

Factory Location and Personnel Timelines relative to the Automatic Musical Company and the Link Piano Company

(Revision of June 4, 2021)

183-185 Water St. Binghamton, NY (old Bundy Time Recorder bldg.) Location is now a parking lot.

Information courtesy of Rusty King; compiled from Binghamton City Directories, circa 1900 to 1956.

- 1900:Bundy Time Recorder Co.
1904:Bundy Co.—International Time Recorder Co.
1906:International Time Recorder Co.
1908:Automatic Musical Co.
1910:Automatic Musical Co. / Harris, President.
1911:Automatic Musical Co. / no officials listed.
1912:Automatic Musical Co. / no officials listed.
1913:Automatic Musical Co. / E. Link, President.
1914:Link Piano Co.
1916:Link Piano Co. and Beman Symphonie Organ Co. (Beman only listed in 1916.)
1932:Link Piano Co. and Aviation School.
1933:Link plant closed; contents auctioned 10:00 am, Friday, March 31, 1933. (from the March 29, 1933, issue of the Binghamton Press)
1936:Link Aviation Devices (first listed at 6 Gaines St.).

PUBLIC AUCTION
OF THE
LINK PIANO CO.
183 WATER STREET
Lawrence Lyons, Auctioneer

EVERYTHING MUST BE SOLD
Building Must Be Vacated in the Next Few Days
Sale Starts 10 o'Clock Friday Morning

Pianos, Player Pianos, Wood Parts, Metal Parts, Bolts, Springs, Screws, Automobile Parts, Work Benches, Tables, Cabinets, Airplane, Airplane Trainer, Airplane Parts, Air Compressor, Adding Machine, Check Protectors, and Thousands of Odds and Ends of an Old-Established Factory.

WILL BE SOLD REGARDLESS OF VALUE

5,000 Pairs of Headlight Lenses **10c** All Sizes of Brake Lining . . . **10c** Foot

(Link Advertisement courtesy of Glenn Grabinsky)

Louis H. Harris (Automatic Musical Company)

Information courtesy of Rusty King; compiled from Binghamton City Directories, circa 1900 to 1956.

- 1899:Automatic Musical Co., L.H. Harris, Mgr., 96 State St.
1900-1904: Automatic Musical Co., L.H. Harris, Mgr., 53 Chenango St.
1905:Automatic Musical Co., L.H. Harris, Mgr., 53 Chenango St. 2nd and 3rd floor.
1906:Automatic Musical Co., 22-26 Henry St. Louis H. Harris, 53 Chenango St., 2nd and 3rd Floor
1907:Automatic Musical Co., L.H. Harris, Mgr., 22-26 Henry St.
1908:Automatic Musical Co., 183-185 Water St. (vacated 22-26 Henry St. building).

George Russell Thayer

Information courtesy of Glenn Grabinsky and Rusty King.

- 1886:George Russell Thayer was born November 14, 1886, in Georgetown, New York. His father, Louis (Lewis) W. Thayer, was a hostler [a groom or stableman who is employed in a stable to take care of horses] and teamster [a person who drove a team of draft animals]. Louis was born in New York on April of 1865. His parents were from Pennsylvania. He was married twice, his first wife being Dora E. (born in 1859). They were married in 1884. Dora died in a horrible accident at home in late July of 1902. His second wife was Margaret (1865 - 1934). Louis W. Thayer died on May 22, 1916. (Note Louis is sometimes spelled as Lewis.)
- 1890:The Thayer family settled into Binghamton, New York, around 1890 from Georgetown, New York. (In Georgetown Lewis was a teamster and his older brother, Frank, was a stagecoach Driver.)
- 1892:The 1892 New York Census lists Lewis W. Thayer (27), hostler, and his family: Dora E. Thayer (32), George R. Thayer (6), Anna B. Thayer (2), as well as older brother Frank A. Thayer's family: Frank A. Thayer (37), hostler, Clayton Thayer (14), baker, Grace Thayer (12). During the early 1890s both Lewis and Frank Thayer worked together as hostlers. Later, Uncle Frank became a motorman on the streetcars.
- 1899:The 1899 Binghamton City Directory has Lewis Thayer and his family living at 48 Mary Street, and Lewis is a hostler. George's Uncle Frank is a streetcar motorman residing at 138 Court Street.

1900:The 1900 US Census shows the Thayer's at 127 Oak Street. Louis is a teamster, Dora E Thayer, a housewife, George Thayer is 13 and in school, as is his younger sister, Annie B. Thayer, who is ten years of age.

1900:The 1900 Binghamton City Directory lists Louis Thayer as a Hostler, residing at 127 Oak Street.

1901:The 1901 Binghamton City Directory shows George R. Thayer as a Clerk at 8 Court (Rourke Brothers Drug Store), and living at 11 Elizabeth, with his parents, Louis W. Thayer (Dora E. Thayer) –Teamster. Uncle Frank, the motorman, is living at 14 Winding Way.

1902:On July 27, 1902, Dora Thayer dies from an explosion of gasoline while filling a stove in her home. George Thayer's sister, Annie, is badly burned.

1902:The 1902 Binghamton City Directory listing for the Thayer's is identical to 1901, except that Frank Thayer is now living at 16 Winding Way.

1903:The 1903 Binghamton City Directory shows George R. Thayer as a Clerk, and his father, Louis W. Thayer, also as a clerk, and residing at 258 Washington. Uncle Frank Thayer is living at 84 Exchange.

1904:Sometime during the first half of the year 1904 George Thayer and his younger sister, Anna (Annie), start working for the Automatic Musical Company, since they are both at the July, 1904, company picnic.

1904:George Thayer marries Jessie Luddington (born 1885) from Pennsylvania (she had been working in Binghamton as a domestic servant). Both are 18 years of age.

1904:The 1904 Binghamton City Directory shows Louis W. Thayer as a Clerk, living at 258 Washington.

1905:The 1905 NY State Census (June) shows George Thayer and his wife (Jessie) as living with his parents and he is working as a clerk in a music store (Harris – Automatic Musical Company).

1905:The 1905 Binghamton City Directory shows all Thayer's living at 14 Lydia: George Thayer's father: Louis W Thayer, clerk; George Thayer's cousin, Frank Thayer (wife Eva), molder; George R. Thayer (wife Jessie), machinist.

1906:The 1906 Binghamton City Directory lists George R. Thayer (wife Jessie), clerk, living at 14 Lydia; Uncle Frank Thayer (motorman) and wife are living with them; but George's father Lewis Thayer has remarried (wife Margaret) and was then living at 153 Murray.

1907:By October of 1907 George Thayer is living in Chicago and associated with Charles H. Hamilton. The two men apply for their first patent 930,544, a coin acceptor. George Thayer, his wife, and sister Annie, are living at 77 South Hermitage Ave. Chicago. The new business, Hamilton & Thayer – musical instruments, is located on the 4th floor at 40 Michigan Avenue, Chicago. Charles Hamilton and his wife are living at 3217 Calumet Avenue, Chicago.

1907:The 1907 Binghamton City Directory shows George Thayer as having moved to Chicago (also his sister Annie). Uncle Frank Thayer is living at 9 Lydia.

1908:In 1908 George Thayer and Charles Hamilton are still in Chicago, and in May of that year they apply for patent #937,933, which is for what will later be known as the "Link" Music Roll Frame, assigned to the Automatic Musical Company in Binghamton. George Thayer is now living at 543 West Monroe, and Hamilton at 4055 Ellis Avenue. Hamilton and Thayer are still located at 40 Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

1908:In July of 1908 the Automatic Musical Company has incorporated in Chicago, Illinois, along with the new firm of Hamilton and Thayer. The purpose of this was to produce automatic pianos, with the Automatic Musical Company to deal in the new product.

1909:The 1909 Chicago Directory still lists Thayer and Hamilton. George Thayer is still at 543 West Monroe, and Charles Hamilton at 4065 Ellis. But Hamilton & Thayer is now located at 61 Union Park Court, Chicago.

1909:The 1909 Binghamton City Directory has no listing for Frank or George Thayer.

1910:In the 1910 Chicago Directory both Thayer and Hamilton are no longer listed.

1910:The April 1910 US Census shows George and Jessie Thayer living in a boarding house at 84 Henry St, Binghamton.

1910:The 1910 Binghamton City Directory lists George R. Thayer as living in a boarding house at 84 Henry Street.

1911-1913: The 1911 through 1913 Binghamton City Directories lists George R. Thayer (Jessie L), Foreman, residing in boarding house at 84 Henry Street.

1914-1915: The 1914 and 1915 Binghamton City Directories lists George R. Thayer (Jessie L), Superintendent, Link Piano Company, home at 150 Oak Street.

1915:The 1915 New York State Census shows George Thayer as Superintendent of Piano Company, home at 150 Oak Street, Binghamton, New York.

1916:On May 22, 1916, George Thayer's father, Lewis W. Thayer, dies.

- 1916:The 1916 Binghamton City Directory lists George Thayer, Foreman, Link Piano Company, home at 150 Oak Street.
- 1917:On February 7, 1917, George Thayer's cousin, Frank A. Thayer, dies suddenly of a heart attack.
- 1917:The June 5, 1917, WW1 Draft Registration shows George Forman as a Factory Manager, Link Piano Company, home at 150 Oak Street.
- 1917:On December 20, 1917, George Thayer's Uncle Frank A. Thayer dies.
- 1917:The 1917 Binghamton City Directory lists George Thayer, Superintendent, Link Piano Company, home at 150 Oak.
- 1918-1919:..The 1918 and 1919 Binghamton City Directories list George Thayer, Superintendent, Link Piano Company, home at 150 Oak.
- 1920-:.....The 1920 US Census has George and Jessie Thayer living at 150 Oak Street, with George Thayer being a manager at a piano Factory.
- 1920-1921:..The 1920 and 1921 Binghamton City Directories list George Thayer, Superintendent, Link Piano Company, home at 150 Oak.
- 1922:On May 18, 1922, George and Jessie Thayer had their first and only child, a daughter named Barbara L. Thayer (1922-1998). She married Arthur G. Smith (1921-1986), and gave birth to four children.
- 1922:The 1922 Binghamton City Directory lists George Thayer, Superintendent, Link Piano Company, home at 137 Seminary Avenue.
- 1923:The 1923 Binghamton City Directory lists George Thayer, Superintendent, Link Piano Company, home at 127 Seminary Avenue.
- 1924-1925:..The 1924 and 1925 Binghamton City Directories list George Thayer, Vice-President, Link Piano Company, home at 127 Seminary Avenue.
- 1925:The 1925 New York State Census shows George Russell Thayer, Jessie L Thayer, and daughter Barbara Thayer, Superintendent, Piano Factory.
- 1926-1930:..The 1926 through 1930 Binghamton City Directories list George Thayer, Vice-President, Link Piano Company, home at 127 Seminary Avenue.
- 1930:The 1930 US Census shows George Thayer (39), Jessie Thayer (39), and daughter Barbara Thayer (7), Manager Piano Factory, home at 127 Seminary (the Thayer's own the house and it is valued at \$12,000).
- 1931:The 1931 Binghamton City Directory lists George Thayer, Vice-President, Link Piano Company, home at 127 Seminary Avenue.
- 1931:During December of 1931 there is an announcement that the George R. Thayer Company has been incorporated and capitalized with \$50,000.
- 1932-1933:..The 1932 and 1933 Binghamton City Directories show George R. Thayer (Jessie L) as President of George R. Thayer Company, home at 127 Seminary; George R. Thayer Company, Inc., G. R. Thayer, President, phonograph manufacturers, 47 State Street.
- 1933:In March or 1933 there is an announcement in a newspaper that George R. Thayer Company is open at 47 State Street & that George Thayer was formally of the Link Piano Company.
- 1934:The 1934 Binghamton City Directory shows George R. Thayer (Jessie L) as President of George R. Thayer Company, home at 127 Seminary; George R. Thayer Company, Inc., G. R. Thayer, President, phonograph manufacturers, 47 State Street.
- 1934:In July of 1934 a notice in Billboard Magazine states that George R. Thayer had been elected the president of a newly formed association of coin operated skill machine operators in New York State. During this period George Thayer is a Wurlitzer distributor and also operating various "games of skill."
- 1935-1940:..The 1935 through 1940 Binghamton City Directories show George R. Thayer (Jessie L) as President of George R. Thayer Company, home at 127 Seminary; George R. Thayer Company, Inc., G. R. Thayer, President, phonograph manufacturers, 47 State Street.
- 1940:The 1940 US Census shows George Thayer (51) as Proprietor – Music Shop, home at 127 Seminary; wife Jessie L. Thayer (51), daughter Barbara Thayer (17).
- 1941:The 1941 Binghamton City Directory shows George R. Thayer (Jessie L) as President of George R. Thayer Company, home at 127 Seminary; George R. Thayer Company, Inc., G. R. Thayer, President, phonograph manufacturers, 47 State Street.
- 1942:The 1942 Binghamton City Directory shows George R. Thayer (Jessie L), phonographs, 47 State Street, home at 78 Matthews.



George R. Thayer
1925 Factory Photograph.

1943-1944: The 1943 and 1944 Binghamton City Directories show George R. Thayer (Jessie L), George R. Thayer Company, home at 78 Matthews; George R. Thayer Company (G. R. Thayer) records and players, 47 State.

1945-1946: The 1945 and 1946 Binghamton City Directories show George R. Thayer (Jessie L), Manager Redd Distributing Company, home at 78 Matthews; Redd Distributing Company, George R. Thayer, Manager, 47 State Street.

1946:During the post WWII years George Thayer becomes a Packard J. B. dealer

1947-1951: The 1947 through 1951 Binghamton City Directories show George R. Thayer (Jessie L), Manager George R. Thayer Company, home at 78 Matthews; George R. Thayer Company (G. R. Thayer), 47 State Street.

1952-1953: The 1952 and 1953 Binghamton City Directories show George R. Thayer (Jessie L), George R. Thayer Company, home at 78 Matthews; George R. Thayer Company (G. R. Thayer), 47 State Street.

1954:During 1954 George Thayer buys his last automobile, a 1954 Cadillac. His wife, Jessie, wrecked it in June of 1962.

1955:Harvey Roehl interviewed Ray Deyo and George Thayer about 1955. Thayer was running a jukebox route. Apparently he never worked for Link Aviation but he is in a picture with Ed Link and the old Piano Company employees taken in 1945.

1956:The 1956 Binghamton City Directory shows George R. Thayer (Jessie L), George R. Thayer Company, home at 78 Matthews; George R. Thayer Company (G. R. Thayer), 47 State Street.

1957:George R. Thayer (70) died in Binghamton, New York, on June 11, 1957.

1972:Jessie (Luddington) Thayer died on Jan. 9, 1972.

George Raymond Deyo

Information courtesy of Rusty King; compiled from Binghamton City Directories, circa 1900 to 1956.

1905-1907: 14 Pearl St. (family home) – Student.

1908:14 Pearl St., Student, works Automatic Musical Co.

1909-1910: 14 Pearl St., Musician (Dollie H., wife).

1911:14 Pearl St., Assembler.

1912:Herald Building; Dollie, stenographer, Security Mutual Life. (No Ray Deyo listed; may be an oversight as his father, George T. Deyo was superintendent of the Herald Building.

1913:Herald Building, G. Raymond Deyo, MSC CTR Beman Organ Co. 21 Doubleday Street. (In the list of abbreviations, CTR equates to "Cutter;" no explanation for MSC, but it is speculated to equal "Music Cutter or Composer."

1914:3 Circuit St., Musician.

1915:16 Circuit St., Musician.

1916:16 Circuit St., Employee, Link Piano Co.

1917:16 Circuit St., Employee, Link Piano Co. (Draft card shows Arranger, Link Piano Co., 184 Water St., lives at 2 Saratoga Ave.)

1918-1931: 2 Saratoga Ave, Assembler, Link Piano Co.

1932:2 Saratoga Ave. Arranger, Link Piano Co.

1933:Music Rolls, 220 State St.; Also the address of A.J. Kleitz, Printer (where the Link roll labels were printed?) Building gone by 2010.

1934:Employee, 1900 Corp. (made washing machines.)

1935-1938: 2 Saratoga Ave., no occupation listed, but possibly worked at Link Aviation after 1936.

1939-1945: 2 Saratoga Ave., Assembler, Link Co. Dollie (wife) not listed.

1946-1949: 111 Oak St., Assembler. Link Co., wife, Edythe.

1950-1956: 135 Front St., Assembler, Link Co.

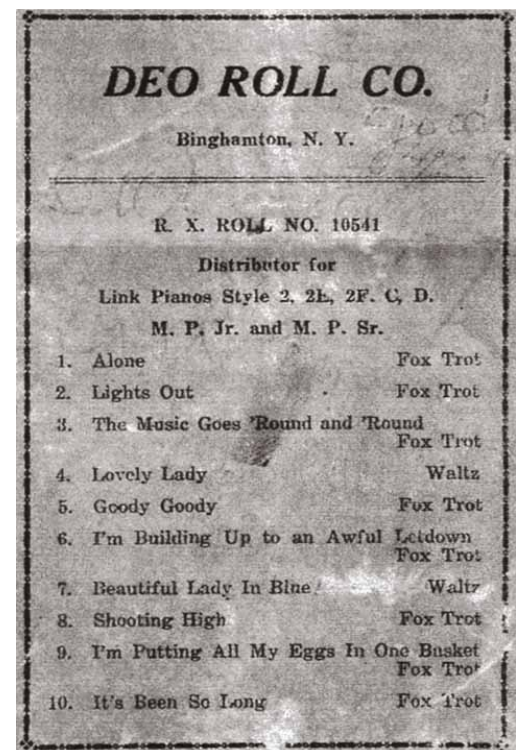
1955:Harvey Roehl interviewed Ray Deyo and George Thayer about 1955. Deyo worked for Link until his death in 1956.

1956:George Raymond Deyo died on Nov. 30, 1956.

1974:Edythe Deyo died on Aug. 21, 1974 (no obituary for Dolly Deyo has been found.)



George Raymond Deyo
1925 Factory Photograph.



(Label image courtesy of Don Rand)
Deo Roll Co. Music Roll #10541.

Released circa 1936 by George Raymond Deyo.

George Theron Link and son Edwin Albert Link (Senior)

Information and research courtesy of Glenn Grabinsky; photograph of former Edwin A. Link house courtesy of Elaine Pease.

- 1844:George Theron Link was born on January 20, 1844 in Georgetown, Indiana, to Mathias and Christine “Jane” (Hanger) Link—both parents were from Virginia. He was one of at least 7 children, and his father, Mathias, was a carpenter by trade. By the time George was 16 years of age he became a carpenter as well. George lied about his age and joined the 12th Indiana battalion during the Civil War. After the war he married Sarah Kirtley and fathered two children: William (born in 1867 and in died 1886) and Edwin Albert Link, born May 8, 1870.
- 1870:By 1870 the Link family was living in Terre Haute, Indiana, and George was a “commercial traveler” (traveling salesman).
- 1878:By 1878, the Link family had settled in Chicago, and George was listed as a traveling salesman for saddlery and hardware. (Note 1).
- 1878-1879:..In 1878 and 1879 George T. Link was a traveling salesman for Eddy & Calhoun, “ironmongers and stove dealers” located at 105 Lake Street, Chicago, Illinois. The Link family lived at 119 N Sheldon.
- 1880:George Link must have become quite successful, because in the 1880 census the family is shown having a live-in domestic servant. The family was also listed in the Chicago Blue Book through the 1880s and 1890s, which was a who’s who of society.
- 1880:In 1880, George Link is listed as a “travel agent” (salesman) for the Thomas Charles Company, who were the largest dealers in kindergarten supplies, and located at 80 Wabash Avenue in Chicago. The residence of the Links was at 417 Fulton. George maintained this job through at least 1881.
- 1882-1886:..From 1882 to 1886 George Link continues to be listed as a traveling salesman, but for what exactly is unclear.
- 1884:In 1884 the George Link family moved to 2444 Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.
- 1886:Sometime in 1886, Edwin A. Link formed a partnership with one Martin A. Fountain, of Chicago, to form the Fountain Printing Company. Father George T. Link listed this company as his profession for 1887. How long George and Edwin Link were involved with this venture is unknown. Mr. Fountain (who was about Edwin’s age) lived in the same house as the Links at 2444 Wabash Ave. Many years later this same printing concern was part of a famous November, 1907, U.S. Secret Service raid on one of the biggest illegal lottery operations in the country, which was being run by D. H. Jones, in Chicago, as the Old Reliable Guaranty Loan & Trust Company. This incident made national news. Fountain Printing did all of the printing work for D. H. Jones, such as the lottery tickets, etc. The lottery had commenced operations in 1885, so possibly Fountain Printing was involved from the beginning. If so, was this printing venture a possible source for some early wealth for the Links?
- 1887:By the beginning of 1887 the 17-year old Edwin A. Link had entered the work force as a bookkeeper for the Chicago Harness Company, at 375 Wabash, Chicago.
- 1888:In 1888, George T. Link was again listed again as a commercial traveler, and his son, Edwin A. Link, as a bookkeeper. They were still living at 2444 Wabash, and Martin A. Fountain was still living there as well.
- 1889:The year 1889 is when the Links enter the piano business. Both Edwin and father George begin working for the C. A. Smith Piano Company, located at 149 Superior Street, Chicago. Edwin is a bookkeeper, and George is a salesman. The Link family is now living at 462 Cleveland, Chicago, Illinois.
- 1890:In 1890 George T. Link becomes Secretary of the Schaff Brothers Company, at 17 N Clinton, Chicago. Edwin is still the bookkeeper for C. A. Smith Piano Company. The Links are still living at 462 Cleveland.
- 1891:As 1891 rolls in George and Edwin Link hold the same employment position as in the previous year, but Edwin Link is now living on his own at 213 Fremont, while George and his wife reside at 15 Elizabeth, Chicago, Illinois.
- 1892:George T. Link must have been a shining star at the Schaff Brothers Company, because in 1892 he is listed as the President of Schaff. The Schaff Brothers Company address is now shown as 126 North Union, Chicago. George is listed as residing at 390 Washington, and Edwin is now a bookkeeper with the Schaff Brothers Company, and is residing at 489 LaSalle, Chicago.
- 1893:In 1893 Edwin A. Link marries Katherine Martin (born September 26, 1874, in Tuscola, Illinois). Katherine’s sister is married to one of the wealthier business men in Rockford, Illinois, Mr. H. L. Wortham (see sidebar). George Link is still President of Schaff, and Edwin Link is now Secretary of Schaff brothers—a good position for a young man of 23 years. The whole family is living together now at 332 Washington, Chicago, Illinois.

Edwin A. Links’ wife Katherine had a sister, Nellie, who was married to Horace L. Wortham of Rockford, Illinois. Wortham was a prominent, wealthy, and influential businessman in the Rockford community and among other things, owned the largest high quality women’s wear store in Rockford, Wortham’s.

- 1894:The year 1894 finds the same job situations for the George and Edwin Link. George and Sarah Link are now living at 464 West Adams, while Edwin and Katherine Link are at 868 Warren.
- 1895-1896:..The years 1895 and 1896 are the identical, except that Edwin and his wife have moved next door to 870 Warren, Chicago, Illinois.
- 1897:During 1897 George and Edwin Link continue along in their same job positions. The address for Schaff Brothers Company has changed to 117 North Peoria, which is an address they will keep until the move to Huntington, Indiana in 1900/1901. Edwin Link and his wife are now residing at 1504 West Monroe. On January 28, 1897, Edwin and Katherine Link's first son, George Theron Link is born.
- 1898:In 1898 Edwin Link and his wife move back in with his father and mother, George and Sara, at 728 Warren, most likely so that Edwin's mother can help his wife, Katherine, with the newborn infant.
- 1899-1900:..The job positions for George and Edwin Link remain the same during 1899 and 1900, but the living arrangement changes in 1900, with the Links all living at 464 West Adams, Chicago, Illinois.
- 1900:In 1900 the Schaff Brothers Company began moving its operation to Huntington, Indiana, but continued to keep the Chicago offices open for a brief period of time. The City of Huntington donated land for a new factory site and put up \$12,000 toward building construction (information from the "History of Huntington County, Ind." by F S Bash, 1914, page 247). This policy of luring of industries to relocate was a rather common practice. Both the Regina Music Box Company and the American Symphonion Company were lured to new locations earlier by similar methods. Moreover, it is possible that George T. Link may have become "homesick" for Indiana, and he may have been the one to reach out to the City of Huntington.
- 1900:The 1900 US census (summer of 1900) shows that Edwin Link is living alone as a roomer at 1211 West Jackson, Chicago, Illinois. This could indicate that the family was getting ready to move, or had partially moved to Huntington, Indiana.
- 1901:By 1901, Edwin Link has left Chicago (but George Link is still in Chicago at 464 West Adams).
- 1901:In November 14, 1901, the Schaff Brothers Company filed as a Foreign Corporation in Indiana (while still incorporated in Illinois). In 1913, Schaff incorporated fully in Indiana with \$50,000 capital stock. It is somewhat interesting that this date seems to correspond to the time when Edwin A. Link became fully involved with the new Link Piano Company.
- 1902:The 1902 Directory of Directors in Chicago book lists George T. Link as President and Manager, and as a director of the Schaff Brothers Company, and Edwin A. Link as Secretary and Treasurer, and a director of the company. Because the book was compiled at the end of 1901 it would suggest that Schaff still maintained a presence in the Chicago business community. How long this Chicago business "presence" lasted is unknown.
- 1904:On July 26, 1904, Katherine Link gives birth to Edwin Link's other son, Edwin Albert Link, Jr.
- 1906:The next available city directory listings available are for 1906 in Huntington, Indiana. George T. Link is shown as being President of Schaff Brothers Company, and living at 88 Guilford. Edwin A. Link is listed as the Secretary / Treasurer of Schaff Brothers Company, and is living at 125 Guilford. Besides being officers of the company both men were also on the board of directors.
- 1905/1906: In 1905 or 1906, Edwin A. Link also formed a partnership with Walter E. Kipp in Indianapolis, and they formed the Kipp-Link Phonograph Company. This company was the exclusive Edison dealer in Indianapolis, and the company continued up into the 1920s. How long Edwin A. Link stayed involved is unknown. However, the company did carry the Link name throughout its existence. It is also interesting to note that from the front piece of the 1906 Huntington City Directory is a Schaff Brothers Company ad where phonographs were being promoted as well as pianos.
- 1907:On February 5, 1907, notice was given that George T. Link had decided to resign and "retire" as President of Schaff due to some sort of conflict within the company. He was still a large stockholder, however, and remained on the board of directors. In his place, his son, Edwin A. Link, was named President. George Link's resignation as President and the conflict with the shareholders, etc., may have been a result of the "Panic of 1907." This nationwide financial crisis started about 6 months earlier and lasted into mid 1908. The stock market plunged, banks and trusts failed, and a record number of businesses declared insolvency and went bankrupt during this stressful period.
- 1907:Edwin Link was obviously a real go-getter, substantiated by an April 8, 1907, article in the Elkhart Daily Review (Indiana) whereby Edwin Link was described as being in a rambunctious automobile chase after a deadbeat purchaser of a Schaff Brothers piano, chasing down a man who was trying to flee the state without paying! (It is possible that Edwin's proven "bird dog" trait was one of the reasons he was later chosen to go to Binghamton, New York, to try to sort out the Automatic Musical Company mess.)
- 1910:In the US Census for 1910 (April 18) Edwin A. Link is listed as "president of piano factory" and living at 1144 Bryon Street, Huntington, Indiana. On July 16, 1910, notice is given in the Music Trade Review that Edwin and

family have moved to Binghamton, NY where he will oversee the operations of the Automatic Musical Company affairs. In the 1911 Binghamton City Directory (compiled at the end of 1910) he is listed as living at 80 Riverside, Binghamton, as President of Automatic Musical Company.

- 1910:In October of 1910 the senior George T. Link's wife, Sarah (Edwin Link's mother), dies in Huntington, Indiana, and on October 29, 1910, notice was given in a Music Trade Review article that a final compromise had been reached between George T. Link, the shareholders, and the board at Schaff, whereupon Mr. Link removed himself from the board and surrendered all of his stock to the new manager, F. Clark Adsit, thereby completely removing himself from both the operations of Schaff and of having any financial involvement. It is interesting to note that George Link apparently had a suit against Schaff stockholders, demanding a receiver to be chosen and a complete financial accounting. It is unknown for certain, but possibly the problems could have been due to the extended credit and resulting debt the company had incurred while doing business with the Automatic Musical Company, starting back during the time of George Link's 1907 "retirement." That Schaff would now become solvent may in fact be due in large part to Edwin A. Link's new control of the Automatic Musical Company affairs and a strong belief that he could fully rectify all of the problems.
- 1910-1912: During the 1910-1912 period the social columns in the Rockford, Illinois newspapers often mention visits from the Edwin A. Link family of Binghamton, New York (sometimes just Katherine), who were staying with Katherine's sister, Nellie, and brother in law, Horace L. Wortham.
- 1911:In the 1911 Huntington Directory, George T. Link is now listed as a "salesman," still living at 88 Guilford. What he was selling is unknown.
- 1912-1913: In Binghamton, New York, Edwin A. Link and family settle in at 80 Riverside. In the 1912-1913 Binghamton City Directories Edwin is listed as president and manager of the Automatic Musical Company.
- 1913:In April of 1913 Edwin Link's father, George Theron Link (1844-1913) dies in Huntington, Indiana.
- 1913:In the 1914 Binghamton City Directory (compiled at the end of 1913) Edwin Link is now listed as the manager of Link Piano Co. On September 30, 1914, Edwin Link's widowed mother, Sarah, dies in Huntington, Indiana, to be buried in Chicago.
- 1915-1916: In the 1915 & 1916 Binghamton City Directories, Edwin Link continues to be listed as the manager of Link Piano Company, except now Edwin and family are living a few doors down at 86 Riverside, Binghamton, New York.
- 1917:In the 1917 Binghamton City Directory the information reflects the 1916 incorporation of the Link Piano Company, and the new position and title of Edwin A. Link as President of the Link Piano Company. Over the next few years the Link family bounces around Binghamton: 1918 finds them at 86 Riverside, 1919 at 142 Water Street, 1920 at 185 Water Street (the factory site), 1921 and 1922 at 69 Walnut, and 1923 at 38 Vermont.
- 1923:In 1923, Edwin A. Link decided to move west due to an indiscretion and secured a home in Glendale, California, at 367 Cumberland Road. For another year or two he maintained two residences, one in Glendale and the other in Binghamton (in 1924 it was 151 Oak in Binghamton, right across the street from where George Thayer had resided earlier). During a trip to the west coast, Edwin A. Link had an affair with a younger married woman named Lillian Calmes. Out of this affair a child was born out of wedlock named Marilyn Calmes Link on February 20, 1924. As a result of this indiscretion, Edwin and his wife Katherine separated—this newest child was 20 years younger than Edwin Link, Jr. Katherine moved in with her son Edwin Jr. and remained in Binghamton the rest of her life, where she died on April 11, 1949. She always used the Mrs. Katherine Link name, Edwin (Sr.) and Katherine never got legally divorced.
- 1924:Edwin Link (Senior) had made a full time move to Glendale, California. He raised his daughter Marilyn there with the aid of a live-in housekeeper. He seems to have lived the last years of his life out there in somewhat of a self-imposed exile. On the US Census in 1930, for instance, he shaved about 6 years off of his age and gave his place of birth as Michigan. By the early 1930s Lillian Calmes was divorced and moved in with Edwin full time and was known out there as Mrs. Lillian Link. Originally, Marilyn's existence was not acknowledged by the Link family in Binghamton, but upon the death of Edwin Link (Senior) in 1941, she moved to Binghamton and was taken in by Katherine Link and Edwin Jr. and his wife, Marion. Marilyn later graduated from Syracuse University and after her move to Binghamton she was always fully acknowledged as Edwin's sister. She passed away on March 19, 2018, after a brief illness and had been active in Vero Beach, Florida. She never married.



(Photograph courtesy of Elaine Pease)
Former Edwin A. Link (Sr.) West Coast home
located in Glendale, California, circa 2012.

When Edwin A. Link (Senior) moved to Glendale he entrusted the daily operations of the firm to his son, George

T. Link, who was the Secretary/Treasurer from 1921 onwards. But even after his full time move to Glendale, Edwin A. Link (Senior) always maintained a Binghamton address, that being the factory's 185 Water Street address. This was maintained right up to the end of the company in 1932. His also retained the position as President of Link Piano Company right up to the end. The elder Edwin Link stayed in Glendale the rest of his life, where he died on May 6, 1941.

Matthew Joseph Kennedy

Information and research courtesy of Glenn Grabinsky.

1879:Matthew Joseph Kennedy was born January 1, 1879, in Elkhart, Indiana, to Thomas and Sarah Kennedy (Irish immigrants).

1902:Kennedy was a traveling insurance salesman out of Elkhart, Indiana. In 1902 he moved to Detroit, Michigan.

1903:Assistant Manager of the Supreme Lodge of the Columbian League (a large fraternal based life insurance company); residence: 184 Abbot, Elkhart, Indiana.

1904:Cashier at the Safety Folding Bed Company, Ltd.; residence: 535 Baldwin Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana.

1905:Treasurer and Manager of Safety Folding Bed Company, Ltd.; residence: 535 Baldwin Avenue.

1905:In March of 1905 Kennedy moves to Chicago.

The majority of the following items are derived from Chicago City Directory Listings (unless otherwise specified).

1905:Kennedy enters into the automatic piano business by working for Harley C. Kibbey at Kibbey's new business, H. C. Kibbey and Company.

1906-1908:..Manager 902 209 State Street (The Republic Building); home: 5130 Calumet, Chicago, Illinois. Note that the Calumet home address was near where Charles H. Hamilton (associated with George R. Thayer) first lived in Chicago.

1908:In October of 1908 Kennedy takes over Kibbey's piano business and moves it upstairs to the 9th floor of the Republic Building. Kennedy is now the exclusive Automatic Musical Company agent in Chicago and all points west.

1909:Manager 932 209 State Street (The Republic Building), Automatic Musical Company; home: 5130 Calumet.

1910:1910 US Census shows Kennedy as a "Piano salesman."

1910:In December of 1910 Kennedy announces that he will no longer represent the Automatic Musical Company, but now Peerless, located in St. Johnsville, New York. It is during this time that the Automatic Musical Company is facing bankruptcy due to an unsettled patent infringement suit brought about by Peerless.

1911:In January of 1911 Kennedy Incorporates the Peerless Piano Player Company in Chicago.

1911:Manager 406 339 South Wabash; home: 813 Dankin, Chicago, Illinois.

1912:Manager 406 339 South Wabash, Peerless Piano Player Company; home: 813 Dankin.

1913:Manager 5th Floor 316 South Wabash, Peerless Piano Player Company; home: 813 Dankin.

1913:In December of 1913 Kennedy announces his resignation from Peerless and discontinues selling Englehardt automatic pianos. He keeps his future plans quiet.

1914:In January of 1914, right after the New Year began, Kennedy announces that he is now with the Link Piano Company. It is announced in the trade journals that he is the vice-president and General Manager of Link (it is still the unincorporated Link Piano Co.) and will have control of all western US business for Link.

1914:Manager 308 339 South Wabash, Link Piano Company.

1914:On November 24, 1914, Kennedy marries Gertrude R. McKinley (11 years younger than he). Gertrude, from Moline, Illinois, was a 2nd cousin to President William McKinley.

1915:Manager 308 339 South Wabash, Link Piano Company.

1915:On November 8, 1915, Matthey Kennedy's only child, Gertrude McKinley Kennedy, is born.

1916-1917:..Manager 930 209 South State, Link Piano Company.

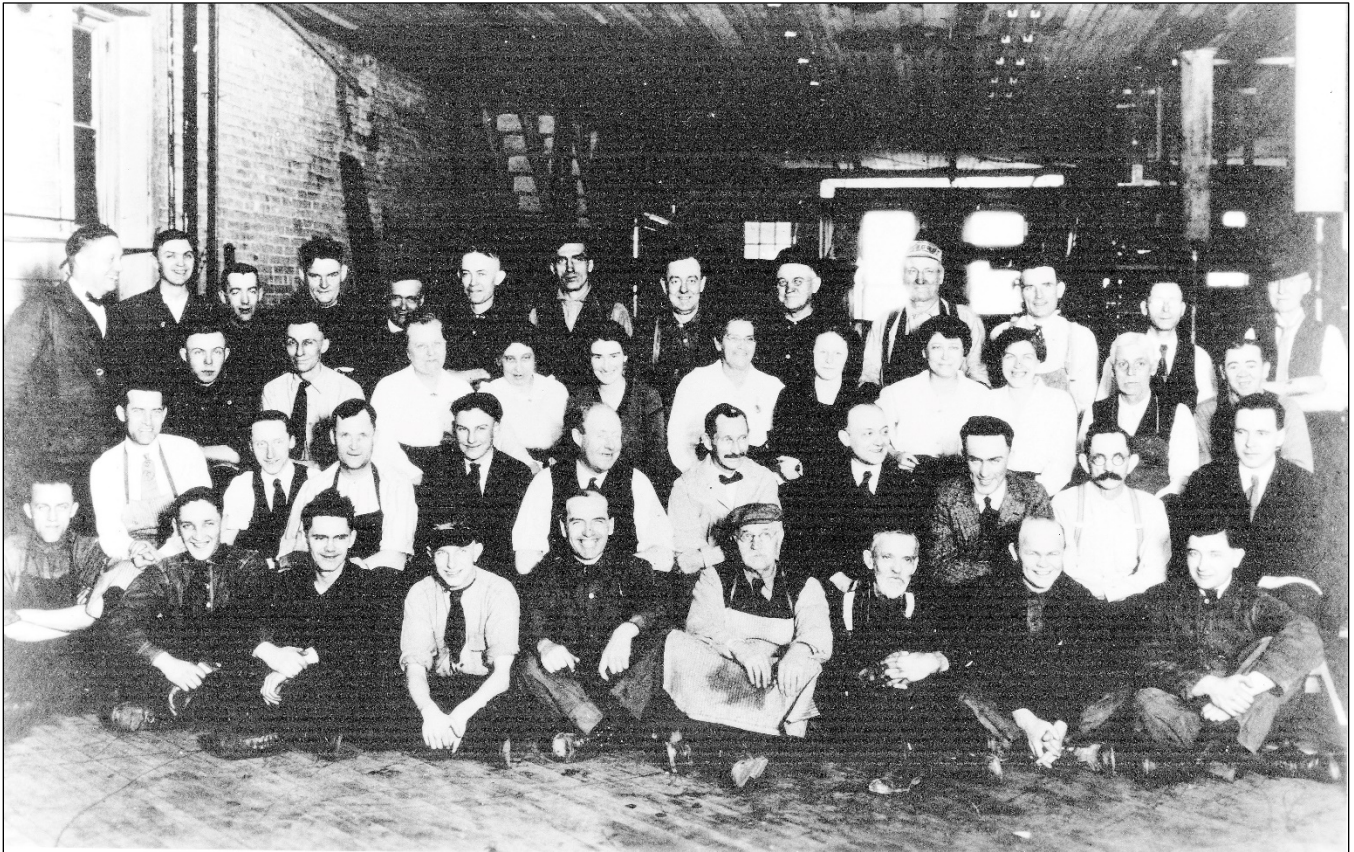
1918:M. J. Kennedy 930 209 South State, Harrison5421.



Matthew J. Kennedy, 1914.

1919:M. J. Kennedy (in large bold letters) 532 Republic Bldg. 209 South State, Harrison5421 (also phonographs).
 1920:M. J. Kennedy (in large bold letters), Link Electric Piano Company, 336 59 East Van Buren, Harrison2871.
 1920:US Census: wholesale merchant – pianos (own business); Gertrude - wife, Gertrude - daughter.
 1928:Kennedy is also doing business in radios as the Sonora Music Shop.
 1930:US Census: salesman - radios - owns home (\$18K) at 5544 Wayne.
 1931:On May 18, 1931 Kennedy’s wife, Gertrude, dies.
 1931:In November of 1931 Kennedy joins Kroehler Manufacturing Co., Radio Division.
 1938:On May 17, 1938, Matthew Joseph Kennedy dies. Kennedy had been Secretary of the National Association of Music Merchants, President of the Chicago Piano Club, National Piano Travelers Assn., etc. He had been a very well-known and active man in the music field.

Link Piano Company Employees—Circa 1926



The Link Piano Company Employees, circa 1926,
 original booklet image courtesy of Lisa Freyer, replacement high-resolution photograph courtesy of Tim Westman.
 See below for a legend showing employee names and location within the photograph.

top row

George Thayer

Lee Bertholf

Floyd Ingraham

Tommy Knickerbocker

John Carroll

Tom Murray

Eurie Taylor

Joe Platner

George Lane

Jim Lyon

second row

Walter Roach

Mrs. Tom Murray

Mrs. Fred Butler

Kathryn Brewer

Lucy Lynch

Jessie Wilmot

Frank Pilcher

Fred Butler

third row

Harold Meads

Sid Brudy

Gerald Kiley

George Snow

Ray Deyo

James O'Neil

William D. Sabin

bottom row

James Smith

Ray Kiley

Kenneth Cook

Floyd Cavanaugh

Tom Bradley

Hirum Blatchly

Beecher Stowe

Earl Chubbuck



Geo. Thayer, General Manager and Superintendent

William D. Sabin cut most of Link Organ rolls

Mr. Ray Deyo worked on Link Piano rolls

Tom Bradley, chief adjuster

Layout chart or legend showing Link Piano Company employee names and location within the above photograph, courtesy of Lisa Freyer.

Source Materials:

Billboard magazine.

Broome County Library, Binghamton, NY.

Binghamton obituaries, Binghamton, NY: 1960 and forward. Broome County Library, Binghamton, NY.

Chicago City Directories.

City of Binghamton. City Directory. Binghamton, NY: 1900 through 1956.

Lisa Freyer (granddaughter of the late Eddie Freyer).

Rockford Republic (newspaper).

The Binghamton Press (newspaper).

The Music Trade Review.

Tim Westman.

www.ancestry.com