

Paige's Music

Founded: 1871

Location: 605 (later 607) Main Street, Terre Haute (1871–86); 642 (originally 641; also 640) Wabash Avenue (1887–); two locations on Dixie Bee Road, 3501 and 4004 (–1977); 5252 East Sixty-fifth Street, Indianapolis (1977–)

William H. Paige came to Terre Haute in 1868 and taught vocal music in the city schools. Originally from outside Cleveland, Ohio, he attended Oberlin College and Ohio State Normal School of Music before moving to New Castle, Indiana, to teach school. In 1871 he opened the W. H. Paige & Company. Music House on the south side of Main Street in Terre Haute. Paige and his partner, a prominent real estate agent named W. B. Wharton, sold a variety of musical instruments, including organs, pianos, accordions, concertinas, and guitars, as well as music books and related merchandise. “We have no desire to injure or supplant other dealers in our line,” the store announced in its newsletter, *Musical Guest*. “We bid them God-speed! There is room enough for all.”

Business was brisk, and Paige quit teaching in 1873 to devote his full energies to the store. His brother-in-law, E. C. Kilbourne, moved to Terre Haute and purchased Wharton's interest. Paige, in turn, bought out Kilbourne in September 1878. Between 1885 and 1887 Paige moved the musical instrument store to 641 Wabash Avenue. He specialized in pianos and organs, registering average annual sales of \$16,000 for Chickering pianos and \$10,000 for Mason & Hamlin organs by 1888. Before the turn of the century Frederick L. Paige joined the company. By 1902 the store was known as Fred L. Paige & Company. Fred later brought Warner H. Paige into the company. Eventually the store became known as Paige's Music. Musical instruments were the store's primary stock, although in the 1910s, it began to sell “Talking Machines,” or

phonographs and in the 1930s radios. Both Warner H. Paige's son and grandson became involved in the family business. In the mid-1970s Paige's Music expanded, opening a second store on Dixie Bee Road in Terre Haute and between 1976 and 1977 one in Indianapolis at 5252 East Sixty-fifth Street. The Terre Haute stores closed in the mid-1980s. By the 1990s Paige's Music specialized in the sale, rental, and repair of band and orchestra instruments.