

Oklahoma Couple Owns Organ Eighty Years Old

In the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Wiederanders, north of Oklahoma, is an antique that will inspire fond memories for old-timers. It is an old organ, 80 years old and in perfect condition.

Pioneers have seen many of its kind in rural churches and will cherish the memory of the organist as she pumped vigorously with her feet while she tried to concentrate on the keys, being, at the same time, mindful of the many "stops" facing her above the keys.

It is true that this instrument is in perfect condition today and will give forth with a beautiful tone when skillfully played. But it has a history. It had to be rejuvenated.

This history began when the organ was purchased by Charles Wiederanders, grandfather of C. L. Wiederanders, in Bastrop, Texas. The year was 1880. The instrument was manufactured by Daniel F. Beaty in Washington, N. J., and the woodwork seems to be some sort of oak. The Beaty company called this number the "Golden Tone," and it seems to have been well named.

"My grandfather gave the organ to my uncle, Emil Wiederanders, said Mr. Wiederanders. (The uncle he added, operated Riverside Gardens and grew vegetables to supply the residents of Clifton.

Emil Wiederanders used the organ until it deteriorated to the extent that it was no longer suitable for the purpose. Then he gave it to John Wiederanders, father of C. L. Wiederanders.

John Wiederanders and family moved to Wilbarger County and settled in the Lockett community in 1907, bringing the organ with them. C. L. Wiederanders became possessor of the organ when he and the former Miss Lydia Bruns, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bruns, were married in 1921.

As a musical instrument, the organ was practically useless until about a year ago. The Wiederanders have a beautiful piano in the living room. (The organ is kept in a bedroom). The organ came to the attention of Karl Goetze of Wichita Falls, brother of the late Paul Goetze, Vernon music teacher for many years, when he was called to the Wiederanders home to tune the piano.

"When he saw the old organ, he wouldn't let us alone until we agreed to let him put in re-air and electrify it," Mrs. Wiederanders said. Mr. Goetze repaired the inside, installing a motor to operate the pump Mr. Wiederanders brightened up the outside. It looks good as new and it plays as good as new.

Mr. Wiederanders said his aunts and uncles (eight of them, he believes) learned to play on this instrument as did the four sons and four daughters of his parents.

"Aunt Bertha, wife of Uncle Amc Wiederanders, used the organ for a while in her profession as a music teacher," said Mr. Wiederanders.

Does Mr. Wiederanders play the organ now? "No", he answered. His fingers are too stiff. However he recalled how he once played the instrument with a brother accompanying on the violin. Mrs. Wiederanders "plays a little."

"Mostly for myself," she added. How much is it worth? Well, it is not for sale, and that's for sure.

"The next owner will be our daughter, Mrs. Edward Roth, who lives presently at Roswell, N. M.," Mrs. Wiederanders said. "Her husband is a radar instructor in the Air Force."

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Wiederanders would estimate the worth of the old organ. They said Mr. Goetze said it was worth about \$300 as a musical instrument. Unquestionably it would bring more than that as an antique.



80-YEAR-OLD ORGAN—C. L. Wiederanders is shown seated by an organ that has been in his family for about 80 years. The organ belies its age, thanks to some vigorous refinishing done by Mr. Wiederanders. It plays like new, thanks to a thorough inside repair job by Karl Goetze of Wichita Falls, Mr.

Goetze also modernized it by installing a motor to operate the pumps. The instrument was purchased by Mr. Wiederanders' grandfather at Bastrop in 1880. Ownership passed first to Mr. Wiederanders' uncle, then to his father and finally it became his own when he and Mrs. Wiederanders married in 1921.