

John Philip Sousa, Sr. (6 Nov 1854 – 6 Mar 1932)

The Evening Star, October 2, 1880

The New Leader of the Marine Band

Louis Schneider, the leader of the Marine Band having been dismissed the service his accounts were settled yesterday. Mr. John Philip Sousa was informed by telegraph at Kansas City, Mo., (where he was engaged with Mackey's Flirtation Combination) on Saturday last that the leadership was at his disposal. Yesterday Mr. Sousa reported to Colonel McCawley, was formally mustered into service and granted ten days leave of absence to settle his business in Philadelphia, which place he has made his home for several years past. Mr. Sousa is now but 25 years of age, and is about the youngest band leader in this section of the country. He is a son of Mr. George Sousa, a veteran musician of the Marine band, who has played in it for thirty-five years. For some years he was in the charge of the Theater Comique orchestra, and for a short time was the director at Ford's Opera House. For several years he was attached to Hassler's orchestra and band in Philadelphia, playing at the theatres and the seaside resorts. Next he took charge of the Church Choir Combination, and during the present year has been traveling with Mackey's Flirtation Company as its musical director. His forte is that of a composer, and he has during the past few years accomplished a vast amount of musical work. Among his compositions is the music of "Catharine," the opera by Mr. W.J. Vance, which will be produced this winter. He also wrote the greater part of the score of the "Smugglers." His compositions, songs, dance music, marches, etc., now number over two hundred, some of which are quite popular. Mr. Sousa is married, and his wife is an accomplished contralto singer.

The Evening Star, October 24, 1893

Medals for John Philip Sousa

John Philip Sousa has recently received a handsome souvenir of the successful seven weeks' engagement of his band at the St. Louis exposition, when the directors of the exposition presented him with a magnificent jeweled medal. The medallion is of blue and white enamel and bears a golden reproduction of the exposition building in relief, over which is a costly diamond. This medal is surrounded by curious scroll work forming the letter S, and by two dolphins with ruby eyes. The bar from which it is suspended bears the first three bars of one of his popular marches in black enamel, the heads of the notes being represented by diamonds. An appropriate inscription is on the reverse. A few nights before this presentation Sousa also received a gold medal from a St. Louis military company, with the inscription "Music is the Voice of Heaven."

The Evening Star, April 13, 1904

Sousa's Band

It has been more than a year since John Philip Sousa and the world-famous band under his direction have appeared in the principal American cities--a period that has brought additional fame to the American conductor-composer and won yet greater triumphs for him in the principal capitals of Europe. Sousa now returns to the concert field in his own country, where he has held undisputed sway for a dozen years, and enjoyed a popularity and success that shows no signs of diminution. Some few notable changes have been made in the personnel of the band, but in the main it is the same capable body of artist musicians who have served for years under the Sousa baton. Mr. Sousa will present a number of musical novelties on the program of his spring tour, appearing here on Friday afternoon, at 2:15, at the

New National Theater. He will have Estelle Liebling, soprano; Jessie Strauss, violinist, and Herbert L. Clarke, as assisting soloists.

The Evening Star, November 19, 1913, p. 13

Sousa's Band Sunday

John Philip Sousa and his famous band will give concerts at the New National Theater next Sunday afternoon and night.

Hailed the world over as the "march king," Sousa probably is one of the best known band leaders of the day. He has arranged a program for the concerts that runs from the classics to ragtime. Three soloists will be heard, Miss Virginia Root, soprano; Miss Margel Gluck, violinist, and Herbert L. Clarke, cornetist.

Sousa. On Sunday, March 6, 1932, at Reading, Pa., John Philip Sousa, lieutenant commander, U.S.N.R. Forces, husband of Jane Belita Sousa. Lieut. Comdr. John Phillip Sousa's body will lie in state in the bandroom at the Marine Barracks, Eighth and G streets southeast, where funeral services will be held on Thursday, March 10, at 33 p.m. Interment at Congressional Cemetery.

Sousa. A special communication of Hiram Lodge, No. 10, F.A.A.M., is called for Thursday, March 10, 1932, at 2 p.m., at the Masonic Temple, to attend the funeral of our late Brother, John Philip Sousa, who died March 5, 1932.

Paul H. Moreland, Master
William H. Grass, Secretary

The Evening Star, March 7, 1932

The body of John Philip Sousa, America's 'March King' was brought last night to Washington, the city of his birth and early fame to await burial next Thursday in Congressional Cemetery.

In the absence of directions from the bandmaster's family there was no ceremony on the body's arrival. Navy officials were ready to extend to him any courtesy in the way of escorts, the Marine Band or any other provisions that might be desired. In review of his reserve status, however, this could not be done without instructions from his family.

The body of the band leader, who once led the famous Marine Band and whose marches have stirred the patriotism of millions of Americans was brought to Washington from Reading, Pa., where Sousa died early yesterday morning. It was accompanied by Hamilton Abert, son-in-law, and an escort of the 213th Coast Artillery. They were Maj.s. Joseph D. Eisenbrown and William J. Smith, and Capt.s. Ralph M. Altenderfer and I.B. Rittgers.

Mr. Abert left at once for New York to return here later today with Mrs. Sousa and two daughters. Sousa's son, John Philip Sousa, Jr. left La Jolla, Calif. By train yesterday for the East.

The hour of the burial has not been set early today, pending the arrival of the family. Navy and Marine Corps officials are expecting to participate in the plans.

A military escort of the Marine Band, a naval firing squad, a company of blue jackets and a company of Marines will be provided for the funeral, the Navy Dept. announced. Bluejackets will act as body bearers.

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The celebrated bandmaster, 77 years old, was stricken a few hours after directing a rehearsal of a local band in Reading. He attended a banquet in his honor, retired to his room and was found shortly after stricken by a heart attack which had snuffed out his life.

Sousa was born in Washington, and it was his family's wish that he eventually be buried at home. His father obtained a place for him in the Marine Band when he was 13 years old.

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Most popular of his compositions, Sousa always believed was 'The Stars & Stripes Forever'. His last was the 'George Washington Bicentennial March.' His final appearance here was to conduct the massed Army, Navy and Marine Corps Bands in playing that composition on the Capital Plaza on Washington's Birthday, just 2 weeks ago.

Sousa became a member of the U.S. Marine Band when only 13 years old through a plan of his father, a member of the band, to thwart the boy's plans to run away with a circus band. Later young Sousa conducted theatrical and other orchestras and gave violin lessons. In 1877 he joined the orchestra of Jacques Offenbach, composer of 'The Tales of Hoffman,' as first violinist. About the time of his 25th birthday he returned to the Marine Band.

The Evening Star, March 9, 1932, p. A3

Last Tribute Set For "March King"

Sousa Body to Lie in State in Marine Band Room Until Tomorrow

Shortly before 2 o'clock this afternoon the body of John Philip Sousa, the "march king," will be conveyed from the Gawler funeral home, at 1754 Pennsylvania avenue, to lie in state in the band room of the Marine Barracks, where his great musical career began as a youth. There the flower-decked casket will remain until the same hour tomorrow, when it will be taken under military and naval escort to Congressional Cemetery.

Visitors from private and official circles have filed through the chapel on Pennsylvania avenue, where the march king's body was brought on its arrival here Sunday night, following Mr. Sousa's death from a heart attack early that morning in Reading, Pa. Hundreds more will view the body for the last time as it lies in state in the small band room.

Other prominent names were added last night to the list of honorary pallbearers at tomorrow's funeral. These include Arthur Pryor, bandmaster; John Lagatta, nationally known illustrator; Gene Buck, president of the American Society of Composers; Edwin F. Goldman, president of the American Bandmasters' Association, and Harry Askin, Sousa's manager for many years.

Other close friends of Mr. Sousa who will act in a similar capacity include James Francis Cooke, editor of L'Etude; A.A. Harding, dean of music at the University of Illinois; William J. Martin, Dr. Colin L. Begg and Henry Eagle.

Funeral marches which Sousa himself composed, including one that mourned President Garfield, will be played by the United States Marine Band when it escorts the body to the grave, followed by a military cortege. In the march will be Assistant Secretary of the Navy Ernest Lee Jahncke, Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, chief of the Naval Bureau of Aeronautics; Maj. Gen. Ben H. Fuller, commandant of the Marine Corps; Brig. Gen. George Richards of the Marine Corps, Col. Harold Reisinger of the Marine Corps, Col. Harold Reisinger of the Marine Corps and Maj. William H. Shutan, Army Engineer Corps. A firing squad, which will give the salute at the grave as "taps" is sounded; a company of bluejackets and a company of Marines will constitute the escort.

Capt. Taylor Branson, leader of the Marine Band, which Sousa developed to its present eminence, said that Sousa's "Semper Fidelis" will be one of the marches to be played as the procession moves toward the cemetery in East Washington.

The Gridiron Club Quartet will sing at the grave. Various Masonic lodges to which Mr. Sousa also belonged, as well as the Society of Natives of the District of Columbia, will participate.

John Philip Sousa, jr., son of the dead band leader, was expected to arrive early today from his home in California. Others of the family already are here, stopping at the Mayflower Hotel.

House Honors Sousa

Representative Rainey, the Democratic leader, halted business of the House for 5 minutes today to pay tribute to the late John Philip Sousa.

"Sousa was the greatest band master, the greatest composer of martial music, who ever lived in this world," Rainey said. "The world has lost a great musical composer."

Rainey's remarks were loudly applauded.

The Evening Star, March 9, 1932, p. A3

Society Of Natives Will Honor Sousa

Bandmaster Joined Organization Last November -- Delegation to Attend Funeral

The late John Philip Sousa the "march king," who was born and reared in Washington, was elected to membership in the Society of Natives of the District of Columbia at a meeting of the society last November. His application, it was recalled today, had been forwarded in October, indorsed by Mrs. Anna E. Hendley and Theodore W. Noyes.

It seems that Mrs. Hendley was in attendance at the last Sousa concert on the Steel Pier at Atlantic City and at its close went forward and told Mr. Sousa how much she had enjoyed it. She introduced herself as a native Washingtonian and told him how proud Washington was to have him as a native son. When Mrs. Hendley told the bandmaster about the Society of Natives he expressed a desire to join. On her return to Washington an application for membership was sent him and he promptly returned it with his signature.

Dr. Clarence A. Weaver, president of the Society of Natives requested Mrs. Hendley, who is one of its founders, to arrange for a delegation to represent the society at the funeral of Mr. Sousa tomorrow.

The delegation was named as follows: Dr. Weaver, ex-officio; Mrs. Hendley, chairman; Jesse C. Suter, John Clagett Proctor, Lee D. Latimer and Fred A. Emery, past president; Theodore W. Noyes, Col. C. Fred Cook, Percy B. Israel, Judge Gus A. Schuldt, Miss Etta A. Taggart, Mrs. Ada E. Hodge, William H. Groverman, Mrs. Roscoe Oatley, Mrs. Dora Knight Muir, Washington Topham, Frederick G. Umhau, James F. Duhamel, Evan H. Tucker, Miss Emma Bright, Mrs. Margaret E. Baughman, Mrs. M.E. Bullis and Mrs. Henry Fenno Sawtelle.

The Washington Post, January 18, 1933, p. 18

Southeast Section Will Honor Sousa

Tribute Will Be Paid to Late Composer at School

"Sousa Night" is to be celebrated by the Southeast Citizens Association February 14, and was not scheduled to be held last night, as inadvertently reported in The Post of Sunday.

On February 14 the Southeast citizens - and the public is invited to join them - will pay tribute to the March King, who was born in the southeast section of the city, who lived there, and who is buried in the Congressional Cemetery there.

The Marine Band will be present and render some of the stirring compositions of Sousa. Other facets of the character of Sousa will be marked by his former neighbors. His civic interest, his sportsmanlike bent and his literary qualities will be brought out. The Buchanan School auditorium, Thirteenth and D streets southeast, will be the scene of "Sousa Night."\\\

The Washington Post, March 6, 1936, p. 28

Boy Scout Troop No. 10 Will Honor Sousa Today

A wreath will be placed on the tomb of the late John Philip Sousa in Congressional Cemetery at 4 p.m. today by the Boy Scout Troop No. 10, whose headquarters are at the Ninth Street Christian Church.

Lawrence J. Bach, a former member of a Detroit Scout troop, will lay the wreath on the tomb and deliver the dedication address. Bach belonged to the Boy Scout troop which, during the World War days, was presented with a silk troop flag by Sousa.

[Note: Sousa was born at 636 G Street, S.E., in 1854. He was baptized at Christ Episcopal Church and lived on Capitol Hill for most of his life. One of his former homes was 318 Independence Avenue.]

The Washington Post, March 8, 1941, p. 11

Sousa Services Scheduled Today, Snow or Not

Memorial services will be held at the grave of John Philip Sousa in Congressional Cemetery at 2:30 p.m. Today, regardless of weather conditions, it was announced yesterday.

Boy Scouts of Troop Ten, Washington, with the cooperation of Scout Troop Two of Detroit, are sponsoring the observance.

Representative William Blackney of Michigan, will speak.

The Washington Post, March 3, 1942, p. 6

Memorial Services Set Friday for John Philip Sousa

Memorial services for John Philip Sousa, America's march king, will be conducted for the seventh time since his death 10 years ago this Friday at 4 p.m. at the Congressional Cemetery.

Attending the ceremonies, which will be opened by the Rev. Edward Gabler, pastor of the Christ Church of which Sousa was a life member, will be Boy Scout Troop 10 of this city and Troop 2 of Detroit.

Troop 10, organized by Theodore Roosevelt, and stationed in Mr. Sousa's home section, Southeast, will place a wreath on the memorial as it has done ever since the services were inaugurated. Troop 2 Scouts were for many years the composer's followers when he played in Detroit, and still use a purple and white flag given to them by Mr. Sousa.

Osmund Varela, Mr. Sousa's nephew, will represent the Sousa family. Congressman George D. O'Brien, of Detroit, Mich., will speak.

Capt. R.D. Workman, chaplain of the Navy, will give the benediction.