

# History of Standard Pneumatic Action Co., Is One of the Magic Romances of the Music Industries

Founded by the Late Charles Kohler, This House Has Produced in Sixteen Years More Than 400,000 Player Actions Which Are Now Heard in All Parts of the World—Factory Uses Three Million Feet of Lumber Annually—W. A. Mennie, President, Reports This Year's Business Ahead of 1925 and Prospects Bright for Rest of 1926



The Standard Pneumatic Action Co. Family. The Player Action Made by This Group Is Heard All Over the Globe

**A** MOST impressive industrial pageant is presented in the reproduction of a panoramic photograph showing the entire working organization of the Standard Pneumatic Action Co., New York, in the accompanying illustration. This photograph was taken especially for THE MUSIC TRADES in front of the extensive factories of this company, which are located at Twelfth Avenue and Fifty-second Street, facing De Witt Clinton Park and the Hudson River.

In the center foreground will be noted William A. Mennie, president of the company; Herbert E. Lawrence, vice-president and treasurer, and Adam K. Gutsohn, secretary and factory superintendent, who is also president of the National Piano Technicians Association. On the extreme right in the second row will be noted Fred A. Barrow, editor of the "Standard Player Monthly," house magazine of this company.

The story of the Standard Pneumatic Action Co. and its development from comparatively small beginnings to its present large proportions reads like a romance of industry. The late Charles Kohler, founder of the Kohler Industries, was a sagacious and far seeing man who recognized the need of the trade for a player action that would be reliable in operation and as simple in construction as it could possibly be made; he realized the tremendous growth that was to come to the player industry, and equipped a manufacturing plant for the production of player actions in large quantities. His foresight and enterprise have been fully justified, as the whole trade knows.

In 1911, the first full year of operation, 6015 Standard player actions were made and sold. For the years 1924, 1925 and 1926 the production of Standard player actions will average 43,300 for each year. Over 400,000 Standard player actions are now being used in many countries and in 125 makes of player-pianos of both domestic and foreign manufacture.

The Standard player action was the result of ten years of exhaustive study and experiment, resulting in an action that has met the most stringent requirements of the trade—quickly responsive, readily accessible, and durable in every climate. The last is a cogent reason why this player action is so popular in many foreign countries, with diverse climatic conditions to be encountered.

The original design of the Standard player action has been closely adhered to, while improvements in detail have been made wherever possible.

The illustration presents ocular and convincing evidence of the tremendous demand for player actions throughout the world. This small army of skilled workers, operating under the direction and close personal supervision of A. K. Gutsohn, factory superintendent, is producing player actions that are as nearly fool proof and trouble proof as anything of this nature can be made.

## Some Facts About the Standard Player Action

There are three types of the Standard player action, respectively called A, B and C. The type A is a double valve action, upon the high quality of which the Standard laid the foundation for its enviable reputation. Type B is a duplicate of type A, except that the primary valve chamber has been removed, making it a single valve action. Type C—the top action of which is a duplicate of type B—differs from both of the preceding types in the simplified construction of the bottom action, and in the duller finish of exposed woodwork.

Over 3,000,000 feet of lumber are used yearly in the building of Standard player actions. About 52,000,000 screws are used annually in assembling. The most expensive of imported leather is used. The skins of lambs from Scotland and from India, as well as sheep, goat and calf skin, are used in this action. It requires one whole lamb skin to supply pouches for a double valve action.

Over 150,000 yards of rubber cloth, flexible and durable, are used in Standard actions in a year. About 350,000 pounds of special metal tubing are required for a year's production.

Good workmanship in the construction of Standard player actions is assured by the "family pride" of all employees in their organization and in their product.

An extensive, intensive and expensive national advertising campaign is carrying the message of Standard superior quality into millions of homes.

The Standard player action factory occupies over 225,000 feet of floor space.

The first Standard player action was shipped in September, 1910. Over 400,000 actions have been sold since that time. A five year guarantee goes with every Standard player action sold.

There are over 7000 competent service men throughout the country ready at all times to make any necessary adjustments when needed in Standard equipped players.

The Standard player action is known in every part of the United States and in Hawaii, New Zealand, China, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Australia, Cuba, England, Egypt, India, France, Spain, Germany, Belgium and other foreign countries.

The "Standard Player Monthly" is one of the most popular and widely read house organs in the industry. It is always tastefully dressed, and its pages are filled with matter pertaining to the profession followed by the majority of its readers—the tuning fraternity—throughout the world.

It is gratifying to record the fact that the business of the Standard Pneumatic Action Co., under the able direction of W. A. Mennie, as president, and H. E. Lawrence, vice-president and treasurer, is exceedingly prosperous, and is indicative of the continued universal popularity of the player-piano in this and foreign countries.

## Optimistic Views of W. A. Mennie

When Mr. Mennie was asked about his opinion of business for the entire year he said:

"So far as the Standard is concerned, we are substantially ahead of 1925. Shipments for the first four and a half months are ahead of last year, and we have had a substantial increase in orders booked for the remainder of the year. It is interesting to note that in view of this increase, 1925 was one of the best years in the history of our company.

"I haven't any concern about business for the balance of 1926. Basically, the principal industries of the country are in good shape and reporting monthly progress.

"A recent issue of a financial bulletin published by the National City Bank of New York reports that for January, February, March and April, freight car loadings were considerably larger than for the same period in 1924 or 1925. Furthermore, bank clearances show a substantial increase. The building and steel industries are ahead; the production of automobiles for the first three months was 27 per cent above the first quarter of last year.

"All of these figures serve to show the general prosperity of the country, which is the thing that we are most concerned about.

"Within the piano industry many manufacturers reported excellent business during January and February, with a 'falling off' in production during March and April. I believe that one of the things that will help to stabilize the music business and make for a greater demand for pianos and musical accessories will be the inauguration of a cooperative advertising campaign to sell music to the nation. I understand that a suggestion for such a campaign will be submitted to the manufacturers and dealers during the coming convention in June. It is worthy of careful consideration.

"We have had extremely gratifying returns from our own national advertising campaign, inaugurated last year. In fact, we largely give credit to the national campaign for an increase in our sales of over 17 per cent. This national campaign has given us a good insight into the effect that it has in the direction of stimulating sales and how greatly it is appreciated by the dealers."