^2$, for sudden piano effect, a third, $r^3$, for crescendo effect and a fourth $r^4$, for releasing the crescendo effect. Each set of expression actions, furthermore, preferably comprises actions $r'$ and $r^2$ to actuate a bellows $h$ having a stop $i$ adapted to engage a stop $i'$ carried by the expression bellows $e$, said compartments $r'$ being connected with the bellows $h$ by a pipe $h'$. Each expression action $(r', r^2, r^3, r^4$ and $r^5)$, like those of the tone-producing actions above described, comprises a chamber $(k, k', k^2, k^3, k^4$ and $k^5$, respectively) arranged at one side of the wind trunk $10^4$ and having valves $g$ which control communication of said chambers with said wind trunk and the atmosphere; and each also has, at the other side of said wind trunk, a chamber $8^4$ having a diaphragm-pneumatic $g^2$, said chambers $8^4$ thus corresponding to the chambers $8$ above described, and having ducts $9^4$ from which passages lead to the tracker board $A'$ which tracker board, as stated, has special perforations or air inlets therefor.

Each of the expression-actions $r'$ and $r^2$ for forte and crescendo effects respectively, and $r^3$ for operating the bellows $h$, is provided with a chamber $s$ within which is arranged a membrane $g$ connected with the valves $g'$ and membrane $g^2$ of said action. The portions of said chambers $s$ above the membranes $g$ are connected, respectively, with the valve-chambers $k$, $k^2$ and $k^4$ by bores or passages $t$. In practice, the passage $t$ for the forte action may be omitted. The valve chamber $k'$ of the action for producing a "piano" volume of tone is connected with the portion $u$ of the chamber $s$ below said membrane of the forte action by a passage $v$; and similarly the valve chamber $k^2$ of the action $r'$ for releasing the crescendo effect is connected with the portion of the chamber $s$ below the membrane $g$ of the crescendo action $r'$; which likewise is
true as to the valve chamber \(k\) of the action \(r\) and the lower portion of the chamber \(s\) of the action \(r\). Thus, when the valve chamber \(k\), for example, is evacuated by the quick rising of the valve, the space above the membrane \(q\) is placed under suction so that the valve cannot return to its seat. Even when the original force which has raised the valve ceases to work, the valve is kept raised until the neighboring action allows exhaust to operate by means of the channel \(v\) on the membrane \(q\) from below. In this manner short openings only need be provided in the music sheet in order to produce sustained tones or a series of tones of the same quantity.

The communication between the expression actions and the expression bellows \(e\) controlled thereby is shown best in Fig. 3, upon reference to which it will be seen that from the valve chamber \(k\) of the forte action \(r\) a comparatively large duct or pipe \(l\) leads into said expression bellows; from the similar chamber of the piano action \(r^*\) a smaller duct or pipe \(m\) leads to a small expression bellows \(a\) which is provided with and actuates a valve \(o\) which normally closes a passage \(o'\) in the expression bellows \(e\), through which passage said expression bellows has communication with the atmosphere, whereby it is quickly inflated when it is desired to pass suddenly from a stronger to a weaker volume of tone; and from the valve chamber of the crescendo action \(r^*\) extends a very small duct or pipe \(p\) to said expression bellows \(e\).

The wind trunk \(10\) of the expression actions is connected by means of a pipe \(12\) with the main bellows \(a\), whereby said expression actions are controlled directly by said main bellows instead of by the regulating bellows \(d\).

In practice, it is preferred to have two regulating bellows, one for the treble and the other for the bass, and to correspondingly duplicate the distributing bellows and other expression devices. The expression actions may be arranged at any suitable place, without departing from the spirit of the invention. In the drawings, they are shown as arranged at opposite ends of the series of compartments \(1\) of the tone producing actions with their respective wind trunks \(10\) divided from the wind trunk \(10\) by means of walls \(w\).

In the operation of the expression pneumatics:—When a sudden forte is to be produced, the forte action \(r^*\) comes into operation and, through the air passage \(l\), quickly deflates the expression bellows \(e\), thus causing the slide \(c\) to be raised quickly and the register valve \(d\) to be forcibly sucked by the main bellows \(a\). At the same time with forte the crescendo is always produced, so that if the forte-hole in the note sheet has passed, the expression bellows is kept by the crescendo action in forte position.

If piano is to be produced, the piano action \(r^*\) is actuated whereby the small valve \(r_0\) bellows \(n\) is evacuated by means of the channel or pipe \(m\). The opening \(o'\) in the expression bellows is then opened and the latter quickly returns from the forte position into the piano position. Simultaneously with piano the crescendo action \(r^*\) is actuated, so that the crescendo which up to now kept the expression bellows in the forte position, is released.

If crescendo effect is to be produced, the crescendo action comes into operation and gradually evacuates the expression bellows \(e\) by means of the small pipe \(p\). If crescendo is to be produced the crescendo effect is released by the action \(r^*\) and the expression bellows \(e\) is gradually filled with atmospheric air through the pipe \(p\) and slowly returns to the piano position.

For producing mezzo forte the action \(r^*\) as arranged, which deflates the bellows \(h\), whereby the stop \(i\) comes into the path of the expression bellows \(e\). A short time later the forte action is operated by which the expression bellows \(e\) is deflated in such a manner that stop \(i\) is engaged with stop \(i\) and the expression bellows is therefore prevented from being fully collapsed. It is kept in this position by the crescendo action actuated at the same time. If piano is to again enter, the mezzo-forte and crescendo are released by the actions \(r^*\) and \(r^*\) and the piano action \(r^*\) is actuated. For passing from mezzo-forte through decrescendo to piano, mezzo-forte and crescendo are released and the expression bellows \(e\) slowly returns into its piano position. For passing from mezzo-forte through crescendo to forte only mezzo-forte is released and the crescendo sucks the distributing bellows up to the forte position. If it is desired suddenly to pass from forte to mezzo-forte, mezzo-forte is inserted and the stop \(i\) is thereby moved into the path of the contact piece \(i\) of the expression bellows \(e\). Thereby crescendo is released and the piano action is put into operation.

For passing from forte through decrescendo to mezzo-forte mezzo-forte is inserted, crescendo is released; then the expression bellows \(e\) gradually returns up to the stop \(i\) of the bellows \(h\).

It will not be a departure from the scope or spirit of the present invention to embrace novel features thereof in a construction wherein the operation of the bellows \(e\) is effected manually, by a hand or foot lever, for example. The expression bellows \(e\) may be omitted (in such case for example) and the adjustable supporting device for the valve \(c\), in this case the board \(c'\) and pulley

continue...
$g$, may be directly actuated manually, by hand or foot operated means for instance. Furthermore, means for manual operation may be embodied in a machine which also has means for automatically controlling the expression, whereby provision is made for either individual or automatic control of the expression, at the will of the operator. In the latter event, and with a machine having automatic expression regulating means, like those hereinbefore described for example, the manually operable means should be of such character that atmospheric air will be admitted below the membrane or diaphragm of the "piano" action $r^2$, for example, as long as the manually-operable device is in action, thereby preventing the forte pneumatic from being actuated by the note sheet. To exemplify this feature of the invention we have illustrated one form of means which may desirably be employed for the purpose, but to the details of which we do not restrict ourselves, nor do we claim said details in the present case. In the form shown means are provided for manually operating the expression bellows $c$, or rather for raising and lowering the pulley $g$ of the latter. These shown are operated by hand and comprise a shaft 100, which is journaled in suitable bearings and provided with a conveniently accessible handle 101 by which it is turned. A cord or other suitable means 102 leads to the movable support of the valve $c$, from a pulley 103 which is fastened on said shaft 100. Thus, when the shaft is turned the means which supports the valve $c$ will be moved accordingly, and such manual movement will obviously cause the same movement of the regulating bellows $d$ that would be effected by similar movement of the said support produced automatically through the automatic expression means aforesaid.

The shaft 100 has a flat portion 104, or is otherwise suitably formed to make it cam shaped or eccentric, and bears upon the upper ends of a series of plates or valves 105 which are arranged in juxtaposition to openings 106 in a casing 107. Said openings are in communication with passages 108 which in turn communicate, through ducts 109, with the chambers $s$ of the expression actions $r^2$, $r^1$, and $r^0$, whereby, when the shaft is turned it also presses said plates 105 and uncovers said openings 106, thus establishing communication of said chambers with the atmosphere. Thus, the valves in said actions $r^2$, $r^1$, and $r^0$ are elevated, and held in elevated position, as long as the hand operated device is in operation, thereby, through the passages $u$, preventing the forte pneumatic from being operated by the note sheet while the hand operated device is in use, and said hand operated device then can be manipulated by the player to produce various changes of expression corresponding to his own idea or interpretation.

From the above description it will be apparent that by reason of the reciprocal action of the valve and the regulating air chamber or bellows, the valve tends to seek at all times during the operation of the instrument, some one of a number of mean positions, each representing a particular pressure in the regulating chamber and in the air passages leading to the tone producing actions.

The particular mean position which the valve seeks and thus the particular pressure maintained, is determined by the position of the expression air chamber or bellows, which in turn is controlled by the selective action of the expression actions, or by the manual operating device. This results in obtaining and retaining for the period desired any particular pressure in the regulating chamber and in the air passages referred to.

The relation between the valve, the regulating air chamber or bellows, and the expression air chamber or bellows is such that, when the hand-operating device is actuated, the valve is moved to a degree equal to the resultant of the forces of the two air chambers referred to. The parts may be so arranged that the movement of the valve may be the resultant of the movement of the two chambers, though this is not necessarily the case. By resultant is meant the algebraic sum of the movements of the two chambers or other corresponding elements, giving to motion of either element tending to move the valve in one direction the $+$ sign, and to motion of either element tending to move the valve in the other direction the $-$ sign.

As already stated, the expression actions are connected directly with the main air chamber without the intervention of the regulating air chamber, while the tone producing actions are connected with the regulating air chamber and thus indirectly with the main air chamber. It follows that the expression air chamber is operated independently of the regulating air chamber, and that the expression air chamber makes effective immediately any selection by the expression actions.

Having thus fully described the nature of our invention, what we desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States, is:

1. In a musical instrument, the combination of striker pneumatics, a main source of power for actuating them, expression-controlling means arranged to control the degree of pressure at the striker pneumatics accordingly as such means are set, automatic actions for setting the expression-controlling means for high, low or intermediate pressure, and pressure-maintaining means operatively connected with the said expression-controlling means for maintaining substantial uniformity of that pressure for 130
which the said controlling means may at any time be set whatever number of striker pneumatics be simultaneously operated.

2. In a musical instrument, the combination of striker pneumatics, a main source of power for actuating them, means for controlling the air supply located between the said pneumatics and the main source of supply, a pneumatic in free communication with the striker pneumatics connected with and arranged to move the air controlling means to maintain substantial uniformity of pressure at the striker pneumatics whether many or few of these are simultaneously brought into operation, and operable at whatever pressure the said controlling means may be set to maintain, expression-controlling devices also operatively connected with the air-supply-controlling means arranged to change the position of the latter to vary the degree of pressure at the striker pneumatics accordingly as the expression-controlling devices are set, and automatic actions for setting the expression-controlling means.

3. In a musical instrument, striker pneumatics, a main source of power, a regulating motor intermediate the striker pneumatics and the main source of power, having means for automatically maintaining constant condition of action between the main source of power and the striker pneumatics including a valve in the connection between the regulating motor and the main source of power, and an automatically actuated device arranged in the connections of the valve for changing to any degree the operative effect of the main source of power upon the key pneumatics through the regulating motor.

4. In a musical instrument, striker pneumatics, a main source of power for actuating them, means for maintaining at the striker pneumatics uniformity of pressure from the main source of power, as the said pneumatics are operated, devices cooperating with the said pressure-maintaining means for varying the degree of pressure, whether high, low, or intermediate, which the said means will maintain, and automatic actions for setting said pressure varying means.

5. In a musical instrument, striker pneumatics, a main source of power for actuating the same, means for maintaining uniformity of pressure of the main source of power at high, low and various intermediate pressures with reference to the striker pneumatics, and means cooperating with the first named means for automatically varying such pressures at varying speeds.

6. In a musical instrument, striker pneumatics, a main source of power for actuating the same, a valve controlling the action of the main source of power upon the striker pneumatics and two automatically actuated valve-operating devices for maintaining and producing numerous operative effects of the main source of power upon the striker pneumatics.

7. In a musical instrument, striker pneumatics, a main source of power, a regulating device for automatically maintaining predetermined pressures upon the striker pneumatics, and an automatically actuated device connected therewith for varying the operative effect of said automatic device and for producing and maintaining any predetermined degree of pressure of the main source of power upon the striker pneumatics.

8. In a musical instrument, striker pneumatics, a main bellows, a regulating bellows connected with the main bellows and the striker pneumatics, a valve situated in the passage between said main and regulating bellows so as to regulate the same, a flexible device connected with said valve and regulating bellows, a pulley over which said device runs, and means for adjusting said pulley to vary the action of the flexible device with respect to the valve.

9. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions and expression actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows in communication with said tone producing and main bellows, a valve arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows, said valve being connected with and moved by the regulating bellows, and an automatically adjustable device interposed in the connections for moving said valve, independently of or in conjunction with the regulating bellows, said automatically adjustable device controlled by said expression actions.

10. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions and expression actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows in communication with said tone producing actions and main bellows, a valve arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows and connected with said regulating bellows, and an expression bellows controlled by said expression actions and connected with said valve, and adapted to actuate the valve independently of its movement by the regulating bellows.

11. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions and expression actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows in communication with said tone producing actions and main bellows, a valve arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows and connected with said regulating bellows, an expression bellows having connection with said valve and ducts connecting different expression actions with said expression bellows, whereby the latter is controlled for various positions to vary the movement of the valve independently of its movement by the regulating bellows.
12. In a musical instrument, a main bellows, a regulating bellows, striker pneumatics connected therewith, a valve situated in the passage between the main and regulating bellows so as to regulate said passage, said valve being mechanically connected with the regulating bellows, an expression bellows mechanically connected with said valve interposed in the connection of the valve and regulating bellows, and automatic expression actions, acting upon the expression bellows and comprising compartments provided with actuating and releasing valves, one of said actions also provided with a chamber having a membrane dividing the same into spaces above and below said membrane, means connecting one of said spaces with the compartments of one of said actions, and means connecting the other of said spaces with the compartment of the other of said actions.

13. In a musical instrument, in combination, striker pneumatics, a regulating bellows in connection therewith, a main source of power connected with the regulating bellows and the main source of power for maintaining a predetermined action of the main source of power upon the striker pneumatics, and automatic means in operative relation with the first named means for increasing and decreasing the operative effect of the main source of power and regulating bellows upon the striker pneumatics.

14. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows in communication with said tone producing actions and main bellows, a valve arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows, a flexible means connecting said valve with said regulating bellows, a pulley over which said flexible means runs, means for adjusting said pulley, and means for holding the same in different positions of adjustment.

15. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows in communication with said tone producing actions and main bellows, a valve arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows, a flexible means connecting said valve with said regulating bellows, an automatically actuated device over which said flexible means runs, means for automatically adjusting said device, and means for holding the same in different positions of adjustment.

16. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions and expression actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows communicating with said main bellows and tone producing actions, a valve arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows, means for connecting the valve to the regulating bellows, an expression bellows controlled by said expression actions and connected with the last mentioned means, and stop devices for said expression bellows, said stop devices comprising a projection from said expression bellows, and a bellows connected with one of the expression actions and arranged contiguous to the expression bellows and having a stop to engage said projection.

17. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions and expression actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows communicating with said main bellows and tone producing actions, a regulating device arranged in the passage between said main and regulating bellows, means for connecting the regulating device to the regulating bellows, an expression bellows controlled by said expression actions and interconnected with the means connecting the regulating device and regulating bellows, and stop devices for said expression bellows, said stop devices comprising a supplemental bellows and interengaging parts between the expression bellows and supplemental bellows connected with one of the expression actions.

18. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows, an expression bellows, a pulley connected with the expression bellows, a valve between the regulating bellows and the main bellows, and means extending over the pulley of the expression bellows and having one end secured to said valve and its other end connected with the regulating bellows.

19. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions, a main bellows, a regulating bellows, an expression bellows, a movable device connected with the expression bellows, a valve between the regulating bellows and the main bellows, and means extending over the movable device of the expression bellows and attached at one end to said valve and at its other end connected with the regulating bellows.

20. In a musical instrument, key pneumatics, a main bellows, a regulating bellows in communication with said main bellows and key pneumatics, expression actions, an expression bellows controlled by said expression actions, a valve arranged between the main bellows and the regulating bellows, operating means for said valve including a connection from the valve to the regulating bellows whereby the former is operated by the latter, and a connection from the expression bellows to the valve whereby the latter may be operated by the expression bellows in conjunction with or independent of the operation of the regulating bellows, and stop devices for said expression bellows, comprising an auxiliary bellows controlled by one of said expression actions and interengaging projections on...
said expression bellows and auxiliary bellows.

21. In a musical instrument, the combination of striker pneumatics, a main source of power for actuating them, means for maintaining uniformity of pressure from the said main source of power for actuating the striker pneumatics whether many or few of these be operated at once, a tracker board, automatic actions controlled from the tracker board, and means controlled by the said automatic actions, operatively connected with the said pressure-maintaining means for varying the degree of pressure supplied to the striker pneumatics.

22. In a musical instrument, in combination, striker pneumatics, a main source of power, a regulating bellows interposed between the striker pneumatics and main source of power, means including the regulating bellows for maintaining varying operative conditions of the main source of power with relation to the striker pneumatics, a music roll, and automatic means interconnected therewith and with the regulating bellows for controlling to various degrees the operative effect of the main source of power upon the striker pneumatics at any position of the regulating bellows.

23. In a musical instrument, in combination, striker pneumatics, a main source of power, a regulating bellows connected therewith, a main source of power connected with the striker pneumatics through the regulating bellows, a regulator intermediate the regulating bellows and main source of power and controlled in part by the regulating bellows for maintaining predetermined constant actions of the main source of power upon the striker pneumatics, and a mechanism automatically actuated by the main source of power and connected with the regulator for varying the operative effect of the main source of power to any degree and at varying positions of the regulating bellows, substantially as described.

24. In a musical instrument, in combination, striker pneumatics, an expansible bellows in connection therewith, means for exhausting the air from said bellows, means for expanding the bellows against the action of the exhaust, a wind-trunk connecting the bellows and the exhaust, a valve controlling said wind-trunk, connections inter-

mediate the bellows and valve for operating the valve, and automatic means actuated by the exhaust and interconnected with the means for controlling the valve for moving said valve during its control by the regulating bellows.

25. In a musical instrument, tone producing actions, a main air chamber, a regulating air chamber in communication with said tone producing actions and main air chamber, means governing the communication between said chambers and connected with said regulating chamber, an expression air chamber connected with said governing means, and means for increasing or decreasing the pressure in said expression chamber abruptly or gradually.

26. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions, expression actions, a main air chamber, a regulating air chamber in communication with said tone producing actions and main air chamber, a valve governing the communication between said chambers and connected with said regulating chamber, an expression chamber to change the position of the valve, and ducts of different capacities connecting different expression actions with said expression chamber.

27. In a musical instrument, pneumatic tone producing actions, pneumatic expression actions, a main air chamber, a connection between the tone producing actions and the main air chamber, a valve governing the said connection, an expression bellows provided with an opening, means controlled by an expression action or actions for evacuating said expression bellows, and an auxiliary expression bellows connected to an expression action and controlling said opening to permit the sudden expansion of the expression bellows on the actuation of the said expression action.

In testimony whereof we have signed our names to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

EDWIN WELTE.
KARL BOCKISCH.

Witnesses as to Edwin Welte:
JULIUS MULLUCK,
LAMBERT E. WALTHER.

Witnesses as to Karl Bockisch:
LUDWIG ZINBAUL,
BENJAMIN F. LIEFELD.
The World Famous Welte

The art of the world's eminent pianists has been preserved through the instrumentality of the world famous Welte.

With the Welte Mignon and Welte Music Rolls you can procure an exact reproduction of the playing of practically all of the most celebrated pianists of the last decade.

And it is a high tribute to American achievement that this great musical triumph should now have passed into exclusive American ownership.

M. WELTE & SONS, Inc.
Studio and Showrooms
SIX SIXTY SEVEN FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK
Automatic music is enchanting for many reasons. Certainly a large part of the fascination comes from the production of music by pedaling, dropping a coin or tripping a switch. I personally enjoy the music and the longer the roll the better; I am not the first to want a long program of music. The Welte-Mignon Corporation staff recognized this desire and successfully marketed the ultimate in automatic music—the Welte Musicale.

The Musicale was an attachment for piano or organ which held 10 music rolls, automatically playing any selected roll at the touch of a finger. The Musicale was designed for ease of operation. Once the changer was loaded with the 10 favorite rolls, the listener need only relax and enjoy uninterrupted music at the touch of a button. The cost of this attachment rendered it too expensive for the average consumer, indeed only the most wealthy customer could afford this level of comfort. Of course, the customer who could afford a residential pipe organ probably had no difficulty including the Musicale in the budget. This is why there are many more surviving Musicale changers for Welte-Philharmonic pipe organs than for Welte-Mignon pianos.

Undoubtedly the source of the name “Multi Control”. The roll changing mechanism was built by the Grand Rapids group but was finished and installed by the Welte-Mignon Corporation.

The Musicale was a free standing device connected to the piano or organ by a wire cable. Since the changer was a separate unit, in some organ installations the device was built into a wall with a small opening to access the rolls for changing. In other installations, very elaborate cases were built to match a customer’s existing furniture. The Musicale was flexible insofar as the original buyer had many options in the changer embodiment.

Our multi control unit, originally sold to Eleanor Boleter of Perryville, Maryland in 1929, is in a lovely mahogany case with carved decorations. In 1939, Ms. Boleter employed W. W. Kimball to move the organ and Musicale to her home in Havre de Grace, Maryland; Kimball placed their own name plates on the multi unit at that time. Visitors to our home who know nothing of what this case houses have admired the woodwork, wondering about the nature of our “china closet”.

The Welte-Mignon with Musicale was available in the line of Welte-Mignon “Original” pianos or as a custom built attachment by the Welte-Mignon Corporation. The Musicale played Purple Seal or Welte-Mignon Licensee rolls with the tempo for each roll controlled by separate tempo knobs. The changer unit selects the desired roll, reads each roll pneumatically then converts the information electrically. The multi unit is attached to the piano by a large cable which operates a series of magnets to convert the information back to pneumatic signals to operate the Welte-Mignon player.

The Welte-Philharmonic organ with Musicale played style V-VI Philharmonic “150” rolls. Like the T-100 (red paper) counterpart, the “150” rolls were played at a single speed and required no adjustment of speed for the multi control unit. The changer units were either self contained

continue...
or built into the structure housing the organ. It is important to note however that while the Musicale was a self contained unit, the Welte-Philharmonic player required two large relay units to complete the player.

The relay units control the register selection and pedal notes. The register relay, like the Aeolian Duo-Art Reproducing Pipe Organ, is needed to actuate the registers as selected by the Welte-Philharmonic rolls. The pedal notes on the Welte-Philharmonic "150" rolls are multiplexed on the rolls. The pedal relay is required to determine if the note is to be played on the pedal, great manual or both. All of this to say that the multi control unit can be connected to other (non-Welte) organs but, in addition to the changer unit, the relays are required. This is often overlooked by collectors today.

The Musicale is an extraordinary device, the epitome of automatic operation. The multi changer enables the listener to enjoy the benefit of long uninterrupted musical programs while blending well with existing decor. The multi unit takes the fine Welte-Mignon piano and Welte-Philharmonic organ to a new level of listening pleasure. Enough Musicale units survive today that, with diligence and persistence, the collector may eventually possess this fascinating machine.

Unfortunately, by April 1931 National Piano Mfg. was in receivership. The Welte-Mignon Corp. had undergone restructuring and was eventually broken up and sold. The fate of the piano division is not clear but the organ division was sold to Donald Tripp and moved from the Bronx to Sound Beach, Connecticut. The new firm, Welte-Tripp Organ Corporation, also failed and was subsequently sold to W. W. Kimball. Richard C. Simonton purchased a resident organ from W. W. Kimball with multi control ca. 1947. The origin of this late changer is unknown since National was in receivership by 1931. Perhaps the changer was old stock or reacquired from an earlier owner.

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US Patents for Welte Musicale

US Pat. No. 1,582,002, John G. Goll and Paul J. Sowada, filed 10. Dec. 1923, granted 20. Apr. 1926, Pneumato-Electric Device, assigned to Welte-Mignon Corporation. (This device converts the pneumatic roll information to electrical signals, used in both Musicale and single Philharmonic players.)

April 20, 1926.

J. G. GOLL ET AL
PNEUMATO ELECTRIC DEVICE
Filed Dec. 10, 1923 2 Sheets-Sheet 1
US Patents for Welte Musicale


March 25, 1930.

C. H. GREEN
MULTIRECORD CONTROLLER
Filed Oct. 13, 1923 1 Sheets-Sheet 1


April 21, 1931.

C. H. GREEN
MULTIRECORD CONTROLLER
Filed Jan. 11, 1926 12 Sheets-Sheet 1

Complete copies of US patents may be obtained for a cost of $3.00 each by writing to the US Department of Commerce, Patent and Trademark Office, Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Box 6, Washington, DC 20231.
Welte-Mignon Musicale in period case with close up view of selector tablet.
Welte-Mignon Musicale closed.

Welte-Mignon Musicale open for roll changing and tempo adjustment.
20114-R Welte-Mignon showing electric to pneumatic converter and cable from the multi control unit on the underside of a grand piano.
April 21, 1931.

C. H. GREEN
MULTI RECORD CONTROLLER
Filed Jan. 11, 1931 12 Sheets-Sheet 5

20121 Rear side of Musicale showing pneumatic to electric converter at top and roll selector on shelf halfway down.
April 21, 1931.

C. H. GREEN

MULTIRECORD CONTROLLER

Filed Jan. 11, 1936 12 Sheets-Sheet 2

20122 Front of Musicale with access to rolls and tempo adjustment.
20123 Front of Musicale with covers in place. Access to rolls and tempo still possible.

20124 Front view offset of Musicale with covers in place and closed. Note the cable on the floor at the rear.

20125 Right side of Musicale with mechanisms exposed.
Three New Arrangements
FOR 20-NOTE ORGANETTES

Rolls have been produced to suit the Aeolian "Celestina" and the Wilcox & White "Symphonia" organettes. Roll production by John Wolff.

PO Box 101, Belgrave VIC 3160, Australia • Web site: home.vicnet.net.au/~wolff/mechmusic/newrolls.htm

Three new arrangements, by AMICA member, Stephen Kent Goodman.

1. **Whistling Rufus.** “Whistling Rufus” is an early rag/cakewalk by Kerry Mills, which was copyrighted in 1899; it was (and still is) one of his most popular compositions.
   
   Roll length 13ft, duration 2 minutes 37 seconds.

2. **Alabama Dream - a ragtime cakewalk.** Composed in 1899 by George Barnard. During his youth Barnard learned to play many different instruments, and later became a bandmaster working in various towns throughout the United States. He had over 400 published works, most of which were composed for orchestra.
   
   Roll length 16ft, duration 3 minutes 14 seconds.

3. **The Belle of Chicago.** Composed by John Philip Sousa in 1892. Sousa composed this march as a salute to the ladies of Chicago. Although Sousa was soundly criticized in the press for this march, with such news quotes as: "Mr. Sousa has made his Chicago belle a strapping kitchen wench”;, it outlived it’s criticism and it became a popular march mostly overseas. The march certainly reflects Sousa's background conducting Offenbach operettas and has a French, dance-like quality to it.

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**PLEASE VISIT THESE SUPPLIERS OF RECURT ROLLS**

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<td><a href="http://www.wiscasset.net/artcraft/pratt.htm">Artist Choice Music Rolls</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:pianola@cross.net">pianola@cross.net</a> Phone: (419) 626-1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wahl:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.leedyrolls.com">Magic Melodies &amp; Keystone</a></td>
<td>Phone: (269) 468-5986 Fax: (269) 468-0019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Deland:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bluesrolls.com">Blues Tone Rolls</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:rdeland@bluesrolls.com">rdeland@bluesrolls.com</a> Phone: (847) 548-6416</td>
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<td><a href="http://members.aol.com/meliorarol/index.htm">Precision Music Rolls</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:davesaul@pacbell.net">davesaul@pacbell.net</a></td>
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<td>Phone: (504) 721-7188</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:meliorarol@aol.com">meliorarol@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.home.earthlink.net/~rollertunes">Rollertunes</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:rollertunes@earthlink.net">rollertunes@earthlink.net</a> Phone: (504) 721-7188</td>
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<td>Larry Norman:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.home.earthlink.net/~rollertunes">Rollertunes</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:rollertunes@earthlink.net">rollertunes@earthlink.net</a> Phone: (504) 721-7188</td>
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Amica Pig Roast

On April the 24th Galen and Linda Bird hosted a Pig Roast for the Heart of America Chapter and guests with about 60 in attendance. This has become a very popular event for the chapter. Galen smoked a whole pig as well as 2 briskets and a turkey. Many of the ladies brought food and snacks. It was a rainy morning but it turned out to be a beautiful day for the party. People started arriving around noon and we snacked and played instruments all afternoon and evening. The Birds have a newly restored 7 ft. Mason Hamlin Ampico which was played for hours with and without the midi. Several people in attendance played the piano including Craig Brougher and Scott McDonald. Scott played the keyboard for Andy Williams for several years and is now a well known jazz pianist in Kansas City. He and Craig entertained us along with some of our outstanding singers in the chapter. We were even treated to an improv duet with Scott and Craig. The Bird’s children’s carousel was a big hit with the children and adults alike. People also spent time in the music room in a separate building listening to the other instruments in the collection.

On Sunday morning a brunch was held at the Bird’s followed by the business meeting. Final preparations were discussed for the Band Organ Rally at Gage Park in Topeka, KS on June 19th. There will also be a meeting in September at the Washburn’s and the Christmas meeting will be at the Tyler’s.
On Saturday May 1, members of the Midwest Chapter met at the entrance to the Cleveland Museum of Art to begin an afternoon in University Circle. Some of us viewed the exhibits at the museum, while others went to see the newly opened Glasshouse at the Cleveland Botanical Garden. We were surrounded by butterflies in a tropical rainforest setting. The Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum of the Western Reserve Historical Society was next, where almost 200 classic cars are displayed, plus our favorite Steinway Duo-Art. We then took a scenic journey through Cleveland neighborhoods including Little Italy, to our eventual destination of Mayfield Heights and dinner at Bucce DiBeppo. Family-style dining included never-ending platters of salad, breads, pasta, lasagna, pizza and multiple desserts.

We could hardly make it to our cars to travel to Chagrin Falls and the beautiful new home of Karl and Carol Theil, who moved from southern Ohio. Karl’s dad was a member of our chapter, and many of his instruments and memorabilia were in evidence here. I tried out the Wilcox and White player organ, purchased by Karl after waiting in line for an estate sale. Next was the 65 note Wheelock Pianola with a unique bird’s eye maple spool box. The roll cabinet was just as unique, as you can see by the photo, the rolls are suspended by their pins and the shelves fold out for easy access. The twin Knabe Ampico A & B pianos sat back to back and were tuned in unison by our guest technician Wanda Dawson. The Marshall and Wendell Ampico and Bush and Lane Welte rounded out the downstairs collection. Karl played the Stroud Duo-Art and showed us the framed collection of Seeburg sales posters and other advertising.

The next morning we traveled back to the Theils where Karl’s mom joined in hosting brunch before our business meeting. We discussed plans for the July gathering in Indianapolis, Indiana, along with a possible trip to Michigan for the fall meeting. Afterwards, we added to our roll collections by checking out the selections in the dining room brought by members for an informal Mart.

We had a wonderful time in northeast Ohio visiting a collection most of us had not seen before, and would like to thank Karl and Carol for planning a great weekend.
Karl Theil explains the latest Ampico selection to Liz and Mike Barnhart.

Mike Stephens, Karl Theil and Wes Neff enjoy a selection on the Theil’s Bush & Lane Welte.

Karl Theil explains the latest Ampico selection to Liz and Mike Barnhart.

Sherri Neff plays a roll on the Chein Pianolodeon.

On Sunday, June 26, the Sierra Nevada Chapter met at the home of our newest, and certainly youngest, member Alex Thompson (age 14) in Stockton, CA. Alex’s pride and joy is his 1918 Style 40 Fotoplayer. The Thompson’s also have a 1915 Style 42 Fotoplayer (under restoration), a 1909 NYC Francis Bacon Kohler and Campbell pumper, and an 1899 6’3” Knabe grand in a beautiful rosewood case.

After a great potluck meal, chapter president John Motto-Ros conducted a business meeting. Our chapter web page was discussed, and we hope to have it up and running soon. Chapter members were encouraged to attend the 2004 convention in Denver. It looks like we will have eight chapter members attending. At the end of the meeting, we viewed an interesting video, furnished by Kent and Margie Williams, on the restoration of a 1799-1800 Tannenburg organ (America’s oldest and largest) in Old Salem, N.C.

Alex was trying to promote a Fotoplayer rope-pulling contest. Kent Williams gave it his best try, and did well. The rest of us chickened out after Alex’s great performance.

Many thanks to Alex and his parents, Phyllis and Ted Thompson, for inviting us to their beautiful home and for supporting Alex’s interest in mechanical musical instruments. Special thanks to Ted for bringing out the 1909 Pierce-Arrow.

Ted Thompson in the Pierce-Arrow

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Spring time in upper New York State and southern Ontario brings the promise of warm and long days, just the right amount of rain, and the planting of our favorite vegetables. Stan Aldridge, host of our May gathering, gave a tour of his recently planted vegetable garden and offered freshly picked rhubarb to fellow SOWNY members. Thanks to Stan and my wife Anne, I have enjoyed both rhubarb muffins and a rhubarb-strawberry pie.

Stan lives in a large 19th Century home in downtown Tonawanda. The post office is beside his home, the town memorial band stand and its tree lined park is two blocks away, and the Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum a mere five minute drive across the historic Erie Barge Canal. Small town America is indeed alive and Norman Rockwell would certainly recognize the thoughtfulness of the local police department who allowed us to park along a street that does not normally permit Saturday parking.

For those who ventured to Niagara Falls for the 1998 AMICA Convention, I will rekindle your memories of our group visit and update the museum. Our recent tour to the expanded display at the Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum certainly demonstrates the interplay between the important role of volunteerism and the trained guidance of museum personnel. To understand a lost technology and a century old ‘way of life’, the museum is indeed busy researching the business of carrousel making, restoration and recreation of various animals, the distribution and sales and payment system, and the impact of carrousels on the towns they were once part of.

We are curious about the working conditions, about the impact of lead paints on the health of the workers and their neighborhood, and about the role of management in controlling the product line and encouraging worker loyalty. Questions from the tour group were thoughtfully answered and peaked our curiosity. There are plenty of examples of the vitality and dedication of this museum staff, from the classes for woodworkers and painters, and the researchers for suppliers of the mechanicals and gears to make this ‘traveling’ carrousel work, to the administrators and efforts to make this a viable economic project.

We are hopeful that the children who visit and play on the miniaturized carousel will also find their favorite animal, be curious and enjoy this amazing piece of Americana.

After our tour and ride on the carousel, we made a short drive to Pane’s Family Restaurant, selected our supper meal from an extensive menu and renewed friendships. Harrold and Muriel Hodgkins, honorary members, recently celebrated their 60th Wedding Celebration—congratulations! John and Janet Johns traveled from Ottawa, Canada. John is rebuilding a Chickering Ampico A. Bruce Bartholomew and Alan Mueller traveled from Rochester, home of the original American Piano Company (Aeolian Co.). Alan convinced the local museum to accession the original plans for the Ampico B.

Stan invited us back to his home to hear his interesting and varied collection of musical instruments. These instruments represent an incredible period of invention, consumer spending and the age of travel. Travelers from all over America and Europe were fascinated by the hills and caves of Kentucky. Cave owners were entrepreneurs and wanted to become rich. Floyd Collins wanted to discover a new cave and thereby become rich and famous. He was to become famous as the first person to have his tragic story reported on coast to coast radio! While searching for a cave
entrance, he slipped and got stuck in a rock crevasse. The lines of tourists grew as the radio reported about his misadventure and eventual death. The musical about Floyd Collins is being presented by the Shaw Festival in Ontario and Stan has an original musical roll from the 1920’s about this story. A melodramatic and long suffering representation from the past lives on the Buffalo manufactured Kurtzman Welte-Mignon. What a moments!
On Saturday May 01, 2004 25 members and guests met in Duncanville, TX for our May meeting.

We started at 12:00 noon at The Golden Corral Restaurant for lunch and at 1:00 caravanned to the Olden Year Music Museum which was about 1/2 mile away.

This museum was started by the DeFord family of Duncanville and has grown since. Rick Wilkins is the curator of the museum and was in Michigan, so Mr. DeFord and his two sons showed us around. It really has to be seen to be believed.

We began with a business meeting which was efficiently conducted by our President Jerry Bacon. Mention was made of the untimely passing of the President of the Pacific Can-Am chapter, Carl Kehret. Our sympathy goes out to them and to Mrs. Kehret who is the co-president of that chapter.

We adjourned and turned over the proceedings to Mr. DeFord who welcomed us and demonstrated everything for our pleasure.

The first thing we saw was a single Mills Violano which came from a restaurant in Dallas and was moved to the Texas Centennial of 1936 and was seen and heard by thousands of people at that great event. Next to the single was a Double Mills which played a snappy 6/8 tune “Barcalona”. Close to the Mills was a fine Seeburg KT which has Piano, Mandolin, Xlophone, Tambourine and Castanets.

Recently purchased from Europe was one of only two known “Ehrlicks Music Disk Playing Organ” which was about 5’ tall with an exquisite inlaid front. It has a rank of flutes in it and played flawlessly.

About 3 different Barrel Organs were demonstrated next. All were in excellent tune and very pleasant to hear.

A large cylinder orchestral music box was next and to it was a rare “Pianolin” with it’s endless roll which played a ragtime piece.

They also have a “Regina” Sublima piano, a Wurlitzer Caliphone from 1928 and a Ruth Band Organ.

All sorts of disk music boxes abound from small to a large three disk Symphonion which was lovely.

In the next portion is a large collection of Phonographs. One, which is memorable, is an English Gramophone with a paper mache' horn which is about 4’ in diameter, the sound of which equals or surpasses the famed Victor Credenza, which most of us are familiar with.

They have a complete collection of Edison cylinder machines from the lowly “Gems” to an “Opera” machine.

A Victor Schoolhouse with a large oak horn was shown by our own Bill Boruff as well as many of the other phonographs.

A rare Scopitone showed us a couple of 1950’s “music videos” which were a hoot and provided much interest with comments about the robust dolls with those huge beehive hairdos of the period.

After much visiting and a closing demonstration by our own Michael Barisonek of a fabulous Aeolian Orchestrelle of 11 sets of reeds, the day ended with a final performance by the Double Mills which played “Moonlight & Roses”.

We are grateful to have been allowed to visit this World Class museum in our midst and thank the DeFords for the excellent hospitality we were afforded.

“The second day of a diet is always easier than the first,” Jackie Gleason once said, because “by the second day, you’re off it.”

~ Jackie Gleason
**FOR SALE**

**CREMONA MODEL J ORCHESTRION**, unrestored, complete and original, with rolls. Don Janisch, 4794 Wildflower Ct., Dousman, WI 53118; 262-965-2627. (4-04)

**STEINWAY PIANOAL VERTIGRAND**, upright player, serial number 140216 (circa 1911), restored, with bench, located in Itchaca, NY, $3,000 or best offer. Call 607-273-7589 evenings. (4-04)

**MARSHALL & WENDELL AMPLICO**, electric player 5’ baby grand, sn#113128, refinished off-white lacquer, new keyboard, re-strung, excellent playing condition. Pump in player requires repair. Asking $7,700, call 201-224-2265. (4-04)

**AMPICO B & A ROLLS**, 100+ regular and 30 small Ampico rolls, $750 for all. Call Carl 440-593-2155 (OH). (3-04)

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**1929 KNABE GRAND AMPICO B**, #108445, restored in 1980’s, plays well, plain cabinet, $12,000. **HIGEL PLAYER PIANO** #122, restored, plays fair, $700. **ANGELUS PUSH-UP PLAYER**, restored, plays well, $200. **CHASE & BAKER PUSH-UP**, restored, plays well, $300. **Transposing Piano** (Geo. Russell, London, Forrest & Son) $89375, not restored, in pieces (work was in progress), make offer. **EDISON DISC PHONOGRAPHER** #0032 SN 1417, plays, nice cabinet, many records, $300. All located near Fortuna, California. Call Linda at (805) 967-7920 or email scrubjay46@hotmail.com for more information. All prices negotiable. (5-04)

**“Rose City Rag” 2003 Convention Rolls** available for $12, shipping included. Contact pegkekhre@tx3.net (4-04)

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