

MUSIC OF THE CIVIL WAR

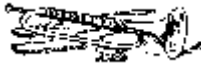
The Military Function of Music

- **Regimental Bands**
 - Infantry – each regiment could have one 24-member band
 - Cavalry – each regiment could have one 16-member band
- **Functions**
 - Recruitment rallies
 - Celebratory parades
 - Military formations
 - Dress parades
 - Evening concerts
- **Union War Department Regulations of 1862**
 - Eliminated brass ensembles for volunteer regiments
 - Brigade bands replaced regimental bands and belonged a brigade
 - Dismissed musicians re-enlisted as combatants only to be reassigned by the regimental commander to serve a regimental band
- **Bands in the Confederate Army**
 - Bands were rare due to a shortage of both musicians and instruments (made primarily in the north from materials in short supply in the South)
 - Viewed as a vital tool in maintaining morale
 - Instruments were often taken as enthusiastically as arms from captured Union soldiers
- **Typically, an infantry company had a drummer, frequently a boy**
 - Used to signal orders
 - To enter formation
 - To wake up
 - To report to roll call
 - To respond to sick call
 - To report for guard duty
 - To indicated lights out
 - To communicate orders from the commanding officers
 - To signal troop movements



- **Appearance**
 - **Union** – a large eagle with wings outstretched and the stars and stripes flowing behind and to either side
 - **Confederate** – unpainted and undecorated

- Sometimes accompanied by a fifer
- A cavalry regiment had a bugler
 - Buglers often had distinctive sounds that distinguished on from another
 - Served same function as drummer served in infantry regiment



- The bugle call – “Taps” – was written during the war by Union General Daniel Butterfield
- It also has words:

Taps

Fading light dims the sight,
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.
From afar drawing nigh—Falls the night.

Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky.
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.

Then good night, peaceful night,
Till the light of the dawn shineth bright,
God is near, do not fear—Friend, good night.

- Musicians often had alternate duties
 - Usually ordered to rear during combat
 - Helped surgeons and nursed the wounded
 - Some actually performed during battle
- Soldiers typically sang during marches.
 - Union
 - “The Battle Hymn of the Republic “
 - “John Brown's Body”
 - “Just Before the Battle, Mother“
 - “Dixie's Land”
 - “Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground”
 - “The Vacant Chair”
 - “Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!”
 - “When Johnny Comes Marching Home”
 - Confederate
 - “The Bonnie Blue Flag”
 - “Maryland, My Maryland”
 - “Lorena”
 - “The Battle Cry of Freedom”
 - “The Yellow Rose of Texas”
 - “Eating Goober Peas”

- One of President Lincoln's favorite songs was "The Blue Tail Fly," known better today as the children's song "Jimmy Crack Corn."
 - Of uncertain origin
 - Requested by Lincoln at the Gettysburg ceremony

To hear music and songs from the era of the Civil War, click on

<http://www.pdmusic.org/civilwar.html>