




**Frederick Fennell**

Photo: Decca

## FREDERICK FENNELL conducting the EASTMAN WIND ENSEMBLE

### JOHN PHILIP SOUSA (1854-1932)

1	Sound Off	2:55	14	The Pride of the Wolverines	3:33
2	Nobles of the Mystic Shrine	3:25	15	Golden Jubilee	3:19
3	Sabre and Spurs	2:58	16	The Gridiron Club	3:16
4	The Picadore	2:51	17	New Mexico	2:53
5	Our Flirtation	2:37	18	Sesqui-Centennial Exposition	3:18
6	The High School Cadets	2:35	19	The Black Horse Troop	3:13
7	The Invincible Eagle	3:31	20	The Kansas Wildcats	2:36
8	Bullets and Bayonets	3:28	21	Manhattan Beach	2:03
9	The Liberty Bell	3:26	22	Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company	2:21
10	Riders for the Flag	2:19	23	The National Game	2:50
11	Solid Men to the Front!	3:48	24	The Glory of the Yankee Navy	3:19
12	The Gallant Seventh	3:14			
13	The Rifle Regiment	3:13			

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Musical supervisor: Harold Lawrence  
Chief engineer & Technical supervisor: C. Robert Fine  
Associate engineer: Robert Eberenz  
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Wilma Cozart Fine  
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preparation of these SACD transfers.

## JOHN PHILIP SOUSA: SOUND OFF! SOUSA ON REVIEW

In addition to writing over a hundred marches, John Philip Sousa (1854–1932) also wrote an autobiography 365 pages long. Entitled *Marching Along* and published in 1928, it is a rambling and reflective account of his fascinating life, somewhat frustrating to the reader who is anxious above all to get to the point: Sousa does not get down to the facts of writing marches until page 358! But then he is unquestionably precise in his observations:

Marches, of course, are well known to have a peculiar appeal to me. Although during my busy life I have written ten operas and a hundred other things—cantatas, symphonic poems, suites, waltzes, songs, dances and the like—marches are, in a sense, my

musical children.... The march speaks to a fundamental rhythm in the human organization and is answered. A march stimulates every center of vitality, wakens the imagination.... I can speak with confidence because I have seen men profoundly moved by a few measures of a really inspired march. But a march must be good. It must be as free from padding as a marble statue. Every line must be carved with unerring skill. Once padded, it ceases to be a march. There is no form of musical composition where the harmonic structure must be more clean-cut. The whole process is an exacting one. There must be a melody which appeals to the musical and unmusical alike. There must be no confusion in

counterpoints. The composer must, to be sure, follow accepted harmonization; but that is not enough. He must be gifted with the ability to pick and choose here and there, to throw off the domination of any one tendency. If he is a so-called purist in music, that tendency will rule his marches and will limit their appeal. How are marches written? I suppose every composer has a somewhat similar experience in his writing. With me the thought comes, sometimes slowly, sometimes with ease and rapidity. The idea gathers force in my brain and takes form not only melodically but harmonically at the same time. It must be complete before I commit it to paper. Then I instrument it according to the effects it requires.... I do not, of course, manufacture my themes deliberately; the process isn't direct or arbitrary enough for

that. It is not a nonchalant morning's work.

The twenty-four marches presented here span forty-nine years of Sousa's creative activity: 1880 (*Our Flirtation*) to 1928 (*Golden Jubilee*). The years between were filled with such wide-ranging activities, so many concerts, so many marches, so much traveling, that it is not too surprising to discover that Sousa failed to leave behind even the most basic information concerning the composition of many of his most famous creations. His autobiography includes no reference to several of these marches. There is, of course, no official documentation of the majority of his manuscripts, and thus, save for those marches to which he made specific reference in his autobiography or for which a dedication was printed on the solo cornet part, all comment is but the purest conjecture.

[Since Dr. Fennell penned these notes,

a biography of Sousa by Paul Bierley was published: *John Philip Sousa: American Phenomenon* (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1973)—in Fennell's words, "the most comprehensive overview of Sousa the conductor...." That same year, Bierley's *John Philip Sousa: A Descriptive Catalog of His Works* was published by the University of Illinois Press (Urbana, 1973). It was updated in 1984, published under the title *The Works of John Philip Sousa* (Columbus, Ohio: Integrity Press).—Ed.]

Any Sousa anthology is certain to include a host of marches that are totally unfamiliar both to the public and to performing musicians. Why at least half of those recorded here do not share the fame of *Washington Post* or *King Cotton* is a question that only the public and the performer could answer. Of the two, Sousa preferred to serve the former, for he never claimed to be anything other than an

entertainer of the public. The title "March King" was conferred upon him when he was leader of the Marine Band, by an anonymous writer for what he referred to as "some obscure brass-band journal, published in England...." He wore the crown and raiment of that office with rare devotion, being more stimulated by its responsibilities than enervated by its privileges. Following his own belief that "subsidy is the death of art," Sousa, as "king," did not freeze his creative assets in a "royal bank" and retreat behind the security of palace walls where, in the ancient practice of monarchs, he could rule the future from the past. Sousa was a different kind of "king," for he continued to produce his marches, never fearing, for instance, that his next would fail simply because it had been his fate to write the *Stars and Stripes Forever!*

*Sound Off* (1893) is the first of Sousa's lesser-known marches in this album

and, like *Liberty Bell* and *Picadore*, it was written during the first years with his own band. The familiar bugle call "Sound Off" was well-known to Sousa from his recent service as leader of the Marine Band. In spite of its title, it is not a regimental march in the spirit or fashion of *Sabre and Spurs*, and any musical quotation of the three-note bugle call to "Sound Off" does not appear until the trio. The march has an unorthodox introduction and first strain in the key of C Minor, and the bass drum after-beats in the first strain are Sousa's, not mine. But like the chanting of the drill sergeant and the crunching of boots, *Sound Off* swings along in a compelling and infectious manner.

*Nobles of the Mystic Shrine* (1923) is unique among Sousa's marches: it has a part for the harp! It also calls for triangle and tambourine as part of the percussion texture. The addition of these instruments to the normal complement of reeds, brasses, and

percussion found in his scorings was intended to provide those touches of color that are such an integral part of the "Turkish Music" so intimately associated with public appearances of Shrine marching units. Cymbals, triangles, and tambourines were some of the many fascinations the Crusaders beheld in their contacts with life in the Holy Land when they sought to wrest it from the Turks (1096-1271). The Noblemen of Europe were indeed so fascinated by the tromperies of the Turkish and Saracen forces that they brought them back to Europe and adapted them to their own ceremonial life. One of the most unusual of these noisemakers is the Turkish Crescent, known also as a Schellenbaum (bell tree), Pavillion, or Jingling Johnnie; it was first used to signal the passage of a person of high station. This arrangement of bells was mounted on a long staff and carried with great dignity by an imposing personality who, through the years, developed a

technique of brandishing it about in a most skillful manner. As it was whirled about, everything but the round silver ball flew off—leaving the shaft topped by the ball, thus providing us with today's drum major baton. The use of a modern reconstruction of the Crescent in Sousa's march *Nobles of the Mystic Shrine* seemed most appropriate. It can be heard in the noisy outbursts of the first strain (so typically "Turkish," in which Sousa, who was a Shriner, sought to capture the spirit of his title), in the last strain of the trio, and in the final decay of sound as the march comes to its conclusion.

The traditional *esprit de corps* among those who were *Riders for the Flag* (1926) marked with honor the service of cavalry units of the United States Army, from the Revolution until their replacement in the recent past by armored units. Sousa was a devoted rider himself, and two of the marches recorded here were written for his

fellow horsemen. *Sabre and Spurs* (1927) became the "March of the American Cavalry." Both these classic marches are written after the rhythm of galloping horses and both employ the sounds of the traditional cavalry bugle as the basic musical materials in the trio. In addition to its effectiveness as a cavalry march, *Riders for the Flag* has always struck me as typical of the two-step dance-march of Sousa's earliest successes, such as *Washington Post*.

In his youth, Sousa had "a very hazy idea of the value of money" and "no adequate idea of the value of my compositions." His sense of values was indeed so hazy and inadequate as to allow him to sell "*Semper Fidelis*, *The Picadore*, *The Crusader*, *Washington Post*, *High School Cadets*, and several others, under a contract to Harry Coleman, the music publisher in Philadelphia, for thirty-five dollars apiece, and I was also to furnish three arrangements, one for piano, one for

orchestra, and one for band!" But as was the case with Antonín Dvořák and his second set of Slavonic Dances, Sousa's next brace of marches cost his publisher most of the bonanza reaped from the first. *High School Cadets* (1892) was written for a company of cadet students in Washington. *The Picadore* (1889), also from the first of Coleman's publications, is exemplary of the warmth and charm in Sousa's early style.

As a young musician, Sousa played the violin in various theaters in Washington and Philadelphia. He was particularly interested in operetta, which flourished everywhere and to which his particular talents as a composer and orchestrator seemed ideally suited. After a series of routine jobs as an arranger of "opera fantasies" and following a long association with Philadelphia productions of *Pirates of Penzance* as an orchestral player and *Pinafore* as a

conductor, Sousa received an offer to write the music for a new musical comedy, *Our Flirtations* (1880). He had recently married Jennie Bellis, a member of his *Pinafore* company, and when that show closed he took his "bride, a couple quires of music paper, and a large capacity for work, to Cape May and straightway wrote the piece." The march recorded here is all that survives of the score, but *Our Flirtations* probably held a warm place in his memory, for he was in the midst of his tour west with that company when he received word that he was wanted in Washington to lead the Marine Band—a summons that was to change his entire life. *Our Flirtation* [Sousa confusingly limited the flirtations to a single event in the march.—Ed.] is different from any of his marches thus far known to me. In it I perceive the unmistakable spirit of the Strausses of Vienna, uniting "Waltz King" and "March King." Sousa's later operettas, *El Capitan*, *The Charlatan*,

and *The Bride Elect* were great successes in their time, but it is the marches from them that have survived.

*Invincible Eagle* dates from 1901 and was written during Sousa's first tour with the Marine Band. They played for the month of June at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, and Sousa wrote this march commemorating that Exposition. The spirit of 1918 provided Sousa with his march and title, *Solid Men to the Front*. Virtuosity of a special kind is demanded from the low brass section in the first two strains, and its trio is a model of the college fight songs that came with the rise of football. Another march from the period of World War I was *Bullets and Bayonets*, which Sousa wrote in 1919 for "the Officers and Men of the U.S. Infantry."

Sousa seems always to have been able to provide the appropriate title to his marches, and he rarely wrote about

the manner of choice or the order in which they came to him. Concerning *The Liberty Bell*, however, he wrote: "During the Trocadero engagement [Chicago, 1893] I brought out *The Liberty Bell*. I had finished the march, but had not determined what its title should be, when on entering the Auditorium one day I chanced to see a spectacle there, called *America*. I was impressed by the very artistic scenic drop which depicted the Liberty Bell. At the end of the performance I went into the lobby of the Auditorium Hotel to inquire for my mail. A letter from my wife informed me that our little boy, Philip, had paraded that day in Philadelphia with his kindergarten class in honor of the Liberty Bell. The two incidents decided me. I called my new march *The Liberty Bell*...."

Sousa's 101st march was *The Gallant Seventh*, and he "brought it out" at a gala concert at the old New York Hippodrome on November 5, 1922,

celebrating the thirtieth season of "Sousa's Band." The Seventh Regiment of New York has long been known for its gallantry in the service of our country. On the occasion of the first performance of *The Gallant Seventh*, Sousa augmented his band by that of the Seventh Regiment. Listening to this marvelous example of the Sousa style one cannot fail to comprehend him at the height of his mastery of marches.

*The Rifle Regiment* (1886) was written for the 3rd Infantry, and it is one of the many he sold to publisher Harry Coleman for thirty-five dollars a title. It is one of his finest regimental marches and contains unusual structural features, such as an extended introduction that is repeated and a break-strain that is similarly lengthy and equally unique.

One of Sousa's most unusual marches is the one he wrote in 1928 for the Governor and the people of New

Mexico. Sousa's skein was running out, but he had a few more good ones yet to give when he wrote those final marches. *New Mexico March* is one in which Sousa departs considerably from his customary observance of traditional march forms. Rarely did he attempt to color his marches with props or borrowed tunes, feeling, perhaps, that an appropriate title on a good, solid march was all he needed to provide. But when he decided to shed his traditions, he went all the way. *New Mexico* begins like many of his marches, after which he launches into a musical history of New Mexico, embracing with appropriate effects the music of the Indian, the cavalry, the Spanish, the Mexican, and concluding with a happy fusion of these diverse elements.

The Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston was honored in 1924 by one of Sousa's traditionally solid regimental marches, one in which

he included their appropriate song "Auld Lang Syne" as the complete trio.

In 1925 he wrote one of his best marches, *The Black Horse Troop*. This is a regimental march of classic content and proportions, one which serves as a model for all that are similar to it. Sousa wrote it for a famous band of Cleveland horsemen, Troop A, a magnificent mounted unit of the most beautiful black animals man ever rode. I saw them ride many times in my youth, including their performance at the concert of Sousa's band to which my father took me when he played the march for the first time. Sousa was a devoted horseman and owned a beautiful black Arabian steed called Aladdin, which mount threw him, wrenching his right shoulder, causing him thenceforwards to adopt that conducting style in which he swung his arm from the elbow rather than the shoulder. Much more than Sousa's talent for writing marches is

present in *The Black Horse Troop*; his love for horses must surely have helped to make this one of his finest creations.

When Sousa was leader of the Marine Band (1880-1892) he presided over the music for the meetings of the Gridiron Club. Later, as his fame grew, it was he who listened while others played, and for his colleagues in this famous Washington fellowship he wrote his march *The Gridiron Club* (1926). That same season he brought out another of his superior marches, *The Pride of the Wolverines*, written for Mayor John W. Smith and the people of Detroit.

In his careful salutations to important peoples, places, and things, Sousa wrote a march for that hallowed American institution, baseball. He dedicated it to its most famous commissioner, Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, and called it *The National Game* (1925).

*The Glory of the Yankee Navy* (1910) may have been part of an operetta on the subject, "The Yankee Girl"; Sousa spent his boyhood in and around the Navy Yard section of Washington, and while he served in the Marine Corps before he became a Lt. Commander in the Navy, he seems to have had a long-held and deep affection for the Yankee navy.

*Sesqui-Centennial Exposition* was written to observe the 150th Anniversary of the Republic of the United States, a much-celebrated occasion and one to which Sousa contributed his most appropriate service.

*The Kansas Wildcats* honors that State, its University, and all that goes with this famous plains country. Sousa is alleged to have produced the march for a visit to the State in the early 1920s.

Another of his earliest march efforts was one he wrote for the President of the Long Island Railroad, Austin Corbin, who happened to be the owner of Manhattan Beach, a famous seaside resort to which Sousa often brought his band in the initial seasons of his travels. The march he wrote for *Manhattan Beach* dates from the year of this first visit, 1893; it is the briefest of Sousa's marches and one that, to me, seems to invite a bright and moving tempo.

By the time Sousa had reached the fiftieth year of his career as a conductor he had conducted in all of the great and humble places of the world; for both the great and the humble people he met, he often left the token of his highest esteem, a march with their name on it. *Golden Jubilee* was his own salute to himself, observing fifty years of conducting that began in the theater pits of Philadelphia and took him around the

world and into the hearts of all who ever saw him lead his famous band. Composers do not usually write pieces for themselves—but then, John Philip Sousa was not the usual composer.

All the marches recorded on this disc were played by the full instrumentation of the Eastman Wind Ensemble from the published editions. Sousa's Marine Band of 1891 contained 49 players (26 reeds, 20 brasses, 3 percussion). The Eastman Wind Ensemble personnel lists 52 players: 25 reeds, 19 brasses, 6 percussion, harp, and string contrabass.

#### *Notes by Frederick Fennell*

Quotations from Sousa's autobiography, *Marching Along* (Boston: Hale, Cushman & Flint, 1927)

## MERCURY LIVING PRESENCE ON SUPER AUDIO CD

In the early 1990s these legendary recordings were successfully transferred to the digital medium of Compact Disc, making the famous Mercury Living Presence catalogue available once again. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, these recordings are being made further available through the new high-resolution digital medium of Super Audio CD.

But the aim of the engineering team has remained the same – to capture as accurately and completely as possible the true sound of the original tapes and film masters. In this, they are assisted by the greatly increased resolution, frequency response and dynamic range offered by SACD's DSD (Direct Stream Digital) technology. Even more dramatically, the multi-channel capability of SACD allows, for the first time, the listener to experience these recordings in their original three-channel format.

As with the CD transfers in the 1990s, only original masters were used for these new SACD releases. For the transfers themselves, Saki Magnetics three-channel heads (specially built for this series) were mounted on a Studer A80R ½" or Studer A820 1" recorder. Both

machines were substantially modified to optimise tape reproduction. Playback equalisation was adjusted to provide an NAB characteristic of that used for the original recording, and the analogue-to-digital conversion was done exclusively via DSD, using dCS equipment. This combination of superior head construction, high quality electronics and transport, and direct-to-DSD conversion, results in a very high quality transfer: there is less risk of wow and flutter, a better signal-to-noise ratio, and because the signal path incorporates no transformers, there is less possibility of distortion.

Throughout the entire process, repeated comparisons were made both to a playback of the original masters on an Ampex 300 machine previously belonging to Wilma Cozart Fine and to the original CD transfers which she herself prepared.

Because of the historical significance of the Mercury Living Presence recordings, it was decided to retain (as with the previous CD releases) the original LP covers and liner notes, as well as the original CD stereo mix prepared by Wilma Cozart Fine in the 1990s.

**MERCURY  
LIVING PRESENCE****THIS DISC PLAYS ON ALL CD PLAYERS**

This Mercury Living Presence SACD of Sousa Marches presents, for the first time, Frederick Fennell's definitive performances in their original 3-channel (left, right & centre) versions. In addition to this direct-to-DSD 3-channel stereo, the disc includes a new DSD stereo, plus the original CD transfer.

**FREDERICK FENNELL conducting the EASTMAN WIND ENSEMBLE****JOHN PHILIP SOUSA (1854-1932)**

- |           |                             |      |
|-----------|-----------------------------|------|
| <b>1</b>  | Sound Off                   | 2.55 |
| <b>2</b>  | Nobles of the Mystic Shrine | 3.25 |
| <b>3</b>  | Sabre and Spurs             | 2.58 |
| <b>4</b>  | The Picadore                | 2.51 |
| <b>5</b>  | Our Flirtation              | 2.37 |
| <b>6</b>  | The High School Cadets      | 2.35 |
| <b>7</b>  | The Invincible Eagle        | 3.31 |
| <b>8</b>  | Bullets and Bayonets        | 3.28 |
| <b>9</b>  | The Liberty Bell            | 3.26 |
| <b>10</b> | Riders for the Flag         | 2.19 |
| <b>11</b> | Solid Men to the Front!     | 3.48 |
| <b>12</b> | The Gallant Seventh         | 3.14 |
| <b>13</b> | The Rifle Regiment          | 3.13 |
| <b>14</b> | The Pride of the Wolverines | 3.33 |
| <b>15</b> | Golden Jubilee              | 3.19 |
| <b>16</b> | The Gridiron Club           | 3.16 |

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|-----------|--|------|
| <b>17</b> | New Mexico                                 | 2.53 |
| <b>18</b> | Sesqui-Centennial Exposition               | 3.18 |
| <b>19</b> | The Black Horse Troop                      | 3.13 |
| <b>20</b> | The Kansas Wildcats                        | 2.36 |
| <b>21</b> | Manhattan Beach                            | 2.03 |
| <b>22</b> | Ancient and Honorable<br>Artillery Company | 2.21 |
| <b>23</b> | The National Game                          | 2.50 |
| <b>24</b> | The Glory of the Yankee<br>Navy            | 3.19 |

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