Nobles of the Mystic Shrine March: A Presentation on Masonic Music

Mark Dreisonstok, *the Scottish Rite Journal*

It is well known that Masonry has often been an inspiration for the most musical among us to become composers: Mozart, Haydn, and Sibelius come immediately to mind. Less well known is that the Shriners, perhaps the most uniquely American of Masonic organizations, has been a font for music as well, represented by the March King John Philip Sousa and his “Nobles of the Mystic Shrine March.” More than that, a book of more than 100 years ago was issued for music for the Shriners, often with local Shrine organizations contributing as well as operatic and other classical pieces rewritten with new lyrics, sometimes humorous and sometimes evocative of the Orientalism which the Shrine represented at its nineteenth-century inception.