

Marie Elizabeth Sousa **(20 May 1826 – 23 Aug 1908)**

Sousa. The funeral of the late Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa who died on Sunday August 23, 1908 will leave the family residence 502 7th street southeast on Wednesday, August 26 at 9 a.m. thence to Congressional Cemetery Chapel where the final services will be held. Friends and relatives invited to attend.

The Evening Star, Monday, August 24, 1908

Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa Dies

Mother of John Philip Sousa, Famous Bandmaster

Was Eighty-Two Years Old and Had Lived Here Since 1854 -- Six Children Survive Her

Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa, widow of Antonio Sousa and mother of John Philip Sousa, the noted bandmaster and composer, died at the family residence 502 7th street southeast, yesterday afternoon at 5:35 o'clock. Her death was due to general debility.

Mrs. Sousa was eighty-two years of age and had been a resident of this city since 1854. Up to about three months ago she was more than ordinarily active for her age and was accustomed to a daily walk; but about that time she began to fall, and gradually grew weaker until her death.

Was a Native of Germany

Mrs. Sousa was a native of Germany, having been born in Hesse Darmstadt in May, 1826. She came to this country with her parents in 1846, and resided in Brooklyn, N.Y., until her marriage to Mr. Sousa. They afterward moved to Washington. Mr. Sousa died sixteen years ago.

Mrs. Sousa is survived by four sons and two daughters, John Philip Sousa, former leader of the United States Marine Band, and now of Sousa's Concert Band; George W. Sousa, a retired musician, living at Newport News, Va.; Antonio A. Sousa of 617 G street southeast, an employee of the city post office; Louis M. Sousa of 631 E street southeast; Mrs. A.C. Varela of 536 6th street southeast, and Mrs. Bower, wife of Lieut. J. McK. Bower, a retired naval officer, who lives in Chicago.

Mrs. Sousa was a member of Christ Protestant Episcopal Church, on G street southeast, and has always been forward in the charitable work of that parish. She visited the sick and needy constantly and did much to help them.

Proud of Son's Success

Mrs. Sousa was especially proud of her son, John Philip, the famous bandmaster. Their last meeting was about two weeks ago. He has been notified of his mother's death and will arrive here in time for the funeral services Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock in the chapel at Congressional cemetery. Rev. Arthur S. Johns of Christ P.E. Church, Navy Yard, officiating.

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Body Laid to Rest

Final Services Held Over Remains of Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa

Funeral services over the remains of Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa were held at 9 o'clock this morning at her late home, 502 7th street southeast. Rev. Arthur S. Johns, rector of Christ Protestant Episcopal Church officiated. Interment was in the family lot in Congressional cemetery.

Four sons and two daughters of the deceased -- John Philip Sousa, George W. Sousa, Antonio A. Sousa, Louis M. Sousa, Mrs. A.C. Varela and Mrs. Bower -- with their families, attended the funeral.

John Philip Sousa arrived in this city last night from Willow Grove, Philadelphia, where his band is now playing. He returned to Philadelphia this afternoon.

The pallbearers were Messrs. C.A. Stockett, William Biondi, Anton Jeagle, Walter Smith, A.W. Auth and Charles Biondi. Many beautiful floral tributes were sent to the house, among which was a large wreath of roses from the members of Mr. Sousa's band.

The Evening Star, January 29, 1908, p. 8

Suit for Mandamus

Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa Seeks to Collect Money Due Late Husband A petition for a mandamus has been filed in the District Supreme Court by Mrs. Elizabeth Sousa, mother of John Philip Sousa, against Vespasian Warner, commissioner of pensions. Mrs. Sousa seeks to be paid money which, she alleges is due her as the widow of Antonio Sousa, for many years an enlisted musician in the Marine Band, of which his son later became conductor.

Mrs. Sousa says her husband, in April, 1879, applied to the Secretary of the Navy for the benefits of section 4756 of the Revised Statutes, and the Secretary issued him a certificate certifying that under this section he was entitled to \$19.50 a month as retired pay for the remainder of his life, instead of a home in the Naval Asylum in Philadelphia.

From April, 1879, until March 4, 1886, this amount month was paid to Sousa by the commissioner of pensions, and about the latter date he was granted a pension of \$24 a month. When the pension was granted the commissioner canceled the payment of \$19.50 a month, on the ground that, under the law, no person could receive two pensions at the same time. Accordingly, Sousa was paid his pension of \$24, and the payment of \$19.50 on the certificate issued by the Secretary of the Navy was discontinued. Mrs. Sousa states the Commissioner of Pensions has taken adverse action on her application for the amount that accrued to her husband from the time the \$19.50 monthly was stopped until the time of his death.

Attorneys Fugitt and DePutron represent Mrs. Sousa.

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Marie Elisabeth Trinkaus was born in Frankish Grumbach Thuringen, Bavaria, on May 20, 1826. Her father, Peter Trinkaus, was the mayor (burgomeister) of a small town, and her mother was Catherine Schafers. Marie Elisabeth came to the United States about 1846 and resided with relatives in Brooklyn. There she met and married John Antonio Sousa. After moving to Washington in 1854, she remained there until her death in 1908.

She was a deeply religious person, and in her early life she was known as "Cloister Elise" because of her saintly disposition. She was originally Lutheran, but after changing her membership from the Concordia German Evangelical Church to Christ Episcopal Church, she was active in that church's work for approximately fifty years. She had a remarkable influence on John Philip, and he was guided by her principles throughout his life. When she died on August 25, 1908, he sent the following telegram to his brother Antonio: HEAVEN HAS ADDED ONE MORE ANGEL TO ITS LEGION. LET US BOW TO THE WILL OF GOD. (Washington Post, August 25, 1908).

She is buried in the Antonio Sousa plot in Congressional Cemetery.