Colonel Bogey
by: Kenneth J. Alford (Frederick J. Ricketts)

Original Copyright: 1914
By: Boosey & Hawkes

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Alford, Kenneth J. (Frederick Joseph Ricketts)

DOB: February 21, 1881 (London, England)  
DOD: May 15, 1945 (Reigate, England)

Kenneth Joseph Alford is a pseudonym taken by Major Frederick Joseph Ricketts. As a composer, he was best known for his marches, the most famous of which was Colonel Bogey. British officers of the day were not encouraged to pursue interests outside the Army so, as a Lieutenant, he published works under a pseudonym. The first name, “Kenneth,” was that of his eldest son, and the surname, “Alford,” was his mother’s maiden name.

He joined the Royal Irish Regiment as a musician in 1895 and was commissioned into the Royal Marines as a director of music in 1927. He retired in 1944 with the rank of Major. Ricketts/Alford is known as “The British March King.”

Colonel Bogey (march) was published in 1914 by Hawkes and Son. The composer is said to have heard the opening 2 note motive whistled as a signal while he was strolling on a golf course in Scotland one day. The idea stuck in his mind and the march, “Colonel Bogey” resulted with the golfing term in its title. WWI soldiers sang the melody with bawdy words much to the dismay of the composer, even though he understood its value as a morale builder.

The march played a prominent role as a major musical theme in the movie, “Bridge Over the River Kwai.” Colonel Bogey is a perennial favorite of bands and audiences.

Program note researched by Marcus L. Neiman  
Medina, Ohio

Additional information on either the composer or composition would be welcomed. Please send information to  
marcusneiman@zoominternet.net

1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth_Alford
COLONEL BOGEY
March
KENNETH J. ALFORD
COLONEL BOGEY

Db FLUTE & PICCOLO

March

KENNETH J. ALFORD

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March
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Eb CLARINETS

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March

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March

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KENNETH J. ALFORD

Bb FLUGEL HORN
SOLO Eb SAXHORN

COLONEL BOGEY

March

KENNETH J. ALFORD

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March

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1st & 2nd HORNs in Eb

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1st B♭ BARITONE

2nd time

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