



FREDERICK ALTON JEWELL

Frederick Alton Jewell was born May 28, 1875, the sixth of seven children of Dudley and Emily Jewell of Worthington, a small town in Greene County (IN) about thirty-five miles west of Bloomington. Dudley was a traveling preacher, organist and cornet player who founded the Jewell Family Band around 1885. A highlight for this ensemble was performing during Benjamin Harrison's successful campaign for the Presidency in 1888. Jewell ran away from home at the age of sixteen to join the Bloomington-based Gentry's Equine & Canine Paradox, which would eventually become the highly successful Gentry Brothers Circus. Jewell played cornet, violin, and piano during his life, but his best performances were on the euphonium.

Jewell became the bandmaster for Gentry by 1900, and his first published band works came from 1899. One of his most successful works was *Gentry's Triumphal*, which was published by the C. L. Barnhouse Co. of Oskaloosa, IA in 1900. That firm would be his publisher for the next two decades and his friendship with Charles L. Barnhouse would lead to significant positions in Iowa following his circus career. *More below in "The Circus Years"*

Jewell left touring life in 1918 at the age of forty-three. He took a position in Fairfield, IA. He would be in close proximity to the Barnhouse company and to an old friend, Cleveland Dayton, who was Jewell's assistant conductor with Barnum & Bailey. Dayton was now the bandmaster in Ottumwa, a position he would hold for more than fifty years. He moved fifty-five miles further west to Oskaloosa at the request of C. L. Barnhouse in 1919 to become the bandmaster of the Iowa Brigade Band, where he stayed until 1923 and where he wrote some of his best band compositions. He was also the band director at Oskaloosa High School. While he was conducting in Oskaloosa John Philip Sousa brought his band to town for a concert and played one of Jewell's marches. Jewell and Sousa became friends, but that started a rift between Jewell and Barnhouse that was exacerbated by the fact that Jewell had started a new publishing company, and in 1923 Jewell returned to Worthington. Some of the important works he wrote during the Iowa years were *Iowa Brigade Band*, *Imperial Council*, *Supreme Triumph* and the overture *The Scarlet King*. His son Fred Jewell, Jr. was born in Oskaloosa.

Worthington was proud of Jewell and glad to have him back – a headline in the local newspaper announced *Fred Jewell Preparing to Increase Salary of the Postmaster Soon*. The story began with "Worthington is soon to have a new business, a mail order music publishing house conducted by our own Fred Jewell, composer of band works and agent for the works of others. He will locate here just about as soon as he can leave Oskaloosa, Iowa, in which city he has conducted business in recent years. He has tired of leading circus and other traveling bands, although he has headed some of the better known organizations in the nation. Mr. Jewell's business is conducted almost entirely by mail. It is of such volume that it is expected to permanently raise the local post office to second class."

Jewell's return had some implications for Indianapolis, as well. Noble Howard, who would a few years later become Sousa's euphonium soloist, stepped aside as bandmaster of the Murat Temple Band so that Jewell could assume that position. Jewell would take this band to many national conventions, including Kansas City (1924), Los Angeles (1925 & 1929), Philadelphia (1926), Atlantic City (1927 & 1933), Miami (1928), Toronto (1930), Cleveland (1931), San Francisco (1932) and Minneapolis (1934). His assistant conductor was Merrill Henry, who recalled that Jewell was a "stylish, fine conductor who had a great rapport with the band and a keen sense of deportment to the audience." Jewell also conducted the Sahara Grotto Band in Indianapolis. In Worthington he was conductor of both the band and orchestra at Worthington High School. In the 1920s and 1930s the Indianapolis 500 race used a massive marching band made up of a hundred or more individual bands, and they brought in famous conductors such as John Philip Sousa and Karl King to lead the ensemble prior to the race. Fred Jewell served in this function several times and wrote the march *Checkered Flag* for the 1928 race. His publishing house grew larger and included the works of several other composers. Previously he had used the pen name "J. E. Wells" on his easier works that were meant for school ensembles. He also hired composer and prolific arranger R. B. Eisenberg to be his assistant at the Fred Jewell Music Co.

Jewell served as the President of the Worthington Town Board in 1924, and in 1927 he assumed the directorship of the band at the Franklin Masonic Home – the band sounded so good that one competition judging panel disqualified them and accused him of using professional ringers. His other activities in the last half of the 1920s included conducting the First Regiment Band in Vincennes, providing a band for silent films and boxing matches, and conducting a winter concert band in Tampa for three months in 1928. He also collaborated on a beginning band method with his former assistant conductor Cleveland Dayton that was published by the Jewell Music Company. *A few programs are detailed at the bottom of this article.*

Fred Jewell ceased many of his activities because of illness in 1935 and conducted his final concert on August 29 with the Linton Concert Band. It was determined that he was suffering from stomach cancer and he was hospitalized in Indianapolis for several months. He died at his home in Worthington on February 11, 1936 and was buried in the Worthington Cemetery.

Jewell wrote 102 marches, several of which are still performed with regularity today, 8 overtures, 5 galops, 5 waltzes, 3 trombone smears, 2 Latin dances, 2 ragtime works, 3 serenades, and several piano and vocal works that were published as sheet music. He arranged 33 of his band works for orchestra. He was honored with a state highway historical marker on Indiana Route 67 in Worthington.

More information on Frederick Jewell compiled by Dr. Charles P. Conrad, who wrote his dissertation on Jewell, continues below

THE CIRCUS YEARS

(Along with *Gentry's Triumphal*) another of his most significant circus compositions appeared in 1901. *The Crimson Petal* was a set of waltzes that used the Johann Strauss, Jr. sets as a model. In the 1920s it was an important musical feature of one of the great aerial acts in circus history. Lillian Leitzel was known as the "Queen of the Air," and Merle Evans chose Jewell's waltz set for her featured act in the center ring with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth.

Jewell joined the Ringling Brothers Circus for three years starting in 1902. The bandmaster during those years was one of the all-time greats, George Ganweiler, and Jewell mentioned that he learned a great deal. The 1904 Ringling Brothers euphonium section is considered one of the greatest ever assembled – Fred Jewell and Charles Sanglear, who was also a significant march composer. It was also from Ganweiler that Jewell learned the importance of the center ring concert. Jewell was the assistant conductor of the Great Floto Circus in 1905, which was based in Denver. Among the marches he wrote for this company were *The Denver Post* and *Floto's Triumph*, both of which feature spectacular euphonium parts. Jewell played the calliope for this show, and he was in the final wagon of the circus parade. Jewell assumed the position of Music Director for the show in 1906, and the name changed to the Sells-Floto Circus. One of his greatest circus marches, *The Screamer*, was written for this show.

Jewell moved to the position of Assistant Conductor for the Ringling Brothers Circus in 1907, and he was working with one of the top circus bandmasters in Al Sweet, a great cornetist and a composer. The Ringling Brothers had purchased the Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth that year but ran both shows until 1919. Jewell was offered the position of Music Director for the Barnum & Bailey, which was stationed in New York. The band was a thirty-four-piece group that was one of the top professional concert bands in the nation. Several of the members would become famed bandmasters, including J. J. Richards and Cleveland Dayton.

From around 1890 to 1935 this concert prior to each circus was a primary way for Americans outside the largest cities to hear classical music, Broadway tunes and opera. Radio started in the mid-1920s, orchestras started to be considered a natural musical source in mid-level cities at the same time (the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1930), and the average family could not afford the luxury of recorded music or player pianos. The traveling concert bands such as Sousa's, the bands with Chautauqua, minstrel shows, under canvas theatrical companies, vaudeville and the circus filled this cultural gap. Here is the repertoire that Jewell used with the Barnum & Bailey band:

Opera Overtures

Tannhauser	Wagner
Rienzi	Wagner
William Tell	Rossini
Semiramide	Rossini
Barber of Seville	Rossini
Rosamunde	Schubert
Italian in Algiers	Rossini
Zampa	Herold
Mirella	Gounod
Raymond	Thomas
Norma	Bellini

Opera Selections

Lucia di Lammermoor	Donizetti
Ernani	Verdi
I Lombardi	Verdi
Carmen	Bizet
Romeo and Juliet	Gounod
Anvil Chorus from Il Trovatore	Verdi
The Merry Widow	Lehar

Broadway Selections

Fifty Miles from Boston	Cohan
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	Dream City & The Magic Knight	Herbert
	The Time, The Place, and The Girl	Howard
Popular Songs		
	Bye, Bye Dearie & Summertime	Von Tilzer
	When It's Moonlight	Helf & Hager
Orchestra and Band Pieces		
	1812 Overture	Tchaikovsky
	The Forge in the Forest	Michelis
	A Hunt in the Black Forest	Voelker
	Cavalry Charge	Luders
	Grand Fantasia – Dixie	Langey
	Ballet Anthony and Cleopatra	Gruenwald
	Reminiscences of Scotland	Godfrey
	Hungarian Fantasia	Tobani
	Slavonic Dance #1	Dvorak
	Polish Dance #1	Schwarenka
	The Wee MacGregor	Amers
	Blumengeflusten	Von Blon
	The Bullfrog's Serenade	Engleman
Grand Military Descriptive		
	Battle of San Juan Hill	Sweet & Jewell

The scope of the repertoire is almost incredible. The process was that the pieces were numbered in the program and circus performers would hold up signs with the numbers listed so that the audience would identify them. The performance quality was attested to in this review in the Salt Lake City Evening Telegram of the August 3, 1908 center ring concert: "The brass band traveling with Barnum & Bailey's Circus is one of the most noted in the United States. The director is Fred Jewell, known to all of the bandmasters of this country and abroad. He is a composer of some note. Among the compositions played at the two performances yesterday were several classical compositions. One especially worthy of note was Tannhauser's Overture, which was played with precision and consonance of action and tone by the thirty-four pieces comprising the band. Its interpretation ranked with that of Sousa, or that of Creatore's famous organization. Unlike the music furnished by the usual traveling show which confines itself to popular selections such as ragtime and other catchy jingles of tone, the director compliments his audience with the supposition that it has, as a body, the capacity of appreciating the best compositions known to the musical profession. Many of the musicians of the city were present and as far as the limited time would allow tendered this popular director, Fred Jewell, an ovation last evening."

Jewell would spend three seasons leading the Barnum & Bailey band. He then returned to Worthington, married Myrtle Gray and continued to write music for concert and circus band. Jewell could write a march with no difficulty, but he often had trouble coming up with a title. One of his most famous marches, *Quality-plus*, serves as an example of this. He wrote the march while on the train with the Sells-Floto Circus and finished it with no title in mind. He happened to look out the train window and saw a billboard for a clothing store called "Quality-plus" and used that slogan as his title. Another example occurred with his best-selling march

E Pluribus Unum. He had written the march and asked the Indiana Lions Club Band to read the parts through in rehearsal to find any errors before sending it to Barnhouse to be published. Once they had finished, he told the band he had no title and asked for suggestions. Two titles were considered the best and when the band voted, it ended in a tie. A euphonium player flipped a coin to break the tie and remarked that on the coin were the words "E Pluribus Unum," and that is how it was named. He spent one year with a touring vaudeville ensemble called the "Four Musical Hussars" in 1915. This was a group

of four brass players who included some comedy routines in their act, perhaps a predecessor of today's Canadian Brass and Mnozil Brass.

Jewell would return to the circus one last time in 1916 and 1917 when he was the Musical Director for the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus, a large traveling organization that wintered in West Baden, IN. He had a thirty-one-piece concert band and an outstanding side show band that was led by the man considered the greatest of side show bandmasters P. G. Lowery. Jewell petitioned the show to put Lowery in the position of solo cornet with the big show band. At that time the side shows bands were either black or Italian musicians and it was not approved, but he and Lowery were friends for the rest of Jewell's life.

A concert program from the thirty-one-piece Vincennes band features several of his works:

Shrine of Liberty March	Jewell
Escapade	Eisenberg
Cloth of Gold Overture	Jewell
Passing Fancy	Jewell
Intermission	
Mikado Comic Opera	Boettger
Roseland Waltzes	Jewell
Sky Pilot Overture	Laurendeau
A Hunting Scene	Bucolossi
On the Air March	Jewell

Here are the programs from afternoon (2:45) and evening (8:00) concerts in Tampa on January 1, 1928:

Radio Waves	Jewell
Il Guarany Overture	Gomez
Pas de Fleurs	Delibes
Willow Echoes	Simon
R. L. Blankenship, cornet	
Selections from Attila	Verdi
Intermission	
Dance of the Serpents	Boccalari
La Czarine	Ganne
Echoes from the Metropolitan Opera	Tobani
Paramount March	Barnard
Rienzi Overture	Wagner
Andante Religioso	Thome
Theresa Polka	Waldron
Noble Howard, euphonium	
Peer Gynt Suite	Grieg
After Sunset	Pryor
Intermission	

Scenes from Faust
 The Mill in the Forest
 Parade of the Dolls
 Ballet Egyptian
 The Old Circus Band
 Star Spangled Banner

Gounod
 Eilenberg
 Gruenwald
 Luigini
 Jewell
 Key

COMMUNITY BAND PROGRAMS

In the 1930s Jewell added another position during the summers, when he conducted the Linton Concert Band. Here are samples of two of his 1934 programs from Linton:

June 20	Invercargill The Admiral Overture A Morning Serenade Selections from Lucia de Lammermoor Man of the Hour Intermission Belford's Carnival Selections from Over There Desdemona Waltz Basses Conquest	Lithgow Russell Bennett Donizetti Fillmore Alexander Lake King English
July 25	King Cotton Choral Overture Bones Trombone A Morning Serenade Waterville Military Band March Intermission Zanzibar Overture Alpine Sunset Waltz Selections from Ray, May and Jay On the Air	Sousa Clement Fillmore Bennett Hall Eisenberg King Fulton Jewell