



Nino Marcelli

Founder of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra

News of the California gold discovery arrived in Chile on August 19, 1848, when the brig *JRS* anchored in Valparaíso. Strangely enough, few people paid attention to the news, but when ten days later the schooner *Adelaida* arrived with \$2,500 worth of gold dust, the news spread all along the coast of Chile.¹

SPURRED BY THE NEWS, Chileans began emigrating to California in droves. During the first six months of 1849 alone, the Chilean Foreign Office issued some 6000 passports. Although most Chilean emigrants appear in the California census returns of 1852 and 1860 as miners (954 in 1852, 709 in 1860), a few identified themselves by other occupations such as “teacher,” “physician” “law-student,” and even “musician” (Gonzalo Espinoza at San Francisco gave his age as 29 in 1852, and Juan Urbina at San Francisco as 23 in 1860).² When therefore Nino Marcelli (*b* Rome, Italy, January 21, 1890; *d* San Diego, California, August 4, 1967)³ emigrated to

¹Carlos U. López, *Chilenos in California, A Study of the 1850, 1852 and 1860 Censuses* (San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, 1973), p. ix.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 39 (37-year-old “Josefo Javis,” Spanish and French teacher at San Francisco in 1860 [census-takers ignorant of Spanish made numerous spelling mistakes]) and 27 (39-year-old “Francisco Escanilla” at Los Angeles in 1860).

³*Ibid.*, pp. 28 and 82. Among other Chilean musicians, the following three in all likelihood entered census lists with misspelled names: 35-year-old “Rufucio Caviades” (= Caviedes) in 1860; 30-year-old “Evarito Guanio” (“pianist”) in 1852; 36-year-old “Ucairio Roncal” in 1860.

“The important article “Winners of Five Stadium Prizes,” *New York Times*, July 16, 1923 (14:1), included the statement: “Nino Marcelli was born at Rome, Italy; lived in Chile from his second to twenty-fourth year, came to the United States in 1916, and is now a naturalized American citizen.” These same biographical facts are repeated frequently in San Diego newspapers after he settled there in 1920. The *San Diego Tribune*, August 21, 1933, Section A, carried an article, “Honor Marcelli at Park Concert Tuesday Evening,” that begins his biography with his birth at Rome. In the interview with him published in the *San Diego Union* October 15, 1944 (4:1-2) he repeated that although

California in 1920, he was by no means the first Chilean musician to opt for a career in the golden state.

According to the *San Diego Union* of August 5, 1967 (B1:2-3), he was the eleventh of twelve children born to a family that moved to Santiago when he was three months old. His parents were Natale (a shoe manufacturer and amateur musician who on emigrating became a shoe supplier to the Chilean army) and Angela [D’Ottavi] Marcelli. Published sources for Nino’s early life at Santiago attest not only to his musical precocity, but also his youthful ability to win influential friends in the highest Chilean circles.

Luis Sandoval y Bustamante’s *Reseña histórica del Conservatorio Nacional de Música y Declamación 1849 a 1911* (Santiago: Imprenta Gutenberg, 1911), page [68], gives 1894 as the year that his brother Ulderico (*b* Rome, Italy, October 3, 1885) entered the conservatory to study violin with José Varalla, and 1900 as the year that Nino (= Juan) entered to study horn with Antonio Silva. From April 27, 1900, to June 14, 1904, the professor of harmony and composition was Domenico = Domingo Brescia (*b* Pirano, Italy, April 28, 1866; studied in Milan conservatory, graduated in 1889 from the Liceo Musicale at Bologna, where he was a pupil of Giuseppe Martucci). On April 7, 1905, Enrique Soro—recently returned from Milan resplendent with honors—began teaching harmony and piano and on August 30, 1909, became sub-director of the

he grew up in Chile and graduated from the National Conservatory at Santiago, he was born in Rome, Italy. The article “Ex-Students Honor Symphony Founder” in the *San Diego Union*, August 29, 1960 (15:7-8) again places his birth at Rome. His obituaries in both the *San Diego Union*, August 5, 1967, and *Tribune* of the same date clinch not only his birth at Rome but also his death at San Diego August 4, 1967 (not August 16, as stated in *Baker’s*, 1984 edition, p. 1448). His obituary, “In Memoriam Don Nino Marcelli,” *Revista Musical Chilena*, XXI/101 (July-September 1967), confirms that he was not born in Chile but instead arrived there when a few months old (*llegó a Chile a los pocos meses*).



conservatory. Both Brescia and Soro later assisted the Marcelli brothers enormously in their careers.

Brescia, on leaving Santiago to become director of the national conservatory at Quito (Ecuador), took Ulderico with him to teach violin.⁵ As sub-director at Santiago, Soro instigated Nino's appointment April 1, 1910, at the age of only twenty to succeed Giuseppe Faini in teaching solfège (two hours weekly) and on June 7, 1910, to replace deceased Antonio Silva as teacher of *trompa* (four hours weekly).⁶ In 1911, Nino additionally became teacher of harmony (two hours). Three photographs in which Nino Marcelli is a chief figure enter Sandoval B.'s *Reseña histórica*. The first (before page 48) carries the caption "Diploma de Armonía y Contrapunto Discípulo del maestro Soro." The next two are in the *Album 1911* section: one captioned "Teoría y Solfeo (Año I.) Clase del Profesor D. Nino Marcelli," the other "Instrumentos de viento (en cobre) Clases de los Profesores: D. Nino Marcelli (Trompa); D. Emilio Blanchait (Pistón) y D. Juan Betteo (Trombón y Tuba.)" For Nino at age 21 to be teaching a class of 33 theory and solfège, and at the same time the three French hornists then enrolled in the conservatory, amply attests Soro's confidence in him.

Marcelli's next signal achievement at Santiago was a series of orchestral concerts at which he conducted in their numerical order Beethoven's nine symphonies. As clippings from the Santiago newspapers *El Mercurio*, *La Mañana*, *La Razón*, *El Diario Ilustrado* and *Las Últimas Noticias*, of 1913 reveal,⁷ the series at the Teatro Unión Central⁸ began April 9, and continued April 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 30, and

June 6—concluding June 27 and 30 with the Ninth performed with soloists Carolina C. de Gallardo, soprano; Mercedes Neumann, contralto; Ludovico Muzzio, tenor; Emmanuel Martínez, baritone; and with choristers recruited from the Deutsches Doppel Quartet. To round out these concerts, Marcelli provided each time a lighter second half: Julio Rossel on one occasion playing the Grieg concerto, Américo Tritini on another the Tchaikovsky B flat minor.⁹

On January 1, 1914, in its annual round-up of happenings during the previous year, *El Mercurio* rated "the symphonic concerts at the Teatro Unión Central among the most important events" of 1913.¹⁰ Nor did the memory of the concerts soon fade. Fifty years later *El Mercurio* on April 10, 1963, reprinted the judgment of Carlos Silva Cruz (director of the Chilean National Library from 1911). The opening concert with 65 players "attained an extraordinary success"¹¹ and was the "best night of the year," according to Silva Cruz. The similar accolades that followed successor concerts in the series were reprinted in *El Mercurio* ("De Hace Medio Siglo"), June 3 and 28, 1963.

The profound impression created by the series was recalled by Eugenio Pererira Salas in his article, "La música chilena en los primeros cincuenta años del siglo xx," *Revista Musical Chilena*, vi/40 (Summer 1950-51), 65.¹² A decade later, Daniel Quiroga bespoke the historic significance of the series in "Los músicos chilenos y su inquietud viajera," *Revista Musical Chilena*, xiv/73 (September-October 1960), 68.¹³ Auditions of all nine still remained a newsworthy event when the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile led

⁵Sandoval B., *Reseña*, p. 69. Ulderico received his diploma in violin from the Santiago Conservatorio Nacional (*curso superior*) December 16, 1908 (*ibid.*, p. 25).

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 29. Throughout the *Reseña*, Sandoval B. alternately refers to him as Nino and as Juan Marcelli.

⁷Approximately 80 clippings covering Nino Marcelli's musical activities in Santiago from 1907 through 1913 are neatly pasted in a scrapbook (Box 1, file 7) given May 10, 1983, to the San Diego Historical Society, Casa de Balboa, Balboa Park, San Diego, by Nino Marcelli's niece, Angélica Marcelli (then residing at 1411 1/2 Tyler Avenue, San Diego 92103). In August, 1986, Sylvia Arden, Head, Library & Manuscript Collections, San Diego Historical Society, P.O. Box 81825, San Diego 92138, kindly placed at my disposal the entire Nino Marcelli Collection. Catalogued MSS 281-069-072 (1907-1983), the collection is sufficiently rich and detailed to justify a Ph.D. dissertation on Marcelli's career.

⁸This theater was located in the second block of Ahumada Street.

⁹In 1904 Rossel entered the Conservatorio Nacional as a pupil of Carlos Debuysere, Tritini as a pupil of Roberto Duncker Lavalle.

¹⁰"Los conciertos sinfónicos del Teatro Unión Central figuran entre los hechos más importantes del año 1913." See "J.A.H.," "Las Nueve Sinfonías de Beethoven," *El Mercurio*, April 4, 1963. Jorge Valenzuela Llanos wrote the *folleto* that served as program notes for the series. Eugenio von Chrismar, student of *humanidades*, saved the programs and clippings.

¹¹"El concierto con que el maestro Nino Marcelli, acompañado de una orquesta de 65 profesores, inició en el Teatro Unión Central los destinados a ejecutar las nueve Sinfonías de Beethoven, alcanzó un éxito extraordinario."

¹²"En 1913 Nino Marcelli asombró al público con la audición completa de las Sinfonías de Beethoven."

¹³"[Nino Marcelli] destacara por sus condiciones de director y dejara de ser cornista para pasar a ocupar el 'podium.' Una de las primeras ocasiones en que se escucharon las sinfonías de Beethoven en serie completa, se debió a la batuta de Marcelli."



by Georg Ludwig Jochum gave them during the winter of 1961 in the Aula Magna of the Universidad Técnica Santa María at Valparaíso,¹⁴ and when the same orchestra conducted by David Serendero and Rolf Kleinert performed them to commemorate the Beethoven bicentennial in 1970.¹⁵

After the series, Marcelli heeded the advice of Mascagni (who had visited the conservatory September 6, 1911),¹⁶ that he should study in Italy. However, before departure from Santiago, he did conduct his orchestra on at least two further occasions in August, 1913: (1) at a ceremony in the Teatro Municipal attended by the president of Chile, Ramón Barros Luco, during which the chief speakers were Domingo Amunátegui, rector of the University of Chile from 1911, and Juan Nepomuceno Espejo, rector of the National Institute from 1887;¹⁷ (2) at the centennial of the founding of the Biblioteca Nacional.¹⁸ So far as his own going-away tribute was concerned, *El Mercurio* of October 10, 1913, reported that "a large public attended the farewell concert honoring Nino Marcelli given at the Conservatory; the faculty taking part included [Enrique] Soro, [Luigi Stefano] Giarda, and [Giuseppina] Grazioli."¹⁹ Later that month Marcelli left Santiago—possessor of a gold medal given him by admirers who were not to see him again in Chile for 36 years.

During the three years between Chile and his ad-

vent in the United States, Marcelli earned his livelihood as cellist and occasional conductor with a travelling Italian opera troupe that he himself dismissed as "third rate" in an interview published in the *San Diego Sun*, February 27, 1933. In 1916 while the company toured small towns of the United States he broke away and began conducting theater orchestras in New York (*Maytime*, music by Sigmund Romberg opening August 16, 1917, at 492 Broadway) and Chicago (D. W. Griffith's film, *The Birth of a Nation*).²⁰ When the United States declared war, he quickly earned American citizenship by enlisting in the 334th Infantry, 86th Division.²¹ While at Barle-Duc, 125 miles east of Paris, his unit was visited by General John J. Pershing. In his honor Marcelli composed an *Ode to a Hero* that he waited to send Pershing until Carl Fischer published it for orchestra in 1941. Pershing acknowledged it with a warm letter.²²

Shortly before the Armistice, Marcelli was selected to conduct the 100-piece Headquarters Band at Paris. He climaxed his army band career in July 1919 with a "Concert donné au Cercle Interallié par le 303^e d'Infanterie du G. Q. G. Américain, 33 Faubourg Saint-Honoré."

Upon discharge, he visited his brother Ulderico, who had in 1914 followed Domenico Brescia to San

²⁰Wallace Moody, "Intensive Preparation Marks Career in Music of Nino Marcelli, Conductor of San Diego Civic Orchestra Concerts," *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1930, credits Marcelli with having conducted the theater orchestra at the Chicago premiere of *The Birth of a Nation*, but without giving an exact date or the name of the theater.

²¹An undated clipping from an unidentified Chicago newspaper in the Nino Marcelli Collection, San Diego Historical Society, headed "Musician Sacrifices \$8000 a year," states that he also conducted theater orchestras that played at Chicago premieres of the films *Hearts of the World* and *Intolerance*. This clipping places him at Camp Grant for his basic training.

²²An excerpt was published in the article "Pershing Thanks San Diego Musician for Composition," *San Diego Union*, March 22, 1941, 9:3. The letter, written at San Antonio, Texas, and received by Marcelli March 21, closed with this sentence: "Such a tribute by a veteran of the old A. E. F. gives me particular pleasure, and this note will convey to you assurances of my deep appreciation. / John J. Pershing."

The concert edition of Marcelli's *Ode to a Hero* carries the following program note: "This brief, stirring composition is one of the aftermaths of the World War. Such catastrophes tend to call up from the rank and file of humanity certain individuals endowed with the strength of character and steadfastness of purpose required to cope with complex and harrowing situations. Such was the man called to head the American expeditionary force to ultimate victory, and it was as a tribute to him that this work was conceived."

¹⁴*Revista Musical Chilena*, xv/77 (July–September 1961), 135.

¹⁵"Festival Beethoven," *Revista Musical Chilena*, xxiv/112 (July–September 1970), 98.

¹⁶Sandoval B., p. 49. According to Constance Herreshoff's interview with Marcelli published in the *San Diego Sun*, February 27, 1933, Mascagni while in Santiago heard the first public performance of Marcelli's symphonic poem, *El Amanecer de la Primavera* ("The Awakening of Spring").

¹⁷"De Hace Medio Siglo," *El Mercurio* August 11, 1963.

¹⁸"De Hace Medio Siglo," *El Mercurio* August 19, 1963. At the commemoration, postponed to Sunday, August 24, 1913, Marcelli conducted both his orchestra and the "coro del Instituto Superior de Educación Física."

¹⁹"De Hace Medio Siglo," *El Mercurio* October 10, 1963. Giarda (*b* Cassolnuovo, Pavia, March 19, 1868; *d* Viña del Mar, January 1, 1953) taught cello in the conservatory at Naples before coming to Santiago where he was appointed to direct the chorus in the National Conservatory October 9, 1905, and to teach voice majors May 4, 1907. His opera *Lord Byron* was given with great success at the Teatro Municipal, Santiago, October 16, 1910 (Mario Cánepa Guzmán, *La ópera en Chile (1839–1930)* (Santiago: Editorial Del Pacífico, 1976, p. 208). Like Giarda, Grazioli was a graduate of the conservatory at Milan. She was appointed to teach harp in the Santiago conservatory April 15, 1908.



Francisco.²³ Ulderico was already a well known musical figure in the Bay Area. On March 23, 1919, Alfred Hertz had conducted the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra at the Curran Theatre in a first performance of Ulderico's *Water Colors (Four Symphonic Sketches)*.²⁴ On July 24, 1920, Ulderico's incidental music accompanied *Ilya of Muron*, the Grove play given that summer by the socially promi-

nent Bohemian Club of San Francisco at its 18th annual retreat in nearby Sonoma County.²⁵

Eager to follow his elder brother's example, and to build for himself a settled, permanent career in California, Nino in late summer of 1920 accepted an offer to succeed retiring B. O. Lacey, who had conducted the San Diego High School Orchestra from 1903 to 1920. During that lengthy period Lacey had built the orchestra from eight to 45 members. Therefore when Nino stepped off the steamboat *Yale* that brought him from San Francisco, he took charge of a viable, functioning youth orchestra. After only one year of extremely effective teaching, Marcelli had already increased the membership from 45 to 65 and had trained the orchestra sufficiently for it to play a highly acclaimed concert as early as December 7, 1921, in downtown Spreckels Auditorium (seating 1915). Marcelli's fame grew so rapidly that at the beginning of his third season the *Los Angeles Evening Express* critic Bruno David Ussher, in an article published September 9, 1922, "School Orchestras Should Perform Classic Music," cited the San Diego High School Orchestra as a model for others to follow.

The outstanding event of the year, 1923, was Marcelli's co-winning of a New York Stadium First Prize with his four-movement *Suite Araucana* premiered under Willem Van Hoogstraten's baton at the City College Stadium concert of August 9, 1923. (The last place winner of the five in this same competition was Wallingford Riegger, who entered his *American Polonaise* in the contest.) *The New York Times* article, "Winners of Five Stadium Prizes," July 16, 1923 (14:1) included the paragraph already partially quoted above in footnote 4. The paragraph continues thus:

He is a graduate of the Santiago de Chile Conservatory of Music and has a reputation in South America as a symphonic conductor. He led the American Headquarters Band in Paris during the War and composed the music for the Grove Play [*The Rout of the Philistines*] of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco last summer.

The first performance of the *Suite Araucana* at San Diego occurred March 16, 1924, when the visit-

²³For the year 1914, see Jessica Fredricks, *California Composers Biographical Notes* (San Francisco: California Federation of Music Clubs, 1934), pp. 8 and 22.

Walter Anthony's extremely lengthy Programme Note published in the *San Francisco Symphony Orchestra* book for 1918-1919 (pp. 261-267) closes with this statement: "When Signor Brescia came to the United States, [Ulderico] Marcelli came also to continue his post-graduate work, which being completed, gives Signor Brescia the credit as Marcelli says, 'for everything I know'—a sweepingly embracing compliment from a devoted pupil to a no less devoted master."

²⁴Describing the four sketches, Anthony wrote: "(I) *Little Shepherdess's Love Dream* presents at once a characteristic of the composer. His rhythms are unusual, yet suave. The sketch opens with a measure of 5/8 rhythm followed by a measure in 6/8, which in turn is followed by a measure of 9/8. The first measure sets before the hearer a motif of agitated quality, a rhythmic figure sounded by the strings and woodwinds and interrupted by perturbations of the cymbals. This leads to the conclusion of the brief introduction, poetically conceived to be that fleeting period between waking and sleeping when the soul, as in that other sleep, hesitates to resign itself to sleep. (II) *Sunday Morning in the Village* is a virtuoso play upon church bells to secure the tonal depths of the deepest and farthest bell. There are three groups of bells at proportionate distance and of proportionate size. Rustic joviality, a ceremonial of festal gaiety before the church and then the climax in a treatment of choral simplicity given the Gregorian chant, after which the emerging worshipers resume their holiday. (III) *The Moonlight Night*. Muted double basses in twelve measures of sustained notes suggest the world 'without form and void.' The flutes enter stealthily as moonbeams rippling through dark shadows on harp harmonies. In the Coda, English horn repeats the tranquil first melody against a background of muted trumpets. (IV) *The Burning Arrow Dance* represents the composer's effort to reduce to modern, occidental notation the music of Ecuadorian Indians. He has not tried in a single impression, like MacDowell in *The Flight of the Eagle*, to "visualize" in tone the flight of a flaming arrow, but to embody in his music the spirit of the aborigines whose music and whose habits and customs he has studied at close range. Every theme employed in this sketch is note for note from original native melody, treated with the composer's license, of course, but never violated nor distorted. The auditor will note the avoidance of the 'leading tone.' Frequent employment of two oboes in thirds represents the native instrument called *rondador* (Pan pipe), which the Ecuadorian cherishes. Here, too, the 'leading tone' is missing and the 'minor' passages are thus given a singular coloring."

²⁵Ulderico Marcelli composed the incidental music for the six Bohemian Grove plays presented the summers of 1920, 1937, 1952, 1955, 1958, and 1961. For their exact titles and dates of presentation, see *The New York Public Library, Dictionary Catalog of the Music Collection*, 2d ed. (1982), xxiv, 141.



ing Los Angeles Philharmonic under Walter Henry Rothwell's baton performed it in Spreckels Auditorium. When performed by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra November 29, 1925, at Curran Theatre under Alfred Hertz's baton,²⁶ the Program Notes for the four movements of the *Suite Araucana* included these explanatory remarks:

- I. *Spirits of the Forest*. Like most aboriginal peoples, the Araucanians were nature worshippers, endowing things with a conscious personality. They believed that their forests were inhabited by spirits who appeared nightly among the trees, amusing themselves with songs and dances that suited their mood. These spirits could also be attacked by hostile forces, scattering them in the midst of their revelry.
- II. *Worshippers of the Sun*. Upon hearing the noise of these hostile attacking spirits, the Araucanians interpreted the tumult as omen of impending calamity. Leaving their *ruca*s (dwelling places), they hurried to the mountain tops to implore protection of the rising sun.
- III. *At the Toqui's Fiesta*. In 1546 the gloomy forebodings of the Araucanians south of Santiago proved only too well founded when Pedro de Valdivia, an able tactician and bold fighter, descended upon them. Until his death at their hands in January 1554, Valdivia waged relentless war against the Araucanians. The third movement of the Suite pictures a triumphal celebration before the ruca of a *toqui*, or supreme war chief, following a victory over the Spaniards.
- IV. *The Unconquered*. For centuries, the old enmity continued between the Araucanians and the European invaders, until, after long and stubborn fighting, this proud nation—whose boast was never to have known a master—came at last upon a new era, in which warfare gave place to friendly amalgamation with the ancient foe.

During the three seasons before Marcelli's augmented high school orchestra blossomed in the summer of 1927 into the Philharmonic Orchestra of San Diego (giving five Sunday afternoon concerts July 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31, 1927, in Balboa Park Organ Pavilion), Marcelli added to his high school instrumental program the conducting of the following

works given by the San Diego Oratorio Society (Annie Marie Clark Ostrander and he were its "co-founders"): *Elijah*, at Balboa Park Organ Pavilion, September 14, 1924; Humphrey J. Stewart's *The Hound of Heaven* (words by Francis Thompson), at Spreckels, March 9, 1925;²⁷ Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*, concert version at Spreckels, June 1, 1925,²⁸ *Messiah* at Spreckels, December 14, 1925; Rossini's *Stabat Mater* at Spreckels, March 2, 1926;²⁹ *Creation* at Spreckels February 28, 1927. (Branching out into the Los Angeles area, Marcelli conducted *Messiah* at Ocean Park Municipal Auditorium December 18, 1927.)

Nor did Marcelli's interest in oratorio conducting summarily cease after 1927. At San Diego High School's 2500-seat Russ Auditorium, built in 1927 at a cost of \$300,000, he again conducted *Elijah* February 25, 1930—this time with local resident Ernestine Schumann-Heink as soloist. As a novelty, on February 9, 1931, he there conducted Henry Hadley's *Resurgam* (text by Louise Ayres Garnett). But from 1927 to 1937 Marcelli's extracurricular energies no longer flowed chiefly into oratorio but instead into the transformation of his winter high school orchestra into a summer orchestra called the Philharmonic Orchestra of San Diego in 1927, the San Diego Civic Orchestra in the summers of 1928 through 1930, and the San Diego Symphony Orchestra in the summers of 1931 through 1937.

Marcelli approached the name "San Diego Symphony Orchestra" cautiously. And with good reason. The name had already been applied to a predecessor organization born in 1902. Conducted the first season by R. E. Trognitz, conducted beginning in 1910 by Richard Schliwen and in 1912 by Lionel Gittelton, the "San Diego Symphony Orchestra" was conducted from February 28, 1913, to 1920, by Buren Roscoe Schryock. As early as the concerts of December 6, 1910, and May 5, 1911, this prior San Diego Symphony Orchestra had performed the first and fifth Beethoven symphonies.

To Marcelli's disadvantage, Schryock did not abandon San Diego after 1920. Instead, he stayed in

²⁶Charles Woodman's review in the *San Francisco Call* of November 30, 1925, is headed "Nino Marcelli Lauded with Symphony."

²⁷A chorus of 225 accompanied by an orchestra of 50, with Royal Brown at the organ, performed the oratorio under Marcelli's direction Monday evening March 9, 1925, at Spreckels Theatre.

²⁸Chorus of 200, orchestra of 75, participated.

²⁹To eke out this program, Richard Crooks sang solos (accompanied by Elinor Remick Warren).



town as an expensive vocal teacher whose position as "general music director" of a San Diego Civic Grand Opera Association enabled him between 1919 and 1932 to showcase his voice pupils in over forty productions of staple French and Italian operas. Schryock's long continued presence in the city explains why Marcelli not only awaited the summer of 1931 before giving his own orchestra the name of San Diego Symphony, but also why he refrained from poaching on the opera domain claimed by others throughout his long residence at San Diego.³⁰

Such programs of the San Diego High School Orchestra as he saved and can now be seen at the San Diego Historical Society—those given at Spreckels Theatre December 4, 1925, and at Russ Auditorium January 19 and May 1, 1928, for instance—do not differ markedly from his summer programs given at Balboa Park Organ Pavilion 1927 through 1930. The December 4, 1925, program included the *Rienzi* overture, Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*, *Nutcracker Suite*, and *Marche slave*; the January 19, 1928, all-Schubert program contained the *Unfinished Symphony*, the overture to *Alfonso und Estrella*, and *Rosamunde* incidental music; the May 1, 1928, began with Henry Hadley's *Herod* overture, continued with Mozart's D minor piano concerto, K. 466, and closed with Pochon and Grainger arrangements.

Marcelli's financial backer for the 1927 summer season of the "San Diego Philharmonic" was Appleton S. Bridges of Timken Investment Company. In 1927 he also stabilized his social position by marrying Adelaide Burns Vogel, widow of Leo F. Vogel. A businesswoman of great acuity, she had resided in San Diego since 1922. As bookkeeper and notary for the San Diego lawyers Stearns, Luce & Forward, and mother of two children, Jack and Harriet Vogel, she enjoyed prestige of her own. Marcelli's ascent into higher spheres during the 1927-1937 decade owed much to her organizing abilities.

The first program of the five given by the "San Diego Philharmonic" July 3, 1927, ranged from Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite, No. 1*, and Brahms's *Hungarian Dances, Nos. 5 and 6*, to Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance, No. 1*. He closed the series of five Balboa Park concerts on July 31 of that year with

a program highlighting a *Carmen* suite and *Marche slave*. The eight concerts given by "The Civic Orchestra" Sunday afternoons July 21 through September 8, 1928, under sponsorship of the San Diego Musicians Protective Association, were each preceded by paid two-hour rehearsals. Even so, no novelties more demanding than Borowski's *Adoration* were programmed. In the summer of 1929 the most adventurous numbers programmed were Carlos Troyer's *Zuni Lover's Wooing* and Homer Grunn's *The Eagle Dance and Chant of the Four Hills* (introduced at the August 11 concert). Alfred Hertz, who guest-conducted the September 1, 1929, concert, gave the public Schubert's *Unfinished*. Marcelli—returning to conduct the September 8 afternoon program—opened with Von Suppé's *Poet and Peasant* overture and continued with Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre*. To add dignity to this last program in the 1929 summer season, Marcelli prevailed upon Harry S. Clark, then Mayor of San Diego, to give an intermission speech. He closed with a "request"—his own *Araucanian Suite*.

In 1930, still known as "The Civic Orchestra of San Diego," Marcelli's organization played his longest season yet in the Organ Pavilion at Balboa Park—extending from July 29 to September 16. Now beginning at 8:30 p.m., rather than 4:45 p.m., the programs grew progressively more ambitious. The first included the *Unfinished Symphony* and Liszt's *Les Préludes*, the second included Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*. On September 2, during a "Wagner night," F. X. Arens of Los Angeles (but for 17 years conductor of so-called "People's Symphony Concerts" in San Diego) interrupted Wagner to conduct his own *Largo for String Orchestra and two horns*.

During the 1931 summer season, Marcelli could at last advertise his orchestra as the "San Diego Symphony." The name change had been formally approved at the Spring 1931 meeting of the orchestra association, and had been publicly announced in the *San Diego Union*, May 16 (7:2). According to Wallace Moody's history of the orchestra since 1927 published in the Water Section of the *Union* January 1, 1931 (2:3), the 1930 summer season had closed without a deficit. But since the name change presaged a professional orchestra no longer staffed with high school students and ex-students, news of a drive to raise funds for a fully professional symphony orchestra filled the newspapers during June of 1931.

At the kick-off luncheon June 3 in the U. S. Grant

³⁰Under sponsorship of the Bay Cities Music Association, he conducted a performance of Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Ocean Park Municipal Auditorium, Friday, March 2, 1938, but never any such standard repertory opera in San Diego.



Hotel, the nationally famous theatrical producer Oliver Morosco (1876–1945) bespoke San Diego's need for a fully professional, home-based symphony orchestra. True, an article in the *Union* on June 4 (2:6) was headed "San Diego Student Musicians Home from Schools/Will Play in Orchestra," but on June 22 (5:3) and July 1 (7:4) the *Union* published the names of Gustave Liebholdt of Cincinnati and Fred J. Sietz of Chicago as examples of professionals from afar who were now to occupy first chairs formerly the prized possessions of Marcelli's students or ex-students. He opened July 14 with a concert including Beethoven's *Symphony, No. 5*, the *Euryanthe* overture, and *Siegfried's Funeral March*. July 21 was "Viennese Night." But instead of only one night of the season centered around a subject, each of the remaining six concerts in 1931 became a "theme" night. He labelled the concert on July 28 "Scandinavian Night." In succession, August 4 was called "Soloist Night," August 11 was named "Novelty Night" (with John Doane playing the Spreckels Organ in Pietro Yon's *Concerto Gregoriano* for organ and orchestra),³¹ and August 10 was titled "American Night" (highlighted by Hadley's "Entrance of Montezuma" from his opera *Azora*, Cadman's *Oriental Rhapsody from Omar Khayyam*, and by five orchestrated *Woodland Sketches* by MacDowell). August 25 was "Italian Night." The closing concert on September 1, "Request Night," included the Franck Symphony.

Flushed by his mounting successes, Marcelli in the fall of 1931 published his first article in a national magazine, "The Birth of a Civic Orchestra," *Musical Courier*, November 28, 1931, pages 43 and 50. Under the pen name of "Veritas" he contributed next winter a series of nine articles to the *San Diego Herald*, collectively entitling them "As It Sounds" (weekly from January 7 through March 3, 1932).

In the summer of 1932 he began dedicating concerts to specific individuals—the opening July 26 program, for instance, to local maecenas Murray C. Pfefferkorn. The most ambitious item included in any of the four remaining 1932 programs August 2, 9, 16, and 23 was Tchaikovsky's *Symphony, No. 4* performed on August 16. He began the 1933 series on July 18 with a concert climaxed by Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*. A week later he dedicated the second concert that included the Franck Symphony to Gertrude Gilbert, Amphion Club president to its disso-

lution in 1948. The sixth and last of the 1933 series, August 17, included his orchestration of the song *As I Came Down from Lebanon*³² by his longtime program annotator who had taught music at San Diego High School 1917 to 1926, Alice Barnett (*b* Lewiston, Illinois, May 26, 1886; *d* San Diego, August 28, 1975). The first of the series of only three concerts in 1934 (July 24, 31, and August 7) included Dvořák's *New World Symphony* and a three-minute *minuetto* by Giovanni Bolzoni (1841–1919) published at Chicago as a string sextet that same year, 1934. The latter became so much a favorite with him that he requested its performance 23 years later at his own funeral (occurring Sunday August 13, 1967).³³

Marcelli again included it at Hollywood Bowl Saturday night, August 11, 1934, in a concert that began with *Die Fledermaus* overture and continued with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Caprice espagnole* and Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*. Los Angeles critical reaction to his debut as a conductor at Hollywood Bowl was uniformly favorable. Bertha McCord Kinsely in *Saturday Night*, August 18, reported that he had received an ovation. Bruno David Usher in *Beverly Hills Town Topics* especially lauded his reading of the *Caprice espagnole*. Wallace Moody in the *San Diego Union* of August 14 (7:1) reported that over 300 San Diegans had trekked by auto to the concert.

Inspired by the wider fame that Marcelli was gaining as a conductor, the orchestra board (of which Mrs. Marshall O. Terry was currently president) began planning as early as the Spring of 1934 for an all-year orchestra. The board's plans were touted in the *Union*, May 6 (9:1), July 22 (3:1), and August 26 (6:4) in articles by Marcelli's enthusiastic advocate, Wallace Moody. But for the time being, financial backing was available for only the expanded summer seasons of 1935 and 1936.

During the 1935 California-Pacific International Exposition, San Diego Symphony's twice-daily concerts conducted by Marcelli at Ford Bowl (dedicated May 29, 1935; renamed Balboa Park Bowl in 1949) began July 10,

³²Marcelli originally orchestrated *As I Came Down from Lebanon* (lyrics by Clinton Scollard descriptive of a sunset scene) for a performance by the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1924.

³³His funeral music included also items by J. S. Bach (choral fugue, transcribed by him and published by Carl Fischer in 1939), Handel (*Largo*), Pergolesi (*Nina*), and Mendelssohn (two chorales). Dr. Garry White conducted the fifteen players.

³¹Published at New York by J. Fischer & Bro. in 1920.



with a two-week series sponsored by the bowl's donor, Henry Ford. At the season's close, the San Diego Symphony played the week that included Labor Day. The Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seattle, San Francisco, and Portland Symphonies occupied the intervening weeks in the Bowl. During these intervening weeks Marcelli taught summer session in the University of Southern California.

On September 6 (1935), Marcelli conducted the San Diego Symphony in an all-Charles Wakefield Cadman concert that was highlighted by *Trail Pictures* (listed as new) and *Dark Dancers* (with Cadman as piano soloist). Cadman's *Festal March*, originally for organ, opened the concert (which also included an intermezzo from *Shanewis* and songs).

On July 14, 1936, Nino's brother Ulderico guest-conducted one concert in the Ford Bowl 1936 season that extended from July 10 to September 6. On July 15 Nino conducted works by two of his San Diego composition protégés, Leo Scheer (*Los cargados*) and Joseph Giovanazzi (*American Sketch*), both of whom were violinists in the summer orchestra. The 72 members of the 1936 orchestra included also such later famous players as the hornists John H. Barrows and Sinclair Lott, as well as the percussionist Frederick Fennell.³⁴

During the 1937 summer season—Marcelli's last directing the orchestra that he had created—he conducted twelve concerts. Gambling on improved taste, he now gave programs as substantial as any being offered summer audiences elsewhere throughout the nation. The opening July 13 concert included Tchaikovsky's Fifth, the July 16 Liszt's *Les Préludes* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Caprice espagnole*. On July 20 he conducted an all-Wagner night; on July 23 Lillian Steuber soloed in Liszt's E flat piano concerto. Beethoven's Seventh came on Friday July 30. At the seventh concert on Tuesday, August 3, he conducted Charles H. Marsh's *Three Fairy Tales* composed at Paris in 1929. Consisting of a *Nocturne* ("Sleeping Beauty"), *Dance grotesque* ("Hobgoblin"), and *Valse* ("Cinderella"), these fairy tales were written by the newly appointed Federal Music Project director in San Diego and Orange Counties (resided in San Diego at 1824 Altura Place from 1937 through 1940).³⁵

³⁴For the names of all 72 players see *San Diego Union*, August 2, 1936, II 1:5.

³⁵Nikolai Sokoloff conducted Charles H. Marsh's *A Trojan Legend* at Ford Bowl during the San Diego Symphony 1939 summer season. See *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1939, A4:1 and August 5, A5:1-2.

At the next concert, including Sibelius's *Symphony No. 2*, Lyell Barbour (San Diego resident since 1931) played Saint-Saëns's *Concerto, No. 4*. The tenth concert of the season August 13 included Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* overture and violin concerto. On August 15 Fred[erick] Fennell played seven kettledrums in Kurt Striegler's percussion spectacular, entitled *Scherzo Caprice*. On August 17 political appointee Charles H. Marsh usurped the program to conduct Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*. August 20, the last concert of the season, Marcelli offered again his own *Araucanian Suite* as a valedictory.

The full damage to Marcelli contemplated by Federal Music Project director Charles H. Marsh began reaching public notice at the close of 1937 when the *Union* of December 28 (2:8) announced the appointment of "business leader" Joe E. Dryer to the executive board of the symphony, and when the *Union* on January 2, 1938 (3:3) carried the news that "beginning January 11 and continuing through June" the Symphony Association in cooperation with the Federal Music Project would sponsor two concerts each month, conducted by Julius Leib and guest conductors yet to be chosen. As a sop, Marcelli would be invited to conduct the opening concert in downtown Savoy Theatre.³⁶

The injustice of thus trashing Marcelli did not escape public denunciation. In the *Union* of January 13 [1938], II, 1:1, nationally respected critic, music encyclopaedia editor, and annotator Havrah Hubbard excoriated the Federal Music Project set-up. He next roasted the "socially proper" San Diego patrons who cheerfully paid large prices to hear the visiting Los Angeles Philharmonic play, but contributed not a dime to the San Diego Symphony. Six days later the *Union* of January 19, II, 1:1, carried an interview with at least one symphony orchestra executive committee member not under Marsh's thumb, Armistead B. Carter. In full agreement with Hubbard,

³⁶In the *San Diego Union* of August 23, 1940 (A10:1-2), Marcelli published an open letter stating that he never withdrew as conductor of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, but had not been asked to conduct since 1938. Five days later in the *Union* of August 28, 1940 (A10:1-2) Donald B. Smith, president in 1940 of the Board of Directors, San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association, countered Marcelli with the statement that on account of Federal Music Project sponsorship, Marcelli was in 1938 offered "one-half of the concerts, which he refused." No such offer of "one-half of the [1938] concerts" is documented in any of Marcelli's meticulously kept business correspondence now on file at the San Diego Historical Society.



Carter praised him for bringing into the open the festering orchestra situation.

But to no avail. Marcelli conducted no San Diego Symphony concerts in 1938. Instead, Julius Leib conducted all concerts at the Savoy Theatre through May 2. "Czechoslovakian" Alois Reiser conducted the first Ford Bowl concert May 30. Constantin Bakaleinikoff, "noted Russian conductor and director of music at MGM in Hollywood for three years," directed the July 8, August 12, and August 29 Ford Bowl concerts. Erich Korngold, "composer of the music for the movies *Robin Hood*, *Prince and the Pauper*, and *Anthony Adverse*," conducted on July 19. Eventually, however, movie celebrities ran dry. The winter season therefore had to begin at Savoy Theatre November 29, 1938, under direction of James Sample, "Los Angeles Federal Symphony's assistant conductor" (*Union*, November 25 [1938], 5:1).

Despite his no longer conducting the San Diego Symphony, 1939 became a banner year for Marcelli because of the world premiere at Ford Bowl on August 22, 23, and 24 of his two-hour light opera, *Carmelita*. In April of that year Carl Fischer (New York) published the 113-page piano-vocal score and placed the orchestral materials on rental.³⁷ In recognition of Marcelli's unique services to San Diego's youthful musicians, the San Diego Parent-Teachers Association sponsored the premiere performances.

Set in New Mexico before 1846, the three acts of *Carmelita* (libretto by Helen Bagge of San Diego) unfold the tale of a youthful United States surveyor, Henry Post, who leads the fight against a band of Navajos plotting destruction of a wealthy landowner's ranch. While so doing, he rescues a hostage held by the Navajos, Doña Consuelo

³⁷Carl Fischer had previously published his art songs for voice and piano, *Solitude* (1924), *Harp of Sunset* (1926), and *Song of the Andes* (1930). In 1942 Carl Fischer published the latter in an SSA arrangement, in 1947 for SSATB; and in 1944 took into its catalogue *Deep in the Forest*, an art song by Marcelli published at New York by Composers Music Corporation in 1924. In 1936 Carl Fischer issued *The Music Educator's Basic Method for String-Bass by Nino Marcelli, Supervisor of Instrumental Music, San Diego (California) City Schools*. Book I took the student from Half-Position through Second-Position, Book II Third-Position to Seventh. In the preface Marcelli wrote that for several years his string-bass class had run from "six to twelve students." The musical excerpts came from *Nutcracker*, *Marche slave*, *Danse macabre*, *Tannhäuser March*, and Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.

In 1937 Fischer issued a companion Marcelli method for cello.

Arguello. His gallantry wins the heart of the rancher's beautiful daughter Carmelita Valverde—who had previously been eyed by an aging slanderer, Don Pablo Arredondo de León. Carmelita's brother Carlos, amid all the fracas woos Sally Spencer, who to protect herself while travelling in New Mexico, had worn man's attire. The opera ends with a double wedding.

Interspersed with speech carrying forward the narrative, the 17 numbers comprising the music of *Carmelita* begin with an Introduction and Song of the Señoritas and conclude with a Song of the Americanos (No. 16) and Finale. When on July 15, 1947, Marcelli conducted three excerpts from *Carmelita* in a Ford Bowl concert sponsored by Scottish Rite Bodies of San Diego, the program notes stated that the Prelude to Act III was "based on a Kentucky mountain air," with which he had sought to characterize the United States surveyor and his party. On the other hand, in Act I he included a Bolero and a Habanera to evoke the New Mexico landowner's milieu. Not concerned, however, with historical or regional accuracy, Marcelli made no attempt anywhere to quote anything authentically New Mexican. The one item in *Carmelita* that Carl Fischer in 1940 published in a separate sheet music edition and continued selling until 1960 was a Song of Thanks from Act I that shares more the character of a Protestant hymn.

Carl Fischer, which had been Marcelli's publisher since 1924, also brought out in 1939 *The Marcelli Folio for Orchestra or Band*. Intended for high schools, this album contains an original *March Processional*, but the rest consists of arrangements. In 1941 Carl Fischer published the orchestral version of his *Ode to a Hero*³⁸ and in 1948 a band version. Encouraged by his successes, not only with Carl Fischer, but also with Boston Music Company³⁹ and Mills,⁴⁰ Marcelli began keeping careful records of his royalties, joined ASCAP in 1944, and had himself listed in the 1952 San Diego City Directory not as conductor or teacher but as "composer" dwelling at 2440½ Front Street.

³⁸John Barbirolli conducted *Ode to a Hero* at Los Angeles Philharmonic concerts in Los Angeles December 3 and 4, 1942 (*Union*, November 22, 1942 [C5:1-2] and in San Diego December 5 (*Union*, November 25 [A4:2] and December 6 [A25:1]).

³⁹Boston Music Company published his *Gavotte in G* and *Neapolitan Dance* for cello and piano in November 1944. The *Union* of August 6, 1944 (2:2) carried a story on the cover designed for both.

⁴⁰Mills published his *Music Box Minuet* for winds in 1946.



Teaching and instrumental music supervision did, however, remain his chief source of income⁴¹ until retirement from the San Diego school system in 1948. In the early years of World War II, he also continued doing summer guest teaching in various localities farther north. As examples: in the summer of 1940 he conducted a six-week series of symphony concerts in Monterey peninsula from June 24 to August 2 and in addition headed the summer school of music at Pacific Grove (*San Diego Union*, May 31, 1940 [8:3] and July 28, 1940 [4:8]). In 1941 he went to Spokane, Washington, to conduct the Northwestern High School and College Symphony Orchestra "comprised of the best students in the California-Western territory" (*Union*, October 15, 1944 [C4:1]). In January 1942, he organized a Community Orchestra that met Tuesday evenings in orchestra hall of San Diego High School. Intended to serve "as a sort of laboratory for musicians who enjoy studying symphonic music and for composers wishing to try out their orchestral works" this orchestra of civilian and service musicians provided welcome relief from members' tensions brought on by the war (*Union*, October 15, 1944 [C4:2]). After the war, it took on a more professional character. In the summer of 1942 he lectured at the University of Idaho, where *Carmelita* was performed during his visit; also while at Moscow he conducted the Idaho Symphony in a series of popular concerts (*Union*, May 17, 1942 [C4:1]).

His Masonic activities during the early World War II years included election January 1940 to be Master of San Diego Lodge No. 35, F. & A. M. As such, he wrote for Masonic publications several articles having nothing to do with music. His fellow Masons did aid him musically, however, by sponsoring the previously mentioned Ford Bowl concert Friday night, July 15, 1947. On this occasion he conducted "The Community Symphony of San Diego" in a program the second half of which was devoted exclusively to his own compositions. Earlier that year, on Thursday and Friday nights, March 27 and 28 (1947), *Carmelita* was revived in highly acclaimed performances at Russ Auditorium.

In 1948, the year of his wife's death, he retired from the school system at age only 58. On May 13, 1948, the *Union* (D2:4) published a tribute to him by

Dr. John Aseltine, Principal of San Diego High School. *The Union* of June 13, 1948 (D1) carried an interview with him, in which he stated that he was retiring after 28 years on doctor's orders. Reviewing his career, he said that before World War II he always had from 85 to 100 musicians in the High School orchestra that played two concerts each school year. He took credit for having persuaded John Barrows to switch from baritone to French horn, Robert Hester to English horn and oboe, Edward Janowsky from violin to viola. These and other players had, after high school, become nationally famous. (Not mentioned in the interview because her national fame had not yet been established was his latest protégée, Lois Wann, oboist.)

Now financially able to do so, and after several months of planning, he embarked for Chile. The Santiago newspaper *El Diario Ilustrado* of Thursday, March 3, 1949, took notice of his past connections with Chile. The Santiago public was reminded that "He was the first in Chile to conduct the nine Beethoven Symphonies" (*el primero que executó en Chile, con certera batuta de Director, la serie completa de las nueve Sinfonías de Beethoven*). In replying on March 22 to a San Diego friend's letter of January 24, 1949, he said that he had been met at Valparaíso by his three sisters and their eleven new families. Remarking that one-fourth of Chile's five million inhabitants lived at Santiago, he continued:

The new residential districts practically surround old Santiago. They are beautifully laid out and elegantly built. A good many of these homes and other important buildings are the works of one of my young nephews, Oscar Zaccarelli Marcelli. Of musical life and activities, I cannot tell anything yet. The summer is just ending, and the season does not begin until mid-fall.

In a letter partially published in the *San Diego Union* by March 27, 1949 (D 2:3), he similarly remarked on the "new and elegant buses" and "imposing new avenues, beautifully lined with green trees and masterpieces of architecture" that charmed him in Santiago.

On Sunday, June 5 (1949) his fellow ex-classmates from the Conservatorio Nacional programmed an Homenaje a Nino Marcelli at the Auditorium de la Radio del Pacifico (*entrada general \$20*). The ceremony included presentation of a diploma by Luisa Arancibia A., the president of the Centro Ex Alumnos del Conservatorio, and a greeting from Lily Salas of the Coro Santa Cecilia—which then

⁴¹According to his royalty account book at San Diego Historical Society, his total royalties received in the year 1940 amounted to \$598.82; in 1960 to \$685.56 (including \$125 from ASCAP).



closed the event with a performance of his "extremely beautiful" motet, *O salutaris*. The ceremony also included performance of the Prelude to Act III of *Carmelita*.

After having been given a certificate of merit by the Conservatorio Nacional in April, he was appointed an honorary member of its faculty July 20, 1949. However, after almost a year in Santiago, he decided to end his days in San Diego. On his return, the *Union*, January 15, 1950 (D4:3), published an article including these paragraphs:

Nino Marcelli, conductor-composer, has returned from a visit of almost a year in Santiago, Chile, the home of his youth. Marcelli's plans for the future are indefinite, but for the present at least, the conductor will make his headquarters at 2144 Third Avenue. The conductor's niece, Miss Angelica Campanini Marcelli, of Santiago, is here to see that her uncle has proper care until he recovers completely from a recent severe illness.

Marcelli says he was "amazed" at the musical activity in Santiago. "Music is boiling down there. There is an excellent symphony orchestra conducted by a fine young Chilean conductor, Victor Tevah. This orchestra gives a concert each week during a six-month season. All members of the government supported National Symphony are associated with the music department of the University of Chile. They are paid throughout the year and, under a system similar to the Civil Service here, they have the rights of social security and retirement pay, as well as medical care."

In the year of his return was organized a "San Diego Philharmonic," which Leslie Hodge—beginning November 28, 1950—conducted for three seasons. "Dedicated to providing all-year-round entertainment," the Philharmonic included some of the same personnel that played the San Diego Symphony's summer seasons under Robert Shaw's direction at Balboa Park Bowl 1953 through 1957. After Marcelli guest-conducted the Philharmonic at Russ Auditorium in its annual maintenance fund concert May 17, 1953, Bruno David Ussher hailed him in the *San Diego Tribune* of May 18, as "San Diego's first musical citizen" in an article headed "Avalanche of Appreciation Rolls Down on Marcelli's Conductor Artistry." Preceding the concert, Edward B. Wheeler, president of Local 325, American Federation of Musicians, presented him with a Certificate of Merit that recalled his nonpareil service to San Diego's musical life during three decades.

In 1956, at one of his guest appearances outside

the city that were becoming increasingly rare, he directed the San Diego Symphonic Band in the last of its summer series of eight concerts at the Ocean-side Beach Stadium (*Union*, September 2, 1956, E3:6). That same year the San Diego City Directory listed his new occupation in retirement as "interpreter, Federal Court."

More intensive newspaper coverage of his activities awaited 1960, the year that his seventieth birthday was celebrated in various ways. On April 12, 1960, at the California Music Educators Convention in Monterey, he received the \$1,000 Mancini Teaching Award⁴² for his 28 years of outstandingly successful high school instrumental instruction and in recognition of his excellent published double bass and cello methods (*Union*, March 22, 1960 [8:3]). On August 28, 1960, more than 300 former students gave him a testimonial dinner and reception at El Cortez Hotel—some who attended coming from as far away as New York and Texas (*Union*, August 29 [15:7-8] and 30 [5:1-2]). On December 3, 1960, the *San Diego Union* announced that the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) had given him a substantial cash award for his published and unpublished compositions.

An article on the history of orchestras in San Diego in the *Union* of January 10, 1965 (3:1-8) stated that to him "is due the gratitude of the community for creating the nucleus for a permanent symphony orchestra." The first summer concert of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler on July 11, 1967, in Civic Theater honored Marcelli for having founded the symphony orchestra (*Union*, July 9, 1967 [3:1-8]). His obituary in the *Union* of August 5, 1967 (B1:2-3) hailed him as a central figure in the San Diego musical scene for over a half-century and called him "probably the only man in the world to build a full-fledged symphony from a group of high school musicians."⁴³

⁴²John E. Kinder of Niles, California, established this award to honor Frank Mancini.

⁴³The obituary of the *Union* of August 5, 1967 (B1:2-3) carried the heading: "Nino Marcelli Dies, Symphony Founder." After Masonic funeral services at Lewis Colonial Mortuary, he was interred at Cypress View Mausoleum. "In Memoriam Don Nino Marcelli," *Revista Musical Chilena*, XXI/101 (July-September, 1967), 122, spoke of him "como alumno predilecto del maestro Enrique Soro" and referred to him as "en su espíritu un gran chileno."