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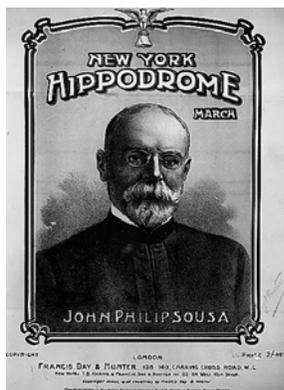
THE WILLIAMS FAIREY BAND

PLAYS

**SOUSA
MARCHES**

CONDUCTED BY
MAJOR PETER PARKES





John Philip Sousa (1854–1932)
Royal College of Music

Sousa Marches

1	Semper Fidelis <i>arr.</i> C.W. Hewitt	2:55
2	The Crusader <i>arr.</i> Peter Parkes	3:36
3	El Capitan March	2:33
4	The Invincible Eagle <i>arr.</i> Peter Parkes	3:47
5	King Cotton	2:58
6	Hands across the Sea <i>arr.</i> Peter Parkes	2:57
7	Manhattan Beach <i>arr.</i> C.W. Hewitt	2:25
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23	The Directorate <i>arr.</i> Norman Richardson	2:38
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TT 77:28

The Williams Fairey Band
Major Peter Parkes musical director

Sousa Marches

John Philip Sousa achieved immortality not because he was a major composer but because his music caught the spirit of his time – he was the musical spokesman of a new nation. All the excitement of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America is there in his music – the excitement of growing knowledge and industrial power, the novelty of instant communication in a shrinking world, the thrill of increasing international influence and success – they are all there in his music. Sousa's music is the symbol of the most optimistic and confident period in American History.

Sousa's marches are famous for their stirring melodies and for the simplicity of their structure. They are never overscored or weighed down with endless counter-melodies. In Sousa's own words 'a march must be as free from padding as a marble statue – once padded it ceases to be a march!' On another occasion, when questioned as to why he wrote so many marches he said 'I would rather be the composer of an inspired march than the composer of a manufactured symphony.' We should be grateful for that! The final measure of the worth of any

composer is whether or not his music stands the test of time. Nearly all of the marches featured on this recording are more than a century old, yet they sound as fresh and vital now as on the day they were written.

Semper Fidelis was written in 1888. Dedicated to the United States Marine Corps it was eventually adopted by the Corps as its official march. Sousa later spoke of his feelings when writing this march: 'I wrote *Semper Fidelis* one night while in tears, after my comrades of the Marine Corps had sung their famous hymn...' The march was premiered during a parade for President Harrison. In his book *The Works of John Philip Sousa* Paul Bierley describes the scene: 'As Sousa's band came into view and reached the reviewing stand on Pennsylvania Avenue, the trumpet section (with ten extra members) pealed out the theme in the trio – nothing like it had been heard before – it was a proud moment for us all.'

The Crusader was also written in 1888. Sousa was inspired to write this march as the result of his experiences as a Mason. He was

knighthood into the Knights Templar shortly before the *Crusader* was written – the link with the crusades and the rituals of the Knights Templar gave Sousa the title for his march.

El Capitan March: Sousa's output as a composer was extraordinary. In addition to the one hundred and thirty plus marches it also included fifteen operettas of which *El Capitan* was the most popular. First produced in 1896 the closing scene includes this march. In 1899 Sousa played *El Capitan* during a victory parade celebrating the return to the USA of Admiral Dewey and his Spanish-American war veterans.

The Invincible Eagle: Sousa was the leader of the United States Marine Band from 1880 until 1892 when he retired in order to form his own 'Sousa Band'. He dedicated this march to the Pan-American Exposition of 1901 which was held in Buffalo, New York. He was encouraged to do this by the knowledge that Francesco Fanciulli, his successor with the Marine's Band, was also writing a march for the exposition. In 1897 Fanciulli gained some notoriety when he was arrested and court-martialled for refusing to play a Sousa march when ordered to do so by a superior officer – very little changes!

King Cotton: In 1895 the Sousa band was booked to play during the Cotton States Exposition. The march written for the occasion remains one of Sousa's most popular compositions. Shortly before the opening the organizers of the exposition attempted to cancel the band's contract for the three-week show. Fortunately for them Sousa refused to accept this and his band was so popular that it played a large part in the show's financial success.

Hands across the Sea: Composed a short time after the end of the Spanish-American war, the title refers to the bonds of friendship which can grow from such conflicts. Sousa was inspired to write the march by an old play in which appeared the line 'A sudden thought strikes me – let us swear an eternal friendship'.

Manhattan Beach: In 1893 Sousa's band began a long series of engagements at Manhattan Beach which was then a fashionable New York holiday resort. By this time many former members of other bands, including nineteen players from the famous 'Gilmore Band', had joined Sousa's band. Sousa knew the artistic and musical potential of the new group, but his business manager, David Blakeley, had doubts about its commercial viability. These doubts were put to

rest by the enormous success which followed. Sousa wrote *Manhattan Beach* during this first summer engagement.

Our Flirtations: This was the first of Sousa's marches to be written using the successful form of most of his later marches. In 1880 he was appointed as the conductor of a Philadelphia theatrical company which was preparing for performance a musical comedy called *Our Flirtations*. Sousa arranged all the music for the show and composed a number of additional numbers including this fine march. It was Sousa's good fortune that the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps attended a performance. Later that year Sousa was named leader of the Marine Band!

The Picadore: This is another of those marches which Sousa was inspired to write by the Spanish-American war. This lively march suits the brass band idiom particularly well.

The Gladiator March: Written in 1886 this was the first of Sousa's marches to become a big hit. He was delighted to learn of its popularity when he heard it being played by an organ-grinder in Philadelphia. He later wrote 'I was exultant. My music had made enough of a hit to be played on a street organ. At last I felt that it had struck a popular chord.'

The Free Lance: In 1905 Sousa wrote an operetta called *The Free Lance*. The following year he took the song *On to Victory* and a number of other melodies from the operetta and included them in this march.

The Washington Post: In 1889 the newspaper *The Washington Post* sponsored an essay competition and this march was written to help in its promotion. At the time a new dance, the two-step, was sweeping America and Europe and this lively 6/8 march was found to be highly suitable by the dancers. It quickly became the most popular of tunes wherever it was played.

The Beau Ideal: Written in 1893 the title of this march comes from the French – *le beau ideal* – 'the ideal of beauty'. The phrase was widely used by Americans in the early 1890s. Sousa's dedication on the original sheet music refers to the newly formed 'National League of Musicians of the United States'. His newly appointed band manager took up the phrase and used it in promotional literature which extolled 'The March King's' virtues.

The High School Cadets: In 1890 the High School Cadets, a drill corps which was sponsored by the city's only secondary school, commissioned a march from Sousa

which would be better than the one which he had written for a rival corps, The National Fencibles. In the years following the Civil War these drill teams had become an exciting and popular part of the scene in Washington D.C. – the marches which they inspired have remained popular to the present day!

The Fairest Of The Fair: In 1908 Sousa wrote a new march for the annual Boston Food Fair. The title was inspired by the memory of a pretty girl who Sousa had seen working at the fair during a previous visit. *The Fairest Of The Fair* is one of his most melodic and best-written marches.

The Thunderer: At the time of writing this march Sousa was thirty-five years old and he had been the leader of the Marine Band for nine years. Despite this he was quite naive in business matters. *The Thunderer* was one of a number of marches which he sold outright for thirty five dollars! During the First World War he led the Naval Training Band on a tour for the American Red Cross which featured six marches including *The Thunderer*.

The Occidental: Sousa wrote no dedication on the original manuscript of this march and, as it is not mentioned in any of his letters or memoirs, the meaning of the title remains a mystery. Written in 1887 it was not published

until 1890. Despite lack of information *The Occidental* is a fine effective march, and is typical of Sousa at his best.

The Liberty Bell: Sousa was an unashamed patriot. In 1893 during a visit to a show in Chicago he was deeply moved by a spectacle called *America*, when a painting of the Liberty Bell was used as a backdrop. The next day a letter from his wife told how their son had just marched in a parade in Philadelphia honouring the return of the Liberty Bell which had been on tour. The march which resulted was an immediate success netting Sousa the immense sum of \$40,000 in fees. It has subsequently been arranged for every possible instrumental combination from a full symphony orchestra to piano duet. More than a century later it is still one of the most often-played of all marches.

The Corcoran Cadets: When Sousa was still a very young man William W. Corcoran had offered to finance a visit to Europe to give him a chance to complete his musical education. Sousa declined the offer but several years later dedicated this march to a very popular drill team sponsored by Corcoran – perhaps as a belated mark of his appreciation?

National Fencibles March: There were many

Washington drill teams which marched to Sousa's music throughout the 1880s and 90s. The National Fencibles was one of the finest and after they had won the National Championship they asked Sousa to write this march for them.

The Black Horse Troop: When Sousa and his band premiered this march in Cleveland in 1925 the troopers rode their beautiful black horses up onto the stage with the band. Many years before, in 1881, he had marched with his U.S. Marine Band and this same mounted troop in the funeral procession for President Garfield.

The Gridiron Club March: This is the title of a group of journalists in Washington D.C. In 1926 Sousa was named musical director of the club whilst leader of the United States Marine Band. Since that time it has remained the tradition of the club to honour the current director of the band in a similar way.

The Directorate: Sousa retired from the U.S. Marines in 1892 to form his own band. The new band's first performance took place on

26 September in Plainfield, New Jersey. Two days before this concert the director of the famous 'Gilmore Band' had died and many of his musicians joined Sousa, including many great soloists – Herbert L. Clarke and Arthur Pryor among them. *The Directorate* is typical of the many fine marches which he wrote in the years which followed. Late in his life Sousa told Clarke that in his time he had spent \$15,000,000 on band transportation and a further \$13,000,000 on salaries! Despite this he died a very rich man.

The Belle of Chicago: In 1893 Sousa took over the contract of the former Gilmore band to play for the Chicago World Fair. From that time nothing could stop the progress of the Sousa Band. In the next seven years the band played at all the important fairs and expositions in the United States and in 1900 the band made the first of four tours of Europe. *The Belle of Chicago* dates from this time – every note is pure Sousa!

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Quotes from John Sousa from *March Music Notes* by Norman Smith

Fifteen times 'British Open Champions' and seven times 'National Champions of Great Britain' are just a few of the successes achieved by the **Williams Fairey Band** since its formation in 1937. In 1993/94 'Fairey' held the three major titles 'National', 'British Open' and 'European' concurrently and for the past two years they have remained in the top spot of the 'Brass Band World's' computer rankings.

Formed by a group of employees as the 'Fairey Aviation Band' many of its early successes were achieved under the brilliant direction of Harry Mortimer, the band's musical director for thirty-three years. The company later became 'Fairey Engineering' and it is now one of the 'Williams Holdings Group of Companies'. The band is proud to be part of 'Williams Holdings' and is grateful

for the support which it has received throughout the past fifty-eight years!

Major Peter Parkes was appointed as the band's musical director in 1989. He is the most successful brass band conductor of modern times having conducted winning performances at a total of twenty-one National, British Open and European Championships and a record eight Scottish and twenty-five Area Championships. He was formerly director of many famous bands in the British Army, including HM Grenadier Guards and the Royal Engineers. He has worked as a conductor and adjudicator in the USA, Japan, New Zealand, Australia and throughout Europe. For the past twelve years Peter Parkes has been President of The British Federation Of Brass Bands.

The Band

Soprano	Craig Bennett	Second Euphonium	Nigel Lawless
Solo Cornet	Brian Taylor	Solo Baritone	Peter Christian
	Philip Chalk	Second Baritone	Nigel Beasley
	Steve Bastable	Solo Trombone	Brett Baker
	Tony Goddard	Second Trombone	Andy Gillooly
Repiano Cornet	Lee Rigg	Bass Trombone	Jim Cant
Second Cornet	Martyn Booth	E flat Bass	Shaun Crowther
	Gary Parker		Geoff Harrop
Third Cornet	James Leggat	B flat Bass	Derek Jackson
	Ray Peacock		Gareth Johnson
Flugel	Simon Stonehouse	Percussion	Jason Jones
Solo Horn	Sandy Smith		Paul Lovatt-Cooper
First Horn	Trevor McCormick		Mark Hanley
Second Horn	Simon Jones	Manager	John Creswell
Solo Euphonium	David Welsh		

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Sousa: Marches - The Williams Fairey Band/Parkes



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