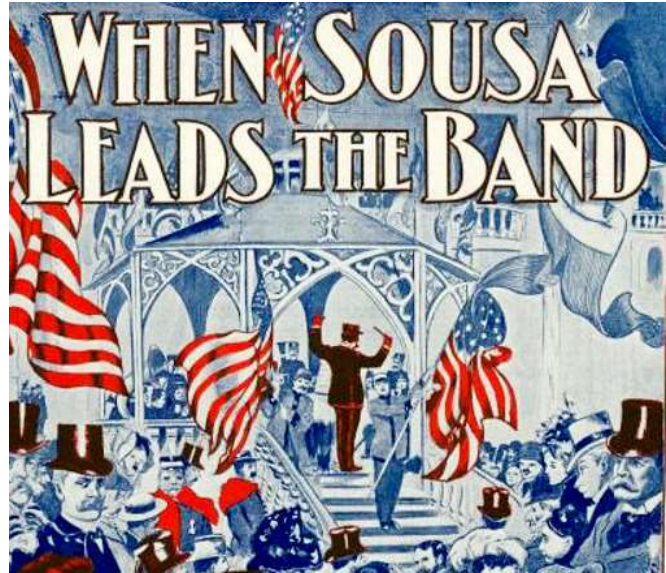


# Oh, Listen to the Band – songs inspired by brass bands

*Gavin Holman – September 2019*

As brass bands gained in popularity, composers and arrangers naturally produced pieces to supply the ensembles with the music for their craft. It was not long before some of those pieces became arranged for solo or piano performance, sometimes with words attached. These first appeared in the 1870s through to the early 1900s.

A little later, songs were composed which featured bands, extolling the musicians' abilities, the "sweetness" of the music, and other aspects of bands and their relation to the singer. These were particularly prevalent in the USA, mainly being produced by the talented songwriters of Tin Pan Alley in New York.



In some cases these were specifically written in relation to a particular band or band leader (e.g. the Ringgold Band, John Philip Sousa, and Helen May Butler), but in most cases they were sentimental or comic songs that found favour in the vaudeville theatres and, later, in the nation's parlours as sheet music for piano.

There are a number of sheet music archives around the world. Two examples are

Duke University Libraries - Historic American Sheet Music  
<https://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/hasm/>

Library of Congress - sheet music collection  
<https://www.loc.gov/notated-music/>

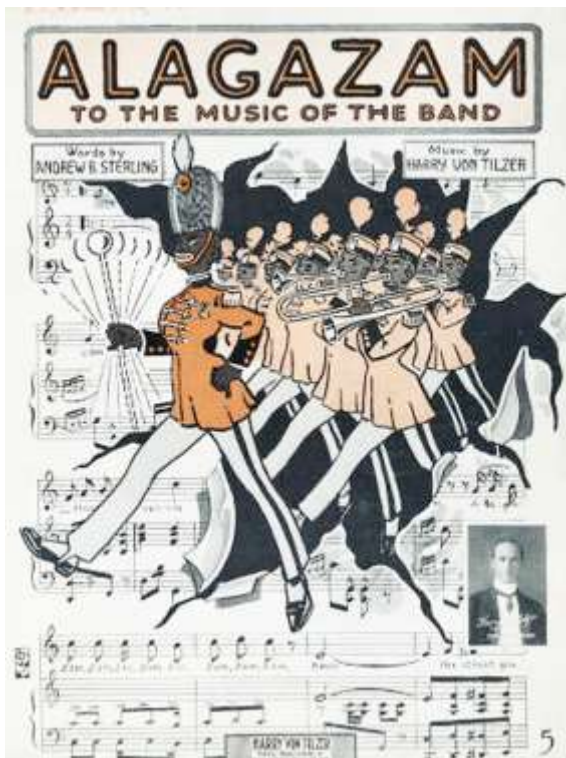
Here is a selection of some of these pieces.



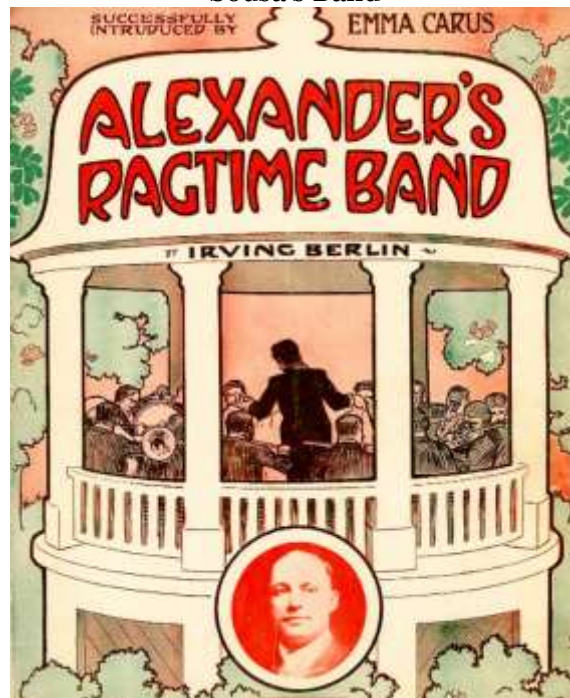
A Brass Band's Good Enough for Me (lyrics: James Clarence Harvey, music: Robert Hood Bowers) - was featured in the show "The Wife Tamers" (pre-1910)



A Coon Band Contest (composed by Arthur Pryor in 1899, sung by Edward Coe) - a cakewalk, made popular by Sousa's Band



Alagazam - the Music of the Band (words: Andrew B. Sterling, music: Harry von Tilzer)



Alexander's Ragtime Band (Irving Berlin, 1911)

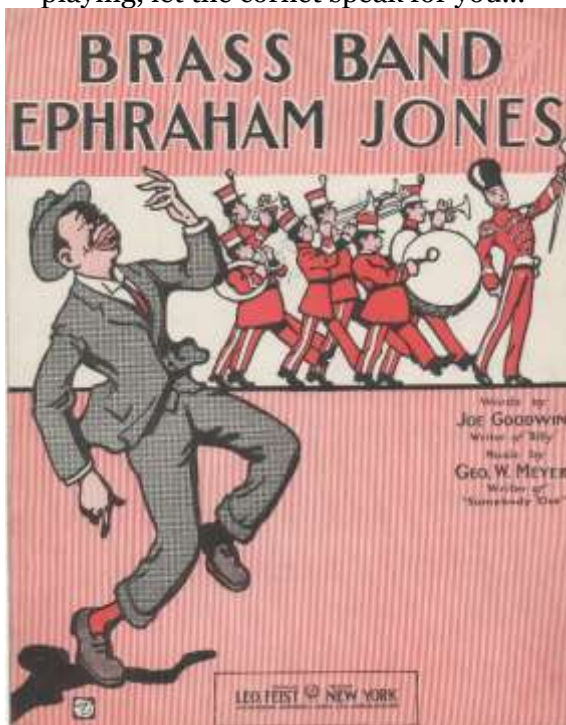




Ask Her While the Band Is Playing  
(lyric: Glen MacDonough, music: Victor Herbert, 1908) - from the musical play "Algeria" - "... ask her while the band is playing, let the cornet speak for you..."



Big Brass Band From Brazil  
(words: Bob Hillard, music: Carl Sigman, 1947)

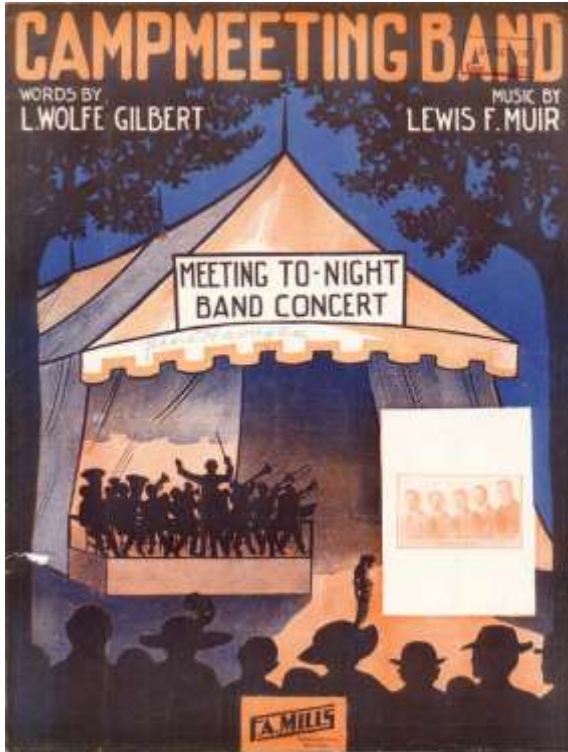


Brass Band Ephraim Jones  
(words: Joe Goodwin, music: George W. Meyer)

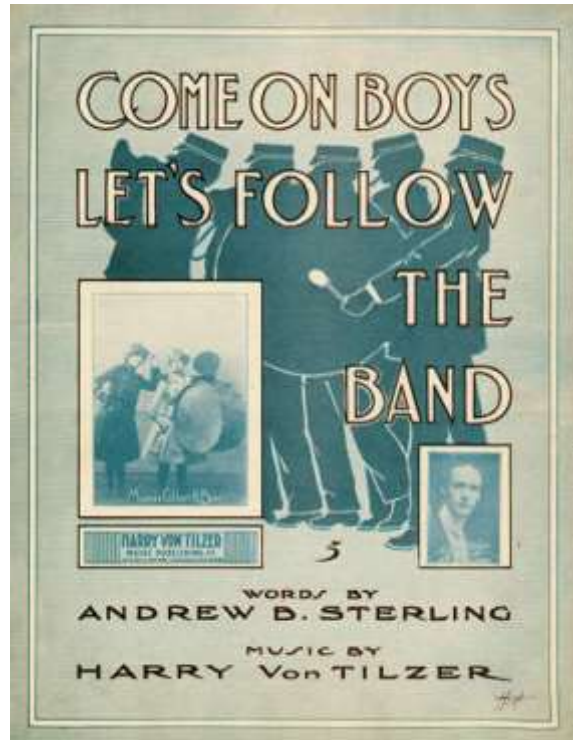


Brass Buttons  
(by Harry Appel, 1906)





Camp Meeting Band  
 (words: L. Wolfe Gilbert, music: Lewis F. Muir, 1914)



Come on Boys Let's Follow the Band  
 (words: Andrew B. Sterling, music: Harry von Tilzer, 1904)



Everybody Loves a Big Brass Band  
 (lyric: Roger Graham, music: May Hill)



Hear the Pickaninny Band  
 (words: Billy J. Vanderveer, music: Seymour Furth, 1911)





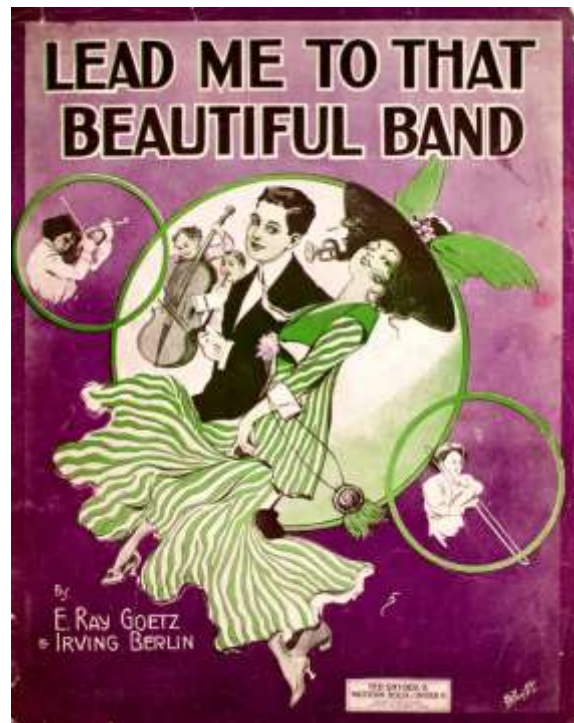
Hi Jig A Jig Hi Jig A Jig (Follow the Band)  
 (words & music: Sim Simmons, 1947)



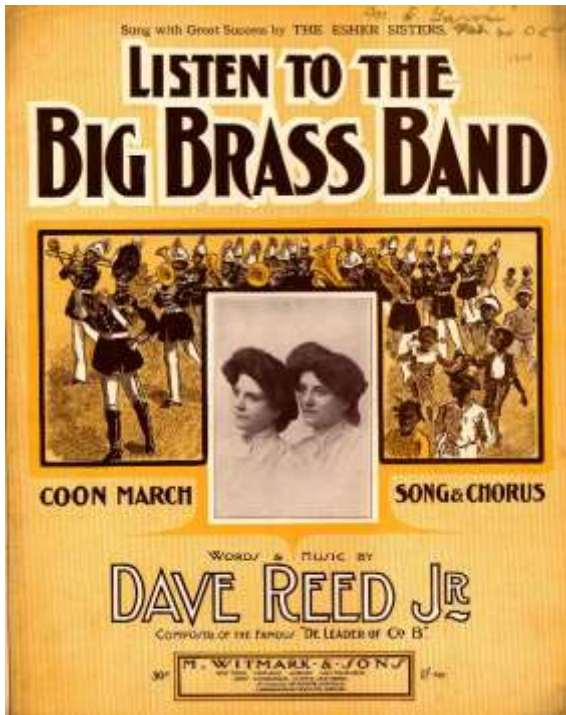
I'm Crazy About a Big Brass Band  
 (words & music: John B. Lowitz, c. 1906)



It Must Be Great To Be A General But I'd  
 Rather Lead the Band  
 (words: Will M. Hough & Frank R. Adams,  
 music: Jos E. Howard, 1910) - from the  
 musical comedy "Miss Nobody from  
 Starland"



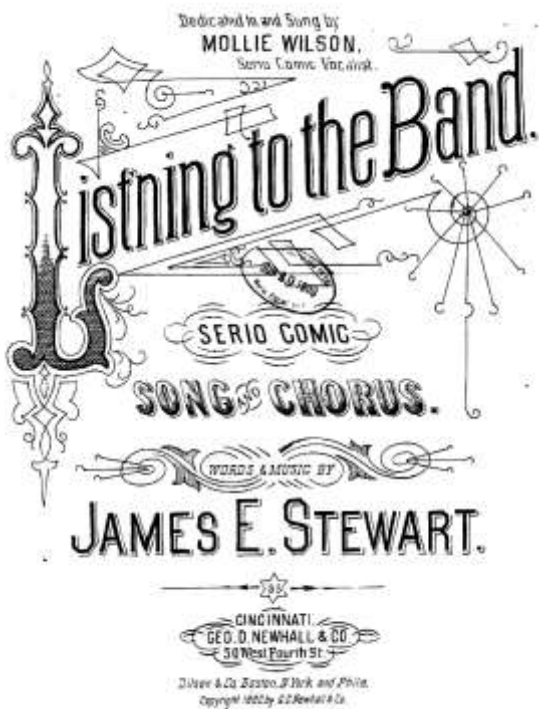
Lead Me To That Beautiful Band  
 (words: E. Ray Goetz, music: Irving Berlin,  
 1912) - "... just hear that slide trombone a-  
 blowin' for me, just hear those sweet cornets  
 all goin' for me..."



Listen to the Big Brass Band  
(words & music: Dave Reed, c.1910)



Listen To the German Band  
(words: Mack Gordon, music: Harry Revel, 1932)



Listening to the Band  
(words & music: James E. Stewart)

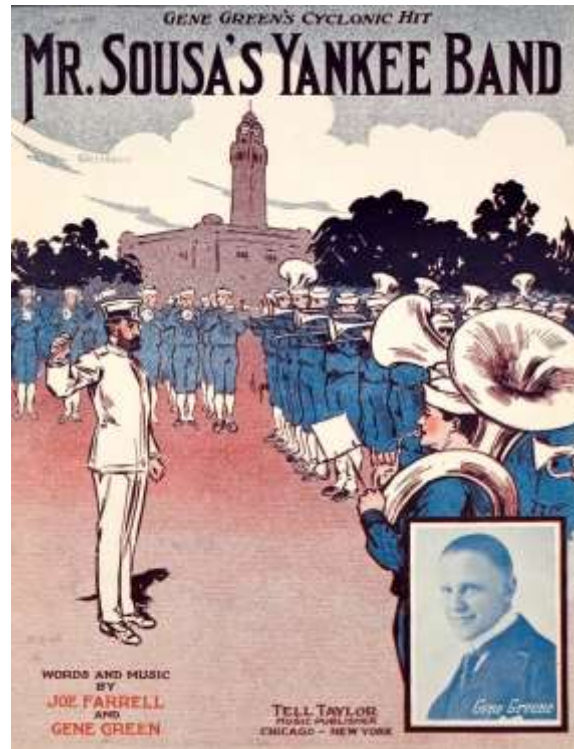


Marching with the Band  
(words & music: Ned Florence, 1874)





Miss Sousa Jr - March Two-Step  
(J.A. Bartlett, c.1895)



Mr. Sousa's Yankee Band  
(words: Joe Farrell, music: Gene Green, 1918)



Oh Listen to the Band  
(words: Aubrey Hopwood, music: Lionel Monckton, 1898)

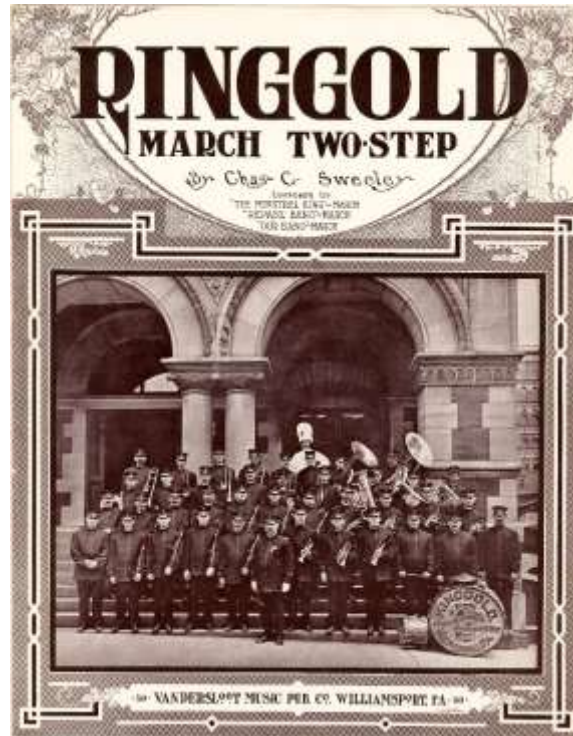


Our Band - March Two-Step  
(music: Charles C. Sweeley, 1910)

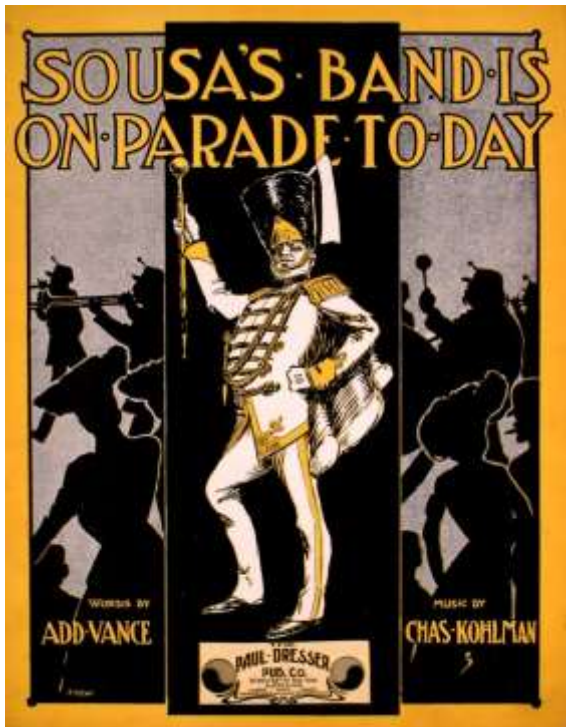




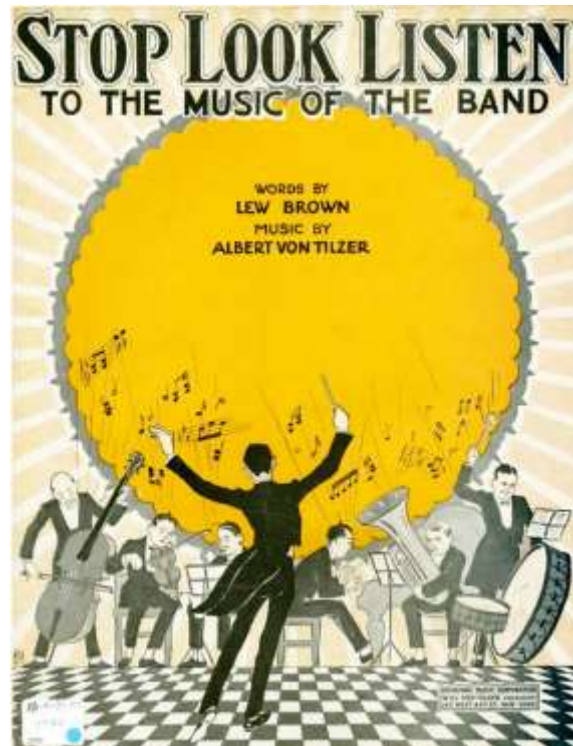
Repasz Band March  
(music: Charles C. Sweeney)



Ringgold March Two-Step  
(music: Charles C. Sweeley)



Sousa's Band is on Parade Today  
(words: Add Vance, music: Charles Kohlman,  
1905)

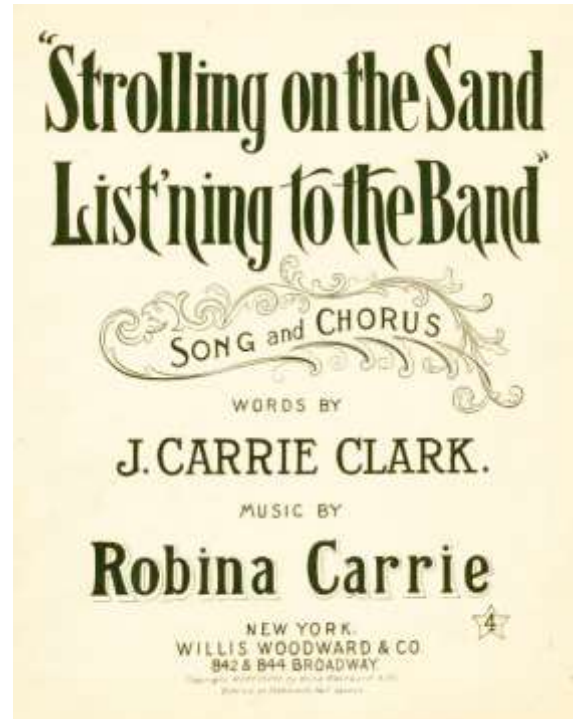


Stop Look Listen to the Music of the Band  
(words: Lew Brown, music: Albert von Tilzer)

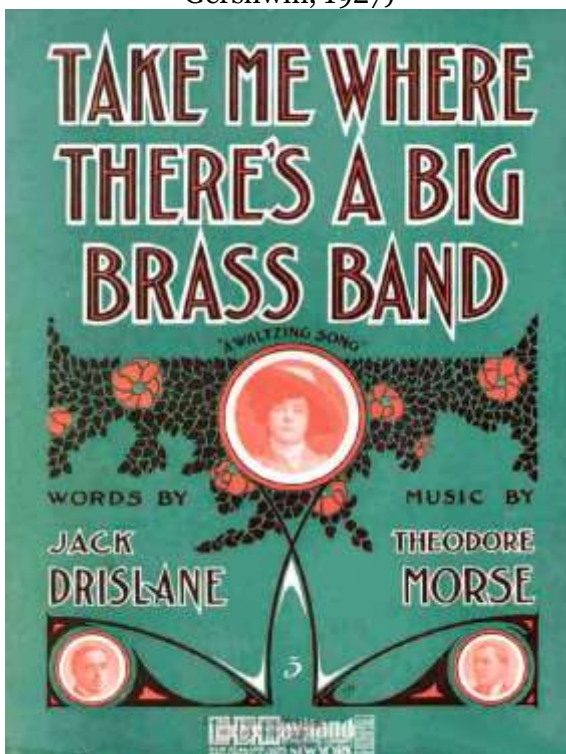




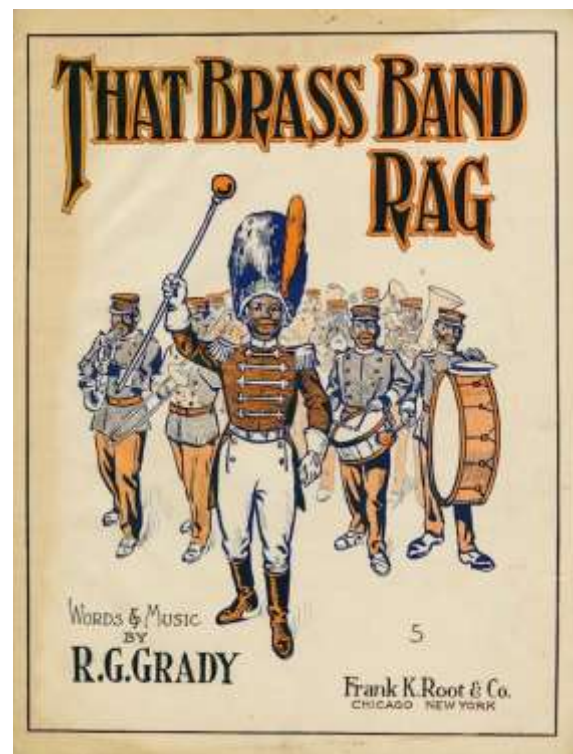
Strike Up the Band  
(lyrics: Ira Gershwin, music: George Gershwin, 1927)



Strolling on the Sand, List'ning to the Band  
(words: J. Carrie Clark, music: Robina Carrie, 1896)

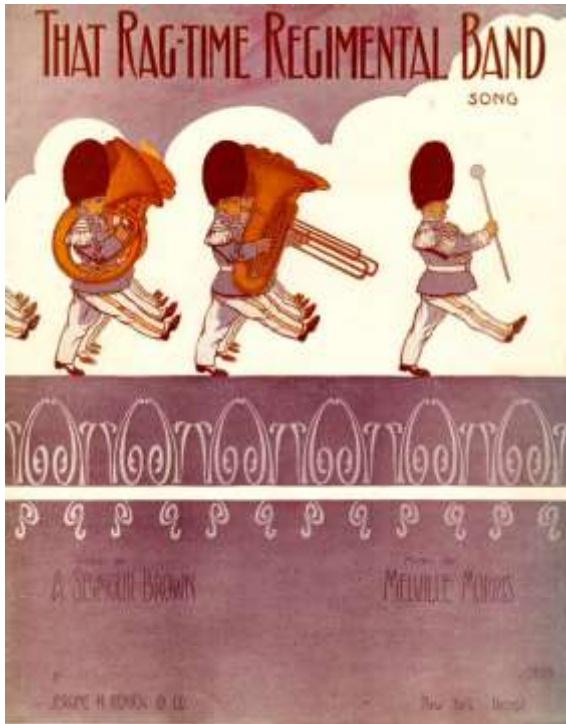


Take Me Where There's a Big Brass Band  
(words: Jack Drislane, music: Theodore Morse, 1907)



That Brass Band Rag  
(words & music: R.G. Grady, c.1910)

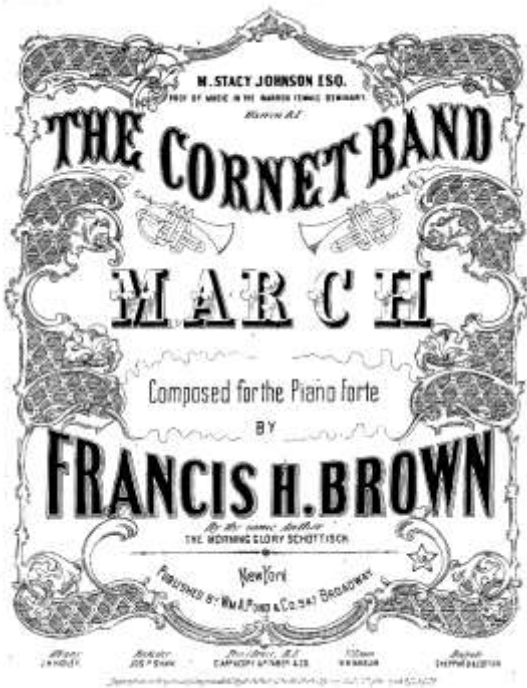




That Rag-Time Regimental Band  
 (words: A. Seymour Brown, music: Melville Morris, 1912)



The Bugle is the Sweetest of Them All  
 (words: Harry P. Moore, music: George Mitchell, 1908)



The Cornet Band March  
 (music: Francis H. Brown, 1884)



The Daughter of the Leader of the Band  
 (words: Sigmund B. Alexander, music: Summit L. Hecht, 1897)





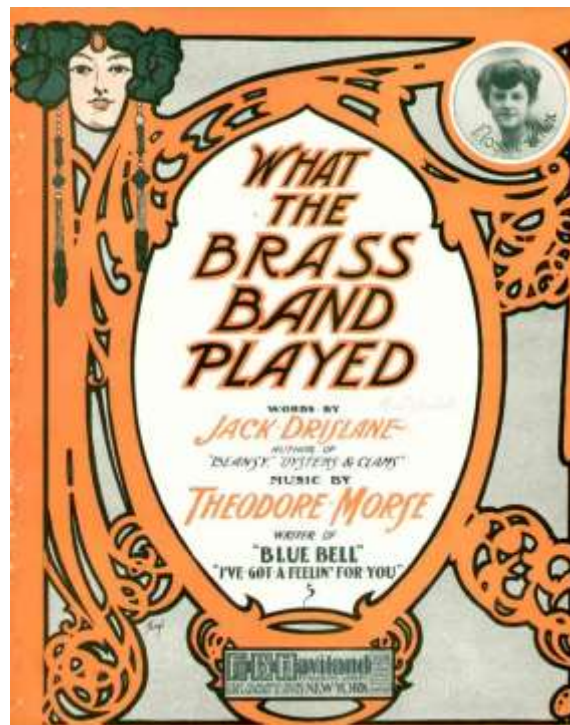
The Leader of the German Band  
 (words: Edward Madden, music: Theodore Morse, 1905)



The Village Band  
 (words: D.A. Esrom, music: Theodore Morse, c.1910)

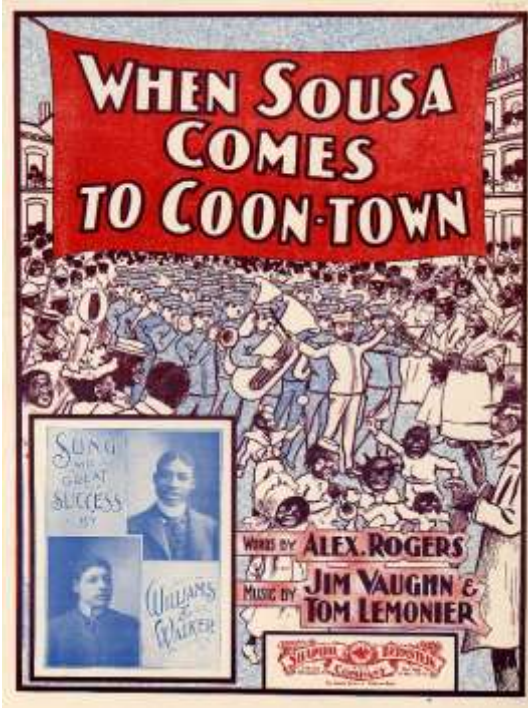


The Village Band  
 (words: Percy Edgar, music: Mart Fryberg, c.1910)

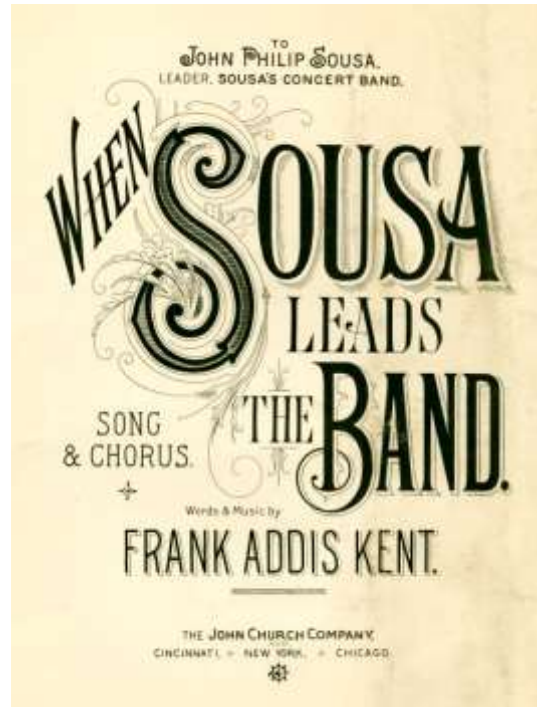


What the Brass Band Played  
 (words: Jack Drislane, music: Theodore Morse, 1904)





When Sousa comes to Coon-Town  
(words: Alex Rogers, music: Jim Vaughn & Tom Lemonier, 1902)



When Sousa Leads the Band  
(words: William Jerome, music: Charles Horwitz & Fred V. Bowers, 1900)

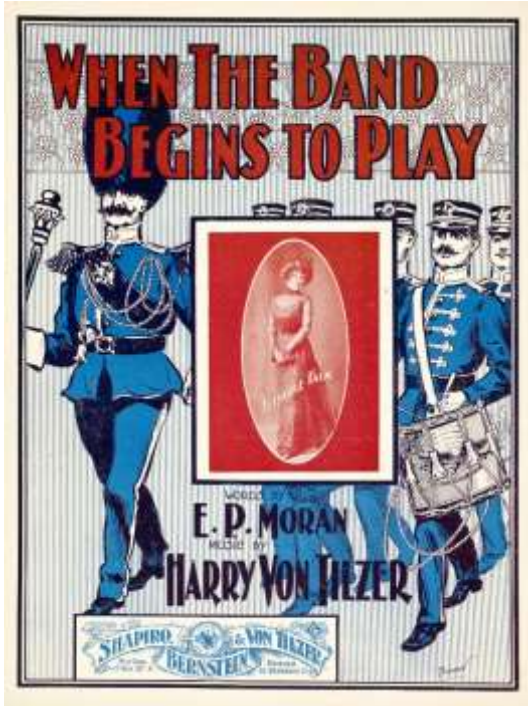


When Sousa Leads the Band  
(words & music: Frank Addis Kent, 1894)



When the Band Begins to Play  
(music & words: R.A. Brennan, 1871)





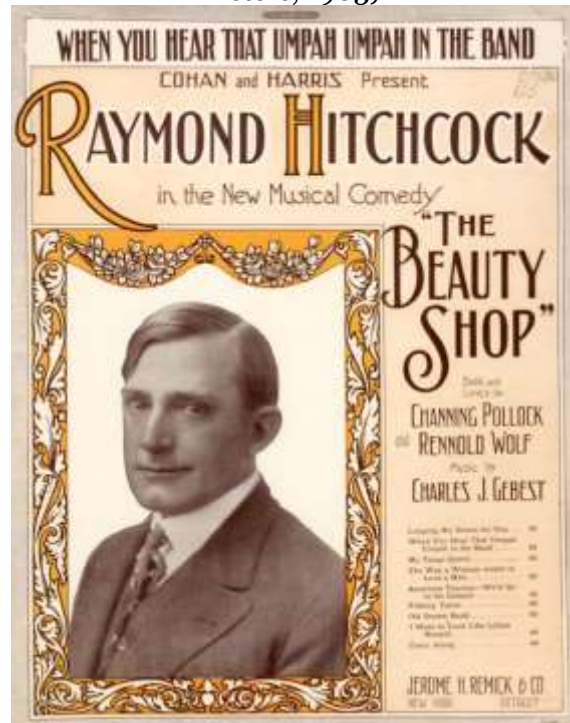
When the Band Begins To Play  
 (words: E.P. Moran, music: Harry von Tilzer,  
 1901)



When the Band was Playing Dixie  
 (words: Howard McCarver, music: Bert  
 Peters, 1903)



When the Village Band was Playing on the  
 Green  
 (words & music: R.G. Grady, 1912)



When You Hear That Um-pah Um-pah In the  
 Band  
 (words: Channing Pollock & Rennold Wolf,  
 music: Charles J. Gebest, 1913) - from the  
 musical comedy "The Beauty Shop"





When You Hear the Music in the Park  
(words: Ed P. Moran, music: Harry von  
Tilzer, 1902)



Why Don't the Band Play?  
(words: James Weldon Johnson & Bob Cole,  
music: John Rosamond, 1900)