

THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER

March

"The Stars and Stripes Forever" is the most popular march ever written. It is famous not alone in the United States—but throughout the world. Sousa's interpretation of his own marches was in many instances quite different from that designated in the printed copies; and I feel that these interpretations should become traditional. He frequently let the brasses (or most of them) rest during a soft strain, and often signaled his drummers for special accents not marked in the parts.

Having known Sousa intimately, I am herewith making a few suggestions as to the way he performed "The Stars and Stripes Forever." First of all he never played his marches as gallops, as so many bandmasters do. He also insisted on the observance of all dynamic markings. For instance there is a *p* (*piano*) in the ninth bar of the first strain which bandmasters seldom observe. Then in the second strain, Sousa omitted first and second cornets and trombones the first time starting on the last half of the second ending of the first strain. On the repeat the full band played. The Trio was played softly the first time, with the accented notes as marked. The Interlude is fortissimo—with a big decrescendo starting four bars before the Grandioso—just before the piccolo solo. The Grandioso is played softly the first time except for the piccolos. The trombones do not play the counter melody the first time. Upon the repeat everyone plays *ff* until the end. Sousa had the piccolos, cornets, trumpets and trombones come to the front of the stage for the second Grandioso. He did not take the finale at a slower tempo as so many bandmasters do.

Mr. August Helmecke has revised the drum parts so that they are now printed precisely as Mr. Sousa had them played in his own band. He has also verified the suggestions set forth by me as being authentic. Mr. Helmecke is the greatest authority on the correct interpretation of the Sousa marches today.

EDWIN FRANKO GOLDMAN

At the turn of the twentieth century, John Philip Sousa (1854-1932) and the mandolin were each in their heyday, as the facsimile title page at right clearly demonstrates. Sousa's manuscript for this classic American march is dated Christmas 1896 and all of the arrangements at right were issued simultaneously in 1897. In fact, fewer arrangements were made than would appear; there was simply a set of "mix and match" parts, by different arrangers, that were assembled in several different ways. The first mandolin part was arranged by John N. Klohr and was used for all six of the mandolin versions. Klohr also arranged the guitar accompaniment that was used for three of the six. The guitar solo version was made by C. Henlein, but was combined with the accompaniment by Klohr for the guitar duet. I do not doubt that the same piano part was also used for both the mandolin and banjo arrangements.

In all of the arrangements mentioned above, the music was transposed from E $\flat$ to D and many things were omitted. My arrangement is also in D, but I have gone back to the original band version to restore the missing parts, thus making it much closer to Sousa's intentions than the earlier mandolin versions were.

The mandola part is notated for the octave mandola, but is also playable on a tenor mandola. The sections of the first mandolin and mandola parts that are put in brackets are to be played the second time only. This, and the p-ff markings in the final strain are not taken from the printed music, but from recordings I have heard of Sousa conducting the piece himself.

Neil Gladd

Acknowledgements - To the staffs at the Library of Congress Music Division and the United States Marine Band Library for their help in obtaining copies of Sousa's manuscript, a complete set of the original band parts, and the various mandolin versions.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE FOR THIS
WORK PROVIDED IN HONOR AND
FOND MEMORY OF DOUGLAS M. SMITH,
CHAPPAQUA, NEW YORK.