



Esberger, Walter

DOB: 23 July 1884, Cincinnati, Ohio

DOD: 22 June 1962, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

"In the Esberger family, there were six musical children whose music was directed by their father, himself a musician. He was very stern about their music lessons; having talents, they must make the best use of them, if they desired, they might make a profession of music, but each must learn one thing in addition to music by which to make a living." (Cincinnati Post, April 28, 1930, page 1.)

In 1895, (aged ten), Esberger was climbing a fence in his back yard when a ring on the third finger of his right hand caught on a nail and ripped the finger off his hand. Blood poisoning set in, and a local newspaper reported that "serious results were anticipated". Luckily, he survived.

The 1907 Cincinnati Enquirer described Esberger as "one of the city's ablest and most thorough musicians." The 1910 census listed him as living with his parents, Charles, (born in Germany ca. 1852), and Louisa, (born in Ohio ca. 1854 to German immigrant father and Ohioan mother), and siblings Walter, Flora, Hubert, Charles Jr., and his wife Lillie, and child Eleanor. Walter is listed as a music teacher.

He attended Cincinnati public schools and studied piano at the old College of Music and Conservatory in Cincinnati. In 1911, Walter Esberger was working in the banking field, as a clerk for the Union Trust and Savings Bank. At the age of 27, he found the music field to be more profitable and to his liking. He was one of the youngest band leaders in the United States at that time, and quickly surpassed many veteran leaders.

In 1914, he is listed at 1408 Vine St. under "Bands and Orchestras" in the Cincinnati directory. By 1920, his is listed as "Musician, Own Business" in Cincinnati directory.

In 1942 he was employed by Baldwin Piano Co., 142 W. 4th St, Cincinnati. At this time, he states in his WW2 military draft card that "Third finger right hand is amputated". Walter Esberger was also one of the principal artists at the Vocalstyle Music Co., where he recorded piano rolls.

For more than 25 years Esberger and his brother, Walter, were associated with bands in Cincinnati and free concerts in Eden Park. His band frequently played for the Turnfest, The Elks' Reunion, the Cincinnati Zoo, visits by President Taft, WLW radio, and other civic functions. An active Mason, Esberger was also a member of the Knights Templars, the Shriners, and Oola Khan Grotto. He led the Cincinnati Syrian Shrine Band from 1926-1957.

Esberger retired from his music career in 1957. He and his wife moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where he died of a heart attack on June 22, 1962. He is buried in Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery.

Paul E. Bierley's book, "Hallelujah Trombone! The Story of Henry Fillmore" is quite unkind to Esberger: *"It is perhaps poetic justice that many of the concerts which Henry conducted would ordinarily have been conducted by Walter or Charles Esberger, his successors as leader of the Syrian Temple Shrine Band, and with whom there had previously been unpleasant relations. Walter Esberger was also a composer of marches, and a study of his programs shows that he almost never played any of Henry's music. Henry's friends who played in Esberger's band resented this."*

KNOWN WORKS (8) - Heritage Encyclopedia of Band Music

- American Spirit March (Church, 1922)
- By Power of Right March (Fillmore, 1915)
- Freedom of the Seas March (Church, 1918)
- Our Nominee March (Church, 1916)
- Our Pride, march
- Our Republic March (Church, 1912)
- Paeon of Triumph March (Fillmore, 1916)
- Pie

Information compiled by Mark A. Hensler.

MADE A HIT WITH TURNER MINSTRELS



ALBERT ESBERGER

WALTER ESBERGER

With their sister, Miss Norma Esberger, they made a hit at the North Turner minstrel performance Saturday and Sunday in a skit entitled "At Opack's Garden," which they themselves wrote.

Freedom of the Seas March

Solo B \flat Cornet
(Conductor)

WALTER ESBERGER

590

The musical score is written for a Solo B \flat Cornet. It begins at measure 590 in a 6/8 time signature. The key signature has two flats (B \flat and E \flat). The score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff starts with a *ff* dynamic and includes a 'Bass' line. The second staff has a first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending labeled '2'. The third staff continues with *ff* dynamics. The fourth staff is marked *p* and *p dolce*. The fifth staff continues with *p*. The sixth staff has *ff* dynamics and includes a 'Solo' section. The seventh staff is marked *ff* and includes a '1st B \flat Cor.' section. The eighth staff is marked *p* and includes a 'Tromb. & Bar.' section. The ninth and tenth staves continue with *p* dynamics.

Freedom of the Seas March

Piccolo

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff f mf *fz* 1 2 1 2 *p* *p dolce* 1 1 1 1 *fz* *fz* *ff* *fz*

Freedom of the Seas March

Oboe

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff

mf

f

1 12

1 2

p p dolce

f

1 1 1 1

ff

Freedom of the Seas March

Bassoons

WALTER ESBERGER

590

2

ff *mf* *fz* *f* *p* *fz* *fz*

1 2

1 1

Freedom of the Seas March

WALTER ESBERGER

E♭ Clarinet

590

1

ff *f* *mf* *p* *p dolce*

1 2

1 2

1 1 1

fz *fz* *fz*

ff

fz

1 2

fz

Freedom of the Seas March

Solo & 1st B \flat Clarinets

WALTER ESBERGER

590

Musical score for Solo & 1st B \flat Clarinets. The score is written in 6/8 time and consists of ten staves. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The first staff contains a melodic line starting with a first ending bracket. The second staff features a rhythmic accompaniment with dynamic markings *ff*, *mf*, and *fz*. The third and fourth staves continue the accompaniment with a first ending bracket and a *ff* marking. The fifth staff is a new melodic line starting with a *p dolce* marking. The sixth and seventh staves continue this melodic line. The eighth and ninth staves feature a rhythmic accompaniment with dynamic markings *fz* and *ff*. The tenth staff concludes the piece with a final melodic line and a *fz* marking.

Freedom of the Seas March

2d & 3d B \flat Clarinets

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff *fz* *mf* *fz* *p* *p*

Freedom of the Seas March

Soprano Saxophone

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff *mf* *fz* *fz* *ff* *p* *p dolce* *fz* *fz* *fz* *ff*

Freedom of the Seas March

Alto Saxophone

WALTER. ESBERGER

590

ff *mf* *f* *fz* *fz* *fz* *fz* *fz* *fz* *fz*

dolce *p*

Freedom of the Seas March

Tenor Saxophone

WALTER ESBERGER

590

The musical score is written for Tenor Saxophone in 6/8 time. It begins at measure 590. The first staff starts with a dynamic of *ff* and a second ending bracket. The second staff continues with dynamics of *fz* and *ff*, and includes first and second endings. The third staff has a dynamic of *ff*. The fourth staff features dynamics of *p* and *p* with first and second endings. The fifth staff has a dynamic of *p*. The sixth staff has a dynamic of *ff*. The seventh staff has dynamics of *fz* and *fz*. The eighth staff has a dynamic of *ff*. The ninth and tenth staves continue the melodic line with various dynamics and articulation marks.

Printed in the United States

Freedom of the Seas March

Baritone Saxophone

WALTER ESBERGER

590

The musical score is written for Baritone Saxophone in 6/8 time. It begins with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a first ending bracket. The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *ff*, *p*, and *f*. It features first and second endings and concludes with a *fz* marking.

Freedom of the Seas March

E♭ Cornet

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff *mf* *f₂* *f₂* *ff* *ff* *p* *p dolce* *Bass f₂* *f₂* *f₂* *f₂* *B♭ Cor.* *f₂* *f₂*

Freedom of the Seas March

1st B♭ Cornet

WALTER ESBERGER

590

The musical score is written for 1st B♭ Cornet and 2d Cor. in 6/8 time. It consists of 10 staves. The 1st B♭ Cornet part is on the top nine staves, and the 2d Cor. part is on the bottom staff. The score includes various dynamics such as *ff*, *mf*, *fz*, and *p*. There are also performance instructions like "play lower notes when no 2d Cor. or 2d Clar." and first/second endings. The piece starts with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature of 6/8.

Freedom of the Seas March

1st & 2d Altos (Horns in E \flat)

WALTER ESBERGER

590

2

ff *mf* *fz* *fz* *ff* *p* *fz* *fz* *fz* *ff*

1 2 1 1

Freedom of the Seas March

3d & 4th Altos (Horns in E \flat)

WALTER ESBERGER

590

The musical score is written for 3rd and 4th Altos (Horns in E \flat) in 6/8 time. It begins at measure 590. The first staff starts with a dynamic of *ff* and a fermata over the first measure. The second staff has dynamics of *mf* and *fz*. The third staff has dynamics of *f* and *ff*. The fourth staff has dynamics of *ff* and *p*. The fifth staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The sixth staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The seventh staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The eighth staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The ninth staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The tenth staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The eleventh staff has dynamics of *ff* and *fz*. The score includes first and second endings, marked with '1' and '2' above the notes. There are also fermatas and accents throughout the piece.

Freedom of the Seas March

1st & 2d Tenors  (or Trombones)

WALTER ESBERGER

590



ff *mf* *fz* *f* *ff* *fz* *ff* *fz* *tutta forza* *ff*

Freedom of the Seas March

B♭ Bass $\text{\textcircled{3}}^{\text{d}}$ Trombone

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff *mf* *fz* *ff* *ff* *p* *ff* *fz* *tutta forza* *fz* *fz*

Freedom of the Seas March

1st & 2d Trombones b :

WALTER ESBERGER

590

2

ff *mf* *f*

1 2

ff *tutta forza* *f*

Freedom of the Seas March

3d Trombone b :

WALTER ESBERGER

590

The musical score is written for a 3rd Trombone in bass clef, 6/8 time signature, and B-flat major. It begins with a dynamic of *ff* and a second ending bracket. The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *fz*, *ff*, and *p*. It features first and second endings, a *tutta forza* section, and a final section with first endings. The piece concludes with a repeat sign.

Freedom of the Seas March

Baritone

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff *mf* *fz* *f* *ff* *p* *p dolce* *tutta forza* *ff*

Freedom of the Seas March

Baritone b :

WALTER ESBERGER

590

ff *mf* *f* *ff* *p* *p dolce* *tutta forza* *ff*

Freedom of the Seas March

Basses

WALTER ESBERGER

590

2

ff *mf* *f₂* *f₂*

p *ff*

f₂ *f₂* *ff*

ff

Freedom of the Seas March

Drums

WALTER ESBERGER

590

2

ff *fz* *mf* *p*

1 2

1 2

1 1 1

1

Cym. B. D. Cym.