



SEMPER FIDELIS

MUSIC OF
JOHN PHILIP
SOUSA

“THE PRESIDENT’S OWN”
UNITED STATES
MARINE BAND

COLONEL JOHN BOURGEOIS
DIRECTOR

"SEMPER FIDELIS" MUSIC OF JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

"The President's Own" UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Colonel John Bourgeois, Director

1	March, "Semper Fidelis"	2:45
2	Presidential Polonaise	4:15
3	March, "Manhattan Beach"	2:13
4	March, "Comrades of the Legion"	2:40
5	Selections from <i>The Bride Elect</i>	10:50
6	March, "Sabre and Spurs"	3:13
7	March, "The Gallant Seventh"	3:17
8	Waltz, <i>La Reine de la Mer</i>	7:25
9	March, "King Cotton"	2:52
10	March, "The Gridiron Club"	3:23
11	<i>Easter Monday on the White House Lawn</i>	2:21
12	March, "Who's Who in Navy Blue"	2:47
13	March, "The Invincible Eagle"	3:40
	Suite, <i>Looking Upward</i>	
14	1. By the Light of the Polar Star	4:44
15	2. Beneath the Southern Cross	6:22
16	3. Mars and Venus	7:09
17	March, "The Royal Welch Fusiliers"	2:35

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA, THE MARINE LEADER, United States Marine Band, 1880-1892 Born: Washington, DC, November 6, 1854 Died: Reading, Pennsylvania, March 6, 1932

by Paul Bierley

On the wall of John Philip Sousa's home on Long Island was a humorous account of his Marine Band's popularity many years earlier in Washington, DC. The writer related that when the band paraded through the streets it was followed by a small army of boys. Close behind the boys came some businessmen and other citizens. Following those were Congressmen, all mesmerized by the stirring sounds of Sousa's marches.

While this might have been an exaggeration, it gave an indication of the Marine Band's great popularity while Sousa was leader.

John Philip Sousa did not begin his Marine career as leader; he began it as an apprentice, or "boy" musician. His father Antonio, a trombonist in the Marine Band, learned that young Philip was planning to run away from home and join a circus band. The elder Sousa promptly had him enlisted in the Marine Corps on June 9, 1868. He was 13 years of age at the time.

Even at age 13, Philip was not a stranger to the Marine Band. His father had been a member of the band since before the Civil War and had traveled to Gettysburg with the band when President Lincoln

made his famous address there. Since the family lived just a few short blocks from the Marine Barracks, Philip had been a visitor during many rehearsals and had even played cymbals, triangle, and E-flat alto horn at times. It must be assumed that his sudden enlistment, although a surprise, was not disagreeable. The fact is that he loved bands.

While an apprentice, Sousa received both music and scholastic training, for which \$3.00 was deducted from his pay each month. He learned to play all of the band instruments, but the violin was his primary instrument. Meanwhile, he studied advanced music subjects with private teachers and performed nights in local theater orchestras.

This early period of his Marine service ended at age 20 in 1875, whereupon he set out to expand his career as a violinist and conductor of theater orchestras. During America's Centennial celebration in Philadelphia in 1876, he was a member of the first violin section in the orchestra of the celebrated French composer Jacques Offenbach. Sousa later received wide acclaim as a director of an *H.M.S. Pin-afore* company.



Sousa as Leader of the United States Marine Band, circa 1888.

By the time a vacancy for leader of the U.S. Marine Band was created, Sousa's exploits had been noticed by Marine Corps officials, including the Commandant, who went to Philadelphia to see Sousa conduct a musical revue. After some deliberation, they offered the position to him.

Sousa's father probably played a role in the appointment. He had retired from the Marine Band a year earlier but stayed in touch with the bandmen. More importantly, he had contact with the Commandant by doing cabinet work for him. It is reasonable to assume that the elder Sousa kept the Commandant informed of his son's triumphs as a conductor and that he told his son of an impending change in the leadership of the band.

At age 25, Sousa became the 17th leader of the Marine Band, and for the first time in his life, he was conducting a military band. The band numbered about 40 at that time, and most of the musicians were older men from Germany and Italy.

Sousa updated what was an antiquated music library by acquiring modern classics, adding some new marches and transcriptions of his own, and beginning rigorous rehearsals. This displeased some of the older musicians, so he made arrangements for their immediate discharge upon written request. The band temporarily shrank in size to 30 members, but the improvements were dramatic. He recruited several young friends from Philadelphia to fill the vacancies.

After being in charge for a year, Sousa had conditioned the band to the point where performances around Washington were delightfully different from what they had been before. Presidents of the United States were among the many who took notice, because it was the Marine Band's job to perform at White House functions. Sousa had more than passing acquaintances with the five Presidents he served under and tried diligently to present quality music offerings which would be both dignified and appropriate. His observations on the five presidents he served, as related in his autobiography, *Marching Along*, make for very interesting reading.

The five Presidents in office while Sousa was leader of the band were Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, and Harrison. The President closest to him was James A. Garfield, since they both belonged to the same Masonic lodge. When Garfield was assassinated, Sousa probably felt the loss more keenly than most anyone else in Washington. Upon receiving the news, he left his house and walked aimlessly about town all through the night. Upon returning home, he composed his solemn dirge, *In Memoriam*. The Marine Band accompanied Garfield's body to Cleveland for burial.

Being members of Masonic organizations was not only very important to military bandmasters during that era, it was expected. When significant Masonic events took place in Washington, the Marine Band (often called the National Band or the Gov-

ernment Band) usually furnished the music, with Brother Mason Sousa deciding which selections were appropriate. Several of his marches were inspired by these Masonic gatherings—perhaps more than we know about today.

Sousa endeared himself to his musicians because he had their welfare at heart. He made numerous attempts to have their salaries increased and even encouraged the men to take outside music jobs to augment their meager government pay. The band's wide acceptance in the community was especially good for the musicians' morale, as was playing for a composer who would be known internationally as the "March King" before leaving his post. The musicians no doubt felt privileged to premiere many of Sousa's marches which were to become some of the finest ever written such as "The Washington Post," "Semper Fidelis," and "The Thunderer."

The military ranks Sousa held as a Marine during his 12 years as leader have not been definitely established, but it is known that he was never a commissioned officer. Sousa resented this because bandmasters in many foreign countries were commissioned officers. At the end of his Marine career, it is believed that he was a warrant officer.

As Sousa's reputation spread, so did the reputation of the band. Toward the end of his 12 years as leader, the band was considered the finest military band in America and had grown to 49 members.

Their concerts drew huge crowds, particularly the Saturday evening open-air concerts, which became public social events.

When Sousa resigned from the Marine Corps to form his own civilian band in 1892, there was public outrage. Much of the criticism was directed at his manager David Blakely and a syndicate of Chicago businessmen who made him an offer that would have been hard to decline.

The Marine Band made entertainment history during Sousa's last two years as leader, but did so without his active participation. The phonograph had just recently been invented, and the band made numerous recordings on wax cylinders. Sousa believed the poor quality of the cylinders was in no way representative of his band's sound, and not once did he set foot in the recording studio.

Only about one-third of the band could be crowded into the small recording studio, with 10 individual acoustic recording devices (microphones had not yet been invented) placed around the periphery of the studio. This of course yielded 10 different sounding recordings. If 400 recordings of a selection were desired, the musicians had to record the selection 40 times, because a way to produce the cylinders en masse had not been worked out.

These primitive recordings were used mostly in the "nickel-in-the-slot" parlors. Sousa would have no part of the business, which he thought rather amusing, and he did not make his peace with the record-

ing industry until a quarter of a century later. Aside from his objection on artistic grounds, he pointed out that he was not paid for the use of his music; instead, the producers benefited from the fruits of his labor. He did, however, permit band members to make the recordings. It is believed that conductors were not used for the recording sessions; presumably the solo cornetist gave a signal to start playing.

The Marine Band had traveled very little during most of the years Sousa was leader. Gradually, he changed that, and lengthy cross-country tours were made during his final two years as leader. The band's first tour was conducted in 1891 and lasted five weeks; the 1892 tour went from coast to coast and lasted seven weeks. The success of the two tours inspired David Blakely, the tour manager, to lure Sousa away from the military service and form his own band.

Sousa's career as a Marine ended with a concert on Friday, July 29, 1892. His first formal concert as conductor of the band had been at a New Year's reception in 1881. His total Marine service, counting the years spent as an apprentice musician, was 18 years, 3 months.

"Semper Fidelis" (Always Faithful)—the title of one of his finest marches, certainly applied to Sousa. Following his death on March 6, 1932, Marine honor guards stood

by Sousa's body in the band rehearsal hall at Marine Barracks, and the Marine Band led the funeral procession to Congressional Cemetery four days later. Sousa was buried with full military honors, and each year on the anniversary of his birth the Marine Band performs a ceremony there.

John Philip Sousa got his humble beginning in the band world as a Marine, and he was always quick to acknowledge that debt. Without that start, he undoubtedly would have made his mark in the music world, perhaps as a composer and conductor of operetta and theater music. But such was not his destiny. The world will long remember him as the "March King." This would not have been possible without the opportunity provided by the United States Marine Corps.

PAUL BIERLEY is today's foremost authority on John Philip Sousa. He is the author of the two primary reference sources on the subject: John Philip Sousa, American Phenomenon and The Works of John Philip Sousa, both published by Integrity Press of Westerville, Ohio. In addition, Mr. Bierley is a tuba player and, as both performer and guest conductor, he is active in performances of Sousa's music with the Detroit Concert Band and other ensembles.

SOSA'S MARCHES—AS HE CONDUCTED THEM

by Keith Brion

Sousa conducted his music with his own players more often than any composer in history. When he wrote a new march the published parts were thickly orchestrated with outdoor marching in mind. Sousa's Band, however, was exclusively a concert band, playing mainly in concert halls, theaters, and opera houses. Therefore, during the first rehearsal of a newly composed march, Sousa would verbally indicate various changes to his players, radically altering the orchestration for indoor performance. The changes included deletions in doublings, octave switches, changes of texture, dynamics, and accents. The repeated strains were reorganized to enhance the progression of musical ideas. All of the changes served to build toward the march's grandioso finale. These alterations developed in the daily give and take between the composer/conductor, his virtuoso musicians, and the audience. The process allowed the march to reach its fullest concert hall potential, and shortly settled into a standard procedure for the march. This created the "Sousa sound." It made Sousa's performances of his own music unique.

When a march had proven to be a hit, it was added to the Sousa encore books—bound volumes of 100 popular encore selections. From these, 8 to 10 were chosen

for performance at each concert. Sousa's altered performance versions of his marches remained fairly constant through the years, even though the players continued to read the music from the original, heavily orchestrated, and largely unmarked march-size parts. New members learned Sousa's orchestration style by ear and by word of mouth from their older "side-partners." While the changes are sometimes difficult to pinpoint, they must be considered authentic clues to the accurate concert interpretation of Sousa's music. They are essential to its fullest realization.

These Sousa performance practices offer numerous musical rewards. There is a freshness of texture, shading, and dynamics. The trimming of instrumentation allows some parts of the march to become more delicate and dance-like, reminding one of Sousa's origins as a violinist, and recalling the European "light-music" traditions of Sousa's idols, Arthur Sullivan, Johann Strauss, and Jacques Offenbach. The lightness of texture contrasts and illuminates the powerful "battle scenes" and grandioso finale which conclude the march. The alterations heighten architectural form, greatly enhancing the total effect of the composition. Sousa's marches, in their sophisticated concert versions,

rival similar compositions by Sullivan, Strauss, and Offenbach.

Clues abound for the verification of Sousa's unwritten "secret arrangements." They include recordings of the Sousa Band, one lone published example, information passed on by band members, and secondary sources such as bandmasters of the time who sought out Sousa or his players for knowledge of their performance practice.

James Smart's *THE SOSA BAND—A Discography*, attributes 1166 Victor Talking Machine record titles to Sousa's Band. Of those issued, only six were led by Sousa. The best known: "Nobles of the Mystic Shrine," "Sabre and Spurs," "Solid Men to the Front," and a radio broadcast of "The Stars and Stripes Forever." All reveal precisely the orchestration changes reported by Sousa's contemporaries.

Sousa's biographer, Paul Bierley, suggests that the March King personally approved every disk, whether or not he was the conductor. Many Sousa Band recordings led by other conductors, from the earliest cylinder recordings until the electrical recordings of the late 1920s, reveal orchestration changes similar to those confirmed by other sources.

A comparison of the published indoor and outdoor versions of the march from the operetta *The Free Lance*, provides a rare corroboration of Sousa's "changes." The marching band edition, as usual, is thickly orchestrated and doubled, but the

concert version, meant for indoor performance and published in a concert edition as the finale to the "Selections from *The Free Lance*," uses the lighter orchestration style often attributed to Sousa's indoor performances. The process also worked in reverse. For his concert music, Sousa often *added* doublings when the band played outdoors.

Edmund Wall, principal clarinetist from 1926 until Sousa's death in 1932, affirmed to this writer the general accuracy of reports of Sousa's reorchestration. Since many of Sousa's instructions were given to one section at a time, the rest of the band would likely be unaware that any change had occurred. Some deletions and changes were accomplished with a quick visual gesture from the conductor and remained forever. Some of these ideas may be confirmed by a small number of pencil markings surviving in the Sousa Band encore books, located in the library of the United States Marine Band. Most of the alterations were of a simple nature and did not require rewriting. However, for some marches Sousa did add special parts for bells and harp. These are also preserved in the Marine Band Library. According to Mr. Wall, once the march settled into a satisfactory performing pattern, Sousa rarely made subsequent changes.

Today, over 57 years after the death of Sousa, these ideas also live in the contemporary performance practice of the marvelous Allentown (Pennsylvania) Band.

Those musicians began to play the marches in the Sousa style during his lifetime and continue to do so today. The band, which was conducted from 1925-75 by Albertus Myers, a former Sousa cornetist, has maintained the tradition section by section in the same aural and oral manner used by the Sousa band. Older members pass the information to younger ones, and all play from the unedited parts.

A number of prominent college band directors, including Albert Austin Harding and Mark Hindsley at the University of Illinois, and Raymond Dvorak at the University of Wisconsin, made an effort to emulate Sousa's concert orchestrations and thus preserve the Sousa sound. In the 1960s, Frank Simon, who had been Sousa's solo cornetist and assistant conductor, supervised a remarkable two-volume record series for the American School Band Directors Association. Extensive program notes detailed Simon's memory of Sousa's performance practice.

It is strange that Sousa altered his published music so greatly. It is even more mysterious that, since his death, attempts to restore Sousa's concert arrangements and make his "secrets" public by such dedicated conductors as Simon, Hindsley, and Dvorak have had so little general influence. Although most of Sousa's works are

now performed indoors, publishers have resisted reissuing the music as it was originally played by Sousa. The vast majority of today's performances and recordings use the outdoor editions intended for marching band.

If "classical" is defined as "music each generation rediscovers as valuable," and if "classical" refers to "ideal compositional realizations within strict but pleasing forms," then Sousa's marches are America's classical music.

Sousa, although he lived in the romantic era, may well be regarded as one of America's preeminent classical composers. However, until the public is once again able to hear the marches in the original concert settings and performance practice of Sousa and his Band, Sousa's true place in music history will not be fully established.

KEITH BRION is the former director of bands at Yale University. Mr. Brion is now devoted to full-time conducting and research of the music of John Philip Sousa. He has conducted bands and symphony orchestras in the United States and abroad in recreations of Sousa Band concerts, and is an authority on Sousa performance practice.



AUGUST "GUS" HELMECKE (left), Legendary bass drummer of the Sousa Band for 22 years. Sousa stated, "No one who has watched and heard Helmecke with my band playing a march will differ with me when I declare that my bass drummer has the spirit and the soul of a great artist."



FRANK SIMON (right), Solo cornetist and assistant conductor of the Sousa Band from 1914-1921. Simon was instrumental in documenting Sousa's performance practices. As conductor, performer, and educator, Simon influenced an entire generation of band conductors and performers.

IN SEARCH OF SOUSA

by MGySgt Frank Byrne

The authentic performance movement in music is a fascinating world where old is new and "tradition" can be a euphemism for musical heresy.

Authentic performance advocates discovered that numerous performance traditions have evolved which departed from the composers' original intentions. These discoveries led scholars to restudy original manuscripts and fueled many "authentic" performances, recordings, and no small amount of controversy. To borrow a phrase from the late music critic Olin Downes, "much ink has been shed over it."

Some changes attempted to fit masterworks of the 18th and 19th century into the framework of the modern ensemble. Some may have resulted when autocratic conductors sought to "improve" on the original. Other changes were benign decisions in an era where the musical score was viewed as a guidepost rather than as holy writ. Still other discrepancies occurred in the incorrect transmission of musical thought via faulty musical editions.

Add to this advancements in musical instrument design and manufacture which produced instruments capable of greater intensity and you have a result which, to some listeners, almost turns Mozart into Mantovani. There will always be audiences for both. But many listeners discover new

insights when standard repertoire is presented in authentic performances which attempt to recreate music as the composers intended.

The most pure method blends the use of period instruments (or modern reproductions), ensembles which reflect the style of the period in both size and musical approach, and critically-prepared musical editions created from original manuscripts and other definitive sources. Some conductors apply the same scholarship to performances using modern instruments, believing that composers would welcome the improvements.

Sousa has been a treasured part of the Marine Band's musical repertoire since his time as director from 1880-1892. In preparation for these Sousa recordings, we considered the various options and examined our own Sousa performance traditions in the light of modern scholarship.

The Marine Band's history of recording Sousa's music dates to 1890 and early cylinders made by the Columbia Phonograph Company of Washington, DC. Sousa was then director of the Marine Band and, although he was unconvinced of the value of this new invention, he allowed his band to record for Columbia. Under succeeding directors, Sousa's music appeared on Edison and Victor recordings, and on the

band's promotional recordings.

During 1974-1976, Lieutenant Colonel Jack Kline (Director, 1974-1979) conducted the Marine Band in *The Heritage of John Philip Sousa*. This series, the brainchild of late band aficionado Robert Hoe, yielded 18 long-playing albums of Sousa's marches, songs, overtures, tone poems, operetta selections, concert suites, and miscellaneous pieces. Music never accessible to Sousa enthusiasts was committed to recordings which were distributed to public libraries, music schools, and educators.

The "total immersion" into Sousa yielded new interest in many of his infrequently-performed works, new respect for the difficulty of recording Sousa, and a commitment that this project should be revisited when the repertoire could be considered in more manageable portions.

In the intervening years, *The Heritage of John Philip Sousa* recordings have come to be regarded as the most authoritative set of Sousa recordings on LP. And with the advent of digital recording, opportunistic commercial recording companies recognized that Sousa is still in demand and both new and reissued Sousa recordings by other musical organizations have been released on compact discs. As a result, there has been a renewed interest in performing Sousa by bands and orchestras the world over. Aside from the marches that are played almost continuously, Sousa's other marches and many concert works began appearing on con-

cert programs and in publishers' catalogs.

The Marine Band has continued its Sousa performances and research to learn about its former director. This research has involved intense study of the Marine Band's Sousa collections, literature searches for writings by and about Sousa, study of recordings of the Sousa Band, and an ongoing dialogue with Sousa scholars such as Paul Bierley and Keith Brion.

This study has brought forth an incredible amount of information about how Sousa performed his music. It has also generated considerable thought and, occasionally, debate regarding the interpretation of some facts.

Even the most exhaustive research may not resolve every question. In an essay published in *The Journal of Musicological Research*, musicologist Standley Howell wrote, "Because of this inescapable element of uncertainty, some music historians have begun to wonder if the entire historical performance movement is misdirected. But our inability to achieve absolute authenticity should not prevent us from trying to understand as much as we can. Historically-oriented performances can afford real insights into period musical style as long as we remember that all such efforts are experimental and subject to criticism and eventual revision."

This has been our approach to this recording. Considerable effort has been expended to capture performances which closely approximate those Sousa con-

ducted. The modern equipment and instrumentation of today's Marine Band were used, believing that those yielded the best musical results and, therefore, best served the music. (It should be noted that the current Marine Band instrumentation is similar to that of the Sousa Band.) In areas where there have been the "inescapable elements of uncertainty," we adopted a conservative approach. When performance techniques could not be distilled to a single formula, we explored several options.

Whenever original Sousa manuscript scores were available, they were studied and compared with first published editions. This proved particularly valuable in the *Looking Upward* Suite. We compared the manuscript full score from the Library of Congress and manuscript parts from the University of Illinois with the two published editions and discovered numerous differences. We performed *Looking Upward* from the manuscript edition, undoubtedly the first recording of this version.

The scoring of each march was thoroughly checked to insure that only those parts which Sousa performed were used for recording. Many editions published after his death contain extensive changes, including additional parts not written by Sousa. For example, the 1951 John Church edition of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" contains 10 instrumental parts that are neither in Sousa's original manuscript score nor the first published edition.

Former members of the Sousa Band were aware of this problem. During the 1952 meeting of the Sousa Band Fraternal Society, William Gens (President of the Society) commented on remarks delivered by Edwin Franko Goldman (conductor of the Goldman Band) at that meeting. Gens wrote: "Dr. Goldman asked us to do everything in our power to stop publishers from murdering Sousa marches. It is a crime what they are doing to make a sale. We should all refuse to buy, play, or handle anything but those from the original publishers."

The performance parts used for these recordings were extensively edited to reflect corrections from the original scores, to standardize articulations and dynamics, and to incorporate authentic Sousa performance techniques.

As Keith Brion has documented in his essay "Sousa's Marches—As He Conducted Them," Sousa incorporated many distinctive performance techniques which were his trademarks. Sousa said to his musicians, "Any band can play the printed arrangements but we shall play them differently." August Helmecke, bass drum virtuoso of the Sousa Band for 22 years, wrote, "People have no idea how Sousa wanted his marches played because the tricks and effects that brought them to such vivid life under the big boss' own direction never got marked into the scores. The notes alone give but the barest skeleton of what a Sousa march can be!"

Helmecke continued, "In some of the marches, not a single bar of rest is written for cornets and clarinets (this was done so marches could be played by small bands) but when Sousa led his own band in these works, he'd simply wave the unwanted brasses into silence."

Frank Simon, Sousa Band solo cornetist and assistant conductor 1914-1921, once said, "There are so many things he did to make it colorful, not just a march where you go through and play it. He 'doctored them up' to make them interesting to the public. That's why he became so famous. Not only for the marches but for HOW he played the marches."

Fellow composer and conductor Karl King noted Sousa's performance style in a 1946 letter to a colleague. King wrote, "Even in his marches, Sousa pulled some strains down to a whisper which always made the last strain sound that much heavier by contrast. Also, Sousa had a few little tricks on pianissimos that I observed and I always wondered why other leaders who heard him didn't get 'hep' to how he did it but apparently they didn't."

In his autobiography *Marching Along*, Sousa wrote, "The chief aim of the composer is to produce color, dynamics, nuances, and to emphasize the storytelling quality. The combination and composition which gives that result is most to be desired." Sousa achieved this through his unique interpretations.

Those who suggest that Sousa made per-

formance changes out of boredom with his music are incorrect. His preparation and attention to detail were impeccable. About the rehearsal and performance of marches, Sousa Band clarinetist Sam Harris wrote, "It was Sousa's belief that a march is one of the most difficult of all compositions to play correctly. He stressed the importance of being alert for all details—tempo, accents, dynamics, nuances, breathing, articulation, and proper balance."

Colonel Howard Bronson, another Sousa Band member, made the following comments in an address to the College Band Directors National Association: "Why did Sousa's compositions take on different character when played by his band? He knew exactly how he wanted the band to sound and he developed a playing character that expressed it. Each player knew exactly how Sousa wanted certain passages to be played—just the right shading and perfect coordination. His own compositions were played with meticulous attention to dynamics, shading, and tone coloring. The printed scores do not carry the dynamic markings as actually played by the band."

To document these performance changes, we consulted three main sources: 1) The writings of Sousa solo cornetist Frank Simon

In 1966, Frank Simon participated in a series of interviews in which he discussed 35 Sousa marches in detail, documenting the performance changes as he remem-

bered Sousa had made them. These interviews were transcribed and published in two booklets with accompanying recordings under the auspices of the American School Band Directors Association.

2) The Sousa Band encore books

The Sousa Band encore books are another valuable source of information about Sousa's performance practices. These encore books, now in the Marine Band's Sousa collection, were used at every performance. They include the performance parts used by his musicians.

Although most of Sousa's information to his players was not written down, some markings were made in these encore books which give insight into how Sousa played his marches. These markings support information given by Frank Simon.

3) Recordings of the Sousa Band

Of the six Sousa march recordings actually conducted by the composer, two stand out: "Solid Men to the Front" and "Sabre and Spurs." Both were recorded on September 6, 1918, and are perhaps the best picture of the Sousa Band in a concert performance of a march during this period. Among the interesting features of these two recordings are the tempos.

Sousa Band members reported that he conducted his marches from 120 to 132 beats per minute. In his later years, the tempos became faster and at times may have approached 138 beats per minute (according to Sousa biographer Paul Bierley) if the band had to rush to catch

a train to the next city. Both of these 1918 radio recordings are considerably slower.

"Solid Men to the Front" is performed at approximately 118 and "Sabre and Spurs" at approximately 116-118. Other Victor recordings with Sousa conducting range from 122-128 beats per minute. A radio broadcast transcription of Sousa conducting "The Stars and Stripes Forever" is at approximately 120. While it is doubtful that Sousa would have chosen the identical tempo for every march, the slower tempos are particularly striking.

Since most of Sousa's marches were performed as encores to the printed selections on the program, perhaps he endorsed a faster tempo for this purpose. This theory is supported by Sousa's remarks in a *Sydney* [Australia] *Evening News* article on July 24, 1911, entitled "Sousa Says Good-Bye." Under the heading "Quick March" a statement is printed, "The opinion has been expressed that your march time is too quick." Sousa responded: "If you play my marches for troops to march to in the streets, they must, of necessity, be played slower than I play them on the stage. But anyone who attends my concerts must, unless there is sawdust in his veins, see that the whole idea is of terrific musical force. Contemplation must be after the battle, not during it. The whole idea is that the musical atmosphere must be brought up to a great tension, as it were. My marches, with the exception of one, are used entirely as encores ... I play

them at a rather quick step rather than keep them down to a slow patter ... Of course, no one would march to the tempo that I play them on stage. But I try to quicken up the blood, and exhilarate people ... I have heard people say that they would like me to play my marches slower. Well, if I had to play in front of a regiment, I would do so; but never on stage."

We know that Sousa's march encores were very effective. He played them within 10 seconds upon the completion of the previous work. Nothing interfered with the momentum of the performance.

Sousa apparently preferred to perform his marches briskly when used as encores, but the true marching tempos were an important factor in their structure and creation. An article in a Wilmington, Delaware, newspaper of June 10, 1924, quoted Sousa as saying, "I do not think that I ever received the inspiration for a march except while I was marching ... with my life at stake I do not think I could sit in a chair and write a march."

In an August 1950 article in *The Etude* entitled "How Sousa Played His Marches," Sousa's bass drummer August Helmecke wrote, "Sousa never played his marches as fast as they're generally taken today. He kept to a good, firm, marching tempo. A march, remember, isn't a gallop. When people march, they don't run.

Although Sousa marches can be performed faster, we have adopted tempos around 118-120 beats per minute to sim-

ulate actual marching cadences. Sousa's own recordings of "Solid Men to the Front" and "Sabre and Spurs" demonstrate that, outside of the context of his concert encores, the marches could be quite effective at these tempos.

Another distinctive factor in Sousa march performance is the addition of unique percussion accents. Helmecke wrote, "I've saved the accents for last because, in Sousa, they're by far the most important. Sousa's marches gained most of their stirring effectiveness from the crisp, wonderful accents he put into them. As I said, these never got marked into the music and never were published. In giving his material to the copyist, Sousa wrote the drums in the simplest manner—barely indicated where they were to be. But when it came to play those marches, he put the accents in! Sousa didn't print his accents, and he never explained them—he just made them known through his conducting."

Helmecke once asked Sousa why the accents were not written in but Sousa would not commit himself to an answer. Helmecke decided that Sousa didn't want other bands to play the marches the way his band did. In the era of competition between professional bands, such "trade secrets" were very highly valued.

Dr. Leonard B. Smith, conductor of the Detroit Concert Band, knew many Sousa Band members and also performed with Helmecke in the Goldman Band. Regarding the use of accents in the marches, Dr.

Smith commented: "The Sousa accents were placed logically, not whimsically. The interpretation is found within the music itself and has nothing to do with sentiment or caprice. Sousa's accents were so effective because he conceived them. People fantasize that Gus (Helmecke) created them but it is not true. Sousa originated the accents in all his marches."

Without written documentation, recreating Sousa accents is difficult. Some accents reinforce the melodic contour or bring out what is written. Others provide variety by adding rhythmic contrast to the melodic line. Accents in these recordings are a combination of traditional Marine Band accents and new accents which, in the opinion of conductor and percussionists, fit the criteria mentioned above.

Another Sousa percussion technique was to either reduce or completely eliminate the percussion during soft sections of a march. In these recordings, percussion (except for bells) has been eliminated in the trio of "Invincible Eagle." Interestingly, the published percussion part for "Grid-iron Club" has minimal percussion at the trio and is performed here as written.

In addition to the Sousa accents, many of the marches have unique effects. These include regimental trumpet and drum parts, horse hoofs, the use of orchestra bells, ship's bell, harp, bosun's pipe, whistles, sirens, pistol shots, and more.

In performing regimental trumpet and drum parts ("Sabre and Spurs" and "Gal-

lant Seventh"), four trumpet players and two percussionists were positioned to one side of the band. The deeper-pitched field drums were used on regimental drum parts to provide contrast to the sound of the concert snare used throughout. Sousa wrote the "bugle strain" in "The Royal Welch Fusiliers" to be performed by the entire cornet and trumpet section.

Several marches contain published harp parts (Sousa added a harpist to his band during the later years). There is a harp folder in the set of Sousa encore books which contains mostly piano editions of the marches. Since the published harp parts do not match the piano editions, we may assume that the harpist improvised from the piano edition when no published part was available. We have chosen to use harp only when a separate part was published, as on "Comrades of the Legion" and "Who's Who in Navy Blue."

Orchestra bells were added at the trio to double the melody on those marches which had a manuscript bell part in the Sousa encore books.

"Sabre and Spurs" as recorded here duplicates the techniques demonstrated in Sousa's 1918 recording. This includes a xylophone solo on the first time through the last strain. The use of the xylophone on this part is substantiated by a manuscript part in the Sousa encore books which, unlike the other manuscript bell parts that accompany it, is clearly marked "xylophone" for "Sabre and Spurs."

Former Sousa drummer John J. Heney noted Sousa's use of the xylophone in this fashion in his percussion text *The Correct Way to Drum*.

"Manhattan Beach" follows the instructions as noted in the Sousa encore books and also documented by Frank Simon. Among the effects are a soft introduction, contrasting use of the brass in the second strain which is reversed on the repeat, extra emphasis on the clarinet arpeggios at the trio (which simulate waves), and a very dramatic crescendo-decrescendo on the final strain which gives the effect one might hear while passing the bandstand during a stroll at Manhattan Beach.

Taken individually, these techniques and performance practices seem a complex

collection of formulae: an octave here, an accent there, and an odd xylophone or pistol shot thrown in for good measure. Taken collectively, they represent a particular genius in which Sousa looked beyond convention and saw within his own music the potential for an extraordinary musical experience.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "There is properly no history, only biography." In searching for Sousa, we hope to have discovered not only the essence of the music but of the man himself.

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NOTES ON THE SELECTIONS

by Paul Bierley

MARCH, "SEMPER FIDELIS" Composed 1888

The Sousa march most closely associated with the United States Marine Corps is "Semper Fidelis." "Semper Fidelis"—"Always Faithful"—is the motto of the Corps.

Because of statements Sousa made at different times in his career, the march has become the subject of two separate controversies. A discussion of these controversies is in order.

One controversy involves the official status of the march. Sousa often referred to it as the official march of the Marine Corps. While it is regarded as such, written documentation is lacking. But one must consider that the march was composed over a century ago and not all Marine Corps records of the past century are accounted for. For example, there are no records showing Sousa's rank as leader of the Marine Band, nor are there records showing his pay, the dates of most of his concerts, or what was played. A flood in

the early part of the 20th century resulted in the loss of many official Marine Corps documents and photographs.

Thus, just because the order naming "Semper Fidelis" as the official march of the Marine Corps cannot be found, it should not be assumed that such an order never existed. Sousa was a man of incredibly high moral standards, and he did not make a practice of spreading false information.

One of Sousa's managers, Mr. William Schneider, once said, with great conviction, "In the years I knew John Philip Sousa, he impressed me as being a man who wanted to be the most honorable person who ever walked the face of this earth." In light of this, plus the fact that every account available to historians indicates Sousa was honest and straightforward, it must be concluded that since he said repeatedly "Semper Fidelis" had been named the Marine Corps' official march, it probably was.

The second controversy regarding "Semper Fidelis" centers around an interview printed in the *Grand Island* [Nebraska] *Independent* of October 31, 1927. It reads as follows:

"I wrote 'Semper Fidelis' one night while in tears after my comrades of the Marine Corps had sung their famous hymn at Quantico."

There is a glaring error in this quote. Sousa composed the march some 28 years before any Marines were stationed at Quantico. The march was written during

the summer [probably] of 1888, and the first assignment of Marines at Quantico did not take place until May 14, 1917.

There are several possible explanations for this. First, there is the possibility that a Marine unit was on maneuvers or engaged in some other military exercise at Quantico at the time. Sousa did not specifically say that the Marines had a post there. Second, perhaps Sousa had referred to a location other than Quantico and had simply been misquoted.

Suffice to say that the march truly was inspired. Sousa often referred to it as his best march. The famous drum roll and trio were developed from an exercise called *With Steady Step*, which appeared in Sousa's first book, *The Trumpet and Drum* (1886), a handbook of instruction for the field-trumpet and drum. Fittingly, "Semper Fidelis" was played in dirge time by the Marine Band in the procession which took Sousa's body from the Marine Barracks to its final resting place in Congressional Cemetery on Thursday, March 10, 1932.

PRESIDENTIAL POLONAISE Composed 1886

Most Presidents of the United States have found *Hail to the Chief* suitable for announcing their arrival, but President Chester A. Arthur did not. Sousa and his U.S. Marine Band had been using the piece for that purpose, and one day at a White

House function, Arthur inquired about its origin. When Sousa replied that it was an old Scottish boating song, Arthur ordered him to replace it.

No doubt Sousa replaced *Hail to the Chief* immediately with other music, but not with a new composition of his own. It was not until a year and a half after Arthur left office that Sousa composed Presidential Polonaise. The first manuscript is dated November 25, 1886.

It is not known how long the Marine Band used Presidential Polonaise to announce the President, but presumably Sousa used it until he left the Marine Corps in 1892. A note on the sheet music published by Harry Coleman stated that the piece was "Performed by Beck's Grand Orchestra of Philadelphia and the U.S. Marine Band at the inaugural ball [for President Benjamin Harrison] on March 4, 1889."

MARCH, "MANHATTAN BEACH" Composed 1893

The "Manhattan Beach" march was written in appreciation of the opportunities presented to Sousa and the civilian band he had organized one year earlier. Manhattan Beach was a fashionable summer resort area in New York City, and it added to a band's prestige to be invited to perform there.

The resort was sweet in the memory of John Philip Sousa. He wrote several of his

most famous pieces while his band played engagements there, as evidenced by inscriptions on his manuscripts. The engagements were lengthy, lasting an average of 10 weeks, usually with 2 concerts every day.

Sousa was given a medal in 1894 by Austin Corbin, the owner of Manhattan Beach. The medal is gold, studded with diamonds, and is inscribed "THE MARCH KING." Sousa dedicated the new march to Corbin and presented him with a manuscript, now in custody of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

MARCH, "COMRADES OF THE LEGION" Composed 1920

John Philip Sousa was asked to compose "The American Legion March" long before the organization was founded. Eventually he composed a march in honor of the American Legion, the organization as we know it today.

Captain Edwin B. Hesser of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces (C.E.F.) wrote to Sousa on May 16, 1916, and asked him to compose a march recognizing Canada's entry into World War I. He wrote on behalf of the 97th, 211th, 212th, and 213th C.E.F., pointing out that both Canada and the United States uphold the sacred principles of liberty. He stated that if the greatest of all American composers was to write "The American Legion March," it would aid the cause.

At the time, Sousa was unable to honor the request exactly as made, but he did honor it, indirectly, with compositions such as "Flags of Freedom" during the World War I era.

The march for the American Legion was written in 1920. On one manuscript, Sousa used the title suggested by Captain Hesser in 1916, but when the march was published it was entitled "Comrades of the Legion."

Sousa was very much in sympathy with one of the stated purposes of the American Legion: "To promote 100% Americanism." Financially, this march was rewarding. A recording by the Victor Talking Machine Company gained immediate popularity. In fact, one-half million copies were sold before the record was pressed. "Comrades of the Legion" became the featured march of the Sousa Band's 1920 tour.

SELECTIONS FROM *THE BRIDE ELECT* Composed 1898

El Capitan (1895), John Philip Sousa's most successful operetta, had the advantage of a clever libretto by Charles Klein and equally clever lyrics by Tom Frost and Sousa. While *El Capitan* was at its peak of popularity, Sousa believed he could capitalize on that popularity and fulfill a personal dream by creating another hit operetta without the aid of a librettist or lyricist. This was precipitated by Charles

Klein's retirement from active writing because of ill health.

Sousa was only partially successful. Although *The Bride Elect* was far from a failure, it lacked the spark of *El Capitan*. After the first performance at the Hyperion Theatre in New Haven on December 28, 1897, some (including a few critics) felt the operetta would have an extremely long run. One person in particular was the manager of the Hyperion Theatre. *Music* magazine reported in its February 1898 issue, that the manager had offered Sousa \$100,000 for exclusive rights to the work. Sousa refused the offer. Moreover, he and his publisher refused an offer of \$10,000 from the *New York Journal* for the privilege of printing the march from the operetta. *The Bride Elect* did not meet expectations and Sousa lost on both counts.

In compiling Selections from the opera, Sousa chose some of the most pleasing melodies and put them in a charming sequence—ending, naturally, with the march which concludes the operetta.

Sousa borrowed some of the music from two of his previous operettas, *The Wolf* (1888) and *The Smugglers* (1882) in constructing *The Bride Elect*. The plot and some of the songs bear resemblances to those of *The Wolf*. *The Wolf* was never produced, and Sousa was not one to waste good music.

The comical plot of the opera involves the kingdoms of Capri and Timberio, which

fought a war simply because the King of Capri shot a goat belonging to the King of Timberio. Timberio won the war and decreed that, as spoils of war, the beautiful Princess Minutezza of Capri must marry the King of Timberio. However, Minutezza and others arranged for a gang of robbers to kidnap the King. From there the plot thickens, as it does in all other Sousa operettas.

For those interested in tracing the origin of Selections, the following songs from the operetta are included in this instrumental work: *One Day King Papagallo Sent a Note, When This Old Coat Was In Style, Kind Friends This Deference, Let Poets Sing (The Highwayman), The Rose Tint Leaves the Sky, An Act to Purify Our Band, The Snow Baby, and Unchain the Dogs of War (The God of Love Presides)*.

MARCH, "SABRE AND SPURS" Composed 1918

Sousa served in the United States Navy during World War I and was in charge of fleet band organization at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. He also directed a select 300-piece "Jackie Band" on tours of the larger American cities to help raise money for the Liberty Loan and Red Cross drives. During this period, he received numerous requests for marches to promote the war effort. One such request came from officers of the United States Army.

A colorful scroll donated by the Sousa family to the archives of the United States Marine Band tells the story of the creation of this march. The scroll reads as follows:

Headquarters 311th Cavalry
Fort Riley, Kansas
June 12, 1918

1. The Regimental Commander takes great pleasure in announcing to the Command the fact that a musical composition entitled *The Sabre and Spurs March* of the American Cavalry has been composed by Lieutenant John Philip Sousa, U.S.N.R.F. and dedicated by him to our Regiment.

Upon the inception of the 311th Cavalry, Lieutenant Colonel Ben D. Dorcy took up the subject of a Regimental March with Lieutenant Sousa and, in spite of the latter's many duties and activities aside from his leadership of the Band of the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, he generously and unhesitatingly placed his genius at the disposal of the Regiment.

2. Lieutenant John Philip Sousa is hereby declared an honorary member of the Officers' Mess of the 311th Cavalry.

By order of Colonel Kirkpatrick
Sidney Guard
Captain and Adjutant 311th Cavalry

Being named "honorary life member of the Officers' Mess" was the highest honor the regiment could bestow on someone who was not a member of the regiment.

In those days, each regiment had its own mess hall, the formal meeting place of the officers. Essentially, this membership extended a lifetime welcome to Sousa to visit the regiment.

Over the years, "Sabre and Spurs" has become one of Sousa's most popular marches. Eight years after he composed it, he composed a second Cavalry march, "Riders for the Flag," which was dedicated to the 4th U.S. Cavalry. It too became very popular.

Some of Sousa's most rhythmically exciting marches have titles that reflect his great love for horses. He was an expert equestrian and usually kept a stable of handsome thoroughbreds. The tempo Colonel Bourgeois has chosen for this selection is strongly suggestive of the graceful gait of cavalry horses and is the same tempo Sousa used when playing the march.

MARCH, "THE GALLANT SEVENTH" Composed 1922

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, several of the musicians of Sousa's Band felt it their patriotic duty to enlist in military service. The first to leave was cornetist Francis Sutherland. Sousa respected him for giving up a lucrative position to serve his country.

Four years after the war, Sutherland had become bandmaster of the 7th Regiment, 107th Infantry, of the New York National Guard, and had risen to the rank of major.

This band had an enviable reputation. One of the reasons for its excellence was that approximately 80 percent of the members reportedly had played under Sousa at one time in their careers.

The Commanding Officer of the 7th Regiment, Colonel Wade H. Hayes, made a formal request for a Sousa march to be dedicated to the regiment. This was unusual because seven other composers had written marches for the same regiment. Sousa and his publisher acted with haste; Colonel Hayes' letter was dated May 23, 1922, and within two months, the new march was in print.

The march had a gala dedication before an audience of 5,200 at a concert of Sousa's Band in the New York Hippodrome on November 5, 1922. The 7th Regiment Band lined up on the stage behind Sousa's Band, and Sousa directed the combined bands. The piece was formally dedicated "To the Officers and Men of the Seventh Regiment, N.Y.N.G., New York City," and Sousa was made an honorary officer in the regiment.

WALTZ, LA REINE DE LA MER Composed 1886

It is odd that Sousa, who preached Americanism throughout his life (and even declined an invitation from philanthropist W.W. Corcoran for a music education in Europe), would give foreign titles to some of his compositions. *La Reine de la Mer*

is an example of one of his foreign titles. He did, however, frequently program it by its American title, *The Queen of the Sea*.

As a writer of waltzes, Sousa was not the equal of Johann Strauss. Yet *La Reine de la Mer* is pleasant to listen to and is still being played by bands and orchestras.

The composition was a favorite of Sousa's. He programmed it often and it was one of the pieces chosen for his farewell concert with the Marine Band on July 29, 1892. The printed parts carry a dedication to Mrs. William C. Whitley, whose husband was Secretary of the Navy. In general, Sousa was deeply respectful of women, and by his own admission he often gained access to his superiors by making favorable impressions on their wives.

MARCH, "KING COTTON" Composed 1895

Sousa had the knack of giving colorful (and often enigmatic) titles to his marches. "King Cotton" is one notable example. Simply stated, the march was composed at a time in American history when cotton was "king," i.e., very important to the country's economy.

Sousa's tie with the cotton market was indirect. In 1895, his band was engaged to perform for three weeks at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta. The band had such great drawing power that it actually turned the fair from being a potential financial disaster

to a profitable venture. Newspaper accounts emphatically link Sousa's appearance to the success of the fair, and Atlanta businessmen were so delighted with the change of events that they implored him to stay longer. When Sousa's Band was passing through the South 29 years later, Sousa presented a manuscript score of "King Cotton" to Georgia's governor, Clifford Walker.

"King Cotton" was one of Sousa's personal favorites and it has become one of his most popular marches. In fact, it is a rare band member who has not played it. Sousa made up some nonsensical lyrics to the march for the private amusement of children. One of his soprano soloists, Marjorie Moody, had copied down the lyrics and explained that they fit the second section of the march:

The sun was a-shining in the sky.

The sky was black and blue.

As Barnacle Ben and Jazzy Jen

Came down the avenue.

And everybody laughed with glee,

And whispered, "Is it he or she?"

For one of his legs was shorter

Than it really ought to be.

MARCH, "THE GRIDIRON CLUB" Composed 1926

The Gridiron Club, of Washington, DC, is an organization of newspaper writers and other distinguished journalists; it is

not an association of football enthusiasts, as the name might suggest. Only journalists in Washington are eligible for active membership.

The organization also has two other membership classifications. Limited members are elected because of some special reason, such as their musical ability; associate members are former active or limited members who have left Washington.

The organization was founded in 1885. In 1889, they felt the need for a permanent music director, and the leader of the U.S. Marine Band was the logical choice. At this time, the leader was a famous composer called the "March King" Sousa thus became the first music director of the "Griddies," and it has been a tradition to elect the current leader of the U.S. Marine Band to that post. Colonel John R. Bourgeois now serves as music director of the Gridiron Club.

Sousa composed "The Gridiron Club" march in 1926 at the request of club officials. It is puzzling why he would wait nearly four decades to compose such a march, solicited or unsolicited, since he was very fond of the club (according to his daughter, the late Helen Sousa Abert).

But did he actually wait? A personal scrapbook of Sousa's, recently discovered in England, contains a very curious item: a program of a graduation ceremony in Washington, dated June 7, 1886. Music was furnished by the U.S. Marine Band, with Sousa directing. One of the selections

played is listed as follows:

March "The Gridiron" Sousa
Among the possible explanations are that this was an earlier march for the Gridiron Club. If that is the case, what happened to the march? Did he give it another title, or was it lost? If a march was actually dedicated to the Gridiron Club, it would indicate that Sousa was affiliated with the club three years before being elected a limited member. Or perhaps "The Gridiron" referred to something other than the club. Still another possibility, although unlikely, is that of a misprint.

In any event, the "Griddies" now have a permanent memento of Sousa's affection; after 100 years, the march is still being played by bands around the world.

EASTER MONDAY ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN Composed 1928

Many composers alter their own works, often years after the originals have been performed several times. John Philip Sousa seldom did this. One exception was his addition of *Easter Monday on the White House Lawn* to the suite, *Tales of a Traveler*, composed 17 years earlier. His reasons for doing this are not fully understood.

Tales of a Traveler was inspired by events of the Sousa Band's tour of 1910-1911. The third movement brought him considerable grief. It was originally

called *Coronation March*. Sousa composed it aboard ship en route to South Africa, anticipating it would be used at the coronation of King George V of England. However, a curt note from Buckingham Palace informed him—after he had completed the work—that "... It is contrary to rule for His Majesty to grant permission for dedication to those who are not his own subjects. . . ." *Coronation March* was then given a new title, *Grand Promenade at the White House*.

Perhaps the painful memory of this rebuff caused Sousa to replace *Grand Promenade at the White House* with *Easter Monday on the White House Lawn* as the third movement of the suite. The royal rejection had never made sense to him. After all, he had been presented the Victorian Order by King George's predecessor, King Edward VII; he had played two command performances for Edward and had composed the *Imperial Edward* march in his honor. Moreover, British music publishers had asked him to compose a coronation march. Close friends of Sousa were well aware of his long memory for such disappointments, so it is entirely possible that making the substitution was his way of putting the matter out of his mind.

Easter egg-rolling in Washington is an American tradition which began during President James Madison's administration. Dolly Madison, charming wife of the President, initiated this tradition in 1816, perhaps patterned after the ancient Egyptian

ceremony of rolling colored eggs toward the pyramids. In the American version, children roll colored eggs with spoons, and the child with fastest egg wins.

The 44th Congress banned egg-rolling on the Capitol grounds in 1880, whereupon President Rutherford B. Hayes invited children to continue this exciting activity on the White House lawn. The event has been held there ever since and has grown in popularity to the extent that it now rates much media coverage.

President Benjamin Harrison introduced music for the event in 1889, with Sousa directing the Marine Band. Thus Sousa was present at three egg rolls before leaving the Marine Corps, and it is probable that his own children participated. His memories are recorded in the notes he added to Sousa Band programs when *Easter Monday on the White House Lawn* was featured on the 1928 tour:

"With the children rolling eggs, dancing and romping, a scene of animation persists itself; the elders, from the President to the merest street arabs, look on the scene with joy and pleasure."

MARCH, "WHO'S WHO IN NAVY BLUE" Composed 1920

At one time, it was a tradition at the U.S. Naval Academy for each graduating class to adopt or commission a class song. Midshipman W.A. Ingram wrote Sousa in

1918 and asked him to compose a march for the Class of 1920. It seemed logical to ask Sousa, since he was a lieutenant in the Navy at the time.

The request was honored, but the Class of 1921, not the Class of 1920, was the recipient of the new march. The manner of choosing the title nearly became a farce. In an exchange of letters between the students and Sousa, numerous titles were suggested, and rejected. When one midshipman suggested *Ex Scientia Tridens*, Sousa responded that such a title would be more appropriate for a flu remedy or a breakfast cereal.

In the end, "Who's Who in Navy Blue" was the title printed on the music. Sousa was made an honorary member of the Class of 1921 and presented with a miniature class ring. The published music carries a dedication to Tecumseh, the wooden Indian that figures in Annapolis traditions. In the words of the song, Tecumseh predicts the midshipmen will be admirals by and by.

MARCH, "THE INVINCIBLE EAGLE" Composed 1901

One march which clearly epitomizes Sousa's love of country is his stirring "The Invincible Eagle." Although formally dedicated to the Pan-American Exposition held in Buffalo, New York, in 1901, it was intended strictly as a patriotic march. Because of the intense nationalistic mood

of the time, Sousa felt it would eventually be more popular than anything he had ever written.

He sincerely believed that America, like the symbolic eagle, was invincible. The country's victory in the Spanish-American War created a wave of patriotism never before experienced. The march reflects those sentiments.

Sousa's feelings toward the march are revealed in a newspaper interview pasted in one of the Sousa Band scrapbooks (press books). As quoted in the *Buffalo Courier* June 9, 1901:

"The new march is what I call one of my 'sunshine' marches. Some of my heavy marches are intended to convey the impression of the stir and strife of warfare, but 'The Invincible Eagle' shows the military spirit at its lightest and brightest—the parade spirit, in fact, with the bravery of uniform, the sheen of silken standards and the gleam of polished steel and all its other picturesque features."

SUITE, LOOKING UPWARD Composed 1902

1. *By the Light of the Polar Star*
2. *Beneath the Southern Cross*
3. *Mars and Venus*

For most of Sousa's 11 suites, the inspirations came from something he saw or read. As for *Looking Upward*, he often told

news reporters the first movement had been inspired while looking into the heavens one crisp evening while riding a train through the State of South Dakota; the second movement was suggested by an advertisement for the steamship *Southern Cross*; and the third came simply by "... gazing into the heavens..." The suite is original throughout, although Sousa did borrow two brief themes from his operetta, *Chris and the Wonderful Lamp*.

Sousa's suites were prominently featured in his band concerts, but they do not enjoy great popularity today. One of the reasons for this neglect is because Sousa, like Victor Herbert, could interpret his own music far more effectively than any other conductor. However, Colonel John Bourgeois' interpretation of this suite has been well-received by audiences.

In general, Sousa's suites served admirably as a sort of middle ground between the classics and music for entertainment. Inasmuch as the Sousa-style concert was much different from concerts presented today, it is perhaps understandable that the suites have fallen into a class known as "period music." Some conductors, who are champions of Sousa's music, are quick to point out that in many cases this categorization is unjustified.

One of the distinguishing features of *Looking Upward* is the pair of drum rolls in the third movement, *Mars and Venus*, which begin as whispers, slowly swell into thunderous roars and then diminish to the

original whispers. This unique effect surprised audiences, and since Sousa never left written notes telling what it was intended to represent, an explanation is left to the listener's imagination.

In Sousa Band concert programs, the printed notes were usually as follows:

BY THE LIGHT OF THE POLAR STAR

"Jingle bells, jingle bells,
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh."
—Old song.

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

"Above the slim minaret,
Two stars of twilight glow,
The lute and bright castanet
Sound in the dusk below.
Look from thy lattice,
Gulnare, Gulnare.
Stars of twilight glow,
Now through the nearing night
Four stars in glory rise—
Two the pale heavens light.
Two are thy shining eyes."
—Macdonough.

MARS AND VENUS

"He was a soldier off to war,
She was a sweet young soul.
She sang of love and he of glory,
And together they told the same old story.
After the drummer's roll, my lad,
After the drummer's roll."
—Old, old song.

**MARCH, "THE ROYAL
WELCH FUSILIERS"
Composed 1930**

"The Royal Welch Fusiliers," as heard on this recording, is the second of two marches that Sousa composed to commemorate the association of the U.S. Marine Corps and the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers in 1900, during the Boxer Rebellion in China. The first of the two marches, composed in 1929, has never been published and has probably never been played in public.

This is the only known instance in which Sousa had to compose a march twice because the first one was unsatisfactory. Marine Brigadier General George Richards first suggested the march in 1924. Five years later, Sousa still had not written it. Major General Wendell Neville, made a second request in 1929, Sousa responded with a march.

The original march [No. 1] was a medley march, incorporating such melodies as *Men of Harlech* and *Hymn to the Marines*. Upon hearing an early piano ver-

sion, Sousa's friends criticized him for not composing a march entirely of his own melodies. Sousa wrote MGen. Neville asking his opinion. Neville replied that he would prefer an original composition, since he was of the opinion that the public was somewhat tired of medleys. So Sousa tried a second time.

The march [No. 2] had an impressive premiere by the U.S. Marine Band at the Gridiron Club's annual dinner in Washington, DC. President Herbert Hoover was there to present his own personal account of the Boxer Rebellion. Hoover had been in China as a mining engineer at the time.

The first performance in Britain was equally impressive. Sousa personally traveled to Wales, conducted the band of the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers at Tidworth, and presented his manuscript to the regiment. The Welch have treasured the beautifully illuminated manuscript by placing it, and the baton Sousa used to conduct the march, on permanent display at Caernarvon Castle.

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John Philip Sousa conducts the U.S. Marine Band in the public premiere of his new march "The Royal Welch Fusiliers" on May 12, 1930, at the White House. The march was first performed by the Marine Band under Sousa's direction on April 26, 1930, at the annual dinner of the Gridiron Club in Washington. This performance at the White House was staged to allow photographers and newsreel cameras to record the event. President Herbert Hoover, the British ambassador, and other dignitaries can be seen on the steps to the left of the band.