

Music at State and Royal Funerals

By Colin Dean, Former Band Secretary, Irish Guards

As we mourn the passing of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, we can perhaps reflect with pride on the great contribution that military musicians have made in times of the nation's sorrow.

Few could have failed to be moved as Lieutenant Colonel Simon Haw MBE conducted massed bands from the three services in the Quadrangle of Windsor Castle on 17th April 2021, with the parade lowered on arms reversed, heads bowed, awaiting the bearer party which was to carry the coffin from the State Entrance. The selection of music perfectly set the tone of reflection: *I Vow to Thee My Country*, *The Supreme Sacrifice (Oh Valiant Hearts)*, *Jerusalem, Isle of Beauty* and *Nimrod*.

As the Duke was driven through the castle to his final resting place, the short procession was led by the Band of the 1st or Grenadier Regiment of Foot Guards under its Director of Music, Captain Ben Mason, who had been a trombonist in the band when it supported the Guard of Honour at the funeral of the late Queen Mother in 2002. As the Duke of Edinburgh's coffin entered the Horseshoe Cloisters the National Anthem was played by the Band of The Rifles, conducted by Captain Justin Teggerty, a one-time tuba player in the Welsh Guards.

A journalist wrote '*Yesterday, with little of the pomp and pageantry of a State ceremonial, but with every outward mark of respect, and with all the solemnity which befitted his high station and his public virtues, the mortal remains of the husband of our Queen were interred in the last resting place of England's Sovereigns - the Chapel Royal of St. George's, Windsor. By the express desire of His Royal Highness the funeral was of the plainest and most private character ... and throughout England, by every sign of sorrow and mourning, the nation manifested its sense of the loss which it has sustained.*'

Those words were written, not about Prince Philip, but following the funeral of Prince Albert in December 1861. The circumstances of 2021 which forced a change to the original plans, brought additional poignancy as the ceremony followed a similar pattern to that of Queen Victoria's consort, with a procession from the State Entrance of Windsor Castle, via the Norman Gate, to St. George's Chapel.

The hearse bearing Prince Albert was drawn by six horses with an escort of the 2nd Life Guards, whereas the Duke had asked to be carried on a Land Rover, a request perhaps inspired by the final journey of his uncle, Earl Mountbatten, who was driven from Westminster Abbey on a Land Rover of The Life Guards following his funeral in 1979.

In 1861 the Grenadier Guards formed Guards of Honour at the State Entrance and at St. George's Chapel, while the processional route was lined by a squadron of the 2nd Life Guards and two companies of the Scots Fusilier Guards. There was, however, no military music during Prince Albert's final journey but there were other similarities in that the Royal Horse Artillery fired minute guns from Home Park during the procession and '*the mournful knell of the Castle Bell*' was heard.

At 75 paces to the minute, the Band of the Grenadier Guards led the Duke of Edinburgh's procession playing marches published as Beethoven's Funeral Marches Number 1 and Number 3, but a question regarding the identity of the composer would not produce what would appear to be the obvious answer. Funeral March No. 1 was written by Johann Heinrich Walch (1776-1855), director of the court orchestra of the principality of Saxony-Gotha-Altenburg. This is the march played annually on Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph during the laying of wreaths. The march was published by Hawkes and Son in the early 20th Century but quite how it came to be credited to Beethoven is uncertain; presumably a genuine mistake.

But what of Funeral March Number 3, published at the same time and also attributed to Beethoven? A number of Beethoven experts have been consulted as to its origins but none have been able to identify it as anything written by the composer. The same question has been posed to experts on German marches with a similar blank response, so it remains something of a mystery. If anyone knows the origins of the march we would be very interested to hear from you.

The service in the chapel drew to its conclusion with Pipe Major Peter Grant of The Highlanders playing *Flowers of the Forest*, after which Buglers of the Royal Marines sounded *Last Post*, followed by *Reveille* from the State Trumpeters, then *Action Stations* from the buglers.

A little earlier, the troops to line the Quadrangle and Middle Ward were marched into position by the Corps of Drums of 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards and 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards, obtaining the best television coverage of the outdoor musical elements. They made an impressive spectacle, and it may well be 184 years since the sound of drums and fifes (flutes) was last heard at a royal funeral.

Just over two hundred years ago, on 16th February 1820, the funeral procession of King George III also followed a similar route from the State Entrance and was headed by '*Trumpets and Kettle Drums, and Drums and Fifes of the Foot Guards*'. At the next two state funerals, for King George IV on 16th July 1830 and King William IV on 8th July 1837, the processions were led by:

Trumpets and Kettle Drums, and Drums and Fifes of the Foot Guards

Drums and Fifes of the Royal Household

Trumpets and Kettle Drums of the Royal Household

*'A blast of trumpets from within faintly announced to those without that the procession had commenced'. At all three funerals the *Dead March in Saul* was played by static bands. This had been composed by George Frederic Handel, lamenting the death of Saul and Jonathan in Act III of his oratorio, *Saul*, composed in 1739 to words by Charles Jennens (who also wrote the libretto for the Messiah). A good description survives from the funeral of George IV:*

'The Bands to be on the right of their respective Battalions. The Band of the Grenadier Guards to commence the 'Dead March in Saul', on the Guard of Honour receiving the body with presented arms. The Band of the 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards [later to become the Scots Guards] to take up the 'Dead March in Saul' on the Procession reaching its Right Flank; and, in like manner, the Band of the Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards to take it up, and continue it until the Body is met by the Clergy.'

The Duke of Wellington

Nine years before the death of Prince Albert, a number of military bands had taken their place in the State Funeral of the first Duke of Wellington, held on 18th November 1852, with a procession from Horse Guards Parade to St. Paul's Cathedral, via Apsley House.



The troops assembled on Horse Guards Parade before the procession to St. Paul's Cathedral, seen in the distance. The Foot Guards Bands can be seen positioned between the two trees in the foreground.

'The first minute gun was fired, the troops presented arms and saluted the body, upon which the roll of the muffled drum followed by the music of the 'Dead March' in Saul, announced that the procession had commenced. As each regiment or body of troops filed off in the appointed order, its band led the way, playing the 'Dead March' or other appropriate pieces, accompanied at intervals by the roll of the muffled drums. The men carried their arms reversed which, combined with the mournful music and the slow funeral pace at which they marched, had a singularly imposing effect'.

As remains the custom, the procession was formed in reverse order of seniority in order that the more senior units were closest to the hearse or gun carriage; it included:

Infantry - Six Battalions

Band of 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade

2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade

Band of the 1st Battalion Royal Marines, Chatham Division

1st Battalion Royal Marines

Band of Her Majesty's 33rd Regiment

Her Majesty's 33rd Regiment

Bands of the Scots Fusilier Guards and Coldstream Guards

1st Battalion Scots Fusilier Guards

1st Battalion Coldstream Guards

1st Battalion Grenadier Guards

Band of the Royal Artillery

Artillery - Nine Guns of the Field Batteries

Cavalry - Five Squadrons:

Band of Her Majesty's 17th Lancers

17th Lancers

Band of Her Majesty's 13th Light Dragoons

13th Light Dragoons

Band of Her Majesty's 8th Hussars

8th Hussars

Band of Her Majesty's Scots Greys

Scots Greys

6th Dragoon Guards

Eight Guns of the Horse Artillery

Band of the 1st Life Guards

Royal Regiment of Horse Guards (Blues)

2nd Life Guards

1st Life Guards

Thirteen Trumpets, and Kettle Drums

Two Pursuivants of Arms in a Mourning Coach

The Standard or Pennon

Deputations from Public Bodies in Carriages

Band of Her Majesty's 6th Dragoon Guards

The Guidon

Household Officials

Band of Her Majesty's 2nd Life Guards

Banner of Wellesley

His Royal Highness Prince Albert in a Carriage Drawn by Six Horses

Field Officer in Brigade Waiting

Sergeant Trumpeter

Heralds

Norroy King of Arms, in a Mourning Coach

Band of the Royal Horse Guards

The Great Banner

The Pallbearers, Eight General Officers, in Two Mourning Coaches

Band of the Grenadier Guards

The Funeral Carriage

Private Carriages of the Deceased and of the Chief Mourner

Band of the Royal Marines, Woolwich Division

Officers and Men of every Regiment in the Service; consisting of one Captain, a Subaltern, a Sergeant, a Corporal, and five men from every regiment

Band of Her Majesty's 93rd Highlanders

The troops moving in the procession, and also those on duty assisting the civil authorities to preserve order and prevent accidents, were commanded by Major General HRH The Duke of Cambridge KG, later to become Commander-in-Chief and establish what was to become The Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall.

[Bands in the State Funeral of The Duke of Wellington in 1852:](#)



[Band of the 1st Life Guards](#)



Bands of the Scots Fusilier Guards and Coldstream Guards



Drummers of the Grenadier Guards

Queen Victoria

Queen Victoria reigned for over 63 years until her death at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight on 22nd January 1901 and this brought about a State Funeral that took four distinct parts, starting on 1st February 1901 when her coffin was borne on a gun carriage of "Y" Battery Royal Horse Artillery from Osborne House to Trinity Pier at East Cowes. Included in the procession were the Bands of the Royal Marine Artillery and the Royal Marine Light Infantry, Portsmouth Division, under the direction of 2nd Lieutenant George Miller, RMLI.

The coffin was carried onto the Royal Yacht, HMY Alberta, and the bands played *The Saints of God, Their Conflict Past* as it left the quay and crossed the Solent, passing through lines of ships of the Royal Navy and the Navies of France, Germany, Japan, Portugal and Spain. Ships' bands played Chopin and Beethoven's funeral marches as the yacht passed on its way to the Clarence Victualling Yard at Gosport where the coffin rested on board overnight.

The next morning, Saturday 2nd February 1901, a Guard of Honour from the Royal Marine Light Infantry was mounted on the jetty, supported by its band who played a funeral march as the coffin was placed on the train to be taken to Victoria Station in London, where it arrived at 11.00 a.m.

The second stage of the funeral then took place through the capital with a procession from Victoria by way of The Mall, St. James's Street, Piccadilly, Hyde Park and Edgware Road to Paddington Station.

Officer of Headquarters Staff

Mounted Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues)

Mounted Band of the 2nd Life Guards

Yeomanry, Colonials, Militia, Honourable Artillery Company

Departmental Corps, Indian Army

Infantry of the Line, Foot Guards

Royal Engineers, Royal Garrison Artillery, Royal Field Artillery

Cavalry of the Line, Household Cavalry

Royal Marine Light Infantry, Royal Marine Artillery, Royal Navy

Military Attaches, Headquarters Staff and Field Marshals

Band of the Royal Marine Light Infantry (Chatham Division)

Bands of the Brigade of Guards (Coldstream Guards and Scots Guards)

Band of the Royal Engineers

Band of the Royal Artillery

Gun Carriage drawn by eight Hanoverian Creams driven by Royal Postillions

Royal Mourners

The two mounted bands, each 30 strong, were formed up in Piccadilly in readiness for leading the procession which stretched back to Victoria Station. The remaining bands were grouped together immediately ahead of the gun carriage, with (2nd Lieutenant) Cavaliere Ladislao Zavertal, Royal Artillery, having charge of the musical arrangements as the senior bandmaster. The printed orders for the parade stated: *'The two mounted bands in front will not play; the four dismounted bands in rear will play alternately, commencing with the rear band of the group'*, adding that *'Beethoven's and Chopin's funeral marches alone to be played'*.

It would appear that The Queen had left specific instructions that only these funeral marches were to be played. The Beethoven march played on this occasion was the genuine article, published as Funeral March Number 2. It is the third movement of his Piano Sonata Number 12 in Ab, sometimes referred to as the 'Funeral March on the Death of a Hero', and was played by a wind-band during Beethoven's own funeral procession. It has been suggested that the tremolando and crescendo section of the march is intended to signify drum rolls and rifle volleys to convey the mood of a military funeral.

Chopin's *Marche Funebre* is taken from his Piano Sonata in B flat minor.

On arrival at Paddington the coffin was placed on the royal train and taken to Windsor station where it was to have been drawn on a gun carriage of "S" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery. However, the horses had been standing still in the cold for a considerable time and as the procession was about to move off one of the wheelers reared and plunged, damaging the traces to the extent that it proved necessary for the horses to be unhooked from the gun carriage. As a result the Naval Bluejackets forming the Guard of Honour took over and dragged the gun carriage to St. George's Chapel in the castle, thus giving rise to a new tradition.

The procession marched by way of High Street, Sheet Street, turning left into Park Street and left again along the Long Walk into the castle for the service in St. George's Chapel, and included the Bands of the Grenadier Guards and the 1st Life Guards (*dismounted*) who played alternately.

The final stage of the funeral took place on Monday 4th February at 3 pm when "S" Battery bore the coffin from the chapel to Frogmore in a procession which again included the Band of the Grenadier Guards, unusually led by a corps of drums with the flutes in front of the drummers, and headed by the Drum Major with his staff inverted. The band ceased playing at the gates of the Royal Mausoleum and the Queen's pipers, Mr. James Campbell and his nephew, played as the Queen's coffin was taken inside for burial alongside Prince Albert.

King Edward VII

After a comparatively short reign King Edward VII died on 6th May 1910. On 17th May a procession conveyed his remains from Buckingham Palace to the lying-in-state at Westminster Hall by way of The Mall, Horse Guards Parade, Whitehall and Parliament Street:

Officer of the Headquarters Staff

Army Council, Lords of the Admiralty

1st Division of the Sovereign's Escort

Field Marshals, Admirals of the Fleet, Indian Orderly Officers, Naval and Military ADCs

2nd Division of the Sovereign's Escort

Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards, Drums, and Pipes of the Scots Guards

Gun Carriage drawn by the Royal Horse Artillery

His Majesty The King and his two Sons, Foreign Sovereigns, Princes of the Blood

3rd Division of the Sovereign's Escort

Members of the Household

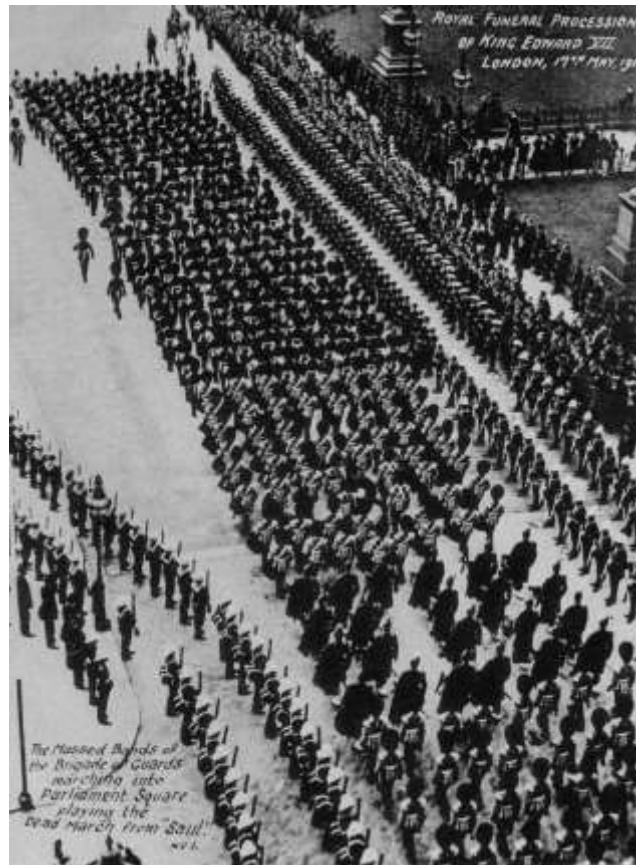
4th Division of the Sovereign's Escort

The Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards, headed by eight Drum Majors, were under the senior bandmaster*, Lieutenant John Mackenzie Rogan, Coldstream Guards. Knowing the tremendous effect the drums can have on such an occasion he had requested permission to use all eighty side drummers from the brigade in addition to the 250 musicians from the four bands, and the pipers of the Scots Guards. The funeral marches were each preceded by an introductory 'Prelude for Drums' over 48 paces written by Mackenzie Rogan, which was said to have given the suggestion of the firing of musketry and the booming of artillery over the grave of a hero.

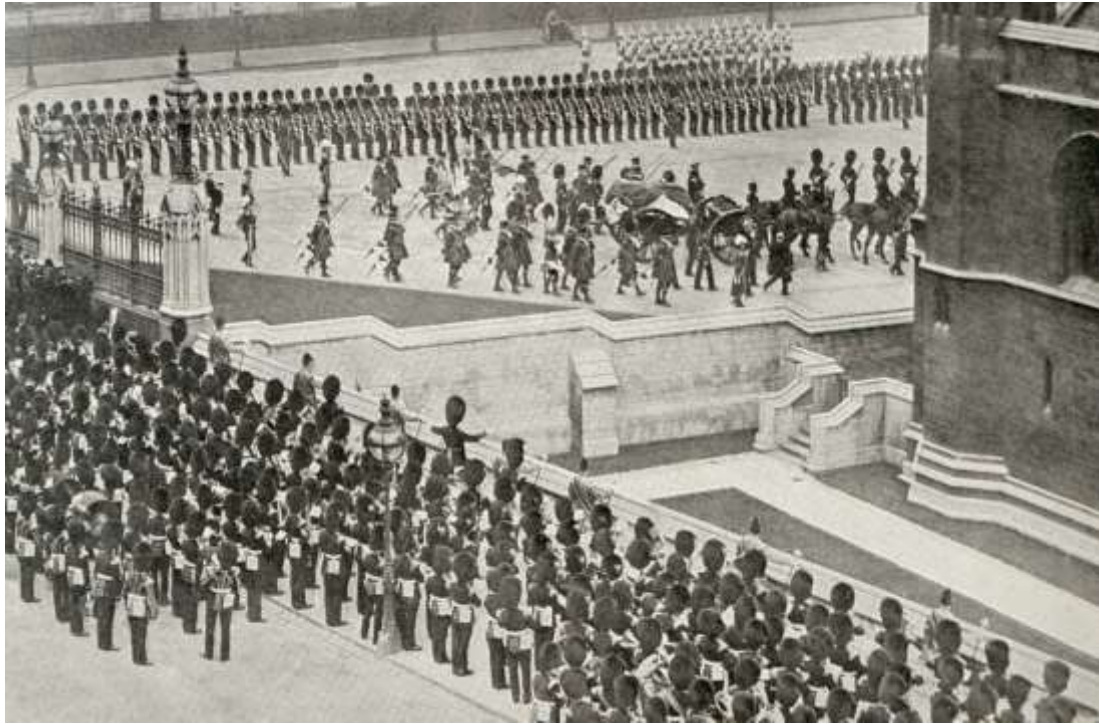
*The appointment of Director of Music was introduced in June 1914.

The Major General desired to know the exact time the procession would take so Lieutenant Rogan, always a perfectionist, personally paced out the route in slow time - it took 43 minutes. He was therefore able to ascertain the number of bars to be played and selected the music as follows:

Buckingham Palace to Marlborough Gate:	Prelude for Drums	<i>Mackenzie Rogan</i>
	Funeral March in Bb Minor and Db Minor	<i>Walch</i>
Marlborough Gate to Duke of York's Steps:	Flowers of the Forest (Pipes)	
Duke of York's Steps to Downing Street:	Prelude for Drums	<i>Mackenzie Rogan</i>
	Marche Funebre	<i>Chopin</i>
Downing Street to Westminster Hall:	Prelude for Drums	<i>Mackenzie Rogan</i>
	Saul	<i>Handel</i>



The Massed Bands, Drums and Pipes of the Brigade of Guards lead the gun carriage bearing King Edward VII as it approaches Westminster Hall



The Massed Bands conducted by Lieutenant Rogan continue to play as the gun carriage enters New Palace Yard

Following the lying-in-state, the state funeral took place on 20th May 1910 with the procession in London leaving Westminster Hall at 9.50 and taking two hours to reach Paddington. After the first two divisions of the Sovereign's Escort rode the Band of the 2nd Life Guards, immediately followed by the Band of the 1st Life Guards. The same dismounted bands were used (the Brigade of Guards bands this time being those of the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards) and they were again positioned together in front of the gun carriage, playing alternately.



The bands approaching Paddington station: Royal Marine Light Infantry (Chatham Division), Brigade of Guards (Grenadier and Coldstream Guards), Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery

As the procession reached Paddington the Royal Artillery Band was due to play but orders were given by Lieutenant Rogan that the Guards bands would play (out of turn) at the station and as the train moved out. This decision did not please the Royal Artillery who felt they were entitled to this honour "*both by seniority and by turn*".

The gun carriage in London had been drawn by "BB" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery but the Royal Navy took over for the procession through the streets of Windsor, following the precedent from Queen Victoria's funeral. All troops were on foot, including the Sovereign's Escort found by the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues), the first two divisions being followed by:

Band of the Irish Guards
Band of the Scots Guards
Pipers of the Scots Guards
Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues)
(dismounted in state dress)

The bands played Chopin's and Beethoven's funeral marches and the pipers played *Flowers of the Forest* during the procession and *Land o' the Leal* as it passed through the Lower Ward of the Castle.



The bands formed up at Windsor station awaiting the start of the procession



The bands in the Windsor procession, headed by the Band of the Irish Guards

Queen Alexandra

Queen Alexandra died at Sandringham on 20th November 1925 and her coffin was brought to London to lie in the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace. Queens Consort are not granted state funerals but a procession left the palace from Colour Court on 27th November and marched in slow time through a snow shower to Westminster Abbey for the funeral service, after which the coffin remained for a short lying-in-state until it was taken to Windsor late that evening.

Royal Air Force
Brigade of Guards
Royal Horse Guards (The Blues)
The Life Guards (1st and 2nd)
Royal Yacht - Victoria and Albert
Royal Navy and Royal Marines
GOC and Staff

Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards

Gun Carriage: "O" Battery Royal Horse Artillery
15th/19th Hussars
The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment)
3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles
Rear Party of Brigade of Guards including 20 men carrying wreaths

The marches played in the procession included those of Beethoven, Chopin and Handel.

King George V

King George V died early in 1936, the year following his silver jubilee. The state funeral took place on 28th January 1936 with a procession from Westminster Hall to Paddington, this time with a Royal Navy Gun Carriage Crew in London as well as at Windsor. Following the first two divisions of the dismounted Sovereign's Escort, found by the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues), marched:

Band of the 3rd Carabiniers (Prince of Wales's Dragoon Guards)

Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) (*dismounted - in state dress*)

This was the only occasion when the band of a regiment of the line took part in the funeral procession of a sovereign. As on previous such occasions, the remaining bands were grouped together immediately in front of the gun carriage, this time comprising:

Band of the Royal Air Force

Band of the Royal Marines (Portsmouth Division)

Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards

Royal Engineers Band

Royal Artillery Band

Massed Pipers from:

The Royal Irish Fusiliers (Princess Victoria's)

The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)

Irish Guards

Scots Guards

The bands marched with a frontage of eight in what was a very long column, the Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards (less the Coldstream Guards) alone being in 26 ranks, led by five Drum Majors. In the centre of the Guards bands were three ranks comprising the four time-beaters (bass drummers), cymbal players and side drummers from the bands as well as ten drummers (from the corps of drums). The pipers were found from the regiments of which the late King was Colonel-in-Chief.



The Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards in Parliament Street



The long line of bands marching along Piccadilly with the Royal Marines at the head (the RAF Band is out of the picture)

The bands in the procession at Windsor were:

Band of the Coldstream Guards

Band of The Life Guards (*dismounted in state dress*)

Massed Pipers from:

The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)

Scots Guards

King George VI

The State Funeral of King George VI took place on 15th February 1952. At the previous three Sovereign's funerals, aside from the cavalry, the bands in the procession in London had been grouped together immediately in front of the gun carriage so that only one band was playing at any time. In 1952, however, a major change took place and the bands were distributed throughout the procession in pairs with each band of the pair playing alternately.

Officer of the War Office

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

Band of the Welsh Guards

Royal Air Force, Colonial Troops, Territorial Army, Infantry of the Line

Band of the Irish Guards

Band of the Coldstream Guards

Foot Guards, Corps of Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery

Royal Tank Regiment, Cavalry of the Line

Band of the Royal Artillery

Band of the Royal Marines (Plymouth Group)

Royal Marines, Royal Navy

Drum Horse and State Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry

1st Division of the Escort

Band of the Scots Guards

Massed Pipes and Drums from:

The Royal Irish Fusiliers (Princess Victoria's)

The Royal Scots Fusiliers

The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

Irish Guards

Scots Guards

Earl Marshal

Royal Navy Gun Carriage

Mourners

2nd Division of the Escort

Band of the Royal Engineers (Chatham)

Band of the Metropolitan Police



The Band of the Irish Guards in the procession; a Marshal checks the pace with the Drum Major



The Band of the Scots Guards followed by the Massed Pipes and Drums, in Piccadilly



The Massed Pipes and Drums turn into Hyde Park

The Band of the Scots Guards and the massed pipes marched immediately in front of the gun carriage playing the following:

Westminster to Horse Guards	Band: Funeral March No.1 (<i>Walch</i>)
	Pipes: My Home
Horse Guards to Marlborough Gate	Band: Funeral March (<i>Chopin</i>)
	Pipes: Loch Rannoch
Marlborough Gate to Hyde Park Corner	Band: Song of Death (<i>Sommer</i>)
	Pipes: Cradle Song
Hyde Park Corner to Edgware Road	Band: Funeral March (<i>Mendelssohn</i>)
	Pipes: Road to the Isles
Edgware Road to Sussex Gardens	Band: Regrets (<i>Panne</i>)
	Pipes: Mist Covered Mountains
Sussex Gardens to Paddington	Band: Song of Death (<i>Sommer</i>)
	Pipes: Loch Duich

The gun carriage halted on platform 8 at Paddington Station and the coffin was placed on the train. The Bands of the Coldstream and Scots Guards played Chopin's Funeral March, starting one minute prior to the departure of the train to Windsor.



The Bands of the Coldstream and Scots Guards, with Pipers of the Scots and Irish Guards, on Platform 8 at Paddington station as the funeral train departed

On arrival at Windsor Central Station the procession took the traditional route to St. George's Chapel in the castle with the following bands:

Band of the Grenadier Guards

Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues)

Massed Pipers from:

The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's)

The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)

On this occasion the Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) wore Dismounted Review Order rather than state dress.

Additional funeral marches were now being played. The Funeral March by Felix Mendelssohn forms part of a series of 'Songs Without Words' (Liedern Ohne Worte) for solo piano which were published in eight books, each of six pieces. The Funeral March (Trauermarsch) in E Minor was published in 1843 and is Number 27, or Number 3 in the fifth book, Op.62.

Oran Au Aoig (The Song of Death) was composed by Josef Sommer (1843-?), who served as Bandmaster in the Leicestershire Regiment, Scottish Rifles, Hyderabad Contingent and the Royal Engineers. In 1899, in the latter appointment, he became one of the first bandmasters to be granted commissioned rank. He retired in 1905.

Regrets (Marche Funebre) is by Charles Panne, a Belgian bandmaster who directed the Band of the Regiment des Carabiniers in Brussels. This funeral march was much used by continental military bands when the occasion demanded; it was published in the United Kingdom some years later under the title *Regrets*.

Queen Mary

Queen Mary died on 24th March 1953 and her remains were taken in procession from the Queen's Chapel at St. James's Palace on Sunday 29th March 1953 for the lying-in-state at Westminster Hall. The rate of marching on this occasion was increased to 80 paces to the minute, described as halfway between slow and quick march, to make it easier for the horses.

Royal Air Force

Brigade of Guards

Royal Horse Guards (The Blues), The Life Guards

Royal Marines, Royal Navy

Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards

GOC and Staff

Personal Retainers of Her Late Majesty

Gun Carriage

Royal Family Mourners

Representative Detachments of associated regiments led by 13th/18th Royal Hussars (Queen Mary's Own)

Rear Detachment of Scots Guards

Sir Winston Churchill

The State Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill took place on 30th January 1965. It had been planned over a number of years from an attic at the College of Arms in London, in what was known as 'Operation Hope Not' and was only the third occasion that a commoner had been accorded such an honour, the others being Viscount Nelson and the Duke of Wellington.

The coffin was borne on a gun carriage drawn by the Royal Navy and escorted by the Royal Air Force, in a procession which left Westminster Hall at 09.45 and marched by way of Parliament Street, Whitehall, Trafalgar Square, The Strand and Fleet Street to St. Paul's Cathedral. Ten bands took part and, as at the funeral of King George VI, they marched in pairs with the bands playing alternately.

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

No. 5 Regional Band of the Royal Air Force

Battle of Britain Aircrews

The Royal Air Force

Territorial Army

Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

Band of the Grenadier Guards

Band of the Coldstream Guards

Brigade of Guards

Band of the Royal Marines School of Music

Band of the Royal Marines (Portsmouth)

Royal Marines, Royal Navy

Drum Horse and State Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry

First Detachment of Household Cavalry

Band of the Irish Guards

Band of the Scots Guards

Chiefs of Staff

Orders, Decorations and Banners borne by Officers of The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars

General Officer Commanding and Staff

The Earl Marshal, The Duke of Norfolk

Royal Navy Gun Carriage

The Family and other Principal Mourners

Second Detachment of Household Cavalry

Band of the Royal Artillery

Band of the Metropolitan Police

The Police, The Fire Services, The Civil Defence Corps



The Band of the Irish Guards followed by the Band of the Scots Guards in the Strand during the funeral procession of Sir Winston Churchill

Following the service in St. Paul's Cathedral the procession continued along Cannon Street, Eastcheap and Great Tower Street to Tower Hill. Here the coffin was lifted from the gun carriage and carried to Tower Pier by the Bearer Party of 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards as 60 pipers led by Pipe Major Bob Kilgour, 2nd Battalion Scots Guards, played *My Home*, *Mist Covered Mountains*, *My Lodgin's in the Cold Ground* and *Highland Cradle Song*. The pipers were from:

2nd Battalion Scots Guards

1st Battalion Irish Guards

1st Battalion The King's Own Scottish Borderers

1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

1st Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

As the coffin was taken on the launch 'Havengore' the Royal Navy Guard of Honour on Tower Wharf presented arms and the Band of the Royal Marines (Plymouth) played the first section of *Dover Castle* (Carter) as a General Salute, appropriate to the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The coffin was piped aboard by the Royal Navy and as 'Havengore' set off for the journey along the Thames to Festival Pier the Royal Marines Band played *Rule, Britannia!* (Arne), the massed pipers played the lament, *Flowers of the Forest* and a 19 gun salute was fired. Then came a fly past by Lightnings of Fighter Command and the unforgettable sight of the jibs of the cranes along Hay's Wharf being lowered as 'Havengore' passed. Finally, the coffin was taken by train from Waterloo for burial at Bladon.

Earl Mountbatten of Burma

Admiral of the Fleet The Earl Mountbatten of Burma was murdered on 27th August 1979 and his funeral, held in bright sunshine on 5th September, was on a scale which reflected the horrific circumstances of his death. A Royal Navy Gun Carriage Crew took the coffin from the Queen's Chapel at St. James's Palace, along The Mall, across Horse Guards Parade and via Whitehall to Westminster Abbey, in a procession which was formed as follows:

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

Overseas Detachments, Women's Services,
Royal Air Force, 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles

Massed Bands of the Household Cavalry

The Life Guards, Royal Marines, Royal Navy

Massed Bands of the Royal Marines

Gun Carriage
Ex-Service Organisations

Bands of the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards

The Blues and Royals



[The Massed Bands of the Household Cavalry marching through Horse Guards Arch](#)

The procession took over 45 minutes and the bands were required to play continuously, unlike at Churchill's funeral where they had been able to alternate. The Royal Marines Bands which preceded the gun carriage played the funeral marches of Beethoven and Walch, the *Dead March in Saul* (Handel) and finally the *Preobrajensky March*, which had been so closely associated with the Earl and his family.

As the Earl's coffin entered the Abbey, Trumpeters of the Royal Marines, positioned on the choir screen, sounded the fanfare *Supreme Command* which had been composed in his honour some years before by Sir Vivian Dunn. Buglers of the Royal Marines sounded *Last Post* and *Reveille* during the service.

Queen Elizabeth, the Late Queen Mother

The main procession for Queen Elizabeth took place on 5th April 2002 following a similar route to Lord Mountbatten from the Queen's Chapel to Westminster Hall for the lying-in-state, formed as:

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

Commonwealth Contingents

Royal Air Force

1st Battalion Scots Guards

Band of the Royal Marines

Royal Marines

Royal Navy

Bands of the Scots and Irish Guards

The Major General and Staff

Gun Carriage

Royal Mourners

Her Late Majesty's Regiments

The Royal Artillery Band

The Life Guards



The Bands of the Scots and Irish Guards led by Drum Major Andy Gray, Coldstream Guards, marching to St. James's Palace prior to the procession



The Bands of the Scots and Irish Guards as the procession is about to step off

Two further funeral marches were added: The Flowers of the Forest, traditionally played by pipers as a lament at funerals and occasions of remembrance, is believed to have been composed in memory of the Scots killed at Flodden Field in 1513. The tune was arranged as a funeral march by Mr. Henry Fisher (1871-1931) who enlisted as a bandsman in the Seaforth Highlanders and served as Bandmaster of 2nd Battalion The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders from 1898 to 1921.

March of Homage (To a Great Man) was composed by Sir Arthur Bliss, Master of the Queen's Musick, as a tribute to Sir Winston Churchill following his death in 1965.

Following the lying-in-state, on 9th April the massed pipes and drums from all the British Army piping regiments, Scots, Irish and Gurkhas, led a short procession from Westminster Hall to the Collegiate Church of St. Peter at Westminster for the funeral service. They played the slow marches *My Home* and *Mist Covered Mountains* in the procession, then *Oft in the Stilly Night* as the coffin was carried from the abbey after the service.

From the *Dead March* in *Saul* played in 1820, through to the marches not composed by Beethoven played in 2021, the music played by our military bands, the Household Division in particular, have added a special dignity of reflection as the nation has mourned its losses.