



AMERICAN CLASSICS



STEPHEN FOSTER Foster for Brass

Beautiful Dreamer • Camptown Quick Step • Hard Times Waltz

The Chestnut Brass Company



Stephen FOSTER (1826-1864)

Nineteenth Century Brass Band Music based on the Songs of Stephen Foster

Race relations! Industrialization! Pop culture! Accelerating pace of change! While these could be topics shouted from the nightly news, they were issues initially confronted by American society during the life of the country's first great song-writer, Stephen Collins Foster. In Foster's America the issue of slavery was slowly wrenching the nation toward Civil War and the slow pace of agrarian life was giving way to the Industrial Revolution and an exodus from countryside to cities. The leisure time and disposable income of the growing middle class created the first stirrings of a "music industry" and this in turn made it possible for a young man such as Stephen Foster to consider a previously unimaginable career, that of professional song-writer.

Though Foster can be considered the father of American popular music, his life was rather modest by the frenzied standards of today's pop stars. Born on the United States' fiftieth birthday, 4th July, 1826, he spent the greater part of his life in Western Pennsylvania and Ohio, well away from the cultural and entertainment centres on the East coast, moving to New York only when his career was already in decline. Known for celebrating the Deep South, he travelled there only once, and briefly, during his life.

From an early age music was one of the few constants in Foster's life. His entrepreneurial father made risky ventures in both politics and business, and though middle class his large and musically inclined family was in recurring financial distress. They lost their beloved home the "White Cottage" in Foster's infancy and rarely had a settled home life after that time. A childhood spent moving from place to place conferred upon Foster a life-long sense of displacement and nostalgia, which would resonate with a nation of the uprooted immigrants and settlers pining for a peaceful home and Arcadian past even as they bustled toward an urban and industrial future.

Foster's education was as uneven as his home life. Largely self-taught in music, he received some guidance from family members and from Henry Kleber, one of the many fine German immigrant musicians who graced American cities during the nineteenth century. His first known composition was written when he was fourteen. His first published song *Open Thy Lattice Love* dates from his eighteenth year and is typical of the period's genteel parlour ballads appropriate for the young ladies and gentlemen of the bourgeoisie. His first success as a song-writer, however, came with a much earthier style of music, the 'Ethiopian' or 'Plantation' songs associated with minstrel shows. The issue of slavery had been left unresolved with the writing of the United States Constitution, and while abolished in the industrial Northern states, it was pervasive in the agricultural South. Minstrel shows, in which white performers darkened their faces with burnt cork and both mocked and sentimentalised the enslaved African-American population, were a subconscious attempt on a national scale to expiate collective social guilt by reducing the humanity of slavery's victims. The minstrel performers also began a long tradition of whites borrowing from indigenous black music, which continued through jazz and rock-and-roll to the "white rappers" of today.

While working as a bookkeeper in 1847 at his brother's shipping business in Cincinnati, Foster wrote his first great success, the Ethiopian song *Oh! Susanna*. Sold to the publisher W.C. Peters for a mere \$100, the song soon became a national craze and made Peters a small fortune. Though Foster profited little monetarily from the song it gave him the confidence to return to Pittsburgh and begin his career as America's first full time song-writer. More minstrel hits soon followed, including the rambunctious *Camptown Races*. The nostalgic *Old Folks At Home* or *Swanee River*, launched a long tradition of longing-for-the-South songs, from

Irving Berlin's *When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabam'*, to *Sweet Home Alabama* made famous by the country-rock band Lynyrd Skynyrd. Though Foster's traditional songs initially failed to achieve the success of his minstrel numbers, he was gradually able to reconcile the two threads of his work, wonderfully described by his biographer Ken Emerson as 'possum fat and flowerets', into a single cohesive style.

The 1850s were productive for Foster and he achieved fame and relative financial success. In 1850 he married Jane (Jennie) McDowell and their only child, daughter Marion, was born in 1851. Foster, the former accountant, set up an innovative and profitable arrangement with the New York publishing house of Firth, Pond & Co., which paid a royalty for each copy of his songs sold rather than the single purchase fee standard at that time. A similar set-up made Irving Berlin a rich man decades later and might be one of the reasons Berlin kept a portrait of Foster on his office wall. Foster composed prolifically making use of a wide variety of styles and subjects, including ballads and genre and comic songs. Though part of the confused political middle ground regarding the abolition of slavery (he composed campaign songs for the similarly indecisive President James Buchanan whose brother was married to Foster's sister), he largely jettisoned condescending dialect from his plantation songs, which achieved a greater gentleness and humanity. Though the sentiments of many of these songs are questionable by today's standards, the great black abolitionist firebrand Frederick Douglas acknowledged at the time that Foster's plantation songs '...awaken the sympathies for the slave, in which anti-slavery principles take root and flourish'.

In 1860 Foster moved with his family to New York City, but in a nation on the verge of a long and bloody Civil War tastes were changing and Foster's popularity was on the wane. Sales declined and he was often in debt both to his family and to his publisher for advances. The relationship between the dreamy, poetic Foster and his pragmatic wife had always been difficult

and Jennie and Marion soon went back to Pennsylvania for good. Everything, from his career to his personal life to his country itself, was coming apart. Alcoholism and depression, possibly present in Foster's life before this time, took hold and the remainder of his life was spent in increasing poverty and squalor, though he still produced a number of songs, both on his own and in collaboration with a young friend, George Cooper. Late Foster compositions include the Civil War songs *We Are Coming Father Abraam*, *When This Cruel War Is Over* and the comic song *My Wife Is A Most Knowing Woman*.

In January 1864, Stephen Foster fell in his rented room and gashed his throat. His weakened constitution prevented a recovery, and he died at New York's Bellevue Hospital at the age of 38. Though out of fashion at his death, Foster's work was never forgotten. His works have achieved the status of folk-song, and many listeners are surprised to find that his songs have an actual composer at all, for it is hard to imagine a time that they were not part of America's music.

In addition to touring troupes and performances on parlor pianos, much of Foster's music circulated during his lifetime in versions for brass bands. Adolphe Sax, best known today as the inventor of the saxophone, had perfected "saxhorns" in the 1840s, a matched family of conical bore brasses using the recently developed valve system, and their powerful yet sweet sound quickly came to dominate public music throughout mid-19th-century America. As an adventure in musical time travel the sounds that listeners in Foster's time would have heard are duplicated on this recording by a quintet of authentic period instruments. Their unique sound is strikingly different from that of modern brasses. Additionally, at a time when the distinctions between classical and popular music were less marked than today, their performers would have blended elements of classical, popular and folk traditions. Though Foster wrote few instrumental pieces himself, his sturdy melodies were regularly adapted as marches, quick steps and dance pieces by other composers, a typical

practice of the time.

Nineteenth-century American musicians were usually involved in many aspects of music and two names appear on this recording in multiple rôles. D.C. Hall (1822-1890) was a noted keyed bugle soloist and bandleader in New England. His *Bronze Bob Tail Horse Quick Step* is based on two Foster songs, *Camptown Races* and *Oh! Boys Carry Me 'Long*. Its title pokes fun at Auber's *Le Cheval de bronze*, then a brass-band staple. The E flat contrabass saxhorn used on this recording was built by Hall & Quinby, an instrument manufactory he established in Boston during the 1860s. The dynamic musical entrepreneur John F. Stratton (1832-1912) published the *Stratton Military Band Journal* from which *Why, No One To Love* is included here and established a thriving business which made instruments for both sides during the Civil War, including the E flat soprano saxhorn heard on this recording.

American military bands in the mid-nineteenth-century usually depended on arrangements crafted by their leaders. John P. King was stationed in Port Royal, South Carolina as leader of the 6th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry band, under the command of Colonel Lorenzo Meeker. King's bittersweet *Col. Meeker's Quick Step* uses two poignant melodies, *Loving Hearts At Home* by John Rodgers Thomas and *Why Have My Loved Ones Gone?* by Foster to evoke the loneliness of soldiers far from home. Also stationed in Port Royal was the 4th New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry band, formerly the Manchester Cornet Band. From their band books comes *George Hart's Quick Step* by the Spanish-born conductor and composer Claudio Grafulla (1810-1880). Grafulla is also represented here by the *Dolly Day Quick Step*, based on Foster's minstrel tune *Dolly Day* and his parlour ballad *Molly Do You Love Me?*. From the Southern, or Confederate, side of the Civil War, settings of Foster's companion-piece songs *Lulu Is Gone* and *Where Has*

Lulu Gone? come from the manuscript books of the 26th North Carolina Regimental Band which originated in the highly musical Moravian community of Salem, N.C.

The tremendous demand for live music in this era before recorded media led publishers regularly to issue collections and "journals" for brass bands. Foster's *Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming*, originally written in four a cappella voice parts, is heard in contrasting versions, a ballad version featuring solo alto saxhorn, and a quick step version from *Squire's Cornet Band Olio* published in Cincinnati by the English émigré Alfred Squire. The *Brass Band Journal* issued in 1855 by Foster's publishers Firth, Pond & Co. provides the largest single source for the music on this recording. The identity of its writer, G.W.E. Friedrich, remains a mystery, though it may be a pseudonym for the American composer George F. Root who at that time worked through Foster's publisher. The arrangements are elegant and sophisticated and show the influence of Italian opera in the United States. The *March, My Old Kentucky Home* starts out sounding like one of the lost brass band marches by Verdi, then is transformed surprisingly into Foster's familiar tune.

Septimus Winner (1827-1902) is best remembered today as the composer of *Listen to the Mocking Bird*, based in part on a song by a young black employee at his music store. His *Willie Schottische* is based on Foster's song *Willie We Have Missed You*. William Ratel, composer of the *Camptown Quick Step* and James Bellak, whose *Hard Times Waltz* is based on Foster's *Hard Times Come Again No More* are both survived by numerous piano compositions. Edward White, whose *California Quick Step* features Foster's Ethiopian tune *Uncle Ned*, was noted for composing hymns and religious music.

Jay Krush

Chestnut Brass Company

Bruce Barrie, soprano saxhorn in E flat
Susan Sexton, soprano saxhorn in B flat
Marian Hesse, alto saxhorn in E flat
Larry Zimmerman, baritone saxhorn in B flat
Jay Krush, contrabass saxhorn in E flat

The Grammy award winning Chestnut Brass Company has earned international acclaim for brilliant performances on both modern and historical instruments. Since beginning as a street band in Philadelphia in 1977, they have performed in 49 of the United States and in Europe, Asia, South America, Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. They have been guest performers at noted venues and festivals including Italy's Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Munich's Gasteig, the Académie Internationale de Musique in Dijon, France, and the U.S.A.'s Wolf Trap Farm and National Music Camp at Interlochen. The ensemble is equally committed to the music of the past and present, performing and recording on brasses and wind instruments from the Renaissance, such as cornetti, "natural" trumpets and sackbuts, and the nineteenth Century, including families of keyed bugles and saxhorns. They are active in commissioning and recording new works for modern instruments from composers representing a wide variety of contemporary styles. The Chestnut Brass Company has released twelve CD recordings, winning awards, including a recording of brass music by Peter Schickele, which won the Grammy award for Best Classical Crossover Recording in 2000. "*Berlin for Brass*", featuring arrangements of the songs of Irving Berlin, can also be heard on the Naxos label (8.559123). For additional information about the Chestnut Brass Company, visit their website at www.ChestnutBrass.com.

Instruments used on this recording:

E flat soprano saxhorn, ca. 1863. Over the shoulder design, three rotary valves, by John F. Stratton, New York.

B flat soprano saxhorn, 1860s. Over the shoulder design, three rotary valves. Marked D.P. Foulds, Louisville, KY.

E flat alto saxhorn, 1860-70. Upright design, three rotary valves. Anonymous.

B flat baritone saxhorn, 1860s. Over the shoulder design, three rotary valves. Anonymous.

E flat contrabass saxhorn, 1860-65. Over the shoulder design, three rotary valves. Hall and Quinby, Boston.

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- 1 **G.W.E. Friedrich: Ellen Bayne Quick Step** (1)
(from "The Brass Band Journal" 1857, Firth, Pond & Co.)
- 2 **David C. Hall: Bronze Bob Tail Horse Quick Step** (2)
(from the books of the Boston Brass Band) (red. T.L. Cornett)
- 3 **Stephen Foster: Why, No One To Love** (2)
(arr. anonymous, from the Stratton Military Band Journal) (red. W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 4 **Edward L. White: California Quick Step** (3)
(inst. Jay Krush)
- 5 **Stephen Foster: Beautiful Dreamer** (3)
(arr. Jay Krush)
- 6 **Claudio S. Grafulla: Dolly Day Quick Step** (3)
(inst. Jay Krush)
- 7 **James Bellak: Hard Times Waltz** (3)
(inst. Jay Krush)
- 8 **Stephen Foster: We Are Coming Father Abraam, 300,000 More** (2)
(arr. W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 9 **J.P. King: Colonel Meeker's Quick Step** (2)
(as found in the 3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" books) (red. T.L. Cornett)
- 10 **G.W.E. Friedrich: March. My Old Kentucky Home** (1)
(from "The Brass Band Journal")
- 11 **Stephen Foster: My Wife Is A Most Knowing Woman** (2)
(Arr. by W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 12 **G.W.E. Friedrich: Maggie By My Side Grand March** (1)
(from "The Brass Band Journal")
- 13 **Stephen Foster: Santa Anna's Retreat From Buena Vista** (2)
(arr. W.R. Baccus)
- 14 **Septimus Winner: Willie Schottisch** (3)
(inst. Jay Krush)
- 15 **Claudio S. Graffula: George Hart's Quick Step** (2)
(from the 4th New Hampshire (Manchester) band books) (red. by T.L. Cornett)

- 16 Stephen Foster: Some Folks (2)**
(arr. W.R.Baccus)
- 17 Stephen Foster : Open Thy Lattice Love (3)**
(arr. Jay Krush)
- 18 G.W.E. Friedrich: Old Dog Tray March (4)**
(from "The Brass Band Journal") (red. Bruce Barrie)
- 19 William Ratel: Camptown Quick Step (3)**
(inst. Jay Krush)
- 20 G.W.E. Friedrich: Massa's In The Cold Ground (1)**
(from "The Brass Band Journal")
- 21 Stephen Foster: When This Dreadful War Is Over (2)**
(arr. W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 22 Stephen Foster: Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming (4)**
(arr. anonymous, from J.W. Pepper's "20th Century Brass Band Journal") (red. Bruce Barrie)
Marian Hesse, solo alto saxhorn
- 23 Alfred Squire: Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming Quick Step (2)**
(from "Squire's Cornet Band Olio") (red. T.L. Cornett)
- 24 Stephen Foster: Gentle Annie (2)**
(arr. anonymous, from period books in the U.S. Marine Band archives) (red. by W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 25 Stephen Foster: Lulu Is Gone (2)**
(arr. anonymous, from the books of the 26th Regt. North Carolina, C.S.A.) (red. W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 26 Stephen Foster: Where Has Lula Gone (2)**
(arr. anonymous, from the books of the 26th Regt. North Carolina, C.S.A.) (red. W.R. Baccus and T.L. Cornett)
- 27 G.W.E. Friedrich: Farewell My Lily Dear Quick Step (1)**
(from "The Brass Band Journal")

Red.: Reduced from surviving brass band music.

Inst.: Instrumented in the style of the time from surviving piano versions.

Arr.: Arranged in the style of the time from Foster's songs.

- Publishers:
- (1) G. Schirmer
 - (2) Olde Towne Brass, 1813 Epworth Drive, Huntsville, Alabama, 35811, USA.
 - (3) Cornopean Press/Jay Krush, 1827 Spruce St. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19103, USA.
 - (4) Public Domaine



Chestnut Brass Company
Photo: Londa Salamon



Considered by many to be the father of American popular music, Stephen Foster achieved his first notable success with *Oh! Susanna*. This unique recording brings together arrangements for brass band of melodies written by Stephen Foster, as well as marches, quick-steps and dances based on his songs by contemporary bandleaders and composers. They embrace a wide variety of styles and topical subject matter, not least slavery, the Civil War and nostalgia for the past. All the instruments used on this recording date from the 1860s, a period when the newly-developed brass bands were the primary vehicle for public music.

Cover Photo:

A band from Monroeville, Ohio, anonymous
(Hazen Collection, Smithsonian Institution)
American flag by a folk artist, 1880s.

www.naxos.com



Stephen FOSTER

Arrangements of the Songs of Stephen Foster for
19th Century Brass Band, performed on period instruments

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Ellen Bayne Quick Step | 1:31 |
| 2 | Bronze Bob Tail Horse Quick Step | 3:26 |
| 3 | Why, No One To Love | 1:37 |
| 4 | California Quick Step | 2:16 |
| 5 | Beautiful Dreamer | 2:44 |
| 6 | Dolly Day Quick Step | 2:39 |
| 7 | Hard Times Waltz | 1:58 |
| 8 | We Are Coming Father Abraam, 300,000 More | 1:30 |
| 9 | Colonel Meeker's Quick Step | 3:26 |
| 10 | March. My Old Kentucky Home | 2:40 |
| 11 | My Wife Is A Most Knowing Woman | 1:28 |
| 12 | Maggie By My Side Grand March | 3:16 |
| 13 | Santa Anna's Retreat From Buena Vista | 1:58 |
| 14 | Willie Schottisch | 1:56 |
| 15 | George Hart's Quick Step | 2:34 |
| 16 | Some Folks | 1:11 |
| 17 | Open Thy Lattice Love | 2:41 |
| 18 | Old Dog Tray March | 2:41 |
| 19 | Camptown Quick Step | 2:26 |
| 20 | Massa's In The Cold Ground | 3:32 |
| 21 | When This Dreadful War Is Over | 1:57 |
| 22 | Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming | 3:40 |
| 23 | Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming Quick Step | 4:40 |
| 24 | Gentle Annie | 2:28 |
| 25 | Lulu Is Gone | 3:18 |
| 26 | Where Has Lula Gone | 3:06 |
| 27 | Farewell My Lily Dear Quick Step | 2:13 |

The Chestnut Brass Company

A detailed tracklist can be found in the booklet.

Recorded at the Samuel and Elaine Lieberman Auditorium of the Germantown Branch of the Settlement Music School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, 20th, 22nd, 23rd April 2001
Producer and Sound engineer: Michael Johns • Engineer and digital editing: Stephen J. Epstein • Booklet Notes: Jay Krush

Playing
Time:
68:49

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