

Periodic Table

Looking through the lens of Force Management at the intersection of the U.S. Army, Army Bands, and U.S. Culture from 1914-45

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the evolution of U.S. Army Bands from 1914 to 1945, amid societal and military changes. It explores organizational, mission, and role shifts in Army Bands through historical and archival research, against the backdrop of legislative, technological, and cultural changes. The analysis highlights the influence of World Wars 1 and 2 on Army Bands' roles in morale, recruiting, and tradition preservation. It also addresses debates on the justification, mission, and utility of Army Bands during military reorganizations and societal shifts. The findings underscore the interaction of the Army and Army Bands in shaping public perception of both while emphasizing Army Bands' perceived relevance to both military cohesion and cultural heritage. Additionally, the study assesses cultural perceptions, military strategies, and congressional oversight affecting Army Bands. It reveals changing societal attitudes and evolving roles of Army Bands in ceremonial and combat scenarios. Ultimately, despite their value as military assets, Army Bands are shown not to fulfill direct combat mission requirements.

Keywords:

Army Bands
Force Management
Tables of Organization
Tables of Equipment

"...where is the evidence that the hundreds of millions that we spend on military bands, make us safer from terrorism or better able to fight a war? Everyone likes military bands, so few ask the question..."

-The Obama Political Appointee Primer (Eigen, 2009)

RATIONALE

This study explores the evolving relationships of the U.S. Army, Army Bands, and U.S. culture through a Force Management lens. Force Management, encapsulated in the ends-ways-means concept, involves translating law into strategy, prioritizing requirements, approving capabilities, calibrating resources, and managing risks (USAWC, 2021, p. viii). By tracing this perspective that begins with the U.S. Constitution and proceeds through the President's National Security Strategy down to individual tasks, we aim to understand better how the Army's evolving mission has affected the requirements of Army Bands. This examination includes congressional appropriations testimony, historical Tables of Organization for the Army and Army Bands, and historical doctrine to illuminate how changes in the Army reflected American culture and affected Army Bands. Furthermore, this study addresses a gap in historical scholarship by providing a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and debates surrounding Army Bands' justification, mission clarity, and operational utility amidst shifting military priorities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that guided this investigation were:

1. How did the Army's evolving mission shape its organizational structure, including those of Army Bands?
2. In what ways have the mission and structure of Army Bands evolved?
3. What changes occurred with the types and numbers of Army Bands personnel and performers?

1775: *Periodic Table* 1914-45: *Army, Bands, Culture*

ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF FORCE MANAGEMENT

To address these questions, we examined primary and secondary sources documenting the origin and evolution of Army Tables of Organization. The U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) [History of Tables of Distribution and Allowances \(TDA\) Units](#) (1995) highlights the Army "always" distinguished between tactical field organizations and task-based organizations (CMH, 1995). Tables of Organization for tactical units predate WW1, and Tables of Distribution and Allowances (TDAs) for task-based units followed in the 1930s.

In 1914, Army Chief of Staff MG Leonard Wood supervised the creation of the *1914 Field Service Regulations*. The *1914 Field Service Regulations* emphasized that the Army was "...primarily organized for offensive operations..." (War Department, 1916a). *Tables of Organizations 1914* was derived from the *1914 Field Service Regulations*. The *Tables of Organization 1914* presented the personnel, grades, equipment, and transportation for land forces, coast artillery forces, overseas forces, and support personnel required to achieve the practical work of offensive operations (see Table 1). MG Wood asserted the *Tables of Organization 1914* was the "...authoritative source for all matters relating to organization..." (War Department (WD), 1914) and the clarity that flowed from a defined Army purpose to capabilities performed by organizations of personnel and equipment in specific ratios and formations that were replicated multiple times, e.g., capacities, was a crucial advancement toward Army enterprise Force Management.

After WW1, Army leaders refined the Army's mission (see Figure 1) by including strategic and tactical levels. The mission priority was still offensive operations and clarifying levels enabled opportunities for more effective organizational design, staffing, equipping, and training.

Additionally, although the *1914 Field Service Regulations Appendix 8: Sound Signals* mentioned only "...bugle, trumpet, and drum..." (WD, 1916a), the *Tables of Organization 1914* authorized fourteen (14) Coast Artillery bands on the "Outline of Organization" opening gatefold and identified multiple bands in the body of the text.

Personnel of brigade.													Mounts.		Transportation.				Automatic machine rifles.	Other small arms.	
Commissioned.								Enlisted.				Civilian.	Riding horses.	Riding mules.	Wagons.		Mules.			Rifles.	Pistols (or revolvers).
Brigadier general.	Colonels.	Lieutenant colonels.	Majors.	Captains.	First lieutenants.	Second lieutenants.	Chaplains.	Total.	Infantry.	Hospital Corps.	Quartermaster Corps.	Total.			Civilian clerks.	Total.	In combat trains.	In baggage section.			

BANDS AND TABLES OF ORGANIZATION – 1910s

Management approach of that decade, met basic orchestration norms, and were seemingly sufficient for the Army's required activities. Examples of band utilization from the 1910s included explicit mentions or assumptions of playing music:

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1916: Combat division bands' music mission was not articulated in the Tables of Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces; however, the combat division band was to be "...trained for sanitary work..." (CMH, 1947)

1917: Non-deploying bands, such as the Tenth Field Artillery Band, may have had litter training; however, some bands had unusual additional duties:

...when I was in command of a headquarters company in the Tenth Field Artillery the larger percentage of my ordinary enlisted men were band men, and I was delivered some dead horses and told to bury them, and I had to call on the band for a certain proportion of those men. After they had spent four hours on the rocky soil of Tobyhanna [burying those dead horses](#), and then came back to play in the band the colonel of the regiment wondered what was the matter with the playing of the Star Spangled Banner...Their hands had become so stiff that they could not play it properly... (69th Congress, 1927)

1918: *Provisional Infantry Training Manual 1918: Part I. Minimum Specifications for Trained Infantry*. The band element had to expect litter-bearing work (WD, 1918a)

1918: Training Circular No. 24 Program of Training for Headquarters Company, Sanitary Troops, Band, Trains and Military Police of an Infantry Regiment. Combined Training of a Division grouped "sanitary troops and band" (WD, 1918b), and musicians could expect a mixture of music work and training followed by support to the organizational surgeon.

These examples highlight the recurring evidence of a deployable or expeditionary band's wartime mission – supporting medical personnel without conditional specification. Although these examples present some bands' activities, the sum of prescribed activities is not a mission; Army leadership understood this concept before drafting the 1914 *Field Service Regulations* and 1914 *Tables of Organization*. The Army's exemplar of mission shaping a Table of Organization should have enabled all Army leaders, including Army Bands leaders, to communicate a clear and coherent enterprise mission.

In 1916, President Wilson signed the *National Defense Act (NDA) of 1916*, which included allocations of musicians by grade for Engineer, Coast Artillery, and line unit bands. The *NDA of 1916* specified numbers of bands allocated to the Engineers (1 ea.) and Coast Artillery Corps (18 ea.). These quantities were tabulated in *General Orders (GO) No. 50* (WD, 1916b). Table 2, from *GO no. 50* (WD, 1916b) included band spaces and field musician bugler spaces for signaling and ceremonial duties (Gleason, 2006).

Grades of enlisted men.	Head- quarters troop.	Machine- gun troop.	Supply troop.	Troop in squadron.
Regimental sergeant major.....	1			
Squadron sergeant major.....	3			
Color sergeant.....	2			
Regimental supply sergeant.....			3	
First sergeant.....	11	1	1	1
Mess sergeant.....	1	1	1	1
Supply sergeant.....	1	1		1
Stable sergeant.....	1	1	1	1
Sergeant.....	1	5		5
Corporal.....		6	2	8
Cook.....	2	2	2	2
Bugler.....		2		2
Horseshoer.....	1	2	2	2
Saddler.....	1	1	2	1
Mechanic.....		1		
Wagoner.....			37	
Private, first class.....	2	12		10
Private.....	9	35		36
Band leader.....	1			
Assistant band leader.....	1			
Sergeant bugler.....	1			
Band sergeant.....	2			
Band corporal.....	4			
Musician, first class.....	2			
Musician, second class.....	4			
Musician, third class.....	13			
Total.....	54	70	51	70

¹ Drum major.

Table SEQ Table * ARABIC 2 -Enlisted personnel in the several units of a Cavalry Regiment (WD, 1916b)

A year later the Soldiers of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) went to Europe to fight in WW1. The AEF was comprised of 31 combat divisions that arrived between 1917-18, alongside five skeletonized (i.e. only HQs staffed) Infantry Divisions in 1918 (CMH, 1988). Division HQs were assigned only two buglers; however, Infantry, Cavalry, and Field Artillery brigades were authorized varying numbers of buglers and three 28-soldier bands, one per regiment. Additionally, thirty-seven (37) Pioneer Infantry Regiments (PIR) comprised of

approximately 3500 Soldiers, including a 49-Soldier band and 24 buglers (CMH, 1988) were authorized to the AEF. Given thirty-one (31) divisions consisting of two (2) Infantry brigades, one (1) heavy artillery brigade, and one (1) Pioneer Infantry Regiment, it is conceivable that each division may have had 5-10 bands, depending on the division configuration, with a conservative sum of approximately 100 U.S. Army Bands.

The General Headquarters of the AEF published *GENERAL ORDERS no. 183* (McAndrew) on October 1, 1918, that augmented regimental band authorizations by 22 spaces, resulting in bands of 49 Soldiers with an O-1 or O-2 band leader. However, this change would not last long because the armistice ending WW1 was signed forty-one (41) days later, on November 11, 1918.

Throughout WW1, the Army's manpower expanded to four million Soldiers, but after the armistice, the Army took only four months to discharge "...1.6 million officers and enlisted men" (Neumann & Makowicki, 2019). Given the significant and rapid downsizing, sustaining 50-space bands was unlikely due to discharges, inactivations, manning, and utilization. Some early evidence for decreased band spaces includes a 1922 published grade structure for the Twenty-Second Infantry Regiment band section (Smith, O., Wassell, Appleton, Palmer, & Smith, W., 1922) that listed each member by rank. The list closely resembled the *National Defense Act of 1916* (64th Congress) 28-space line unit band. Additional evidence was published in 1924 by the *War Department Militia Bureau Circular No. 34/A18*, which specified the Recognition Strength, Maintenance Strength, and Peace Strength for six (6) configurations of bands attached to eight (8) distinct parent units. The six Peace-Strength (Sale, 1925) configurations were 48, 35, 31, 29, 28, and 19 musicians. More evidence of downsizing was published in 1927 in the *Army and Navy Register*, which identified regular band strengths in six (6) other band configurations:

36, 35, 32, 31, 29, and 28 musicians. In total, the Army identified eight (8) configurations (48, 36, 35, 32, 31, 29, 28, and 19-space) of bands between 1925-27. Evidence of differentiated missions, and methods to determine personnel, equipment, and allocation guidance for each configuration has not been identified.

After WW1, Army senior leaders refined how the Army's mission was realized operationally by incorporating newly gained technological and tactical knowledge into combat formations' organizational design, staffing, equipping, and training. It is reasonable to believe that leaders likely prioritized modernizing combat formations over systematic band review, especially during a period of decreasing funds for the military. Without differentiated Table of Organization missions for each band configuration (Sale, 1925 and *Army and Navy Register*, 1927), tracking decisions and examining rationales for how or why band formations were determined is not possible and suggests a lack of or no enterprise systematic oversight. However, after WW1, Army Bands leaders had an opportunity to modernize the enterprise Army Bands mission, similarly to the Army proper, with echelon-level structures, equipment, and training.

DEVELOPMENT – 1920s

Given this background, it is not known to what degree the Army Music School Commandant, Captain R.G. Sherman, and his staff studied available Army documents while preparing *Training Regulation 130-5 The Band: Organization, Duties, and Musical Instruction* (WD, 1926). *TR 130-5* attempted to clarify the mission of Army Bands (see Figure 2) which, seemingly, began with an allusion to [BG Edward L. Munson, MD](#) and [The Management of Men: A Handbook on the Systematic Development of Morale and the Control of Human Behavior](#) (Munson & Miller, 1921). Following the allusion, the Army Music School leaders asserted Army

Bands had a "well established" mission (WD, 1926) that was followed by two activities: ceremonial support and musical entertainment.

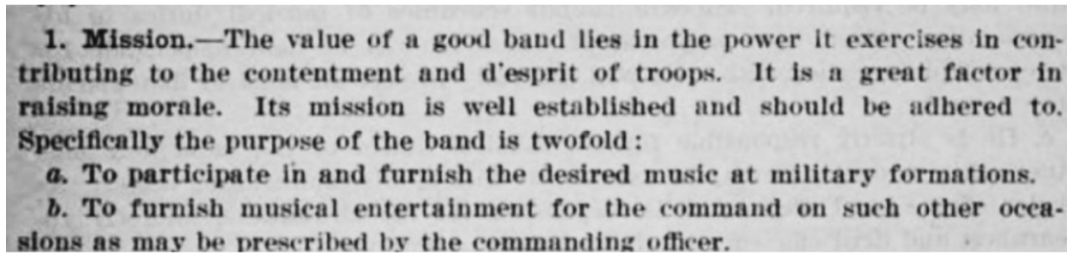


Figure 2 – TR 130-5 (WD, 1926) Band Mission

Army Music School leaders did a disservice in *TR 130-5* by claiming bands had a "well established" (WD, 1926) mission. *AR 130-5* readers in 1926 may or may not have known where to find the "well-established" mission. Written evidence is scant suggesting the assertion may indeed have been widely known or that the authors were overconfident. Overtly stating the mission would have reduced ambiguity and might have enabled military leaders to alleviate some financial and social concerns about bands during congressional hearings that followed.

Army Bands' mission clarification might have occurred passively during the 1928 Army Bandmasters Senate Subcommittee Hearings and the 1932 *Engineer Field Manual: Volume 1 – Engineer Troops*. During the 70th Congress (1928), the 1928 Adjutant General's Office advised of the "...great need..." for bands to provide music and the engineer manual that stated, "...The primary mission of the band is to furnish music to aid the morale..." (Chief of Engineers, 1932). Given these clues then, collectively, the Army had a "...great need..." (70th Congress, 1928) for Army Bands to "...furnish music..." (Chief of Engineers, 1932) by "...participating in..." formations (WD, 1926) and entertaining audiences, such as Soldiers in "...rest camps...", patients in hospitals, Soldiers and civilians in concerts (70th Congress, 1928) and the local

command (WD, 1926), as well as contributing to morale, recruiting, and the publicization of War Bonds (70th Congress, 1928): this was the *prima facie* Army Bands mission.

The summary of the late 1920s was that the Army needed bands to make music for ceremonies, entertainment, morale, Army recruiting, and the nation's economic interests. Practical band work was mainly aligned to the tactical level, with some operational level work, but evidence of thought about tactical-strategic echelons and level of war was scant. Instead, Army Bands in the 1920s focused on congressional initiatives to restructure bands by commissioning all bandmasters. Army Bands had the Army's exemplar of military need and multiple opportunities to communicate Army-needs arguments; however, band analogical arguments comparing U.S. bands to other countries' bands did not articulate that Army need.

Although this method of reasoning may have worked in 1911 to help establish the Army Music School, post-WW1 Congresses, and the Army scrutinized military rationales and expenses very closely (Combat Studies Institute, 1999). For example, in one discussion to commission bandmasters during the [70th Congress, SASC](#) (1928) [BG Campbell King \(IN\), ACoS G-1](#) emphasized "...The purpose of the military organization is to fight, not to make music. Music is a useful thing. It helps the morale of the Military Establishment, but it is subordinate to many other things...and we believe the Military Establishment can go on, and very satisfactorily, under the present arrangement..." (70th Congress, 1928). King's unambiguous testimony reminded listeners of the fundamental, violent nature of the Army while obliquely stating that increasing band leaders' grades from enlisted or warrant officer to commissioned officers would not enhance the practical work of fighting.

DEVELOPMENT – 1930s

As the Army improved needs-based practices with financial scrutiny from congress, it is reasonable to suspect an absence of justification to support eight distinct band Tables of Organization would draw attention. Congressional attention to expenses incurred by Reserve Bands (70th Congress, 1928) and Regular Army Bands (72nd Congress, 1932) may have resulted in the testimony by Quartermaster General John L. DeWitt during the 72nd Congressional War Department appropriations hearings who advised that all bands were authorized only 28 musicians. Additionally, during these hearings, representatives examined military leaders' understanding of the purpose of military bands. General Benjamin D. Foulois, Chief of the Army Air Corps (AAC), testified that AAC bands "...just furnish(es) entertainment for the garrison..." and were "...about as useful as the spurs we wear with our uniforms, in so far as the actual requirements of our flying work..." (72nd Congress, 1932). Infantry Colonel William H. Waldron, Executive Officer of the Militia Bureau highlighted the perceived need of armies to "parade sometimes" (72nd Congress, 1932) because Hannibal and other leaders paraded.

During these same hearings, Major General Stephen O. Fuqua, the Chief of Infantry, testified about the Army mission, enemy threats and capabilities, the Infantry mission and battle objectives, and the specific tasks to justify why the Infantry must be "...organized, trained, armed, and equipped..." (72nd Congress, 1932). This testimony exemplified understanding the Army mission and the operational environment to show Infantry needs. Notably, bands and representatives did not present similar logical testimony, clear purpose, and consistent data to the House of Representatives, which likely served to create or reinforce perceptions that Army bands were niceties rather than requirements.

Socially and economically, the tension between the pursuit of military requirement and "...the perpetuation of military custom and tradition..." was explored by government investigator Robert Wohlforth in [*Our \\$300,000,000 Skeleton*](#) (1933). He identified "...grossly inefficient, sprawling" War Department spending, including "...snappier and costlier uniforms, bigger and better bands..." that, he claimed, fostered largesse instead of "...defense efficiency..." (1933).

Further, in another house discussion about commissioning band leaders, a civilian spokesperson from the American Federation of Musicians' (AFM) executive officer was chosen to advocate for commissioned officers as Army Bands leaders. The choice of a civilian representative, especially the executive officer of a union, to testify on behalf of Army Bands may have been shrewd because of the "...pro-union stance of the Roosevelt administration and from legislation enacted by Congress..." (Library of Congress, 2024) earlier in the decade. However, the oddity of a civilian advocating for a military officer was axiomatic, too. Although, the representative may have presented novel arguments to support commissioning, he also substituted red herring arguments for the Army's need. The AFM executive officer asserted that making band leaders commissioned officers would:

- (1) Increase the morale, efficiency, and combat quality of our Army,
- (2) Cause our people to take even greater pride and interest in our Military Establishment and,
- (3) Stimulate, by reason of better governmental recognition, a greater love of this exalting art in our Nation at large. (75th Congress, 1938).

These assertions for positive outcomes as a function of grade were not presented with supporting evidence and may have been perceived favorably or as logical fallacies. Ultimately, the result of choices in speaker and the unsupported arguments may have reinforced

perceptions of nicety over necessity. Still, Army Bands continued to advocate for commissioned officers during the 76th Congress in 1939 and sought additional provisions for a new Chief Bandmaster position without articulating the need for a new position.

Simultaneously, the U.S. Army Band, commanded by Captain Thomas F. Darcy, oversaw the preparation and publication of *Training Manual 2000-10, The Band, Musical Instruction*. *TM 2000-10* emphasized the priority of band activities:

The mission of a military band as prescribed in BFM [Basic Field Manual], Volume VIII, is well established, but the primary object "To participate in and furnish the desired music at military formations," is frequently subordinated by other activities. Training for concerts, dances, and other forms of musical entertainment must always be considered of secondary importance. (May 22, 1939)

TM 2000-10 may have included prioritized activities as an improvement, but thirteen years after the publication of *TR 130-5*, this *TM* did not clarify the Band's mission for technical or casual readers. Additionally, because the Army "never completed" (Odom, 1999) *Basic Field Manual, Volume VIII Operations of Combined Arms (Small Units)*, CPT Darcy's claim of a "well established" (1939) mission was less than credible.

While Army Bands continued to seek Congressional approval for commissioned officers without an articulated need, the Army conceptualized and tested a triangular division force structure to enable better offensive operations. This reorganization would affect Army Bands. However, in November 1939, Captain Howard Bronson, the president of the United States Army and Navy Bandsmen's Association, authored the article "New Role of Army Bands" that addressed the most critical band concern of the triangular division reorganization: consolidating "...two regimental bands to make one division band..." (ANJ, 1939 Nov 11). Bronson neither addressed the bigger picture of why the Army was reorganizing nor delved into technological

issues, such as transportation and communication, that might affect band operations.

Ultimately, Bronson did not clarify how bands were to be a "useful adjunct" (ANJ, 1939 Nov 11) to the Army. Instead, Bronson focused on company-level efficiency challenges resulting from a "clash of personalities" (ANJ, 1939 Nov 11).

Further, Bronson suggested some band problems were too "...difficult for the "lay-mind" to grasp significance..." because the layman was not "...truly a musician..." (ANJ, 1939 Nov 11). Ultimately, Bronson's solutions for which no specific problems were identified, involved more rank and bureaucracy, including advocating for a new Chief Bandmaster position to provide unspecified "...valuable assistance to the Chief of Staff..." (ANJ, 1939 Nov 11). Before his article was published; however, the new Army Chief of Staff "...approved the triangular division reorganization in mid-September 1939, after the start of the war in Europe" (Combat Studies Institute, 1999). Additionally, Bronson omitted any reference to the two-month-old war.

Six weeks later, another article in the *Army Navy Journal* mentioned the War Department was "...working on tables of organization to cover the new system of Army bands..." (ANJ, 1939 Dec 23). These tables were part of the triangular division force structure field-tested from February-August of 1939 (Combat Studies Institute, 1999). However, band "duties...in war" (ANJ, 1939 Dec 23) were not identified (or likely not publicized) and subsequent band force structure was not socialized. However, rumors probably continued.

In February of 1940, the *Army Navy Journal* urged the Senate to take "...favorably and early action on the House bill..." (ANJ, 1940 Feb 2) for commissioned officers and the new Chief Bandmaster billet. A week later, Warrant Officer Bandmaster Arthur S. Haynes published an *ANJ* article titled "[What's the matter with the band?](#)". Haynes reiterated the positive outcomes of

music (Munson & Miller, 1921); however, he also presented thirteen problems facing bands (see Table 3), some of which may not have needed publication. Haynes also avoided broader concerns, such as reorganization and the war.

Above Company-level Problems	Company-level Problems
Insufficient modernization	Lax discipline
Insufficient rank for musicians	Faulty alignment
Absence of General Staff representation	Outmoded programming
Inadequacy of 28-piece bands	Lack of “modern” idiom capability
Consolidation of field musicians into bands	Unfashionable uniforms
Improvement of enterprise administration	Unsuitable march music
Abolishment of Army Music School	

Table 3 – WO Haynes’ 13 Problems

Had Bronson (ANJ, 1939 Nov 11) focused on aligning Army Bands’ mission and structure with the Army’s mission instead of emphasizing personality clashes, Haynes’s (1940) article might have provided some justification for commissioned officers. Additionally, astute readers likely noticed that both Bronson (1939) and Haynes (1940) claimed music aided military efficiency, while both articles presented inefficiencies of bands realized through personality clashes, discipline, and marching alignment. Ultimately, these public discussions occurred against the background of Army reorganization, the 1938 Anschluss, and the September 1, 1939 Wehrmacht invasion of Poland, which U.S. Army leaders were watching closely.

In March of 1940, LTC [Dager](#) informed Command and General Staff School *Military Review* readers about the “consolidation of regimental bands to form divisional or station bands” that was part of the Modernization Board’s “...new infantry division design...” (Combat Studies Institute, 1999). Three months later in June, President Franklin Roosevelt vetoed the bill to commission band officers, and he justified his veto with a new interpretation to a nearly twenty-year-old logic, “The legislation constitutes a novel departure in the organization of the

Army for which there is no need from a military standpoint.” (Congressional Record, 1940) The full letter can be seen in Figure 3.

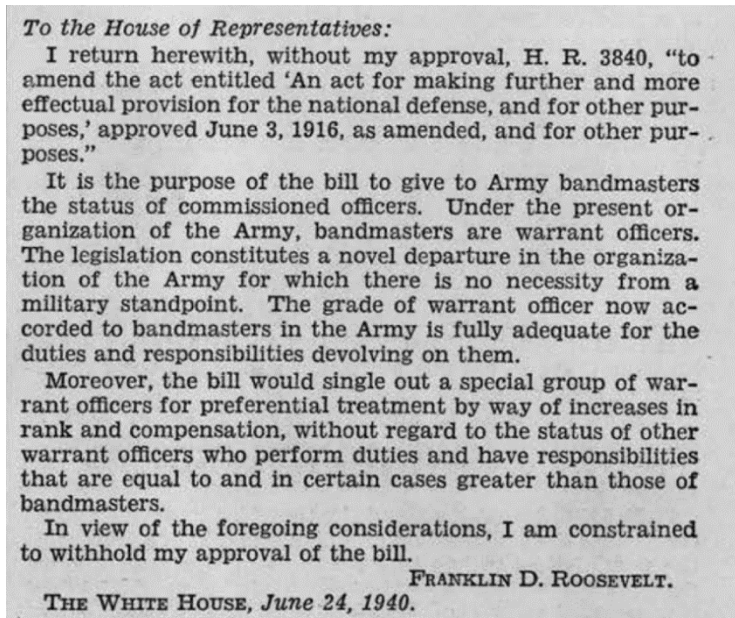


Figure 3 – President Roosevelt's veto statement

Some Army leaders understood President Roosevelt's message very clearly. On March 31, 1941, *FM 28-5 The Band* was published, superseding the 1939 version. This version was "prepared under direction of the Chief of Infantry, the Chief of Cavalry, and the Army Band" (WD, 1941) and included modifications to the Army Bands' mission statement. (Text edits that vary from the superseded version are in italics, while new text is in red font.)

Military bands provide a powerful means to commanding officers for stimulating and maintaining the morale of their units. In addition, good bands contribute directly to the contentment and well-being of the troops. It follows, therefore, that bands, as military units, must maintain high standards of military efficiency, and that their musical performance must be characterized by its excellence and by its spirit. Specifically, the mission of the band is twofold: a. To participate in and to furnish the desired music at military formations. b. To furnish musical entertainment for the command on such occasions as may be prescribed by the commanding officer.

Less than a year later, Congress declared war, and the Army Bands' mission statement underwent further modifications to include combat duties.

Military bands provide a powerful means to commanding officers for stimulating and maintaining the morale of their units. Good bands contribute directly to the contentment and well-being of the troops. Band personnel may be suitably employed in the performance of those combat duties for which their arms and training fit them. It follows, therefore, that bands, as military units, must maintain high standards of military efficiency, and that their musical performance must be characterized by its excellence and by its spirit. Specifically, the missions of the band are—

- a. To participate in and to furnish the desired music at military formations.*
- b. To furnish musical entertainment for the command on such occasions as may be prescribed by the commanding officer.*
- c. To perform suitable combat duties as directed by the commander of the unit to which the band is organically assigned or attached. (C1, April 22, 1942)*

COMBAT DUTIES. - During combat the band may be employed on any of the following missions:

- a. To provide or assist in providing local security of headquarters and bivouacs. This employment includes antitank defense and defense against troops transported by air.
- b. To assist the medical detachment by serving as litter bearers.
- c. To serve as prisoner of war escorts and to guard prisoners in unit areas.
- d. To assist in handling supplies at dumps and train bivouac areas.

Qualitatively, the available evidence suggests the combat tasks bands performed in WW2 were seemingly more varied than what bands did during WW1 (see Table 4).

This variety reflected the changing nature of war and the Army's need for versatile manpower. Tasks such as antitank defense, air defense, HQ/bivouac security, and POW escorts/guards indicate utilization for frontline duties and security operations.

Additionally, POW work and handling supplies at dumps integrated bands into combat support roles within combat zones.

YEAR	COMBAT TASK	YEAR	COMBAT TASK
1915	litter squads	1942	suitable combat duties of the parent unit
1916	trained for sanitary work		suitable duties based on arms and training

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1918	litter bearers		HQ/bivouac security
1918	support to the organizational surgeon		antitank defense
			air defense
			litter bearers
			POW escorts
			POW guards
			supplies at dumps

Table 4 – Combat tasks for bands during WW1 and WW2

Finally, in March of 1943, all Army Bands assigned to Divisions had an increase in TOE personnel strength to 58 (56 enlisted + 2 Warrant Officers), although Army Air Force bands and Army Service Forces bands “...stationed at ports, staging areas, general hospitals, redistribution stations, and certain important military posts...” (Helbig, 1966) were still authorized only 28 musicians. Additionally, the Triangular Division planning evolved from “...11,485...to 15,514...to 14,253...” (Combat Studies Institute, 1999) spaces to address operational needs, including that of bands:

The AGF tables of March 1943 cut the headquarters company 50 percent, bringing it almost back to the strength of June 1941, through removal of vehicles and drivers, economy in orderlies, and abolition of the defense platoon. The 56-man band was assigned, as an additional duty, the local protection of division headquarters. (CMH, 1947)

The Triangular Division lasted through WW2 and was eventually replaced in the mid-1950s by the Pentomic Division.

ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How did the Army’s evolving mission shape its organizational structure, including those of Army Bands?
 2. In what ways have the mission and structures of Army Bands evolved?
 3. What changes occurred in the types and numbers of Army Bands personnel and performers?
-
1. Between 1914-45, Army leaders demonstrated increased self-awareness by studying evolving technological threats and tactical challenges to shape Army capabilities needed

to meet constitutional requirements via a definite strategy, i.e., its mission, with prioritized enterprise structures amidst fiscal constraints. The modernization of Army equipment decreased Army Bands' functional involvement in direct troop support activities, such as road marches and acoustic signaling. Additionally, to address more significant and complex threats in WW2, the size of the U.S. Army nearly doubled from WW1, and many bands were activated. In WW1, Army Bands were often integrated into a higher HQs company as an element and a minimum total estimate of 100 Army Bands during WW1 is reasonable. Comparatively, possibly several hundred separate bands existed during WW2, and these were identified from primary sources such as station lists, administrative orders, and statuses of organizations. The quantity of Army bands quantities increased toward the end of WW2, likely in conjunction with increasing overall troop strengths.

2. As a result of the Army's improved mission clarity between 1914-45, the mission of Army Bands became more refined. Field musicians, i.e., musical clerks who were able to be assigned to almost any kind of unit but were not assigned to Army Bands, became obsolete because of technological changes. Army Bands assumed some of the practical work of ceremonies and possibly vestigial signaling that field musicians did. The original utilization statements of Army Bands included activities such as ceremonies, entertainment, support to medical personnel, and other work as a function of command. Prior to and during WW2, the mission of Army Bands utilized bands at any echelon as a social tool that could also perform specific wartime duties. The mission of

bands was primarily tactical, and there is scant evidence of the *need* that justified different sizes of bands.

3. The relationship with parent companies of Army Bands shifted with the changing Army structures. Bands became separate companies instead of elements of HQ companies, which might have been part of the reason bands lobbied Congress for commissioned officers. Individual field musicians – bugler, drummer, and fifer – were assigned to many different types of units, and an initiative to assign field musicians to bands began. Regimental bands merged to become Division bands. Army Bands and Army band personnel increased toward the height of both wars. Inactivations of Army Bands happened quickly after both World Wars.

SUMMARY OF EVOLVING RELATIONSHIPS OF THE ARMY, BANDS, AND CULTURE

- Changes in the Army's structure impacted band configurations, highlighting the interconnectedness of military organization and musical units.
- Congressional scrutiny of military expenses influenced Army Bands' organizational structure, resulting in downsizing and reevaluation to meet perceived military needs.
- Debates over commissioning band leaders revealed needs-based competition within the Army, including the role of military musicians.
- Integration of new technologies by the Army affected the roles and responsibilities of Army Bands.
- Shifts in the Army Bands' mission during WW2 included deeper integration into broader military operations, reflecting a degree of changing cultural attitudes towards their versatility.

- Military bands were acknowledged for their recruitment support and promotion of civilian patriotism in addition to ceremonies and entertainment.
- Changes in band doctrine reflected efforts to standardize and professionalize military bands, demonstrating an intersection of cultural expectations, military efficiency, and organizational development.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

1. Total Army Analysis is the process through which Army senior leaders make decisions about what capabilities, forces and capacities are needed to defeat, neutralize, and destroy the United States' most significant threats. In 2024, Army leaders have significantly more data, advisement, awareness, and constraints during TAA to examine the Army's mission and the Army Bands' mission to use when recommending modification of the force's structures to provide the best changes to achieve the Army's mission. Force Management decisions occur in a resource-constrained, no-growth environment in which every Soldier and every program is prioritized at the expense of some other program. Army Senior Leader decisions to require-and-fund, require-and-not-fund, and not-require-and-not-fund capabilities are calculated risks in the nation's kinetic/MDO fight. For example, although the sum of all 42R, 42S, 420C, and 42C spaces in all COMPOs is seemingly trivial at only 4,000 spaces. Army Bands do not contribute directly to the offensive kinetic fight: The Army could build significant combat power in many other branches with 4,000 spaces. In 2004, Army Bands leaders eliminated the requirement for a security and because the national debt was smaller, ASLs could more easily invest in Army Bands. However, as resources become increasingly

constrained, ASLs, as stewards of the Nation's resources, must be realistic about the facts of the United States' security needs and carefully prioritize mission-essential needs.

2. In a reductionist sense, the mission of Army Bands has not changed: How the Army uses bands has changed. Bands produce sounds and music. "Bands," "sounds", and "music" are not interchangeable terms. The purposes of these sounds and music have included signaling, ceremony, and entertainment, with the first purpose mainly being subsumed into the second. However, in 2024, Army Bands focus on developing cultural relevance, entertainment concepts, industry production standards, therapeutic music, and information advantage, believing these activities will translate into decisions to halt the inactivation of SRC02 MTOE structures. (See [Is Culture a Luxury?](#)) Although these efforts have and may continue to improve the quality of sonic and visual productions, the misplaced focus away from the Army's emphasis on Large Scale Combat Operations and Multi Domain Operations is reminiscent of Bronson and Haynes. Mission drives structure. COMPO1 is focused on offensive capabilities. Sustainment branches supply means (TC), materiel (QM), maintaining (OD), and personnel (AG) to support offensive capabilities. Cultural relevance, entertainment concepts, industry production standards, therapeutic music, and information advantage do not overtly contribute offensive capabilities. The absence of a wartime mission will continue to yield decreasing structure.
3. Technology and social taste drove the shift in organizational structure from the Sousa-model concert band to an organization that includes electronic musical instruments, sound technicians, and vocalists. The average number of musicians, by

band type, from the eight Tables of Organization of the mid-1920s was 35.8; today, it is 43 across all COMPOs. Because band performances are generally request-driven, whether tasked or not, data should show what musical assets are of most and least value. Data collected for the 2016-2018 Bottom-up Review from Army Bands Operations Reports, presented graphically shows the most-requested capabilities between FY12-17 for self-reporting bands: Buglers signaling TAPS, small brass ensembles performing ceremonial and entertainment support, popular music groups entertaining and marching and non-marching ceremonial bands. Given this data, 34 total musicians: 3 (Bugle Section) +6 (Brass Section) +5 (Popular Music Section) +20 (Marching Band Section) is an honest, need-based, economical estimate for Army Bands force structure, instead of a historical, territorial “Whatever we tell them, it should look like “we’re the experts, we know how this should be done, don’t event(sic) think about deciding without our SME advice” ” arbitrary quantity (email, 17 MAR 2005).

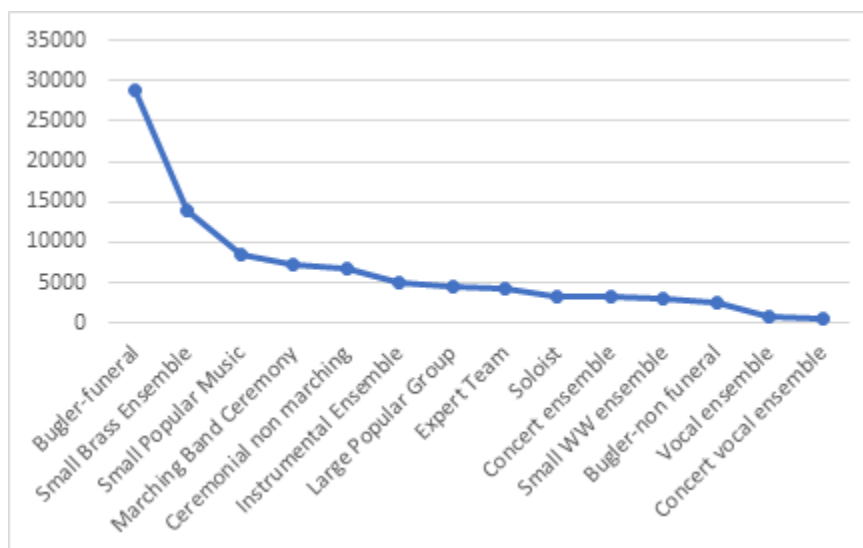


Figure 4 – FY12-17 self-reported missions for Army Bands in all COMPOs by performer or group.

CONCLUSION

The Army does not require bands on the modern battlefield. With rare exceptions like General Hay's use of the 1ID Band in 1967 on Thunder Road, a musical mission on the battlefield looks as bad on paper as it would in real life. Is there a requirement for music on the modern battlefield? No, but many Soldiers will find a way to make or listen to music for individual and organizational morale as safety and security permit.

Band performances may contribute to positive *esprit de corps* and protect against psychology of conviction attacks. However, a handful of Army Bands in 2024 performing songs from the Billboard Hot 100™ once or twice a day neither makes Soldiers "...better able to fight a war..." (Eigen, 2009) nor "increase[s]...the combat quality of our Army" any more so than when the latter assertion was made to the 75th Congress in 1938. Army Bands must be willing to embrace practical, versatile work on the battlefield (support to casualty operations or perimeter security, etc.) that planners can incorporate, and which effectively and practically sustains the American Soldier. This work must account for operational dispersion, reduced electronic signatures, austere environments, isolation, and large distances.

Although Army Bands were, and are, acknowledged as positive military assets, the practical work by units and individuals does not satisfy "...actual requirements..." (72nd Congress, 1932) that enable the Army to eliminate or mitigate threats. Justifying the requirement for Army Bands involves defining a threat-based enterprise need, translating it into a mission, establishing defensible, accountable structures, and proving the accomplishment of the mission. If Army Bands cannot justify this kind of need, the logical means for retaining bands in the Army is via a TDA structure that clearly supports one or more of the twelve [Common Military Department Functions](#).

1775: *Periodic Table* 1914-45: *Army, Bands, Culture*

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