

SOUSA'S GREATEST MARCHES

The Liberty Bell

The Washington
Post

The Stars and
Stripes Forever

Sabre and Spurs

King Cotton

Royal Artillery
Band

Keith Brion



2 CDs

John Philip
SOUSA
(1854-1932)

SOUSA'S GREATEST MARCHES

CD 1

53:43

1	Hands Across the Sea (1899)	2:50
2	Semper Fidelis (1888)	2:57
3	The Royal Welch Fusiliers (1929)	2:42
4	Sabre and Spurs (1918)	3:16
5	King Cotton (1895)	2:57
6	Pathfinder of Panama (1915)	3:14
7	The Liberty Bell (1893)	3:45
8	Hail to the Spirit of Liberty (1900)	3:19
9	The Black Horse Troop March (1924)	3:31
10	The High School Cadets (1890)	2:35
11	Daughters of Texas (1929)	3:21
12	The Fairest of the Fair (1908)	3:40
13	Riders for the Flag (1927)	2:38
14	The Thunderer (1889)	2:53
15	The Washington Post (1889)	2:43
16	The Glory of the Yankee Navy (1909)	3:32
17	The Stars and Stripes Forever (1896)	3:50

CD 2

53:13

1	Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (1922)	3:34
2	Wisconsin Forward Forever (1917)	3:27
3	The Invincible Eagle (1901)	3:32
4	Solid Men to the Front (1918)	3:59
5	The Diplomat (1904)	3:24
6	The Picador March (1889)	2:57
7	Jack Tar (1903)	2:33
8	America First (March of the States) (1916)	2:28
9	Ancient and Honorable Artillery Co. (1924)	2:31
10	The Minnesota March (1927)	3:19
11	The Atlantic City Pageant March (1927)	2:39

12 Sesqui-Centennial Exposition (1926)	3:39
13 La Flor di Sevilla (1929)	2:41
14 The Corcoran Cadets (1890)	3:09
15 The National Game (1925)	3:19
16 Bullets and Bayonets (1918)	3:39
17 The Naval Reserve March (1917)	2:24

CD 1 **1** **8** **11**; CD 2 **3** recorded at Henry Wood Hall, London, UK, from 5th to 6th August, 1999
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Eleanor Thomason (K&A Productions Ltd.)

CD 1 **2**; CD 2 **13-15** recorded at Woolwich Town Hall, London, UK, from 16th to 17th November, 2000
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Eleanor Thomason (K&A Productions Ltd.)

CD 1 **3** **5** **12**; CD 2 **2** **4** **16** recorded at Blackheath Concert Halls, London, UK, from 9th to 10th August, 1999
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Eleanor Thomason (K&A Productions Ltd.)

CD 1 **4** **14**; CD 2 **5** **10** **11** recorded at Blackheath Concert Halls, London, UK, from 10th to 11th January, 2002
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Martin Atkinson

CD 1 **6** **13** **16** **17**; CD 2 **1** **9** **12** recorded at Woolwich Town Hall, London, UK, from 29th to 30th November, 2000
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Andrew Lang (K&A Productions Ltd.)

CD 1 **7**; CD 2 **6** recorded at Woolwich Town Hall, London, UK, from 15th to 16th January, 2002
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Martin Atkinson

CD 1 **9**; CD 2 **8** **17** recorded at Woolwich Town Hall, London, UK, from 11th to 12th January, 2005
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Martin Atkinson

CD 1 **10** **15**; CD 2 **7** recorded at Woolwich Town Hall, London, UK, from 17th to 18th January, 2005
 Producer and editor: Mike Purton • Engineer: Martin Atkinson

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CD 1 **1** **2** **4** **5** **7** **12** **15** **17**; CD 2 **3** arr. Keith Brion and Loras Schissel, published by Willow Blossom Music (ASCAP);
 CD 1 **6** **8** **16**; CD 2 **2** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **14** **15** **17** arr. Keith Brion, published by Willow Blossom Music (ASCAP);
 CD 1 **9** published by Harry Fox; CD 1 **10** arr. Loras Schissel, published by Ludwig/Masters Music Inc.;
 CD 2 **9** published by Sam Fox Company/Alfred Music; CD 2 **13** published by Theodore Presser Co. (ASCAP).

Special thanks for their assistance in preparing these recordings to: Loras Schissel, Sousa Collection, Library of Congress; John Philip Sousa IV, President, John Philip Sousa Inc.; Paul E. Beirley, Integrity Press; The University of Illinois Sousa Collection; The United States Marine Band 'The President's Own'; and Brian Holt, percussionist, New Sousa Band.

Program notes by Keith Brion are freely based (with permission)
 on *The Works of John Philip Sousa* by Paul E. Bierley, Integrity Press.

Sousa's Greatest Marches

John Philip Sousa personified turn-of-the-century America, the comparative innocence and brash energy of a still new nation. His ever touring band represented America across the globe and brought music to hundreds of American towns. John Philip Sousa, born 6th November, 1854, reached this exalted position with startling quickness. In 1880, at the age of 26, he became conductor of the U.S. Marine Band. In twelve years the vastly improved ensemble won high renown and Sousa's compositions earned him the title of "The March King". Sousa went one better with the formation of his own band in 1892, bringing world acclaim.

In its first seven years the band gave 3500 concerts; in an era of train and ship travel it logged over a million miles in nearly four decades. There were European tours in 1900, 1901, 1903, and 1905, and a world tour in 1910-11, the zenith of the band era.

The unprecedented popularity of the Sousa Band came at a time when few American orchestras existed. From the Civil War to about 1920, band concerts were the most important aspect of U.S. musical life. No finer band than Sousa's was ever heard. Sousa modified the brass band by decreasing the brass and percussion instruments, increasing its woodwinds, and adding a harp. His 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, causing a dramatic upgrading in quality nationally.

Sousa's compositions also spread his fame. Such marches as *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, *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", and his surely did. Although he standardized the march form as it is known today, he was no mere maker of marches, but an exceptionally inventive composer of over 200 works, including symphonic poems, suites, operas and operettas. His principles of instrumentation and tonal color

influenced many classical composers. His robust, patriotic operettas of the 1890s helped introduce a truly native musical attitude in American theater.

CD 1

① **Hands Across the Sea (1899)**

In 1899 Sousa planned to take his band to the 1900 Paris Exposition. Sousa wrote about the march: "After the Spanish / American War there was feeling overseas against our republic regarding this war. Some of the nations... thought we were not justified, while others gave us credit for the honesty of our purpose. One night... I came across this line, 'A sudden thought strikes me, let us swear an eternal friendship.' That suggested the title *Hands Across the Sea*".

(Track ① from 8.559058)

② **Semper Fidelis (1888)**

Sousa said: "I wrote *Semper Fidelis* one night while in tears, after my comrades of the Marine Corps had sung their famous hymn at Quantico". The march takes its title from the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps: 'Semper Fidelis' - 'Always Faithful'. It subsequently became the official march of the marines. Sousa regarded it as his best march in a musical sense. It has also become one of his most popular.

(Track ② from 8.559092)

③ **The Royal Welch Fusiliers (1929)**

The march *The Royal Welch Fusiliers* was composed in memory of the association of the U.S. Marines with the Second Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers during the 1900 Boxer Rebellion in China. The première was given in Washington at the annual Gridiron dinner in the presence of President Hoover. It was repeated two weeks later at the White House. Later that month Sousa conducted it in England with the band of the Second Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

(Track ① from 8.559059)

4 Sabre and Spurs (1918)

The World War I era saw a prolific outpouring of great Sousa marches to inspire the military. Among them, *Sabre and Spurs*, dedicated to the 311th Cavalry is one of the finest. The trio depicts the hoof beats and movements of the mounted horsemen.

(Track 15 from 8.559131)

5 King Cotton (1895)

King Cotton was created for the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta and marked the important first major appearance of the Sousa Band in the American South. Without a doubt it has become one of Sousa's greatest marches. It may be that he wanted it to follow in the path of the great dance music success of *The Washington Post* (1888), since he fashioned a beautiful *King Cotton* trio melody that is essentially *The Washington Post* trio played upside down.

(Track 12 from 8.559059)

6 Pathfinder of Panama (1915)

Pathfinder of Panama was composed for the Sousa Band's long residency at the San Francisco Panama-Pacific Exhibition in the summer of 1915. The Sousa Band appeared alongside an all-star symphony orchestra conducted by Camille Saint-Saëns.

(Track 9 from 8.559093)

7 The Liberty Bell (1893)

Sousa and George Frederick Hinton, one of the band's managers, were in Chicago witnessing a spectacle called "America" when a backdrop, with a huge painting of the Liberty Bell was lowered. Hinton suggested that *The Liberty Bell* would be a good title for Sousa's new march. By coincidence, the next morning Sousa received a letter from his wife in which she told how their son had marched in his first parade in Philadelphia—a parade honoring the return of the Liberty Bell, which had been on tour. The new march was then christened *The Liberty Bell*. It was one of the first marches Sousa sold to the John Church Company and was the first composition to bring Sousa a substantial financial reward.

(Track 9 from 8.559132)

8 Hail to the Spirit of Liberty (1900)

Composed for the Sousa Band's appearance at the 1900 Paris Exposition, it was first played there on the 4th July for the unveiling of the Lafayette Monument. Following that, the band did a rare parade through the streets of Paris.

(Track 7 from 8.559058)

9 The Black Horse Troop March (1924)

Sousa's love of horses and for the military combine in *The Black Horse Troop March* of 1924, one of his greatest and most elegant marches. The march is dedicated to Troop A (Cavalry) of the Cleveland National Guard.

(Track 12 from 8.559247)

10 The High School Cadets (1890)

Sousa's march *The High School Cadets* was dedicated to a high school drill team in what was at the time Washington D.C.'s only high school, later to become Central High School. Since Sousa had already written a march (*The National Fencibles*) for another drill team, the students asked Sousa to write them "something superior". In Sousa's estimation he did write a better march.

(Track 11 from 8.559248)

11 Daughters of Texas (1929)

Sousa hurriedly gave his first try for a march for the students at Texas Women's University to Foshay for the dedication of his tower. He then returned to his muse to create one of his most graceful and delightful marches, *Daughters of Texas*.

(Track 12 from 8.559058)

12 The Fairest of the Fair (1908)

The Fairest of the Fair was composed for the Boston Food Fair. It is said that Sousa had been quite impressed by the beauty and charm of a young lady he had seen at the fair on a preceding year. Whatever the motivation, it is one of his greatest and most elegant marches.

(Track 3 from 8.559059)

13 Riders for the Flag (1927)

A sturdy, jaunty calvary march, *Riders for the Flag* was composed for the Fourth U.S. Cavalry and bears unmistakable signs of its equine and military inspirations.

(Track 6 from 8.559093)

14 The Thunderer (1889)

The Thunderer was a nickname for a person whose actual identity may never be known. This gentleman was most likely a Washington, D.C. Masonic friend of Sousa. The march itself has become one of Sousa's most popular and enduring compositions.

(Track 2 from 8.559131)

15 The Washington Post (1889)

The Washington Post is the march that made Sousa famous, the march that made the newspaper famous and the march that made the two-step famous. Composed in 1889 for the U.S. Marine Band to perform at a children's essay contest on the grounds of the Smithsonian, the march is thought to have been concocted in order to be the perfect music for a new dance called the "two-step". The trio melody contains a little melodic half step dip and return that mirrors the sideways tilt used by the partners in the new dance. The jaunty 6/8 march-time has echoes of the older waltz rhythm that was receding in popularity but it adds the peppiness and faster pace of the polka. At any rate the tune caught fire with dancers. By the early 1890s dancing the two-step to the music of Sousa's *The Washington Post March* became the popular ingredients that sparked a huge world-wide dance craze.

(Track 14 from 8.559248)

16 The Glory of the Yankee Navy (1909)

One of Sousa's finest marches, *The Glory of the Yankee Navy* is based on material first taken from a musical comedy *The Yankee Girl*, and later evolved into the martial version heard today.

(Track 10 from 8.559093)

17 The Stars and Stripes Forever (1896)

With the possible exception of *The Star Spangled Banner*, no musical composition has done more to arouse the patriotic spirit of America than *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, John Philip Sousa's most beloved composition. It is the official national march of the United States. Symbolic of flag-waving in general, it has been used with considerable effectiveness to generate patriotic feeling ever since its introduction in Philadelphia on 14th May, 1897, when the staid *Public Ledger* reported: "... It is stirring enough to rouse the American eagle from his crag, and set him to shriek exultantly while he hurls his arrows at the aurora borealis". *The Stars and Stripes Forever* had found its place in history. There was a vigorous response wherever it was performed, and audiences began to rise as though it were the national anthem. This became traditional at Sousa Band concerts. It was his practice to have the cornets, trumpets, trombones, and piccolos line up at the front of the stage for the final trio, and this added to the excitement. Many bands still perform it.

(Track 13 from 8.559093)

CD 2

1 Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (1922)

Sousa composed the incredibly colourful march *Nobles of the Mystic Shrine* to commemorate his admission to the Shrine in Washington D.C. He conducted the première with an enormous band of 6200 Shriners in Washington's Griffith's baseball stadium.

(Track 1 from 8.559093)

2 Wisconsin Forward Forever (1917)

There can be no doubt that World War I inspired some of Sousa's best marches, two of which are represented here. *Wisconsin Forward Forever* was dedicated to the University of Wisconsin, but was originally entitled *Wisconsin to the Front*.

(Track 10 from 8.559059)

3 The Invincible Eagle (1901)

Sousa thought this march would become his greatest hit. If it did not, it is surely one of his finest. Sousa commented: “The new march, *The Invincible Eagle*, 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 stands, and the gleam of polished steel and all its other picturesque features.”

(Track 6 from 8.559058)

4 Solid Men to the Front (1918)

Solid Men to the Front is one of Sousa’s finest and strongest marches. It is also one of the very few marches recorded by the Sousa Band with the March King himself conducting.

(Track 11 from 8.559059)

5 The Diplomat (1904)

One of Sousa’s personal favourites, *The Diplomat* was dedicated to Secretary of State John Milton Hay. Sousa’s composition portrays his admiration for Hay’s elegant and ebullient diplomatic skills.

(Track 12 from 8.559131)

6 The Picador March (1889)

Sousa had a great love for Spanish music. His *Picador March* portrays the grandeur and drama of the bullfight.

(Track 15 from 8.559132)

7 Jack Tar (1903)

Sousa hoped that the march *Jack Tar* would become as important to navy men as his *Stars and Stripes Forever* had become to army men. The march had its première in London’s Royal Albert Hall with the King and Queen present and was performed at that time by the joint forces of the Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, Irish Guards, Himenoa Band of NZ, Sousa’s Band and the Queen’s Hall Orchestra. It is also another of Sousa’s marches based on themes from one his operettas... in

this case the first two strains came from his show *Chris and the Wonderful Lamp*.

(Track 8 from 8.559248)

8 America First (March of the States) (1916)

America First was composed for a 1916 Broadway show *Hip! Hip! Hooray!* The title was inspired by a 1915 Woodrow Wilson speech: “Our whole duty for the present is summed up in the motto “America First”. The march and its subtitle are taken from an extensive ballet score for the *Hip! Hip! Hooray!* show called *The Sisterhood of the States*. Included in the march are four state themes: *Dixie, Maryland, My Maryland, We’re Off to Philadelphia in the Morning*, and *Yankee Doodle*.

(Track 1 from 8.559247)

9 Ancient and Honorable Artillery Co. (1924)

The Ancient and Honorable Artillery Co. of Boston is the oldest military organization in the United States. Sousa composed his march at their request and included their marching song *Auld Lang Syne*. It was formally presented to them at a concert in Symphony Hall Boston in September 1924.

(Track 7 from 8.559093)

10 The Minnesota March (1927)

Minnesota was composed at the request of the University of Minnesota football coach and the alumni. The march is still performed today, and is a popular addition to university sporting events.

(Track 1 from 8.559131)

11 The Atlantic City Pageant March (1927)

During Sousa’s final years, beginning in 1926, the band often played summer engagements at Atlantic City’s Steel Pier. *The Atlantic City Pageant March* was written at the request of the city’s mayor, and honoured the famous Atlantic City Beauty Pageant.

(Track 16 from 8.559131)

12 Sesqui-Centennial Exposition (1926)

Composed for an exposition in Philadelphia celebrating

the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition march is also particularly appropriate for the celebration of Sousa's own sesqui-centennial of his birth in 1854. It features a chime solo evocative of the Liberty Bell.

(Track 2 from 8.559093)

13 La Flor di Sevilla (1929)

Composed for the 1929 Ibero-American Exposition in Seville, the march *La Flor di Sevilla* was 'written and dedicated to the people of Spain'. The soaring trio tune is one of Sousa's most flowering melodies.

(Track 5 from 8.559092)

14 The Corcoran Cadets (1890)

The march *The Corcoran Cadets* was composed for a crack Washington D.C. teenage drill team. Their organization performed with colorful uniforms and bearing wooden rifles. The march was most likely written for the band that accompanied their drill routines.

(Track 1 from 8.559092)

15 The National Game (1925)

Composed at the request of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, major league baseball's first high commissioner, Sousa's unique *The National Game* featured four baseball bat solos.

(Track 14 from 8.559092)

16 Bullets and Bayonets (1918)

Bullets and Bayonets, another First World War rouser, was dedicated 'To the officers and men of the U.S. Infantry'.

(Track 13 from 8.559059)

17 The Naval Reserve March (1917)

The 1917 *Naval Reserve March* was composed for the 300-piece naval band Sousa led at Great Lakes Navy Training Center during World War I. It was dedicated 'To the Officers and Men of the U.S. Naval Reserve'. The trio incorporates a popular Sousa song of the time: *Blue Ridge I'm Coming Back to You*.

(Track 13 from 8.559247)

Keith Brion

The Royal Artillery Band

(by permission of the Director of Music, Royal Artillery, Lt. Col. Malcolm Torrent)

The Royal Artillery Band had their "drum and fife" as long ago as 1557, but it was the need for a "band of musik" in the regiment that led to the formation of the Royal Artillery Band in 1762. Since 1764, the band has been quartered with the Royal Artillery regiment in Woolwich, SE London. Today's band employs over fifty musicians who, in keeping with tradition, must be accomplished on both orchestral and wind band instruments. The band may appear on one day as a symphonic wind band (one of the largest in the British army), the next as a marching unit, and at another time as a full symphony orchestra (England's oldest established symphony orchestra). Their conductor and Director of Music at the time of these recordings was Lt. Col. Malcolm Torrent.

Keith Brion

Keith Brion leads his own New Sousa Band and is a frequent conductor of light music orchestral concerts throughout America and internationally. He is a specialist in Sousa's period style and has published numerous performing editions of his music.



Playing
Time:
1:46:56

SOUSA'S GREATEST MARCHES

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COMPACT
disc
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CD 1 Hands Across the Sea • Semper Fidelis
The Royal Welch Fusiliers • Sabre and Spurs
King Cotton • Pathfinder of Panama
The Liberty Bell • Hail to the Spirit of Liberty
The Black Horse Troop March
The High School Cadets • Daughters of Texas
The Fairest of the Fair • Riders for the Flag
The Thunderer • The Washington Post
The Glory of the Yankee Navy
The Stars and Stripes Forever

CD 2 Nobles of the Mystic Shrine
Wisconsin Forward Forever
The Invincible Eagle • Solid Men to the Front
The Diplomat • The Picador • Jack Tar
America First (March of the States)
Ancient and Honorable Artillery Co.
The Minnesota March
The Atlantic City Pageant
Sesqui-Centennial Exposition
La Flor di Sevilla • The Corcoran Cadets
The National Game • Bullets and Bayonets
The Naval Reserve March

Royal Artillery Band • Keith Brion

A full track list and recording details can be found on pages 2 and 3 of the booklet.

Producer and editor: Mike Purton

Booklet notes: Keith Brion

Sousa portrait by John J. Capolino, Courtesy
'The President's Own' United States Marine Band,
Washington D.C.



This 2 CD set presents 34 of John Philip Sousa's best-loved marches, including *The Washington Post* which, in the early 1890s, sparked a huge world-wide dance-craze, *The Liberty Bell*, used as the signature tune for the BBC comedy *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, and *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, the official national march of the United States. Known affectionately as 'The March King', Sousa personified turn-of-the-century America, the comparative innocence and brash energy of a still new nation. Universally acknowledged as the best of the genre, his marches are notable for their vigorous melodic line and unrelenting driving effect, combined with innovative use of instrumentation and tonal color.

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