

# SKATER'S WALTZ

Emil Waldteufel, 1882

Skater's Waltz was written by classical composer, Emile Waldteufel. Inspired by watching the *Rink of Skaters* at the Bois de Boulogne in Paris, he called it *Les Patineurs Valse*, or *Skaters' Waltz*. It has become a common theme at countless skating rinks in this country.



Waldteufel was born into a musical family in Strasbourg, Germany in 1837. His father, Louis, was an orchestra conductor, and his older brother, Leon, a violinist. The family moved to France, when Leon was offered a position at the Paris Conservatory. His father continued conducting and Emile began writing his own compositions, primarily orchestrated waltzes and polkas.

In 1874, on a visit to France, the Prince of Wales attended a concert that featured some of Waldteufel's music and became enthralled with it. Upon return to London, he introduced the compositions to Charles Coote, leader of the premier dance orchestra in London. Waldteufel's music started being played regularly at Buckingham Palace. As it was heard in other European capitals, Waldteufel became very influential in classical music circles. He is credited with over 250 compositions, though *Skaters' Waltz* remains the most recognizable.

I became familiar with this tune at the age of 8, which was the year I mounted a 'campaign' for a pair of ice skates for Christmas. The last package under the tree that year was a pair of hand-me-down hockey skates from an older cousin. That afternoon, our family went to one of the many outdoor skating rinks in the Buffalo, NY area, where I learned pretty quickly how much more difficult ice skating is than it appears. I never did really learn to skate very well, but this tune became indelibly etched into my brain from being played over and over and over on the PA system at the rink that day

In music and friendship,

~Tull