

Yankee Doodle, first heard in 1755
(Richard Shackburg, exact life dates unknown)

p. 1-5

The origin of this tune is a subject for debate, but it probably predates the American Revolution by at least 125 years. The Spanish, Dutch, Germans, Hungarians, and the English have all claimed this tune as their own. “Yankee” was a term of contempt used for the Puritans, while “doodle” meant a simple fellow. The tune may have been adapted from an earlier British folk song called *Nancy Dawson*. The colonial words are said to have been written by an anonymous gentleman from Connecticut.

In 1755 during the French and Indian War, Dr. Richard Shackburg, a member of the British Army, taught the colonial soldiers the words and music of *Yankee Doodle*, telling them it was a “fine military march.” This was intended as a joke, because of the rag-tag, unkempt appearance of the American colonists serving in the militia. Reportedly, the British were very amused when they heard the tune sung by the ill-dressed colonists. But the joke failed when the song became the victory march of the Revolutionary War.

Dixie, first heard in 1859
(Daniel Decatur Emmett, 1815-1904)

p. 6-11

In 1859, Daniel Decatur Emmett of Mount Vernon, Ohio was a member of the touring company “Bryant’s Minstrels.” As resident composer for the company, he was asked by Mr. Bryant to provide a new song for the upcoming performances, and Mr. Emmett presented the words and music to *Dixie* the following week. The song became a hit and after its debut in a New Orleans performance in 1860, *Dixie* became the inspirational song of the Confederate Army.

Johnny Comes Marching Home, first heard in 1863
(Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, 1829-1892)

p. 12-15

Irish-born musician Patrick S. Gilmore first emigrated to Canada and then to Massachusetts. He became the U.S. Army bandmaster during the Civil War and, under the nom de plume of “Louis Lambert,” composed this tune. In addition to being a famous bandleader, Mr. Gilmore was a promoter and organizer of several large music festivals. Interestingly, his tune is very similar to the Irish song *Johnny I hardly knew ye*. As to which song came first, it is anybody’s guess.

Performance Notes

Modulations and lever changes

What can I say? I am fond of modulations, even on lever harps. The purpose of having levers is so that keys and/or individual notes can be changed.

In addition to some lever presets, there are lever changes within each piece. However, there is plenty of time to execute each change, usually at least one measure per lever.

Range needed

These arrangements can be played on any harp with a four and one-half octave range of low C to high F, with an open tuning of F, Bb or Eb, and a full set of levers.

Yankee Doodle

This arrangement should be played in a moderate march tempo, lively but not too fast; it should never sound “frantic.” The overall mood should have a touch of humor.

Dixie

This arrangement should be played with a relaxed and sentimental feeling – not as a march! Considerable rubato should be employed. Imagine the sun rising over a plantation in the Deep South as the introduction starts and this will set the overall mood for this rendition of *Dixie*.

Johnny Comes Marching Home

This arrangement should be played in a steady rhythm, with lots of dynamic expression. To set the mood for this piece, imagine a troop of soldiers gradually walking in from the distance, passing in front of you, and then retreating in the opposite direction.

Darhon Rees-Rohrbacher, June 2003

Yankee Doodle

Arr. D. Rees-Rohrbacher
(A.S.C.A.P.)

(Attr. Dr. Richard Shackburg)

© 2003 Dragonflower Music
All rights reserved

♩ = 108 (Lively but not too fast.)

1 Preset F#1,4,5 *mp*

2 Preset F#1,2,5 *mp*

7 *b.d.l.c.* *mp* *ord.* RH LH

13 *mp* *p* *mp* *p* F#4 F#3