

About Danish military music in 1911-1943

Introduction

In my previous references to the Army in the 1930s and 1940s, I have not dealt with the military music, but only touched on reserve horn players and reserve trumpeters, who probably look like military musicians by virtue of their instruments, but who are actually signal personnel.



*A 15-member infantry band, 6th Regiment band, Odense.
From Source 1.*

Military music in the period

Danish military music has led a changeable existence over the last 100 years, and the desire to save on the costs of the Armed Forces is not just something that belongs to the present.

Already with the Army Ordinance of 1909, it was decided to abolish military music, apart from the Lifeguard's music corps. This new arrangement was to enter into force on April 1, 1911, but was prevented - or rather

postponed - through popular protests.

With the Army Ordinance of 1932, it became serious, and all music bands, apart from the Life Guards, were disbanded, thereby saving 174 permanent musicians. The regiments then had to manage as best they could. A somewhat special attempt to "automate" the military music by letting a speaker van in which gramophone records with military music were played lead the way, fortunately did not gain traction - see the picture at the end of the paper.

Under the influence of - and as a counterweight to - the occupying power's music corps, Danish military music flourished, as 4 music corps were established in April 1941. These newly formed bands worked until 29 August 1943, when the Army was interned.

The size of the bands

1909-1922 1922-1932 1941-1943

The size of the bands in the period

	9	9	--
The cavalry and the artillery			
	29	36	36
Lifeguard			
	12	15	15
The foot people			

Until 1922, the infantry band consisted of 9 permanent musicians and 3 reserve musicians; in addition, there was access to use up to 7 conscript musicians. Source 1 states that "only a few men could be found among the conscripts to beat the drum and cymbals". To what extent the possibility of supplementing the permanent musicians also applied to the cavalry and artillery, Source 1 does not report anything, but based on the available pictorial material, it seems that the bands here were kept at 9 men in total.

Band crew



An infantry band, perhaps the 6th Regiment band, photographed during a concert in a Funen village, autumn 1927. The card is dated 5 October 1927.

The infantry's 15-member band was originally a pure brass band, but some were gradually transformed into - albeit modest - harmony bands with mixed woodwind and brass bands, while it seems that the cavalry and artillery bands remained pure brass bands; the number of musicians here also did not provide the great opportunities for a concert orchestra instrumentation. The Lifeguard's much larger band throughout the period had a mixed woodwind and brass band.

In addition to showing the instrumentation like a concert band, the uniform confusion of the period is also demonstrated, as virtually every conceivable combination of uniform items is shown.



The band of the Guards Hussar Regiment. From Source 1.



1. Field Artillery Regiment's band.

From Source 3.

In the Gardehusarregimentet's history from 1912-1937 (Source 2), the following is noted when the music corps was disbanded in 1932 [1](#): "But the musicians were also greatly missed in another direction. They had done a lot, partly as remontary riders and partly as specialists in the communication and liaison service benefit."

When military music returned (1941-1943)

In April 1941, as mentioned, 4 new bands were created, respectively at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Regiments.



The newly established music corps in Copenhagen, April-May 1941.

From Source 1.



The newly formed music corps at a concert in Fælledparken, April-May 1941.
From Source 1.



One of the newly formed music corps in Sønderborg, April-May 1941.
From Source 1.



5th Regiment's band wearing hussar uniforms, August 1943.
From Source 4.

Neither the Gardehusarregiment's nor the Jutland Dragoonregiment's music corps was restored in 1941, but on 5 Regiment's and 3rd Regiment's music corps were dressed in the uniforms of these regiments on special occasions.

If you compare the photograph with the subsequent drawings, it can be difficult to tell the difference between the real hussars and other musicians dressed in hussar uniforms. If one does not therefore pay close attention to the dating of photographs, etc., confusion can easily occur.

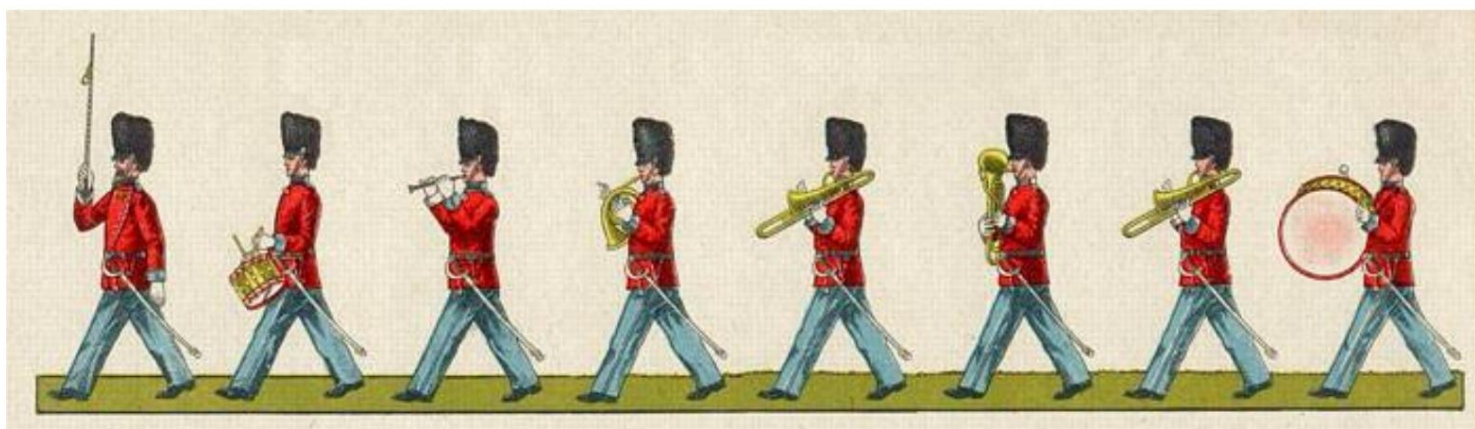


Musicians (trumpet, trombone and tuba) from the Guardhussar Regiment's music corps, approx. 1912 2).

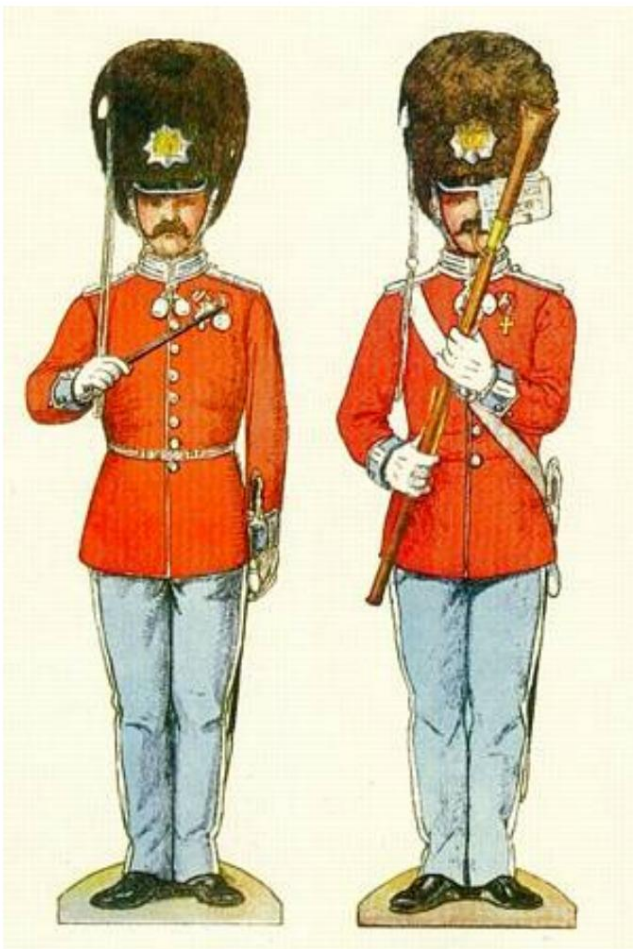
From the clipping sheet Danske Bilder Nr. 340, Alfred Jacobsen's Publishing House.

The Royal Lifeguard's band

Excerpt from the clipping sheet Livgardens Musikkorps, approx. 1920, drawn by Adolph Holst, Danske Bilder series 2, no. 2.



From left to right: Stabstambour, Snare drum, Clarinet, Waldhorn, Drag trombone Tuba Drag trombone and Snare drum.



*Music conductor and musician (bassoon)
from the Royal Life Guard, approx. 1912.*

From the clipping sheet Danske Bilder 315-316, drawn
by Adolph Holst, Alfred Jacobsens Forlag.
Reproduced from a reprint,
published as a postcard in the 1960s by
Ballermann & Søn.

The Lifeguard's music corps 1922-1943:

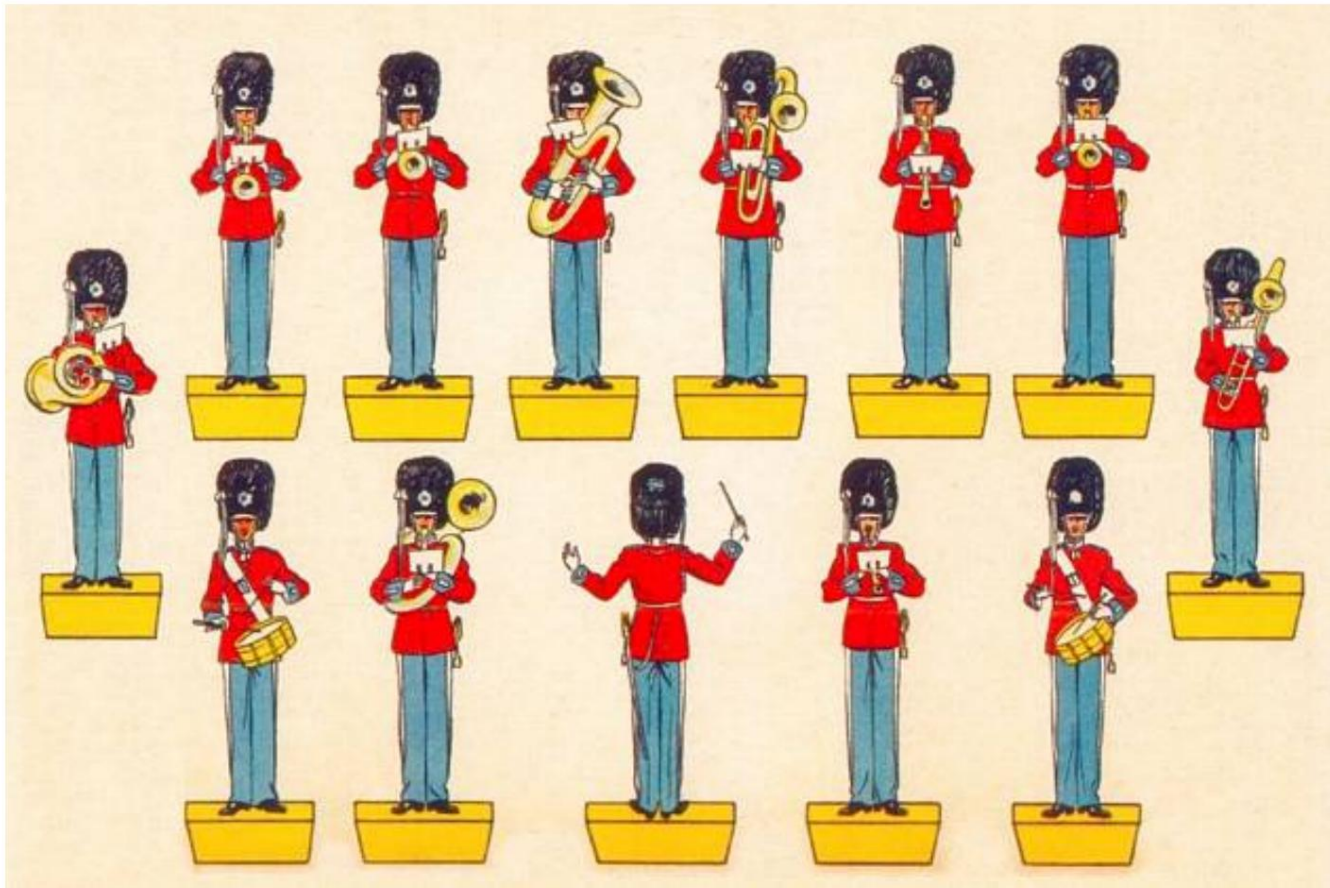
Management group	Brass group
Music director 1	Flugelhorn 2
Staff drum 1	Trumpet 3
	Waldhorn 4
Woodwind group	Tenor horn 2
Piccolo flute 1	Baritone 1
Grand flute 1	Tuba 2
Oboe 1	Traction trumpet 3
E flat clarinet 2	Helicon 1
B flat clarinet 6	
Bassoon 1	Percussion group
	Snare drum 1
	Bass drum 1
	The pelvis 1
	Lyre (glockenspiel) 1
	A total of 36 men

For example instrumentation from
the period 1922-1943.

From Source 5

Excerpt from a clipping sheet from the 1930s: Livgarden's music corps, in an adapted concert set-up.

The clipping sheet was reprinted in 1999 as a postcard, no. 4251, Topp.



Trumpet Trumpet Tuba Trumpet Clarinet Trumpet

Waldhorn

Tow trumpet

Small drum Helikon

Music conductor

Clarinet Snare drum

References and music samples

The website The Virtual Music Library contains 74 examples (sound files and sheet music) of trumpet marches for cavalry and artillery, which originate from a larger collection of marches that Captain of the Life Guard (later lieutenant colonel of the Reinforcements) Axel Vilken Arendrup (1896-1984) left behind. The music samples, which come from two tapes that the lieutenant colonel had recorded in the 1950s with an E-flat trumpet voice, are not the greatest pleasure, but give a good impression of both melody and tempo.

The website also contains two articles by Niels Friis (the author of Source 1), which partly summarizes the development of military music in the current period and mentions the music corps restored in 1941:

- *Military music and the new defense system* (Danish Musiktidsskrift, Volume 21/1, 1946)

- *The military music situation must be sorted out now* (Dansk Musiktidsskrift, Volume 23/10, 1948).

(The articles can be found by searching for *military music*.)



1st Regimental Band, Kastellet, approx. 1930.
From the website of the 8th Regimental Band.

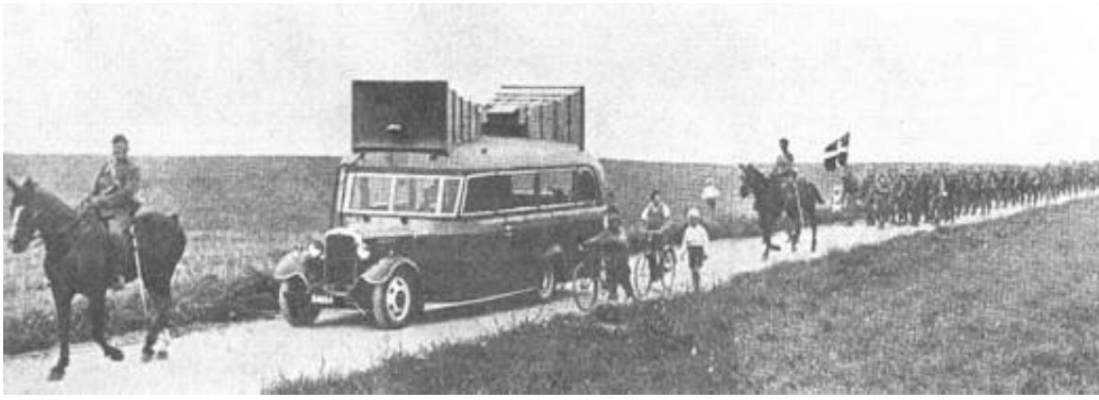
The 8th Regiment's (reestablished) Music Corps (until 1986 *Roskilde Hornorkester*) keeps the traditions of the old regimental music alive.

The music corps' website contains a good description of the history of Danish military music as well as a number of examples of the corps' repertoire. The page contains i.a. the article *Militærmusikken i Roskilde 1913-1932* by Martin Corfix, in which the original 8th Regiment's band is described.

On the Fredericia history website, there is a corresponding article on the *Military Music in Fredericia* by Erik F. Rønnebech, including a mention of the 7th Regiment's music corps. The website also contains a number of audio files with horn signals from the Schleswig Wars as well as a number of interesting accounts from the same wars.

Sources

1. *The military music - Leaves of its history, Memories of its men* by Niels Friis, Special edition of Viborg Diocesan Gazette, Viborg 1941.
2. *The Guards Hussar Regiment 1912-1937, with a summary of the regiment's history from 1762-1912* by Colonel Alf Giersing, The Hoffenberg Establishment, Copenhagen 1937.
3. *Concise overview of the history of the 1st Field Artillery Regiment from 1917 to 1942* by Niels Bjerre, Special edition of Dansk Artilleri-tidsskrift, Copenhagen 1942.
4. *Gardehusarkasernen on 29 August 1943* by Anders D. Henriksen, Forlaget Devantier, Næstved 1993, ISBN 87-984530-0-9.
5. *A contribution to the debate about the formation of the Royal Life Guard's music corps in the period when the company Lineol produced its 7½ cm soldier figures* by EC Finsted, Chakoten Nr. 2/1982.



From the 1930s experiments with "automated" military music.

The picture comes from an advertisement on the occasion of Bagger Radio's 40th anniversary, November 1977. The speakers had to be a Bang & Olufsen model.

Notes:

1) Since the dawn of time, the actual military music has been performed by professional musicians, dressed in military uniforms. You could say that the military musicians were primarily musicians, secondarily soldiers. Contrasted with the tambourines, who - as signal personnel - were primarily soldiers, secondarily musicians. The tradition is still maintained in the Army, where the musicians are hired, as in any other symphony orchestra, according to their abilities as musicians. After employment, the musicians receive a "course" in military decorum, so that they e.g. can march. See e.g. the article The Royal Music Corps, FOV Newsletter no. 4/2002. The hussars of the time thus also had actual military tasks.

2) Why the draftsman, who is possibly Adolph Holst, has chosen to depict the hussars with black sweeps, the story does not say anything about. The other hussars on the cut-out sheet are also shown with black strokes.