

THE SOVEREIGNS' BIRTHDAY PARADES - SNAPSHOTS OVER TWO CENTURIES

By Colin Dean, former Band Secretary, Irish Guards

The origins of the parade popularly known as *Trooping the Colour* are believed to date from around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Guard Mounting took place daily on Horse Guards Parade prior to the King's (or Queen's) Guard for the day marching to St. James's Palace (later Buckingham Palace) to take over the duties. The custom developed of augmenting this parade on the Sovereign's birthday by including the flank companies from the three regiments of the Brigade of Guards, as well as the Household Cavalry who took part prior to riding under the arch to become the King's (or Queen's) Life Guard.

King George III

1809: A report in the *Morning Post* of the 19th January 1809 makes what appears to be the first documented reference to the three Foot Guards bands being together on Horse Guards Parade: 'Yesterday morning the Duke of Gloucester attended with the Dukes of York and Cambridge, on the Parade in St. James's Park, to inspect the battalion of Grenadiers*, previous to their mounting guard. At the same time a very novel and grand military spectacle was exhibited, as we believe, never was displayed before; the whole of the numerous Bands of the three regiments of Foot Guards attended, with new state uniforms on. The first and second Bands wore new jockey velvet caps; the three Bands marched as far as the entrance to the Stable-yard; the first and third Bands went on with the King's Guard, and the second proceeded to the Queen's Guard, near the Queen's Palace'.

*This parade pre-dates the title Grenadier Guards, the reference to Grenadiers being to the right flank companies of each battalion, comprising the tallest and most able men.

This enhancement to the parade may have been to celebrate the birthday of HRH The Duke of Gloucester and Edinburgh (Colonel, Scots Fusilier Guards) on 15th January. He was accompanied by his brothers, HRH The Duke of York and Albany (Colonel, 1st Regiment of Foot Guards) and HRH The Duke of Cambridge, Colonel, Coldstream Guards).

The implication from the report is that as the bands marched back along The Mall, those of the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards (later Grenadier Guards) and the 3rd Guards (later Scots Guards) led the King's Guard into Stable Yard Road at St. James's Palace, while the Band of the Coldstream Guards continued along the Mall to lead the Queen's Guard on to Buckingham House (now Buckingham Palace) which was Queen Charlotte's principal residence. At this time, until 1832, the musicians wore state dress, an elaborate and magnificently resplendent uniform paid for via the royal wardrobe, when in attendance to the Royal Family, similar to the custom which continues in the Household Cavalry.

The success of this parade would seem to have led to an order issued soon after, for similarly staged parades of the Grenadier companies with the three bands on parade, to be held on both the King's and the Queen's birthdays, although they lapsed from 1811 to 1820 during the King's illness.

King George IV

1826: In the early days, most of the musical interest centred on the music played in Colour Court at St. James's Palace after the parade while the sentries were changed. *The Times* reported: '23rd April (1826) was the day appointed for the celebrations of the King's birthday. The King's Guard was composed of Grenadiers, under the command of the Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Townsend, the Field Officer in waiting. The bands of the three regiments of Foot Guards attended on this occasion in their full State uniforms, and marched up to the Palace with the King's Guard, preceded by the three head Drum Majors of the three regiments, in their full State ceremonials. The novelty of having the three bands assembled in the Palace-yard at the same time induced the Colonel to detain them near an hour after the Guard had been relieved, to play for his gratification and that of some friends'. This rather suggests that the programme of music played by the massed bands after the parade came about on the whim of the Field Officer to entertain his friends!

1827: In the following year a report in the *Morning Post* dated 24th April 1827 tells us: 'Yesterday being the day commanded to be observed for the celebration of the Birth-day of his MAJESTY, the same was observed as a general day of rejoicing throughout the Metropolis.

About 10 o'clock the King's Guard, and that of the Tilt Yard, mounted on the Parade in St. James's Park, attended by the Bands belonging to the three Regiments of Foot Guards in their State Dresses, together with the Drum Majors, who had new State Dresses.

After trooping the State Colours the Guard, preceded by the three Bands, marched to the Court-yard of St. James's Palace. Soon after they had marched in the Bands performed the National Anthem 'God Save the King' in a very superior style: the solo parts were taken by HOPKINS, BLANEY and GODFREY, the Masters of the Bands of the Guards* (Clarionets), and subsequently by the Horns; the chorus was exceedingly grand, being supported by about seventy wind instruments.

The other pieces performed by the Bands included HANDEL'S Coronation Anthem 'Zadok the Priest,' ROSSINI'S Overture to 'La Gazza Ladra', WEBER'S 'Der Freischütz', and PAGANI'S 'La Schiava in Bagdad'. Great ingenuity was displayed in the adaption to wind instruments of the first twenty and odd bars of Handel's Anthem written for violins; the same remark also applies to the latter part of the first movement in 'Der Freischütz'. The Bands continued playing until past twelve o'clock (some time after the King's Guard had left the Palace-yard), many of the Officers and their friends remaining.'

*Mr. Edward Hopkins, Scots Fusilier Guards 1797-1838, Mr. James Blaney, Grenadier Guards 1815-1822 and Mr. Charles Godfrey, Coldstream Guards 1825-1863. They would have directed the bands with movements of their clarinets, rather than conducting with a baton as we know today.

1829: ‘In the morning the brigade guard, consisting of detachments from the three regiments of Foot Guards, mounted on the Parade in St. James’s Park. The respective bands of the three regiments assembled on this occasion in their full State regimentals; the number of wind instruments was about 109.

Their performance commenced with the National Anthem, the solo parts by one of the Masters on the clarionet; this was followed by the Overture to *Oberon, Napoleon’s Coronation March*, and the *Duke of York’s last march*. The guard was inspected by his Grace the Duke of Wellington, as Colonel of the First Regiment of Foot Guards. The colours were then trooped, and the men marched off to their different guards – those intended for the King’s Guard received the State Colours, and proceeded to St. James’s Palace. They marched into the Palace-yard, the bands playing the *Duke of York’s old march*. During the halt at the palace, several beautiful pieces were performed with admirable skill, including the Overtures to *La Gazza Ladra, Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and *Tancredi*. They continued playing after the King’s Guard had been relieved’.

King William IV

1832: The Queen’s Birthday (24th February): ‘The King’s Guard mounted duty with the bands of the three regiments of Foot Guards in their state uniforms. After ‘God Save the King’ they performed *Fra Diavolo*, the celebrated chorus from *Pluto and Proserpine* and other favourite pieces.’

1833: ‘The King’s Guard mounted with the bands of the three regiments in the Standard Court-yard of the Palace. The bands played *God Save the King*, the Overture to *William Tell*, a chorus from *Proserpine*, and *Buonaparte’s Grand March*. The performances were under the direction of Mr. Hardy of the first regiment*.’

*William Hardy, Bandmaster Grenadier Guards 1830-1838, possibly as a civilian; transferred to the Scots Fusilier Guards 1838-1842

Queen Victoria

1844: The instrumentation of the massed bands on the parade was recorded as follows:

30 Clarionets	12 French Horns	6 Ophicleides
6 Flutes and Picolos	6 Cornopeans	3 Bass Drums
6 Oboes	6 Trumpets	3 Tenor Drums
9 Bassoons	9 Trombones	3 Cymbals

With 78 Drums and Fifes added, this made a total of 177.

‘Prince Albert and the Duke of Wellington were present. After the inspection was over, the detachments of the Grenadier Guards for duty at Buckingham Palace and St. James’s Palace marched to their respective posts, headed by the united bands of the three regiments. On their arrival on the Flag-court. St. James’s, the National Anthem was performed in so masterly and spirited a manner as is seldom to be heard; they subsequently performed airs from *Don Pasquale*, also Mozart’s *Non Piu Andrai*, and other pieces, to the great gratification of a numerous concourse of Her Majesty’s loyal subjects who had assembled in the immediate neighbourhood of St. James’s Palace.’

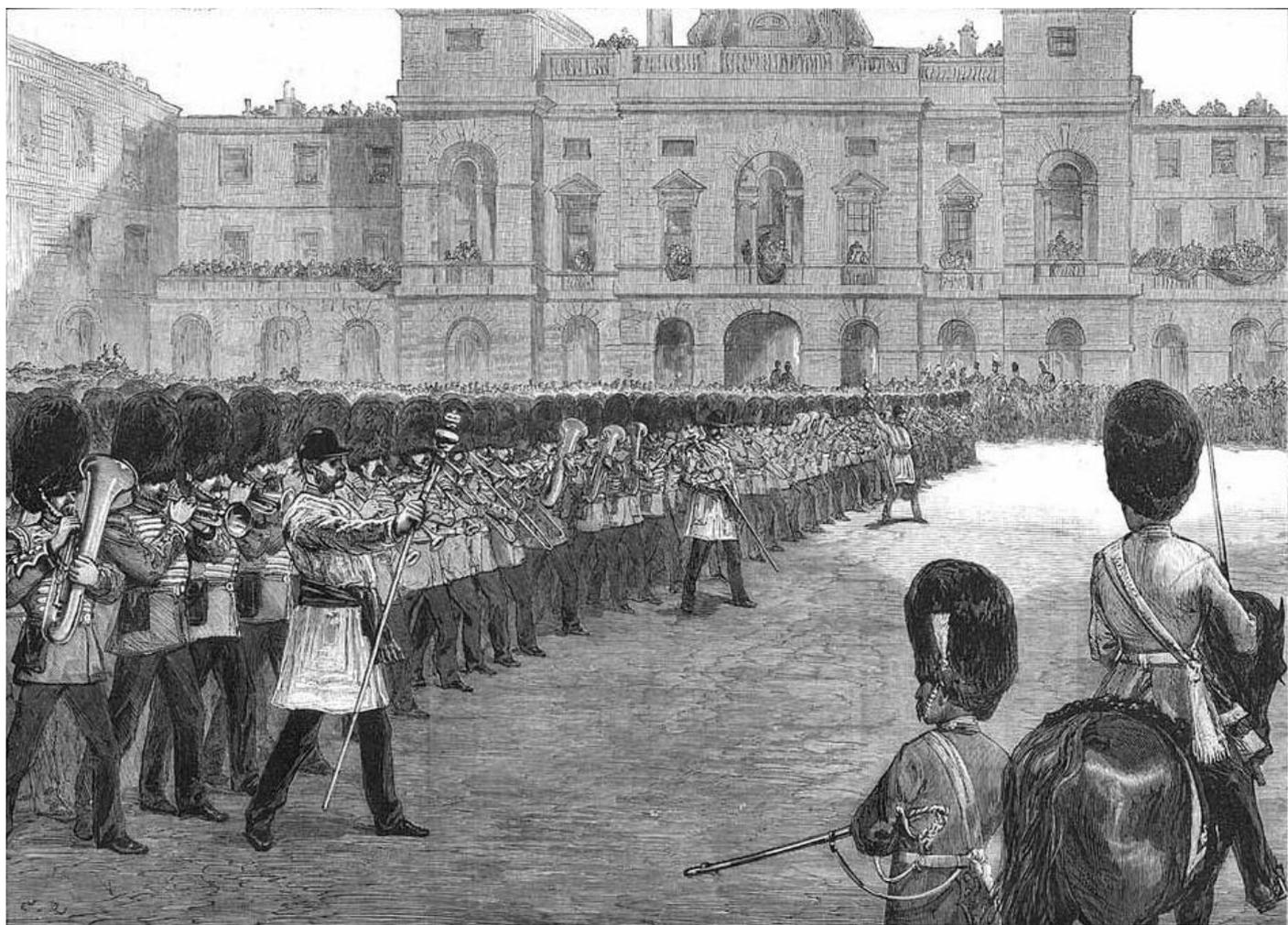
1849: ‘The bands on this occasion were united, under the direction of Mr. Godfrey, Bandmaster Coldstream Guards. *God Save the Queen* was played at quarter to ten soon after which Prince Albert arrived and reviewed the line, the bands playing Mendelssohn’s Grand March from *Athalie*. The line passed in review, the bands playing *Coburg March* and *The British Grenadiers*. The Guard accompanied by the bands, then proceeded to St. James’s Palace where the bands performed selections from *La Figlia Del Regimento, Haydee* etc. with remarkable precision and effort.’

1850: ‘The United bands under Mr. Godfrey played *Prince of Wales’s Grand March* (Coster), *Coronation March Le Prophete* (Meyerbeer), *Kraig’s Marsch der Priester from Athalie*, (Mendelssohn), Grand Selection from *Figaro* (Mozart), Overture: *Maritana* (V. Wallace), Wedding March from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Mendelssohn).’

1854: ‘Prince Albert reviewed companies of Grenadiers, Coldstream and Scots Fusiliers, and of the 97th Foot* who were drawn up on the parade-ground. There was also a Troop of the Horse Guards present.’

*The inclusion of a regiment of the line may have been due to there being three Guards battalions serving in the Crimea.

1857: ‘After the inspection HRH (The Duke of Cambridge) and his retinue went to St. James’s Palace and the usual relief of guard took place. In the quadrangle of St. James’s Palace, the bands of the three infantry regiments played selections from *Don Giovanni* and *Traviata*, Costa’s march in *Eli*, waltzes by Gung’l and other select pieces, under the direction of Mr. Charles Godfrey of the Coldstream.’



The Massed Bands on Horse Guards Parade circa 1875

1869: Much of the music used in the 19th century for the slow march was taken from the opera. As examples, the music for the slow troop on the birthday parade in 1876 was from *Romeo and Juliet* (Gounod), in 1868 from *Rigoletto* (Verdi) and in 1874 and 1877 from *Nabucco* (Verdi). As far as can be traced, the march from Meyerbeer's opera, *Les Huguenots* was first played at the parade in 1869. It was used again for the 1871 parade and continued to be played with considerable regularity. The music programme for the parade on 2nd June 1869 included:

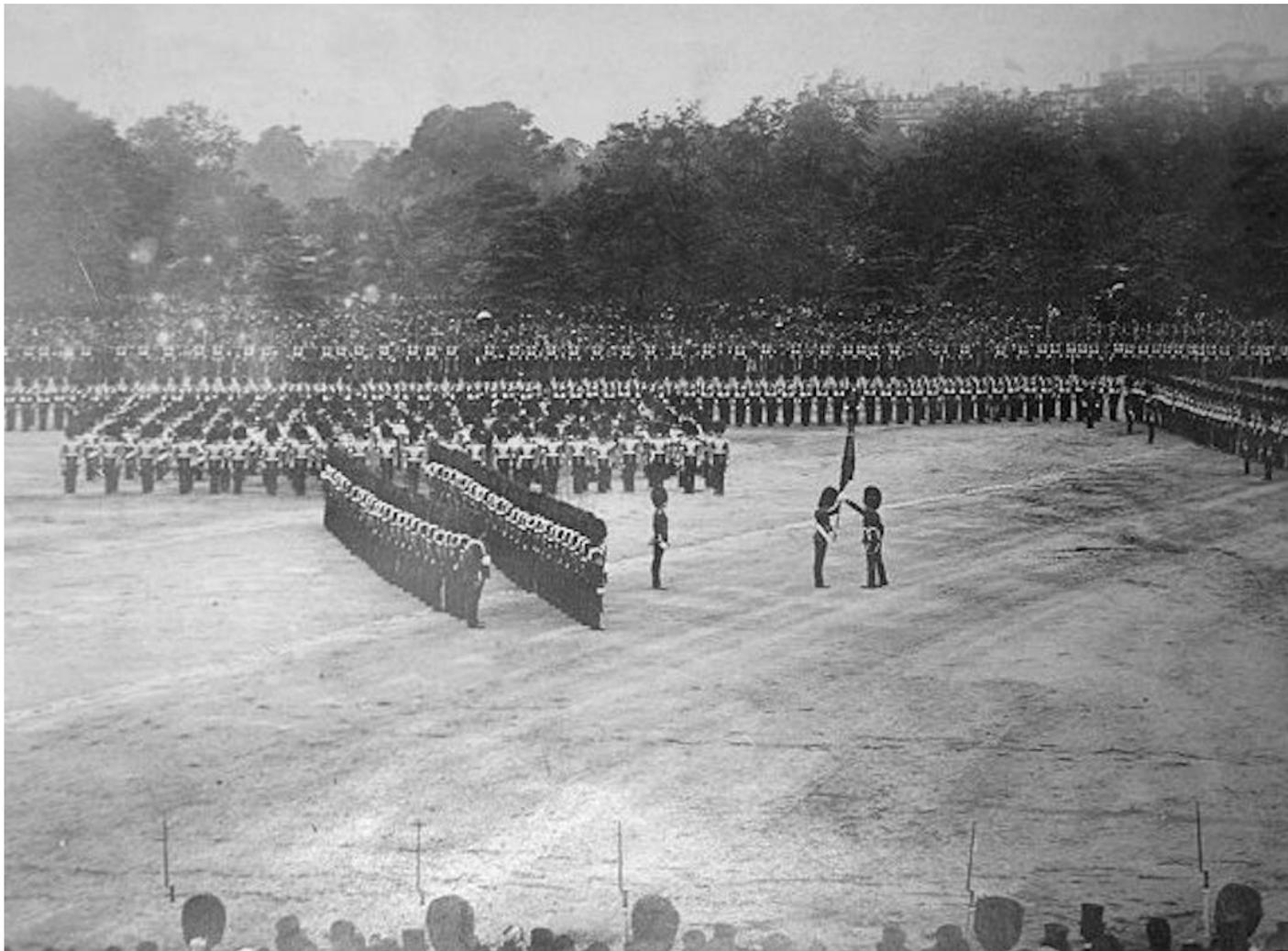
	Parade March	<i>Donizetti</i>
	Grand March	<i>Prince Albrecht of Prussia</i>
	The Prince of Wales's Grand March	<i>Sir Michael Costa</i>
Inspection of the Line:	The Danish Hymn	
	The Egyptian Hymn	
Troop:	Les Huguenots	<i>Meyerbeer arr. D. Godfrey</i>
	Der Tyroler und sein Kind (The Tyrolese Man and his Child)	<i>Kucken</i>
Marching the Guard to St. James's Palace:	Gut Heil (Good Cheer)	<i>Johann Valentine Hamm</i>
	Quick March: On Ballads	<i>Colonel Michael Bruce</i>

There is no indication as to the reason for the inclusion of the first three marches. It is unlikely to have been for marching onto parade as it seems the Guards were generally led on by their Corps of Drums. The most likely explanation is that the marches were played as incidental music to entertain the Guards and spectators prior to the arrival of the Royal Procession.

The *March on Ballads* was based on *The Maiden*, *The Rose* and *The Vision*, all composed by Colonel Michael Bruce who commanded the parade, and arranged as a march by his Bandmaster, Mr. Dan Godfrey. Colonel Bruce appear to have been an officer commissioned into the Grenadier Guards in 1840, serving at Sebastopol in the Crimea and eventually rising to the rank of General. The march was also played as the Inspection music at the parade in 1873.

The composer of *Gut Heil* is best known for having written the regimental quick march of the Coldstream Guards, originally shown for the parade as *Minanolla*, the correct spelling of *Milanollo* not appearing in the programmes until 1894. From around 1908 to 1958 it was referred to simply as *The Coldstream March*.

1886: The Grenadier Guards had previously marched past in slow time to Handel's *Scipio* but by 1886 this had changed to *The Duke of York* (Eley). It had reverted to *Scipio* by 1927 but *The Duke of York* was again used from around 1936 until the mid-1950s.



The Queen's Colour is handed over at the 1886 parade with the Massed Bands and Drums in the background.

1890: The music for the inspection included the *Jubilee March of the Prussian 1st Royal Guards Dragoons (Queen Victoria's Regiment)* (Voigt). The Queen had been appointed the regiment's Honorary Colonel and the march was played at her request.

1896: Unlike today when all Guards march from Wellington Barracks, the troops marched directly to Horse Guards Parade from their various stations around London led, in the case of the Foot Guards, by their respective Corps of Drums or Pipes. A report of the 1896 parade gives a good description of the assembly: 'About 9.30 a weak squadron of the Blues headed by their band emerged from the Mall, and ten minutes later the two flank companies of the 3rd Bn. Grenadier Guards from the Tower passed through the Archway to the inspiring strains of their drums and fifes. They were succeeded by the flank companies of the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Coldstream Guards, who appeared from the direction of Storey's Gate. A few minutes afterwards a squadron of the 2nd Life Guards, to the sound of their band, and two flank companies of the 1st Bn. Scots Guards, with pipes playing, appeared from the Mall and completed the force.'

1900: A company was found from the Royal Guards Reserve Regiment, who marched past to the 'very appropriate' strains of *Auld Lang Syne* and in quick time, *The Boys of the Old Brigade*. The company was described as '... looking bigger and broader than their comrades and having no badges on the valises, but otherwise not distinguishable. They were the finest men on the ground, tall and broad, and most of them wore medals. They went by decidedly the best of all'.

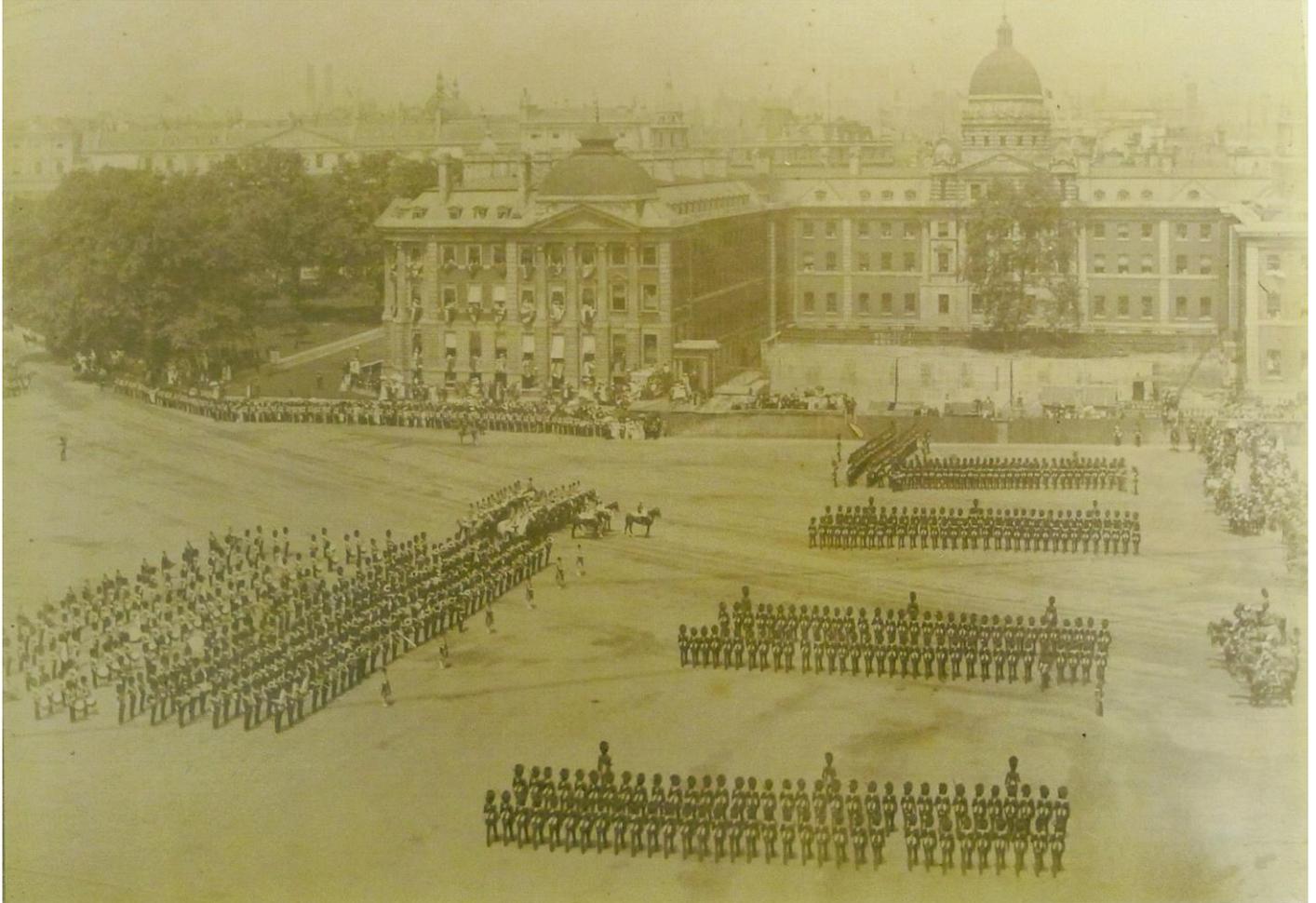
King Edward VII

1901: This was not strictly a King's *Birthday* Parade as the concept of an 'official birthday' had not yet developed. Instead, the King ordered that: 'The parade to take the form of a Presentation of Colours to the 3rd Batt. Scots Guards at the ordinary guard mounting of the day, as in earlier years'. The parade was, however, 'much on the lines of the Trooping of the Colour with which

it was the custom to mark the anniversary of the late Queen's birth'. It was the first occasion at which the sovereign attended the parade on Horse Guards Parade.

The Irish Guards took part in the parade for the first time and marched past in slow time to *Come Back to Erin* and in quick time to *St. Patrick's Day*. The regimental slow march was changed to *Let Erin Remember* in December 1902.

1902: On 15th April 1902 the London Gazette announced that 'the King's Birthday would be celebrated on 30th May next', creating the concept of an official birthday that could be celebrated with the traditional parade. It took a similar form to the previous year, being combined with the presentation of the first colours to 1st Battalion Irish Guards, the regiment having been formed in 1900.



The march past, believed to be at the 1903 parade. The Mounted Band of the 2nd Life Guards is on the left of the massed bands. In the background, the familiar frontage of the Admiralty building is being constructed to fill what was previously an open courtyard.



The Escort to the Colour from 1st Battalion Irish Guards march past in 1907, the colour yet to carry any battle honours. At the head of the Mounted Band of the 1st Life Guards is its Bandmaster, Mr. Frederick Haines.

1907: *Triumphal* was played for the inspection at the King's Birthday Parade on no less than seven occasions (1907, 1914, 1919, 1921, 1922, 1927 and 1929) as well as being used at the review of the ten battalions of the Brigade of Guards which took place in Hyde Park in 1913. The composer, James Waterson, was born in Blackburn in 1834 and became a noted performer on the clarinet. He joined the Band of the 1st Life Guards in 1853 and was appointed bandmaster ten years later in 1863. He was a good friend of the composer Charles Gounod who is recorded as having made several visits to the bandroom to listen to the band's rendition of his music. Waterson left the band in 1879, becoming editor of the *British Bandsman* magazine and died in 1893.

1908: Three of the marches, *Mauretania* (Duffy), *The Cameronians* (Lovell) and *Pioneer* (Adams) were entries in the 1907 march competition for students studying at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. Lieutenant John Mackenzie Rogan, Coldstream Guards, the Senior Bandmaster of the Brigade of Guards, was the adjudicator and was sufficiently impressed to include them on the 1908 King's Birthday Parade. Also in the 1907 class was Student Frederick Joseph Ricketts, better known under his pen-name of Kenneth J. Alford, now generally considered the finest of all march composers. However, Rogan was clearly unimpressed with his entry for the competition as he placed it – last!



The March Past in 1911

1911: King George V clearly took a personal interest in selecting the music for the parade. Lieutenant Colonel Rogan recalls in his autobiography that: “When I was shown into the presence, His Majesty greeted me very warmly and went carefully through the list of pieces I had submitted for the Birthday Parade. One piece in particular he wished to have played, and as he wrote down the name on the paper he hummed the refrain. It was Elgar’s march, ‘Pomp and Circumstance’. The King wanted to know the music I would play for the ‘Troop’. I explained that I had taken airs from two different operas, which were specially suited for the purpose*. To follow the ‘Troop’ he chose ‘Entry of the Gladiators’ march.” Today, Her Majesty entrusts the selection to The Major General Commanding the Household Division.

*This comprised part of *Ballet des Patineurs* from *Le Prophete* (Meyerbeer) and the Slaves’ Chorus from *Nabucco* (Verdi)



This is believed to be the 1914 parade and must be one of the earliest photographs showing the spin wheel



The Corps of Drums of 4th Battalion Guards Machine Gun Regiment c.1919

1919: The parade was held in Hyde Park because huts had been erected on Horse Guards Parade. The massed bands wore full dress and the nine drum majors and the three mounted bands of the Household Cavalry were in state dress, but the remainder of the parade (including the drummers and pipers) wore khaki. This was the largest ever birthday parade with all eleven battalions from the six regiments of the Brigade of Guards represented, including the 4th Battalion Guards Machine Gun Regiment who found Number 8 Guard. They marched past to *Mandalay* (Charles Franklin) in slow time and *The Soldiers' Chorus from Faust* (Charles Gounod) in quick time. This was their only appearance at a birthday parade as the regiment was disbanded in 1920.



The Massed Bands returning from the 1919 parade, led by nine Drum Majors. The Band of the Grenadier Guards leads and the two Directors of Music and three Bandmasters can be seen marching on the left flank.

1920: The parade was also held in Hyde Park with the massed bands now under Captain Albert Williams, Grenadier Guards, the composer of the *Parade March* used for the inspection. Pipers of the Irish Guards took part in the parade for the first time and this was the last occasion when a second march (*Coburg*) was played after the *Grenadiers March* as the colour was trooped. At the conclusion of the parade the King rode as far as Hyde Park Corner behind the mounted bands and, after the Household Cavalry marched past at Apsley House, he continued between the Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards and the King's Guard to Buckingham Palace where he took the salute as the procession marched past.

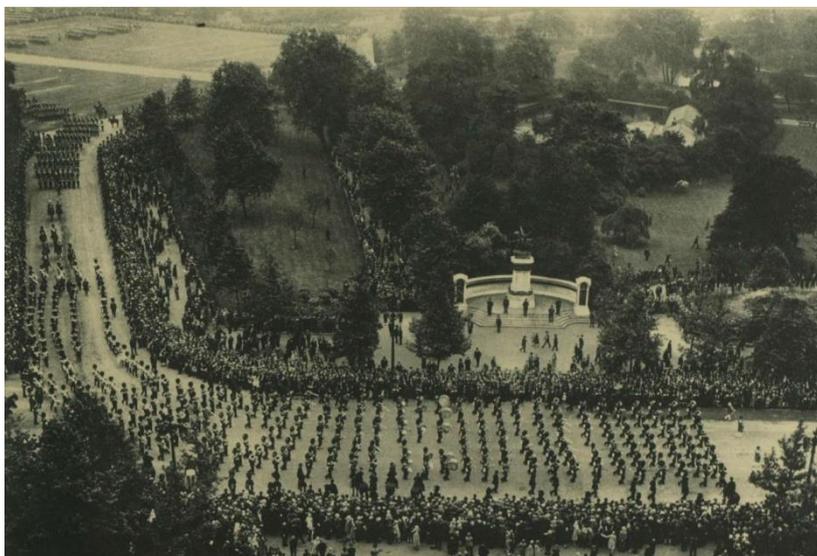


The Massed Bands and Drums at the 1920 King's Birthday Parade in Hyde Park with a mere seven Drum Majors and with the Corps of Drums and Pipers wearing khaki.

1921: This was the first birthday parade to be held on Horse Guards Parade following the war and the first with the Guards back in full dress. At the conclusion of the parade the King rode back along The Mall at the head of the King's Guard and took the salute at Buckingham Palace.



The Mounted Band of the 2nd Life Guards, headed by Major Charles Hall, with Squadrons from the 1st Life Guards at the 1922 parade. The two regiments amalgamated later in the year and Major Hall died shortly afterwards.



The Massed Bands lead the parade into the Mall following the 1928 parade, playing El Abanico by Alfredo Javaloyes, known to generations of soldiers for its unofficial words, 'You'll be Far Better off in a Home'. For this reason, bands were specifically banned from playing it in the 1953 coronation procession. The bands continued to march back one behind the other, until 1949.

1928: This was the first occasion at which 1st Battalion Welsh Guards trooped its colour on the parade, the regiment having been formed in 1915. There was no consistency with the strength of the bands on the parade prior to the Second World War. As an example, the bands paraded in 1928 at the following strength:

Royal Horse Guards:	25
Grenadier Guards:	65
Coldstream Guards:	56
Scots Guards:	55
Irish Guards:	44
Welsh Guards:	40
Drummers and Pipes:	140

The size of the bands reflected the number of battalions and the formation of 2nd Battalion Irish Guards and 2nd Battalion Welsh Guards in 1939 led to the regimental bands each increasing their establishments to 60.



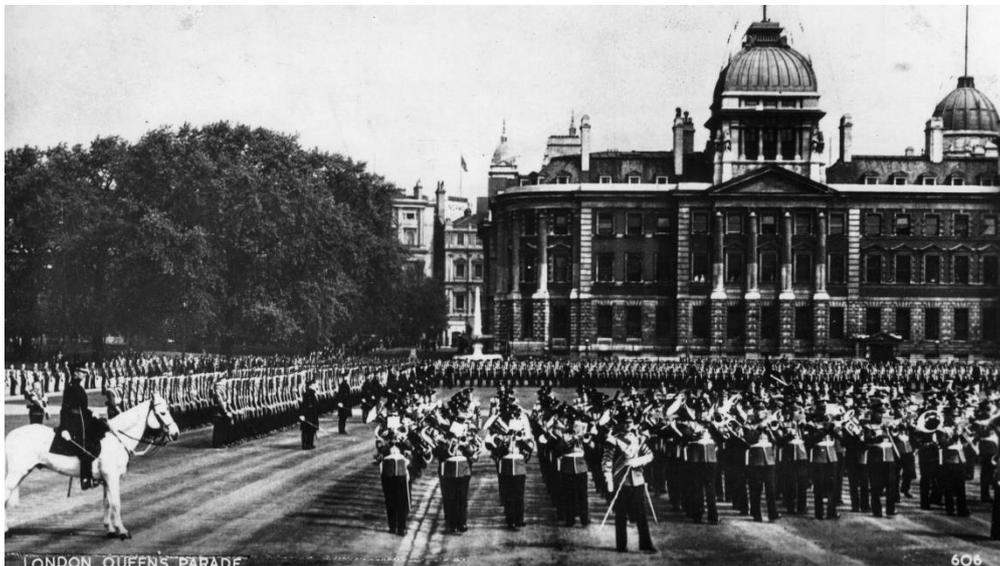
The quick march played for the inspection of the line sometimes comes to a rather abrupt ending as Her Majesty passes the right of the line of Guards and this photograph from the 1932 parade explains why. Captain Andrew Harris, Welsh Guards, can be seen conducting the massed bands as HRH The Duke of Gloucester, wearing the uniform of his regiment, the 10th Royal Hussars, came close to qualifying for membership of the Empty Saddle Club as his charger clearly took a dislike to the march The Chief by Leo Stanley.

1930: The parade was broadcast by the BBC on National Radio with commentary for the next few years by Major J. B. S. Bourne-May, Coldstream Guards. His grandson was the Field Officer-in-Brigade-Waiting in 1999 and 2000, making him one of the very few officers to have commanded the parade twice. It was largely due to his interest that the Band of the Coldstream Guards made a series of three compact discs of marches played on the parades spanning the period from 1864 to the present day.

1932: Standing Orders for the Brigade of Guards dated 1922 laid down that 'A space will be reserved on the south side of the parade, in rear of the bands, for the girls of the Guards' Home', and there were frequent mentions in press reports of the colourful sight these girls made in the red cloaks. It is believed that these were the inspiration for Joseph Mansfield's fine march, *The Red Cloak* which was played as the Quick Troop in 1932, and for the march back down the Mall in 1927 (played by the Drums) and 1949. There is reference elsewhere to a march by Mansfield entitled *The Red Cloaked Girls*, which may have been the original title.



The Mounted Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) leads the march past in 1932. The Director of Music, Lieutenant W.J. 'Paddy' Dunn, MVO, MC, seen on the extreme right of the picture, was the only Bandmaster to be awarded the Military Cross, for his bravery during the Kaiser's War in 1915. The mounted band led the march past and formed up on the left of the massed bands until 1936



Prior to the second world war the rehearsals were carried out with the Guards wearing forage caps and the officers in frock coats.



This picture of the rehearsal in 1933 which would have been taken by a royal colonel as the Mounted Band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) can be seen wearing state dress, behind the massed bands.

1934: Archive footage shows the drum majors gave the signal to cut off at the end of the National Anthem, a practice that appears to have continued until at least 1939.



The 1935 Parade. The Household Cavalry was represented by 'Two Troops' (who had, in earlier years, formed the King's/Queen's Life Guard after the parade) formed up with the mounted band in this position to the right of the massed bands until 1936.

1936: This was the only Birthday Parade for King Edward VIII and the last parade on which *Les Huguenots* was not played, a bad omen perhaps? The *Grand March* from Verdi's *Aida* was used in its place.

1937: This was the first birthday parade for King George VI, who changed the role of the Household Cavalry to that of providing a Sovereign's Escort to accompany the Royal Procession to Horse Guards Parade. It rode onto Horse Guards Parade and formed up in what had been the Household Cavalry's traditional place to the right of the massed bands, although the mounted band

remained in The Mall. Following the inspection, the Sovereign's Escort rode past the King and left the parade as the massed bands played the regimental march.

Another innovation was that Queen Elizabeth, with Queen Mary, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret, drove across Horse Guards Parade in a carriage rather than approaching via Whitehall as in the past; Number 3 Guard opened to allow the carriages to pass through, as has continued to be the custom.

1938: The Massed Mounted Bands of the Household Cavalry led the Sovereign's Escort which accompanied the Royal Procession and, for the only time on Horse Guards Parade, both Directors of Music were on the parade. Also for the first and only time, a Captain's Escort with Standard of The Life Guards escorted Queen Mary and Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret to the parade.

1939: The salute was taken by HRH The Duke of Gloucester, Colonel Scots Guards, as the King was in Canada. The Duke was accompanied by a Captain's Escort with Standard, with the Mounted Band of The Life Guards riding in six ranks of five, with a mounted side drummer in the ranks in addition to the kettle-drummer at its head. The Band of the Coldstream Guards was not on parade as it was performing at the British Pavilion at the New York World Fair. The remaining four bands of the Brigade of Guards were at a total strength of 210 with 131 Drummers and Pipers.

1947: For the first birthday parade following the Second World War the Guards wore battle dress, except for the Household Cavalry, the bands and mounted officers, who wore service dress. The Band of the Scots Guards was not on the parade and there was no mounted band.

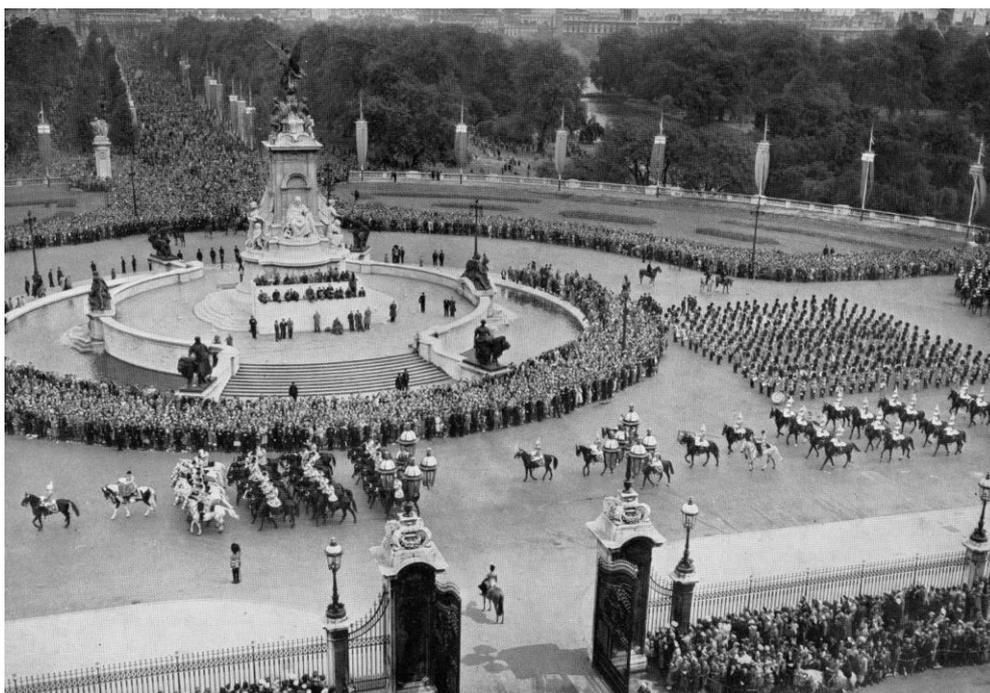
1948: What should have been the first post-war parade in full dress was cancelled owing to the threat of heavy rain although, in the event, it remained dry. The Queen's Colour of 2nd Battalion Scots Guards was to have been trooped and the ensign would have been the future Sir Angus Ogilvy, husband of Princess Alexandra.

The 1902 parade had been combined with the presentation of the first colours to 1st Battalion Irish Guards and this was reflected in the music for the inspection, *The Emerald Isle* (arr. Rogan) and *Killarney* (Balfe). Aside from this, the 1948 parade, had it taken place, was to begin the concept of the music being themed to represent the battalion whose colour was to be trooped, with the inclusion of *Skye Boat Song* and *Scottish Emblem*, the latter composed by Archie Ellis, a one-time musician in the Band of the Welsh Guards.

1949: The Queen's Colour of 1st Battalion Welsh Guards was trooped and the inspection music appropriately included *Great Big David* by Adolf Lotter, formerly the principal double bass player with the Queen's Hall Orchestra.

1950: This was the first time that the Mounted Band and the Sovereign's Escort remained in position in front of St. James's Park throughout the parade and ranked past at the end. After the final Royal Salute, *'The Sovereign's Escort of the Household Cavalry preceded by the Mounted Band will now ride past His Majesty and halt in the Horse Guards Approach Road'*. After the Guards had reformed in Divisions: *'The Sovereign's Escort of the Household Cavalry will advance down the Mall'*.

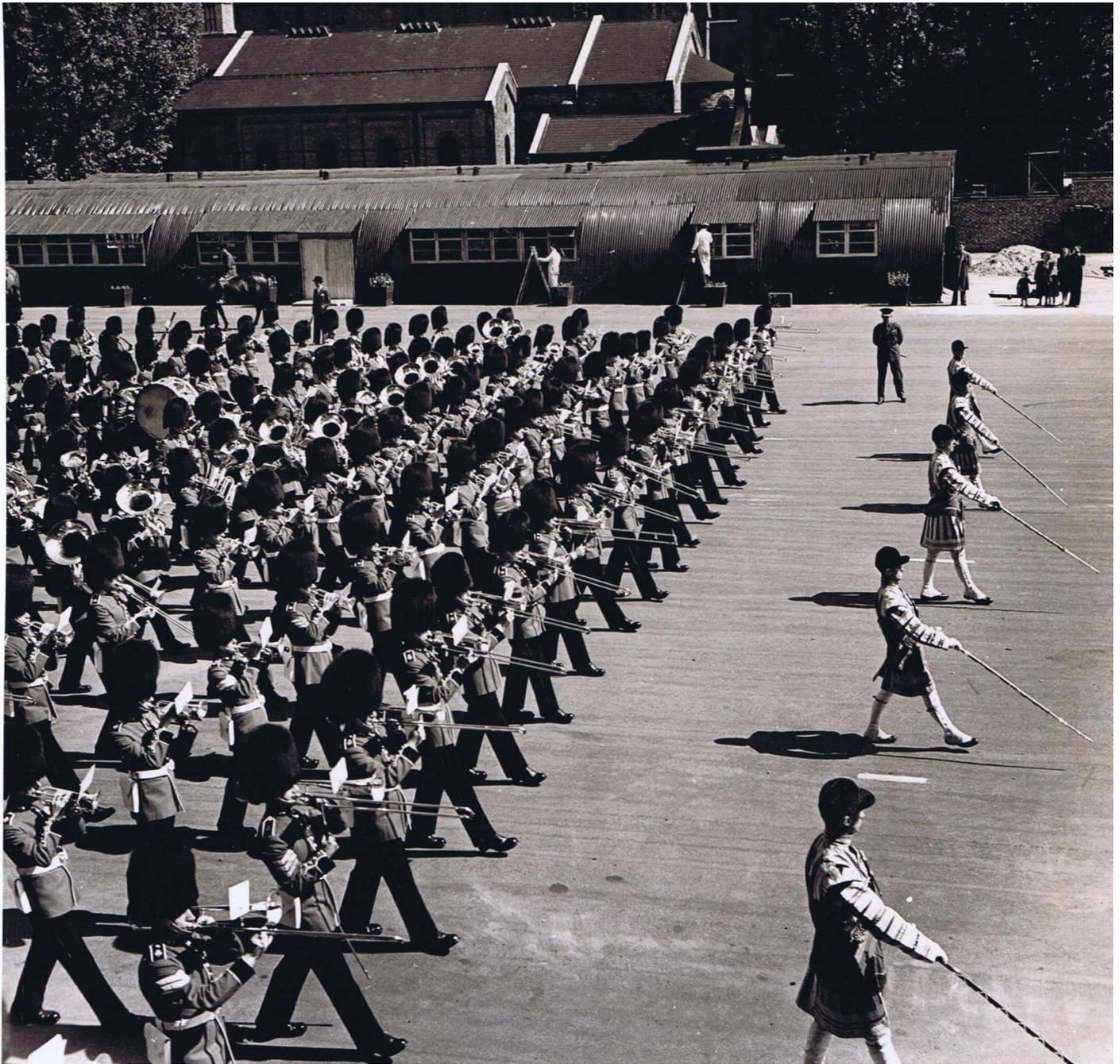
1951: The trot past was re-introduced at what was to be the last King's Birthday Parade of the century, with the salute taken by HRH The Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh, Colonel Grenadier Guards, wearing full dress uniform for the first time, in place of the King who could not be present due to illness.



The Mounted Band of The Life Guards leads the rank past of the Sovereign's Escort at Buckingham Palace following the parade in 1951

Queen Elizabeth II

1952: The Pipes and Drums of 2nd Battalion Scots Guards moved to the front of the massed bands during the march past to play the Escort and Number 2 Guard past in quick time to *Hielan' Laddie*. Only five Guards were on parade. The Sovereign's Escort walked and trotted past *before* the final Royal Salute as has been the custom since.



The Massed Bands rehearsing for the parade at Chelsea Barracks. The chapel seen in the background is now the only part of the barracks still standing.

1953: The music reflected the coronation which had taken place nine days earlier, with Albert Ketelbey's grand march *With Honour Crowned*, *Long Live Elizabeth* from Sir Edward German's *Merrie England*, and the great march *Coronation Bells*, written by William Partridge for the coronation of Edward VII in 1902.

1957: The first year that the Guards marched to Horse Guards Parade by way of The Mall rather than via Birdcage Walk.

1958: The first year that the bands marched to Horse Guards Parade with a frontage of four so as to slot straight into their places in the massed bands. Previously they marched in their 'normal' formation and re-formed on arrival as the corps of drums and pipes and drums do today.

This was also the first year that the massed bands played 'neutral' slow and quick marches during the march past to avoid excessive repetition of the regimental marches. The slow march began with *Golden Spurs* by the Senior Director of Music, Lieutenant Colonel Sam Rhodes, Scots Guards (his name was not Samuel as often appears in print) and was written for the 1937 coronation when he was Bandmaster of the Royal Artillery Mounted Band. The golden spurs form part of the coronation regalia

and are displayed with the crown jewels at the Tower of London. For the march past in quick time, the marches were *Old Comrades* (Carl Teike) and *Sons of the Brave* (Thomas Bidgood).

1959: This was the last birthday parade for 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards before being placed in suspended animation and the last on which the Lee Enfield rifle was carried, although street-liners from 1st Battalion Welsh Guards carried the new self-loading rifle that was to replace it. The parade was now to be held on a Saturday, rather than on a weekday as hitherto.

The first march for the inspection was *King William The Fourth*, believed to have been composed by John Monro (1786-1851), a pianist and composer born in Edinburgh who wrote a 'Complete Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte' in 1819 and has a number of compositions held in the British Library. It was arranged for band by Ken Griffin whose army career included service in the Coldstream Guards Band. After leaving the army he became a BBC television producer.

The Quick Troop was a fine march entitled *The Third Battalion* by J.S. Egerton although details of the composer are uncertain. The march had also been played at the King's Birthday Parade in 1923, the year that the copyright was assigned to Boosey and Hawkes. It was dedicated to the late Captain Arthur Egerton Watts-Russell, an officer of the Coldstream Guards who died in March 1923. The only records retained by the publishers show the composer as Major J.S. Egerton. Although we cannot be certain as to his identity, the Army List shows no other majors of that name so it seems likely that he could be Major Josslyn Seymour Egerton (1883-1946), a descendant of William the Conqueror and one-time Page to Queen Victoria who served in the Coldstream Guards from 1902 to 1920. It also seems likely that he would have served with Captain Watts-Russell and perhaps that their families knew each other, although this remains speculation. The march was arranged by Thomas Bidgood. Egerton also wrote a march called *Winnipeg*, played at the Birthday Parade in 1933.

1960: The last birthday parade for 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards as it too was to be placed in suspended animation, and the first on which the new self-loading rifle was used, with 'shoulder arms' replacing 'slope arms'. For the march off, each guard formed into three divisions rather than four as previously. The first division of the Escort to the Colour formed the St. James's Palace Detachment of the Queen's Guard and the rear division of Number 8 Guard formed the Buckingham Palace Detachment.

Prior to 1971 the mounted band was found by The Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) in alternate years. From 1960 to 1964 the mounted band was led by two drum horses, *Alexander the Great* of The Life Guards, and *Hannibal* of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues).

1960s and 70s: At most of the parades during the 1960s and 70s the flutes of the massed corps of drums played with the massed bands during the quick troop, with slight modifications to the scoring to accommodate them.



The Mounted Band of The Life Guards at the First Rehearsal for the 1965 parade which was the last at which 'coverers' rode to escort the drum horse, in this instance, Alexander the Great. The Director of Music is Major 'Jacko' Jackson who had begun his career as a band boy in the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues). Following the second rehearsal in 1968, the Director of Music of The Blues suffered a mild heart attack so for the day itself, Major Jackson stepped in to lead his former band. The rank past commenced with the trumpet calls signalling To the Right and Walk March (Photos: Colin Dean, aged 9)

1964: Lieutenant Colonel C.H. 'Jiggs' Jaeger, Irish Guards, was Senior Director of Music for the parade from 1964 to 1968 and included a good many of his own marches including *Double X*, *Tent Twelve*, *Commonwealth on the March*, an arrangement of *Dominique* and a fine slow march, *Freedom of Windsor*.

1967: The music for the inspection, *Sumer is Icumen In*, included the flutes from the massed corps of drums. The first march played for the rank past of the Household Cavalry was *Parademarsch*, composed by the Grand Duchess Olga, followed by the trumpet call '*Flourish – for Marching Past*' to precede the regimental marches.



The massed bands rehearsing at Chelsea Barracks in 1968 with Lieutenant Colonel C.H. Jaeger, Irish Guards, conducting. The Senior Drum Major is Drum Major Peter Kirk, Coldstream Guards. Close examination of the photograph reveals that the Band of the Scots Guards was not on the parade, nor was it in 1967, as it was required for public duties in Scotland during May both years. The remaining bands marched in fives so as to maintain the frontage of 20 musicians.

1968: A new arrangement by Captain Trevor Sharpe of the *Old Coldstream Marches* was played for the first time. The three slow marches were taken from the 'Entire New and Compleat Instructions for the Fife Containing the best and easiest Directions to Learn that Instrument with a collection of the most celebrated Marches, Airs &c Performed in the Guards & other Regiments' where they are shown as the First, Second and Third Coldstream Marches. The publication date is unknown but is thought to be the late 18th Century; the marches should not be confused with belonging to each of the three battalions as a BBC commentator once informed his viewers. This arrangement has since been used on most of the parades at which a colour of the Coldstream Guards has been trooped.

1969: The 1969 and 1970 parades were Scots Guards 'Troops' with the music dominated by the prolific pen of Major Jimmy Howe, Director of Music Scots Guards, with: *Melodies of Scotland, Marching wi' Robbie Burns, Road to the Isles, Pentland Hills, The Scottish Colour, Pride of Princes Street, Guards Division* and the slow march *Balmoral Castle*.

Contrary to what was printed in the programme, the rank past by the Household Cavalry in 1969 began with the *Preobrajensky March* to honour Admiral of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten of Burma, Colonel of The Life Guards. The march had family connections with the Earl and he had presented it to the Royal Marines as their regimental slow march in 1964. It has continued to be used most years (but not all) when the sovereign's standard of The Life Guards is on the parade. The march had been played at the parade in 1880 to follow the *Grenadiers March* as the colour was trooped, and in 1889 for the inspection when it reportedly "... aroused the attention of the Russian Military Attaché who ... was on foot at the saluting point".

1970: The only birthday parade at which the Mounted Band of The Blues and Royals (Royal Horse Guards and 1st Dragoons) took part on its own, following the amalgamation in 1969.

1971: The Mounted Bands of the Household Cavalry were massed on the parade for the first time in recent years, under Captain Tony Richards, The Life Guards. Massed mounted bands had previously taken part in the 1938 birthday parade and those held in Hyde Park in 1919 and 1920.

1972: The parade took place shortly after the death of HRH The Duke of Windsor. Officers wore black mourning bands and all drums were draped with black bows. Side drummers from the corps of drums, together with pipers of the Scots Guards, were positioned in two ranks in front of Number 3 Guard and on the arrival of Her Majesty at the saluting base there was a roll of drums and a minute's silence, followed by a second roll of drums. The pipers then played the lament *Flowers of the Forest* after which Her Majesty received a Royal Salute and the parade continued as normal.

Since 1960 each guard had formed into three divisions for the march off, resulting in a very long column which meant the rear guards were unable to hear the massed bands. A new procedure was devised in 1972 resulting in each guard being formed into two divisions and then closing up to the music of the massed corps of drums, normally playing *Prussia's Glory* by Gottfried Piefke. The first division of the Escort to the Colour forms the Queen's Guard for the day.

1973: The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery ranked past its Captain General at Buckingham Palace after the parade for the first time. This led to a change in procedure as the massed mounted bands formed up in front of the Victoria Memorial to play for the rank past, rather than leading it as hitherto.

1975: This was the first and only time that eight state trumpeters formed the front rank of the massed mounted bands. Major Tony Richards, Director of Music of The Life Guards, wrote trumpet parts to the regimental slow marches and *The Keel Row*, and revised the arrangement of *Preobrajensky* under the title *Peter the Great* (it was the march of his bodyguard, the Preobrajensky Guards). Major Richards also composed a new trot tune, *Guildhall*, to include cavalry trumpets. On the return along The Mall, the bands and trumpeters played *Fehrbelliner Reitermarsch* (Henrion), a march to which the Germans once sang '*We want our Kaiser back!*'

1976: The Band of the Grenadier Guards was without a director of music for a prolonged period and a former incumbent, Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Rodney Bashford OBE, was brought out of retirement to fill the role on a temporary basis. It is said that he claimed to be the only civilian to have marched on the birthday parade (at least since the last civilian bandmaster retired in the early nineteenth century).

1978: To reduce the repetition of the *Grenadiers March* a new arrangement was introduced to be played from the point when the Escort to the Colour step off in slow time to the point when the remaining guards present arms as the colour is trooped along the ranks. The march is entitled *Escort to the Colour* and was arranged by the Senior Director of Music, Major 'Dick' Ridings, Coldstream Guards, based on themes from Waldteufel's waltz *The Grenadiers*, thus maintaining the Grenadier connection with this part of the ceremony.

1979: Lieutenant Colonel Ridings' march *Rorke's Drift* was played as the quick troop to mark the centenary of the battle in 1879. One hundred years earlier, the quick troop was *The March of the 24th Regiment*, in honour of the same action.

1980: It is believed that this was the first occasion on which the massed mounted bands were cloaked for the parade, in order to protect their state coats for the Garter ceremony on the following Monday. The Sovereign's Escort rode cloaked to Buckingham Palace but uncloaked outside the palace. The massed mounted bands and the Sovereign's Escort had been cloaked for the first rehearsal which took place in steady rain.

1982: The parade took place during the war to liberate the Falkland Islands from hostile Argentinian invaders. 2nd Battalion Scots Guards and 1st Battalion Welsh Guards were due to have taken part in the parade but instead were sent to the South Atlantic as part of the Task Force. As a result, only six guards were available for the parade with just three drum majors leading the massed bands. After the first Royal Salute there was one minute's silence to remember those in action in the Falklands and the regimental marches of the Scots Guards and the Welsh Guards were played as the guards marched off parade.

The march originally selected for the quick troop was *San Lorenzo* (Silva) which is very popular in Argentina and regarded as their national march. It was understandably felt to be inappropriate for the parade and was replaced by *Children of the Regiment* (Julius Fucik), although perhaps this was a pity as the British army has a long tradition of stealing the enemy's tunes, from *Ca Ira* at Famars in 1793 to *Lili Marlene* during the Second World War.



Her Majesty The Queen passes the massed bands following the Inspection in 1983 (Photo: Colin Dean)

1985: The strength of the massed bands was reduced from 13 ranks to 12, with each band parading with a director of music and 47 musicians.

1987: The Queen rode in a carriage and took the salute from a dais. As a result of changes in the command of the Foot Guards it was decided that the Field Officer in Brigade Waiting for the Queen's Birthday Parade will in future be the commanding officer of the battalion finding the escort.



The massed bands historically played their programme of music while the sentries were changed, on the north side of the forecourt adjacent to Green Park. The location was moved to the south side during the 1980s to avoid obstructing motor cars entering or leaving via the Garden Entrance. This photograph shows them in 1987, conducted by Lieutenant Colonel 'Mick' Lane, Irish Guards. This was the final birthday parade for Garrison Sergeant Major Alec Dumon (otherwise known as Black Alec), seen on the right of the photograph. In the front centre, learning the ropes, is the man who was to succeed him, Garrison Sergeant Major 'Perry' Mason (Photo: Colin Dean)



From 1991 the reductions in the size of the bands meant that there were no longer sufficient 'spare' musicians to put out music stands and distribute music pads so from 1991 the bands remained in marching formation and all music was played from cards. The photograph shows them in the early 2000s under Major Andrew Chatburn, Irish Guards (Photo: Colin Dean)

1988: This was the first birthday parade at which the SA80 rifle was carried and some modifications to the drill were required. The Quick Troop was *Colonel John*, composed by Lieutenant Colonel 'Mick' Lane, Irish Guards in honour the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, Colonel Irish Guards, and combining Irish airs with music from *The Count of Luxembourg*. Although it was an Irish Guards troop, the fact that Guards were found from all five Foot Guards regiments (this also happened in 1953 and 1973) was reflected in the 'neutral' slow and quick marches with *Belle Isle* for the Grenadiers, *Red Red Rose* for the Scots, *Northumbrian Airs* for the Coldstream and *Men of Wales* for the Welsh Guards.

1989: The strength of the massed bands was again reduced, with each band on the parade comprising a director of music and 43 musicians.

1990: For the first time since 1967 the massed corps of drums joined the massed bands in part of the inspection music, *Sospan Fach Patrol*; they also played *Lilliburlero* as the Guards formed back in preparation for the march past. The Field Officer in Brigade Waiting wore aiguillettes for the first time, on the parade and at both rehearsals, and the Crown Equerry and Equerries-in-Waiting wore cocked hats for the first time in recent years.

1991: It was felt that the term 'rehearsal' was inappropriate. Consequently, the First Rehearsal became 'The Major General's Review' and the Second Rehearsal became 'The Colonel's Review'.

The march played by the corps of drums as the guards formed up for the march past was *Hazelmere*, composed shortly after the second world war by Drum Major Tom Birkett, 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards, for his wife, Hazel. It has been played at this point in most years since. The role of the corps of drums was further extended, playing *Hanover Girl* by Major Mike Hall, Coldstream Guards, as the guards prepared to march off. After the march past at Buckingham Palace the massed bands were marched to the forecourt to the music of the massed corps of drums playing *Come Lasses and Lads*. They then stepped off, less the corps required for the guard change, and marched back to Wellington Barracks playing *Passchendaele* (Hekker).



*The Massed Corps of Drums returning to Wellington Barracks playing Regina (Johnson) following the 1992 parade
(Photo: Colin Dean)*



The Massed Bands rehearsing at Chelsea Barracks in 1992

1995: The pipes and drums combined with the massed bands for the inspection music for the first time, playing *Brentwood Bay* (arranged by Lt. Col. David Price, Scots Guards), and *The Crags of Tumbledown Mountain*, composed by Pipe Major Jimmy Riddell, 2nd Battalion Scots Guards, while on the mountain in the immediate aftermath of the battle which ended the Falklands War in 1982. The original score, written on a 24-hour ration pack, is now displayed in the Guards Museum.

1996: For the first time the pipers played with the massed bands during the quick troop, the march being *Killaloe*.

1998: This was the first year that ladies were included in the massed bands. The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery took part in the parade on Horse Guards Parade for the first time. They formed up to the right of the Sovereign's Escort in the area previously occupied by the mounted bands, who were therefore moved to the left of the Sovereign's Escort and rode to their position for the rank past by way of the left of the line of Guards, passing behind Number 6 Guard.

There was a touch of sadness to the 1998 parade as the inspection music began with *Welsh Airs and Graces*, specially arranged for the occasion by Major Terry Davis, Director of Music Welsh Guards, who had died in the previous month.

2000: The strength of the massed bands was again reduced, with each band on the parade comprising a director of music and 39 musicians. Similarly, the mounted bands were each reduced by four musicians to 5 ranks of 8, but for this year only. Foot Guards

musicians carried backing cards in Household Division colours of blue red blue, with the regimental badge in the centre, and gold-plated cornets were used for the first time on the birthday parade.

2001: This was undoubtedly the wettest parade in living memory, with boots being completely submerged under water at some parts of the ground where the drainage could not cope, basses and euphoniums filled with water and with considerable damage to the woodwind pads. On the positive side, the Household Division's reputation for stoicism in the face of adversity was widely applauded in the press. Although the rain eventually ceased there was further very heavy rain after the parade throughout the period when the massed bands played their programme of music in the forecourt.

The Sovereign's Escort was cloaked for what is believed to be the first time on the parade (although the mounted bands were cloaked in 1980 and 1982).

2002: The signal for half of the massed bands to turn about after the spin wheels was now given by a double tap, rather than by a hand signal from a director of music as hitherto.

2004: The Escort to the Colour was found by Inkerman Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, to mark the 150th anniversary of the battle. The company represents the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards and *Rule, Britannia!* was included in the slow march as it had been part of that battalion's traditional music.



Her Majesty The Queen inspecting the pride of the nation in 2005

2006: After the return to Buckingham Palace the Old and New Guards, with the first six half-companies of street-liners, fired a *feu-de-joie* (fire of joy) to celebrate Her Majesty's 80th birthday. This comprised a first firing, the first six bars of the National Anthem, a second firing, the remainder of the National Anthem and a third firing followed by the complete National Anthem. Commands were given by Major General (Sir) Sebastian Roberts who then ordered the guards to ground arms (officers returning swords), remove head-dress and give three cheers for Her Majesty the Queen.

2007: One of the marches played for the march past was *The Coldstream Colonel*, dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant General Sir William Rous, the 27th Colonel of the Coldstream Guards. General Willie, as he was known in the regiment, held the post from 1994 to his death from cancer in 1999, just five days after showing great courage and fortitude by escorting the Queen at the Presentation of Colours at Windsor Castle despite being desperately ill. The march was composed by Lance Corporal James Scott, a cornet player in the band who has also developed a considerable reputation at home and abroad as the band's vocalist, having been featured at many high-profile events.

2010: The march *The Sergeant Major* by Lieutenant Colonel Philip Hills, was played during the march past in poignant memory of Regimental Sergeant Major Darren Chant, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, who had been killed in Afghanistan on 3rd November 2009, and who would have played a central role on the parade.

2015: *Lord Wellington's March*, composed by Princess Charlotte of Wales (1796-1817), was included after The Prince of Wales had sent a piano score to Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Barnwell with the suggestion that he might arrange it for the birthday parade. The other slow march, the *Parade March* from Gounod's opera, *Le Medecin Malgre Lui (The Mock Doctor)* was last played at the parade in 1867; the arrangement was by Fred Godfrey, Bandmaster of the Coldstream Guards.

2017: There was a return to an old tradition after many a decade, with the mounted kettledrummers playing Life Guards' drum rolls to lead into the Life Guards Slow March rather than the Royal Horse Guards' rolls which are normally used by the mounted bands.

An unusual feature was that two of the marches played by the massed bands for the march back along The Mall were composed by former Drum Majors: *The Irish Guards* was written by Drum Major Albert Shrimpton (Coldstream Guards) and played by the bands and corps of drums combined, and *Guards Parade* was written by Drum Major William Baldwin (Grenadier Guards).

The 2017 parade is particularly remembered as probably the hottest in living memory.

2019: The 2019 Queen's Birthday Parade marked two important anniversaries. Firstly, it was one hundred years since the Guards Machine Gun Regiment took part and this was noted by the inclusion of the *Soldiers' Chorus* from Gounod's *Faust*, to which the regiment marched past in 1919.

Secondly, it was 150 years since the magnificent slow march based on melodies from Meyerbeer's opera, *Les Huguenots*, is first known to have been played on the parade. This forms the musical centrepiece of the parade, played after The Queen has completed her inspection and returned to the saluting dais, and might just be the finest piece of martial music of all!

With thanks to John Gleeson for discovering some of the early reports.