The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa

Vol. 3 No. 53

THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER

MARCH

(1896)

FULL SCORE

AS PERFORMED BY

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

March, "The Stars and Stripes Forever" (1896)

With the possible exception of "The Star Spangled Banner," no musical composition has done more to arouse the patriotic spirit of America than this, John Philip Sousa's most beloved composition. … Symbolic of flag-waving in general, it has been used with considerable effectiveness to generate patriotic feeling ever since its introduction in Philadelphia on May 14, 1897, when the staid *Public Ledger* reported: "It is stirring enough to rouse the American eagle from his crag, and set him to shriek exultantly while he hurls his arrows at the aurora borealis."

Aside from this flowery review, the march's reception was only slightly above average for a new Sousa march. It grew gradually in public acceptance, and with the advent of the Spanish-American War the nation suddenly needed such patriotic music. Capitalizing on this situation, Sousa used it with maximum effect to climax his moving pageant, *The Trooping of the Colors*.

"The Stars and Stripes Forever" had found its place in history. There was a vigorous response wherever it was performed, and audiences began to rise as though it were the national anthem. This became traditional at Sousa Band concerts. It was his practice to have the cornets, trumpets, trombones, and piccolos line up at the front of the stage for the final trio, and this added to the excitement. Many bands still perform the piece this way.

With the passing years the march has endeared itself to the American people. The sight of Sousa conducting his own great band in this, his most glorious composition, always triggered an emotional response. The piece was expected–and sometimes openly demanded–at every concert of the Sousa Band. Usually it was played unannounced as an encore. Many former Sousa Band members have stated that they could not recall a concert in which it was not played, and that they too were inspired by looking into the misty eyes of those in the audience. That the players never tired of it is surely a measure of its greatness.

Sousa was very emotional in speaking of his own patriotism. When asked why he composed this march, he would insist that its strains were divinely inspired. In a Sousa Band program at Willow Grove we find this account:

> Someone asked, "Who influenced you to compose 'Stars and Stripes Forever,'" and before the question was hardly asked, Sousa replied, "God–and I say this in all reverence! I was in Europe and I got a cablegram that my manager was dead. I was in Italy and I wished to get home as soon as possible. I rushed to Genoa, then to Paris and to England and sailed for America. On board the steamer as I walked miles up and down the deck, back and forth, a mental band was playing 'Stars and Stripes Forever.' Day after day as I walked it persisted in crashing into my very soul. I wrote it on Christmas Day, 1896."

The march was not put to paper on board the ship. Presumably it was penned in Sousa's hotel suite in New York soon after docking.

The composition was actually born of homesickness, as Sousa freely told interviewers, and some of the melodic lines were conceived while he was still in Europe. In one such interview he stated:

> In a kind of dreamy way I used to think over old days at Washington when I was leader of the Marine Band...when we played at all public official functions, and I could see the Stars and Stripes flying from the flagstaff in the grounds of the White House just as plainly as if I were back there again.
>
> Then I began to think of all the countries I had visited, of the foreign people I had met, of the vast difference between America and American people and other countries and other peoples, and that flag of ours became glorified...and to my imagination it seemed to be the biggest, grandest, flag in the world, and I could not get back under it quick enough.
>
> It was in this impatient, fretful state of mind that the inspiration to compose 'The Stars and Stripes Forever' came to me, and to my imagination it was a genuine inspiration, irresistible, complete, definite, and I could not rest until I had finished the composition. Then I experienced a wonderful sense of relief and relaxation. I was satisfied, delighted, with my work after it was done. The feeling of impatience passed away, and I was content to rest peacefully until the ship had docked and I was once more under the folds of the grand old flag of our country.

The interviewer then added this telling postlude: "'Amen! to those sentiments,' I said. And as I looked at John Philip Sousa there were tears in his eyes."

Sousa explained to the press that the three themes of the final trio were meant to typify the three sections of the United States. The broad melody, or main theme, represents the North. The South is represented by the famous piccolo obbligato, and the West by the bold countermelody of the trombones.

By almost any musical standard, "The Stars and Stripes Forever" is a masterpiece, even without its patriotic significance. But by virtue of that patriotic significance it is by far the most popular march ever written, and its popularity is by no means limited to the United States. Abroad, it has always symbolized America. It has been recorded more often than practically any other composition ever written. Sales of the sheet music alone netted Sousa over $400,000 in his lifetime; radio broadcasts, sheet music, and phonograph records brought his heirs tidy sums for many years. After the copyright expired in 1953, over fifty new arrangements appeared in the United States alone. Looking back at the march's astonishing success, it is difficult to believe that the publisher had shown little faith in it and that he had even suggested to Sousa that "Forever" be stricken from the title.

Sousa did not claim that his march title was original. He could have come by it in one of two ways. First, the favorite toast of bandmaster Patrick S. Gilmore's was "Here's to the stars and stripes forever!" Also, one of Sousa's publishers had earlier printed a piece with the same title.

Sousa wrote words for the march, evidently for use in *The Trooping of the Colors*, his pageant of 1898. These are printed below. One phrase ("Death to the enemy!") was curiously omitted, however–one which he said came to him repeatedly while he was pacing the decks of the *Teutonic*.

Let martial note in triumph float
And liberty extend its mighty hand;
A flag appears 'mid thunderous cheers,
The banner of the Western land.
The emblem of the brave and true.
Its folds protect no tyrant crew;
The red and white and starry blue
Is freedom's shield and hope.

Other nations may deem their flags the best
And cheer them with fervid elation
But the flag of the North, and South and West
Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's nation.

Hurrah for the flag of the free!
May it wave as our standard forever,
The gem of the land and the sea,
The banner of the right.
Let despots remember the day
When our fathers with mighty endeavor
Proclaimed as they marched to the fray
That by their might and by their right it waves forever.

(Second time)
Let eagle shriek from lofty peak
The never-ending watchword of our land;
Let summer breeze waft through the trees
The echo of the chorus grand.
Sing out for liberty and light,
Sing out for freedom and the right.
Sing out for Union and its might,
O patriotic sons.

Other nations may deem their flags the best
(Etc.)

Hurrah for the flag of the free!
(Etc.)

Paul E. Bierley, *The Works of John Philip Sousa* (Westerville, Ohio: Integrity Press, 1984), 84. Used by permission.

Editorial Notes

Throughout Sousa's career as a conductor, he often altered the performance of his marches in specific ways without marking or changing the printed music. These alterations were designed for concert performances and included varying dynamics and omitting certain instruments on repeated strains to expand the range of the musical textures, as well as adding unscripted percussion accents for dramatic emphasis at key points in the music. Although Sousa never documented his performance techniques himself, several players who worked extensively with Sousa provided directions for his frequently performed marches, most notably from cornetist Frank Simon. Many of the marches in this volume of "The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa" were staples in Sousa's regular concert repertoire and were included in the "Encore Books" used by the Sousa Band. A complete set of his Encore Books resides in the U.S. Marine Band Library and Archives and are referenced extensively by the Marine Band not only as a guide for some of Sousa's special performance practice, but also to ascertain the exact instrumentation he employed in his own performances of his marches.

"The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa" appears in chronological order and is based on some of the earliest known sources for each composition. These newly edited full scores correct many mistakes and inconsistencies found in the parts of early publications; however, all remaining markings and the original scoring are preserved. Where instruments are added to the original orchestration, it is guided by the additional parts Sousa sanctioned in his Encore Books where applicable or based on these typical doublings. Additionally, the alterations traditionally employed by the United States Marine Band in performance are incorporated throughout; either those specifically documented by Sousa's musicians or changes modeled on the customary practices of "The March King."

The musical decisions included in these editions were influenced by the work of several outstanding Sousa scholars combined with many decades of Marine Band performance tradition. These editions would not be possible without the exceptional contributions to the study of Sousa's marches by Captain Frank Byrne (USMC, ret.), Jonathan Elkus, Colonel Timothy Foley (USMC, ret.), Loras Schissel, Dr. Patrick Warfield, and "The March King's" brilliant biographer, Paul Bierley.

Performance practices that deviate from the original printed indications are described below and appear in [brackets] *in the score. In many instances these indications appear side-by-side with the original markings. An open diamond marked with an accent in the cymbal part indicates that the cymbal player should let that accent ring for an additional beat before rejoining the bass drum part.*

First Strain (m. 5-20): From the basic forte dynamic of this first strain, the three original crescendos found in m. 5, 9, and 12 should be pushed just slightly, with the third one leading to a subito piano in m. 13. While the next subito forte in m. 15 is original, the added change in dynamics in m. 17 and 19-20 were not part of the original score and parts. However, early recordings of this march with Sousa conducting indicate that this is how he did it. The fortissimo pick-up in m. 20 (first ending) mimics the strong pick-up note at the end of the introduction.

Second Strain (m. 21-53): The repeat of this strain is written out in this edition to clarify the important changes. E-flat clarinet, cornets, trombones, and cymbals are tacet first time through and clarinets have been altered down the octave. All others play at the piano dynamic. 2nd and 3rd clarinets originally had the same octave decorations of the melody like the firsts, but in the Marine Band, these parts typically play the original half-note melody first time along with euphoniums as indicated. First clarinets play the octaves first time along with flutes. Piccolo should also play first time to highlight the octave decorations. The capped notes should be slightly accented even at the soft dynamic, and the percussion lightly accents beat two in each measure to highlight a feel that "reverses the beat" here. All instruments rejoin at fortissimo with

the pick-up notes to m. 37 as indicated, and clarinets are back in the original higher octave. Along with the added sfz accents in percussion, the feel of "2-1" with the accents on two continues second time through, slightly stronger.

Trio (m. 53-85): For this famous 32- bar trio, the Marine Band makes several alterations. Piccolo AND flute are traditionally tacet, along with E-flat clarinet, cornets, trombones, and all battery percussion. Bells are added to double the melody, and clarinets have been altered down the octave. A terrific harp part was added by the composer and if available, enters with the arpeggios at the trio. The "reverse beat" feel continues in this trio, with Sousa's original indicated accents in the melody on many of the second beats. These should be played as "push" accents, slightly emphasized each time, but without articulation. The indicated crescendos in m. 81-83 should be subtle and always within a piano dynamic.

***The last eighth note in the melody that first appears in m. 75 (concert G) was originally written up the octave in Sousa's manuscript. However, early recordings by Sousa himself reveal that this was traditionally played down as a lower minor third rather than a leaping major sixth, and the Marine Band has also long performed it this way.*

Break Strain (m. 85-109): All instruments are back in a fortissimo beginning with the pick-up notes to m. 86. Cymbals are choked for the two interjections at m. 88-89 and 92-92, but then have a solo part in m. 94-95 and 98-99 that may ring. M. 103 and 105 are choked again before a big crash left to ring in m. 106 both times. A diminuendo is added first time in m. 108-109 leading to the soft first statement of the final strain.

***All flute players traditionally change to piccolos for the famous obbligato of the final strain. If this is done with all players and they remain in their seats, all may* tacet *beginning in m. 106 to switch from flute to piccolo. If they come out to the front of the stage for the solo as was tradition in Sousa's bands (and for the Marine Band), that tacet must happen early at m. 95 to allow time to make the switch and move from their chairs.*

Final Strain (m. 110-143): For the first time through this final strain, flutes (if any remaining), E-flat clarinet, cornets, trombones, and cymbals are tacet as well as saxophones and euphoniums. This is unusual in a Sousa march, but so too is this special piccolo soli. Keeping the trio melody only in the clarinets makes sure it does not compete with the obbligato. Piccolos may play their soli in forte first time and the harp arpeggios also re-appear here, if a harpist is available. All instruments rejoin in the original octaves and at fortissimo in m. 141 for the repeat of the break strain. A crescendo occurs this time in m. 108-109 leading in the final time through the last strain. The Marine Band traditionally adds a slight ritard in m. 109 second time, but then immediately returns to the original tempo in m. 110. Although marked "grandioso," this is a style indication from Sousa rather than a tempo instruction; he never conducted his final strains slower than the rest of the march. A terrific countermelody in the trombones is added to the trio melody and piccolo obbligato for the last time through, and percussion adds the indicated accents and the final sffz hits.

***There is an historical discrepancy in one note in the famous piccolo part. The fourth eighth note in m. 131 has long been printed in often-used edition as a concert C. The Marine Band has long performed this note as a B-flat rather than a C, which is more in keeping with the melodic shape of other like-figures in the rest of the part. The original manuscript is not entirely clear regarding this note, nor are the early recordings of the march.*

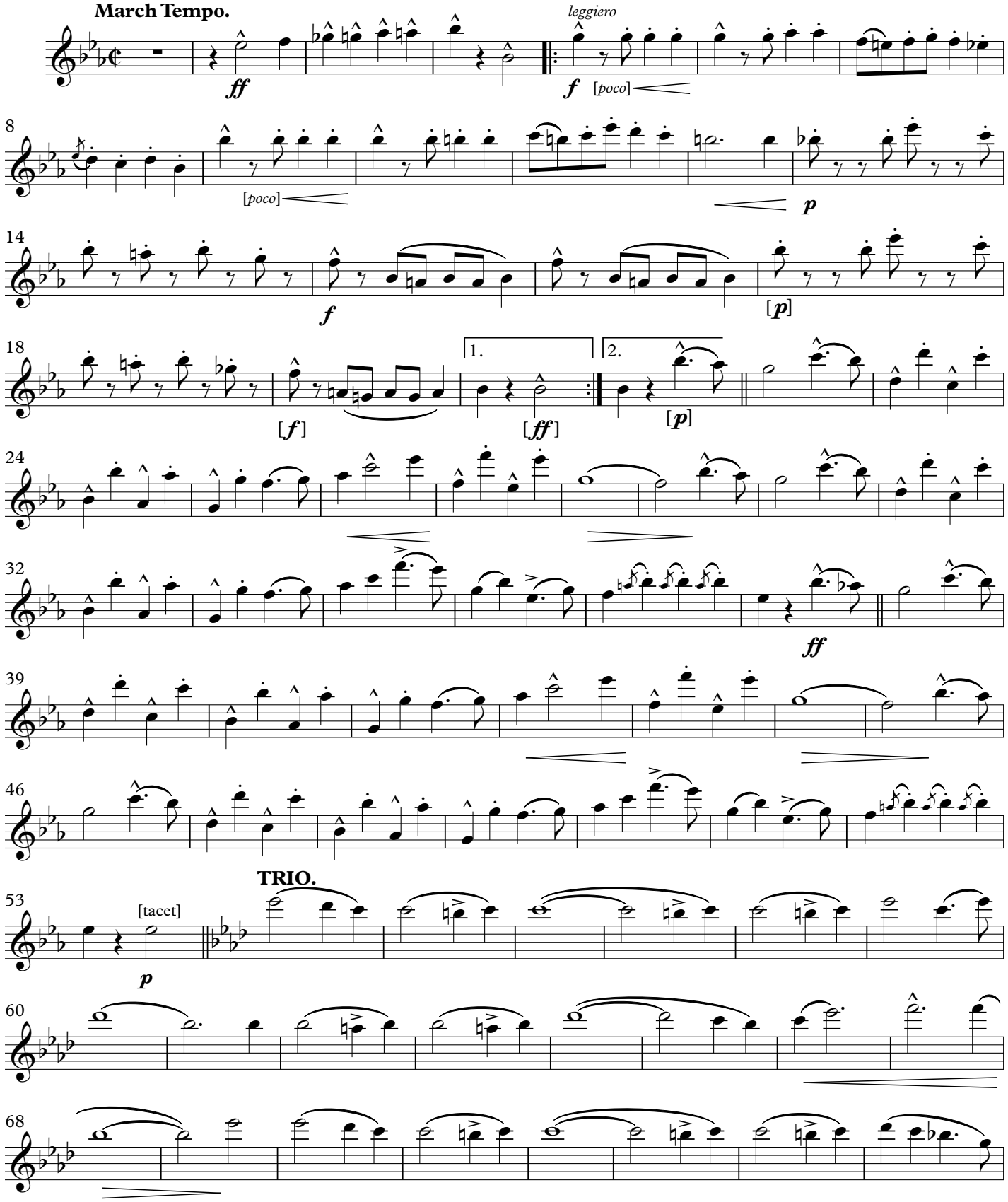
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Piccolo

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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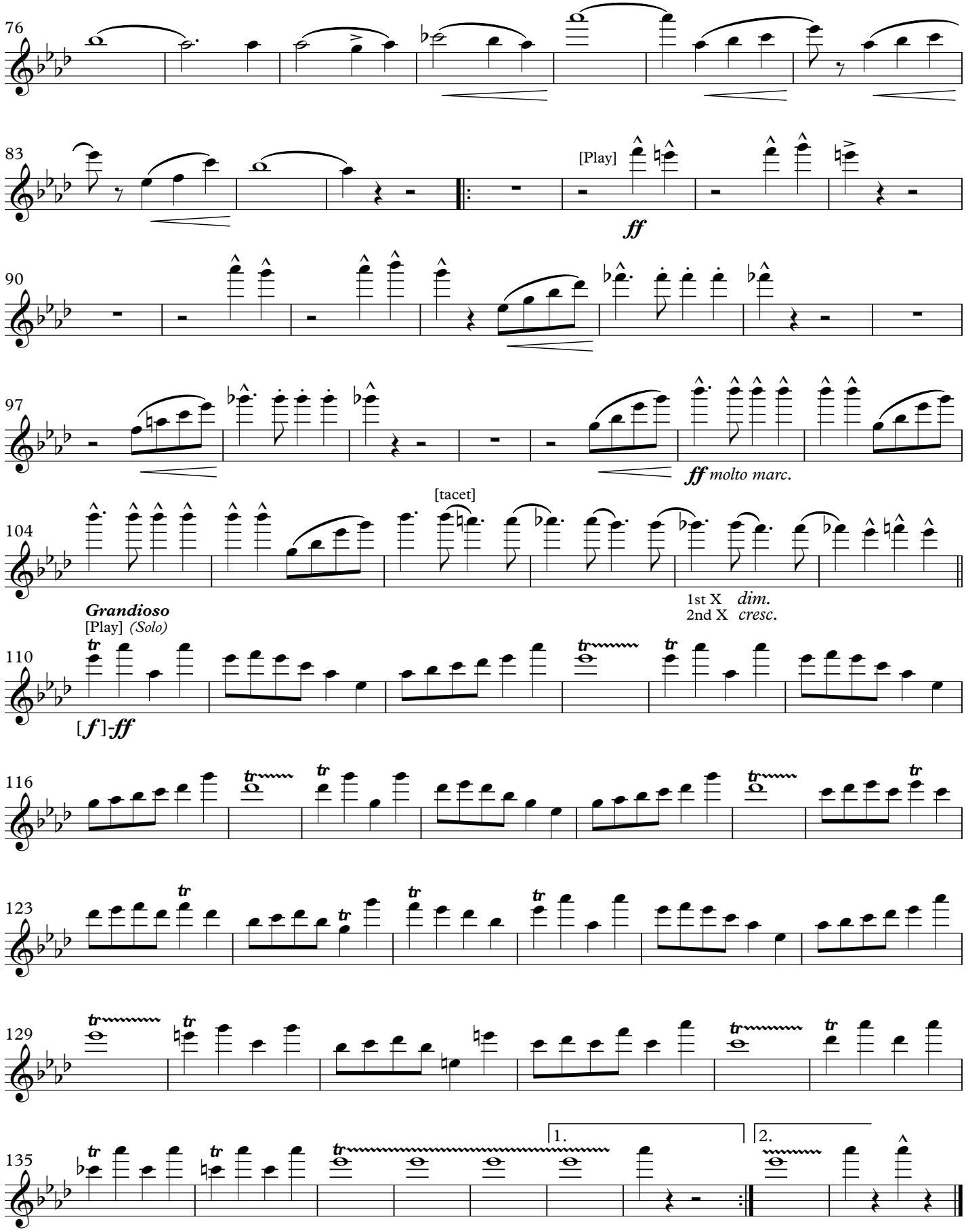
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Piccolo



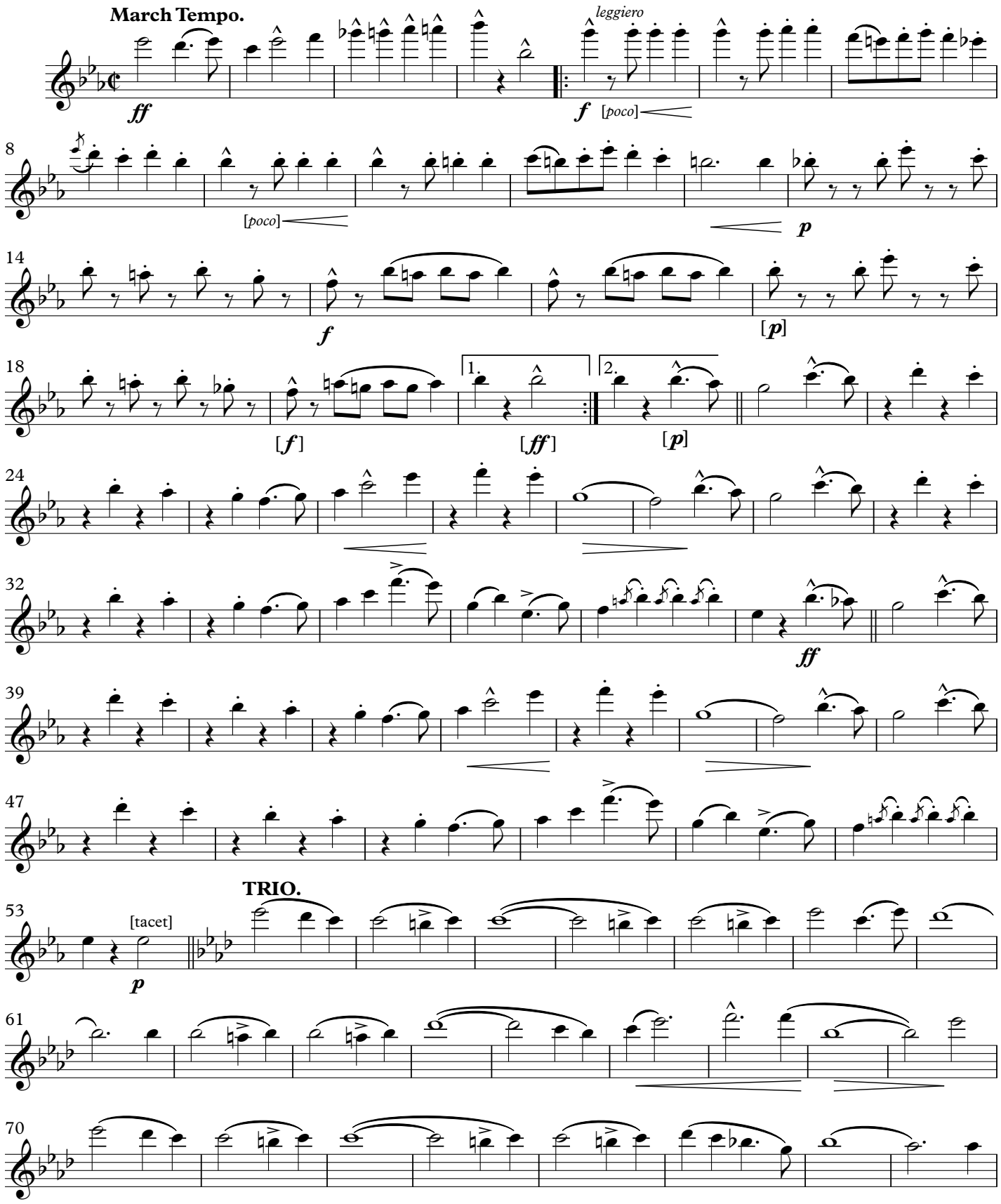
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Flutes (divisi)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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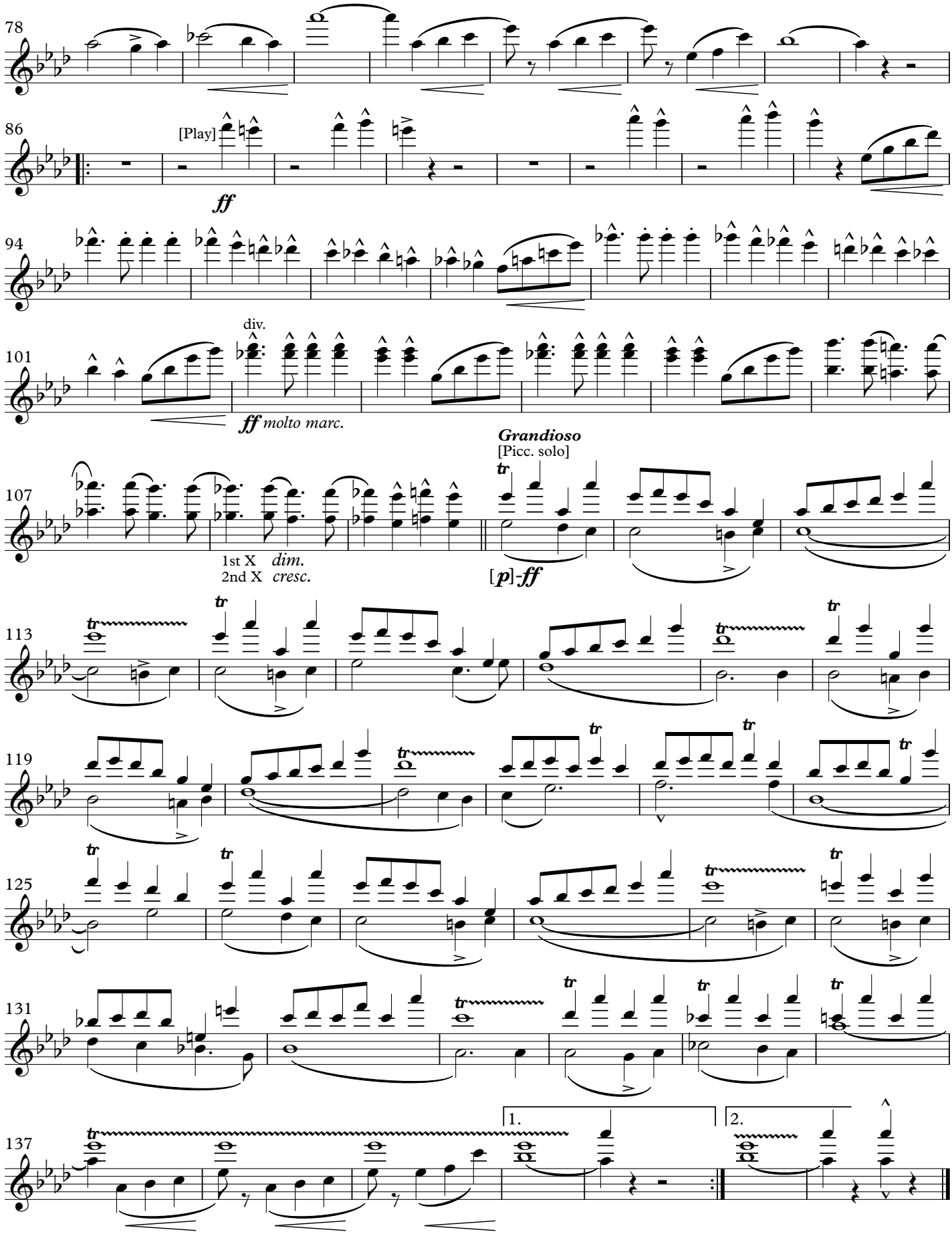
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Flutes (divisi)



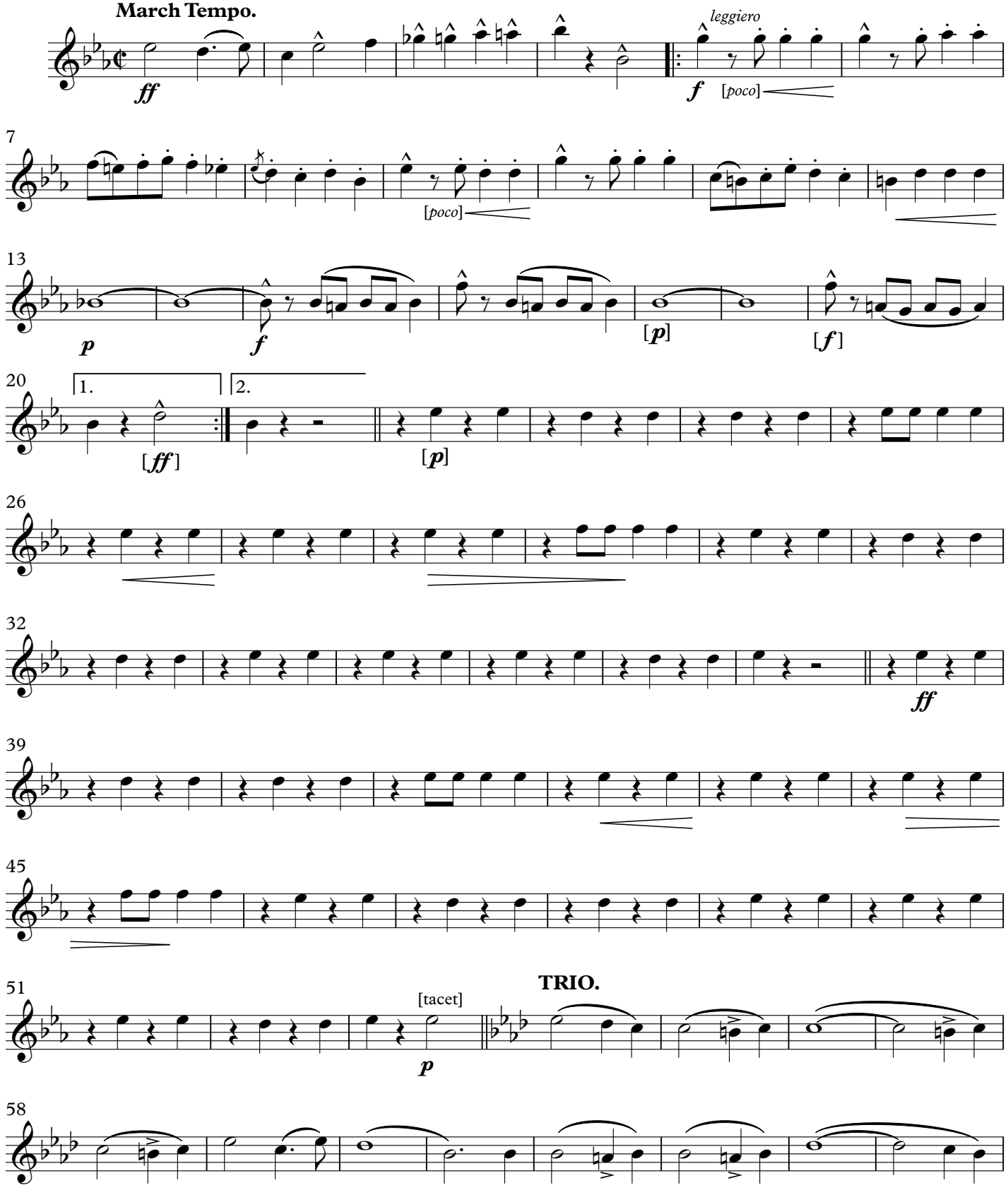
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

1st Oboe

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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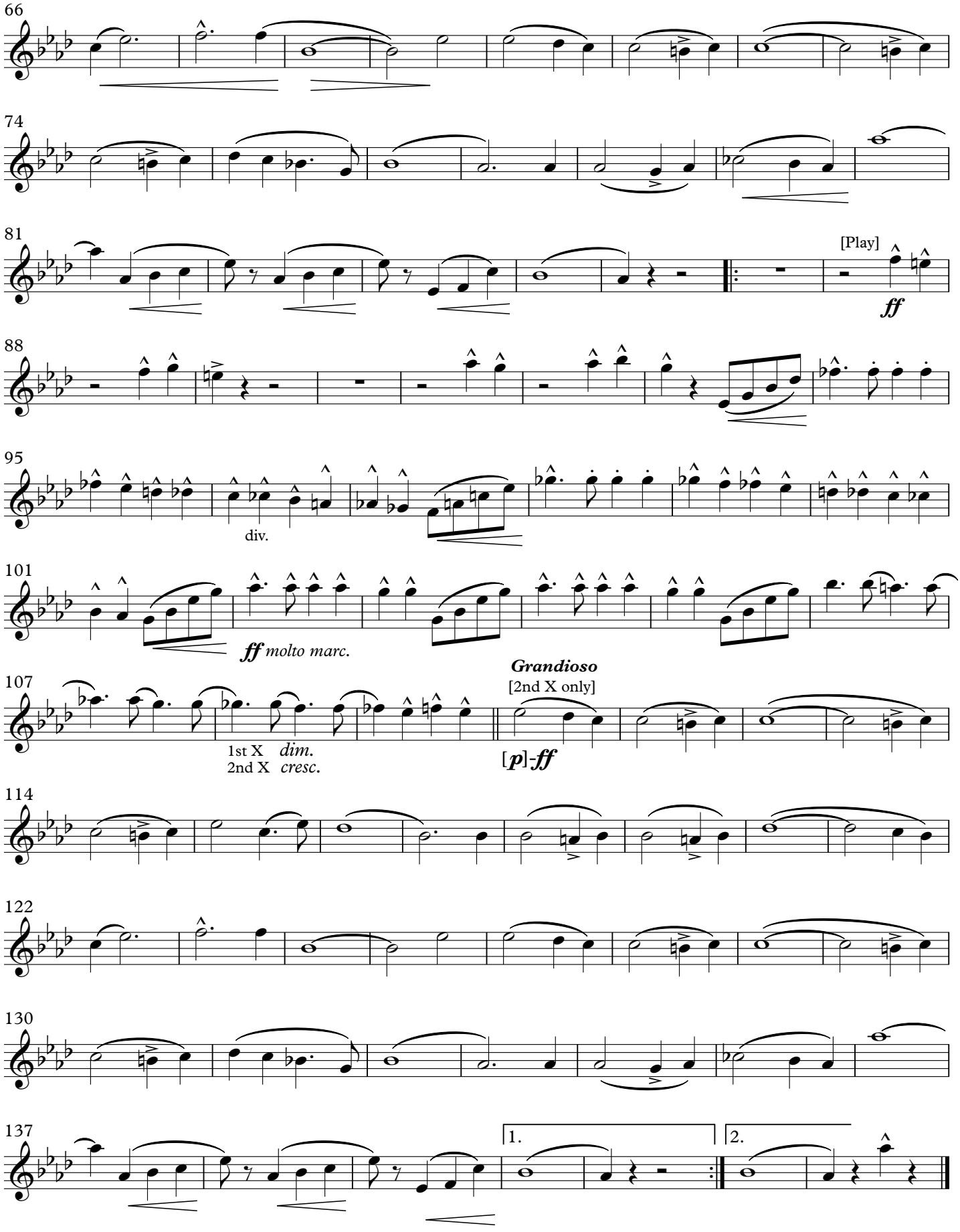
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

1st Oboe



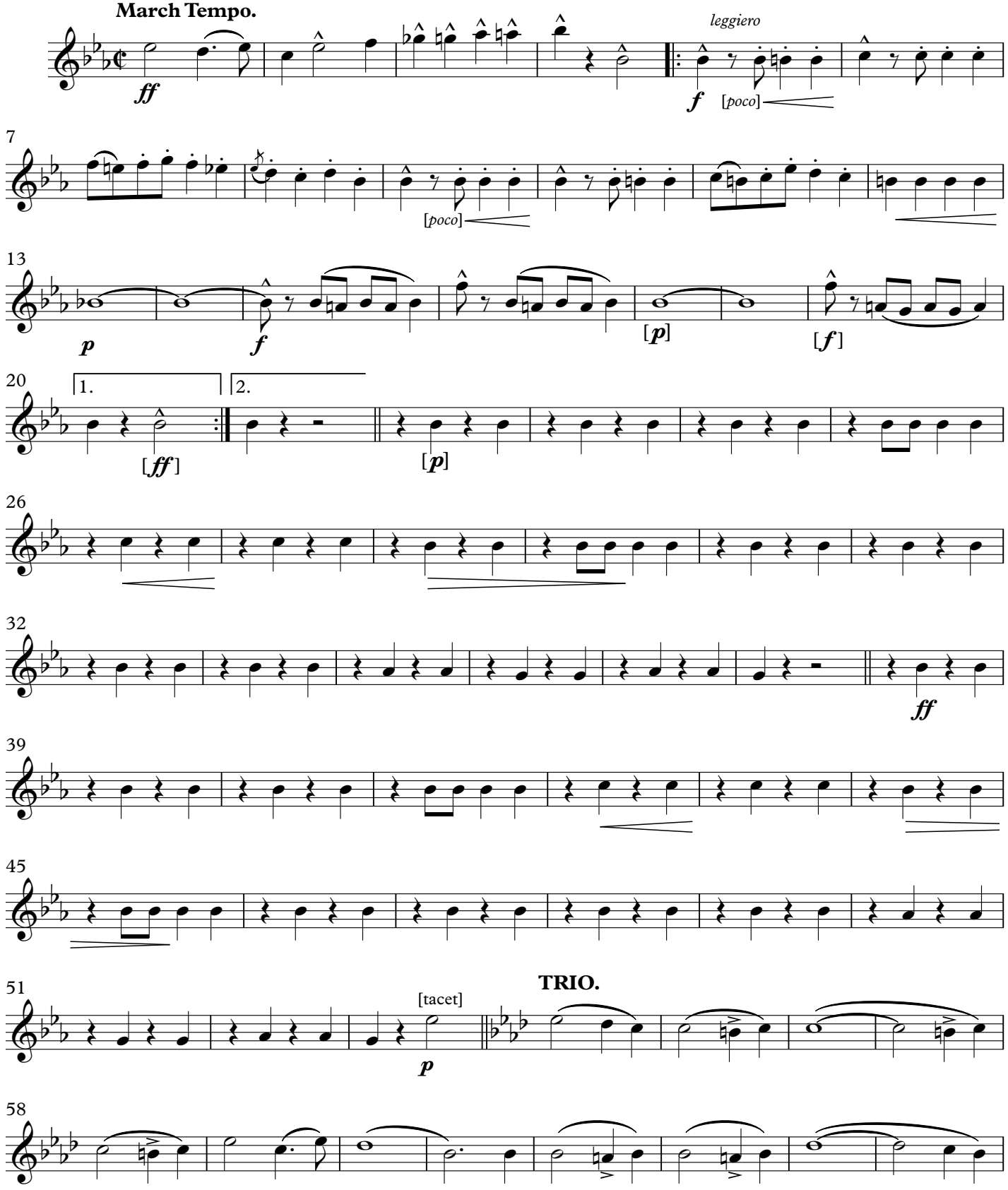
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

2nd Oboe

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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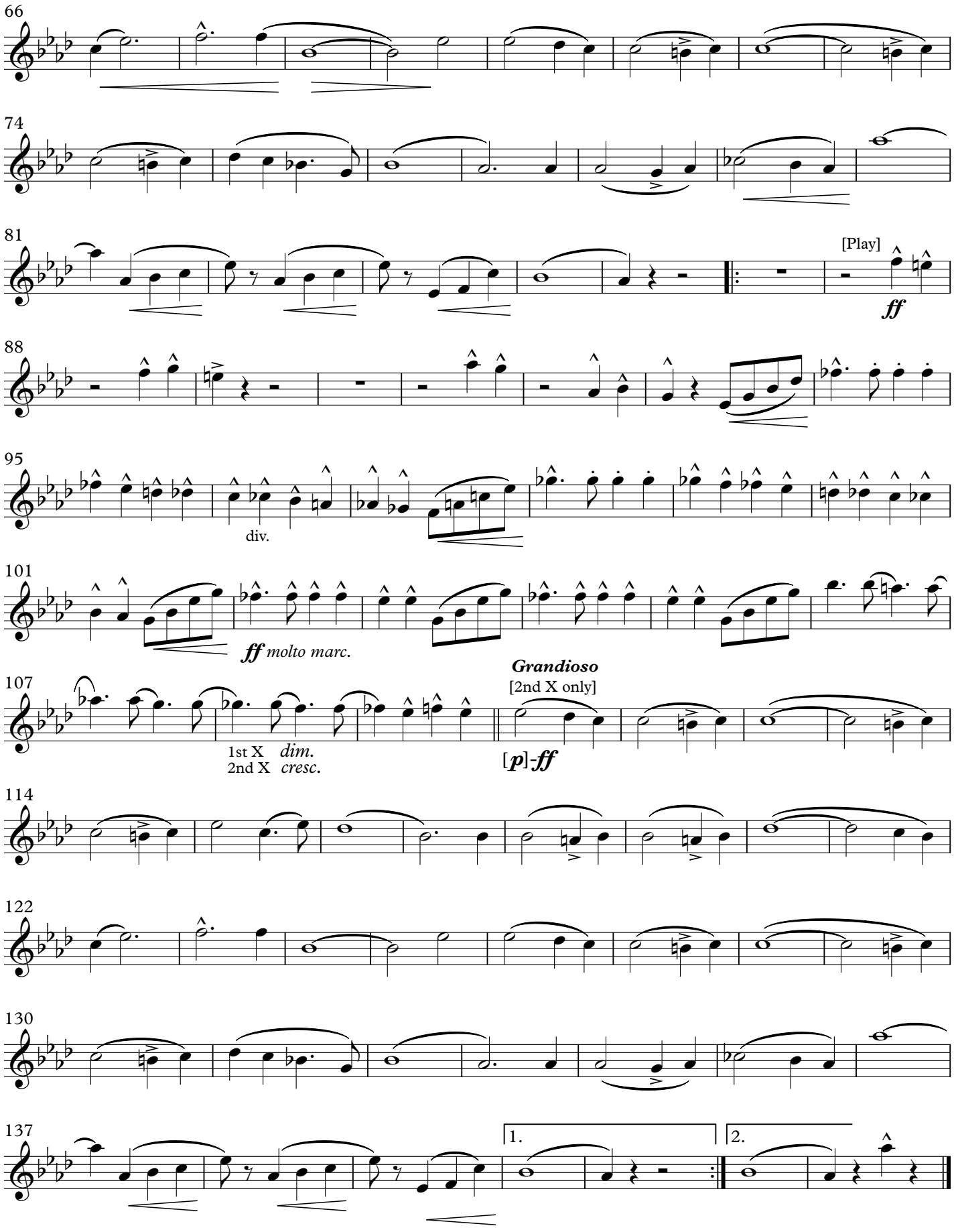
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

2nd Oboe



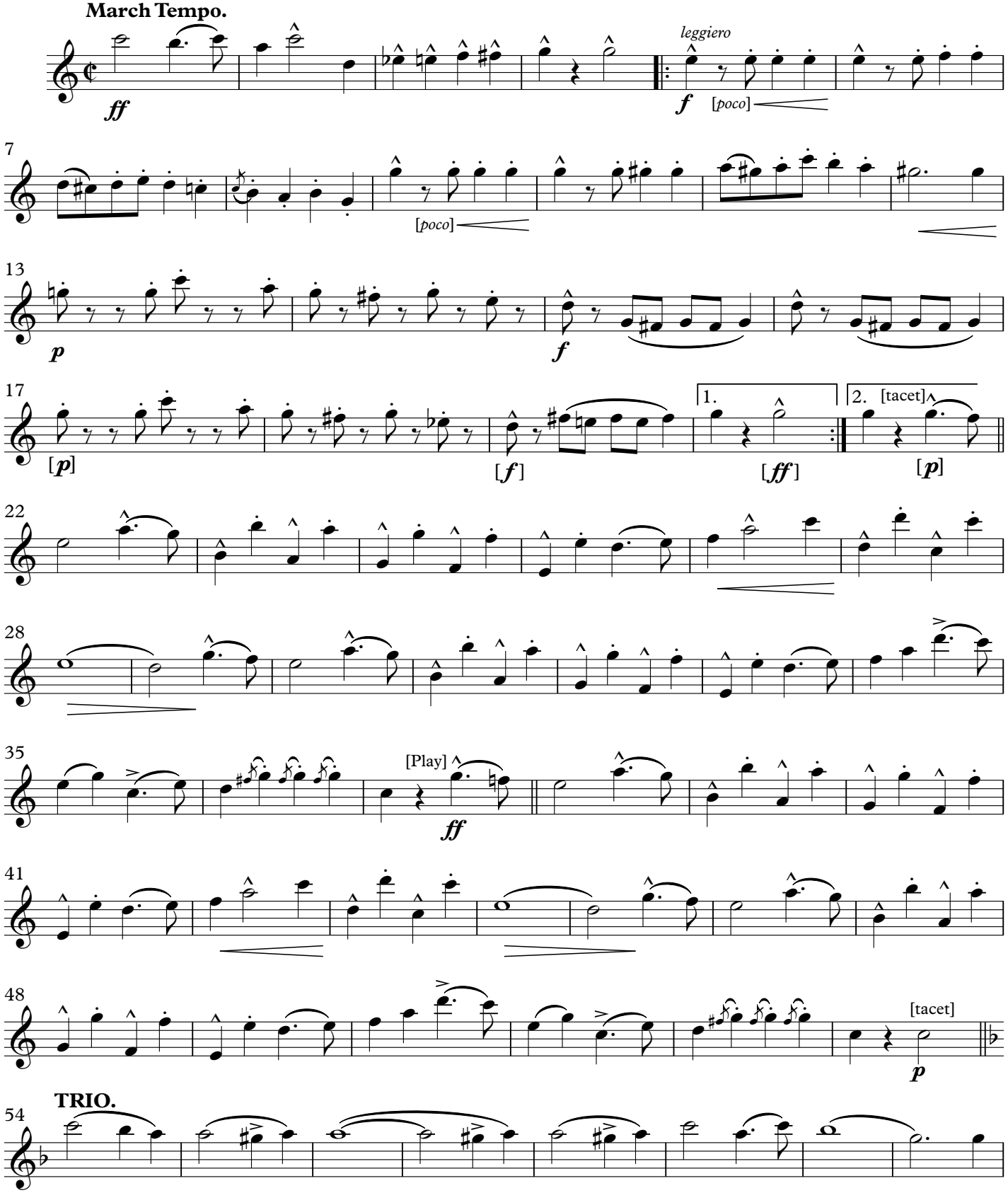
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

E♭ Clarinet



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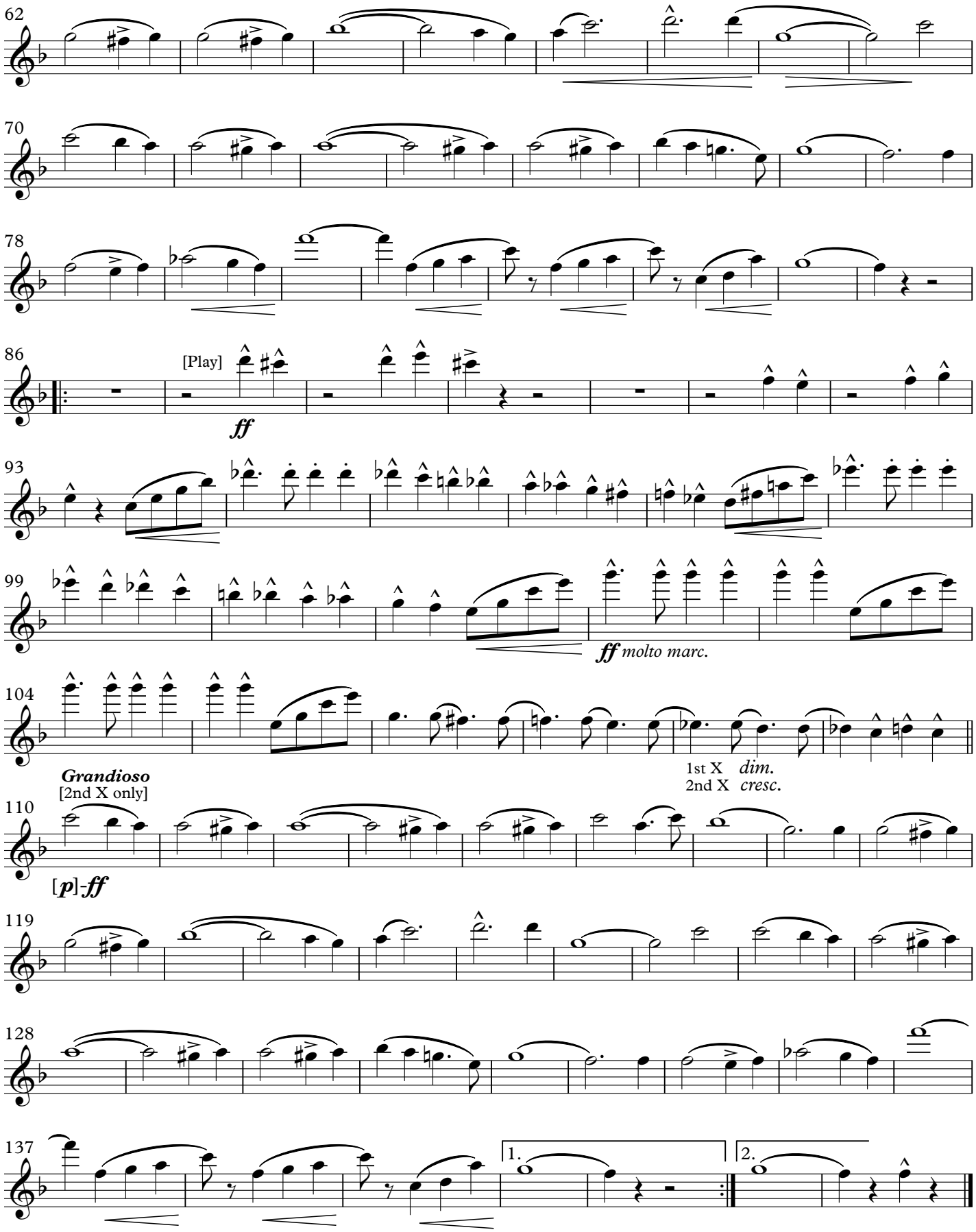
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

E♭ Clarinet



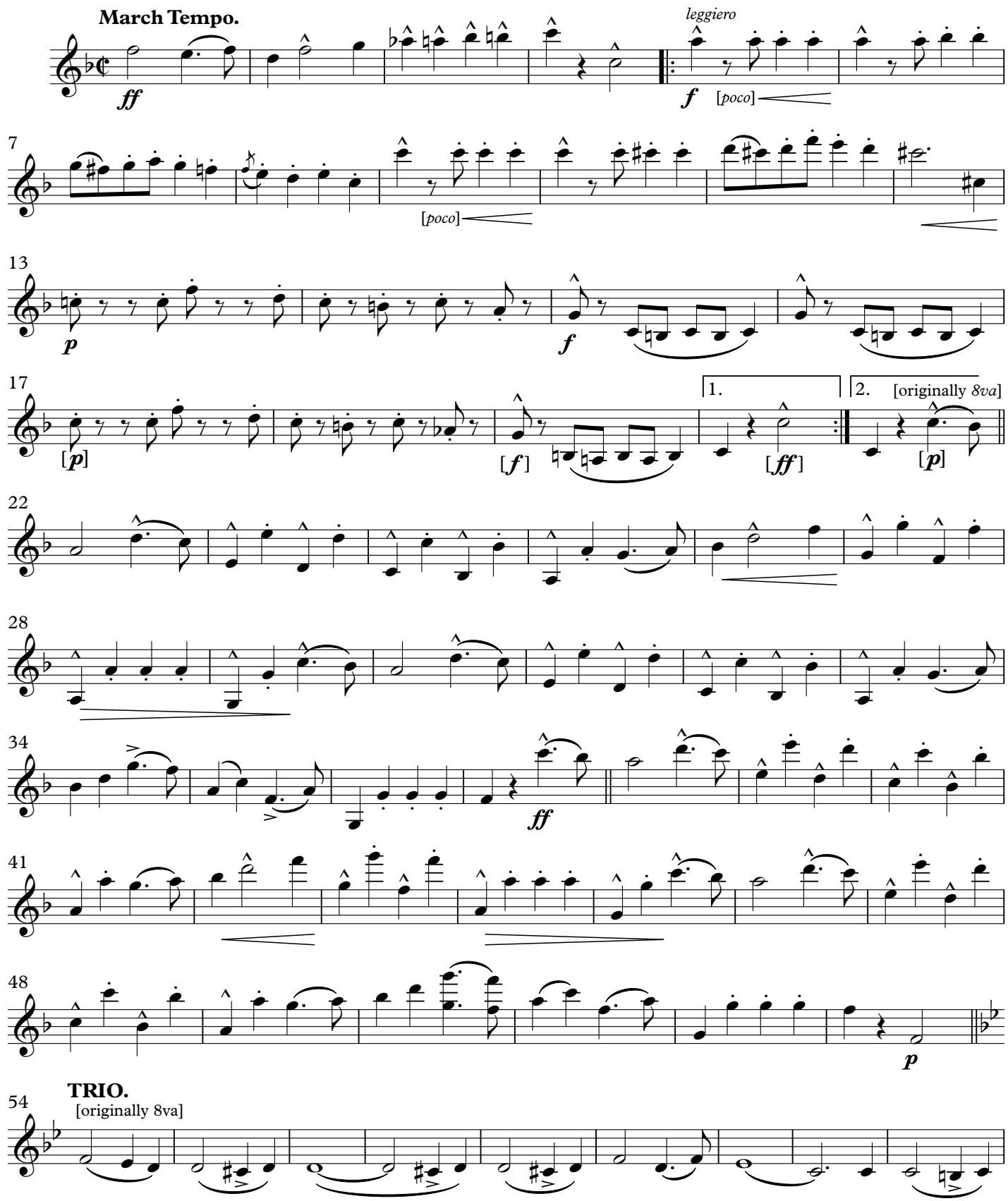
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

1st B♭ Clarinet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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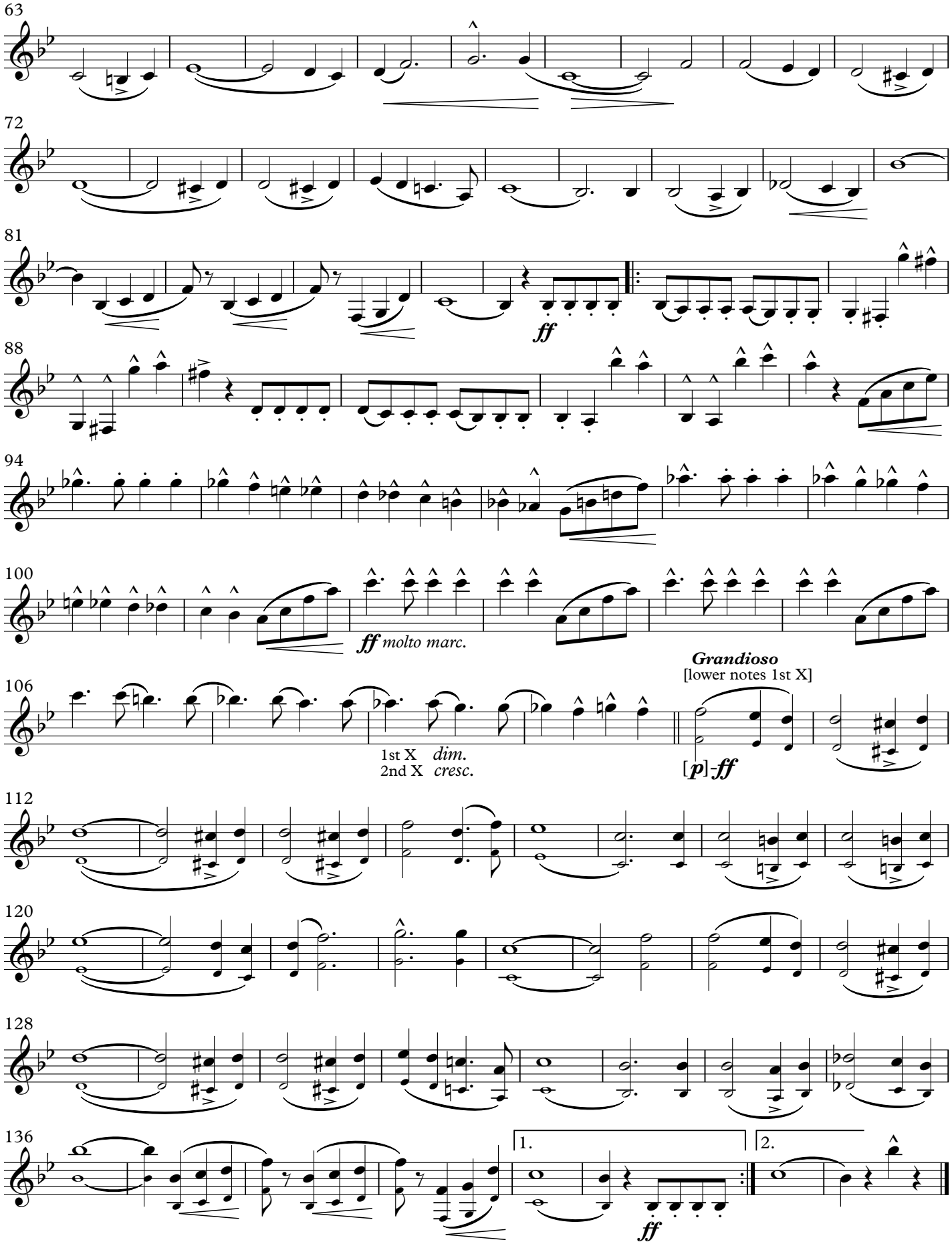
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

1st B♭ Clarinet



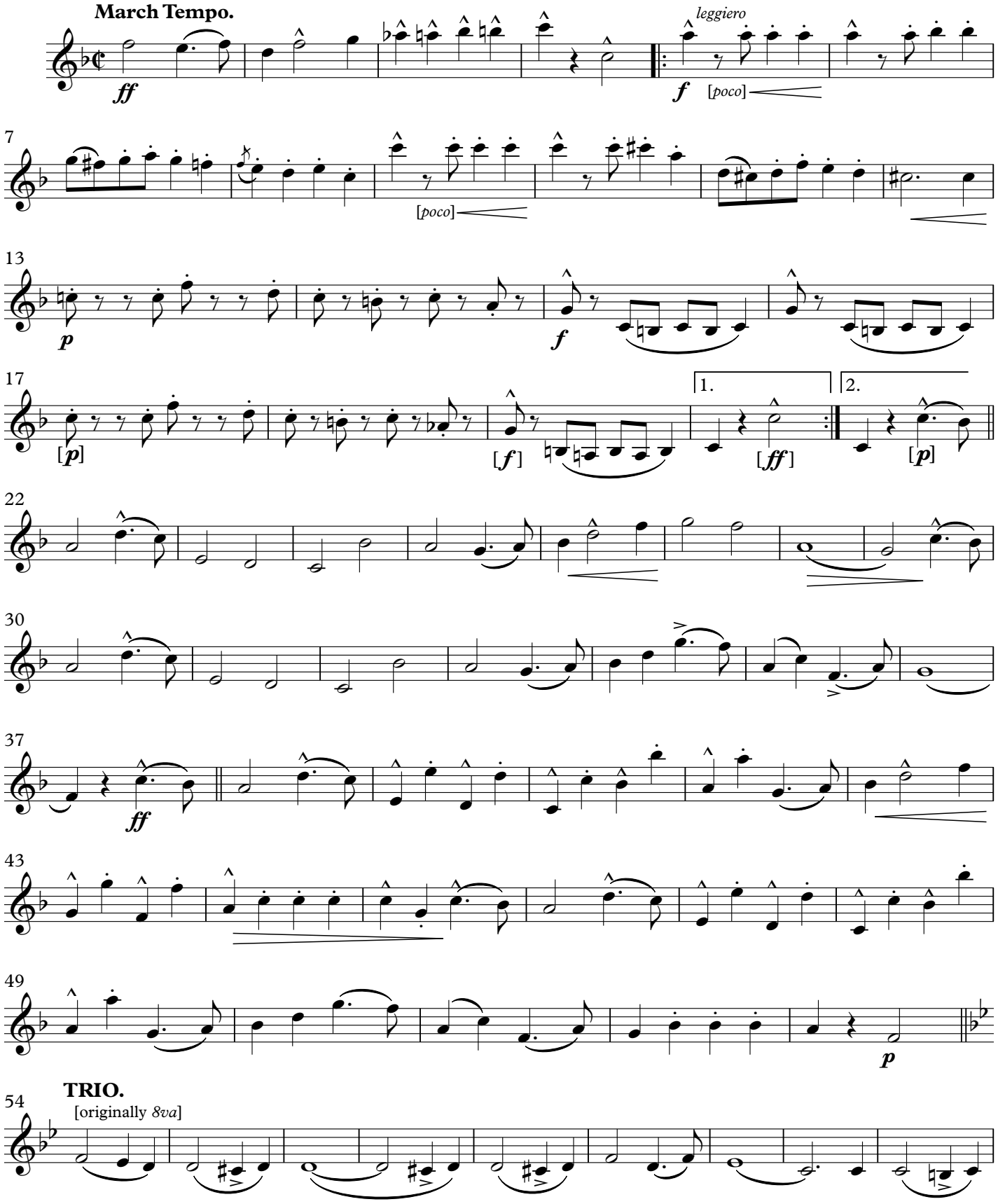
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

2nd B♭ Clarinet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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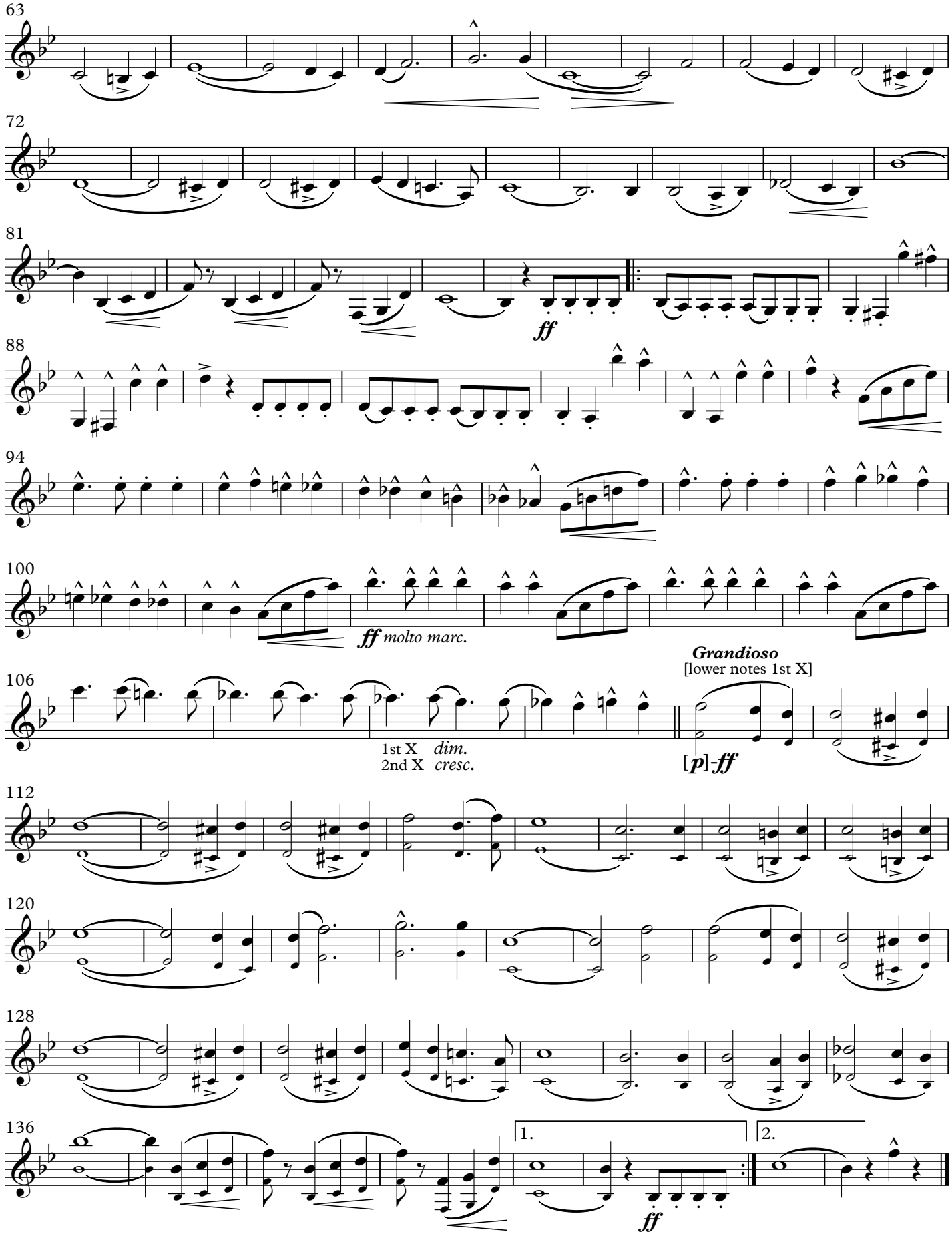
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

2nd B♭ Clarinet



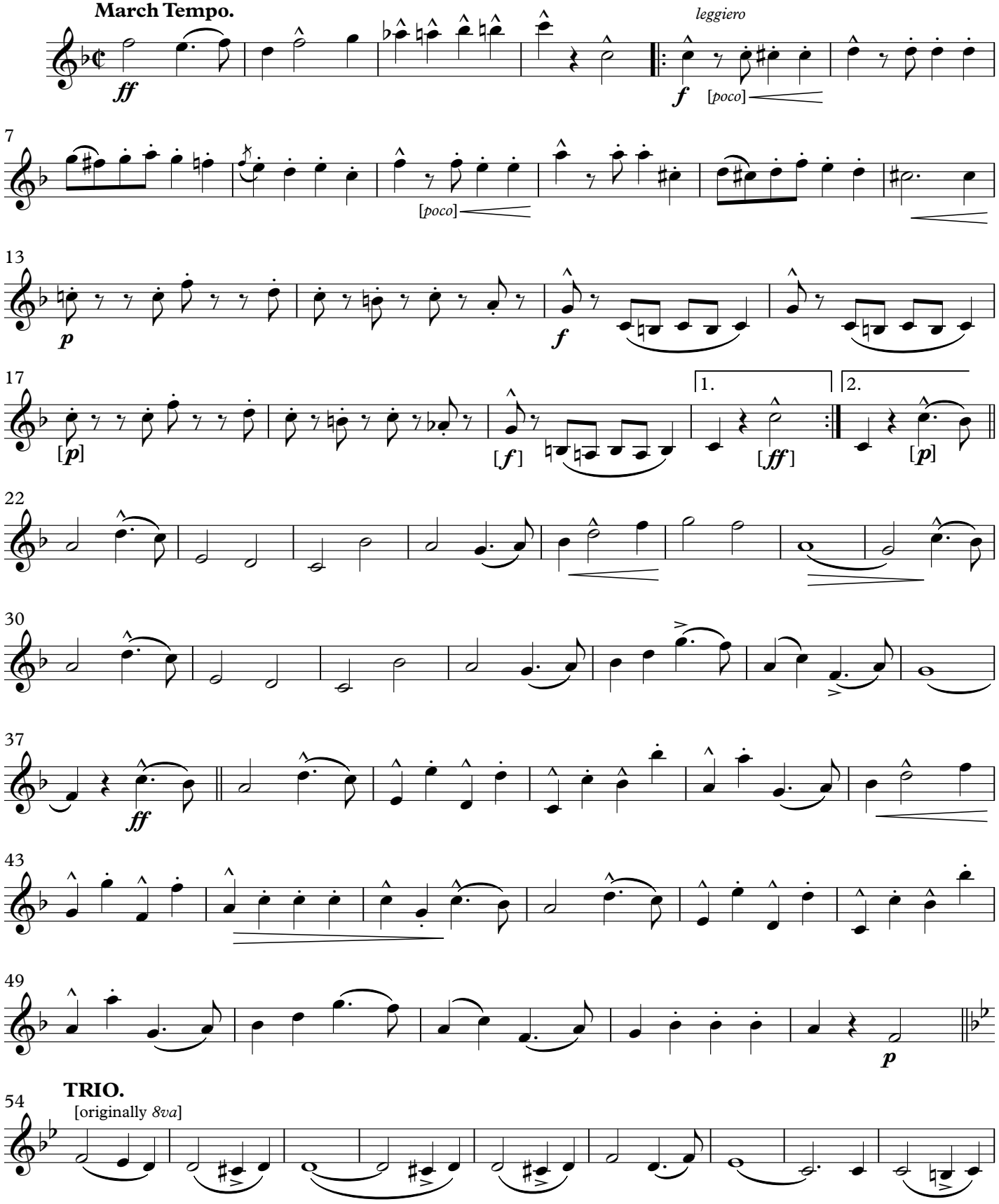
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

3rd B♭ Clarinet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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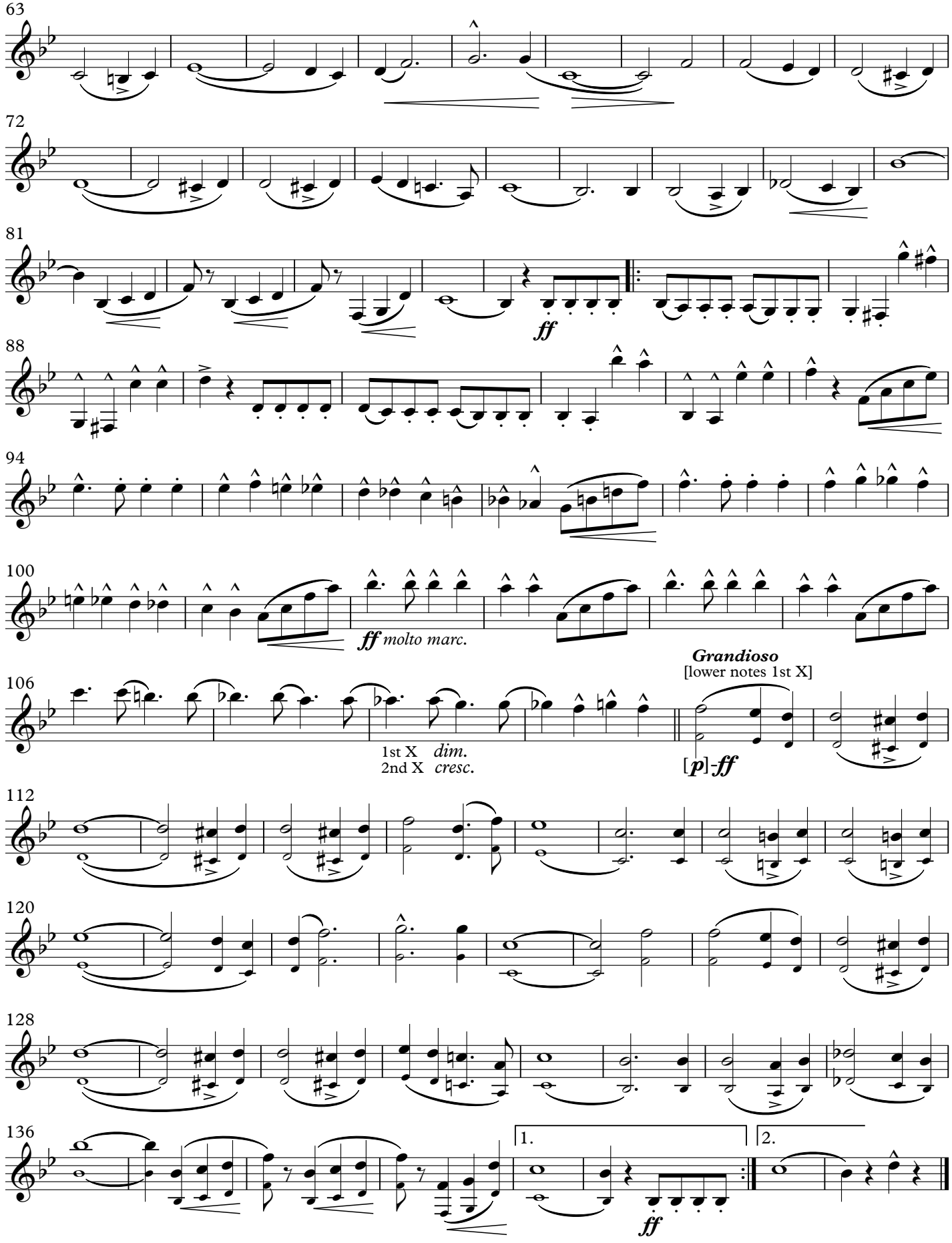
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

3rd B♭ Clarinet



March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

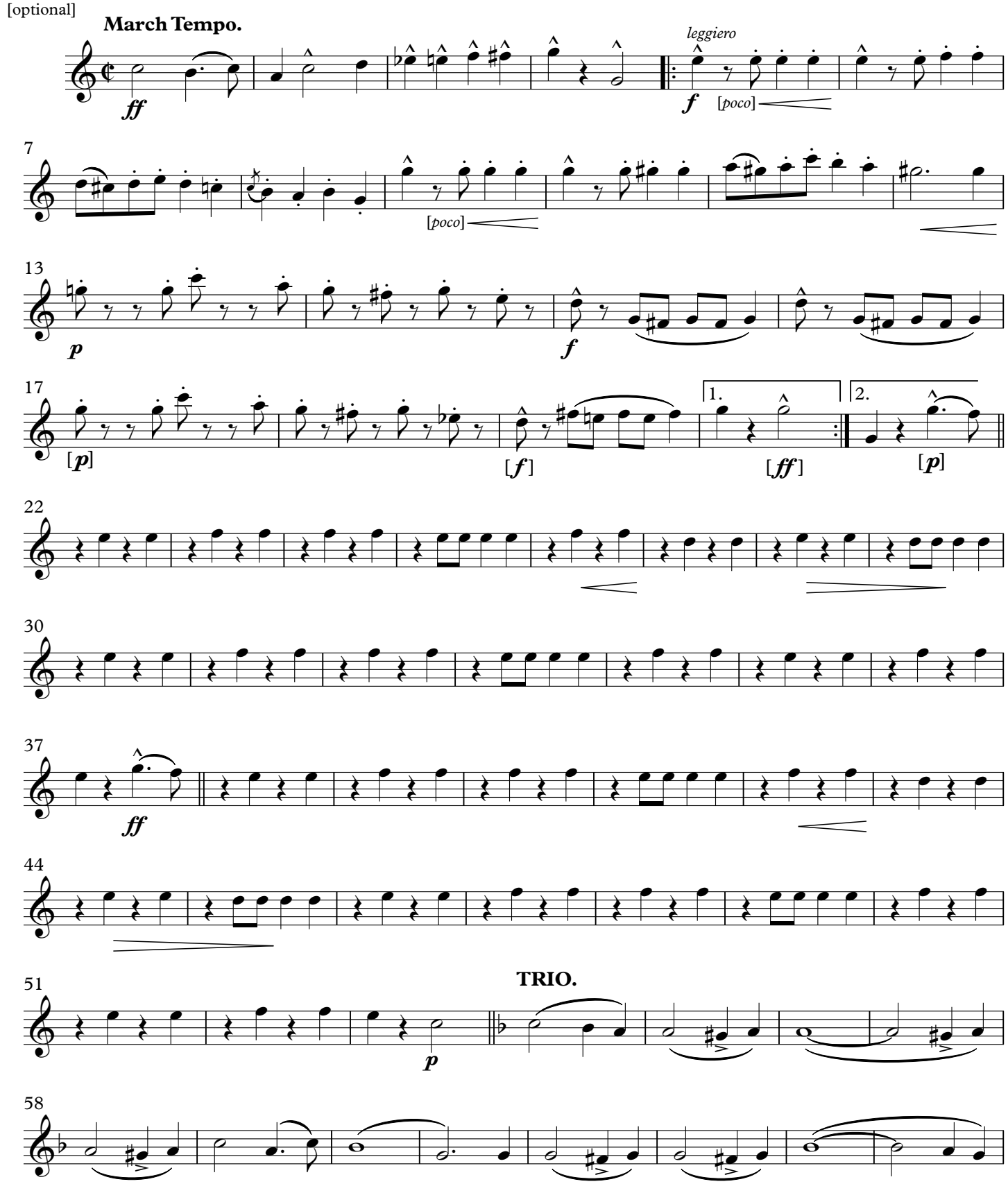
(1896)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

E♭ Alto Clarinet

[optional]

March Tempo.



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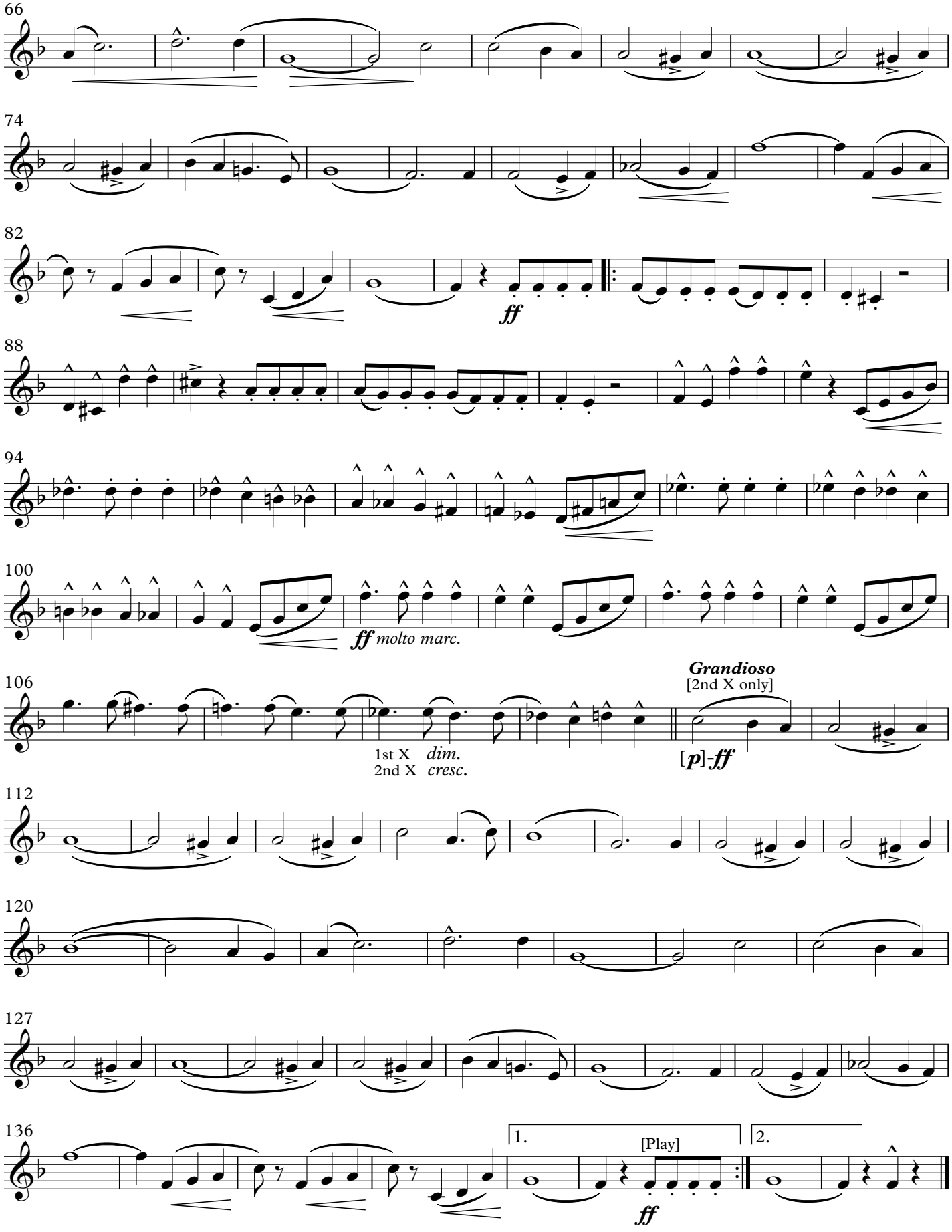
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

E♭ Alto Clarinet



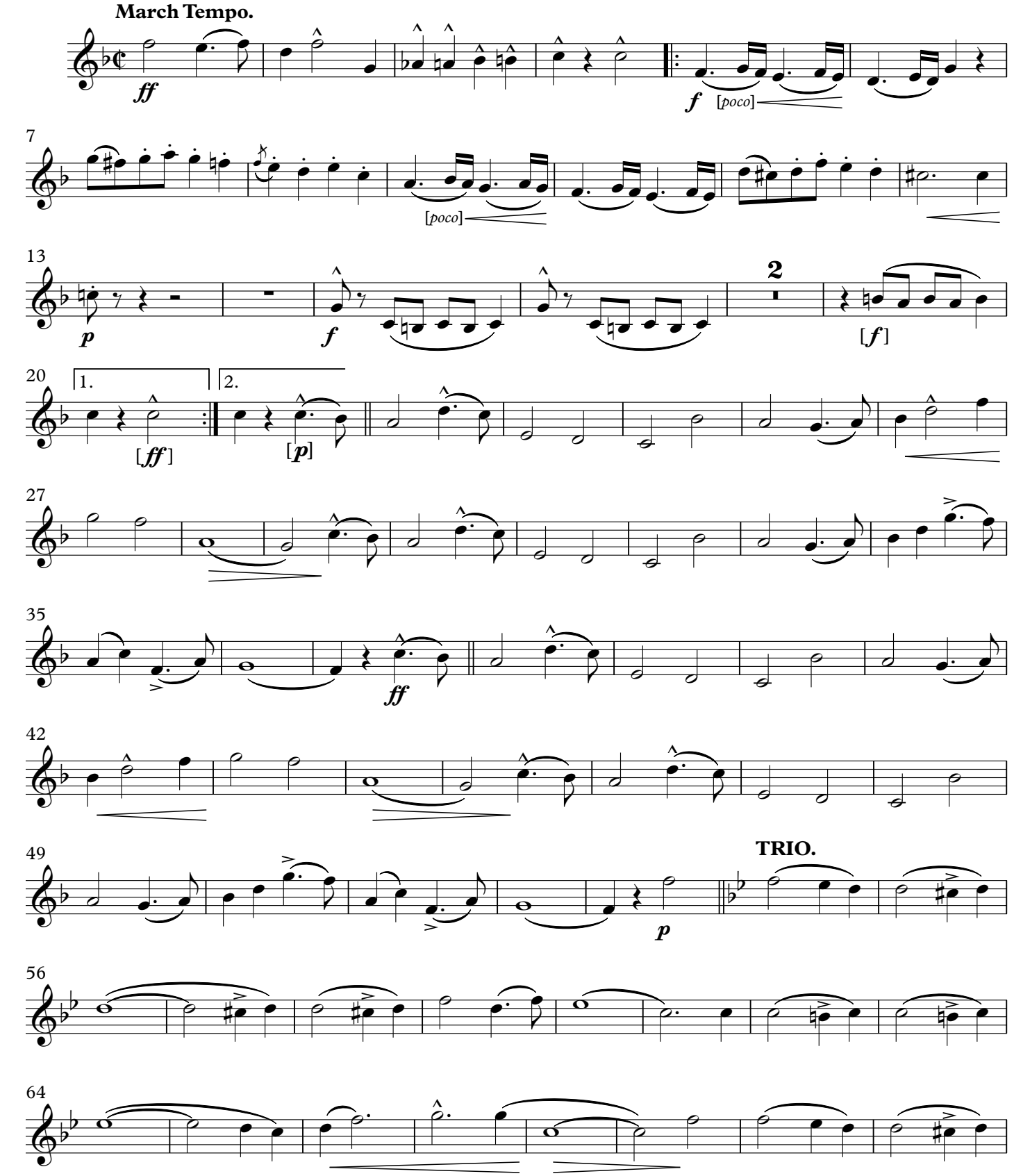
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

B♭ Bass Clarinet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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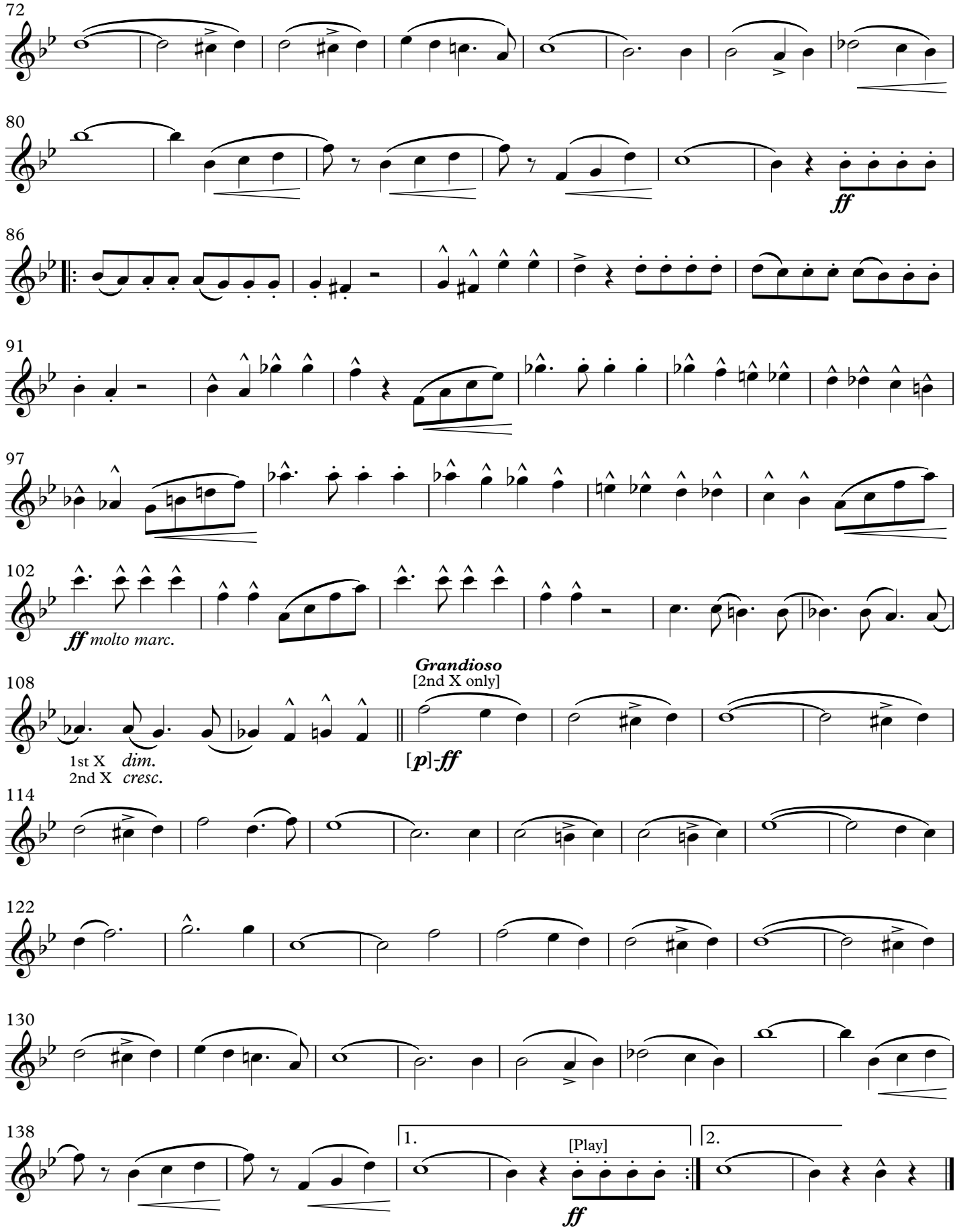
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

B♭ Bass Clinet



March

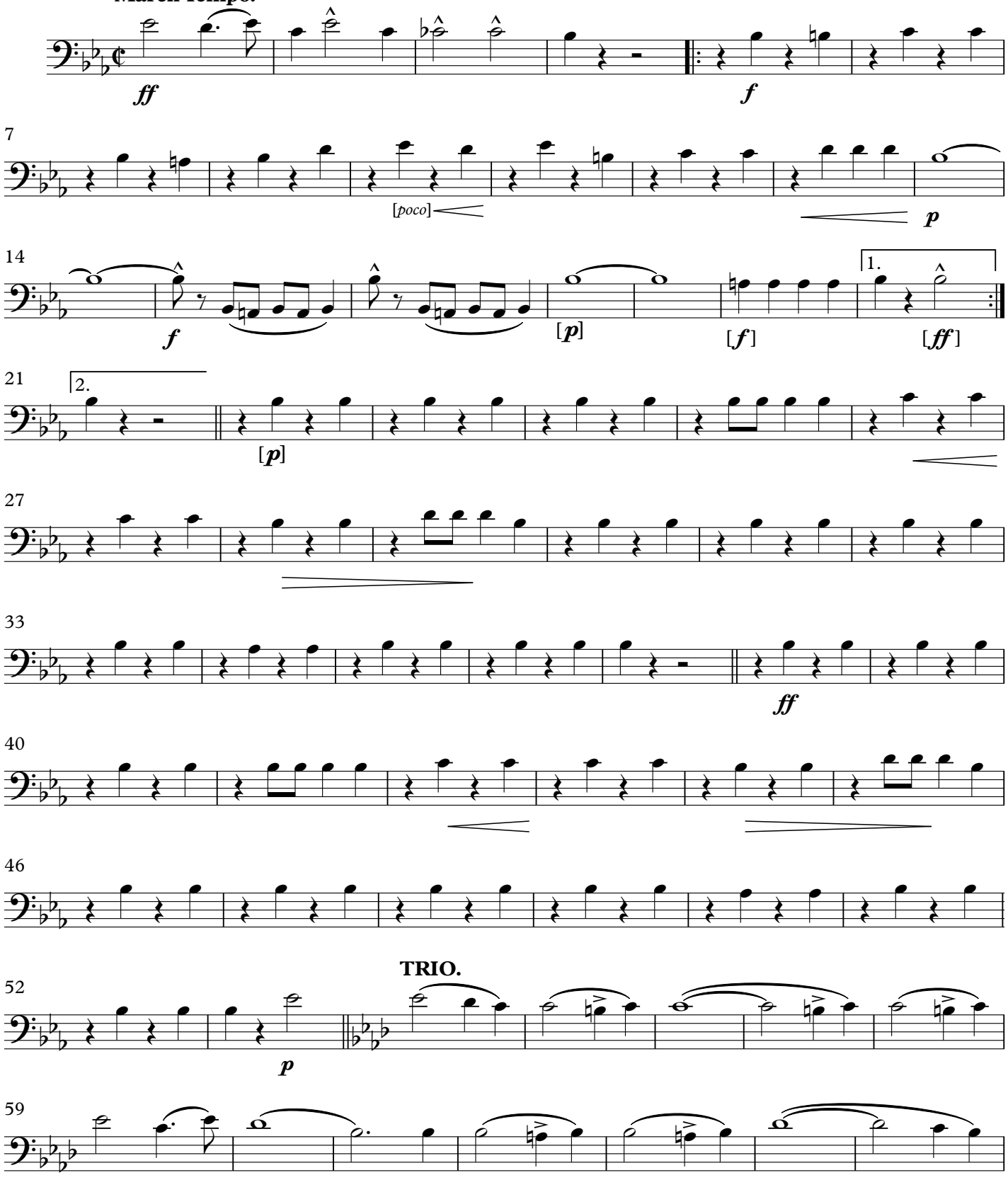
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

1st Bassoon

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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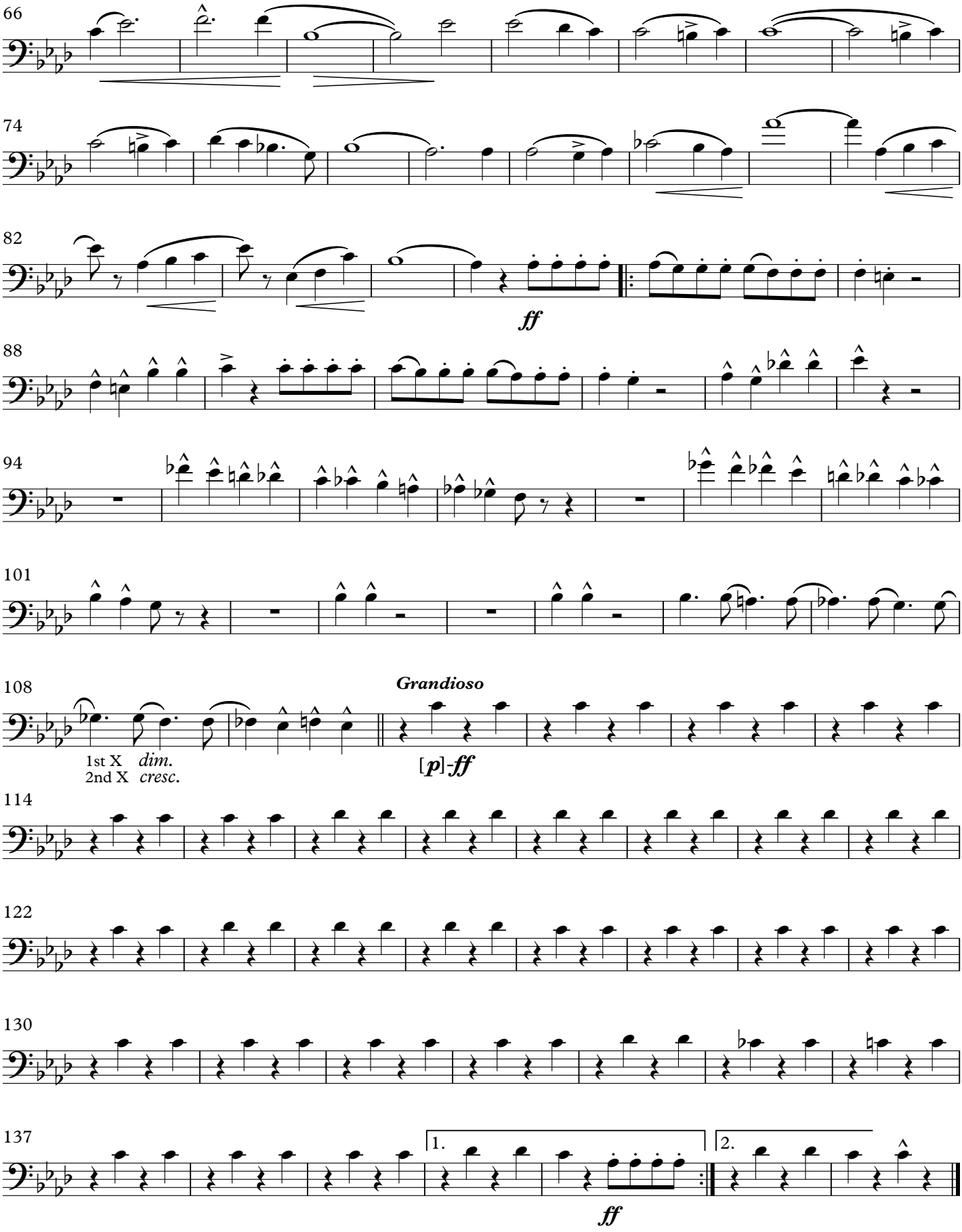
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

1st Bassoon



March

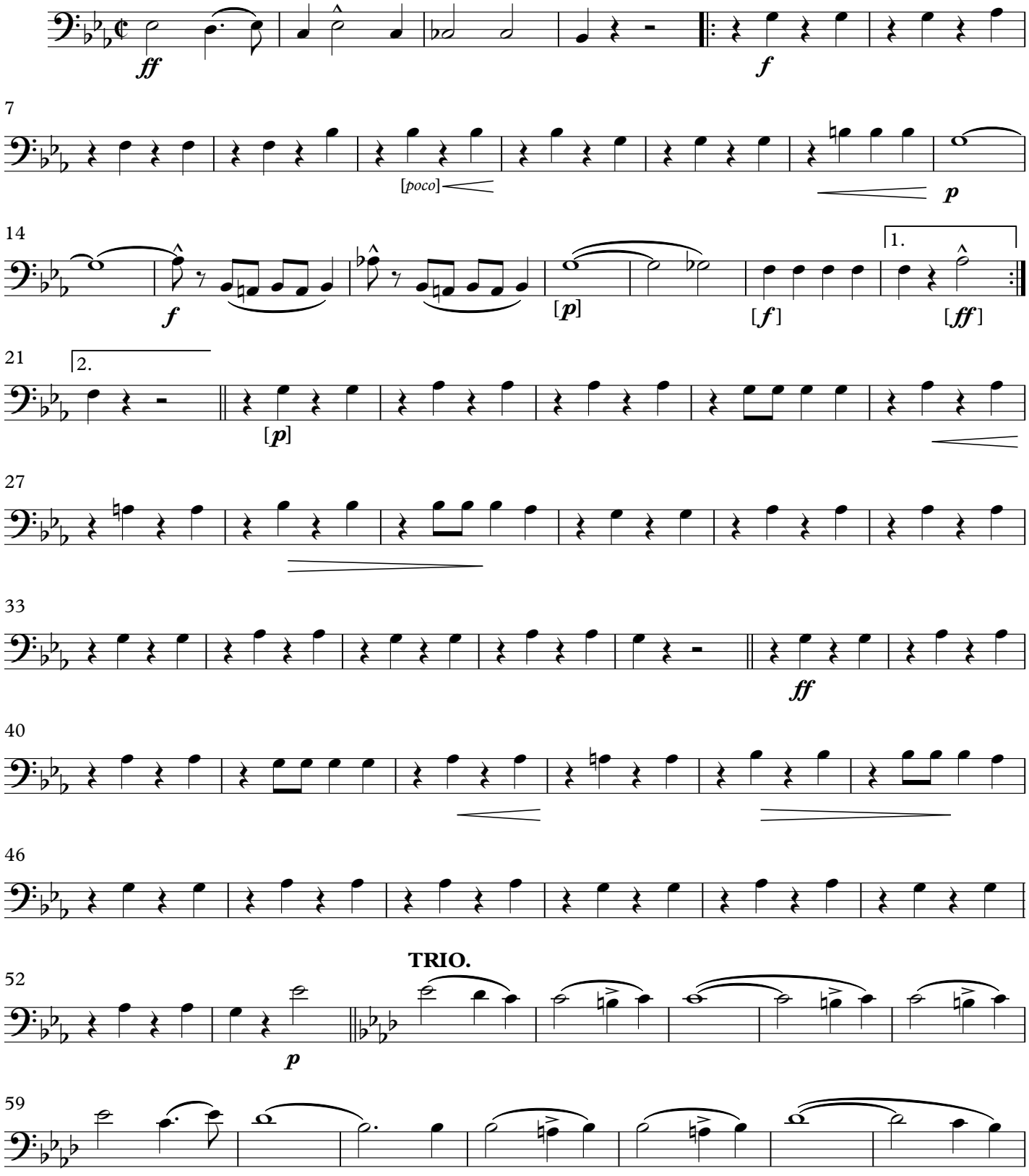
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

2nd Bassoon

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

2nd Bassoon

66

74

82

ff

88

94

101

108

Grandioso

1st X *dim.*
2nd X *cresc.*

[***p***]-***ff***

114

122

130

137

1.

2.

ff

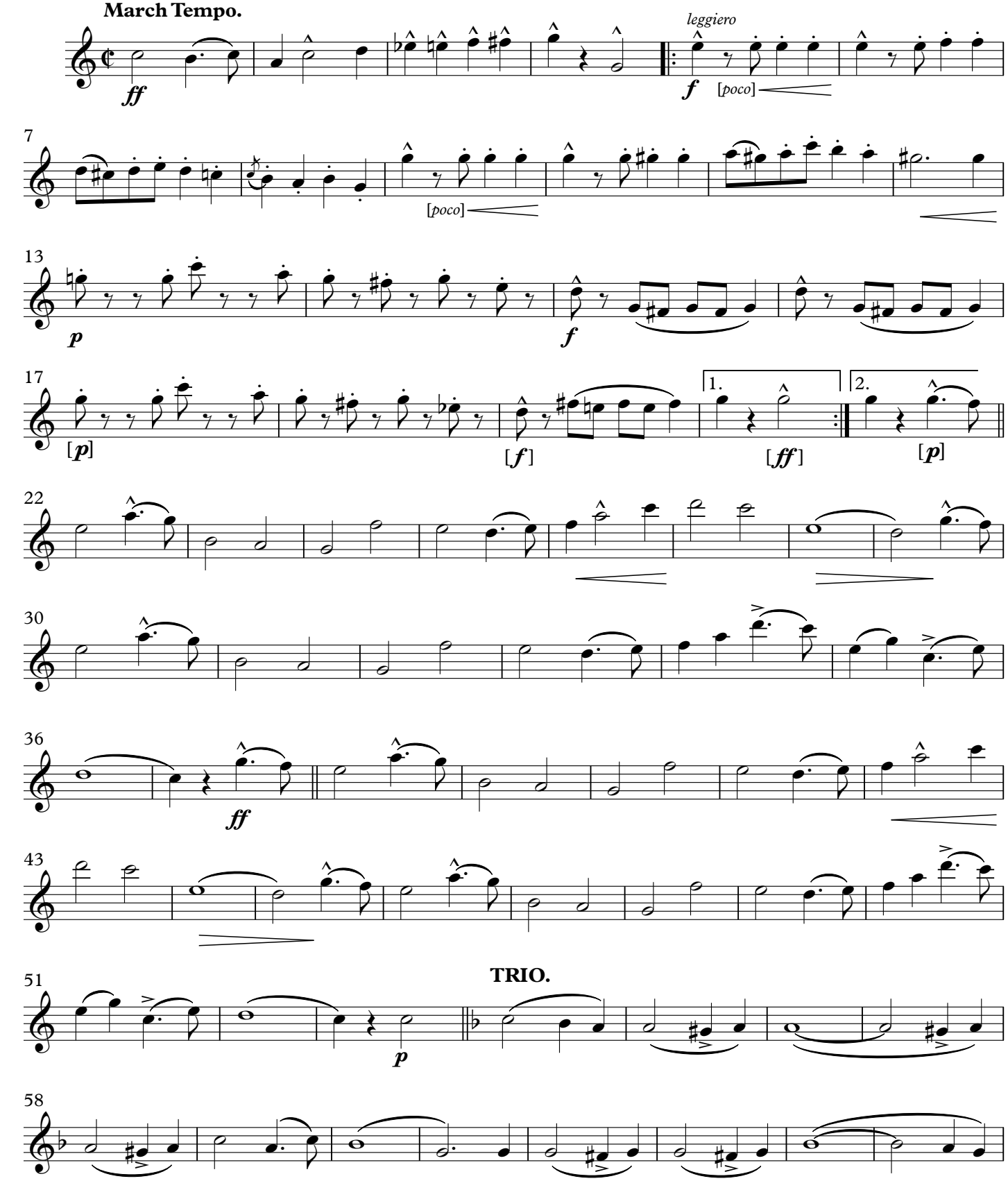
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

E♭ Alto Saxophone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

E♭ Alto Saxophone

66

74

82

ff

88

94

100

ff molto marc.

106

1st X *dim.*
2nd X *cresc.*

Grandioso
[2nd X only]

[***p***]-***ff***

112

120

128

136

1.

2.

ff

March

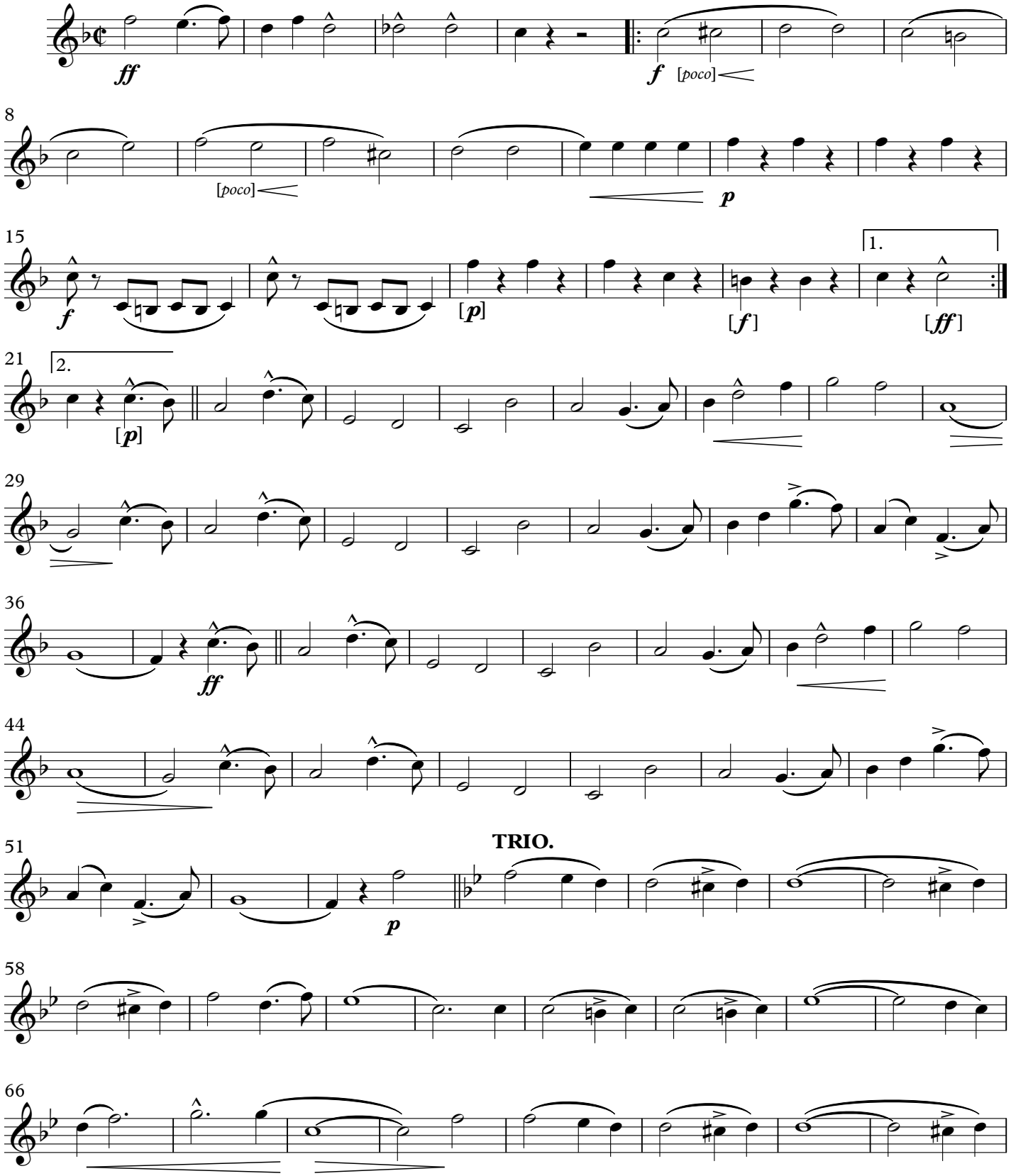
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

B♭ Tenor Saxophone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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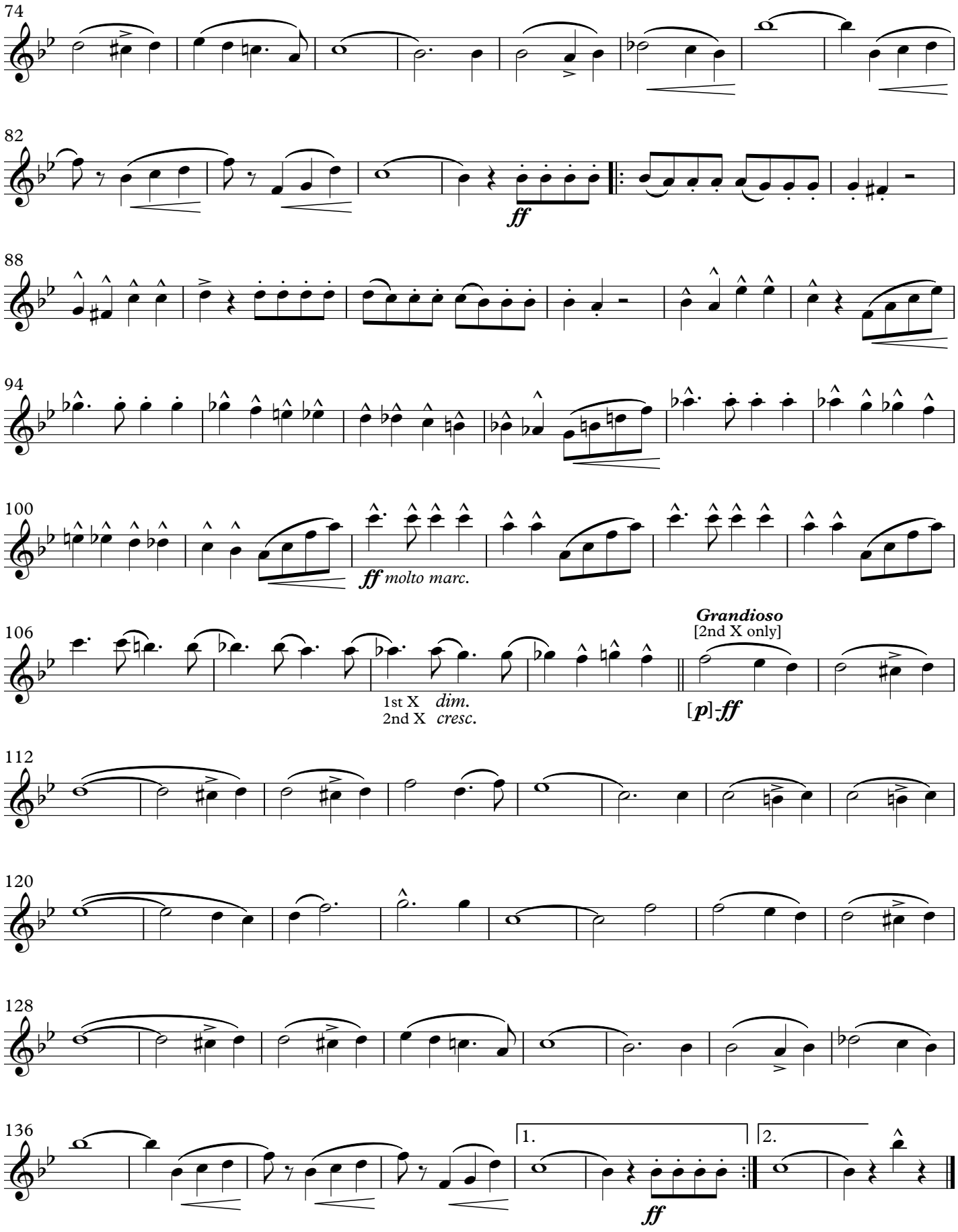
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

B♭ Tenor Saxophone



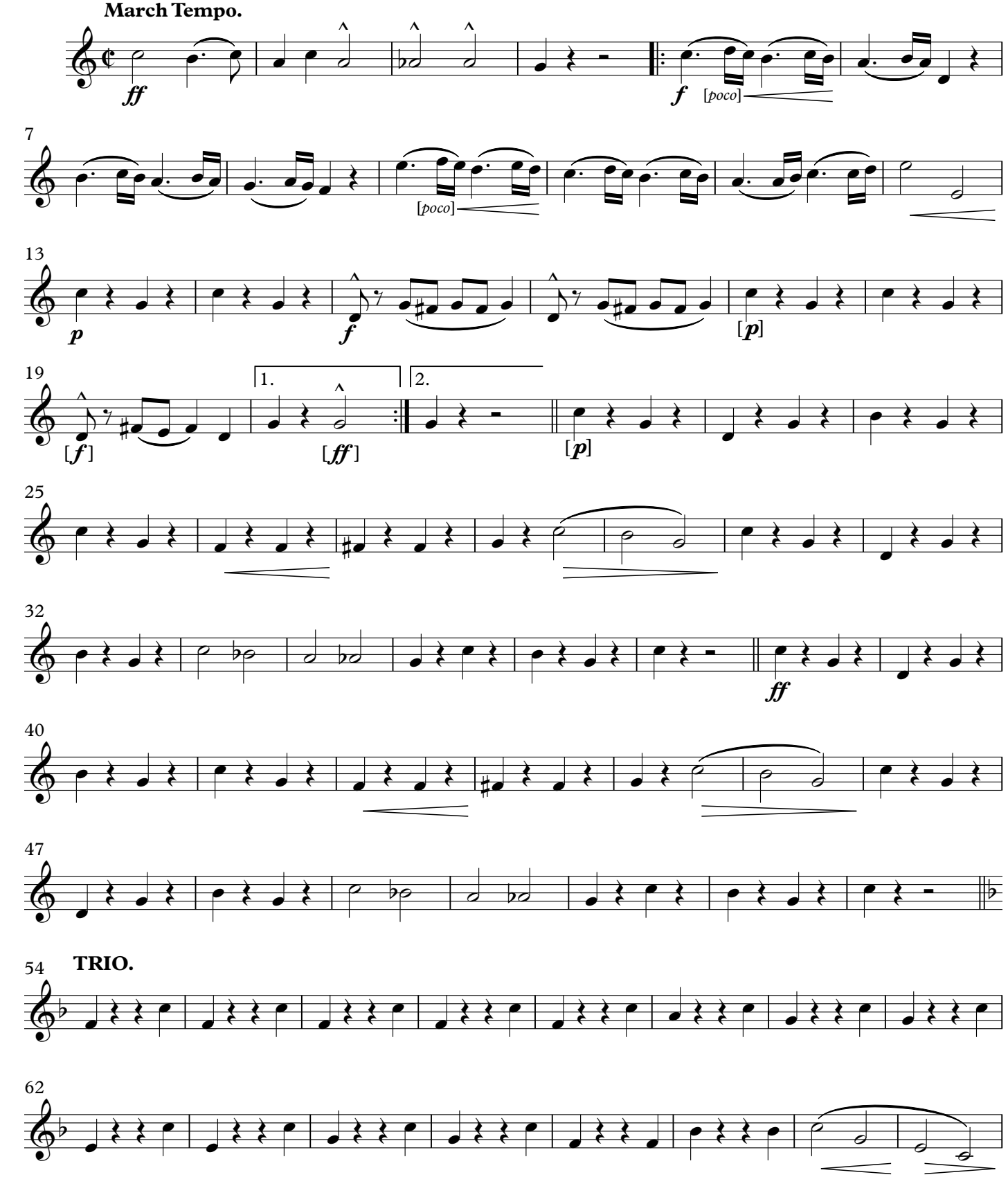
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

E♭ Baritone Saxophone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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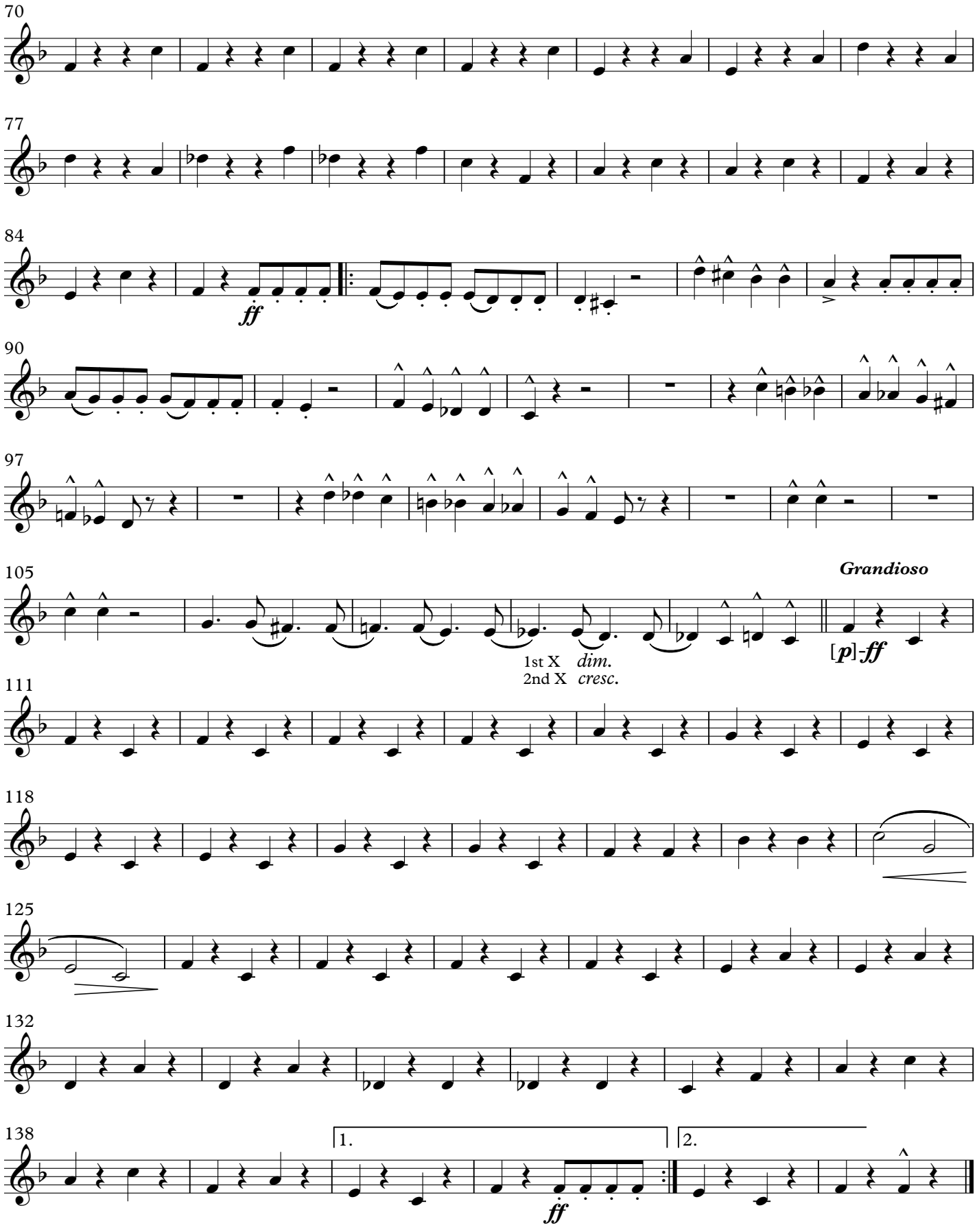
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

E♭ Baritone Saxophone



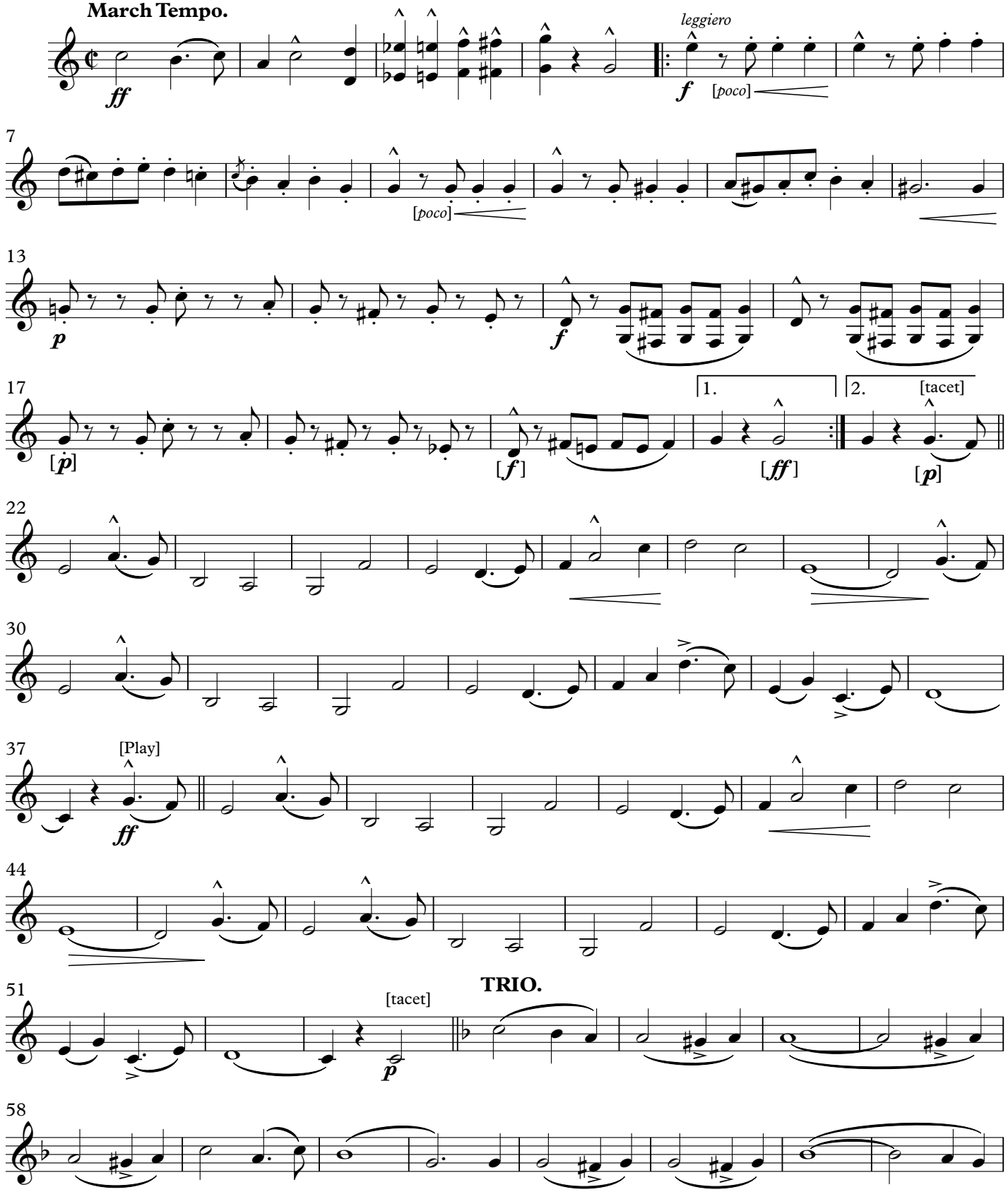
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

E♭ Cornet
[optional]



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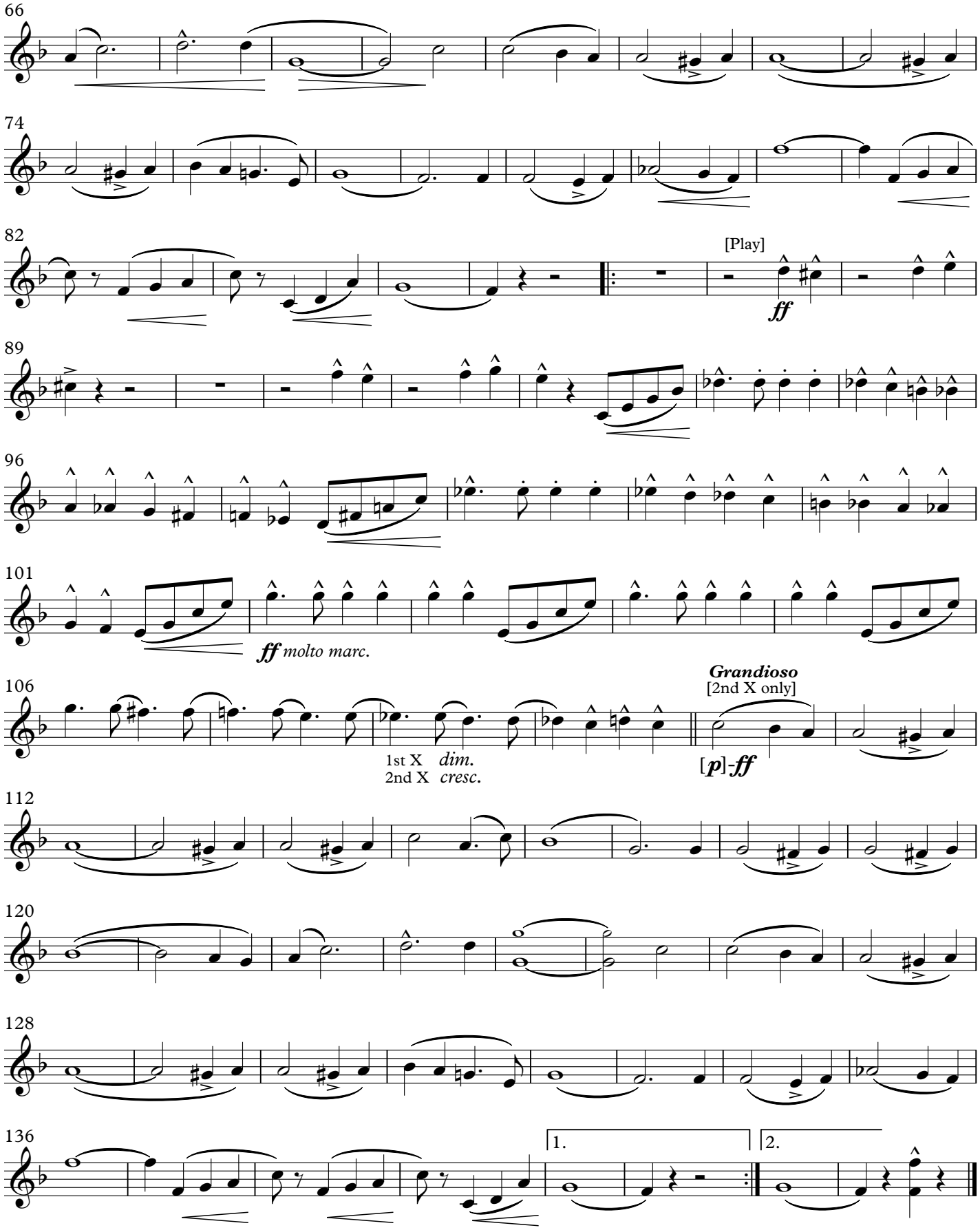
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

E♭ Cornet



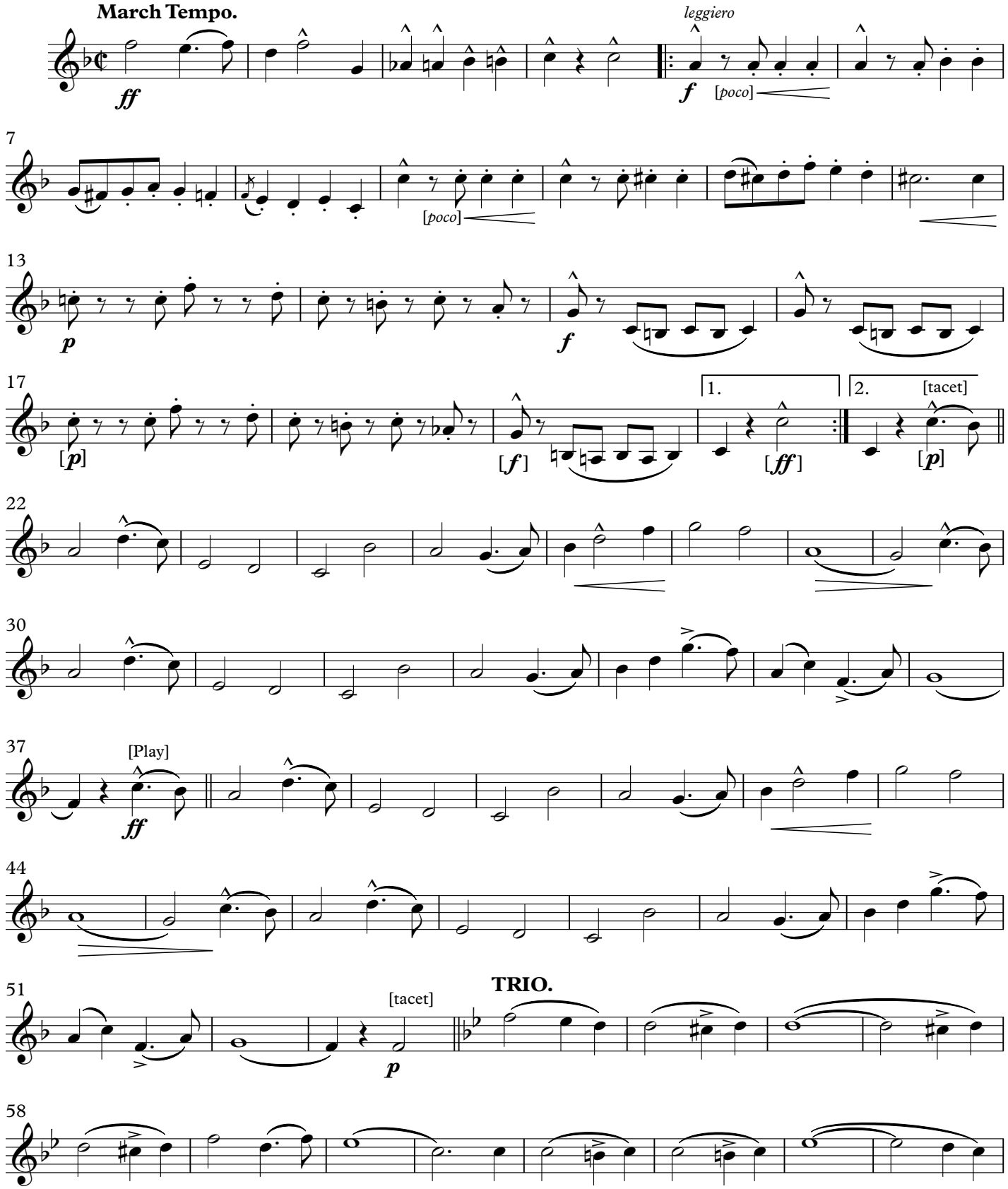
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Solo B♭ Cornet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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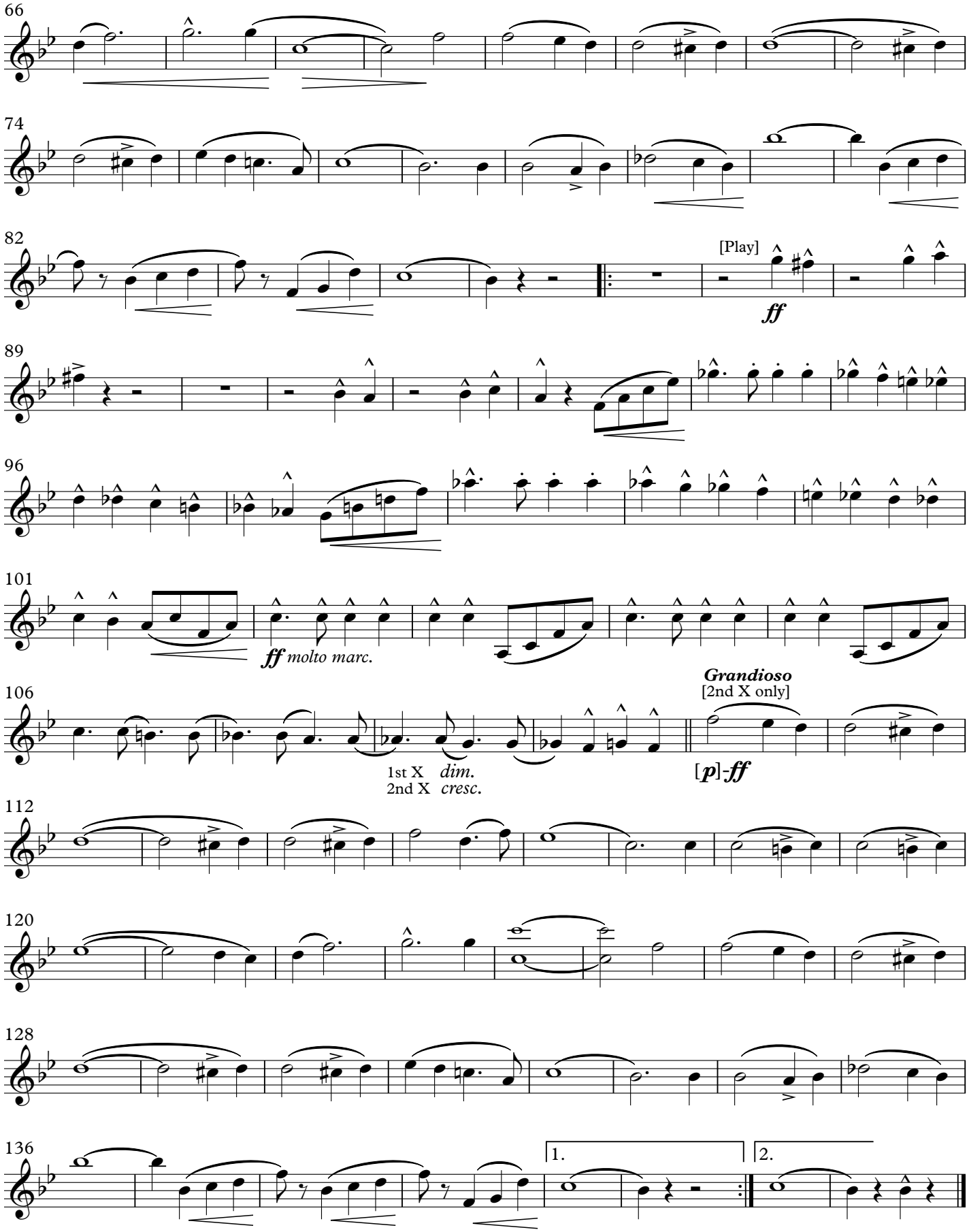
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Solo B♭ Cornet



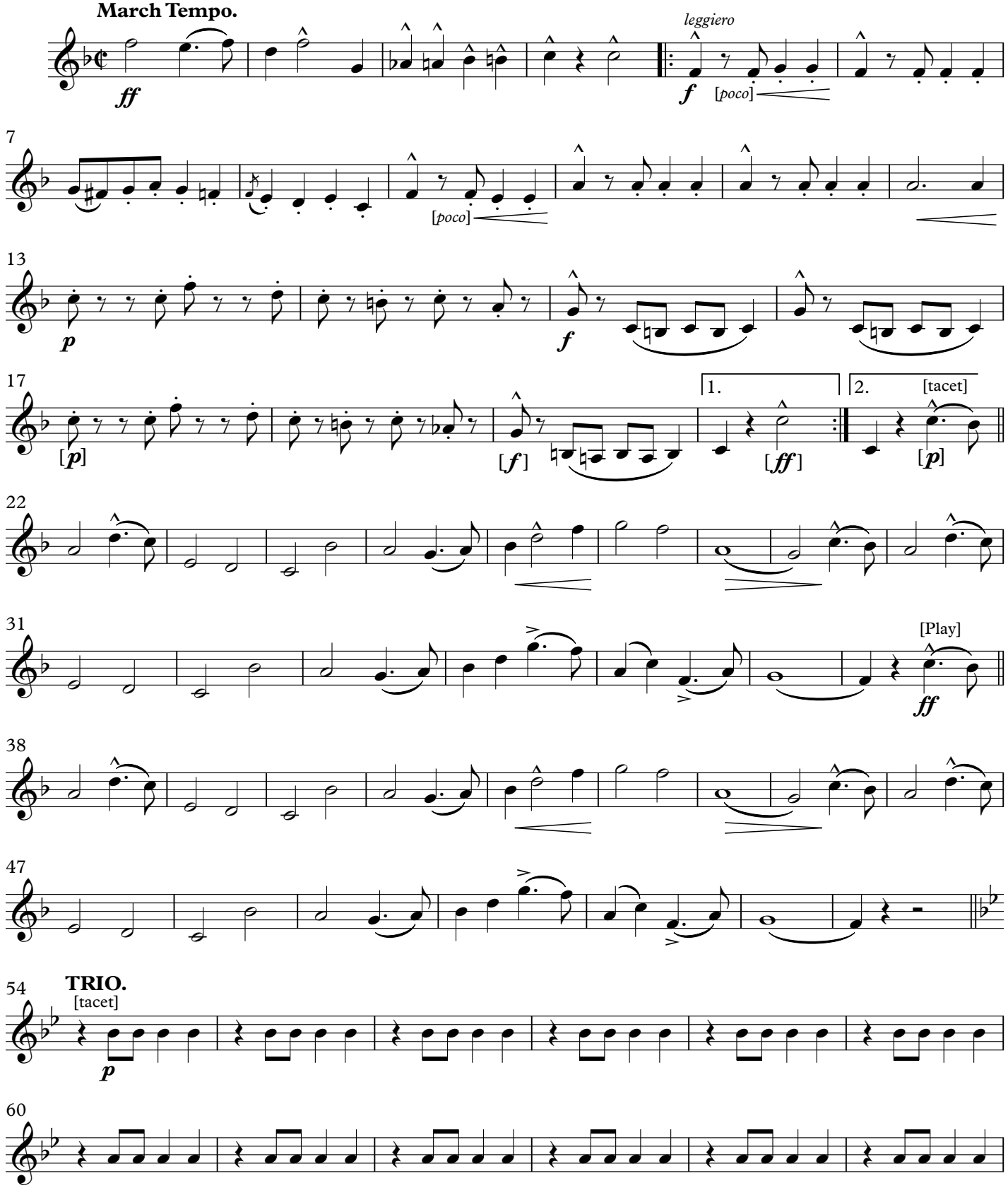
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

1st B♭ Cornet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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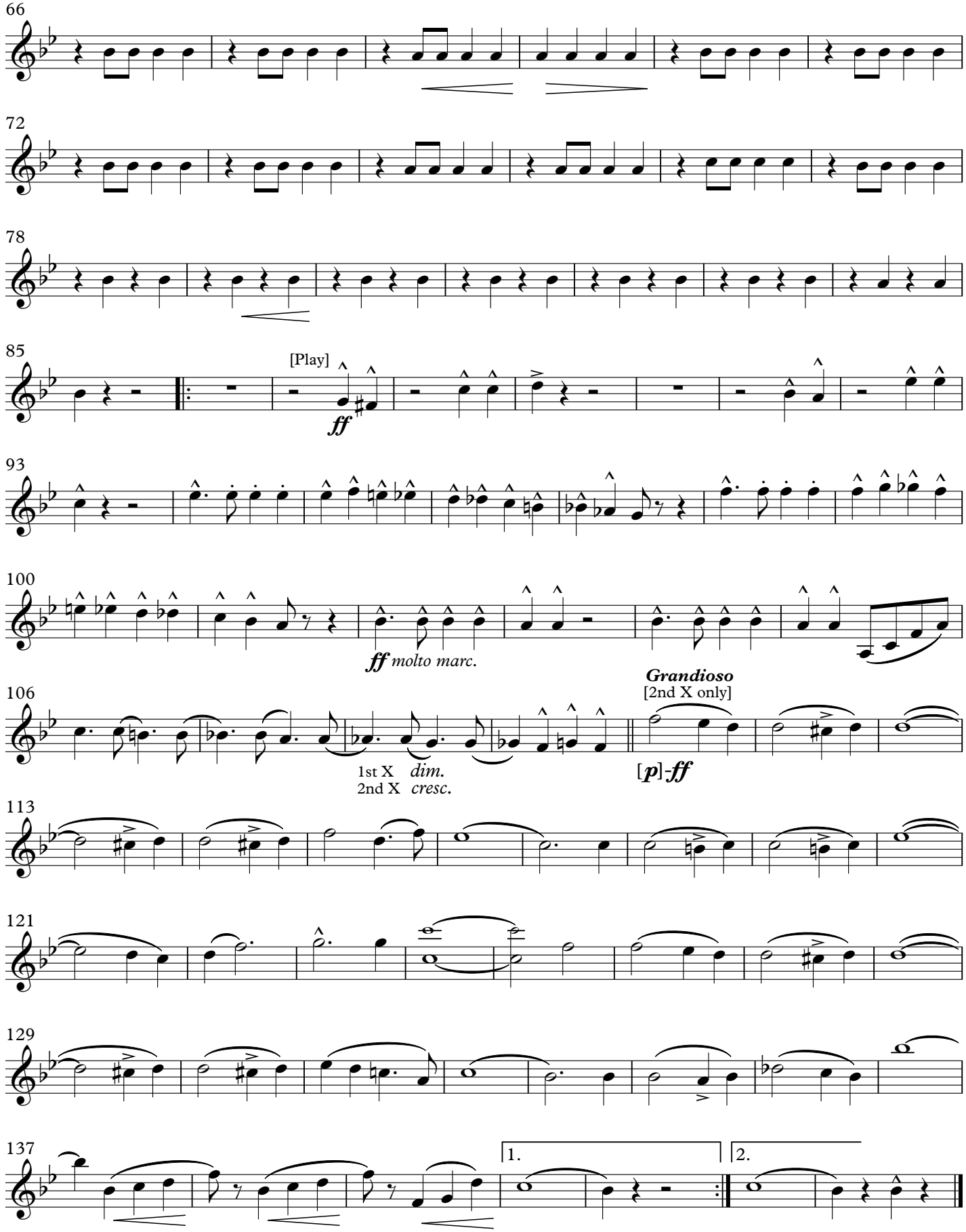
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

1st B♭ Cornet



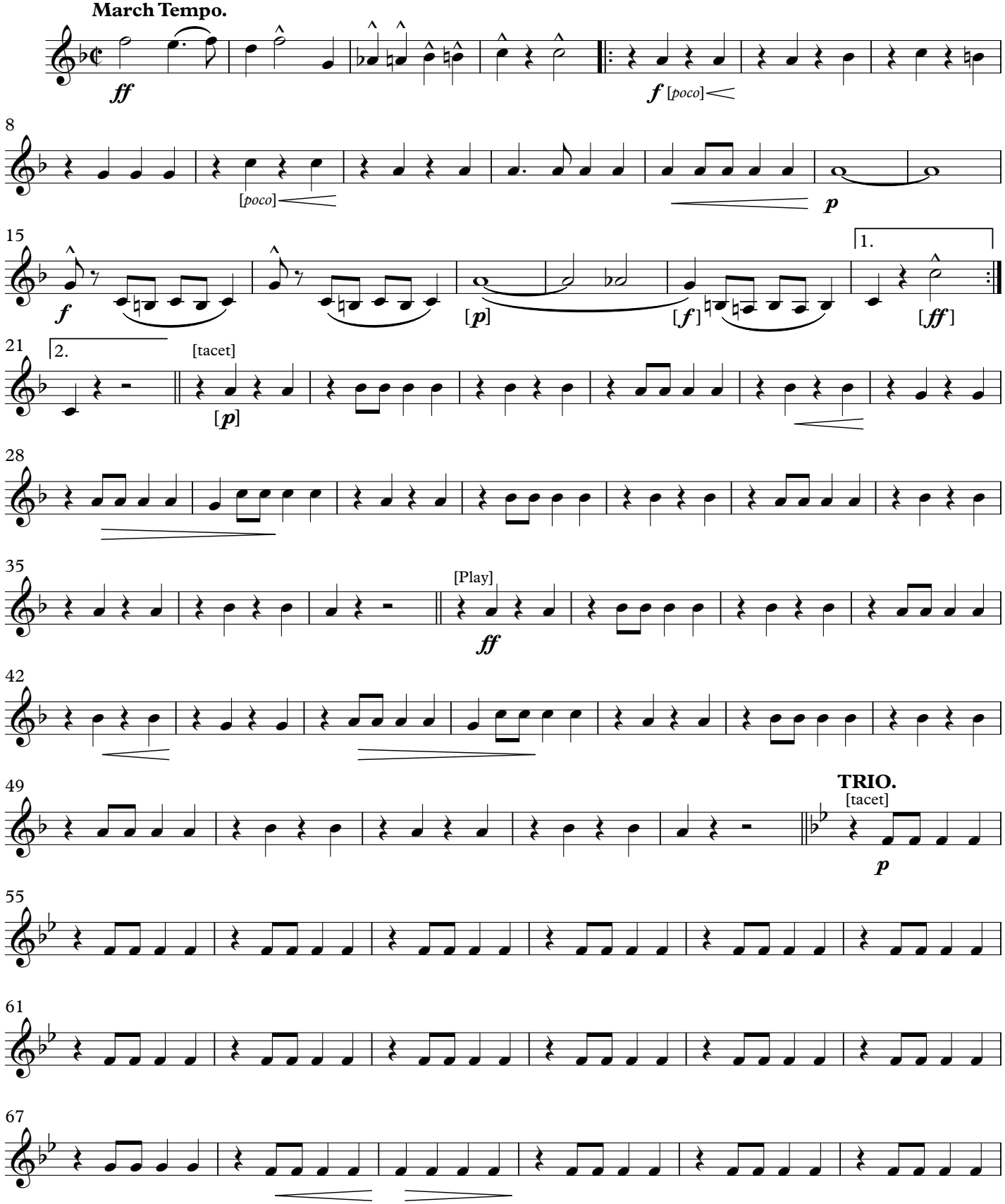
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

2nd B♭ Cornet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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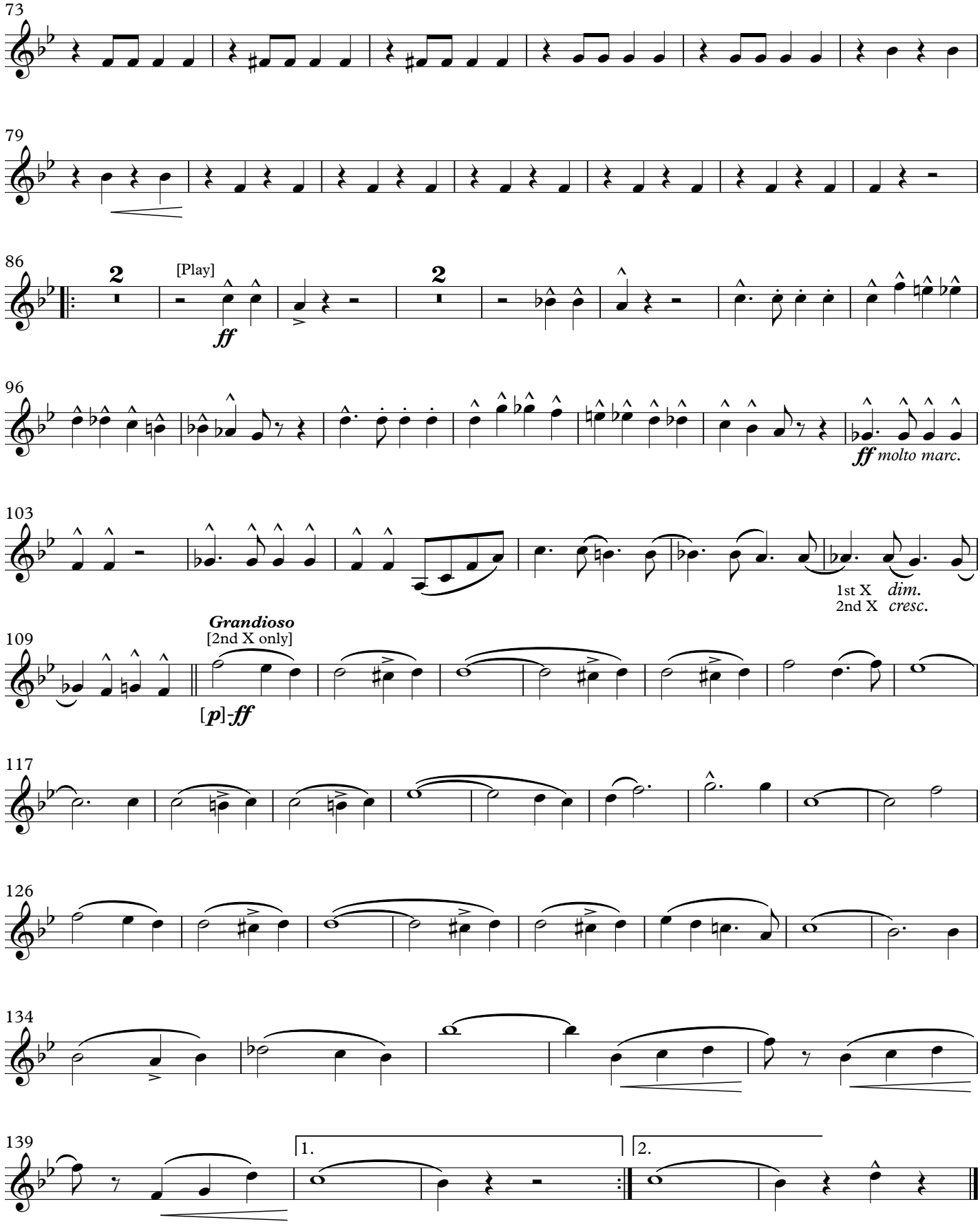
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

2nd B♭ Cornet



March

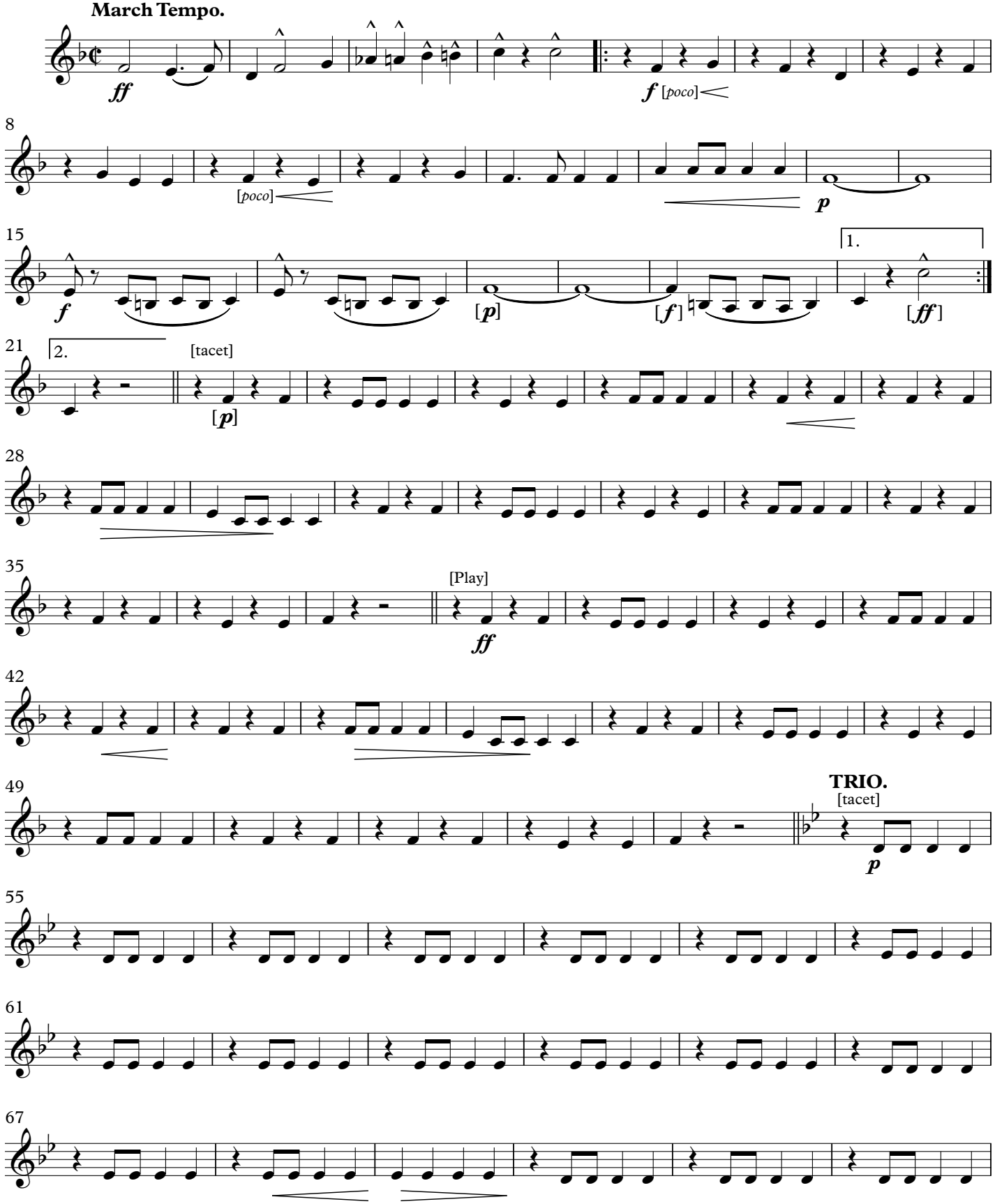
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

3rd B♭ Cornet

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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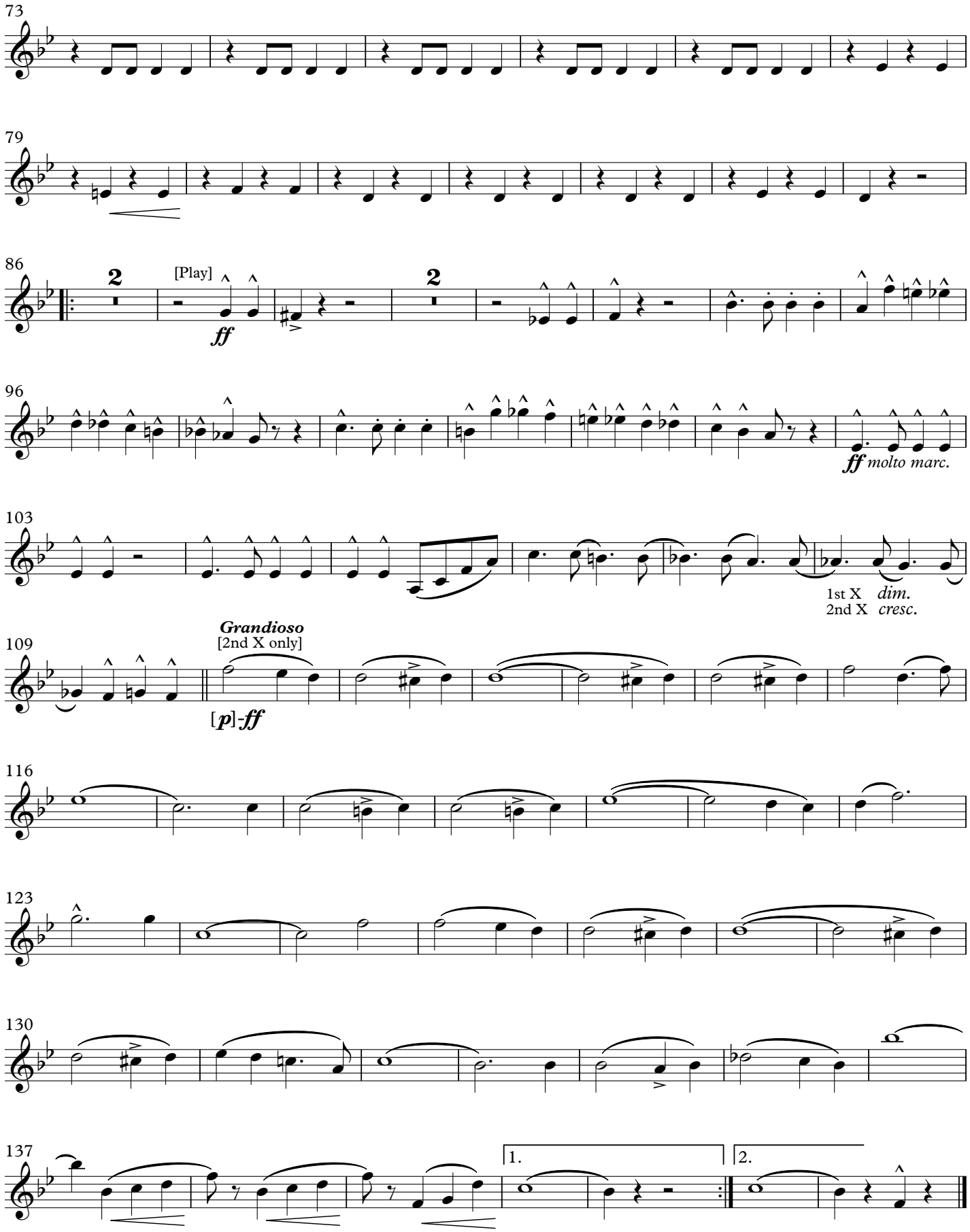
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

3rd B♭ Cornet



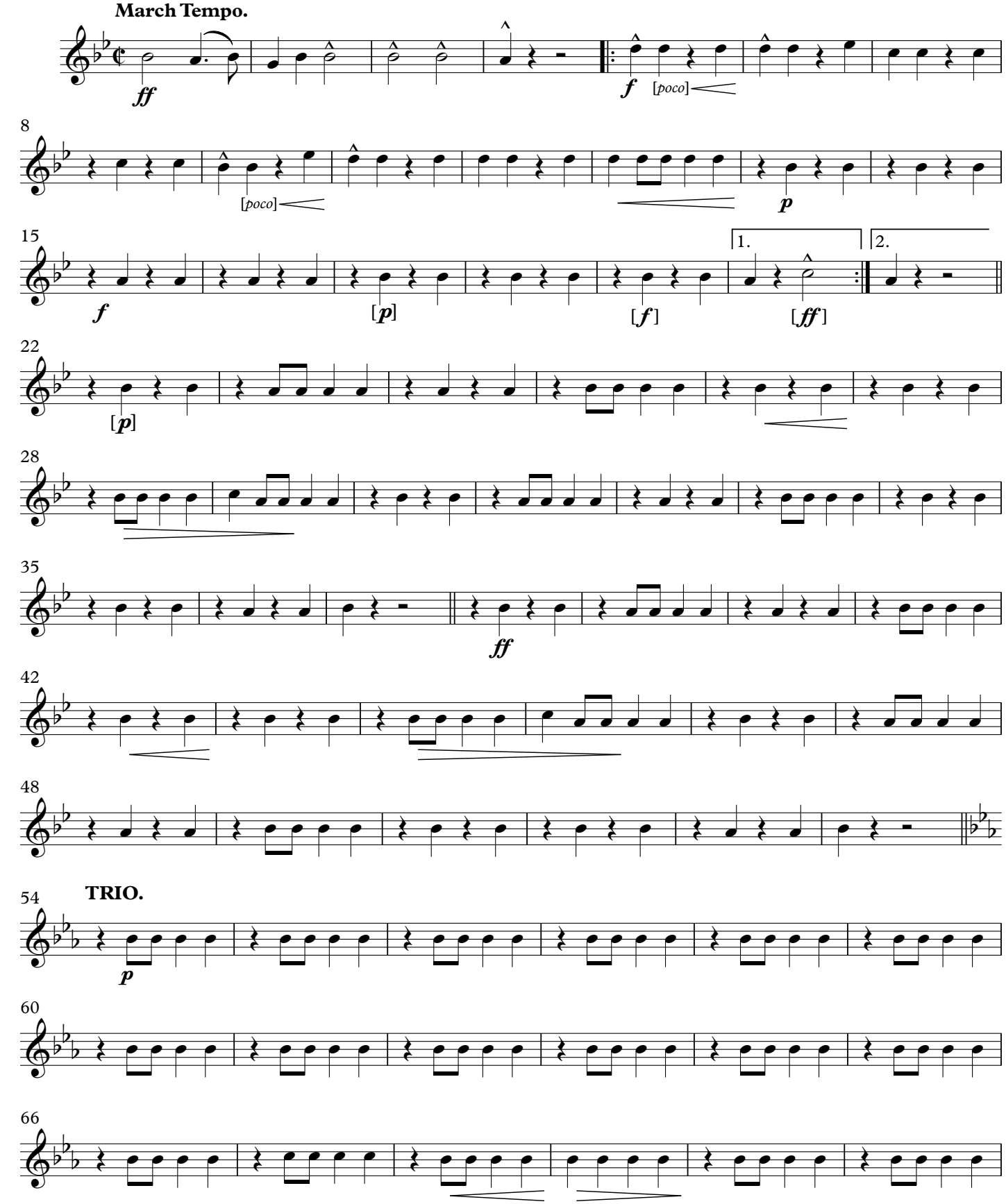
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

1st F Horn

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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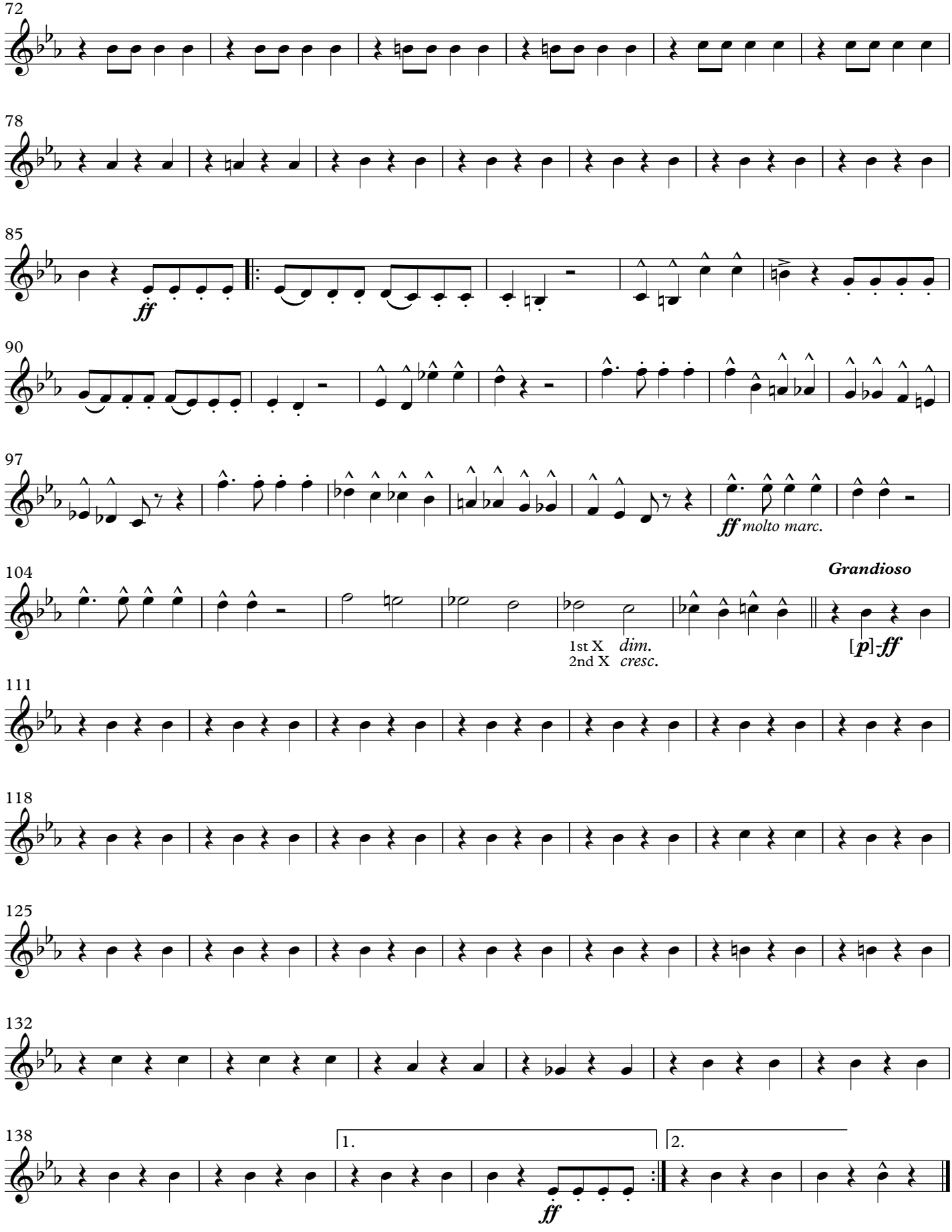
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
1st F Horn



March

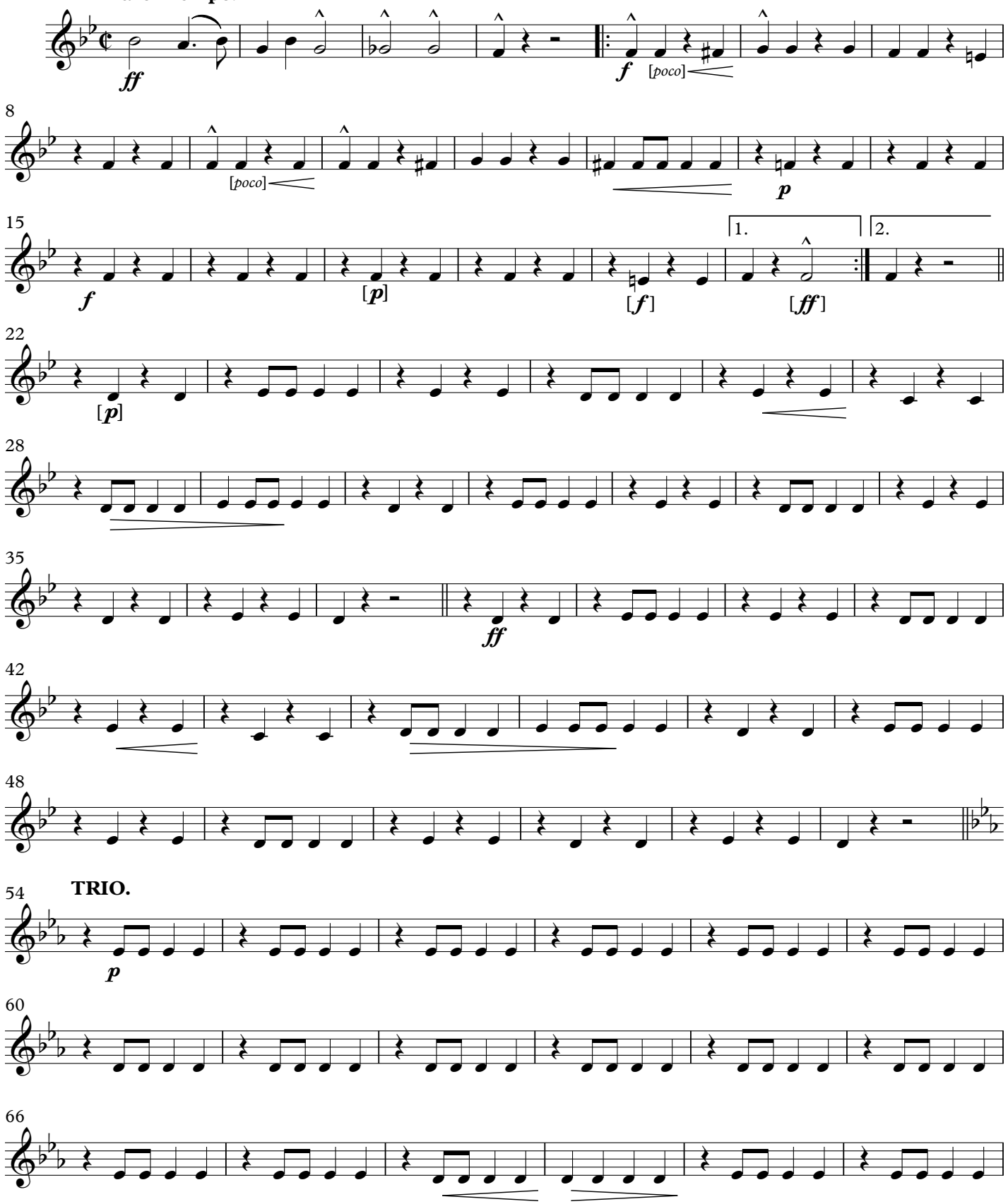
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

2nd F Horn

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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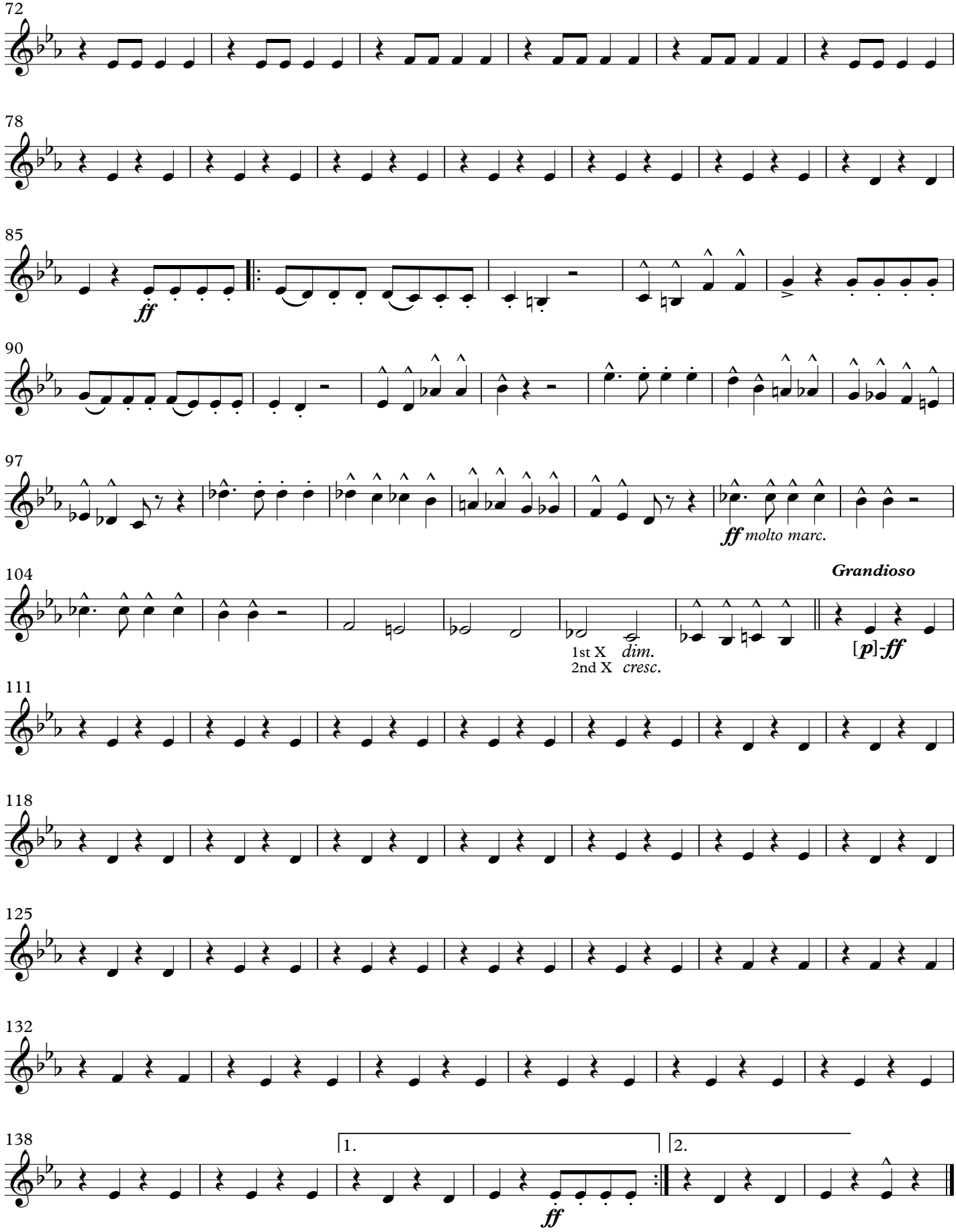
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
2nd F Horn



March

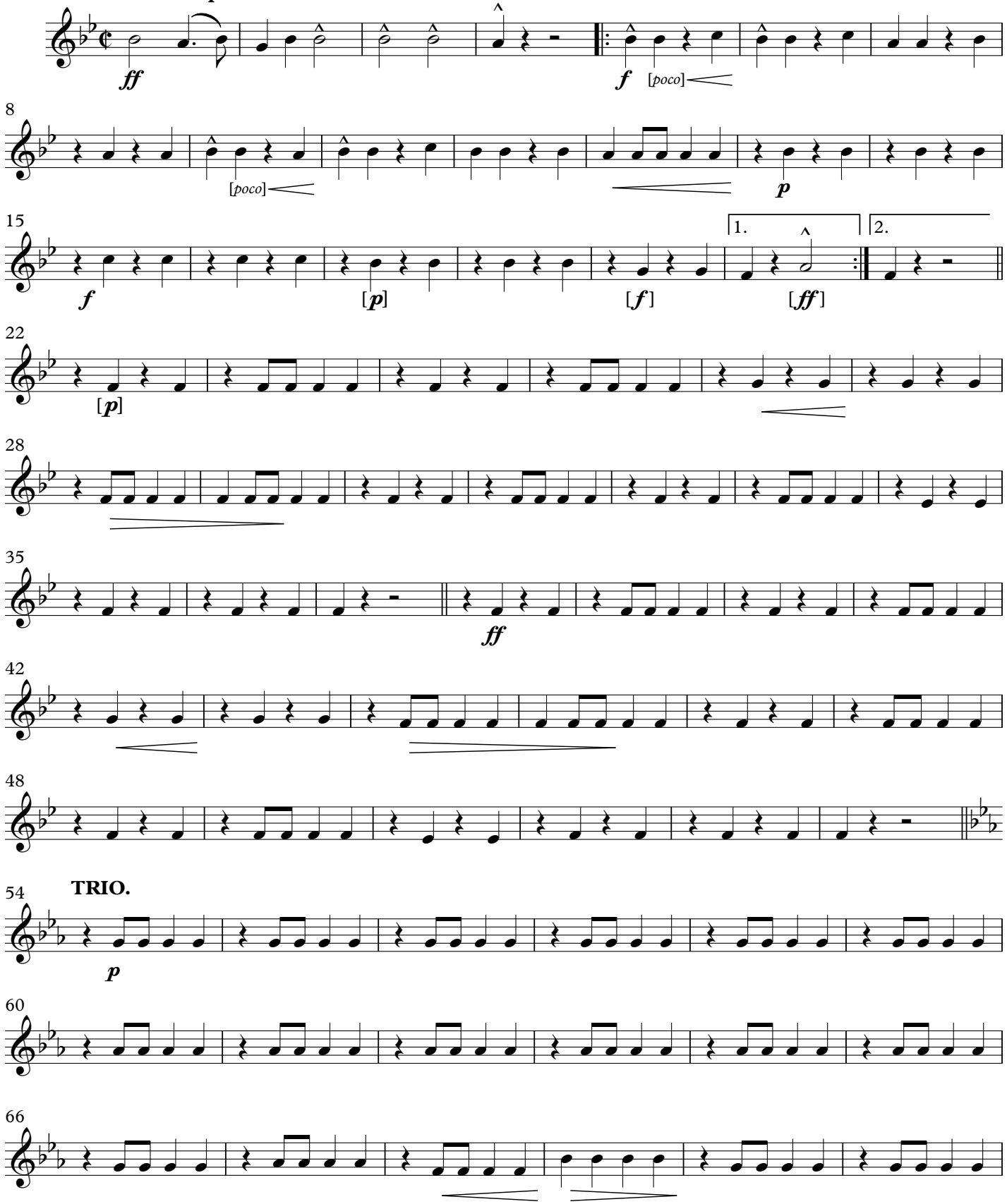
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

3rd F Horn

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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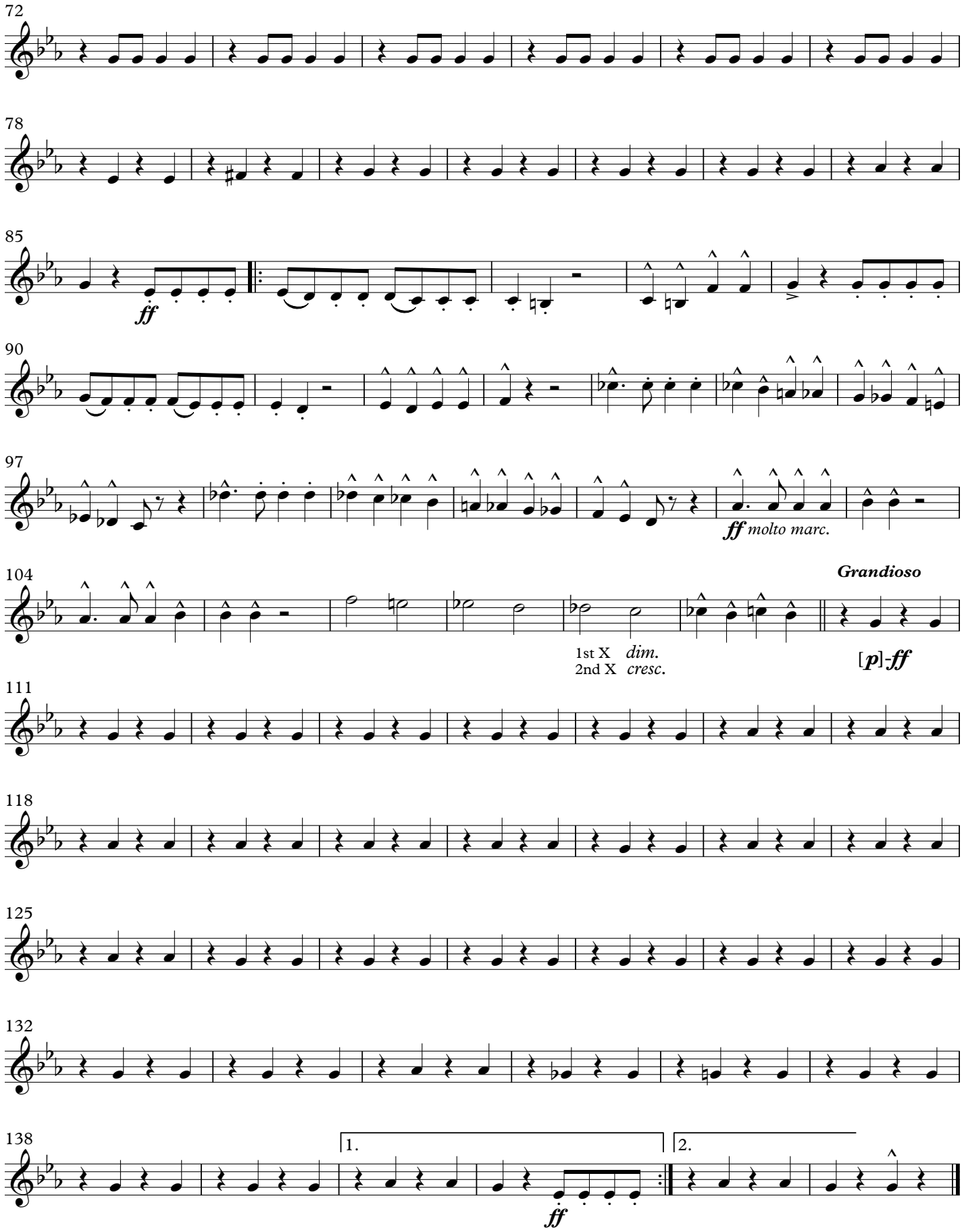
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
3rd F Horn



March

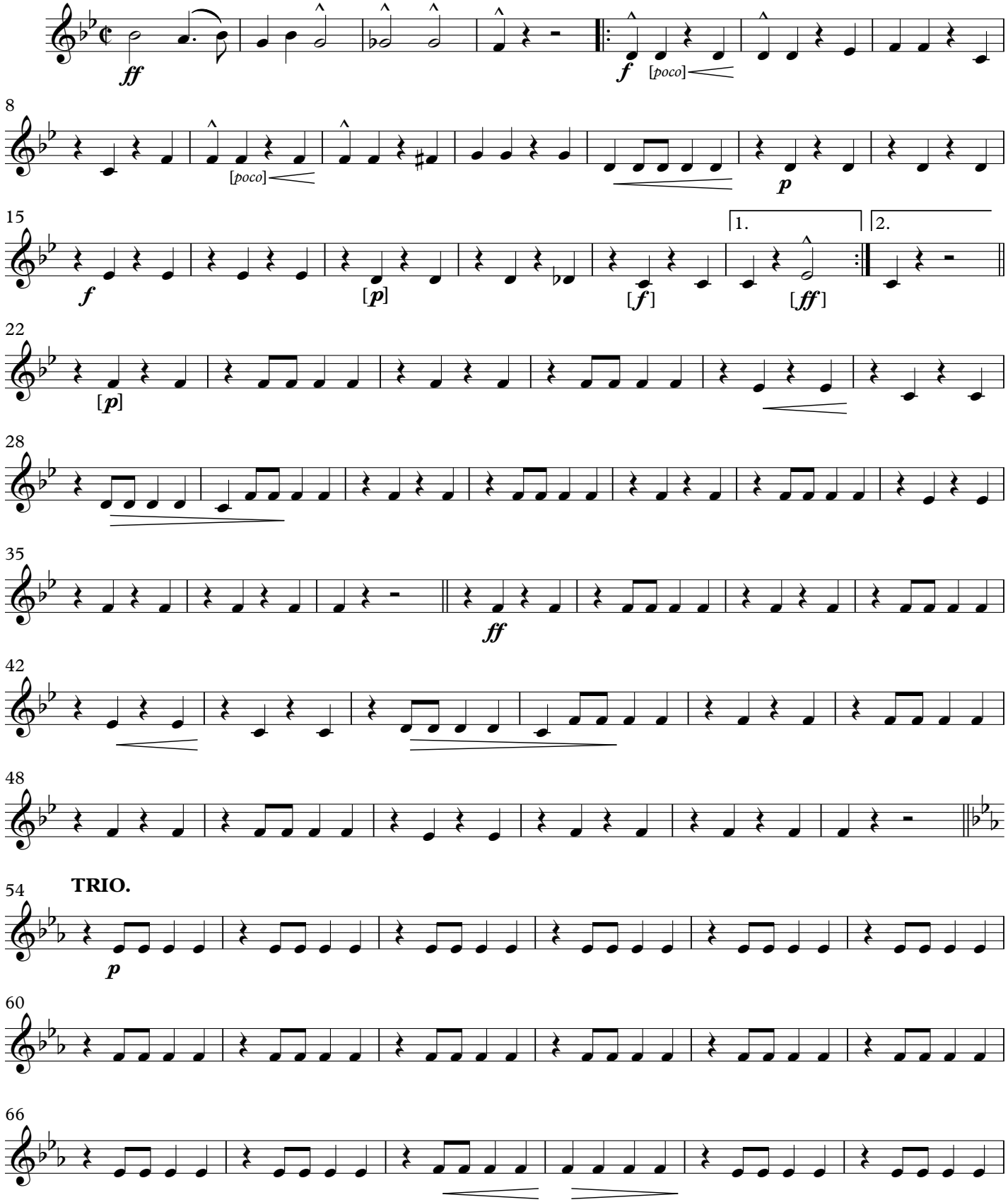
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

4th F Horn

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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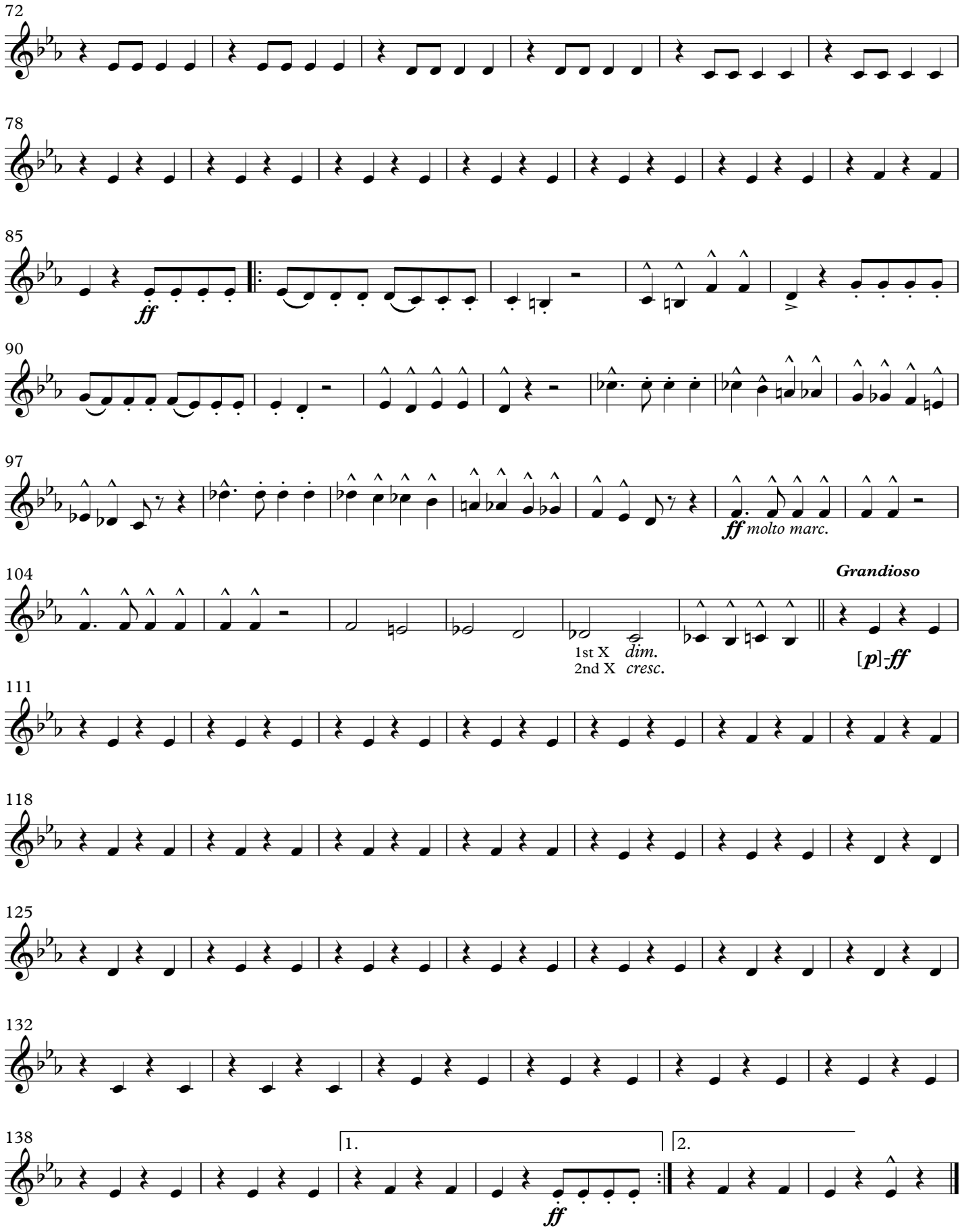
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
4th F Horn



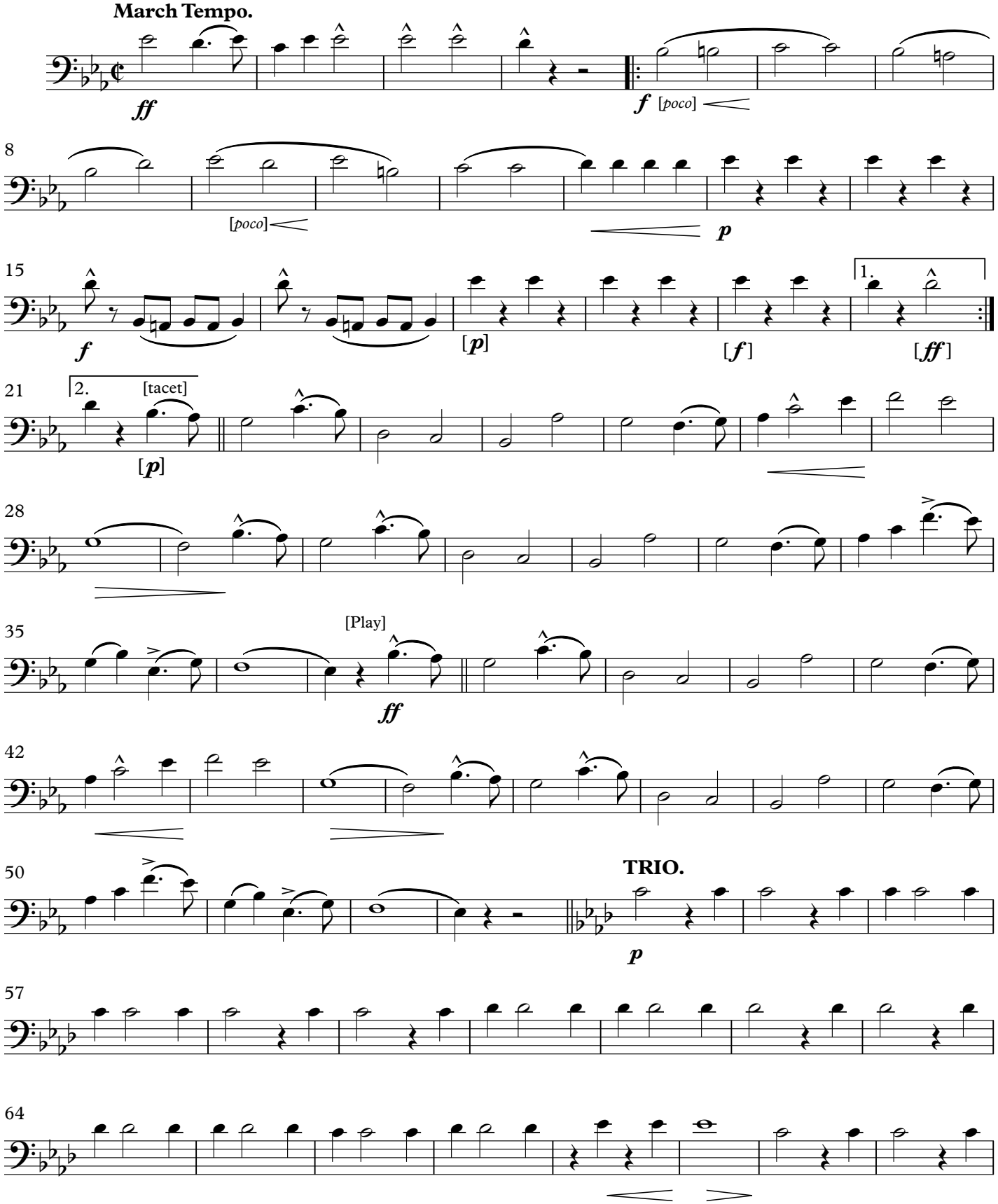
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

1st Trombone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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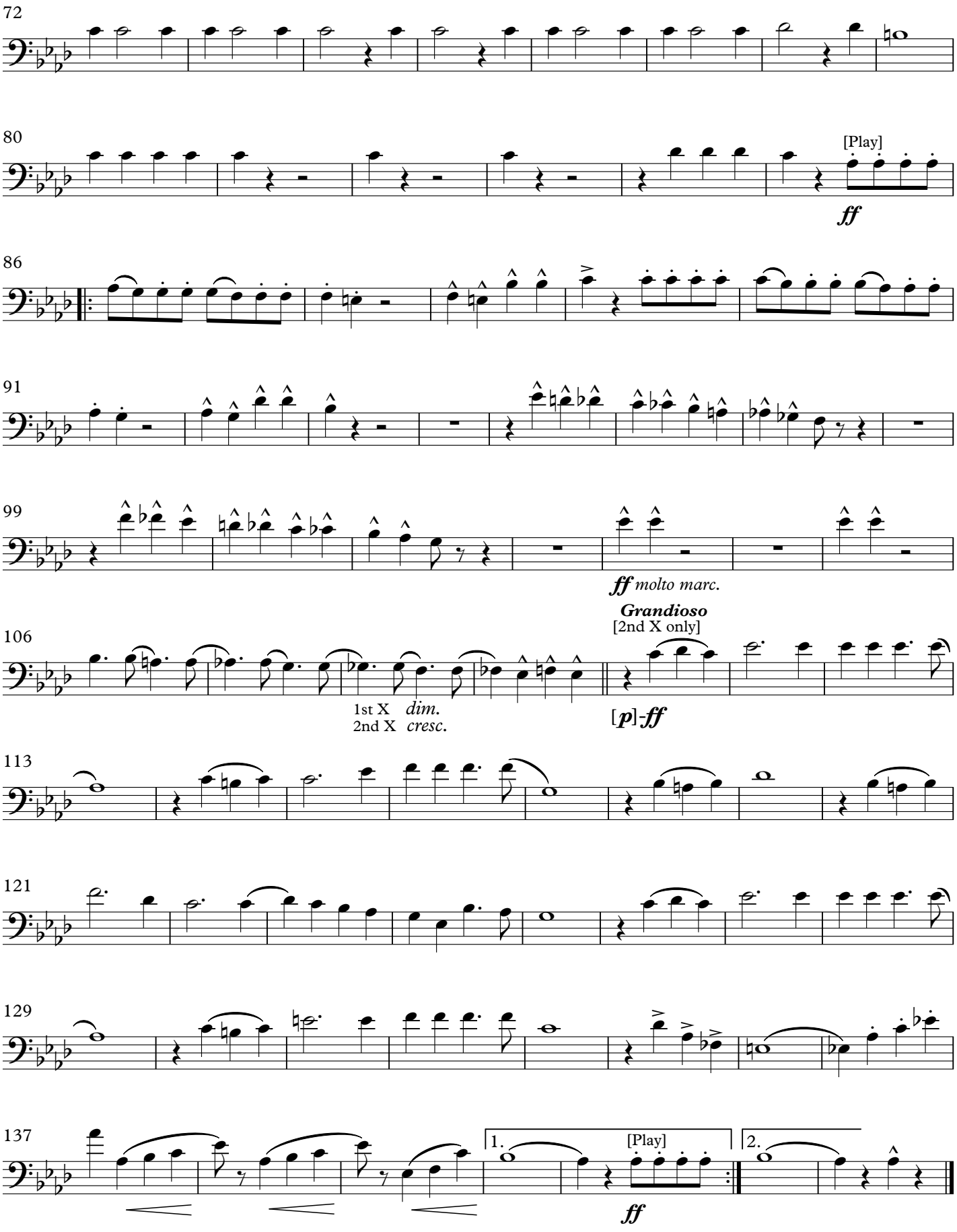
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

1st Trombone



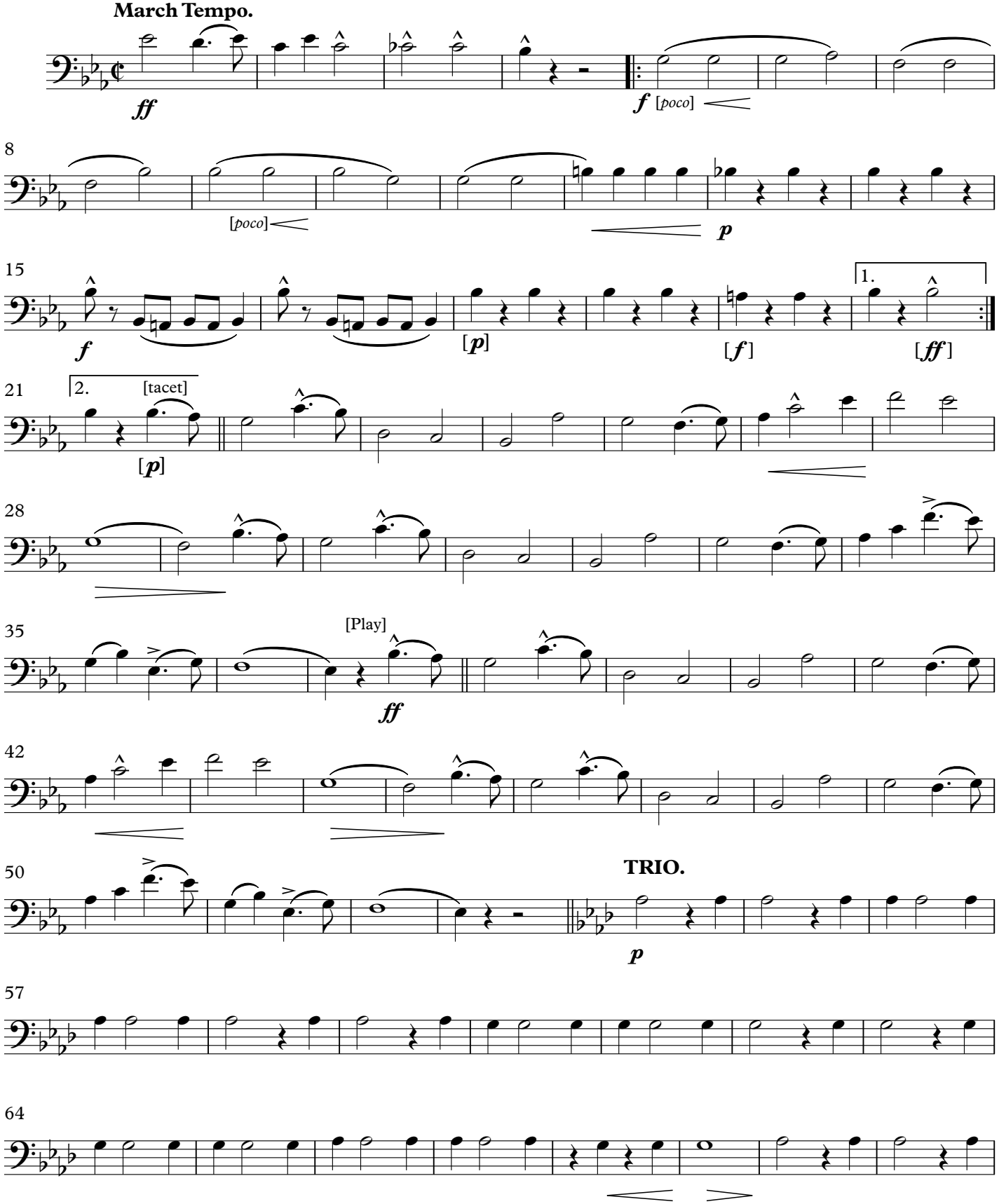
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

2nd Trombone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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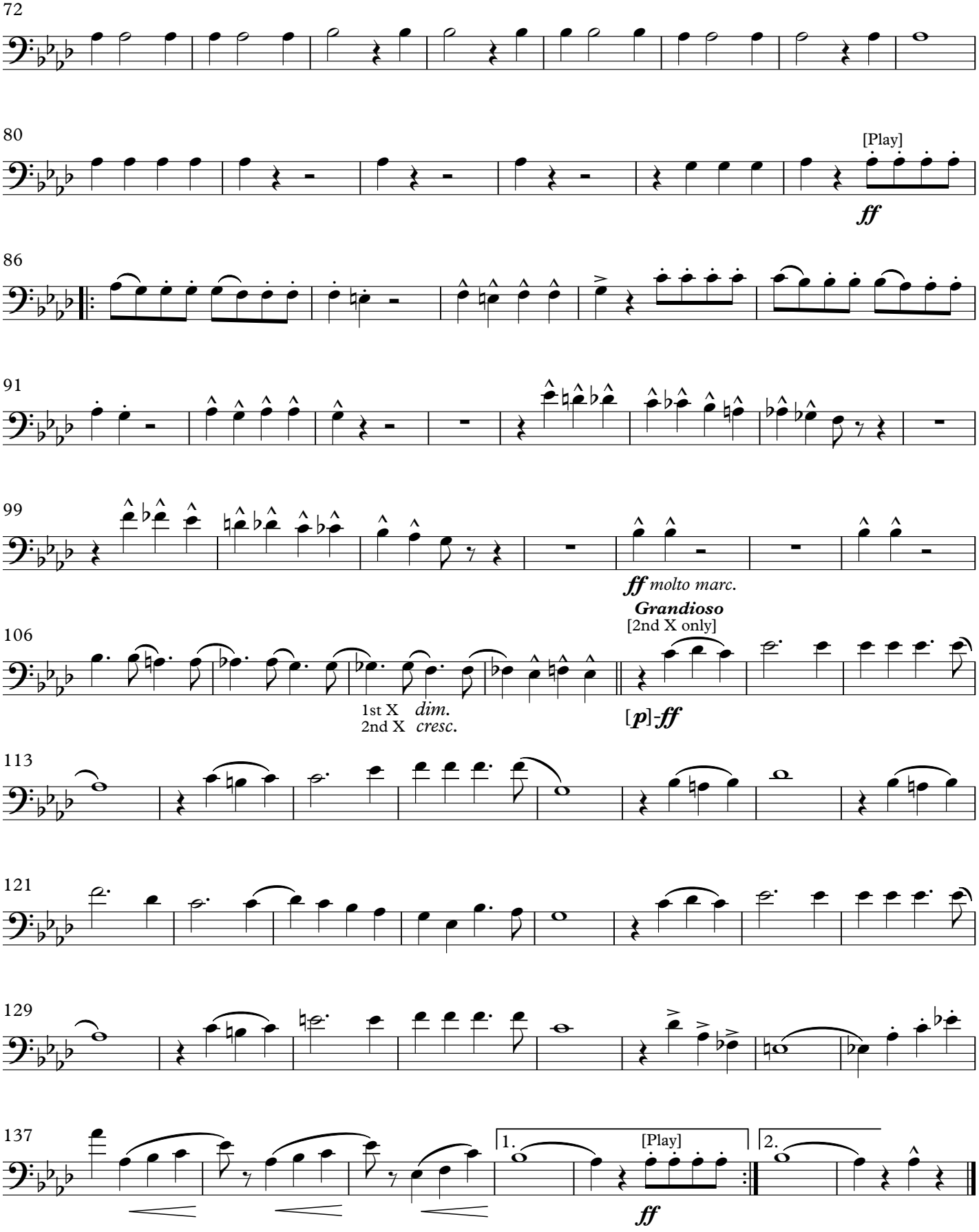
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
2nd Trombone



March

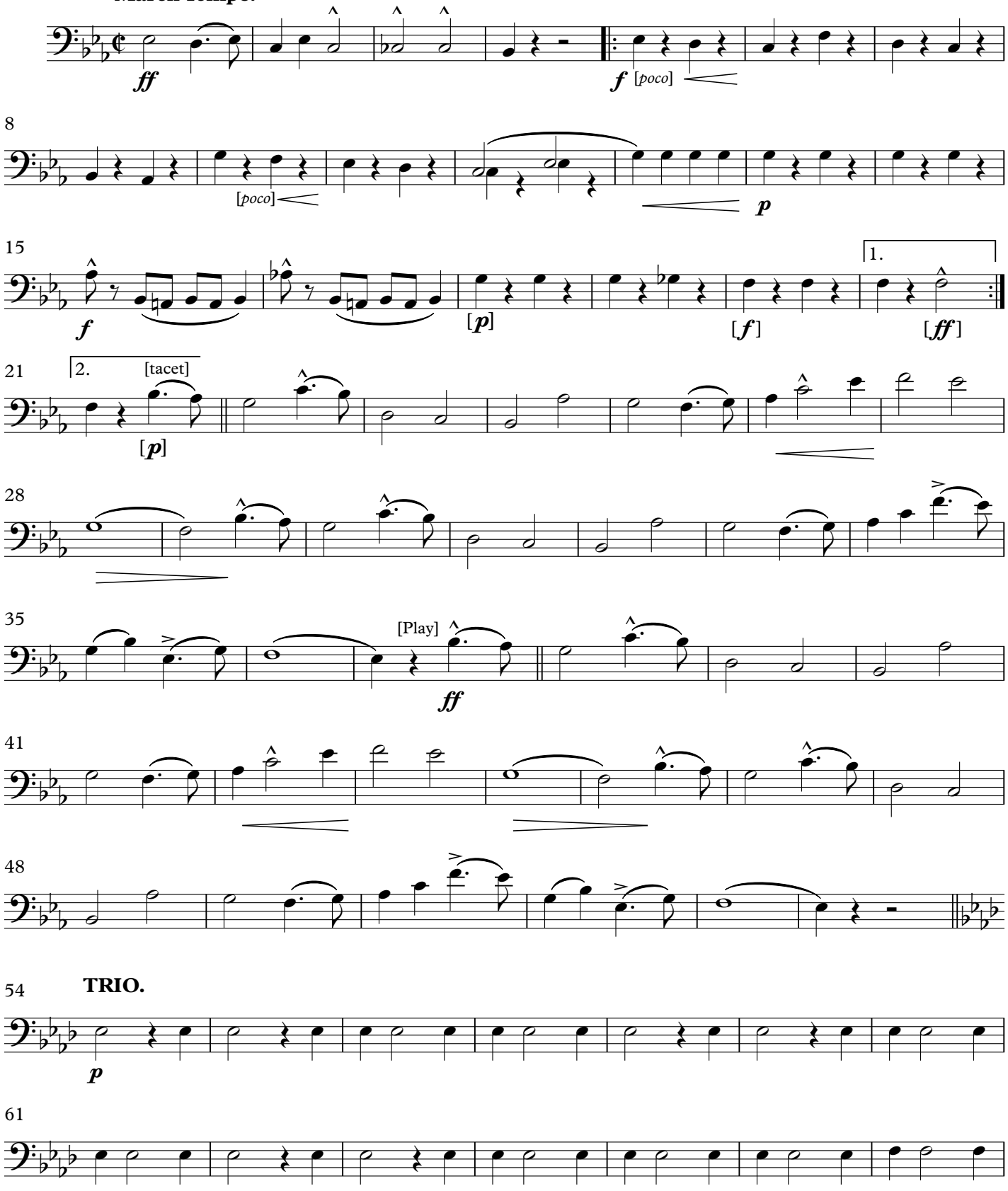
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Bass Trombone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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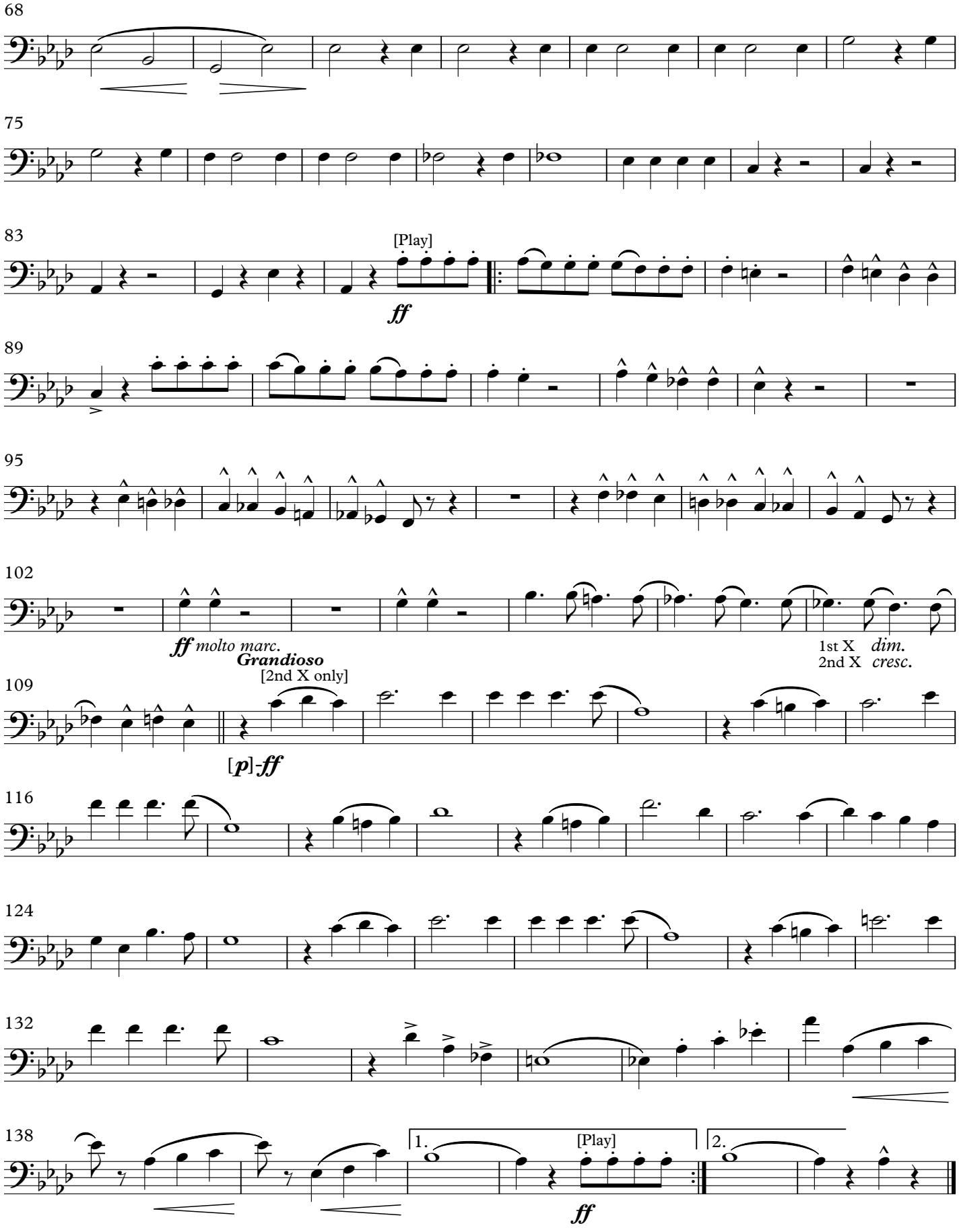
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
Bass Trombone



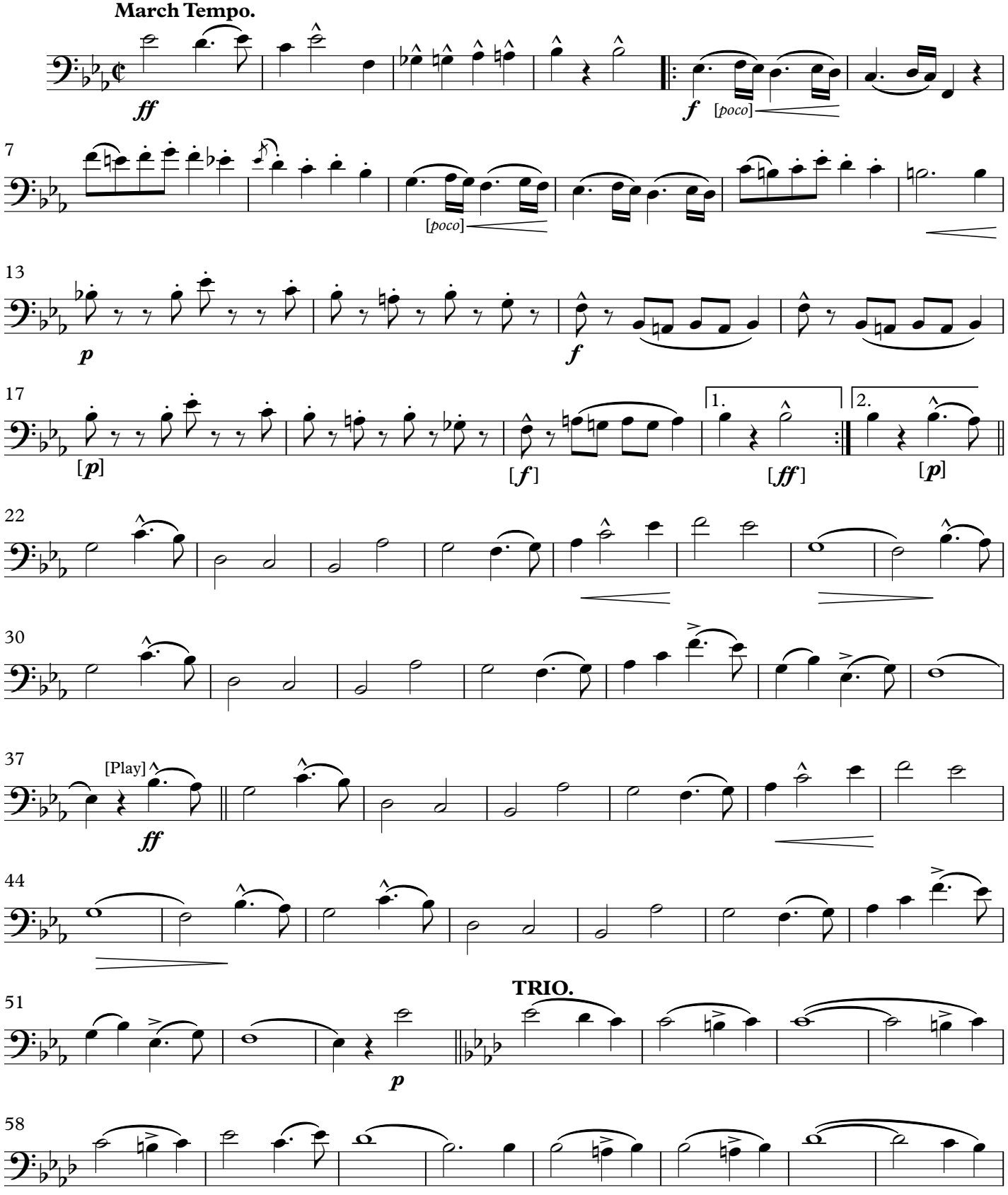
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Euphonium

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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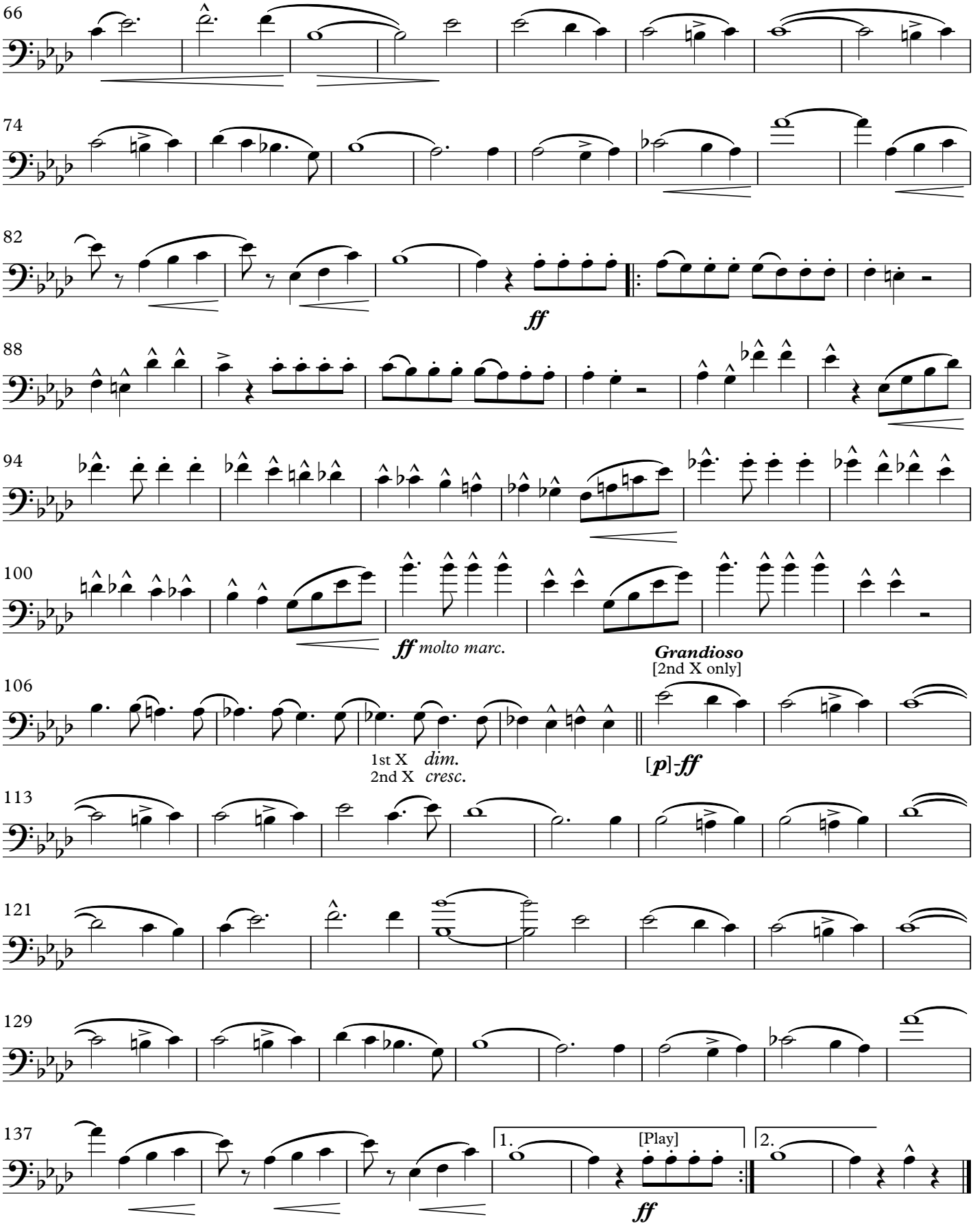
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER
Euphonium



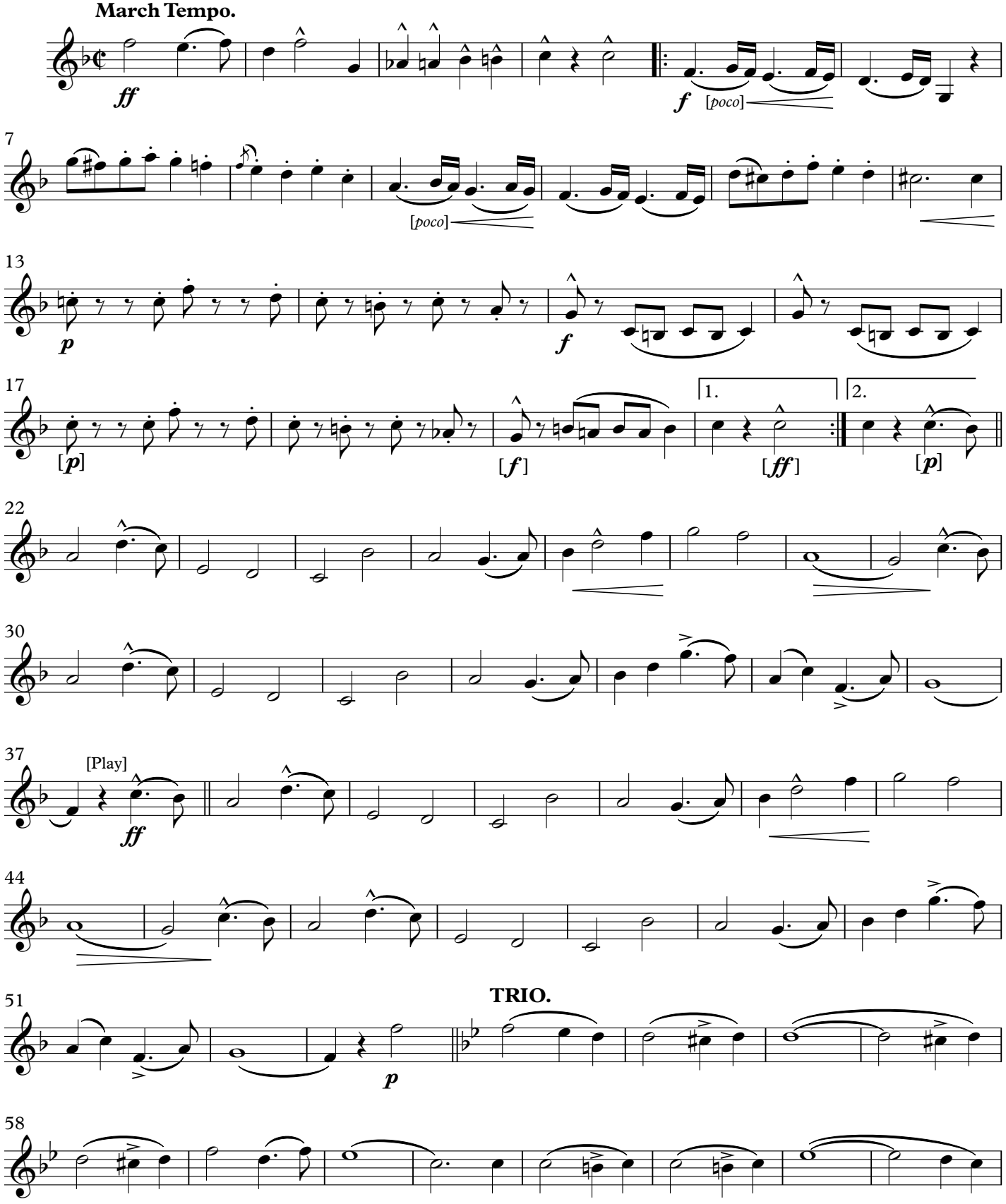
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Baritone, T.C.

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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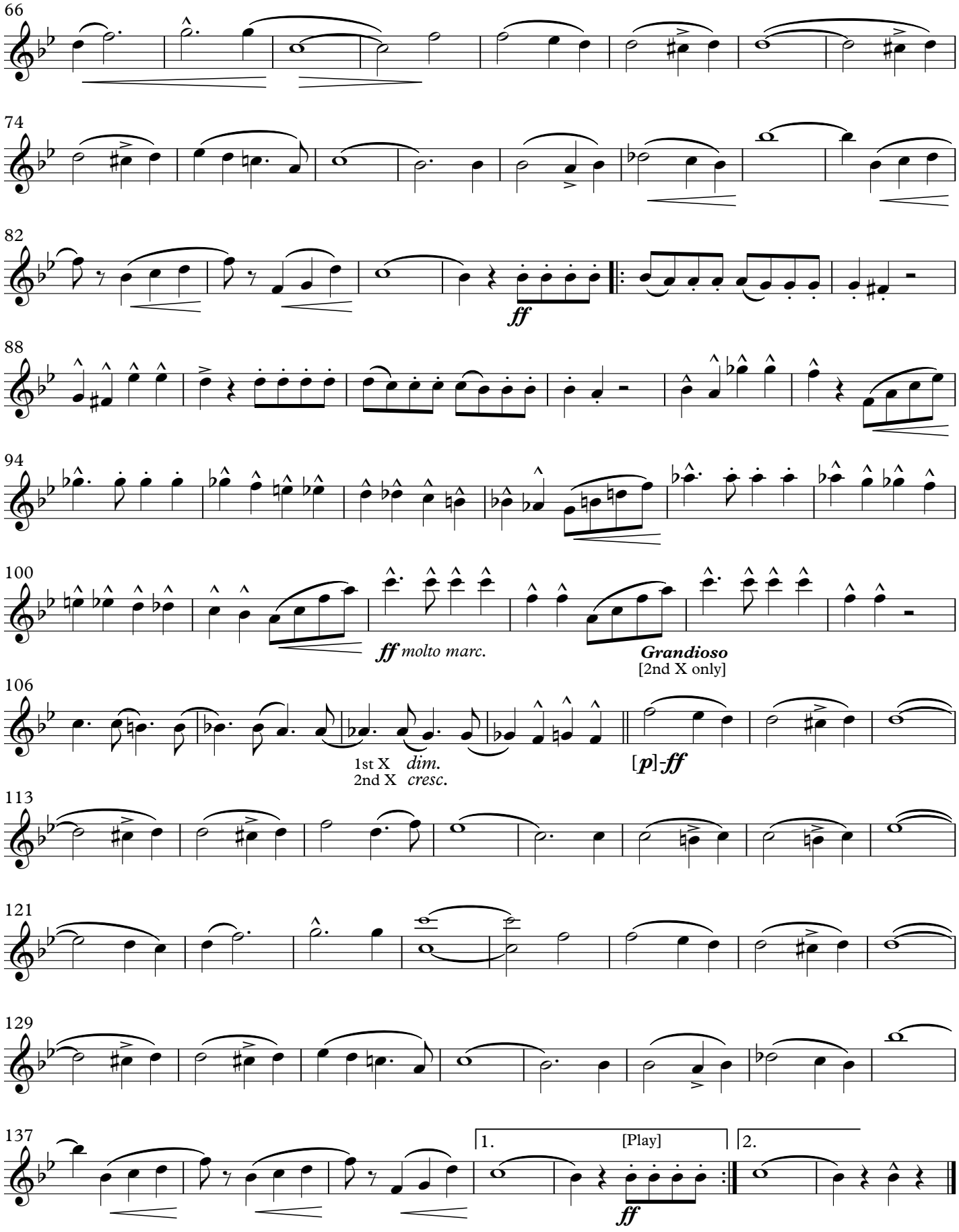
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Baritone, T.C.



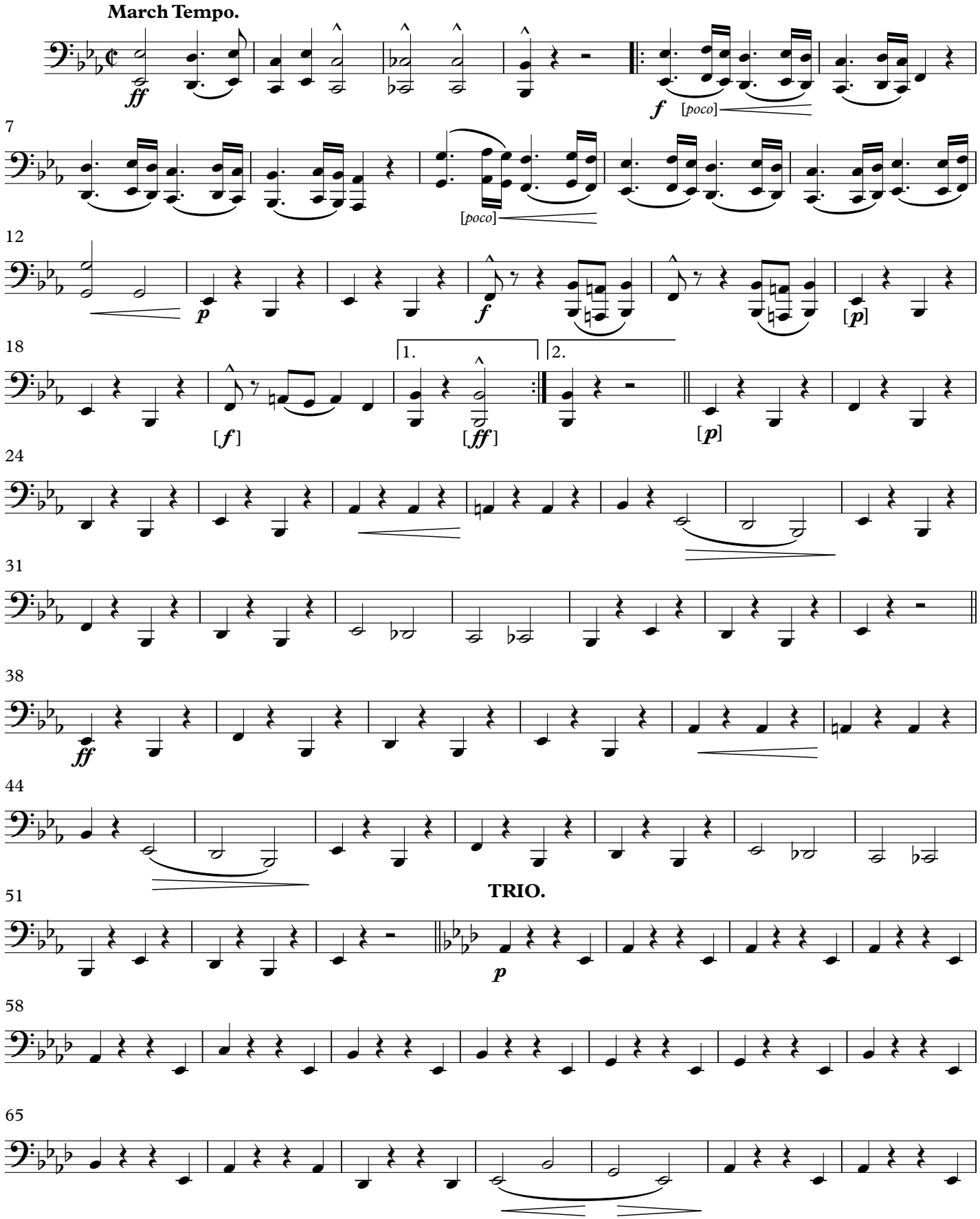
March

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Tuba

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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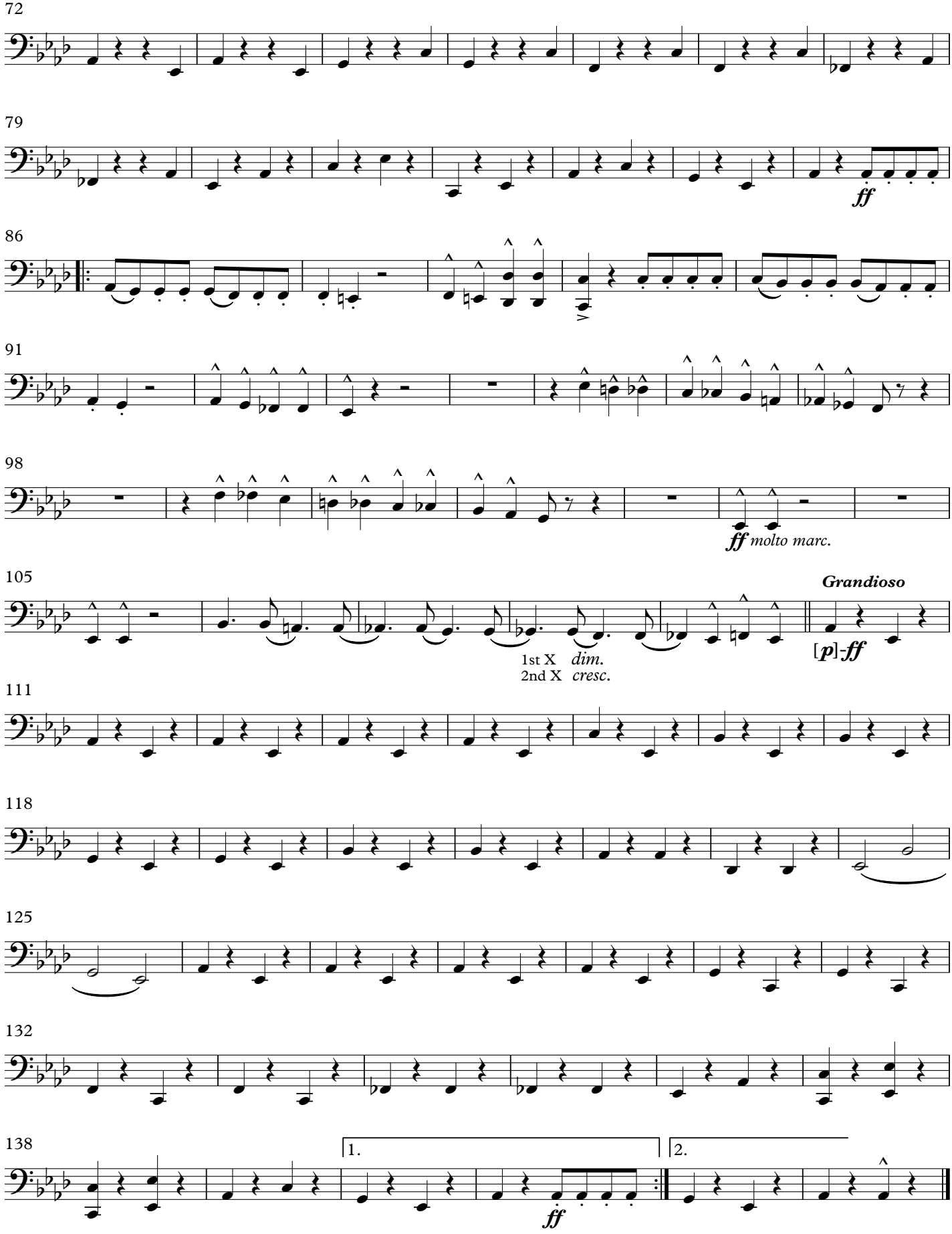
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Tuba



March

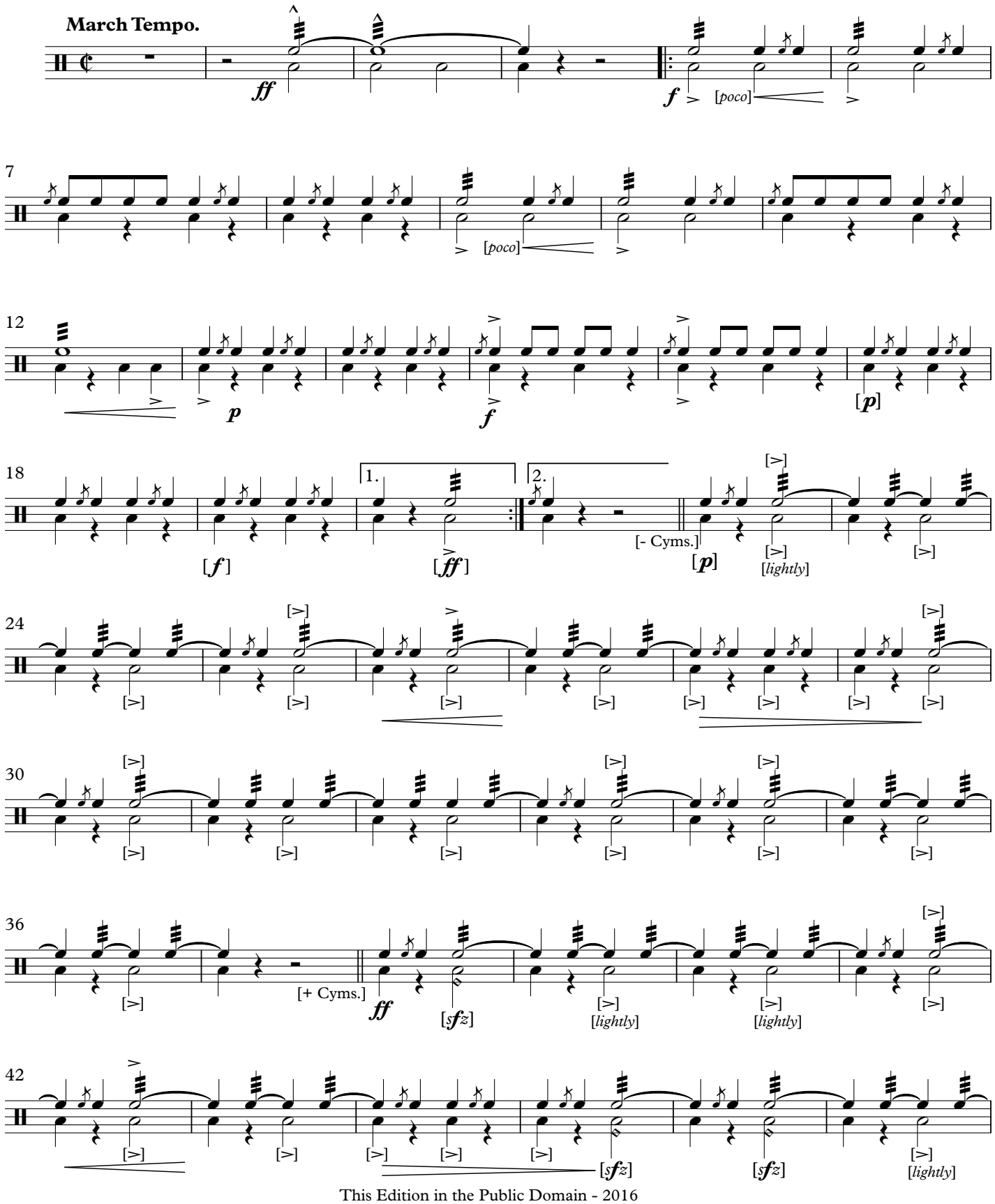
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Drums & Bells

Handwritten bell part
from Sousa's Encore Book

(1896)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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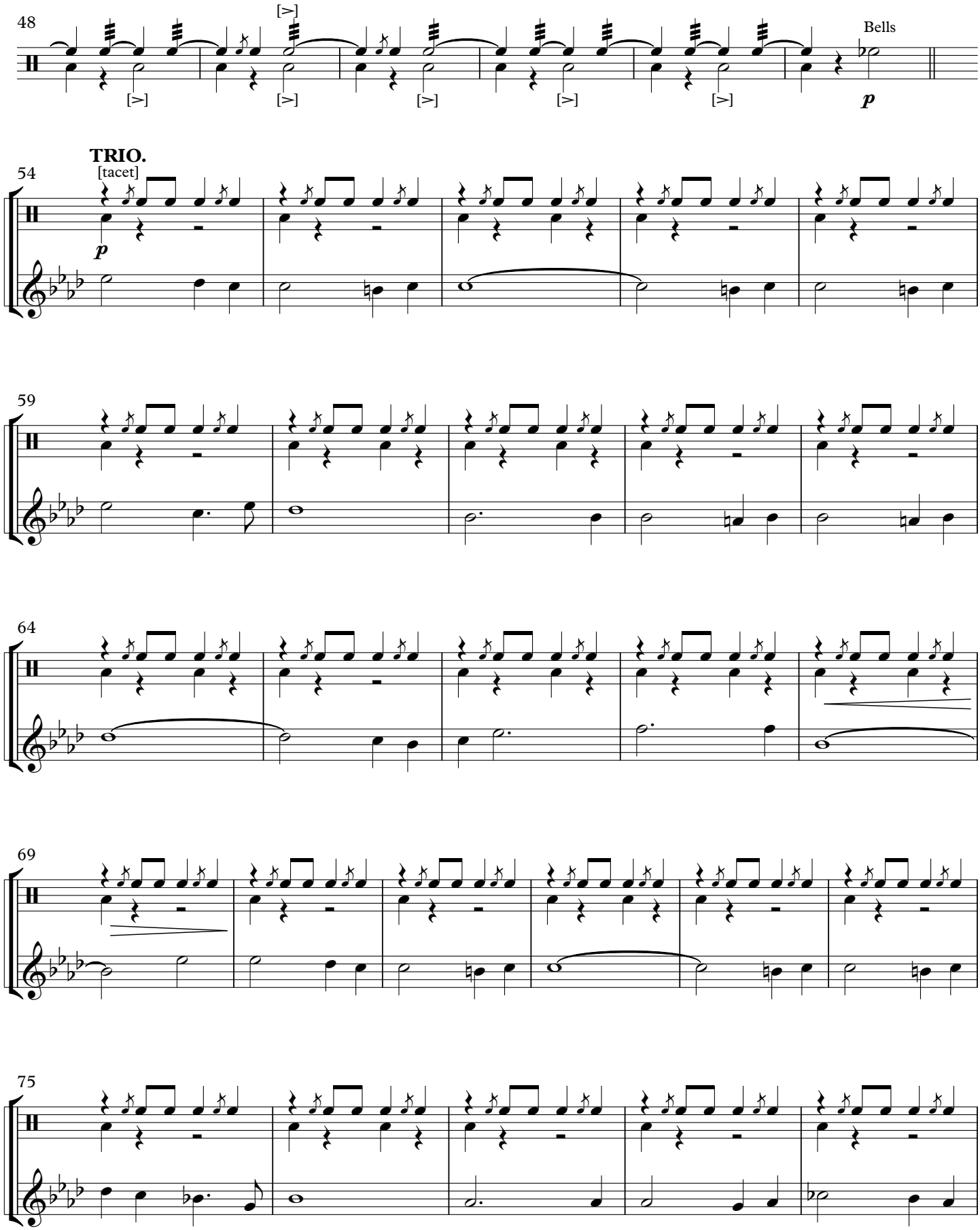
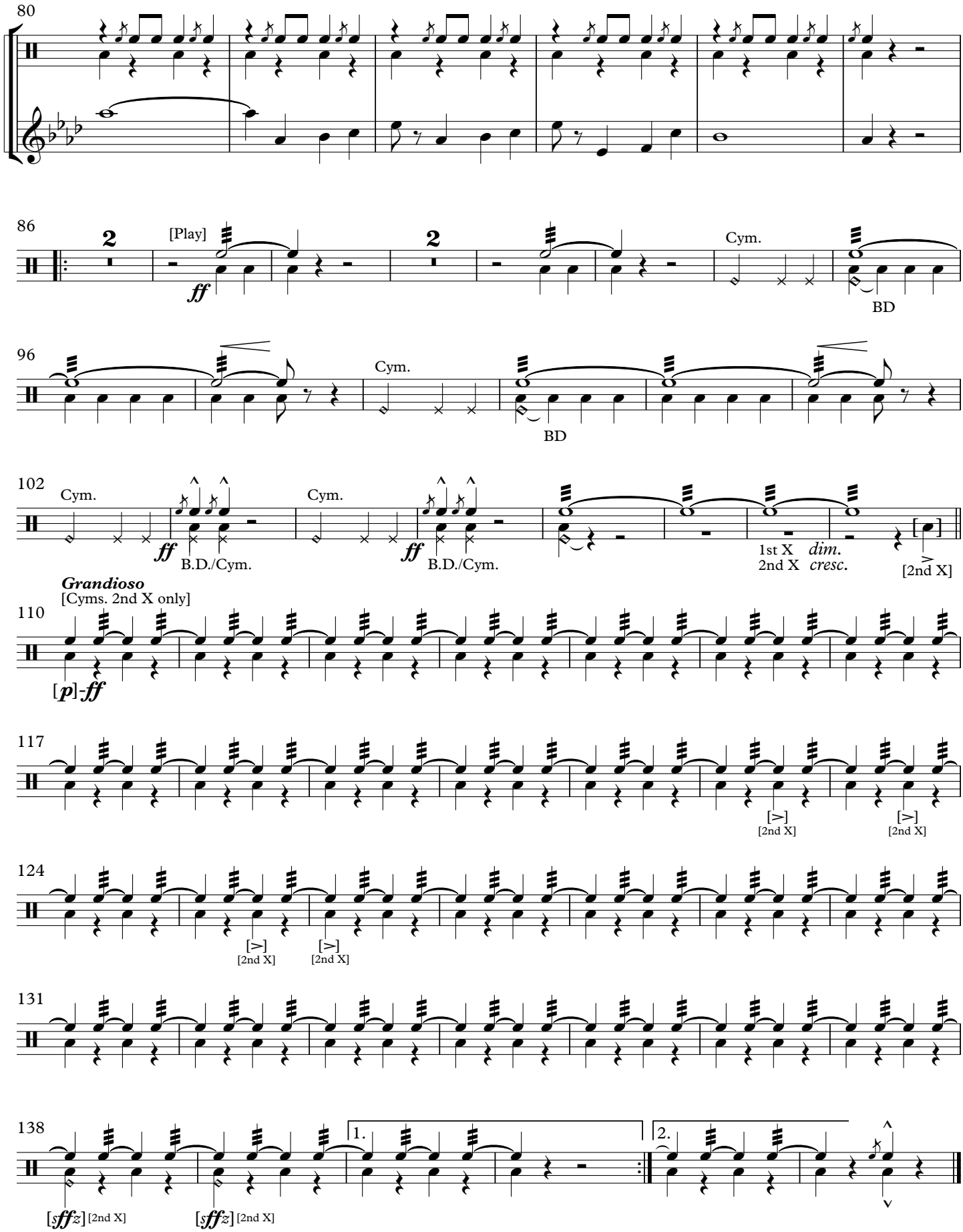
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Drums & Bells




80
86
2
[Play]
ff
2
Cym.
BD
96
Cym.
BD
102
Cym.
ff
B.D./Cym.
Cym.
ff
B.D./Cym.
1st X
2nd X
dim.
cresc.
[2nd X]
Grandioso
[Cyms. 2nd X only]
110
[p]-ff
117
[>]
[2nd X]
[>]
[2nd X]
124
[>]
[2nd X]
[>]
[2nd X]
131
138
1.
2.
[sffz] [2nd X]
[sffz] [2nd X]

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

Harp

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As played by "The President's Own" United States Marine Band

March

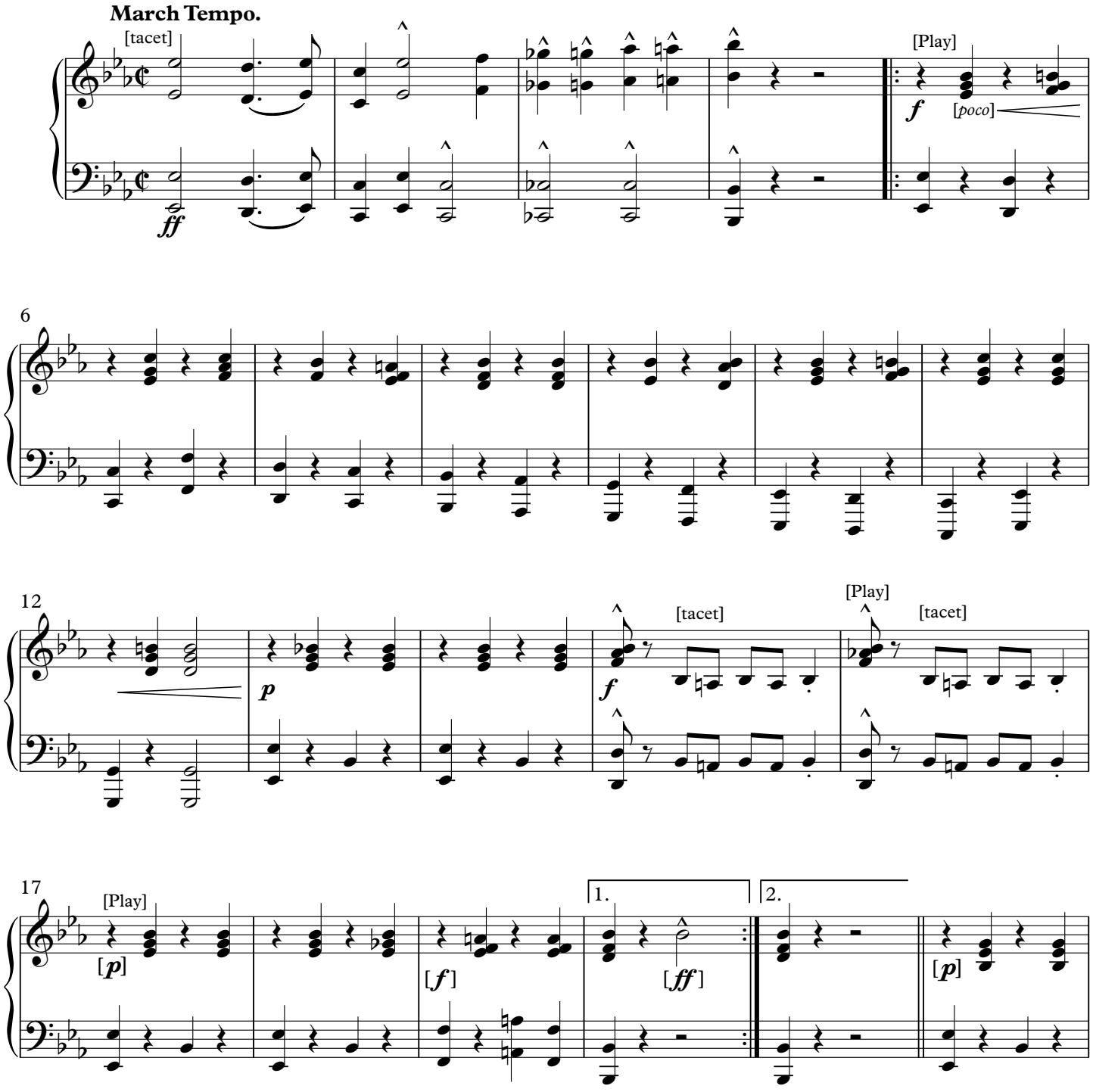
THE STARS and STRIPES FOREVER

(1896)

Harp

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Handwritten part from
Sousa's Encore Book



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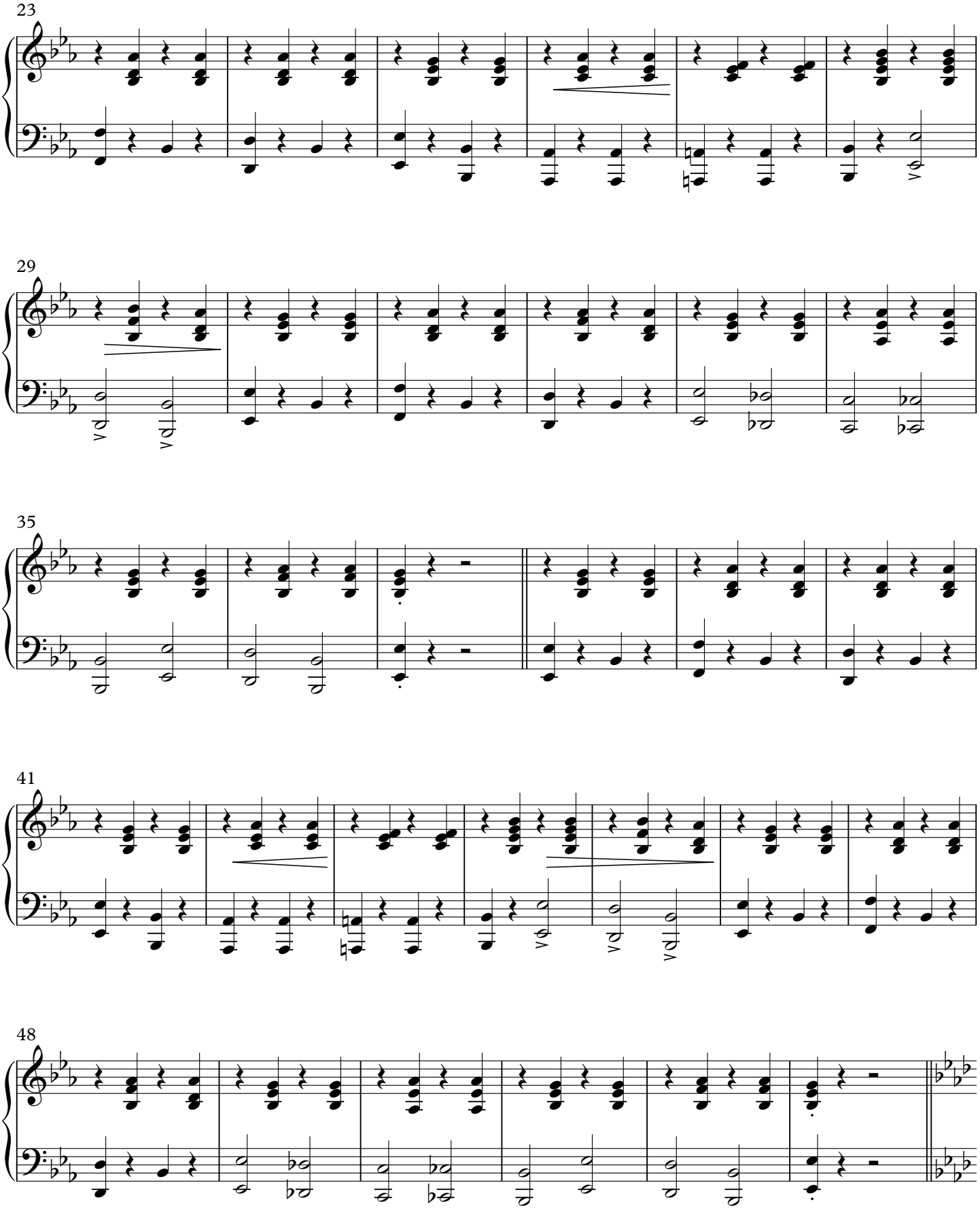
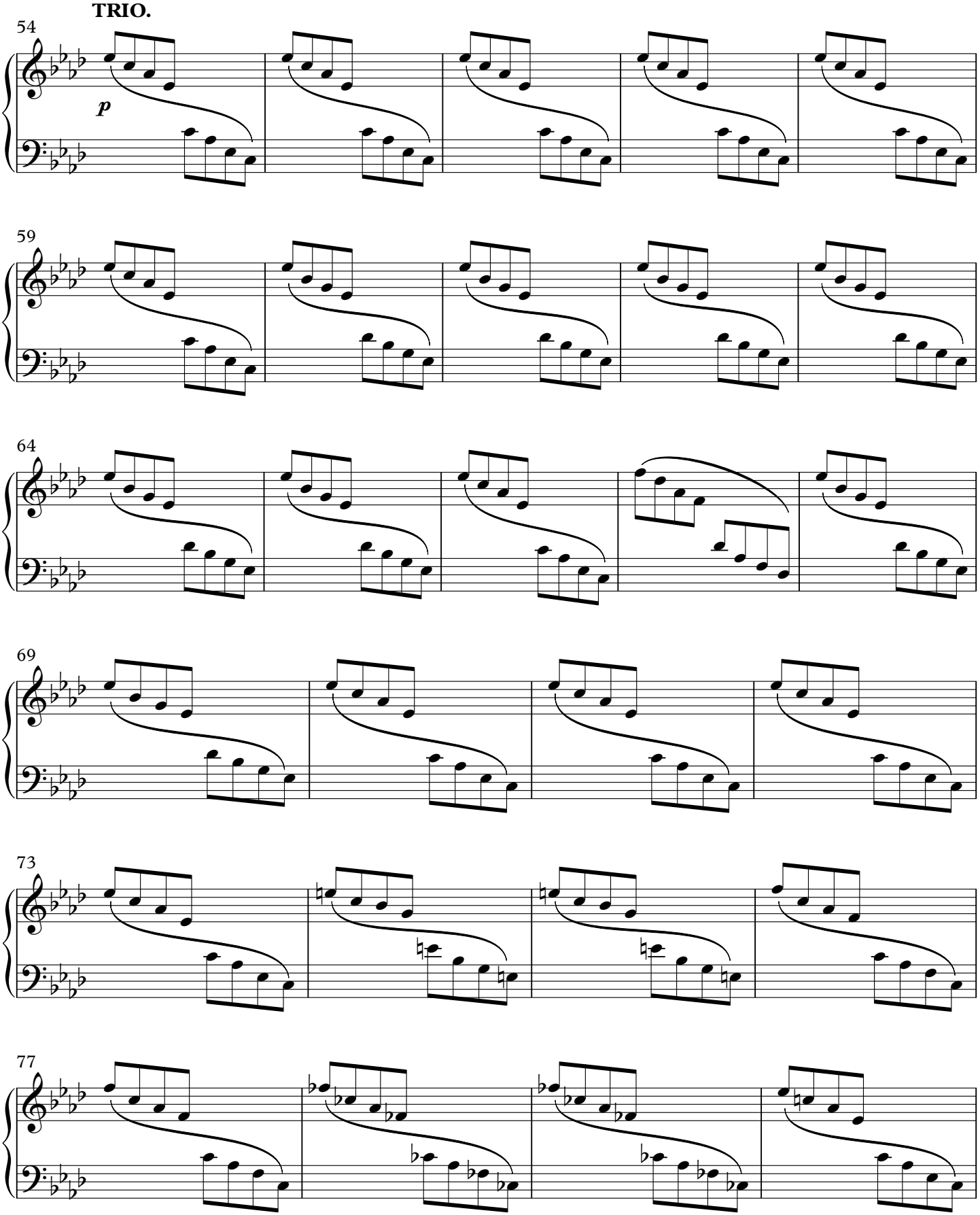
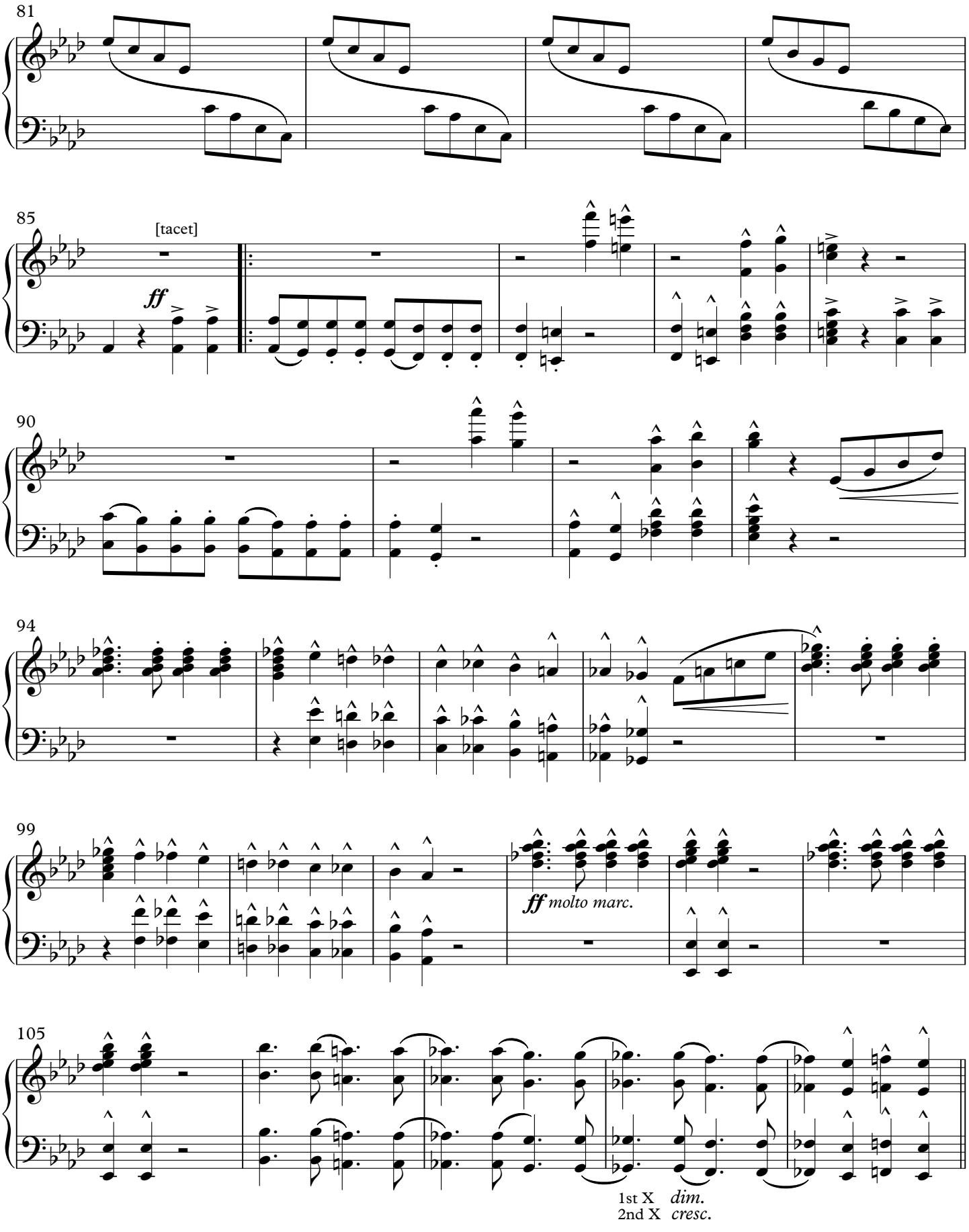

23
29
35
41
48


TRIO.
54
p
59
64
69
73
77


81
85
[tacet]
ff
90
94
99
ff molto marc.
105
1st X dim.
2nd X cresc.

Harp

Grandioso

[Play]

110

[*p*]-*ff*

115

120

125

130

134

139

1.

2.

ff [tacet]