

ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND

1912

Irving Berlin came to New York from his native Russia when he was five years old. It wasn't long before this cantor's son was in business as a newsboy, then a singing waiter, and later a song plugger for the great writer and publisher, Harry Von Tilzer. Soon he became a successful composer and publisher himself. His first hit was in 1907, "Marie From Sunny Italy". Berlin's early songs were light, often comedic and saturated with the ethnic character of New York City. Ragtime music was in vogue, and Berlin capitalized on its popularity by writing "Alexander's Ragtime Band", not ragtime music itself, but a rather slow march which was perfect for those new popular dances, the Turkey Trot and the Grizzly Bear. It was a sensational hit.

Perhaps America's greatest songwriter, he found song material in a simple thought, a humorous incident, a catchy phrase. It might be all of these things, plus a clever quote from "Old Folks At Home" and a bit of bugle call, that makes "Alexander's Ragtime Band" such an enduring classic of popular music.

By IRVING BERLIN
(1888-)

VERSE:

The musical score consists of two staves of sheet music. The top staff is for the voice and piano, and the bottom staff is for the bassoon. The key signature is A major (two sharps), and the time signature is common time. The lyrics are as follows:

Oh, my hon - ey, _____ Oh, my hon - ey, Bet - ter hur - ry and
Oh, oh, — Let's go, — Bet - ter

let's me - an - der, Ain't you go - in', Ain't you go - in'
Ain't _____ Oh, ain't _____

7 to the lead - er man, 8 rag - ged me - ter man? 9 Oh, my hon - ey,
 to ——— rag - ged Oh, ——— Let's

10 Oh, my hon - ey, 11 Let me take you to Al - ex - an - der's
 go, ——— Let ———

13 grand - stand, 14 brass band, 15 Ain't you com - in' a - long?
 Ain't ———

CHORUS: Come hear, ——— Come hear
 17 hear, ——— Come on and hear 18 Come on and hear 19
 Come on and hear, ——— Come hear, ——— Come hear Al - ex - an - der's Rag - time

Right here, ——— right here,
 20 Band; Come on and hear, ——— Come on and hear, 21 Right here, ——— 22 right here, It's the
 Right here, ——— right here,

23 best band in the land. They can play a bu - gle call like you

24 Ta ta

25 nev - er heard be - fore, So nat - u - ral that you want to go to war;

26 Ta ta

That's just the best - est band what am, My

27 28 29 30 31

32 hon - ey lamb. Come on a - long, Come a - long, Come a - long, Let me

33 34 35 36 37

take you by the hand, Up to the man, Up to the man, Up to the man, Up to the man,

to the man

38

8 man to the man who's the lead - er of the band. And if you

39

40

This block contains measures 38 through 40. The top staff starts with a quarter note followed by a eighth note tied to a sixteenth note. The bottom staff has eighth notes. Measures 39 and 40 continue the melody with quarter and eighth notes.

care to hear that Swa - nee Riv - er played in

41

42

43

This block contains measures 41 through 43. The top staff has eighth notes. The bottom staff has eighth notes. Measures 42 and 43 show a transition with different rhythms.

Come on and hear, Come on and hear
rag - time, — Come on and hear, Come on and hear, Come on and hear, Come on and hear Al - ex
Come on and hear,

44

45

46

This block contains measures 44 through 46. The top staff has eighth notes. The bottom staff has eighth notes. Measures 45 and 46 show a transition with different rhythms.

Rag - time Band. TAG:
an - der's Rag - time Band. Hear that mu-sic, ain't it grand? It's the
Rag - time Band.

47

48

49

50

This block contains measures 47 through 50. The top staff has eighth notes. The bottom staff has eighth notes. Measures 48 and 49 show a transition with different rhythms.

best band in the land, Rag - time Band!
51 52 53 54

8

This block contains measures 51 through 54. The top staff has eighth notes. The bottom staff has eighth notes. Measures 52 and 53 show a transition with different rhythms.