

# *Anonymous 4*

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With special guest, Bruce Molsky (fiddle, banjo, guitar, vocals)

## 1865

Joined by special guest **Bruce Molsky**, *Anonymous 4* commemorates the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery with **1865**.

**1865** focuses on the personal experience of men, women, and children from the North and from the South, toward the end of the Civil War and in its immediate aftermath -- as told in songs originally written for the stage and for the parlor, and in songs and instrumental tunes from the hills and back roads of America.

Many of the songs in **1865** were published between 1861 and 1865; others first appeared in print earlier, but were sung constantly during the terrible war years, perhaps in an effort to bring to mind the familiar and the good. Yet other songs and instrumental tunes are not datable; by the year 1865, they had already been passed down from generation to generation without the aid of the printed page.

Whatever their origins or history or musical style, these songs are the stylized, versified “stories” preferred by so many who lived through “This Cruel War.” They describe the cause and the call to fight; the agony of separation of lovers or of mothers and sons; the hopes, fears, and sacrifices of those who remained at home during the long wait for news of loved ones; the experiences of the soldiers themselves -- especially their desperate longing for home and family; homecoming for those who survived; grief for those who did not; and the hope for reconciliation amidst a troubled peace.

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Letters, diaries, and memoirs attest to the importance of music during the Civil War, whether performed on the battlefield by homesick soldiers or at home by those who waited for them.

Responding to the demand for music (and in doing so, creating an even greater market for it), songwriters and composers jumped into action, producing several thousand songs during the war years -- about 700 released by Southern publishers, the rest by Northern publishers. Songs appeared in elegant *sheet music* with beautifully illustrated covers and in cheap single sheets referred to as *song sheets* or *broadsides*; and the lyrics of favorite songs both old and new were printed in pocket-sized collections called *songsters*, which were carried by both soldiers and civilians.

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Despite the frenzy of musical composition and publication, and the speed with which certain new songs became huge hits, the single most popular song in both the North and the South during the

Civil War actually pre-dated the war's first shot by almost four decades, originating in the 1823 opera, *Clari, or the Maid of Milan*. Account after account tells of the singing of this song to ward off despair, or describes Northern and Southern soldiers camped on opposite sides of a river or a battlefield, singing or playing Union and Southern tunes in alternation, and finally joining together on... *Home, Sweet Home*.

Like *Home, Sweet Home*, many other songs on **1865** have nothing to do with side taking. Northerners preferred the love song *Aura Lea*; Southerners preferred the love song *Sweet Evelina*. *Listen to the Mockingbird* became *The Mockingbird Quickstep*, played by military and civilian brass bands everywhere during the war years.

But the lyrics of some of our songs (and many other Civil War songs as well), did promote either the Northern or the Southern cause. Even so, some of the best loved of them were sung with equal fervor in the North and the South. The Northern song *Weeping, Sad and Lonely, or, When This Cruel War is Over* was printed again and again by both Northern and Southern publishers with certain changes in text to indicate Union or Confederate allegiance. Despite the fact that the extreme sadness of its theme caused such bad morale that generals tried to forbid their troops from singing it, sales of *Weeping, Sad and Lonely* approached nearly a million copies, and songwriters on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line churned out reply songs, parodies, and imitations.

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Although a few of the songs in **1865** fell into obscurity after the end of the Civil War, many others have lived on and become part of the American treasury of song. Certain songs have been sung and played in a surprising variety of settings. We particularly love the facts that *Aura Lea* is the source of the melody for the Elvis Presley hit *Love Me Tender*, and (despite its extremely sad lyrics) *Listen to the Mockingbird* became a comic song, often featuring virtuosic whistling solos – and used as part of the theme song in the opening credits of the short films of *The Three Stooges!* *Shall We Gather at the River* has not only enjoyed a long and active life here in the US, but made its way to the British Isles and has flourished there, as well.

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Featured in tonight's concert: five-part harmonies on *Weeping, Sad and Lonely*, the Stephen Foster gem *Hard Times, Come Again No More*, and *Shall We Gather at the River*; Bruce accompanying himself on banjo on *Bright Sunny South*, and his inimitable fiddle and banjo playing on instrumental tunes *Rebel Raid*, *Camp Chase*, and *Polly Put the Kettle On*; *Darling Nelly Gray*, *Listen to the Mocking Bird*, and *Home, Sweet Home* in something close to their original settings accompanied by the fretted banjo; the Southern favorite *Sweet Evelina* sung girl group style; *Aura Lea* in an arrangement for two voices and guitar; an homage to the Carter Family on *The Faded Coat of Blue*; the high lonesome sound on the folk song *The True Lover's Farewell*; and the four-part a cappella singing of Anonymous 4 on the anti-war song *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground* and the hymn *Abide with Me*.

*Anonymous 4 is represented by Alliance Artist Management  
& records exclusively for harmonia mundi usa  
U.S. booking and management for Bruce Molsky: Tree Frog Music*

**All songs on tonight's program have been arranged by members of Anonymous 4 and Bruce Molsky.  
Songs you may hear tonight:**

*Popular songs*

**Home, Sweet Home**

*Words: John Howard Payne ; Music: Sir Henry Bishop (1823)*

**Hard Times Come Again No More**

*Words and Music: Stephen Foster (1854)*

**Darling Nelly Gray**

*Words and Music: B.R. Hanby (1856)*

**The Faded Coat of Blue, or, The Nameless Grave**

*Words and Music: J.H. McNaughton (1865)*

**Listen to the Mocking Bird**

*Words and Music: Alice Hawthorne (aka Septimus Winner) (1856)*

**The Southern Soldier Boy**

*Words: Captain C.W. Alexander (1863)*

*Air: The Boy with the Auburn Hair (ca 1859)*

**Sweet Evelina**

*"Words by M ; Melody by T" (possibly T. Brigham Bishop) (1863)*

**Weeping, Sad and Lonely, or, When this Cruel War is Over**

*Words: Charles Carroll Sawyer ; Music: Henry Tucker (1863)*

**The Picture on the Wall**

*Words and music: Henry Clay Work (1864)*

**Tenting on the Old Camp Ground**

*Words and Music: Walter Kittredge (1864)*

*Hymns and Gospel songs*

**Abide with Me**

*Words: Henry F. Lyte ; Music: William H. Monk (1861)*

**The Land of Beulah**

*Words: Jefferson Hascall ; Music: William B. Bradbury (1862)*

**Shall We Gather at the River?**

*Words and Music: Robert Lowry (1865)*

*Traditional songs*

**Bright Sunny South · Brother Green · The Maiden in the Garden · The True Lover's Farewell**

*Traditional fiddle and banjo tunes*

**Camp Chase · Polly Put the Kettle On · Rebel Raid**