

John Philip Sousa (1854 – 1932) was an American composer and conductor of the late Romantic era, known particularly for American military and patriotic marches. Because of his mastery of march composition, he is known as "The March King" or the "American March King" due to his British counterpart Kenneth J. Alford also being known as "The March King". Among his best known marches are "The Washington Post", "Semper Fidelis" (Official March of the United States Marine Corps), and "The Stars and Stripes Forever" (National March of the United States of America).

"The Army Goes Rolling Along" (originally "The Caisson Song") was originally written by field artillery First Lieutenant [later Brigadier General] Edmund L. Gruber (a distant relative of Franz Gruber, the composer of the Christmas Carol "Silent Night"), while stationed in the Philippines in 1908. The original lyrics reflect routine activities in a horse-drawn field artillery battery. The song was transformed into a march by John Philip Sousa in 1917.

The U.S. Field Artillery March became a blockbuster recording during World War I, selling about 750,000 copies. Gruber heard of it and asked Sousa, "How about some money, since I wrote the song?" Embarrassed (Sousa thought the Army Song was a Civil War song in the public domain), Sousa made certain Gruber got his royalties.

Dr. Michael Pratt has degrees in music education and music composition from The University of Toledo, The University of Michigan, and Boston University. He studied composition with Pulitzer Prize winning composers Ross Lee Finney and Leslie Bassett at The University of Michigan, and taught music in the public schools for many years in Michigan.

He has sung with The Toledo Choral Society, Toledo Symphony Chorale, Opera!Lenawee, and The University Musical Society Choral Union of The University of Michigan with whom he has performed with The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, The San Francisco Symphony, The Kirov Orchestra, The Russian National Orchestra, The Ann Arbor Symphony, The Lansing Symphony, The Grand Rapids Symphony, The Toledo Symphony, The Birmingham Symphony, The Gabrieli Consort, and The Tallis Scholars.

He has played tuba with The Toledo Symphony, Toledo Concert Band, Toledo Opera, University of Toledo Faculty Brass Quintet, Adrian Chamber Brass, Adrian College Faculty Brass Quintet, The Crosswell Opera House, The Adrian Symphony Orchestra and The Adrian City Band.

He has performed with many notable conductors, including, Valery Gergiev, Michael Tilson Thomas, Neeme Jarve, Mikhail Pletnev, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, Leonard Slatkin, John Adams, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Paul McCreesh, Peter Phillips, Catherine Comet, Eric Kunzel, Margaret Hillis, Martin Katz, and John Finley Williamson.

Michael Pratt is a member of ASCAP.

The U.S. Field Artillery

Duration 2:30

March

John Philip Sousa, 1917

Arr. Michael Pratt
for Brass Septet

March tempo ♩ = 120

The musical score is arranged for a Brass Septet in 2/4 time, marked 'March tempo' with a quarter note equal to 120 beats per minute. The key signature is B-flat major. The score is divided into two systems of staves. The first system includes parts for Trumpet in B♭ 1, 2, and 3; Horn in F; Trombone; Euphonium; and Tuba. The second system includes parts for B♭ Trumpet 1, 2, and 3; Horn; Trombone; Euphonium; and Tuba. Dynamics are indicated by *ff* (fortissimo) and *fz mf* (forzando mezzo-forte). The score features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Measure numbers 1 through 16 are indicated above the staves.