



## Military Music



Music has been an indispensable component of armies throughout history. During the second half of the 18th Century most American, British, French and German armies employed drummers, fifers, pipers or buglers as field music. The main function of the field music was communications. It was the musician's duty to relay signals in battle, on the march and in camp. The sounds of the drums and fifes assembled the men and informed them to dismiss. On the battlefield there were signals to prepare to fire, advance, and retreat. In camp music served as the soldiers' clock to regulate their activities. *Reveille* was beat at sunrise to wake the men, the *Troop* was beat at 8:00 am to assemble the soldiers for roll call and inspection; the *Retreat* was played at sunset to signal the end of the day's duty, and *Tattoo* was beat by 10:00 pm as a signal for "lights out." The march was regulated by fifes and drums which kept an even cadence or pace. In that way, the music helped to maintain discipline and made it possible to move large bodies of soldiers in an orderly fashion and on time.

In addition to those duties, music was also a major part of military ceremonies such as receiving and lodging of colors, parades and reviews, punishments and funerals. The addition of music to ceremonies is continued to this day and demonstrates the power of music in affecting emotions and patriotism.