

Arthur Willard Pryor

St Joseph, Missouri

- 1869 Arthur Pryor is born on September 22 in St Joseph, Missouri (census).
- 1880 Pryor is playing the valve trombone and could also play the piano, violin and cornet (Trescott).
- 1881 Pryor's first appearance in Chicago playing trombone.
- 1883 Pryor practicing the slide trombone ten hours per day.
- 1884 Pryor is playing with local bands.
- 1889 Liberati comes to Kansas City with his band, hears about Pryor, travels to St Joseph to hear him, then hires him.
- 1890 Pryor takes a job as conductor for Stanley Opera Co in Denver (Trescott).
- 1892 Pryor moves to New York to play in Sousa's Band. The quote below is from trombone player Marc Lyons.

"When Sousa organized his band in 1892, Frank Holton and I were the two veteran trombone players. The band was rehearsing for the coming World's Fair, to be held in Chicago, the following year, which was to be Sousa's first major engagement. Young Pryor walked into the rehearsal room, looking very much in need of a haircut. With introductions over, Mr. Sousa told Pryor that he might want to warm up a bit, which he did to the surprise of the whole band, for we had never heard such tones come out of a trombone before, but fast. Pryor was told to sit next to Holton, who was playing first chair, who was to brief Pryor on what we were going to play next. The band was in the process of rehearsing a number that Mr. Sousa wanted to use at the Fair and this piece had a very difficult passage for the trombone, which was giving Holton some trouble, on account of the tempo at which Mr. Sousa insisted upon. Holton pointed out this passage to Pryor, telling him to tear into it when they got to it. And tear into it he did. Mr. Sousa stopped the band at once and said: 'Frank that is fine, and the first time you got it right.' Frank stood up and said, 'Mr. Sousa it wasn't me playing, but this young fellow Pryor.' After the rehearsal, Frank spoke to Mr. Sousa privately, asking for his release from the band, stating that, he was no longer needed, now that he had Pryor to play first trombone and be his soloist too. Mr. Sousa replied, 'This young fellow may be just a flash, so, you had better stay around until after the Fair next summer.' which Frank agreed to do with reluctance."

- 1893 Pryor becomes the first trombone after Holton leaves.
- 1894 Jake Burkle (photo 3), craftsman for Conn, makes a gold-plated trombone for Pryor (photo 2).
- 1895 Pryor appointed assistant conductor for Sousa and marries Maude Russell of Utah.



ARTHUR PRYOR



- 1900 Pryor's home in St Joseph (census). A new Pryor model trombone is sold by Conn (*Music Trade Review*).
- 1903 Pryor leaves Sousa to start his own band which he performed with for the next thirty years (Trescott).
- 1904 Pryor is musical director for Victor Phonograph Co.
- 1906 The Pryor Band is incorporated in New York.
- 1909 Stops touring and makes his home in Asbury Park, NJ.
- 1921 Pryor is endorsing the Revelation model trombone by former Sousa player Frank Holton (photo 4 last page).
- 1930 His home is listed in New York City (census).
- 1933 Pryor retires to his farm in Long Branch, NJ called Driftwood (Trescott) and gets elected to local politics.
- 1942 Pryor dies on June 17, a day after suffering a stroke.
- 19?? Son Roger Pryor sells his father's Conn trombone to a man in Indiana (St Joseph's News).
- 1992 Steve Dillon of NJ buys the Pryor trombone (St Joseph's News).
- 2008 Dillon is selling the Pryor trombone for \$250,000.

