The Stars and Stripes Forever
by: John Philip Sousa

Original Copyright: 1897
By: John Church

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John Philip Sousa

**DOB:** November 6th, 1854 (Washington, DC)

**DOD:** March 6th, 1932 (Reading, PA)

John Philip Sousa wrote the most famous American military marches of all time, including "Stars and Stripes Forever," earning him the nickname "the March King"; he was also known as a great bandleader, and organized the famed concert and military group, Sousa's Band. Born in Washington, D.C., on November 6, 1854, Sousa followed in the footsteps of his father, a musician in the U.S. Marine Corps, and enlisted by the age of 14. Before this, Sousa had studied violin with John Esputa. While active in the Marines, he composed his first march, "Salutation."

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**Stars and Stripes Forever** (march) is considered the finest march ever written, and at the same time one of the most patriotic ever conceived. As reported in the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* (May 15, 1897) "... It is stirring enough to rouse the American eagle from his crag, and set him to shriek exultantly while he hurls his arrows at the aurora borealis." (referring to the concert the Sousa Band gave the previous day at the Academy of Music).\(^1\)

The march was not quite so well received though and actually got an over average rating for a new Sousa march. Yet, its popularity grew as Mr. Sousa used it during the Spanish-American War as a concert closer. Coupled with his *Trooping of the Colors*, the march quickly gained a vigorous response from audiences and critics alike. In fact, audiences rose from their chairs when the march was played. Mr. Sousa added to the entertainment value of the march by having the piccolo(s) line up in front of the band for the final trio, and then added the trumpets and trombones join them on the final repeat of the strain.

The march was performed on almost all of Mr. Sousa’s concerts and always drew tears to the eyes of the audience. The author has noted the same emotional response of audiences to the march today. The march has been named as the national march of The United States.

There are two commentaries of how the march was inspired. The first came as the result of an interview on Mr. Sousa’s patriotism. According to Mr. Sousa, the march was written with the inspiration of God.

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\(^1\) Research done by Elizabeth Hartman, head of the music department, Free Library of Philadelphia. Taken from *John Philip Sousa*, Descriptive Catalog of His Works (Paul E. Bierley, University of Illinois Press, 1973, page 71)
"I was in Europe and I got a cablegram that my manager was dead. I was in Italy and I wished to get home as soon as possible, I rushed to Genoa, then to Paris and to England and sailed for America. On board the steamer as I walked miles up and down the deck, back and forth, a mental band was playing 'Stars and Stripes Forever.' Day after day as I walked it persisted in crashing into my very soul. I wrote it on Christmas Day, 1896."  

Program note researched by Marcus L. Neiman  
Medina, Ohio  

Additional information on either the composer or composition would be welcomed. Please send information to marcusneiman@zoominternet.net  

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2 Taken from program notes for the week beginning August 19th, 1923. Bierley, John Philip Sousa, page 71.
The Stars and Stripes Forever March

Piccolo in C

Leggiero

Trio

John Philip Sousa

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Sousa.

Piccolo.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March

Flutes in C

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Theodore Presser Co.

Printed in U.S.A.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Oboes.

leggiero

Sousa.

Trio.

Grandioso

fff molto marc.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Eb Clarinet.

Sousa.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

1st B♭ Clarinet.

leggiero.

Trio.

ff molto marc.

ff Grandioso.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

2d & 3d B♭ Clarinets.

leggiero.
divisi.

SOUSA.

Trio.

Grandioso.

ff molto marcato.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever March

Bass Clarinet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Theodore Pressor Co.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Bassoons.

Sousa.

Trio.

Grandioso.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Soprano Saxophone

\textit{leggiero}

\textit{TRIO}

\textit{molto marc.}

\textit{Grandioso}

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Alto Saxophone

Sousa

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Tenor Saxophone

Sousa

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Baritone Saxophone

Sousa

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The Stars and Stripes Forever

March

B♭ Bass Saxophone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Sousa.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March

Solo B♭ Cornet.

leggiero.

ff

Trio.

p

Basses

Grandioso.

ff molto marcato

The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

1st Bb Cornet.

Sousa.

1

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

2d & 3d B♭ Cornets.

Sousa.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever March
3rd & 4th Horns in F

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Trio

ff molto marc.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

1st & 2d Eb Altos.

Sousa.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

1st & 2nd B♭ Tenors

Sousa.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

1st & 2nd Trombones:

Trio.

Grandioso.

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3rd Trombone or The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

B♭ Bass

Sousa.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Baritone

Trio.

Grandioso.

ff molto marcato.

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The Stars and Stripes Forever: March.

Sousa.
The Stars and Stripes Forever. March.

Drums.

[Music notation]

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