



The Complete
Marches of
JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

VOL. 6  No. 98

NOBLES OF THE
MYSTIC SHRINE
MARCH
[1923]



AS PERFORMED BY
"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

March, “Nobles of the Mystic Shrine” (1923)

Sousa became a member of the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine in Washington in April, 1922, and was promptly named the first honorary director of the Almas Temple Shrine Band. His nephew, A. R. Varela, who sponsored him, asked him to compose this march. The new march saluted Shriners in general but was dedicated specifically to the Almas Temple and Imperial Council, A. A. O. N. M. S.

The Shriners’ national convention was held in Washington in June, 1923, and Sousa was called upon to lead a huge band of 6,200 Shriners in Griffith Stadium. This, incidentally, was the largest band Sousa ever conducted, and a new association with Shriners had just begun. Several Shrine bands accompanied the Sousa Band in performances of the new march as it toured the United States, and many additional appearances of the Sousa Band were arranged by Shriners. It is also noteworthy that in the last years of the Sousa Band approximately half the members were Shriners.

Paul E. Bierley, *The Works of John Philip Sousa* (Westerville, Ohio: Integrity Press, 1984), 74. Used by permission.

Editorial Notes

Throughout Sousa’s career as a conductor, he often altered the performance of his marches in specific ways without marking or changing the printed music. These alterations were designed for concert performances and included varying dynamics and omitting certain instruments on repeated strains to expand the range of the musical textures, as well as adding unscripted percussion accents for dramatic emphasis at key points in the music. Although Sousa never documented his performance techniques himself, several players who worked extensively with Sousa provided directions for his frequently performed marches, most notably cornetist Frank Simon. Many of the marches in this volume of “The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa” were staples in Sousa’s regular concert repertoire and were included in the [Encore Books](#) used by the Sousa Band, which can be found online at

<https://www.marineband.marines.mil/About/Library-and-Archives/Encore-Books/>. A complete set of his Encore Books resides in the U.S. Marine Band Library and Archives, and they are referenced extensively by the Marine Band not only as a guide for some of Sousa’s special performance practice, but also to ascertain the exact instrumentation he employed in his own performances of his marches.

“The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa” appears in chronological order and is based on some of the earliest known sources for each composition. These newly edited full scores correct many mistakes and inconsistencies found in the parts of early publications; however, all of the other expressive markings and the original scoring are largely preserved. Where instruments are added to the original published orchestration, it is guided by the additional parts Sousa sanctioned in his Encore Books where applicable or based on these typical doublings. Additionally, the alterations traditionally employed by the United States Marine Band in performance are incorporated throughout; either those specifically documented by Sousa’s musicians or changes modeled on the customary practices of “The March King” in his own performances.

The musical decisions included in these editions were influenced by the work of several outstanding Sousa scholars combined with many decades of Marine Band performance tradition. These editions would not be possible without the exceptional contributions to the study of Sousa's marches by Captain Frank Byrne (USMC, ret.), Jonathan Elkus, Colonel Timothy Foley (USMC, ret.), Loras Schissel, Dr. Patrick Warfield, and "The March King's" brilliant biographer, Paul Bierley.

Performance practices that deviate from the original printed indications are described below and appear in [brackets] in the score. There are many instances in which these alterations appear side-by-side with the original markings in this edition in an effort to clearly document where and how these deviations occur. An open diamond marked with an accent in the cymbal part indicates that the cymbal player should let that accent ring for an additional beat before rejoining the bass drum part.

Introduction (m. 1-4): Right out of the gate, the unique sound of this march is evident. It is one of a handful of Sousa marches that start in a minor key, and the percussion entrance highlights the stylish accents found in m. 2 and 3. All voices should play with a strong *fortissimo* and ensure that the *marcato* "capped" notes are short and accented.

First Strain (m. 5-21): The dynamic immediately drops to *mezzo-forte* with the pick-up half note in m. 4, but it then alternates with bursts of *fortissimo* figures, setting up a "call and response" feel in this strain. There is an original mix of articulations in m. 13-16, and those differences between woodwinds and brass should be brought to the fore, as it highlights the exotic sound of the march. The grace notes that follow must be played very crisply and close to the root notes. The dynamic is reduced to *mezzo-forte* once again, and the repeat of the strain is played exactly the same way. Of special note, Sousa added a triangle and tambourine part to reinforce the mystical theme of the march, and these instruments should always be included in performance. The harp part is original in this march and one of the few that was published. It is technically optional, but the part is interesting and independent, and it should be included whenever possible.

Second Strain (m. 22-38): Piccolo, E-flat clarinet, cornets, trumpets, trombones, and cymbals should be *tacet* here first time. Clarinets play down one octave from the original parts as indicated, and all play in a *piano* dynamic. Even with the reduced dynamic, eighth and quarter notes must be short and energized in this creative melody. All instruments are back in with the half note pick-up in m. 37 and play at the original *fortissimo* dynamic second time through. Percussion *sfz* accents are added second time to highlight the classic Sousa beat-two accent after a *tutti* melodic rest, in m. 24 and again on the downbeat of m. 33.

Trio (m. 39-70): The mood changes dramatically here in one of Sousa's most elegant trio melodies. Piccolo, E-flat clarinet, cornets, trombones, and all battery percussion are *tacet* beginning with the half note pick-up in m. 38. Bells are added to the trio melody. The shape of

this melody encourages some expressive but subtle swells of dynamics, and the interesting repeated eighth notes in 3rd clarinets, alto clarinet, and bassoons should be clearly heard.

Break Strain (m. 71-86): All instruments are back in with a *subito fortissimo* on the pick-up to m. 71. The cornet fanfares are punctuated by short and accented downbeats from all other voices and choked percussion notes as indicated. A quick diminuendo is added to the percussion parts first time in m. 86 to set up a *subito piano* dynamic for the first time through the final strain. An editorial decision was made concerning the percussion note in m. 81. This downbeat hit appears in the published parts but is believed to be an error, and it is recommended to be omitted in performance.

Final Strain (m. 87-120): Piccolo, E-flat clarinet, cornets, trombones, and cymbals are out once more with the pick-up note to m. 87, but a colorful triangle roll is added to the trio melody. Clarinets should play down one octave as indicated, and all play in a *piano* dynamic first time. Given the quarter note decorations that Sousa has written into the clarinet parts this time (for instance, in m. 88-91), the full melody here the first time is completely carried by the oboes and euphonium, and it should be brought out. All voices are back in with a *subito fortissimo* in m. 118 for the repeat of the break strain, which is played exactly as before, save for a crescendo in percussion in m. 86 this time. The last time through the final strain is played very vigorously with good accents in the melody now carried by the full brass. Percussion *sffz* accents are traditionally added in m. 98 and 114. The tambourine part is now added in also, as well as an optional “Jingling Johnny” bell tower that can be played on the downbeats to bring home the exotic character of this wonderful march.

NOBLES of the MYSTIC SHRINE
Full Score

21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

2. [tacet] [2nd X only]

Picc. [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

1st & 2nd Flts. [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

1st & 2nd Obs. [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

E♭ Clar. [tacet] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

1st Clar. [lower notes 1st X] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X [loco]

2nd Clar. [lower notes 1st X] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X [loco]

3rd Clar. [lower notes 1st X] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X [loco]

Alto Clar. [p].ff

Bass Clar. [p].ff

1st & 2nd Bsns. [p].ff

Alto Sax. [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

Ten. Sax. [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

Bari. Sax. [p].ff

Solo or 1st B♭ Cor. 2. [tacet] [2nd X only] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

2nd B♭ Cor. [tacet] [2nd X only] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

1st & 2nd B♭ Trpts. [2nd X only] [p].ff

1st & 2nd Hrns. [p].ff

3rd & 4th Hrns. [p].ff

Euph. [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

1st & 2nd Trbns. [tacet] [2nd X only] [p].ff (ff) 2nd X

B. Trbn. [p].ff

Tuba [p].ff

Perc. [Cyms. 2nd X only] [p].ff Accents and "his" 2nd X only [fz]

Harp [p].ff (Bring out) gliss.

NOBLES of the MYSTIC SHRINE
Full Score

60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70

Picc. *ff* [Play]

1st & 2nd Flts. *ff* 1st div.

1st & 2nd Obs. *ff*

E♭ Clar. *ff* [Play]

1st Clar. *ff*

2nd Clar. *ff*

3rd Clar. *ff*

Alto Clar. *ff*

Bass Clar. *ff*

1st & 2nd Bsns. *ff*

Alto Sax. *ff*

Ten. Sax. *ff*

Bari. Sax. *ff*

Solo or 1st B♭ Cor. *ff* [Play]

2nd B♭ Cor. *ff* [Play]

1st & 2nd B♭ Trpts. *ff* [Play]

1st & 2nd Hrns. *ff*

3rd & 4th Hrns. *ff*

Euph. *ff* [Play]

1st & 2nd Trbns. *ff* [Play]

B. Trbn. *ff* [Play]

Tuba *ff*

Drums & Glock. *ff* [Play]

Harp

NOBLES of the MYSTIC SHRINE
Full Score

71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80

Picc.

1st & 2nd Flts.

1st & 2nd Obs.

E♭ Clar.

1st Clar.

2nd Clar.

3rd Clar.

Alto Clar.

Bass Clar.

1st & 2nd Bsns.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Solo or 1st B♭ Cor.

2nd B♭ Cor.

1st & 2nd B♭ Trpts.

1st & 2nd Hrns.

3rd & 4th Hrns.

Euph.

1st & 2nd Trbns.

B. Trbn.

Tuba

Perc.

Harp

S.D., B.D., & Cyms.

Tri. & Tamb.

ff

Trpts. Play

T Sax. Play

A. Sax. Play

B. Sax. Play

NOBLES of the MYSTIC SHRINE
Full Score

81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90

Picc. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 1st & 2nd Flts. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 1st & 2nd Obs. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 E♭ Clar. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 1st Clar. [p]-ff [lower notes 1st X]
 2nd Clar. [p]-ff [lower notes 1st X]
 3rd Clar. [p]-ff [lower notes 1st X]
 Alto Clar. [p]-ff
 Bass Clar. [p]-ff
 1st & 2nd Bsns. [p]-ff
 Alto Sax. [p]-ff
 Ten. Sax. [p]-ff
 Bari. Sax. [p]-ff
 Solo or 1st B♭ Cor. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 2nd B♭ Cor. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 1st & 2nd B♭ Trpts. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 1st & 2nd Hrns. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 3rd & 4th Hrns. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 Euph. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 1st & 2nd Trbns. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 B. Trbn. [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 Tuba [p]-ff [2nd X only]
 Perc. [tacet] [p]-ff [Cyms. 2nd X only] Accents and "hits" 2nd X only
 Harp [p]-ff

NOBLES of the MYSTIC SHRINE
Full Score

91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

Picc.

1st & 2nd Flts.

1st & 2nd Obs.

E \flat Clar.

1st Clar.

2nd Clar.

3rd Clar.

Alto Clar.

Bass Clar.

1st & 2nd Bsns.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Solo or 1st B \flat Cor.

2nd B \flat Cor.

1st & 2nd B \flat Trpts.

1st & 2nd Hrns.

3rd & 4th Hrns.

Euph.

1st & 2nd Trbns.

B. Trbn.

Tuba

Perc.

Harp

(8) (12) (14)

[*fff*]

NOBLES of the MYSTIC SHRINE
Full Score

101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110

Picc.

1st & 2nd Flts.

1st & 2nd Obs.

E \flat Clar.

1st Clar.

2nd Clar.

3rd Clar.

Alto Clar.

Bass Clar.

1st & 2nd Bsns.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Solo or 1st B \flat Cor.

2nd B \flat Cor.

1st & 2nd B \flat Trpts.

1st & 2nd Hrns.

3rd & 4th Hrns.

Euph.

1st & 2nd Trbns.

B. Trbn.

Tuba

Perc.

Harp

