



“The Journal of Phileas Fogg” - Peter Graham

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Guidance Notes by Anne Crookston

To describe this test-piece as a ‘musical travelogue’ would be to do it some injustice. It is true that Peter Graham’s *The Journal of Phileas Fogg* draws on elements of Jules Verne’s epic work *Around the World in Eighty Days* for its inspiration, but the skill with which it is scored and the colourful variety of soundscapes it contains make it an eminently playable piece for the bands, and one that is certain to be enjoyed by the listener.

Ten vignettes, depicting a series of adventures (supposedly those recorded in an imaginary diary by our eponymous hero) provide the outline for the piece, and a brief outline of that journey is contained in the score’s programme note (conductors please note the errata - published in August 2015 - concerning clarification of tempo markings and an additional solo cornet dynamic marking). The piece is scored for standard brass band and two percussionists covering a manageable array of instruments including glockenspiel, triangle, wood block, cymbal, tambourine, bass drum and drumkit.

This synopsis must not be understood as a ‘blue print’ for success but as a guide to how adjudicators analyse the inner elements of the score in order to define the accuracy of a performance. Therefore, this is offered as an example only and conductors should delve further into the score in order to reveal other detail not covered in this critique. Moreover, it is expected that conductors will be as musically creative as is possible within the bounds of the score and enable the adjudicator to “hear what we see”!

I - Oct. 1 1872 – London

With its bright, spirited tempo ($\text{♩} = 132$) the opening section depicts the starting point of the journey in London and could be thought of as a three-part structure. The opening motif is heard at letter A on unison baritones and tenor trombones.



It is then extended and given to solo cornets and euphoniums at letter B, while at letter C a more fragmented version is heard moving from solo cornets to trombones and euphoniums, and finally to basses and bass trombone. At each point, conductors have the opportunity to instruct players as to the style they want - perhaps from a *maestoso* opening statement to a more lyrical style at letter B. Careful attention should be paid, however, to intonation at each statement of the motif. Dynamically the opening is shaped in straightforward fashion (the overall shape is that of a gradual diminuendo - each rehearsal letter is quieter than the one before). However, finding a balance of sound in the opening is crucial - the triangle should add atmosphere to the bell sound and not overpower. Similarly, at letter C, the accompanying bell sounds in horns and baritones shouldn't overpower the solo lines. A muted cornet fanfare, answered by trombones and lower brass, signal a change in style just before letter D - make sure there's no drop in tempo here.

II - Oct 2 - En Route

This short section links the bells of London to the sights and sounds of the *Folies Bergère* in Paris. Addition of the wood block gives the impression of a ticking clock (a common theme in Peter Graham's music!) and the tempo ($\text{♩} = 152$) hurries the journey forward. Two solo cornets will need a light touch at letter E (as will euphoniums and baritones at letter F) but clean articulation throughout this section will be of benefit.



III - Oct 5 - Paris

Nimble fingers and overall dexterity in dynamic shaping (two bars before H) will keep this *Can-Can* lively and dance-like. Again the lower brass are in unison to open, this time accompanied by off-beat cornets and horns however, although the dynamic is *f*, the style should be light throughout and the ensemble playing precise - the drumkit will help keep the off-beat quavers in order! Nimble fingers are required in both solo cornet and euphonium parts to end the frivolity of the *Can-Can* before we move to the severe austerity of Russia on the next leg of the journey.

IV - Oct 10 - Moscow (Maestoso $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 84$)

A change in tonality and tempo, to a heavier-styled *maestoso* mark the opening of this journey through the Russian Steppes (Letter J). Unison horns and solo baritone play the opening motif, the accompanying off-beat crotchets on lower brass should be weighty but only *mf*.

This is a short interlude, however, and the brief *Allegro* ($\text{♩} = 152$) at Letter L serves to prepare the listener for the technical heart of the piece: sections V (Chased By Cossacks), VI (Vienna) and VII (Seville).

V - Oct 12 - Chased by Cossacks

The excitement is built letter by letter through this chase scene, beginning with unison flugel, tenor horns and their accompanying rhythmic ostinato. Care should be taken with phrasing - particularly in placing the anacrusis, and the accompanying rhythmic line should be relentlessly accurate.



The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is marked *mp*. The music consists of rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes, typical of a chase scene. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4.

Letter O brings a modulation and change of dynamic as the excitement grows. Here a balance should be found between *repiano* and solo cornets that first state the Cossack theme, and the baritones and euphoniums that reply in echo. Peter Graham uses the technique of *quod libet* (working two themes together at the same time) to great effect from letter P. The *Piu mosso* ($\text{♩} = 160$) almost gives the music a two in-a-bar feel, with attention being paid to the slower-moving hymn like theme in the lower cornets and horns.

VI - Oct 20 - Vienna

VI - Oct. 20 - Vienna
Andante cantabile $\text{♩} = \text{c.}144$



The image shows a musical score for five staves. The top staff is marked *ff*. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked *Andante cantabile* with a quarter note equal to approximately 144 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *ff* to *mf*. The score includes a modulation to a new key signature (three sharps) in the second system.

Having survived being chased by Cossacks, bands are given the opportunity to demonstrate expression and lyricism in a Viennese waltz. The scoring is light and transparent, and the music should flow gracefully. Horns lead off the dance and, when solo cornets and euphoniums join at letter S, the pirouettes begin! Phrasing the solo lines musically will allow the dance to flow. Solo cornets will again need a light, nimble touch from letter T, but even when the texture thickens somewhat towards the close of the section, the dynamics never get above *mf*. The music winds gracefully to a close before the drama of the bullfight begins.

VII - Nov I - Seville - at the bullfight

A declamatory cadenza calls the matadors (solo cornet) to the ring before the characteristic Paso Doble dance begins in earnest (bands are given the option to shout 'Olé' just to add to the drama!)

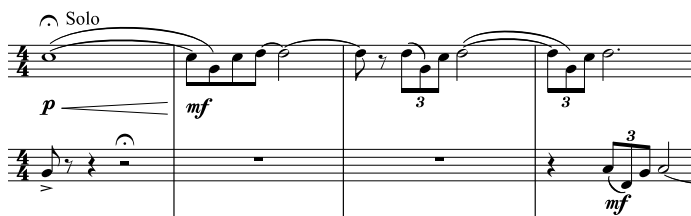


This traditional Paso Doble dance is based on the music played at bullfights during the matadors' entrance; the leaders of this dance are solo cornets and euphoniums. In characteristic style, the dance melody should be played legato and with lyricism over an energetic, rhythmic accompaniment. Care must be taken to maintain the tempo (Allegro $\text{♩} = 152$), whilst great delicacy and accuracy of ensemble is needed from letter Z. This, coupled with a flourish of triplet semiquavers will give the music flair and style, but the energy of this section should be maintained to the very end (DD).

If these sections were the technical and stylistic heart of the music, its emotional core comes in the form of the final parts of the journey: *Sea Voyage*, *The Final Journey* and *Homecoming*.

VIII - Nov 10 - Sea Voyage (Lady Stewart's Air) (Adagio $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 60$)

Lady Stewart's Air was commissioned by David King on behalf of the Federation of Australasian Brass Bands as a tribute to Lady Adrienne Stewart, a long-standing supporter, promoter, fundraiser and patron of most arts organisations in New Zealand with strong links to the brass band community in both New Zealand and Australia. This beautiful air forms the basis of the final, nostalgic trip back to London with solo euphonium given the chance to shine briefly.



Bands and conductors will relish the opportunity to be as expressive as possible but although the tempo is *Adagio*, the music should still flow. The composer adds a sting in the tail at GG in the form of muted cornets so intonation will be an issue to look after.

IX - Dec. 5 - The Final Journey (Alla Marcia J= 120)

X - Dec 21 - Homecoming (Maestoso J= c. 60)

The penultimate section of the piece takes the form of a march and sees a return of the opening motif. The carillon call of London bells once again provide the backdrop as the music builds emotionally and dynamically towards the final, majestic statement of Lady Stewart's Air in the *Homecoming*.

44

3/2

rit.

JJ

X - Dec. 21 - Homecoming
Maestoso J = 60

Soprano Cornet Eb

Solo Cornet Bb

Repiano Cornet Bb

2nd Cornet Bb

3rd Cornet Bb

Flugelhorn

Solo Horn Eb

1st Horn Eb

2nd Horn Eb

This is a beautifully descriptive work and allows every band and conductor the opportunity to display a whole range of stylistic and musical contrasts, and the most successful bands will be those that take the audience and the adjudicators on that musical journey.

Further information regarding the Association of Brass Band Adjudicators performance assessment criteria (PAC) can be found on the AoBBA website

[\(http://www.aobba.com/performance-assessment-criteria-pac-a-guide-for-conductors-and-bands/\)](http://www.aobba.com/performance-assessment-criteria-pac-a-guide-for-conductors-and-bands/)

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