

# John Philip Sousa Legacy Series

FULL CONDUCTOR SCORE  
WBM-4633-01

## Right-Left March

John Philip Sousa

*Sousa-style performing edition by*

**Keith Brion**



John  
Philip  
Sousa

LEGACY SERIES

*Willow-Blossom Music*

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**RIGHT-LEFT****March 1883**

John Philip Sousa

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**Parts List**

Piccolo .....	1	1st B $\flat$ Trumpet	
Flute .....	10	(one player per part) .....	1
Oboe .....	2	2nd B $\flat$ Trumpet	
E $\flat$ Clarinet.....	1	(one player per part) .....	1
1st B $\flat$ Clarinets.....	4	1st & 2nd F Horn .....	2
2nd B $\flat$ Clarinets.....	4	3rd & 4th F Horn.....	2
3rd B $\flat$ Clarinets .....	4	1st Trombone.....	2
E $\flat$ Alto Clarinet.....	1	2nd Trombone.....	2
B $\flat$ Bass Clarinet .....	2	Bass Trombone.....	2
B $\flat$ Contrabass Clarinet* .....	1	Baritone T.C.....	2
Bassoon .....	2	Euphonium Baritone B.C.....	2
E $\flat$ Alto Saxophone .....	6	Tuba.....	4
B $\flat$ Tenor Saxophone .....	2	Percussion: Snare Drum and/or	
E $\flat$ Baritone Saxophone .....	1	Parade Drum, Triangle, Bass	
1st B $\flat$ Cornet.....	3	Drum, Crash Cymbals.....	3
2nd B $\flat$ Cornet.....	3		
3rd B $\flat$ Cornet.....	3		

\*Part not shown in score

**SOUSA LEGACY EDITIONS**

“Sousa Legacy Editions” from Willow Blossom Music celebrate Sousa’s nearly sixty-year career as a composer, spanning the “golden age” of American bands.

In collaboration with the C.L. Barnhouse Co., and the Naxos “Sousa for Wind Band” series, Willow Blossom Music is making available many new full score editions of Sousa’s unique compositions.

Stylistic decisions for these modern band editions are based on numerous sources, including the original manuscript scores, parts and sketches, first printings, printed parts used by the Sousa Band, recordings by Sousa’s Band, period writings, word of mouth from former Sousa Band musicians, period performance practice and verbal accounts from Sousa’s contemporaries.

No composer in history conducted more performances with his own musicians than did John Philip Sousa. While it would be difficult for any publication to duplicate the sound of the great Sousa Band, these editions strive to make this unique musical legacy accessible for performances by modern bands.

**JOHN PHILIP SOUSA – A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY**

by Roger Rugerri



Sousa personified turn-of-the-century America, the comparative innocence and brash energy of a still young nation. While famous as a fabulous band-master, Sousa was by training and experience an orchestral musician. His instrument was the violin. Prior to assuming the role of Director of the U.S. Marine Band, his earlier experience had almost totally centered

on his role of conductor/concert-master/composer and arranger of orchestras in the American musical theatre of his time. His ever-touring civilian band represented America across the globe and brought music to hundreds of American towns.

John Philip Sousa, born November 6, 1854, reached his exalted position with startling quickness. In 1880, at age 26, he

became conductor of the U. S. Marine Band. In 12 years this vastly improved ensemble won high renown while Sousa’s compositions earned him the title of “The March King”. With the formation of his own band in 1892, Sousa achieved worldwide acclaim.

As a Washington D.C. teenager, Sousa received sophisticated European-style training in composition, counterpoint and orchestration from an Austrian immigrant, Felix Benkert. Benkert had studied in Vienna with the famed Austrian theorist Simon Sechter who himself had been taught by Brahms. Sechter’s most famous student was Anton Bruckner. Armed with great talent, passionate patriotism, and the tools of Benkert’s Viennese instruction, Sousa standardized the march form as it is known today, brilliantly exploiting its potential. He was no mere maker of marches but an exceptionally inventive composer of over 200 works, including symphonic poems, suites, operas and operettas. Sousa’s robust, patriotic operettas of the 1890’s helped introduce a truly native musical attitude in American theater. His “El Capitan” musical comedy of 1895 was the first successful Broadway show to be composed by an American.

Sousa’s own band, founded in 1892, gave 3500 concerts in 400 different cities in just its first seven years. Over the four long decades of its existence his band logged over a million miles in an era of train and ship travel. There were European tours in 1900, 1901, 1903, and 1905, and a world tour in 1910-11, which was to become the zenith of the band era.

The Sousa Band became a mainstay in the catalog of the Victor Talking Machine Company. During its 40-year period, the Sousa Band created over 1100 record sides. These recordings brought Sousa’s music to the entire world -- even to the remote Fiji Islands, where the recordings assured an ecstatic reception when he visited there with his band in 1911.

The unprecedented popularity of the Sousa Band came when few American orchestras existed. From the Civil War until about 1920, bands, not orchestras, were the most important aspect of American concert life. And no finer band than Sousa’s had ever been heard. Sousa modified the brass band by decreasing the number of brass and percussion instruments and increasing woodwinds to 2/3 of his personnel. As a final touch he added a harp to create a truly symphonic sound. Sousa’s conducting genius attracted the finest musicians, enabling him to build an ensemble capable of executing programs almost as varied as those of a symphony orchestra. The Sousa Band became the standard by which American bands were measured. It caused a dramatic national upgrading in quality.

Sousa’s fame was also spread by the success of his compositions. “The Stars and Stripes Forever”, “El Capitan”, “Washington Post”, and “Semper Fidelis” are universally acknowledged as the best of the genre. Sousa said a march “should make a man with a wooden leg step out.” His surely did.

First rate salesmanship, learned from the musical theater, was another key to the success of his public concerts. Sousa pleasingly packaged classical standards with orchestral treatments of popular fare, establishing a standard style for today’s pops concerts of American symphonies. Sousa never spoke at his concerts, preferring non-stop music that spoke for itself. His band played “Parsifal” excerpts ten years before the opera was introduced at the Metropolitan Opera, yet combined it with such fare as “Turkey In The Straw.” This audience-friendly programming ultimately did more to champion good music than the work of any American orchestra of the era.

Sousa was also an innovator. He astounded Europe by introducing ragtime on his 1900 tour, touching off a fascination with American music which influenced such composers as Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, Grainger and Milhaud.

The principal commodity Sousa sold was pride in America and American music. Because of his efforts, American music won world acclaim for the first time. A popular, but erroneous tale even arose that Sousa had changed his original name of "So" by adding USA, the initials of his beloved country.

For decades Sousa's visits were a special event for America's cities. Invariably he was met at the station by an assemblage of high school bands, along with the mayor and all manner of dignitaries. Preceding his performance he would briefly conduct the city's combined high school bands. Receptions were held in his honor, he was asked to speak on the radio and given the key to the city.

Before radio, improved electronic records, and finally, the miracle of talking pictures, "Sousa and his Band" had already become one of America's greatest musical attractions. From his first national tour in 1892 to his last performance in 1932, Sousa and his Band were famous for their musicality, topicality, swift pace, and joyous spirit. In America's golden age of bands, Sousa's Band and his music were pre-eminent.

\*By Roger Rugerri, Program annotator for the Milwaukee Symphony

#### **For further reading, consult:**

"John Philip Sousa, American Phenomenon", by Paul E. Bierley 1973, Integrity Press

"The Works of John Philip Sousa" by Paul E. Bierley 1984, Integrity Press

"Marching Along", the autobiography of John Philip Sousa, edited by Paul E. Bierley 1994, Integrity Press

"The Incredible Band of John Philip Sousa" by Paul E. Bierley, University of Illinois Press 2006

"John Philip Sousa's America" by John Sousa IV with Loras Schissel, GIA Publications, Chicago 2012

"Making the March King-John Philip Sousa's Washington years 1854-1893," by Patrick Warfield, University of Illinois Press 2013

### **RIGHT-LEFT MARCH (1883)\***

A dignified parade and review march composed for Sousa's U.S. Marine Band, *Right-Left* prominently contains the commands of "Right-Left" as shouted out by the entire band.

Edited here for modern instrumentation this version also contains the sort of stylistic nuances typically added later by Sousa for his concert performances.

#### **Suggested Recording:**

Keith Brion has recorded *Right-Left March* for Naxos with the Band of the Royal Swedish Navy, volume 12 of "Sousa: Music for Wind Band," Naxos 8559691. Sousa's 1883 *Right-Left March* was first recorded for Victor Records in Philadelphia by a small segment of "Sousa's Band" on October 4th, 1900 with Sousa's assistant conductor Arthur Pryor conducting, however the recording has not been reissued.

### **PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS**

#### **TEMPO**

While the "official marching tempo" of the U.S. Dept. of Defense is currently 120 beats per minute, that number can actually be quite misleading since today's actual military parade tempos are generally much slower, varying from 94-110 beats per minute.

Sousa's "*Right-Left March*" was composed for the parades of the 1883 Marine Band with these sorts of slower marching tempos in

mind. In addition, cleanly articulating "*Right-Left's*" numerous pairs of melodic 16th notes almost requires a somewhat slower tempo.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Begin by rehearsing the introduction to establish equal balance between woodwinds, brass and percussion. In Sousa's marches, it is essential to have good balance between the band's three main sections.

First ask each of these sections to play alone. Start with the woodwinds playing *ff*, then ask the brass to match the woodwind level which will then will become the correct level for the brass. Do the same with percussion, then combine all three.

### **FIRST STRAIN**

Bring out the playful character of this strain striving for light, *leggiero* attacks along with clarity. For added lightness, use a conducting gesture that lifts your arms "away from the beat."

Notice the tenutos in measures 4 and 12 of the strain. Give extra weight of sound to these important notes, conducting more "toward the beat" at these places.

### **SECOND STRAIN**

Play this dramatic second strain strongly and with *marcato* attacks. Tenutos have been added, indicating both extra length and tonal weight.

Conductors wishing more dynamic variety might optionally add a *diminuendo* in m. 25 leading to *mf* in m. 26, and then in m. 28, begin to restore the *ff* dynamic through with a *cresc.* Similarly in m. 36 add *dim.* to *mf* through to the end of the strain.

### **TRIO**

At the trio there is a verbal challenge is for the players to cleanly articulate the words "Right-Left." It is suggested the word "Right" be spoken with a single rolled "R," and for both words "Left and Right," the final "t" must be clearly sounded.

### **BREAKUP STRAIN**

On the downbeats in 70 and 74, etc. play *tenuto* and with extra sound. Use *marcato* attacks.

### **FINAL STRAIN**

Play *tenuto* on long sustained melodic notes in m's 80, 84 and 88 and with a nice full sound. In order to help the horns and snare drum place their double after-beats conduct this passage with very clear beat gestures. Throughout the strain play with *marcato* attacks. Bring out the interesting trumpet parts. These should be clearly audible but should never overwhelm the principal tune.

Due to march's "parade nature," the use of a parade drum is highly recommended.

### **CONDUCTING 6/8 MARCHES**

The *up and down* conducting pattern found in conducting books: ("a reverse "J"), can be deadly for conducting 6/8 rhythms in marches since the natural rebounds of the normal textbook gesture tend to portray *duple* subdivisions rather than triple. Visually the "J" pattern more closely presents 2/4 rather than 6/8 making good performances of 6/8 rhythm nearly impossible. Further the pattern very often portrays beat one as longer than beat two.

Conductors are encouraged to experiment with three different easy and highly effective *side to side* conducting techniques. Each will more naturally portray the swing and subdivisions of compound 6/8 time:

1. The smile, or a “U,” a side-to-side swinging motion. The beat appears at the bottom, while the rebounds occur at the 3rd and 6th beats of the subdivision (the corners of the smile).
2. A variation on this gesture is a simple side-to-side straight-line technique often used by Frederick Fennell for 6/8. Again the beat changes direction on subdivisions 3 and 6.
3. A third pattern is the frown, simply an upside down smile or an upside down “U.” This technique projects a “double ictus,” alternating its two down-beats from side to side. It also projects a strong bass line.

Any of these three 6/8 techniques will work magic, helping players play with good rhythm far more easily. All three patterns may be used interchangeably.

### **RHYTHMIC DRILLS**

To create greater metric ease in performance, school bands are encouraged to use a variety of rhythmic solfege drills...for instance instead of playing, have the entire group while make a “sizzling” sound to articulate the rhythms in their parts. Make these sounds without instruments and without pitches. The goal is simply to capture the printed rhythms, articulations, durations and dynamics of the march’s various parts. Use this technique early in the study of each new march. If slippage occurs, refer back to it.

Isolating the feeling of rhythm from the physical act of blowing an instrument will produce rapid and satisfactory ensemble improvement. Be sure such rhythmically independent parts as the countermelodies and the horns and tubas vital rhythms can be heard at all times. This simple activity will quickly aid students in playing the march’s complex rhythmic relationships in natural and relaxed way.

By making verbal suggestions over top of the band, this sizzling technique will allow the conductor to call attention to ensemble’s rhythmic problems at the moment they arise, allowing the ensemble to quickly develop a more natural and intuitive feeling for the interaction of their rhythms. It will also offer the conductor a verbal opportunity to encourage the best balance for the march’s various rhythmic voices.

Having a drum or a woodblock play continuous subdivisions during this procedure may also help establish a more natural feeling for the way the player’s various internal rhythms fit the pulse.

When the exercise becomes accurate (it won’t take long), the group will return to playing the march on their instruments with revelatory results.

Amazingly via this simple exercise, more accurate ensemble rhythm will also miraculously enhance the band’s intonation.

### **WHAT MAKES A MARCH “MARCH”?**

**All about “Oom-pah-pahs”:** The essential rhythmic framework of a march is the “oom-pah-pahs” the bass line plus the harmonized after-beats.

On the march, the bass line represents the “feet and the beat,” while the after-beat horns become “the foot-lifters,” lifting and swinging the body forward toward the next step. These become the vital physiology of the march

Imagine a march with only a bass line. Try marching to this sound, singing the bass line while walking. There will be a feeling

of heavy movement. It will feel increasingly heavier as the steps continue.

Now try mentally adding after-beats to the bass line. You will immediately sense a feeling of lift, buoyancy, and lightness. In this way after-beats can energize the lift in one’s step, transforming marching from a heavy, plodding affair to a spirit-raising, almost dancing movement. After-beats are the key to the life of the march.

The combination of the bass line and harmonic after-beats are the rhythmic and harmonic architecture of this music, the vital physiology of the march.

**Horn after-beats:** One can study after-beats through the entire evolution of the dance. They are prevalent in almost every dance form. The French horn scoring in Sousa’s marches emanates from a long tradition of energized, dancing after-beats (mid-range harmony), a tradition that can also be found in the scores of the Strauss family, Offenbach and Sullivan, composers who were clearly Sousa’s idols and who were in his time the reigning masters in capturing the feeling of dance.

After-beat harmonies in Sousa’s marches are usually scored for four horns and are voiced in three or four part chords clustered around middle C. In Sousa’s orchestral scoring this same rhythmic and harmonic function is given to second violins and violas playing in divisi. Because Sousa’s harmony is always present in his after-beats, he can quite often focus the rest of his scoring on strong melodic and bass lines, thus creating greater transparency in his music, especially in the mid range.

It should be no surprise to learn that during Sousa’s early teen age years he stood at the front of a popular Washington dance orchestra conducting and playing his violin while at the same time watching the effect his music was making on the dancers. He directly witnessed how variations in scoring, style, rhythm and tempo most motivated the dancer’s movements and sparked their enjoyment.

**Performing after-beats:** The three keys to playing after-beats are shortness of duration, precisely unified attacks and exact coordination of release points.

Ask the tubas to play their line and then invite the horns to join in, suggesting they pay close attention to clearly matching the cutoffs for each after-beat chord. Focusing emphasis on precise horn releases will add a great deal of extra zing to these wonderfully energizing chords, allowing them to most effectively penetrate the sustained textures of the scoring around them. In practicing these passages, encourage the horn and tuba sections to fashion their short notes into longer, more horizontal phrases and encourage them to respond dynamically to harmonic movement as it unfolds. Allow horns to make slight anticipatory crescendos into harmonic anchor points, especially directing their attention to important or “surprise” chord progressions. As a general rule accidentals in these marches almost always call for slight additional stress and in some cases perhaps a little bit of dynamic anticipation.

After-beats in Sousa’s music should never be louder than the primary melodic materials, but also they should *never* go silent!

Remember it is the horn’s jaunty up-beat, chordal rhythms that give Sousa’s marches such delightful lightness and good humor. Well played and carefully balanced after-beats are what give this music its wonderful exuberance and buoyancy.

**Trumpet after-beats:** To balance the trumpet after-beats without interfering with the cornet’s melodic playing, ask the trumpets to play after-beats at only 90% of the volume of the melodic cornet parts. The harmonic rhythm of the trumpet parts must be audible, but it should blend very slightly into the background of the main melody, never quite as loud as the principal tune, but also never inaudible.

**Bass lines:** Sousa's tuba sections were generally larger than often found today. In the marches it is the role of the tubas (not the drums) to project both pitch and pulse in Sousa's music. Because of this the bass-lines in Sousa's marches should be more prominent than so often heard in today's performances. In Sousa's marches the basses represent marching feet. Their pitches must arrive at the very forefront of the ensemble's sound, at once becoming the ensemble's primary focus for rhythm, harmony and good intonation. Considering the size of these instruments and their usual location at the rear of the ensemble, it may seem natural for tuba attacks to sound late. However to be effective in march performances, tubas must project their notes in a very forward manner in order for their sound to arrive at the front of the ensemble's beat. In this way they can best serve as the ensemble's anchor for rhythm and harmony.

In support of this concept, it is hugely helpful for the conductor to primarily project his or her beat toward the tubas, signaling they are the ensemble's primary source for pitch and pulse.

Sousa's bass lines have two main functions. First, they straightforwardly outline the chordal bass. This generally consists of a single note on each beat (or marching step). To enhance the feeling of marching, generally play first beats (the "left step") slightly louder than the second.

Still another role of the bass-line is a contrapuntal one, since at the mid-point or final cadences of strains Sousa often gives the tubas and other bass instruments wonderful short counterpoints. As the basses fill out their soli phrase endings these short but interesting bass interludes afford some breathing time for the melodic players. They should always be projected prominently, played "soli," and balanced at least one or two dynamics louder than the regular bass line's more regular "left-right" music.

**Octave doublings:** Sousa's own tuba section sometimes expanded their doublings even beyond the notes already found in his scores, sometimes for special emphasis they quietly added an additional lower octave to the bass line. When played tastefully, quietly and in tune, these octave lower doublings can considerably enhance the power and depth of the entire tuba section.

**Bass balance:** The bass lines Sousa's marches will often be stronger than the more subdued bass often heard in modern concert bands. Balancing Sousa's more prominent bass writing is closer in concept to the balance in rock and roll and in other dance music. Bass should be especially strong for the "grandioso" finales of the marches.

When the tubas are scored in octaves, use fewer players on the bottom. The power of the doubling will more than compensate for the disparity.

**General horn and tuba balance in soft sections:** As the music gets softer, allow the relative balance of horns and tubas to become louder in relation to the whole ensemble. This energizes the softer playing, and making the music feel more alive and dance-like. Never allow the horns to rest during these quiet sections since their energizing presence keeps the ensembles' soft playing "alive." If horns must rest or empty water, it is better they do so during the louder passages, especially in those places where the first and second trumpets are also reinforcing the after-beat harmony.

*The pitched harmonic rhythm of the horns and trumpets is the life and salvation of this music. Their after-beat chords should never quite be at the forefront of the listener's ear, but also they should never disappear.*

## USE OF PERCUSSION IN SOUSA'S MARCHES

**Role of Percussion:** When the process of securing the "pitched rhythm" of the march is complete, add percussion as color to outline and further energize the pitched harmonic rhythms.

*For the march to sound its best, pitched rhythms should predominate over non-pitched percussion.*

Avoid using percussion as time-keepers. That role belongs to the tubas. Percussion should not form a grid, stifling the pitched music. Instead the drum's function is to add color, definition and excitement to the pitched rhythms of the score. In Sousa's marches:

*The snare drum helps horn and trumpet attacks. Rolls enhance cadences.*

*The bass drum compliments and clarifies tuba's attacks.*

*The cymbals outline brass attacks.*

*Orchestra bells augment and highlight woodwind melodies.*

If the conductor gives close attention to the supporting relationship of horns and tubas to percussion by allowing percussion to help articulate pitches while never obscuring pitch, the attitude of foundational players toward the significance of their ensemble parts will grow and Sousa's music will prosper.

**Location of the section:** Percussion should never be located too far from the brass section lest their role of ensemble reinforcement becomes more difficult. Position the bass drum and cymbals and snare drum near the brass and tubas, but also in a location where the snare drum player can hear the horns. If percussion can watch the breathing of the brass players, so much the better.

**Snare Drum:** The snare drum has changed more radically in sound and pitch during the twentieth century than any other band or orchestral instrument. Head tension is far greater, producing a higher, tighter sound. Along with this over the years snare drum pitch has risen. Heads have evolved from skin to synthetic materials. Snares have changed from gut to wire, or a variety of cable snares. These various evolutions have added considerable tonal brightness to the snare drum sound.

During the 1920's and '30's snare drums of 8" or deeper were common to the concert band. 15" drum heads, which more naturally lower fundamental pitch, were also used, especially for Sousa's marches. Heads were made of skin. Gut snares were common. Today, higher pitched 6-1/2"X14" drums (or shallower) with plastic heads and metal snares have become standard. All of these evolutions have added considerable brightness to what was the snare drum sound of Sousa's Band.

The brilliance and projection of today's higher pitched drums, along with commonly used wire and cable snares and plastic heads cannot duplicate the original sound and wonderfully rich blending qualities of wider drums along with skin heads and gut snares.

*This is why the modern snare drums so often sound "too loud" in Sousa's music.*

If conductors wish to hear snare drum sound in their performances as Sousa characteristically heard it in his time, making modifications in equipment will be a huge step toward making the music sound better. One of the primary roles of the snare drum in Sousa is to outline the after-beat chordal attacks of the French horns. For this reason the tuning needs to be lower, close to middle D (in the middle of the horn's chords) and also less brilliant than the norm for today's snare drums. The quickest way for a modern band to begin to transform itself into the era of the "Sousa sound" is to

find a snare drum with 15" heads, gut snares and a wider drum head, closer to the lower pitched tuning and tone quality of Sousa's time.

Heads If skin heads are not available, especially for the batter head, modern synthetic heads (heads with spun laminated polyester strands) produce a tone more closely matching the original skin heads. These modern heads are sold by such brand names as "FibreSkin 2 or 3" and "Renaissance." For the bottom snare-head, modern clear plastic heads can work very effectively.

Head tension should be as low as practical, allowing the resonant pitch and tone of the drum to blend with the French horns rather than with the trumpets. Since lower tension decreases the "spring" of stick rebounds, the drumming stroke then necessarily becomes more open and "rudimental".

Matched grip vs. Traditional Besides traditional discussions about the technical merits of matched grip vs. traditional, there is also a difference in sound that should be explored. Matched grip usually requires that the drum heads be placed parallel to the floor, often causing acoustical standing waves between the snare head and the floor that tend to cancel sound...whereas with traditional grip, the sloping of the drum allows greater resonant reflections to speak more freely from the bottom of the drum

Size of drum The ideal drum for Sousa's marches is 8"X15" with gut snares and either skin or such imitation skin-heads as FibreSkin. Getting the right snare drum sound (and pitch!) is the most important first step toward authentic and satisfying performances of Sousa marches. If a proper drum is not available, the use of a parade drum instead of a smaller concert snare drum can be effective, or as an alternate, carefully double a concert snare drum with a parade drum.

The musical role of the snare drum Examination of any Sousa march score will reveal the snare drum is almost always used to reinforce the harmonized after-beat rhythms of the French horns, while from time to time to also using open rolls to emphasize important cadential harmonies. Since today such larger drums as 8"X15," a size between a standard concert snare and a field drum is once more becoming available (and is similar in style to those in Sousa's era), conductors may also wish to investigate this excellent option. Modern, higher pitched concert snare drums such as 6-1/2"X14" produce a higher range and consequently will frequently sound too loud for this music. The older, deeper 8" concert snare drums are also very effective in other traditional band music, as well as in many other classic concert band compositions predating World War II.

One manufacturer is once again building 8"X15" concert snare drums, the actual size used by Sousa. 15" drum heads provide a lower resonant pitch than 14" heads, and are the best fit for the lower pitched horn after-beats they are built to compliment. When performing Sousa's marches, the New Sousa Band currently uses either a 1923 8"X15" vintage snare drum with skin batter head on top and gut snares or a modern copy.

If a deeper concert snare drum isn't available, try doubling a concert snare drum (played lightly) with a parade drum. The parade drum alone may sound too "thick", but the careful combination of both parade drum and a concert snare drum may be satisfactory. Parade drums alone can be satisfactory for many of the "outdoor" marches Sousa composed during his Marine Band era (1880-1892).

Sticks In Sousa's time drum sticks were somewhat heavier than today, allowing them to produce a more vibrant sound from the lower tensioned gut snare drums of the time.

Rolls in Sousa's marches are always performed with open sticking.

Matched grip vs. Traditional Besides discussions about the technical merits of matched grip vs. traditional, there is also a difference in sound that should be explored. Matched grip usually requires drum heads be placed parallel to the floor, often causing acoustical standing waves between the snare head and the floor...whereas in traditional grip, the sloping of the drum and its stand allows more resonant reflections to speak from the bottom of the drum, creating a better sound.

Snares The traditional gut snares of Sousa's time have nearly disappeared in today's drumming. Bands and orchestras currently use primarily wire snares or "cable" snares. Conductors who make the effort to locate and install gut snares for Sousa's marches will be rewarded with a richer tone quality, better musical blend, and find it far easier to maintain good balance. Gut snares more naturally match the tone quality of the other pitched wind instruments. Coating gut snares with polyurethane help protect against the kind of temperature and humidity changes that years ago contributed to their fall from grace.

Cymbals: For Sousa's marches, heavy, darker sounding cymbals such as those with the "Germanic" designation, as well as some of the newer "hand hammered" models work best for the cymbal's "time" since they make a clean, clear beginning. Thinner cymbals have a more spreading sound which tends to obscure the clarity of attacks.

Playing "attached" in Sousa's Band cymbals and bass drum were historically played by a single player, often it was the famed August Helmecke. Helmecke used played heavy 16" cymbals, with the bottom cymbal attached to his bass drum. He played "solo" cymbal notes (solos where the cymbal is played alone) by hitting the upturned inside of the cymbal with his bass drum beater. Other major cymbal accents were sometimes doubled by the snare drum player who would use his snare drum stick to strike a suspended cymbal located adjacent to his drum. In today's New Sousa Band we use larger 18" cymbals. A heavy 18" cymbal is attached to the drum and a lighter 18" cymbal is played on top.

Playing separately For modern bands who have not had the opportunity to develop the historical "attached cymbal" approach, separate players may be used for bass drum and cymbals. 14"-16" "heavy" cymbals are perfect for doubling "the time" of the bass drum, however playing big accented crashes with these smaller cymbals however is far less satisfactory. This has lead many of today's bands to use either 17" or 18" cymbals in order for one player to produce both "time" and accents. Heavy "Germanic" or "Band" cymbals are often ideal for march performances. Lighter cymbals such as those marked "Orchestral" slightly spread their sound on attack and so lack the clarity needed for march performances. Avoid cymbals larger than 18" since the attacks are rarely clean enough for "time". Also the added weight of bigger cymbals makes them quite difficult to control. If two cymbal players are used, one player could play "time" with a set of smaller, heavy cymbals...14"-16", while the second one might use somewhat larger cymbals for the major accents, in order to add extra splash, sizzle, ring and excitement. Two players should never double the "time," nor should the player with the smaller cymbals attempt to double the loud accents. In any case try to emulate the sound of attached playing.

After a big cymbal accents it is often best to omit the next beat or two of “time” to allow the cymbals to ring. For large accents, it is the primary role of the cymbals to add excitement and ring as part of the attacks of the brass section. Never allow the cymbals to anticipate these accents. Cymbal players should watchfully coordinate their attacks with the breathing of the brass section.

Playing Time When playing “time,” the sound of the bass drum and cymbals must appear to reach the audience simultaneously with the actual “sound” of the band. Do not be tricked by the beat as it emanates from the drum, the drum’s attack is not the motion of the player’s arm or the impact of the beater, both of which often come earlier, but instead it is when the sound arrives in hall.

When playing separately it is helpful to have bass drum and cymbal players stand near each other to develop an ensemble feeling for the projection of their sounds. Separate cymbal and bass drum players should sound together *as if both are being played by the same person.*

When do the cymbals play in marches? To enhance both ensemble color and balance in the quiet strains of the marches with the New Sousa Band we do not double bass drum with cymbals, especially in those passages where the woodwinds (not the brass) are carrying the lead melody. A simple and very effective rule is: “the cymbals do not play if the trumpets and trombones are resting.”

**Bass Drum:** 36” heads are the ideal. Bass drums should be no smaller than 34” or larger than 38” diameter. Drums smaller than this size do not produce sufficient depth of tone for the accents. Larger diameter 40” drums do not permit sufficient clarity of attack. Deeper bass drums of 16” or 18” or even wider can help produce a good depth of tone.

For march performances *avoid using suspended bass drums* whenever possible. The freely moving nature of suspended drums interferes with the clarity of rapidly repeated bass drum attacks.

The drum should instead sit freely on a low bass drum stand. In order to play with the least effort and strain the stand should be low enough to allow for the player’s knee to be used for damping. If a cymbal attachment is used, for best endurance the drum should be low enough to allow the player to hit the cymbals at a level just above waist high to enable the upper cymbal to be played straight up and down. The bottom cymbal should be mounted “flat” on the top of the bass drum, allowing the down stroke of the upper cymbal to be powered only by a “gravity drop.” For louder sounds lift the upper cymbal higher before dropping, or lower for softer playing,

Bass drum heads should preferably be made of skin, but as with the snare drum, FibreSkin 2 or 3 or similar synthetic heads will produce the closest sound to natural skin and require the least care and upkeep. When at least one skin-head is available, use it on the beating side of the drum. Mixing one skin beating head plus one FibreSkin 2 head on the opposite side will also produce good results or also the use of two FibreSkin heads will work nearly as well. Avoid smooth plastic bass drum heads. These do not blend properly with pitched bass lines.

Beaters A variety of beaters may be used according to the drum, the heads and room acoustics. Generally beaters with smaller head surfaces provide more articulate playing, but on some drums a beater with a very small head may sound too pointed. Sticks with very large beating heads almost never produce the right sound for this music. If the very articulate felt or wooden heads are used, the bass drummer must then play with great restraint.

The most musical sound will result when the bass drum player carefully places and articulates his sound to reinforce the pitched attacks of the tuba section.

Playing “attached” In Sousa’s Band (and today in the New Sousa Band) the bass drum and cymbals were and are always played by one player using an attachment. When mastered, this difficult technique produces the most effective and characteristic sound for the performance of Sousa’s marches.

Attachments Ideally the attachment should consist of a padded “doughnut” type device attached to the top of the drum and anchoring the lower cymbal with rawhide. The upper cymbal is dropped vertically (using only gravity) onto the lower one. For louder volumes the cymbal is simply lifted higher.

Accents Bass drum accents should emerge from the pitches of the tuba line and should not anticipate. The bass drum should closely mirror the attacks, durations and harmonic implications of the tuba part including note lengths (which are sometimes not accurately portrayed in Sousa’s written parts). Cymbals nearly always double the brass attacks.

## BALANCING PERCUSSION

If non-pitched percussion are treated as announcing a beginning to the pitched rhythms of the ensemble, they will provide the most handsome sound. If percussion are used as a metronome, or a loud grid forcing the pitched instruments into proper rhythm, they will sound harsh and overbearing. If the conductor takes great care to insure good rhythm from his wind instruments, the role of percussion switches away from crude time-keeping to a far more satisfying role of coloring and enhancing the pitched, rhythmic music that is already there. The best snare drum sound will always come from listening and matching the French horn line. Cymbals frequently outline the upper brass’s melodic attacks. The most effective bass drum sound arises along with the tubas.

*Percussion will always sound best when it appears to come out of pitches, and sound most harshly when it is ahead of them.*

## BALANCING THE BAND

For his own band, John Philip Sousa favored a treble-bass balance resembling the sound of the 19th century symphony orchestra. In other words: strong treble, lighter mid-range and strong bass. The balance of Sousa’s Band would look more like an hourglass than an even balance from top to bottom or the sometimes suggested modern ideal of a pyramid.

### **Clarinet Section Balances:**

In Sousa’s encore books, the player’s parts were distributed in the following manner:

#### **B<sup>b</sup> Clarinets**

E <sup>b</sup> Clarinet	0 or 1 player (2 in early years)
Clarinet 1	14 players
Clarinet 2	5 players
Clarinet 3	4 players
E <sup>b</sup> Alto Clarinet	0 or 1 player
B <sup>b</sup> Bass Clarinet	1 or 2 players

For performing Sousa’s marches it is recommended to use half of the clarinet section on the first part (as did Sousa). Some of the intonation problems that come from added doubling in the high

ranges may be improved by using more players. \* Using a larger first clarinet section will boost the overall woodwind volume, leading to more equality of the woodwind sound against the brass section. The New Sousa Band, with a nine-player section, uses five 1st clarinets (one doubles Eb), two 2nd's and two 3rd's. The use of cornets instead of trumpets also helps equalize the woodwind/brass balance in a manner more closely resembling Sousa's Band.

#### **Cornet/Trumpet Section Balances:**

For this edition the use of at least 2/3 of the cornet/trumpet section on the Cornet 1 and 2 parts is recommended. For the 1st and 2nd trumpet parts, use only one player per part.

### **EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY PERFORMANCE STYLE**

A knowledge of turn of the natural playing inflections used by performers during Sousa's time, a style clearly in Sousa's mind as he composed, can be enormously helpful in realizing the full potential of his music. These stylistic concepts can also be useful when performing the compositions of other classical and march composers of Sousa's time, the late 19th century and early 20th century.

There are striking differences between today's 21st century performance style and the sort of playing common in the earlier years of the last century (1900-1930). These differences apply to all instrumental music, band or orchestral, and can be verified by listening to early recordings or reading musical texts of the time. A modern guide to some of these changes is detailed below:

### **MELODIC PLAYING IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY**

**Dynamics:** Melodic dynamics were once varied according to the length of the note. "Longer" was louder with a fuller tone; shorter was softer and lighter. For instance, a melodic half note would be louder than a quarter note, eighth notes bit and softer still. Today it is more common to play all note durations at about the same level as the given dynamic, or sometimes to play shorter notes even louder.

**Accidentals:** In the early part of the 20th century, notes with accidentals (pitches out of the key) were given added emphasis by adding depth of tone, sometimes called a form of a "Viennese accent."

**Phrasing:** In earlier times the longest note in a phrase was often the most important. conversely short notes were never given as much importance. This is sometimes called a "Viennese accent." Today the long notes are never as full while short notes are often given added weight and importance.

**Note Length:** Long melodic notes were sustained as long as possible in earlier times. They were seldom shortened even when they preceded a short note. Today long notes are often "spaced" at the end, especially when they come before a short note.

**Staccatos:** Earlier: very short, lighter tone and distinct. Today: longer in length and with fuller tone

**Grace Notes:** Grace notes were played with a softer, lighter tone, played as late as possible and quickly connected to the beat. Today's grace notes are fuller in tone, slightly distanced from the beat and played earlier.

**Balance:** Earlier band balances were based on an 19th century orchestral ideal with more weight in the treble and bass, thus the Sousa Band's balance was described as an "hourglass" with more sound on top and bottom, but lighter in the middle . Today's bands often seek a pyramidal balance.

### **ADDITIONAL READING**

For additional reading about early 20th century performance style: *"The Natural Laws of Musical Expression" 1894, Hans Schmitt, Professor of Music, Vienna Conservatory, Clayton F. Summy, Chicago;* *"Expression in Music" by Vandercook, 1926, Rubank;* *"Early Recordings and Musical Style-Changing tastes in instrumental performance, 1900-1950", Robert Philip, Cambridge University Press, 1992.*



**Keith Brion** is the conductor of his own New Sousa Band and is a frequent guest conductor of bands and of America's major and regional symphony orchestras. He is a former band director at Yale University. Mr. Brion has recorded with his New Sousa Band and is currently recording a 23 volume series of Sousa's complete wind works for Naxos

with British and European military bands and conservatory wind orchestras in the UK. He has also recorded with the Rochester Philharmonic, the Slovak Radio Orchestra, the Stockholm Symphonic Wind Orchestra and the university bands at Ohio State, Central Washington and Michigan State.

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# RIGHT-LEFT

March (1883)

John Philip Sousa  
Sousa-style performing  
edition by Keith Brion

Moderate Parade Tempo (♩ = 94-110)

The score is for a conductor and includes parts for the following instruments:

- Piccolo
- Flute\*
- Oboe
- E♭ Clarinet
- 1st B♭ Clarinet
- 2nd B♭ Clarinet\*
- 3rd B♭ Clarinet\*
- E♭ Alto Clarinet\*
- B♭ Bass Clarinet\*
- Bassoon
- E♭ Alto Saxophone
- B♭ Tenor Saxophone
- E♭ Baritone Saxophone
- 1st B♭ Cornet
- 2nd B♭ Cornet
- 3rd B♭ Cornet
- 1st & 2nd B♭ Trumpet (one per part)
- 1st & 2nd F Horn
- 3rd & 4th F Horn
- 1st Trombone
- 2nd Trombone
- Bass Trombone
- Euphonium (Baritone T.C. supplied)
- Tuba
- Snare Drum and/or Parade Drum (S.D.)
- Triangle, Bass Drum
- Crash Cymbals (Cym.)

The score is in 6/8 time and features dynamic markings such as *ff*, *p*, and *mp*. A section starting at measure 5 is marked with a box containing the number 5. Percussion parts are indicated with 'S.D.' and 'Cym.'.

\*These parts did not exist in Sousa's original edition of "Right Left" but have been added by the arranger.

Percussion interpretation by Brian Holt,

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New Sousa Band

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Picc.  
Fl.  
Ob.  
Eb Cl.  
1st Cl.  
2nd Cl.  
3rd Cl.  
Alto Cl.  
B. Cl.  
Bsn.  
Alto Sax.  
Ten. Sax.  
Bari. Sax.  
1st Cornet  
2nd Cornet  
3rd Cornet  
1st & 2nd Trpt.  
1st & 2nd Hn.  
3rd & 4th Hn.  
1st Trom.  
2nd Trom.  
Bs. Trom.  
Euph.  
Tuba  
Perc.

The image shows a page of a musical score for a full orchestra. The score is arranged in a standard format with multiple staves for each instrument. The instruments listed on the left are Piccolo (Picc.), Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), E-flat Clarinet (Eb Cl.), First Clarinet (1st Cl.), Second Clarinet (2nd Cl.), Third Clarinet (3rd Cl.), Alto Clarinet (Alto Cl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Alto Saxophone (Alto Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (Ten. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bari. Sax.), First Cornet (1st Cornet), Second Cornet (2nd Cornet), Third Cornet (3rd Cornet), First and Second Trumpets (1st & 2nd Trpt.), First and Second Horns (1st & 2nd Hn.), Third and Fourth Horns (3rd & 4th Hn.), First Trombone (1st Trom.), Second Trombone (2nd Trom.), Bass Trombone (Bs. Trom.), Euphonium (Euph.), Tuba, and Percussion (Perc.). The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also trills (tr.) indicated above some notes. The page is numbered 10 through 18 at the bottom.

22

Picc. *p* *ff marc.*

Fl. *p* *ff marc.*

Ob. *f* *ff marc.*

E♭ Cl. *p* *ff marc.*

1st Cl. *f* *p* *ff marc.*

2nd Cl. *f* *p* *ff marc.*

3rd Cl. *f* *p* *ff marc.*

Alto Cl. *f* *ff marc.*

B. Cl. *f* *ff*

Bsn. *f* *ff*

Alto Sax. *f* *ff marc.*

Ten. Sax. *f* *ff marc.*

Bari. Sax. *f* *ff*

1st Cornet *f* *p* *ff marc.*

2nd Cornet *f* *p* *ff marc.*

3rd Cornet *f* *p* *ff marc.*

1st & 2nd Trpt. *f* *ff marc.*

1st & 2nd Hn. *f* *ff*

3rd & 4th Hn. *f* *ff*

1st Trom. *f* *ff marc., detach*

2nd Trom. *f* *ff marc. detach*

Bs. Trom. *f* *ff*

Euph. *f* *ff marc.*

Tuba *f* *ff*

Perc. *ff* +Cym.

1. 2. 22

19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

Picc. *p*

Fl. *p*

Ob. *p*

E♭ Cl. *p*

1st Cl. *p*

2nd Cl. *p*

3rd Cl. *p*

Alto Cl. *mp*

B. Cl. *p*

Bsn. *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *Soli mp*

Bari. Sax. *p*

1st Cornet *p*

2nd Cornet *p*

3rd Cornet *p*

1st & 2nd Trpt. *p*

1st & 2nd Hn. *p*

3rd & 4th Hn. *ff p*

1st Trom. *p*

2nd Trom. *p*

Bs. Trom. *p*

Euph. *Soli mp*

Tuba *p*

Perc. *short p w/o Cym.*

29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39

Picc.

Fl.

Ob.

E♭ Cl.

1st Cl.

2nd Cl.

3rd Cl.

Alto Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

1st Cornet

2nd Cornet

3rd Cornet

1st & 2nd Trpt.

1st & 2nd Hn.

3rd & 4th Hn.

1st Trom.

2nd Trom.

Bs. Trom.

Euph.

Tuba

Perc.

54 TRIO

Picc. *f* *p* *f*

Fl. *f* *p* *f*

Ob. *f* *p* *f*

E♭ Cl. *f* *p* *f*

1st Cl. *f* *p* *f*

2nd Cl. *f* *p* *f*

3rd Cl. *f* *p* *f*

Alto Cl. *f* *p* *f*

B. Cl. *f* *p* *f*

Bsn. *f* *p* *f*

Alto Sax. *f* *p* *f*

Ten. Sax. *f* *p* *f*

Bari. Sax. *f* *p* *f*

54

1st Cornet *f* *p* *f*

2nd Cornet *f* *p* *f*

3rd Cornet *f* *p* *f*

1st & 2nd Trpt. *f* *p* *f*

1st & 2nd Hn. *f* *p* *f*

3rd & 4th Hn. *f* *p* *f*

1st Trom. *f* *p* *f*

2nd Trom. *f* *p* *f*

Bs. Trom. *f* *p* *f*

Euph. *f* *p* *f*

Tuba *f* *p* *f*

Perc. *f* *p* *f*

+Cym. *f* *p* *f*

49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57

Picc. Right Left

Fl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

Ob. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

E♭ Cl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

1st Cl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

2nd Cl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

3rd Cl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

Alto Cl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

B. Cl. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

Bsn. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

Alto Sax. Right Left *f* Right Left *ff*

Ten. Sax. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

Bari. Sax. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

1st Cornet Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

2nd Cornet Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

3rd Cornet Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff*

1st & 2nd Trpt. Right Left *f* Right Left *ff*

1st & 2nd Hn. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

3rd & 4th Hn. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

1st Trom. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

2nd Trom. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

Bs. Trom. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

Euph. Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

Tuba Right Left *p* *f* Right Left *p* *ff* *ff*

Perc. Drums Right Left Triangle Drums Right Left Triangle *p* *f* *p* *ff*

58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69

Picc. *ff*

Fl. *ff*

Ob. *ff* *ff marc.*

E♭ Cl. *ff*

1st Cl. *ff*

2nd Cl. *ff*

3rd Cl. *ff*

Alto Cl. *ff marc.*

B. Cl. *Soli ff*

Bsn. *ff*

Alto Sax. *ff* *ff marc.*

Ten. Sax. *ff marc.*

Bari. Sax. *Soli ff*

1st Cornet *ff* *ff marc.*

2nd Cornet *ff* *ff marc.*

3rd Cornet *ff* *ff marc.*

1st & 2nd Trpt. *ff*

1st & 2nd Hn. *ff marc.*

3rd & 4th Hn. *ff marc.*

1st Trom. *ff marc.*

2nd Trom. *ff marc.*

Bs. Trom. *ff marc.*

Euph. *ff marc.*

Tuba *Soli ff*

Perc. *ff*



80

Picc.

Fl.

Ob.

E♭ Cl.

1st Cl.

2nd Cl.

3rd Cl.

Alto Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

80

1st Cornet

2nd Cornet

3rd Cornet

1st & 2nd Trpt.

1st & 2nd Hn.

3rd & 4th Hn.

1st Trom.

2nd Trom.

Bs. Trom.

Euph.

Tuba

Perc.

*ff* *sim.*

*ff*

*ff*

*Soli* *ff*

*ff* *sim.*

*ff* *sim.*

80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87

Picc.  
Fl.  
Ob.  
Eb Cl.  
1st Cl.  
2nd Cl.  
3rd Cl.  
Alto Cl.  
B. Cl.  
Bsn.  
Alto Sax.  
Ten. Sax.  
Bari. Sax.  
1st Cornet  
2nd Cornet  
3rd Cornet  
1st & 2nd Trpt.  
1st & 2nd Hn.  
3rd & 4th Hn.  
1st Trom.  
2nd Trom.  
Bs. Trom.  
Euph.  
Tuba  
Perc.