

Candidate Warren G. Harding, Once a Village Bandsman, Tells "Musical America" He Wants Federal Aid For Music

"I Am in Favor of Placing the Government Squarely Behind the Nation-Wide Effort to Bring Music Into Its Own," Declares Republican Presidential Nominee—Favors National Conservatory with Branches Throughout Country and Wants Scope of Musical Instruction Widely Expanded in Public Schools—How the Senator Began His Career As a Musician in Marion, Ohio

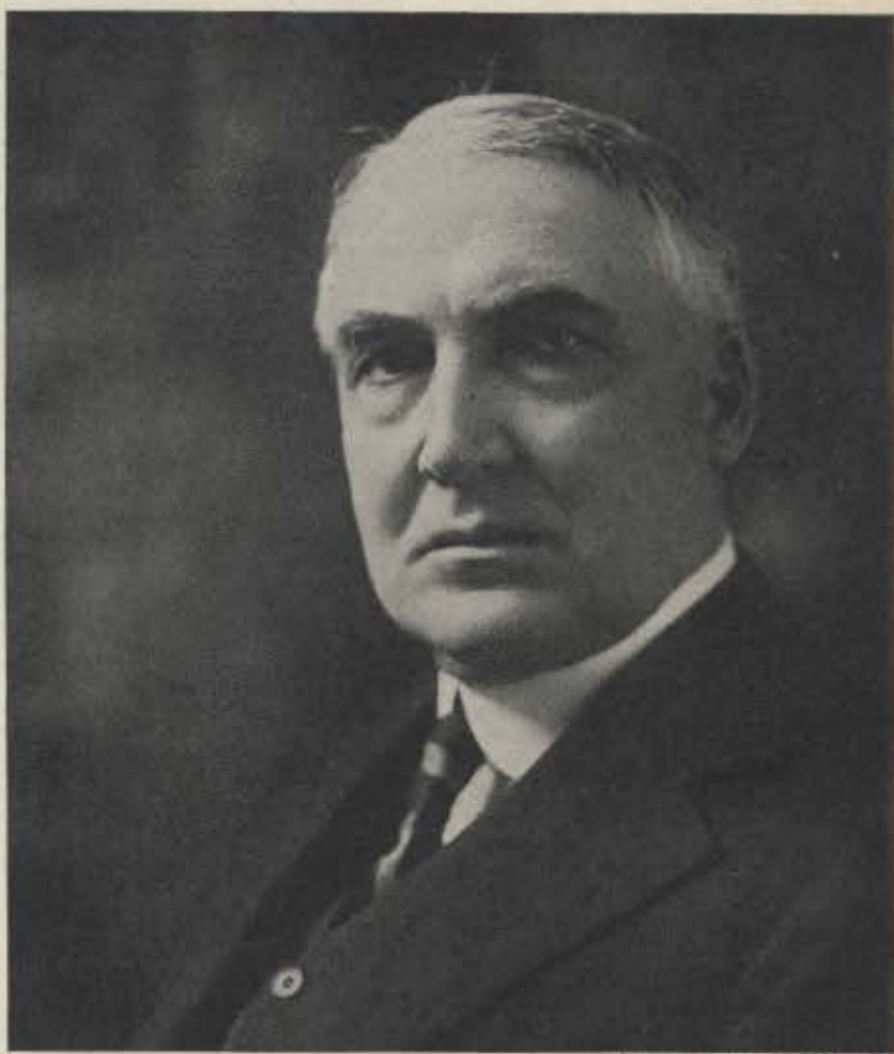


Photo by David B. Edmonston

Senator Warren G. Harding, Republican Candidate for the Presidency, Who Began His Professional Career Playing the Alto Horn in a Marion, Ohio, Band

By ALFRED T. MARKS
 WASHINGTON, D. C., June 16.—Senator Warren G. Harding, the Republican nominee for the presidency, would probably have become a politician even if he had not performed on that alto horn in the Marion, Ohio, Silver Cornet Band—but that's what really put him in politics. The Senator says so himself. Senator Harding, musician and lover of music, is a big and impressive personality—a man of genial presence and magnetic manner. If one word were to be used in describing him, that word would be "force." He is approachable and thoroughly democratic; direct, deliberate and incisive in speech, never hesitating for a word and using the right word always, whether in heated debate on the floor of the Senate or as the subjective end of an interview with a fellow-newspaperman.

These are the impressions absorbed by the MUSICAL AMERICA representative as he talked with Senator Harding in his office on the first floor of the big Senate office building in Washington.

Few men in public life to-day are as well informed in a musical way as is Senator Harding. It is a far cry from playing the alto horn in the village band to listening to grand opera in Rome, Paris and Berlin, but Senator Harding's love for music which manifested itself in the first has not ended in the last.

Senator Harding is fond of opera and good music, and is a patron and devotee of musical enterprises and activities in both his home city of Marion and in the national capital, and it may be said in passing that he knows good music when he hears it.

Favors National Conservatories

Nor is Senator Harding's interest in music entirely confined to the enjoyment he derives in listening to it. He is in favor of what may be termed the "nationalizing" of music, to be brought about by the establishment by the government of a National Conservatory of Music, and such branches as may be found necessary to provide the opportunity for a musical education in those sections of the country more or less remote from the central institution.

"Whether this government-instituted and government-supervised enterprise will be best carried on through the enactment of the Fletcher Bill or some other measure," said Senator Harding, "I am not prepared at this moment to say. But I am in favor of placing the government squarely behind the nation-wide effort to bring music into its own and to establish a definite and permanent place for it in our national activities."

"How this can best be done so that the object desired can be achieved in the large way in which we must do this is but a matter of detail, and I do not hesitate to say is to a considerable extent in the hands of the musical people of the country themselves."

Favors School Music

"I have always favored the teaching of music, both vocal and instrumental, in our schools, and I shall ever feel that these studies should have an important and essential place in the educational curriculum of our institutions of learning from the lowest to the highest."

"I do not feel free to say that our present Bureau of Education should be broadened in scope and expanded into a department of education, to embrace music teaching and supervision, with a Cabinet official at its head. As a matter of fact, I have not given the subject sufficient consideration to have reached an opinion. I see no insurmountable obstacle in the way of such expansion, how-

ever, and can appreciate the advantages it would have over the present plan.

"Generally speaking, I am with the musical people and I am for them; I know music in an unpretentious way and I love it; we cannot have too much music; we need it—the world needs it—probably more than ever before, and I am the friend of every effort to give it its rightful place in our national life."

Senator Harding says that many persons in his home town remember the days when he marched with the village band, at seventeen years of age, proudly tooting on the alto horn, and earning the first few dollars which started the way to the Harding fortune of to-day. It's a joke now, he says, but it was far from a joke then. He considered it serious business, and the people of the town thought it was even worse than that. In fact, young Harding made an earnest endeavor to become a great musician right there. His alto horn could be heard long after 10 p. m., when the villagers wanted to go to sleep, and it would be the town alarm clock in the morning. He "blew awful hard," the old folks say, and it is said that the leader of the aggregation called him aside one day and asked him if he could not "tone it down" some, as the persecutor of the bass drum had complained that he could not be heard at all.

The first political meeting Harding attended was as a member of the band, and from that moment he was "in politics." His natural bent is politics—but he got his introduction via the band route.

In the Harding home at Wyoming Avenue, in the northwest suburbs of the national capital, there is one of the handsomest appointed music rooms to be found in any Washington home.

Mrs. Harding, herself a musician and a graduate of the Cincinnati Conserva-

tory of Music, put in seven hours a day for over three years, just prior to her marriage, in practising on the piano. She is as fond of music as is Senator Harding.

Upon the return of Senator Harding from the Chicago convention he found

awaiting him in Washington a telegram from his long-time friend, John Philip Sousa, the well-known band leader, which read:

"Bless your musical soul! May God's harmonies be with you forever."

GREAT MAHLER FEST STIRS ALL HOLLAND

Tremendous Enthusiasm Marks Big Celebration—Homage to Willem Mengelberg

AMSTERDAM, Holland, June 5.—The Mahler Festival, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth jubilee as conductor of the Concertgebouw-orchestra of Amsterdam of Willem Mengelberg, was a great success. Such enthusiasm has never before been heard in a Dutch concert-hall, and on the last evening it seemed as if the applause would never end. Mengelberg was given many presents and the document of the foundation of a Mengelberg-fund that already possesses more than 100,000 guilders. In Amsterdam and Utrecht streets were named for Mengelberg; commemorative medals have been struck; he became honorable conductor of the Frankfurter Museums Gesellschaft, etc. Concerning the Mengelberg-album we shall say a word at the end of this letter.

The nine concerts under the imaginative conductorship of Mengelberg were of the greatest artistic value. He, the greatest friend of Mahler, knows these works as no one. This music-festival stands alone; it was unique, and thrilling; a musical milestone.

The soloists were: Elise Menagé Challa, Gertrude Foerstel, A. Noorderwiel Reddingius, Charles Cahier, Ilona Durigo, Sigrud Onegin, Meta Reidel, Jacques Urlus, Jos. Groenen and Thom Denys. They all deserve praise for their assistance, particularly Gertrude Foerstel, Charles Cahier, Ilona Durigo, Urlus and Denys.

About the Mengelberg album, a work of nearly 300 pages, edited by Martinus Nyhoff at The Hague. It is very finely

conceived and executed and contains many copies of original pictures, given to the master, by several great painters. This album contains articles in the Dutch, German, English, French and Italian languages. Paul Cronheim composed the album.

Long to be remembered are the yearly recurring performances of Bach's "St. Matthew Passion" at Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, Groningen, and other parts of the kingdom. The conductors are Willem Mengelberg (of this city) and Johan Schoonderbeek (The Hague). The soloists every year are Mme. Noorderwiel-Reddingius, soprano, and Thom Denys, bass-baritone. The latter has sung the part of *Christ* over seventy times in all the countries of Europe. Next year he expects to visit America and will make a tour of the states.

At present Schoonderbeek is very, but not critically, ill. On this account the early summer performance in the great old church of Naarden cannot be given this year.

The music season in the towns is closed. However, not in Scheveningen. Georg Schneevoigt, the well-known conductor of Stockholm, gives his concerts with the Residentie-Orchestra in the "Kurzaal" there. As soloists these artists have been already engaged Jacques Thibaud, Aured Cortot, Ilona Durigo.

Destinn Files Complaint in Suit Over Her Pearl Necklace

In a suit begun in January, Ema Destinn filed a complaint in the Supreme Court on June 14, against Edward Berger, a New York dealer, who, she alleges, sold her a pearl necklace for \$27,000, representing the gems to be Oriental pearls. Mme. Destinn states that she subsequently found out that the pearls were the fresh-water variety with a value of about \$5,000. Berger's attorney claims that there was never any misrepresentation concerning the pearls and

that they were sold as fresh water pearls.

Panic in Carnegie Hall Studios When Fire Routs Tenants

A short circuit of electric wires in the storeroom of the restaurant on the ground floor of Carnegie Hall at 10 o'clock on the evening of June 20, caused a cloud of smoke to ascend to the upper floors, filling the main concert hall, the lecture hall and a number of the studios. The actual fire, which is said not to have been serious, was quickly extinguished by the fire department, but several persons were overcome by smoke and numerous residents of the studios thrown into a panic. The damage was slight.

Moiseiwitsch Makes Sensational Success in Sydney, Australia

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, May 16.—Benno Moiseiwitsch, Russian pianist, made his debut at the Town Hall here yesterday. He is said to have created the record in receipts for a first piano recital in Australia, with the sole exception of Paderewski, and to have been received with wonderful enthusiasm. His success was so great that seven additional recitals have been arranged to take place in Sydney alone during this month.

Thuman Leaves "Enquirer" to Become Head of Cincinnati College of Music

It was learned by MUSICAL AMERICA this week on excellent authority that J. Herman Thuman, music critic of the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, had resigned his newspaper post to become business manager of the Cincinnati College of Music. A few weeks ago, MUSICAL AMERICA published a story to the effect that A. J. Ganfort for many years manager of the Cincinnati College of Music had resigned and that many changes in the faculty were imminent. Mr. Thuman is business manager of the Cincinnati Festival Association.