



George W. Stewart

George W. Stewart *Musical Impresario of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition*

JUSTIN KIELTY

WANTED

Experienced manager of varied musical ensembles, gifted negotiator with an abundance of patience and diplomatic skill, international travel experience, and conversant in several languages to hire “an Exposition Orchestra of eighty men and a utility band of forty men for the duration of the Exposition, six or eight of the greatest military bands of Europe and America, including perhaps South America. Many organists, including the best organists of America and the one greatest living organist.”¹

THAT WAS THE MANDATE IN 1913 from the executives of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition to George W. Stewart (1851–1940).

EXPOSITIONS AND MUSIC

“Musical sounds had been an integral part of expositions ever since the Sacred Harmonic Society of London had launched round-the-clock oratorio performances . . . to accompany the Great Exposition of 1851.”² This musical entertainment, an

essential driver for attendance at world fairs in the late 19th and early 20th century, required organizers to budget significant funds. Of the \$5 million budget for the Panama-Pacific Exposition (PPIE) of 1915, \$566,300 was for music, the second-highest expense of the fair. Only the Exposition buildings cost more.³ Finding a qualified individual to organize the musical offerings and manage the implementation of programs fell to Jacob B. Levison,⁴ appointed by Charles C. Moore, PPIE president, as chairman of the committee on music. Levison, vice-president of Fireman’s Fund Insurance Co. and an amateur musician, immediately turned to George W. Stewart, a native of Cambridge, N.Y., a former trombonist with the Boston Symphony, and founder of the Boston Festival Orchestra. Under Stewart’s guidance, music at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition had been considered to have been a great success.⁵ “Through his efforts, practically every

1. George Stewart to Jacob Bertha Levison, January 16, 1914, writer’s collection.

2. Celia Applegate, *The Necessity of Music: Variations on a German Theme* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 101.

3. “Budget for the Exposition Period—February 20 to December 4 adopted at a meeting of the Executive Council of the Finance Committee of January 28, 1915,” Bancroft 85:30.

4. Levison was reluctant to accept the provision and did so only when Moore agreed to allow Levison to act as a committee of one. Other directors, unaware of the arrangement, were always surprised when the committee on music was the only one that always acted unanimously! See footnote 47.

5. Applegate, *The Necessity of Music*, 102.

band of importance in the world was brought to St. Louis, and his success was unquestioned.”⁶ The PPIE organizers believed he would do the same in San Francisco.⁷

Stewart readily accepted the post, but had he known what lay ahead, he might well have avoided what was to become a not-so-happy three-year saga involving an impresario (Stewart), an organ, and organists. The following discussion will focus on Stewart’s relationship with the organ and organists rather than the entire music program.

THE SAGA BEGINS

Jacob Levison, chairman of the committee on music, selected five prominent local organists to oversee the design of the Exposition organ, knowing that, with its final installation in the Exposition Auditorium, it would be played by local organists on most occasions.⁸ Though not an organist himself, George W. Stewart took an active interest in the design and procurement of the organ, beginning in 1913, and, in addition to the five local organists, sought outside advice from Wallace Goodrich, well-known organ design expert, and Everett Truette of Boston, a faculty member of the New England Conservatory, a concert organist, and one of the Founders of the American Guild of Organists. When Stewart sent the organ specification to Truette to ask his opinion on the organ’s design, he admitted, “Naturally, having spent most of my life with orchestras, the organ is a sealed book to me, and an organ specification is as blind a thing to me as would be a Hottentot essay in the original language.”⁹

On July 10, 1913, Stewart wrote Edwin H. Lemare, world renowned British concert organist, “whether you would be at liberty to accept an engagement for three or four months at the Exposition.”¹⁰ Lemare responded that he would be willing to accept an engagement, providing that “the recitals will be given with closed doors to reverent and quiet audiences . . . that you, personally, will superintend every musical event on the same lines as you would adopt at one of your own concerts.” Lemare stated various fees he received for recitals throughout the world before finally stating that a fee of \$5,000,¹¹ for six recitals per week, excluding Sundays. He volunteered to oversee the design and installation of the proposed organ. “I am looked up to as an authority on such

matters, and it occurs to me that it is essential—in the National interests of good organ playing—that your great Exposition should be a leader in all things appertaining to Art. May I express the hope that you do not have another ‘freak’ instrument whose ultimate destination may be a Department Store.”¹² His mention of the “freak” instrument referred to the St. Louis Exposition organ that eventually formed the nucleus of the now-world-famous Wanamaker department store organ in Philadelphia.

Stewart accepted Lemare’s terms for the recitals as well as his offer to oversee the organ design, which he believed would be built by Ernest M. Skinner. He asked Lemare’s opinion of Skinner organs, which Lemare conveyed in a subsequent letter, telling Stewart that Skinner had adopted many of Lemare’s suggestions. “He (Skinner), however, wants close supervision, or he will introduce one or two ‘cranks’ of his own—whereby often to the advantage of his own pocket.” Lemare addressed the possibility that the Exposition’s director of works might choose an Austin organ, which he also believed to be a good instrument. Lemare cautioned against Austin’s “use of their awful stopkeys and patent windchest, . . . their chief talking point and asset, being very cheap to make.”¹³

As soon as Lemare’s 100-recital engagement with the PPIE and his role in the organ’s design became public, fireworks commenced.

The June 1914 editorial in *The Diapason*, cited protests from the American Organ Players Club of Philadelphia,¹⁴ asking why an American was not chosen as official organist. The reasoning: if the Exposition were in England or France, logic would conclude that an American would not be chosen to be the official organist. Stewart responded that there would be no official organist at the Exposition. This declaration changed some months later when Stewart stated that Wallace A. Sabin was the official organist of the Exposition.¹⁵

The Society of American Musicians¹⁶ and the Southern California Chapter of the American Guild of Organists¹⁷ also protested the selection of Lemare as the official organist. The official response to the criticism was that the Exposition was an international affair and it was entirely appropriate that a non-American, especially one so highly regarded, be appointed.

6. “Director of Music for Exposition Appointed,” *San Francisco Chronicle* (March 5, 1913): 20.

7. Ben Macomber, *The Jewel City: Its Planning and Achievement; Its Architecture, Sculpture, Symbolism, and Music; Its Gardens, Palaces and Exhibits* (San Francisco, John H. Williams, 1915). Chapter XIV, “Music at the Exposition”).

8. Humphrey J. Stewart (no relation to G.W. Stewart), Wallace Sabin, Otto Fleissner, J.B. Struble, and Warren D. Allen.

9. George Stewart to Everett E. Truette, December 18, 1913, Bancroft 83:27.

10. George Stewart to Edwin H. Lemare, July 10, 1913, Bancroft 83:24.

11. About \$120,716 in 2018 dollars.

12. Edwin H. Lemare to George Stewart, August 18, 1913, Bancroft 83:24.

13. Ibid. Despite unanimous agreement by the organ committee to choose a Skinner organ, director of works Connick and his committee gave the contract to Austin. Perhaps the skill of the local Austin representative, Fletcher Tilton, or the works director’s concern that Skinner was frequently late, contributed to the decision.

14. Editorial, *The Diapason* (June 1, 1914): 6.

15. Walter Anthony, “Great Organ to Sing Hallelujah,” *San Francisco Chronicle* (February 14, 1915): 16.

16. Theodore Hardee to J.B. Levison, June 8, 1914, Bancroft 85:22.

17. Theodore Hardee to W.F. Skeele, Dean of the Society of American Musicians, June 16, 1914, Bancroft 85:22.

On June 2, 1914, Stewart set sail for Europe on the Hamburg-American steamer *Cincinnati* to “recruit organizations and individuals of ‘reputation and importance’ to bring luster to the exposition . . . as a means not only of entertainment but as a means of cultural development and as an intellectual factor in the evolution of the race.”¹⁸

The issue of Europeanization of an American exposition was hotly debated. If the Panama-Pacific Exposition were a celebration of the opening of the Panama Canal and the technological advances made in America (one could point out the electrification of the organ as well as the exterior illumination of fair buildings), why the need to bring European musicians, playing mostly German repertoire of the 18th and 19th century to this fair? Some suggested that the men who headed the PPIE were mostly wealthy, self-made, upper-class individuals who had been taught that the very best products came from Europe and who lived in homes filled with the best that Europe had to offer. Many European countries, tired of European fairs, were not particularly interested in sending their wares to the United States. The outbreak of World War would make sending valuable cargo across the Atlantic a fool’s errand. While it was true that many prominent Americans were students of noted European organists, there were good reasons to select an American organist, such as Clarence Eddy, in place of Lemare.¹⁹

By early July 1914, Lemare, well aware of the protests against him, made light of it in a letter to Stewart.²⁰ In reply, Stewart stated his regret that the “billious [*sic*] attacks of these disgruntled Chicago kickers should come to your notice.” Stewart suggested that Lemare ignore the attacks as they were really against his selection of Lemare, not Lemare personally.²¹

Writing to the *Musical Times* of London on June 18, 1914, and quoted in its entirety in the August issue of *The Diapason*, Stewart cited the controversy reported in the British press, denied that there would be an official organist of the Exposition, and stated that there would be 287²² recitals, 100 by Lemare, 100 by Californians, and 87 by other American organists. He went on, “we hope to show our appreciation of the high standard to which the art of organ playing has attained in England. His [Lemare’s] reputation throughout America is so firmly established as to make certain that the Lemare organ recitals will be among the most artistic and interesting features of the Exposition.” The *Diapason* article continued its own response to the affair countering Stewart, “Nay, more, he shows also his appreciation of the high standard attained in

America, by giving one Englishman as much representation as all the American organists outside the state of California put together. Rather plain, isn’t it? Yet the Panama-Pacific fair is to be the exemplification of American progress and achievement—except, of course, as to organ music.”²³

Stewart did not respond and—he did not forget.

A second concern by those opposed to Lemare’s hand in the organ’s design appeared in an editorial in the *Musical Courier*,

The real objection to E.H. Lemare should not be in the score of his nationality, but is justified for reasons more vital. His style of performance is such that the ordinary build of organ does not suit his idiosyncrasies and he usually has the instruments reconstructed for his peculiar needs. The Austin Organ Company has been commissioned to make a special organ for the Exposition, and at its close the instrument is to be retained by San Francisco as a permanent municipal belonging. From reliable sources, the *Musical Courier* learns that E.H. Lemare has succeeded in having the Austin firm build the console of the new organ in the manner best suited to his requirements. As the Lemare constructive changes are extremely radical and make it inordinately difficult for any other players to use the same organ employed by him, his influence in the matter of the Austin construction appears to be a very serious question. When Lemare was the municipal organist of Pittsburgh he had the console rebuilt according to his wish. Visiting organists always had trouble with the instrument. As soon as Lemare’s successor was installed, the latter had the Pittsburgh console ripped out and another substituted, which answered to average needs.²⁴

The objections to the “Lemare” design centered around several issues: (1) the lack of a Crescendo Pedal, (2) straight keyboards (not slanting),²⁵ (3) sufficiently wide spacing of keys (horizontally, not vertically), (4) drawknobs arranged in rows of two, including couplers, and (5) the Pedal division drawknobs on the right side of the console instead of the American left-side practice, and the Choir division stops on the left.²⁶

Ernest M. Skinner, whose firm lost the contract to Austin, wrote to George W. Stewart in December 1914, referring to “the tommy-rot going on in the newspapers regarding Lemare’s engagement. . . . I want to say a word about having a crescendo pedal in a large organ.”

He acknowledged that Lemare did not approve of them, but stated that most American organists find the Crescendo

18. Applegate, *The Necessity of Music*, 104; Ben Macomber, op.cit.

19. Applegate, *The Necessity of Music*, 104–113, discusses this aspect in detail.

20. Edwin Lemare to George Stewart, July 10, 1914, Bancroft 83:23.

21. George Stewart to Edwin Lemare, July 15, 1914, Bancroft 83:23.

22. The actual number ended being 367. Lemare played 16 concerts beyond his 100th.

23. Editorial, *The Diapason* (August 1914): 6.

24. Editorial, “The Lemare Incident,” *Musical Courier* (August 5, 1914).

25. Lemare claimed that slanting keyboards forced the player’s wrists and fingers to be altered for every keyboard.

26. Edwin H. Lemare to George W. Stewart, February 22, 1914, Bancroft 83:27.

Pedal indispensable. He supported Lemare and his ideas, “but I do not think it right that his disapproval of a Crescendo Pedal should deprive every other visiting organist of this most useful device.”²⁷ Skinner’s letter of concern was forwarded to the Exposition director of works, Harris Connick, who directed Austin to install a Crescendo Pedal. The pedal was installed, though Lemare had it positioned, untraditionally, at the very far right of the pedalboard. The Pedal division stops remained on the right side of the console.²⁸

OFF TO EUROPE TO ENGAGE ARTISTS

When the protests became public, both Stewart and Lemare were in Europe. Stewart, in Paris, wrote Levison that he hoped to set an agreement with Camille Saint-Saëns to conduct his works for three concerts, to include his Third Symphony (“Organ”), and to compose an official march for the Exposition, ceding the publication rights to the Exposition authority. Stewart assured Levison that he would attempt to reach the agreement for less than \$10,000.²⁹ Stewart informed him that he had already been to Rome on business and was headed to Munich, Vienna, and Warsaw before heading back to London from where he would sail to the United States on September 11.³⁰ War broke out on July 28 and Stewart was anxious to return home.

Lemare, in an undated letter written before Stewart and his family returned to the United States, mentions that he has heard through a mutual acquaintance that Stewart is safely in Holland and wishes to discuss with him “the attitude with regard to my ‘Frisco’ engagement, taken what seems to be (by) that blackmailing paper, *The New York Musical Courier*.” He asks Stewart to check the August 5 and September 2 issues. “We ought not to let this pass unnoticed.” Further on in the letter, he remarks, “they have allowed themselves to be bought over by a certain section of (as they say in the USA) ‘bum’ organists, so that they can aim their grievances against you for having engaged me.” Lemare laments that the “lies” that critics are circulating about him “will do me untold harm amongst committees, etc. who are not conversant with the details of organ construction.” Lemare refers to the comments in the press that any console designed by him will not suit any other organist and “that only I alone can play them is one of the grossest libels ever uttered.” He urges Stewart and his committee to “go for them at once.”³¹

27. Ernest M. Skinner to George W. Stewart, December 9, 1914, Bancroft 83:27.

28. There was a story that when the organ was moved to Exposition Auditorium, Lemare had the Crescendo Pedal nailed down so it could not be used. This writer has not been able to verify.

29. Contract of \$7,500. The work composed for the occasion was *Hail, California*.

30. George Stewart to J.B. Levison, June 26, 1914, Bancroft 83:27.

31. Edwin H. Lemare to George W. Stewart, undated, Bancroft 83:27.

Safely back in the United States, George Stewart needed to engage organists for the 287 recitals planned for Festival Hall, in addition to the many other musical events that were part of his responsibility. Beginning as early as 1913, he received inquiries from organists interested in performing. He suggested that they write him at a later date. Now, in November 1914, Stewart personally invited a number of prominent organists whom he knew by reputation. Having agreed with Lemare that June, July, and August would feature daily recitals by Lemare at noon, Stewart planned that all the other organists engaged would be scheduled for the months surrounding Lemare.

REVENGE IS SWEET

In a letter to Levison, Stewart hinted at his intention to get even for the bad press when he wrote, “I think the organ trust has weakened. I think I have the matter well in hand now, and that I shall be able to get all of the organists we want, and the best ones, at the low prices I had in the beginning. It is quite a long story, and I shall not attempt to tell you about it now, but it will be of great interest to you to know that we shall be able to give the organ recitals within the limit of our first estimates.”³²

Invariably, whether this correspondence was initiated by Stewart or by the player, Stewart asked the artist to “state your lowest terms for playing, you to pay your own expenses.” It was in this “bait and switch” in which Stewart expressed his hostility to the organ community for the negative press he had endured. No matter what they stated for terms, he already knew what he would pay but seemed to enjoy the ensuing passive-aggressive correspondence. Without a single exception, in the hundreds of letters in his correspondence, he paid organists from the East Coast \$50³³ per recital, and offered them as many as six recitals played in close proximity to each other to minimize the artist’s travel and lodging expenses. Organists from the Midwest were paid the same rate, but played only three recitals. Those players on the West Coast received only \$25 per recital, but had additional opportunities as their proximity to San Francisco allowed them to substitute on short notice.

Often, artists quoted fees higher than Stewart intended to pay and he seemed to enjoy informing them that they could take his offer or not play. When agreement was reached, Stewart sent the artist four contracts to be signed and returned to exposition management; a single signed copy was returned to the artist. Each artist was required to submit programs and analytical notes in quadruplicate one month before engagement.

In hundreds of pages of correspondence, one letter, in particular, clearly documents Stewart’s attitude toward those who criticized him:

32. George W. Stewart to J.B. Levison, November 12, 1914, Bancroft 83:24.

33. In 2018 dollars, about \$1,195.



Festival Hall

My dear Dr. Peters,

I have been intending for a very long time to write you and ask you whether you would like to come to the Exposition for a few recitals. The difficulty in the way is this. A number of different organists' clubs, guilds, etc. found much pleasure during my absence in Europe, from June 1st to October 1st, 1914, in using me as a football. I have no doubt you saw some of the passionate articles that appeared in which I was soundly berated, and in which my record at St. Louis was also hammered hard.

It seems to me on my return that I was perfectly justified in fighting some of these people with their own weapons which however, I did not do, preferring after all to preserve a silence, whether dignified or not, I will not say. What I did do was proceed to make terms as favorable as possible for the Exposition and by a course of watchful waiting, much as has been applied with success by much bigger men than I to much bigger projects than an exposition, to allow the gentlemen organists to become anxious about being invited to the Exposition. The result was greater than I could have anticipated. They were all ready to come and finally at almost any old figure that could be mentioned. In doing this, we have established a price which barely pays their expenses out and back. For instance, the best of them come from New York for five recitals for \$250, they paying all their own expenses. Having established this price, of course I cannot exceed it. For you to come out for two or three recitals at \$50 per recital would seem ridiculously small unless you happen to be in a holiday mood and would like to take a little outing and come out here to see the most wonderful and magnificent of all expositions.

Think it over and let me hear from you at your very earliest convenience as the dates are almost all taken. Lemare is going to be here June, July and August, so should you wish to come, it would have to be in either March,



The 3,782-seat auditorium of Festival Hall with the 121-rank Austin organ, Op. 500, on the stage.

April, or May, sometime after the middle of September or October or November.³⁴

Peters responded that it was "out of the question for me to make the trip, sorry to say, for I should enjoy so much seeing you in the midst of your huge successes," as well as playing the organ at the Exposition. "I have seen the utter rot which has been written about the Exposition recitals and have been much amused to think how perfectly able to take care of yourself . . . positively funny to see how you would get ahead of these people who were stirring things up."³⁵

Stewart responded, urging Peters to come by telling him that he would arrange for him to play during the summer months. He stated that the recitals were going to be a great success and that eastern organists would play during Lemare's engagement by having two recitals a day, Lemare to play at noon and a second recital at four o'clock. He asked Peters to think it over, "for I should be delighted to see you. I should ask you to come to my apartment and live with me just as in St. Louis. You should find practically the same equipment, including Seijeiro, the Japanese, whom you will remember."³⁶

Stewart knew many artists wanted to play the new 121-rank instrument and would probably play for nothing given the publicity and résumé credit. Working around Lemare's June-through-August recital times came at a disadvantage to the numerous college and conservatory artists because of the school-year calendar. When Lemare had to postpone his arrival until August 20, Stewart wrote the many players already assigned performance dates to ask them to change. That, of course, meant new contracts had to be issued and the correspondence became a nightmare.

34. George W. Stewart to R.H. Peters, January 13, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

35. Peters to Stewart, February 10, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

36. Stewart to Peters, February 15, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

Adding to the complication of Lemare's delay and the necessity to re-schedule many recitals, on April 15, 1915, Stewart alerted contracted musicians with dates in May that for two full weeks Festival Hall would be closed to build additional seating and a stage for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Fourteen recitals had to be rescheduled or canceled. Those seeking permission to play were told that only previously-scheduled recitals were being honored and that the popularity of the organ recitals did not match his expectations. From late May through late June, Stewart complained about recital attendance and only honored commitments already made, though he held out hope that interest in the recitals would improve.

THE BATTLE OF EGOS

If Stewart's difficulty with the negative publicity surrounding Lemare's engagement were not enough, some organists not invited to participate provided additional angst. Some of the exchanges are humorous, some bitter, some sad.

For example, Albert Riemenschneider (1878–1950), organist of Baldwin-Wallace College, in Berea, Ohio, wrote on March 28, 1915, that he was willing to play three recitals for \$225, and \$50 for each additional recital. Stewart responded that all recitals were booked but, if a second daily recital were added in June, it might be possible. Riemenschneider wrote that the list of organists he has seen would



John J. McClellan at the console of the organ of the Mormon Tabernacle

not be able to address all the finer points of an Austin organ. He stated that his offer was still open. When Stewart wrote that he would not pay what he wanted, Riemenschneider responded that his price was fair and that to accept less would damage his self-respect. He noted that, since Lemare had been detained, Stewart might want to reconsider. Stewart closed the discussion, "since many of our finest organists are playing for lower than what you are offering, there is no need for further correspondence. I would not like to cause you to lose your self-respect."³⁷

Less humorous and more vexing was a series of 38 letters to Stewart about the engagement of John J. McClellan (1874–1925), organist of the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. Stewart's only concern about McClellan was the amount of compensation. In the course of the correspondence, McClellan's concert manager; Gerrit Fort, head of Union Pacific Railroad; Senator Reed Smoot, and Governor William Spry of Utah; Basil Austin of the organ company; Jacob Levison, chairman of the committee on music; and Charles Moore, president of the PPIE, all demanded that McClellan have a place on the program. George Stewart agreed to McClellan's participation as long as he was not required to pay him more than the other participants. Stewart had McClellan play five recitals to the satisfaction of both men.



Albert Riemenschneider

37. George Stewart to Albert Riemenschneider, July 23, 1915, Bancroft 83:19.



William C. Carl

The case of William C. Carl (1865–1936), director of the Guilman Organ School in New York, demonstrates clearly that when George Stewart came to a firm decision, he would not be swayed, even under great political pressure.

Carl, wrote Stewart in June 1914 of his desire to play at the PPIE in July or August 1915. As Stewart was out of the country, Stewart's secretary responded that Carl's letter would be placed in the file and would be considered when Stewart returned on October 1. With no word from Stewart, Carl wrote again on February 1, 1915, expressing hope that he would hear from Stewart. On February 17, Stewart finally wrote Carl, "Referring to your letter of February 1st, I beg to say that the 287 recitals at the Exposition have practically all been booked and I really cannot see an opportunity to invite you to come."³⁸

On March 11, 1915, Carl's organ student Philip Berolzheimer, treasurer of the Eagle Pencil Company, New York, wrote Stewart, asking the reasons Carl was not engaged to play at the Exposition, declaring that "having worked considerably for the establishment of the Fair in that city, and several of my friends, have contributed large amounts for that purpose," was interested in having Carl play. He noted that Carl wrote Stewart in 1914, was told that his application would be considered, and then was not invited. Berolzheimer suggested that it may simply have been a clerical error and that Stew-

art could rectify it, giving Stewart a face-saving out. Leaving nothing to chance, Berolzheimer sent a letter to Congressman Daniel J. Riordan to intercede, claiming that Carl's denial might be caused by an advertising agency from whom Carl had withdrawn his patronage. Berolzheimer wrote:

From what I know of the California people, I am sure that they do not wish such unjust discrimination shown, and I am sure that if you will lay this matter before one of your colleagues there that they can fix this matter up, either with Mr. George W. Stewart, direct, or still better, through one of the Directors of the Fair. I would not trouble you about a small matter like this if it concerned me personally, but as I am interested in my friend, and do not wish him thrown down by a Boston Impresario, who thinks he has an easy job spending the money of others to further his own purposes, I thought that you could help me by writing one of your friends there.³⁹

Another director of Eagle Pencil, "Leo," wrote Ike Goldman, Exposition board member, asking intercession in the matter, citing, "Mr. Stewart engaged several hundred organists to play at the Fair, most of whom are absolutely unknown, whereas Dr. Carl, who is known as one of the finest organists in the country . . . and I have reason to believe there is some discrimination against him, for some reason which I am not aware of. . . . I trust this matter will not give you too much trouble . . . as I know you are intimately acquainted with the right people."⁴⁰

The pressure on Stewart to engage Carl ramped up with a letter from Congressman Dan Riordan to ask director of works, Harris D.S. Connick, to use his influence with Stewart. The Honorable Julius Kahn of the House of Representatives chimed in with a "personal" letter to Levison supporting the request of Dan Riordan, reminding him that Riordan "voted for San Francisco as the Exposition City and helped get us appropriations for the Government exhibit and Government buildings, etc., etc."⁴¹

In responding to Connick, Stewart complained, "I beg to say that I have had considerable correspondence on this subject as it appears Dr. Carl is determined to play at all hazards. I do not consider Dr. Carl to be a great organist in any sense of the word, and I can see no reason why he is entitled to more consideration than many other organists of real or superior ability whom we have not been able to engage."⁴² In written response to Congressman Julius Kahn, Stewart is blunt: "To be

39. Philip Berolzheimer to Honorable Daniel J. Riordan, March 19, 1915, Bancroft 83:5.

40. Letter to Ike Goldman from "Leo" at Eagle Pencil Company, March 22, 1915, Bancroft 83:5.

41. Julius Kahn to J.B. Levison, April 1, 1915, Bancroft 83:5.

42. George W. Stewart to H.D.H. Connick, April 7, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

38. George Stewart to William C. Carl, February 17, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

perfectly frank, we have considered the engagement of Mr.⁴³ William C. Carl as an organist, but his peculiar characteristics as indicated in the letter written by his sponsor to Congressman Riordan is exactly why we decided to have nothing to do with him. He has already sent several San Francisco people to me and seems now to have entered upon a campaign of abuse, with which I am sure you are not in sympathy.”⁴⁴

Berolzheimer was not a man to give in easily. Upon his arrival in the city, he wrote to Levison that, “I promise to find out for you after my return home end of September, who was at the bottom of this matter. In accordance with your kind invitation, I shall call upon you next Thursday at 2:30 P.M. and lay before you some other matters which may be of interest to you in connection with this matter.”⁴⁵ The correspondence ended and Carl did not play at the Exposition.⁴⁶

A GOOD FRIENDSHIP IN JEOPARDY

Humphrey J. Stewart (no relation to George W. Stewart) headed the committee of five local organists who designed the organ. In a letter marked “Personal,” he informed George Stewart that he “heard that the contract has just been awarded to Austin. The final decision was left to the exposition authorities so the advisory committee had nothing to do with it for which I am glad. Kindly state in any information published that the instrument will be built according to a design that included members of the California Chapter of the AGO. I spoke with Levison regarding the official organist and he will take it up with you when you return in April. I hope you will keep me in mind.”⁴⁷

In April, George Stewart informed Humphrey Stewart that full credit for the organ will be given to the committee and the Northern California AGO Chapter. “We have engaged Lemare for 100 recitals. We will not have an official organist.”⁴⁸

It is reasonable to believe that George Stewart was embarrassed when, months later, he wrote Levison, acknowledging that Humphrey had taken the official organist post in San Diego as of January 1, 1915,

Referring to your letter of October 28, relative to the change in base of my namesake, Dr. H.J. Stewart, that is indeed interesting news. I sincerely hope his duties at San Diego will not be such as to preclude the possibility of

some organ recitals at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.

Dr. Stewart gave so liberally with his time with the committee in the drawing of the organ specifications, and was so interested in everything concerning the building of the organ, that I am sure we would all feel greatly disappointed if we could not have him for a number of recitals.

Should you happen to see him before he leaves for San Diego, you must try to get the promise from him that he will come for five or six recitals.⁴⁹

While letters were exchanged between the two Stewarts, confusion of dates as well as confusion of remuneration for recitals created tension. Humphrey hoped to play five or six recitals in April 1915, but delays in confirming the dates caused George to assign others. In the end, Humphrey was told he could play three recitals for \$25 each. He expected to get at least \$100, which was denied. Humphrey Stewart wrote his namesake, “Pardon me if I say that artists cannot be bought and sold like canned goods—one can just as good as another.”⁵⁰ He suggested dropping the discussion and that he would be at the fair between July 10 and 24. Humphrey Stewart never played at the PPIE.

A VOTE FOR WOMEN

The Diapason published an article, “Women Not Wanted at Frisco Fair Organ: Barrier against Fair Sex.” The editorial complained that Chicago organist, Katherine Howard Ward, one of two organists of the Sunday Evening Club, a Chicago choral society, had been told by Gordon Erickson, director of the choir, that “musical authorities at San Francisco had notified him that they did not care to have a woman play the organ.” The article stated Mrs. Ward’s qualifications as a successor to Clarence Dickinson as accompanist for the choral group and the successor to Peter Lutkin as organist of the First Methodist Church in Evanston, Ill.⁵¹ The choir performed at the exposition accompanied by Edgar Nelson.⁵²

In the August issue of *The Diapason*, an anonymous correspondent carried on the debate of women organists at the fair:

Editor of The Diapason. — Dear Sir: In a recent issue of your very interesting journal, I read with much amusement and some indignation of the action of the committee in re women organists at the Panama exposition.

43. Was Stewart’s use of “Mr.” instead of “Dr.” deliberate or an oversight?

44. George W. Stewart to Honorable Julius Kahn, April 7, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

45. Phillip Berolzheimer to J.B. Levison, July 18, 1915, Bancroft 83:27.

46. In the course of many letters on this matter, Berolzheimer offers \$1,000 for “experts” to examine Carl’s capability. He is not taken up on the offer.

47. Humphrey J. Stewart, to George W. Stewart, February 17, 1914, Bancroft 83:19.

48. George W. Stewart to Humphrey J. Stewart, April 17, 1914, Bancroft 83:19.

49. George W. Stewart to J.B. Levison, November 2, 1914, Bancroft 83:27.

50. Humphrey J. Stewart to George W. Stewart, June 24, 1915, Bancroft 83:19.

51. Editorial, “Women Not Wanted at Frisco Fair Organ,” *The Diapason* (July 1915): 2.

52. This appears to be a false charge as Annette Stoddard of Portland is under contract signed February 2, 1915, to play March 11, 1915. Josephine Crew Aylwin was under contract approved on April 16, 1915, to play on July 8, 1915.

If the other departments of the great fair are managed as this one, I have grave doubts of its success and usefulness. Is it possible that the “virile West” has to be taught by the “effete East” that the woman organist has arrived to stay?

May I suggest to the exposition committee that the modern organ actions are as light and easy as the most delicate piano action, so that the “brute strength” of the man is no longer needed at the keys or pedals? Also that a woman’s feet, being much smaller, lighter shod, and less clumsy, make accurate and rapid pedalling much easier. Also that the short, light skirts now worn by women are much less cumbersome and in the way than the gowns worn by men in Episcopal and many other churches. Further, that there is no more sense or reason for barring women from the wonderfully interesting and inspiring vocation or avocation opened to them by the modern electric organ than to say that Carreño, Zeisler, or Goodson cannot play the piano!

I’ll not speak of the lack of good judgment and courtesy shown by this same committee in catering to the English in selecting organists; they have heard from many in this matter.

No, I am not an organist nor an advocate of woman suffrage (though we men may as well make up our minds that this is coming whenever the dear creatures stop fighting among themselves), but just a music-loving layman who believes in FAIR PLAY.⁵³

PPIE BY THE NUMBERS

According to the final financial report, prepared by Frank L. Darrell, as of December 31, 1919, the music department budget was \$623,800. With revenues factored in, the total expenditure was \$462,058.⁵⁴

One may hope that Darrell’s financial prowess was significantly better than the figures he provided for organ recitals. He listed 48 organists participating, instead of the 50 that played. He omitted Bruce Gordon Kingsley, who played 33 recitals. He listed Clarence Eddy for 70 recitals when he actually played 30, Sabin with 25 when he played only 11, Wal-drop with 14 when he played 10, Lemare with 121 when he played 116. There were 23 players whose recitals were incorrectly numbered.

If we can believe his attendance numbers for organ recitals, 301,709 attendees for his figure of 406 recitals. The actual number of recitals was 367. A total of 2,829 pieces were played

during the course of the 367 recitals. A total of \$30,789.70 was generated by the organ recitals.

Most favored composers represented by the many artists were Richard Wagner (211), J.S. Bach (192), Edwin H. Lemare (164), Alexandre Guilmant (137), Felix Mendelssohn (84), and Charles-Marie Widor (64). A total of 393 different composers were presented by the 50 artists.

THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

As J.B. Levison was to write 18 years later, “The trials of one in charge of music at a great exposition are almost unlimited, and the demands on the department, criticisms of the performances, suggestions by others in authority, complications with artists and musicians, are endless.”⁵⁵

When the Panama-Pacific International Exposition concluded on December 4, 1915,

A carnival atmosphere pervaded as though participants were trying to condense the entire Exposition into a single day. . . . Edwin Lemare gave a triumphant concluding concert in Festival Hall, . . . the Exposition Chorus sang (Handel’s) “Hallelujah,” . . . the greatest display of fireworks ever seen in the west, . . . and at midnight President Moore took the stage for a final proclamation, “This is the end of a perfect day, and the beginning of an unforgettable memory,” . . . he touched a button dimming the illuminations. As the lights slowly faded, a single beam remained focused on Adolph Weinman’s graceful statue Descending Night.⁵⁶

Alfred Metzger, editor of the *Pacific Coast Musical Review*, wrote, “Finally, music has been given more attention than it has at any previous exposition, and we want to give George W. Stewart credit for his share of it. . . . When the history of the Exposition will be written, music will be found to have its place. Those who find fault with the music department, have either never followed the program closely, or cannot believe that someone else is able to do something worthy.”⁵⁷

George W. Stewart returned to Boston at the close of the PPIE, at age 64, and continued musical activities until he retired due to illness in 1934. He died at his home in Brighton, Mass., at the age of 89.⁵⁸

53. Letter to editor, “Champions Fair Organists,” *The Diapason* (August 1915): 8

54. Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company, “Final Financial Report,” March 22, 1910 to December 31, 1919, prepared by Frank L. Darrell, acting auditor under the direction of Lester Herrick & Herrick, General Auditors, writer’s collection.

55. J.B. Levison, *Memories for My Family*, (San Francisco: John Henry Nash, 1933), 190.

56. Laura Ackley, *San Francisco’s Jewel City: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Heyday, Berkeley, 2015), 344–45.

57. Alfred Metzger, “George W. Stewart, Director of Music of Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Honors Musical Review With Enthusiastic Endorsement of its Exposition Number” (November 13, 1915).

58. “George W. Stewart, Trombonist with the Original Boston Symphony Orchestra Dies,” *New York Times* (January 25, 1940): 21.