

## = Music of the American Civil War =

During the American Civil War , music played a prominent role on both sides of the conflict : Union and Confederate . On the American Civil War battlefield , different instruments including bugles , drums , and fifes were played to issue marching orders or sometimes simply to boost the morale of one 's fellow soldiers . Singing was also employed as a recreational activity , but as a release from the inevitable tensions that come with fighting in a war , particularly a war in which the issue of freedom of a race is to be decided . In camp , music was a diversion away from the bloodshed , helping the soldiers deal with homesickness and boredom . Soldiers of both sides often engaged in recreation with musical instruments , and when the opposing armies were near each other , sometimes the bands from both sides of the conflict played against each other on the night before a battle .

Each side had its particular favorite tunes , while some music was enjoyed by Northerners and Southerners alike , as exemplified by United States President Abraham Lincoln 's love of Dixie , the unofficial anthem of the Confederacy . To this day , many of the songs are sung when a patriotic piece is required . The war 's music also inspired music artists such as Lynyrd Skynyrd and Elvis Presley .

## = = Development of American music = =

The Civil War was an important period in the development of American music . During the Civil War , when soldiers from across the country commingled , the multifarious strands of American music began to crossfertilize each other , a process that was aided by the burgeoning railroad industry and other technological developments that made travel and communication easier . Army units included individuals from across the country , and they rapidly traded tunes , instruments and techniques . The songs that arose from this fusion were " the first American folk music with discernible features that can be considered unique to America " . The war was an impetus for the creation of many songs that became and remained wildly popular ; the songs were aroused by " all the varied passions ( that the Civil War inspired ) " and " echoed and re @-@ echoed " every aspect of the war . John Tasker Howard has claimed that the songs from this era " could be arranged in proper sequence to form an actual history of the conflicts ; its events , its principal characters , and the ideals and principles of the opposing sides " .

In addition to , and in conjunction with , popular songs with patriotic fervor , the Civil War era also produced a great body of brass band pieces , from both the North and the South , as well as other military musical traditions like the bugle call " Taps " .

## = = Regulations = =

In May 1861 the United States War Department officially approved that every regiment of infantry and artillery could have a brass band with 24 members , while a cavalry regiment could have one of sixteen members . The Confederate army would also have brass bands . This was followed by a Union army regulation of July 1861 requiring every infantry , artillery , or cavalry company to have two musicians and for there to be a twenty @-@ four man band for every regiment . The July 1861 requirement was ignored as the war dragged on , as riflemen were more needed than musicians . In July 1862 the brass bands of the Union were disassembled by the adjutant general , although the soldiers that comprised them were sometimes reenlisted and assigned to musician roles . A survey in October 1861 found that 75 % of Union regiments had a band . By December 1861 the Union army had 28 @,@ 000 musicians in 618 bands ; a ratio of one soldier out of 41 who served the army was a musician , and the Confederate army was believed to have a similar ratio . Musicians were often given special privileges . Union general Phillip Sheridan gave his cavalry bands the best horses and special uniforms , believing " Music has done its share , and more than its share , in winning this war " .

Musicians on the battlefield were drummers and buglers , with an occasional fifer . Buglers had to

learn forty @-@ nine separate calls just for infantry , with more needed for cavalry . These ranged from battle commands to calls for meal time . Some of these required musicians were drummer boys not even in their teens , which allowed an adult man to instead be a foot soldier . The most notable of these under aged musicians was John Clem , also known as " Johnny Shiloh " . Union drummers wore white straps to support their drums . The drum and band majors wore baldrics to indicate their status ; after the war , this style would be emulated in civilian bands . Drummers would march to the right of a marching column . Similar to buglers , drummers had to learn 39 different beats : fourteen for general use , and 24 for marching cadence . However , buglers were given greater importance than drummers .

= = On the battlefield = =

Whole songs were sometimes played during battles . The survivors of the disastrous Pickett 's Charge returned under the tune Nearer My God to Thee . At the Battle of Five Forks , Union musicians under orders from Sheridan played Stephen Foster 's minstrel song Nelly Bly while being shot at on the front lines . Samuel P. Heintzelman , the commander of the III Corps , saw many of his musicians standing at the back lines at the Battle of Williamsburg , and ordered them to play anything . Their music rallied the Union forces , forcing the Confederate to withdraw . It was said that music was the equivalent of " a thousand men " on one 's side . Robert E. Lee himself said , " I don 't think we could have an army without music . "

Sometimes , musicians were ordered to leave the battlefield and assist the surgeons . One notable time was the 20th Maine 's musicians at Little Round Top . As the rest of the regiment were driving back wave after wave of Confederates , the musicians of the regiment were not just performing amputations , but doing it in a very quick manner .

= = In camp = =

Many soldiers brought musical instruments from home to pass the time at camp . Banjos , fiddles , and guitars were particularly popular . Aside from drums , the instruments Confederates played were either acquired before the war , or imported , due to the lack of brass and the industry to make such instruments .

Musical duels between the two sides were common , as they heard each other as the music traveled across the countryside . The night before the Battle of Stones River , bands from both sides dueled with separate songs , until both sides started playing Home ! Sweet Home ! , at which time soldiers on both sides started singing together as one . A similar situation occurred in Fredericksburg , Virginia in the winter of 1862 ? 3 . On a cold afternoon a Union band started playing Northern patriotic tunes ; a Southern band responded by playing Southern patriotic tunes . This back and forth continued into the night , until at the end both sides played Home ! Sweet Home ! simultaneously , to the cheers of both sides ' forces . In a third instance , in the spring of 1863 , the opposing armies were on the opposite sides of the Rappahannock River in Virginia , when the different sides played their patriotic tunes , and at taps one side played Home ! Sweet Home ! , and the other joined in , creating " cheers " from both sides that echoed throughout the hilly countryside .

Both sides sang Maryland , My Maryland , although the lyrics were slightly different . Another popular song for both was Lorena . When Johnny Comes Marching Home was written in 1863 by Patrick Gilmore , an immigrant from Ireland , and was also enjoyed by both sides .

= = Homefront = =

The first song written for the war , The First Gun is Fired , was first published and distributed three days after the Battle of Fort Sumter . George F. Root , who wrote it , is said to have produced the most songs of anyone about the war , over thirty in total . Lincoln once wrote a letter to Root , saying , " You have done more than a hundred generals and a thousand orators " .

The southern states had long lagged behind northern states in producing common literature . With the advent of war , Southern publishers were in demand . These publishers , based largely in five cities ( Charleston , South Carolina ; Macon , Georgia ; Mobile , Alabama ; Nashville , Tennessee ' and New Orleans , Louisiana ) , produced five times more printed music than they did literature .

In the Confederate States of America , God Save the South was the official national anthem . However , Dixie was the most popular . United States President Abraham Lincoln said he loved Dixie and wanted to hear it played , saying " as we had captured the rebel army , we had also captured the rebel tune " . At an April 9 , 1865 rally , the band director was surprised when Lincoln requested that the band play Dixie . Lincoln said , " That tune is now Federal property ... good to show the rebels that , with us in power , they will be free to hear it again " . The other prominent tune was The Bonnie Blue Flag , and like Dixie was written in 1861 , unlike Union popular tunes which were written throughout the war .

The United States did not have a national anthem at this time ( Star Spangled Banner would not be recognized as such until the twentieth century ) . Union soldiers frequently sang the Battle Cry of Freedom , and the Battle Hymn of the Republic was considered the north 's most popular song .

= = Different versions = =

Although certain songs were identified with one particular side of the war , sometimes the other would adapt the song for their use . A Southern revision of the Star Spangled Banner was used , entitled " The Southern Cross " . In an example of the different lyrics , where the Banner had " O say does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave " , the Cross had " ' Tis the Cross of the South , which shall ever remain " . Another Confederate version of the Star Spangled Banner , called The Flag of Secession , replaced the same verse with " and the flag of secession in triumph doth wave " . Even a song from the American Revolutionary War was adapted , as the tune Yankee Doodle was changed to " Dixie Doodle " , and started with " Dixie whipped old Yankee Doodle early in the morning " . The Union 's Battle Cry of Freedom was also altered , with the original lines of " The Union forever ! Hurrah , boys , hurrah ! Down with the traitor , up with the star " being changed to " Our Dixie forever ! She 's never at a loss ! Down with the eagle and up with the cross ! "

The Union also adapted Southern Songs . In a Union variation of Dixie , instead of the line " I wish I was in the land of cotton , old times there are not forgotten , Look away , look away , look away , Dixie Land " , it was changed to " Away down South in the land of traitors , Rattlesnakes and alligators , Right away , come away , right away , come away " . John Brown 's Body ( originally titled John Brown ) was originally written for a soldier at Fort Warren in Boston in 1861 . It was sung to the tune of Glory , Hallelujah and was later used by Julia Ward Howe for her famous poem , Battle Hymn of the Republic .

= = Legacy = =

The music derived from this war was of greater quantity and variety than from any other war involving America . Songs came from a variety of sources . Battle Hymn of the Republic borrowed its tune from a song sung at Methodist revivals . Dixie was a minstrel song that Daniel Emmett adapted from two Ohio black singers named Snowden . American soldiers would continue to sing Battle Hymn of the Republic in the Spanish ? American War , World War I , and World War II .

The Southern rock style of music has often used the Confederate Battle Flag as a symbol of the musical style . Sweet Home Alabama by Lynyrd Skynyrd was described as a " vivid example of a lingering Confederate mythology in Southern culture " .

A ballad from the war , Aura Lee , would become the basis of the song Love Me Tender by Elvis Presley . Presley also sang An American Trilogy , which was described as " smoothing " out All My Trials , the Battle Hymn of the Republic , and Dixie of its divisions , although Dixie still dominated the piece .

In 2013 , a compilation album by current popular musicians , like Jorma Kaukonen , Ricky Skaggs , and Karen Elson , was released with the title , Divided & United : The Songs of the Civil War .

= = Songs published per year = =