

# *Piquing Student Curiosity About the 100th Anniversary of the Constitution with Sheet Music*

Lee Ann Potter

**I**N 1887, Fred T. Baker composed the “Constitutional Centennial March,” and F. A. North of Philadelphia published it as a four-page piece of sheet music ([www.loc.gov/item/ihas.100000356](http://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.100000356)). In addition to its title, composer, publisher, and date of publication, the sheet music’s cover also explained that the march had been composed to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, and it included images of eight individuals.

All of this information on the sheet music’s cover, may prompt a number of student questions and encourage interest in original research. Provide student pairs with the cover and encourage them to analyze it. The Primary Source Analysis Tool available from the Library of Congress at [www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides](http://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides) may help guide students, reveal their curiosity, and capture their questions.

Some students may wish to find out more about the individuals whose faces appear on the sheet music. Three—George Washington, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton—were instrumental in the drafting of the Constitution. Three—John

A. Kasson, Hampton L. Carson, and Amos R. Little—were leaders of the Constitutional Centennial Commission. One—Col. A. Loudon Snowden—was the Marshal of the Industrial Parade in Philadelphia scheduled to take place September 15, 1887. And the last was Grover Cleveland, president of the United States in 1887.

Some students may wish to learn about the Constitutional Centennial Commission. Others may want to know more about the Industrial Parade in Philadelphia. Still others might want to find out more about the composer or publisher. And some might notice that the dates “Sept. 15th, 16th, & 17th,” are included on the cover and may wonder about the other

events that were scheduled to take place.

The following collections from the Library of Congress may be useful as students conduct their research:

The Papers of George Washington  
[www.loc.gov/collections/george-washington-papers](http://www.loc.gov/collections/george-washington-papers)

The Papers of James Madison  
[www.loc.gov/collections/james-madison-papers](http://www.loc.gov/collections/james-madison-papers)

The Papers of Alexander Hamilton  
[www.loc.gov/collections/alexander-hamilton-papers](http://www.loc.gov/collections/alexander-hamilton-papers)

The Papers of Grover Cleveland  
[www.loc.gov/collections/grover-cleveland-papers](http://www.loc.gov/collections/grover-cleveland-papers)

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NO

25

3 - OCT 31  
1973



JAS. MADISON.



GENERAL. GEO. WASHINGTON.



ALEX. HAMILTON.



JOHN A. KASSON.  
PRESIDENT.  
CONSTITUTIONAL CENTENNIAL COMMISSION.



HAMPTON L. CARSON.  
SECRETARY.  
CONSTITUTIONAL CENTENNIAL COMMISSION.

1787.  
**CONSTITUTIONAL  
CENTENNIAL  
MARCH.**  
COMPOSED BY  
**Fred T. Baker,**

in commemoration of the  
ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE  
ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE U.S.  
SEPT. 15<sup>TH</sup> 16<sup>TH</sup> & 17<sup>TH</sup>.  
1887



AMOS R. LITTLE,  
CHAIRMAN.  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONSTITUTIONAL  
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION.



PRESIDENT GROVER CLEVELAND.



COL. A. LOUDON SNOWDEN.  
MARSHAL  
INDUSTRIAL PARADE PHILA. SEPT. 15<sup>TH</sup> 1887.

**F. A. NORTH & CO.**  
PUBLISHERS.

**PHILADELPHIA, PA.**  
1308 CHESTNUT ST.

Copyright, F. A. North & Co., 1887.



**CONSTITUTIONAL CENTENNIAL MARCH.**

Composed by FRED. T. BAKER.

Copyright, 1897, by F. A. NORTH & CO.

Constitutional Centennial March.

The F. A. North Co. Music Co., 1308 Chestnut St., Phila., Pa.

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OF  
**PHILADELPHIA.**

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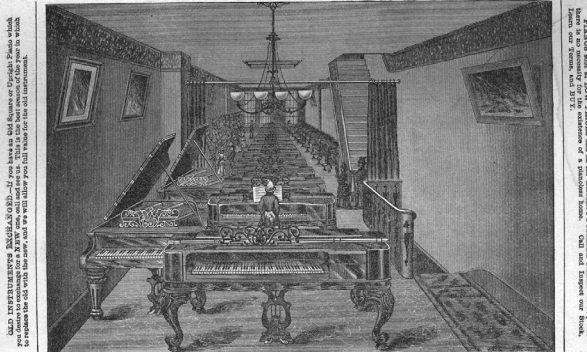
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## CONSTITUTION WITH SHEET MUSIC *from page 229*

Chronicling America (historic newspapers) <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> [Try searching on “Industrial Parade” in Pennsylvania newspapers in 1887; or on the names of the members of the Commission in 1887.]

Congress.gov  
[www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov) [Try searching on “Constitutional Centennial Commission” within the 49th Congress (1885-87).]

Finally, among the general collections of the Library of Congress is a six-page booklet containing the opening address that John K. Kasson, president of the Constitutional Centennial Commission, delivered in Independence Square, Philadelphia, on September 17, 1887, at the “Celebration of the One-hundredth Anniversary of

the Framing and Promulgation of the Constitution of the United States of America.” It is available online at [www.loc.gov/item/28018612](http://www.loc.gov/item/28018612).

Encourage students to share their findings with the class, emphasizing the questions they started with and the sources they found most useful. ■

### Teaching with the Library of Congress Blog

If you try these suggestions, or a variation of them, with your students, tell us about your experience! During the third week of September, the Teaching with the Library of Congress Blog at [blogs.loc.gov/teachers](http://blogs.loc.gov/teachers) will feature a post tied to this article and we invite you to comment and share your teaching strategies.



**Lee Ann Potter** is the Director of the Office of Professional Learning and Outreach Initiatives at the Library of Congress. For more information on the education programs of the Library of Congress, please visit [www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers).

## America250

Speaking of anniversaries related to the founding documents of the United States—in 2026, just three years from now, we will commemorate the United States Semiquincentennial and the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

In the lead-up to this milestone, the America250 Commission has launched America’s Invitation, a nationwide campaign for all Americans to share stories and hopes and dreams for our future.

America’s Invitation is an opportunity for Americans across the country, from every background, to take part in reflecting on our past and looking to the future by sharing their stories, and the things they love about America, as we continue to strive for “a more perfect union.”

Taking part in America’s Invitation is easy—visit [stories.america250.org](http://stories.america250.org) to share photos, videos, artwork,

essays, songs, poems, or anything else that highlights what America means to you and how you hope to commemorate this milestone. This content may be showcased by America250 on its website, in videos, on social media, and more. Together, these contributions will highlight what makes America unique and ensure we are building a commemoration that includes all of us. Over the next three years, America250 will continue to host commemorative events across the country. To learn more, visit [America250.org](http://America250.org), and follow the Commission on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

<https://twitter.com/America250>

<https://www.instagram.com/250america/>

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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/america250/>