

Altoona Symphony Residency Notes  
Study Guide Materials for Young People's Concert  
Teacher's Notes

It begins with freedom. In 1775 courageous people in the American 13 colonies dared to dream of a country in which all people would be free. They acted upon their dream to create a country in which it would no longer matter where they had lived before settling in the new land, or how they worshiped, how much money they had, or the color of their skin. These people who called themselves **Patriots** were up against the mightiest country in the world—England. In order to create their country these brave people would have to free themselves from England. They were up against a tradition in which everyone, even some of their neighbors, accepted that people with money had the power and were supposed to have it—it is the way it had always been! They were up against a country in which the mighty London Bridge stood as a symbol for the tradition of English power and might. When London Bridge meets determined Yankee Doodle---who knows what will happen!

**Falling Down Doodle**

Jeremy Scott Ribando

Composer's Notes

*Falling-Down Doodle* is based on two very familiar pieces known to many children: *London Bridge Is Falling Down*, and *Yankee Doodle*. I seek to put these pieces in opposition, using the soloists as well as different families of orchestral instruments to play against one another. I set up the orchestra as adversary to our heroine soloists.

Donna Wissinger and Joy Myers play many Revolutionary War themes to teach and inspire young students across America, and I wanted to use a distinctly British rhyme to set up the obvious thematic battle intimated by the musical score. Although not a rhyme inspired by war, *London Bridge* can be associated as the British element in this score, its origins based upon perilous bridge building and symbolism over the River Thames. Also a British melody, *Yankee Doodle* is a pre-Revolutionary War tune adapted by British physician Richard Shuckburgh to mock the un-sophistication of the American colonist. After the war the former subjects appropriated this tune, associating it with the finest points of American patriotism, celebrating their defiance against the British.

Artist Notes:

*Falling-Down Doodle* aptly portrays the struggle during the pre-April 19, 1775 *Shot heard 'round the World* that began the American Revolutionary War. Many Pennsylvanians felt little connection to those Northern Yankees who shouted 'no taxation without representation' and orchestrated the 1773 Tea Party, for in Pennsylvania they felt little interference from the British in their day to day affairs. Except for the cities, namely Philadelphia, the settlers of Pennsylvania were unaffected by the British taxes and demands. The one great concern for some had been the Proclamation of 1763 in which the British forbade white settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains. As there were already many white settlers west of the mountains, this did create a problem. Once you feel you own something, you do not wish to give it back. As the British declared this land belonged to Native Americans, there were many deadly altercations between

the white settlers in this region and Native Americans. In many cases, the bloodshed spilled into the area now known as Hollidaysburg, Bedford, Frankstown, and Altoona. In 1765 these places were the frontier!

In Pennsylvania, in the 1760's and 1770's there was probably an equal number of Loyalists, those loyal to King George III, as Patriots, those who wanted to declare independence from the British Crown. You can imagine the struggle and anger between neighbors; those who wanted to remain connected to the most powerful nation in the world, England, symbolized by the great *London Bridge*, with those who dreamed of a whole new world without oppression, symbolized by *Yankee Doodle*. London Bridge did stand for British might. The first bridge was built over 2000 years ago! Even as late as 1660, just so no one could forget who reigned, lining the bridge on tall spiked poles were more than 30 heads of those who dared to defy the King's supreme rule! The heads were dipped in tar to preserve them for many to generations to see.

*Yankee Doodle* became the theme song for the Patriot dreams and of the American Revolution. Why? Years earlier the words of the song were written by the British during the French and Indian War to make fun and to bully the colonists. The colonists fought along side the British against French and Indians during this war. They too wanted to make sure that lands west would be in English hands. However, those colonists who fought in the French and Indian War were not treated equally by the British. No matter what their rank or how well they fought the colonists were made to feel less worthy. The British simply *knew* they were better. They *knew* they were better than the colonists because they *lived* in England (they were called British), they *were* better because they believed that some people were entitled to riches and to ruling others simply by being born to certain parents, and *they* had such people in England—their kings and nobles. No matter how accomplished, or smart, or how rich a person in the colonies was, they would never be equal, or treated equally by the British.

George Washington, Sam Adams, Henry Knox, and others resented this assumption of some people being *born* better. They resented that the officers in the British army did not earn their way up through the ranks to officer by their accomplishments or deeds. The British officers, or their families, *bought* their commissions of advancement. These rich boys were called macaronis. The name evolved years earlier from a family of fancy and rich Italian dressers--the *Macroni* Family. As happens with words even today, the word macaroni became commonly used to describe anyone who was pretentiously wealthy. Thus the decoration on the British officer uniforms was called macaroni. To add insult, *yankee* meant coward, *doodle* meant stupid. The British were essentially saying: you who live in the colonies are cowards, stupid and although you try to be as good, you cannot stick a feather in your hat, or do anything, that would make you worthy to be officers, or equal to us British. The colonists adopted the song *Yankee Doodle* as their theme song during the Revolution to remind themselves that they were not cowards, not stupid, and, by working hard each person should have a chance to rise in the ranks by their worthy actions.

The artists begin playing on instruments that would have been played during the Revolutionary War: fife and rope-tension drum. As they move forward and reach the stage, they play on more

modern instruments. This could symbolize the growing maturity of the Patriots' idea of what freedom would mean or perhaps our own responsibility to live up to the values of 'all people created equal'. The artists are in Continental uniforms of musicians.

**Vocabulary and Activities:** Study Guides found on [www.donnawissinger.com](http://www.donnawissinger.com)  
Quick Guide posted on ASO website For local history Useful <http://www.motherbedford.com/>.

Suggestions to teachers--**How to listen:**

**Ask Question or Create Hook**—ie Who in the room is an American? What makes you an American? When and how was America born? OR Play and sing *Yankee Doodle*—What does it mean? For what War was *Yankee Doodle* the theme song?

- I. Provide some background into the Revolutionary War-1775-1781 (Treaty 1783)
  - a. 13 Colonies vs British (The colonies considered themselves British subjects)
  - b. In the colonies there were **Patriots** (people who wanted independence from the British) and **Loyalists** (those who wanted to remain part of the British empire)
  - c. The Loyalists called the Patriots *rebels*, the Patriots called the Loyalists *Tories*, The British soldiers were called *Lobsters or Lobster Backs*
  - d. Problems began after the French and Indian War (the British and Colonies fought side by side to push the French and Indians further west and north)
  - e. After the French and Indian War the British needed money to repay the war debt. They decided to create taxes in the colonies to help raise money.
  - f. The colonists did not want to pay the taxes—tensions began to rise—there were people who became very angry with the British
  - g. After several failed taxes and events such as the Boston massacre of 1770 and Boston Tea Party, 1773 anger culminated in the Shot heard round the World in Lexington, MA on April 19, 1775

Play *Falling Down Doodle* (perhaps 2-3 times—each time gaining more understanding)

- I. What do you hear?
  - o Familiar tunes
  - o Instrument families
  - o Solo instruments (fife and drum) Fife is instrument similar to piccolo but with no keys
- II. What feeling do you get in the music?
  - o What feeling do you have in the first minute? How does the composer create that feeling?
  - o What feeling do you have when you hear *London Bridge/Yankee Doodle*?
  - o What happens during the last minute of music?
- III. Do you think the composer leans toward Loyalist or Patriot?

Even before the American Revolution was fought for freedom there were many who came from places such as Ireland, Scotland, and Germany seeking a place where they could worship as their hearts dictated, where they could buy land that would really belong to them, and where they had a chance to work hard for their dreams. These were the people who settled in central

and western Pennsylvania; some who dared to cross the Appalachian Mountains and settle near Pittsburgh and some settled in such places in the Allegheny Front Mountains now called Bedford, Tyrone, and Frankstown.

Some of these were called Ulster-Scots (sometimes called Scotch-Irish). These were Scottish people who had lived for many generations in a part of Ireland called Ulster. They crossed the treacherous Atlantic and traveled overland for religious freedom, to escape ruthless landlords, because the English parliament made laws that destroyed their businesses, and because of extended droughts that threatened famine. Those who survived the transatlantic journey entered America by way of the port of Philadelphia.

The historic American stereotype of the self-reliant pioneer family armed with their Bibles and muskets is in part that of the Ulster-Scots. Their spirit of self-reliance and a burning desire for freedom was central to the Revolution and the years that followed. It is said that it was the Ulster-Scots whose voices were loudest for independence. These immigrants embodied and fought tirelessly to make sure that the formative years of the United States were clearly rooted in personal rights and freedoms. Their suffering and courage are truly the making of America. They had not only hope; they had the persistence and undying vision to make it happen.

*The Ulster-Scots: Voyage of Hope*

Robert Kerr

Composer's Notes:

They came to seek a new life free from religious oppression and prejudice. They survived the ravages of the ocean, the elements, illness, and fatigue. They boldly came over land by wagon, until at last they found that place which suited them. They would clear, settle, defend, and die for this land: claiming it their home.

Artist's Notes:

Please see the artist's My Story: An Ulster-Scot in America chapters 2 & 3.

Suggestions about **How to listen**:

**Ask Question or Create Hook** You are leaving home today and never coming back—you can take one thing with you--What would you take? You will be crossing the Atlantic Ocean on a boat in 1768. Nearly 1/3 of the people on the boat will die. Describe the boat. What dangers can you imagine? Name three. How would you prepare to face each of those dangers?

- I. Provide some background to Ulster-Scots
  - a. Scottish people who lived in Ulster Ireland for many generations (parts of Ireland and Scotland were under British rule at various times)
  - b. The Ulster-Scots came to America for religious freedom and to get away from British tyranny—over 200,000 came to American between 1717-1775
  - c. They were independent minded and were well educated. Even the poorest in money could read. Princeton University was founded by Ulster-Scots. They were leaders during the American Revolution
  - d. They were willing to fight for their rights in the American Revolution
  - e. They worked hard and played hard

- f. A favorite instrument was penny whistle

Play *Ulster-Scots: Voyage of Hope* (perhaps 2-3 times—each time gaining more understanding)

I. What do you hear?

- Can you identify the solo instrument? Does it sound like any instrument you have heard—perhaps in a movie score? (The instrument is penny whistle—similar to instrument played in Titanic score)
- Does the solo instrument seem to change?
- Does the music change in tempo and feeling?

IV. What feeling do you get in the music?

- What words describe your feelings in the first section? How does the composer create that feeling?
- What feeling do you have in the second section?

This musical piece begins with low penny whistle. The Slow Aire perhaps captures the sadness of leaving home, the fear of losing loved ones, as well as the hope of what would lie ahead. The Slow Aire moves to the Celtic Fury of the ocean and the energy the Ulster-Scots brought with them. A smaller penny whistle in C is far less plaintive and far more agile than the low g whistle.

What reasons can you suggest for the name Penny whistle?

### *Johnny Appleseed Suite*

The importance and value of freedom is that it gives each person the opportunity to be what they dare to be; the right to write their best life story. From the moment Patriots, whether of English heritage or immigrants from other countries, determined they were willing to fight and die for the freedom of which they dreamed, individual people rose to the occasion to do just what that freedom gave them; they wrote their best life stories.

What does it mean, and how does one begin this story? John Chapman, Johnny Appleseed to you and me, is a perfect example of what it takes, how to do it, and how to do it with the values that, should each person live up to them, will keep alive the promise of America.

First, Johnny Appleseed knew what mattered. Values such as responsibility, even as a child, responsibility to help with family life—chores; truthfulness; generosity, love of nature—without nature, humans lose beauty and connectivity to the world; kindness to all; an independent spirit; and service to others. Then, he knew he needed to find something that grabbed his interest, something that when he was doing it time flew by and he always had lots of energy to learn more—it is called passion. John Chapman knew he needed to find his passions—where his interests and natural gifts fit together perfectly. Some people take a long time to find their passions, some find them early in life, and some never put any energy and effort into finding their passions. John Chapman felt lucky; he found his passions for being in the woods, of

noticing everything about the natural world around him and feeling connected to them, acceptance and interest in others not like himself, and, curiously, apples and apple trees.

After you find a passion, it must be developed. You have to give it great energy and learn as much as possible. When John was about 12 years old he was apprenticed to Mr. Crawford, a nearby orchardist. The orchards were apple trees. John learned how to prepare the seeds (drying them properly), preparing the soil for the seeds, planting so that the space between seeds was perfect, the raising of seedlings by protecting them from animals, pruning the trees as they grew, harvesting, and of course, finding every way under the sun that apples could be used to make life easier. Apples were one of the most useful of all fruits and vegetables during this time. Make a list of every use for apples! List why apples and these uses would be an important part of surviving on the frontier.

John also learned about good business practices; practices that served people as well as made money—doing well (making money) while doing good for others.

When John Chapman was about eighteen he set off on his own. Another of his passions was adventure. He wanted to explore the frontier—the edge of where people lived and what they knew. He gathered seeds, which would be useful to himself and others, a few belongings, and his younger half brother and sister. His destination was the beautiful Susquehanna River and Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. During his travels, John Chapman would salvage seeds from the cider mills—waste is a loss to everyone! In time, the cider mills benefitted from John's industrious nature. There were more apples which meant more of a market for apple cider! John planted trees while traveling, often making a business arrangement with a farmer similar to this: John would plant the seeds on the farmer's land, build a fence around the area so that the seedlings had a chance to grow (called a nursery!) and ask the farmer to care for the trees as they grew. Later, the farmer could sell some of the young trees that were strong enough to be transplanted to his neighbors or those passing through on their way west, keep the apples or sell them, and give John a portion of what he made. The arrangement was always generous. If the farmer had fallen on hard times, John accepted corn meal, or old clothes, or took nothing at all. He usually found a way to visit these nurseries every two to three years.

By the time John had traveled through Pennsylvania and had settled in Ohio, he was called Johnny Appleseed. John bought land whenever he could in Ohio. In spite of this, he seemed to always be on the move, spreading apple seeds, his love of life, and his faith. Among those things people admired was that Johnny Appleseed believe that each person should worship the way their hearts told them. He himself shared his faith whenever he could—his Bible and his following of the Swedenborgian beliefs. It is said he often tore pages from his Bible he thought would provide solice and left them with the families with whom he had shared an evening. Johnny Appleseed was known to be generous and kind to all. He was respected by Native Americans and by the new settlers no matter from where they came. He had found his passions, developed them, and gave back to others; he wrote a life story we still tell today.

In the Johnny Appleseed Suite by Robert Kerr, we hear his energy, passion, and joy in The Planting Song.

Johnny Appleseed's love of nature--he preferred to sleep outdoors under that stars--and his love of God is heard in the simple Johnny's Prayer.

Even though he enjoyed time alone, as a social person who wanted to share his passions, Johnny stayed with countless families during his travels. He seemed to enjoy laughter, a good story, and no doubt he also enjoyed the times when someone picked up a fiddle, flute, penny whistle, or other instrument and played a Hoe Down for the delight of all. The Swedenborgian song, The Lord is Good to Me is known to many.

Helen Keller shared the same religious beliefs as Johnny Appleseed. Below is an excerpt of her words regarding the teachings.

"Since my seventeenth year, I have tried to live according to the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg. By 'church' he did not mean an ecclesiastical organization, but a spiritual fellowship of thoughtful men and women who spend their lives for a service to mankind that outlasts them. He called it a civilization that was to be born of a healthy, universal religion—goodwill, mutual understanding, service from each to all, regardless of dogma or ritual."

"I know that life is given us so that we may grow in love. And I believe that God is in me as the sun is in the color and fragrance of the flower, the Light in my darkness, the Voice in my silence."