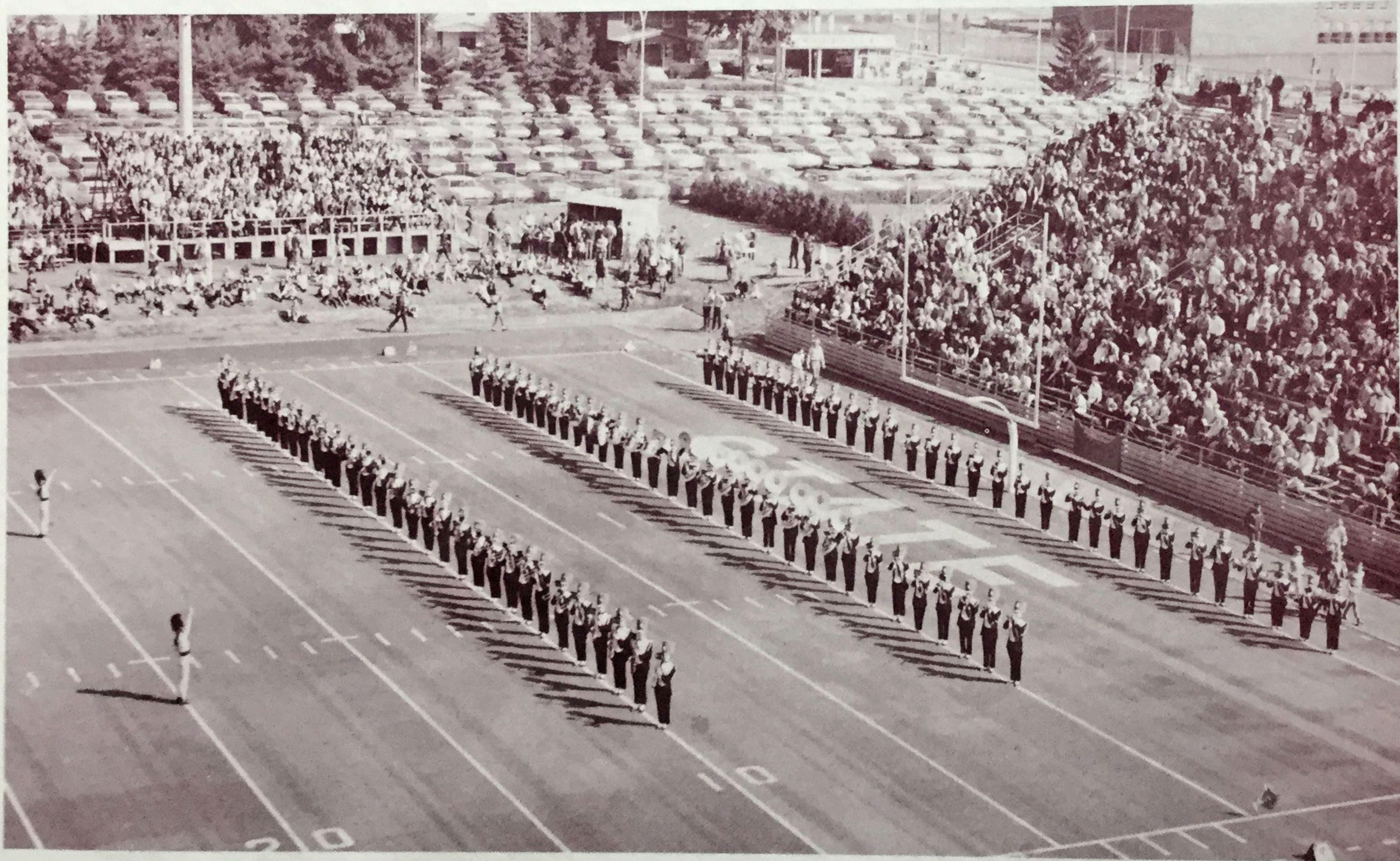


# Heritage of the March

Volume D – D. W. REEVES – W. P. CHAMBERS

*Illinois State University Band*

George Foeller, Director



In 1857, attorney Abraham Lincoln prepared documents that established the first public institution of higher education in the State of Illinois. From that unusual beginning, Illinois State University has grown to an enrollment of more than 18,000 students. The location of the 700-acre campus is near the center of the state, in the twin cities of Bloomington-Normal.

This large university has 28 academic departments and a faculty of more than 1100. Degrees are offered in a wide range of subjects, and include studies in five different "colleges" within the University: Arts and Sciences, Applied Science and Technology, Business, Education, and Fine Arts.

# Illinois State University Band

## Heritage of the March

STEREO

### SIDE 1

#### MARCHES OF DAVID WALLIS REEVES

*Bi-Centennial* – Published in 1895 by Coleman. This is a most unusual march.

The use of the two tunes "Old Hundred" and "Auld Lang Syne" at the same time in the trio, impels a deviation from the use of only "original" material of the composer on this series of records. In addition, the title is most appropriate, with the American Bicentennial coming up soon. It is not known what bicentennial Reeves made reference to in the title. Perhaps 1895 marked the 200th Anniversary of the founding of Providence?

*Ideal* – Published in 1882 by W.H. Cundy.

*Narragansett* – Published in 1880 by Cundy. It obviously refers to the river of that name, or the town or the bay.

*First Brigade M.V.M. (Massachusetts Volunteer Militia)* – Published in 1880 by Cundy.

*Col. Goddard's* – Published in 1881 by Cundy.

*Healy's* – Published in 1884 by Cundy (for band) and in 1873 by Cory (for piano).

*Fraternal* – Published in 1880 by Cundy.

*A.O.U.W.* – Dedicated to the Supreme Lodge Ancient Order of United Workmen. Published in 1894 by Coleman.

#### David Wallis Reeves (1838 - 1900)

David Wallis Reeves was born in the very small town of Owego (not Oswego, as has often been reported; the towns are about 100 miles apart) in upstate New York, in February 1838.

There is no doubt that he was the outstanding march composer of the 1880's following Claudio Grafulla in that role. Grafulla's major compositions dated before and during the Civil War, although he continued to write into the 70's.

Again, in the case of Wally Reeves, as happened with so many of the march writers whose works appear in the Heritage series, he got his real musical start playing in a circus band. At the age of 14 he joined a band led by a well-known E-flat bugle (with keys, similar to a saxophone) player named Tom Canham. For several years he played with and studied under Canham, and later in life Reeves stated that the only instruction he ever received on the cornet was from Canham. Reeves' instrument was a piston valve E-flat cornet, and his mastery of it led him to travel to England as soloist with the Rumsey and Newcomb Minstrels. While there he acquired a new cornet, of very advanced design, and with it he was able to establish a reputation as one of the finest of all cornet soloists.

One of the better-known bands of the time was the American Band of Providence, Rhode Island, and in 1866 he was invited to join as conductor. Wally Reeves had found his musical home for the rest of his life, which extended to March 1900. He took the excellent band he found in Providence and made it into a great band that earned national and international acclaim.

The American Band filled engagements from one end of the U.S. to the other and into Canada as well, even though it was not basically a "traveling" band, such as Gilmore's at the time, and Sousa's and so many others in later years.

The marches of Wally Reeves are a true revelation of what can be done in this musical medium. He was unquestionably the first to introduce into marches the multi-contrapuntal mode of composition. The marches on this record are illustrative of his genius and understanding of the possibilities of a band. It is recorded that the American Band played marches of this type continuously, during parades that lasted as long as three hours. Surely the players and especially the lead cornetists must have had lips made of iron, as the parts they had to play included all sorts of trills, slurs, grace notes – everything possible on a cornet. And they had to play this music on the march. The wonder of it!

His greatest march, "Second Regiment, Connecticut National Guard," required the use of a full drum and bugle corps of nearly

the same number of players as the basic band, to be properly played. Unfortunately, such a combination of instrumentalists is nearly unavailable, and so this outstanding march has never been heard by contemporary Americans as it was intended to be played.

John Philip Sousa was not wrong when he referred to Wally Reeves as "The Father of Band Music of America."

Note – Biographical information by David Stackhouse.

Illinois State University bands include the Marching Band, the Pep Band, the Basketball Band, and three concert units. Participation is open to any regularly enrolled student, regardless of his major field of study.

The Concert Band is selected from more than 300 undergraduate students enrolled in the band program. Although comprised mainly of students preparing for careers as music educators, the members of this prime performing ensemble represent a variety of curricular interests. The band has performed in New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Missouri, and Indiana – as well as in Illinois. It has been complimented by several outstanding figures in the band world for its diversity of programming and flexibility of musicianship.

#### George Foeller, Director

A man of considerable experience and education in the band field, George Foeller directs not only the Concert Band of Illinois State University, but also the Marching Band. Originally from Connecticut, he holds degrees of B.A. and M.A. from the University of Connecticut. Four years as a trombonist in the U.S. Air Force Band was a real education for him, and after that he was a teacher in schools in Willimantic, Connecticut, and Ft. Worth, Texas. In 1960 he came to Illinois State University and found a great opportunity to build a relatively small band program into the major operation it is today.

His accomplishments include a great deal of "guest conducting" of school band festivals, adjudication of numerous contests, and acting as clinician all over Illinois. He, and the band, commission a band composition annually, by a major composer. The University band department each year holds a "Band Clinic-Festival" for high school bands from adjacent areas.

George gets a great deal of pleasure from the individual trombone instruction he gives to some 25 students, and the trombone work on this record shows his talent for this phase of his teaching. One of the highlights of the band's recent history is a performance at a St. Louis Cardinals football game.

He and his wife have two children, future trombone players for sure. The enthusiasm with which George approached the making of this record was most satisfying. The marches of Reeves contained a great number of engraver's errors, and the correction of them was a labor of love, as well as a most educational one. The assistance of several students in the Music Department was required, and George comments that all were amazed at the interesting harmony and progression structure of the compositions of Reeves and Chambers. Young music students today have very little appreciation of the true genius that men such as these brought to march writing, and the study of their marches preparatory to the recording surely made some of these students aware of it.

### SIDE 2

#### MARCHES OF WILLIAM PARIS CHAMBERS

*Regatta* – Published in 1884 by J. Dise. It is easy to guess the reason for the title, since he wrote another march during his time in Harrisburg with the title of "Harrisburg Boat Club."

*Detroit Free Press* – Respectfully dedicated to Theo. E. Quinby, Esq., Editor "Detroit Free Press." Published in 1897 by Fischer. Again Chambers dedicates a march to a newspaper, as he did with his famous "Chicago Tribune."

*King Radium* – Published in 1907 by Fischer.

*Trombone Section* – Published in 1920 by Fischer.

*Sunshine* – Published in 1908 by Fischer.

*The Volunteer* – Published in 1902 by Pepper. Probably referred to volunteers of whatever war the country was engaged in at the time.

*Buffalo Bill's "Equestrian March"* – Published in 1903 by Fischer.

At this time Bill Cody was famous the world over as "Buffalo Bill."

*Bang Wang* – Published in 1900 by Fischer

#### Paris Chambers (1854-1913)

William Paris Chambers, usually called just "Paris Chambers," was another of the many outstanding cornet soloists who turned his musical talent to composing, principally marches. Born in Newport, Pennsylvania, in November 1854, he wasted no time in his youth getting started on his life's work. By the time he became 18 he was leader of the local band in Newville, Pa., where his parents had moved. Then when he was 25, his reputation had become such that he was given the directorship of the Capital City Band of Harrisburg, the state capitol.

After eight years in Harrisburg, during which time he taught many young musicians to play a variety of instruments, he was asked to come to Baltimore, Maryland, and lead the Great Southern Band. Paris Chambers took this band on a number of tours. During one of them, to Colorado, he made a trip up 14,500-foot-high Pikes Peak and played a cornet solo at its top. Since breathing is not easy at such a height, to play difficult music was considered a real feat.

During all this time he turned out a prodigious number of compositions, largely marches, but including also cornet solos, waltzes, serenades, quadrilles, lancers, overtures, and other forms of musical works.

It is difficult, perhaps, for people in this day and age to realize that much of the finest musical talent of the period 1880 through 1920 devoted itself to the writing of marches. But there was no television, no radio, no movies, no Broadway (as we know it today), no juke boxes to write for; and accomplished musicians such as Paris Chambers, who would write for those mediums today, found their greatest financial reward in the composition of marches. Of course, this is also true of the other leading march writers of that time.

There are many interesting stories told about Chambers, particularly as regards his cornet playing. He had a fantastic range, being able to play two octaves above high C, and lip trill all over the range. He enjoyed, during his years as manager of the C.G. Conn retail store in New York City, the opportunity to show off his skill on the cornet for visiting musicians. He often played difficult solos with his horn upside down, so that he had to push the valves up with the back of his fingers, instead of pressing them down. His years with Conn were around the turn of the century, after which he retired to Newville, his old hometown, and died there in November of 1913.

Perhaps some may find that, as a general thing, a march of Paris Chambers is somewhat easier to identify as his work than the marches of many others as to the composer. He used several distinctive musical phrases in many of his marches, and those who are familiar with them can recognize Chambers' work instantly. His harmony also was often repeated, and this too makes his marches easily identifiable. Nevertheless, he must rank among the leading march writers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Record jacket design by Richard Wambach

Note – Biographical information from Loren Geiger and other sources.