

EASY STEPS

to the

BAND

BY
MAURICE D. TAYLOR

A beginner's method which recognizes the problems of the band student and takes him through them in interesting and logical steps. Register development has been given careful consideration so that although much of the material is unison, no instrument is taken out of a beginner's range. Clarinet players conquer the break, and cornet players work up to the higher tones, without the usual discouragements.

All material is melodious, with many songs included. Exercises are short and to the point, so that definite assignments may be made and many players heard individually in a few minutes. Scheduling is made easy, since any combination of instruments may be taught in the same class with satisfactory results.

The supplement of marches, etc., at the back of the book gives an ideal approach to the playing of regular band numbers and makes possible a concert, if anything like a full band is available.

~~~~~ PUBLISHED FOR ~~~~~

## CONDUCTOR'S SCORE and MANUAL

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| C FLUTE                  | CORNET or TRUMPET                 |
| E <sub>b</sub> CLARINET  | E <sub>b</sub> ALTO or MELLOPHONE |
| B <sub>b</sub> CLARINET  | FRENCH HORN in F                  |
| OBOE                     | TROMBONE and BARITONE (♭)         |
| BASSOON                  | TROMBONE and BARITONE (♮)         |
| E <sub>b</sub> SAXOPHONE | BASSES                            |
| B <sub>b</sub> SAXOPHONE | DRUMS                             |

# Contents

|                                                              |                |                                              |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Introduction</b> .....                                    | 7              | <b>Progressive Lessons</b>                   |               |
| <b>Plan of Easy Steps to the Band</b> .....                  | 8              | Lesson 1 .....                               | 44            |
| <b>Guide to the Conductor's Manual</b> .....                 | 8              | Lesson 2 .....                               | 50            |
| <b>General Suggestions</b> .....                             | 9              | Lesson 3 .....                               | 55            |
| <b>Tone Production</b>                                       |                | Lesson 4 .....                               | 60            |
| Comments Applying to All Instruments ..                      | 12             | Lesson 5 .....                               | 65            |
| Flute and Piccolo .....                                      | 13             | Lesson 6 .....                               | 71            |
| Oboe .....                                                   | 13             | Lesson 7 .....                               | 77            |
| Bassoon .....                                                | 14             | Lesson 8 .....                               | 83            |
| Clarinet .....                                               | 14             | Lesson 9 .....                               | 89            |
| Saxophone .....                                              | 15             | Lesson 10 .....                              | 95            |
| Cornet .....                                                 | 15             | Lesson 11 .....                              | 102           |
| French Horn .....                                            | 16             | Lesson 12 .....                              | 108           |
| Alto and Mellophone .....                                    | 17             | Lesson 13 .....                              | 114           |
| Trombone and Baritone .....                                  | 17             | Lesson 14 .....                              | 120           |
| Tuba .....                                                   | 17             | Lesson 15 .....                              | 126           |
| Drum .....                                                   | 18, 42, and 22 | Lesson 16 .....                              | 133           |
| <b>Forms of Articulation</b> .....                           | 19             | Lesson 17 .....                              | 139           |
| <b>Balance of Breath Pressure and Lip Tension</b> ..         | 21             | Lesson 18 .....                              | 145           |
| <b>Drum Rolls</b> .....                                      | 22             | Lesson 19 .....                              | 151           |
| <b>The Unit Method of Rhythm Reading</b> .....               | 23             | Lesson 20 .....                              | 157           |
| Suggestions on Teaching the Divide Beat ..                   | 88             | Lesson 21 .....                              | 163           |
| <b>Fingering Charts and Photographs</b>                      |                | Lesson 22 .....                              | 171           |
| Flute .....                                                  | 27             | Lesson 23 .....                              | 178           |
| Oboe, Conservatory System .....                              | 28             | Lesson 24 .....                              | 184           |
| Oboe, Military System .....                                  | 29             | Lesson 25 .....                              | 190           |
| Bassoon, Heckel System .....                                 | 30             | <b>Unison Scales and Chords</b> .....        | 197           |
| Clarinet, Albert System .....                                | 31             | <b>Special Solos, Duets, and Trios</b> ..... | 203, 204, 205 |
| Clarinet, Boehm System .....                                 | 32             | <b>Easy Harmonized Pieces</b>                |               |
| Clarinet, Boehm System Showing Alternate<br>Fingerings ..... | 33             | Easy Steps March .....                       | 207           |
| Saxophone .....                                              | 34             | Choral .....                                 | 209           |
| Cornet .....                                                 | 35             | America .....                                | 210           |
| French Horn, Single F or Eb Horn .....                       | 36             | Our Boys Will Shine .....                    | 211           |
| French Horn, Double Horn and Single Bb<br>Horn .....         | 37             | America, the Beautiful .....                 | 212           |
| French Horn, 5-Valve Bb Horn .....                           | 120            | Shadowland Waltz .....                       | 213           |
| Alto or Mellophone .....                                     | 38             | Junior Band March .....                      | 218           |
| Trombone or Baritone, Treble Clef .....                      | 39             | Our School March .....                       | 222           |
| Trombone or Baritone, Bass Clef .....                        | 40             | Sunset Meditations, Tone Poem .....          | 227           |
| Basses .....                                                 | 41             | Carnival King Overture .....                 | 230           |
| Drums .....                                                  | 42             | Salute March .....                           | 236           |

# Introduction

Most people begin the study of a musical instrument because they expect to derive pleasure from playing, yet pupils and teachers alike often overlook the fact that a thorough foundation is essential to the continued enjoyment of music study. Pleasure and musical advancement will go hand in hand when proper instruction and study material are available. *Easy Steps to the Band* was offered to the public after extensive trial in many situations had proved it both logical and interesting.

This Conductor's Score and Manual has been prepared with the thought of furnishing every possible aid to the director without appearing dogmatic or attempting to force the reader to adopt the author's ideas of teaching procedure. It is hoped, however, that the numerous suggestions will at least be given consideration, since they are the result of many years of practical experience in teaching beginners. Many seemingly-obvious facts have been included, yet casual observation shows that many teachers fail to practice them with the result that their pupils acquire definitely bad habits or at least fail to do themselves justice. Since not all teachers have the same background, that which is obvious to one may be new to another.

An attempt has been made to treat controversial matters in an open-minded way with no thought of settling such matters "for all time." It is generally recognized that many phases of teaching musical instruments have not been scientifically studied long enough to establish conclusive facts.

Let it be remembered that any person who submits his ideas in writing is still subject to a change of mind. The writer is always on the lookout to improve further the teaching procedure outlined in this book and can think of no better suggestion to band directors than to be on the alert. themselves, for ways in which to bring to their pupils a richer and more satisfying experience in music. It is hoped that *Easy Steps to the Band* will contribute to the attainment of this objective.

The Author

## Plan of *Easy Steps to the Band*

1. All of the books of *Easy Steps to the Band* may be used for either private or group instruction; the various instruments may be taught together in any combination up to full band.

2. Each book contains one or more photographs illustrating the proper playing position; a fingering chart with brief comments on its use; 25 progressive lessons which should be studied in order; a group of unison scales and arpeggios which may be studied one at a time as the proper key has been introduced in the lessons or may be left until all lessons have been completed; several solos, duets, or trios which are not the same for all instruments and can be played only in certain combinations, included with the thought that they might be used for special numbers in case a concert was to be given by the class; eleven specially harmonized numbers intended for groups bearing semblance of a complete band. (These harmonized numbers may be introduced before the entire 25 lessons have been studied.)

3. Accidentals are used in place of signatures in the first 9 lessons; signatures are introduced in the 10th lesson.

4. Wherever new rhythms have been introduced, arrows are placed in all books to indicate exactly where the beat falls.

5. In the pupils' books the fingerings of new tones are shown at the beginning of the lesson in which they are introduced. Drum rudiments, with playing directions, are shown one lesson previous to their use in the score.

6. Throughout the individual books appear many definitions, explanations, and suggestions to the pupil; they have been worded in simple language so that those in the intermediate grades can understand them. Every effort has been made in their choice and wording to include nothing the director might feel obliged to condemn and to avoid committing him to any special way of teaching.

## Guide to the Conductor's Manual

1. Throughout the 25 lessons the complete score for the eight most frequently used instruments is shown; the director can tell what notes the other instruments are playing by memorizing the formula shown below. (To have included the unusual instruments in the score throughout the 25 lessons would have made this book unnecessarily bulky and expensive.)

Db piccolo – sounds one octave higher than the C flute. The notes will be written one degree lower than the flute and the key signatures will be in sharps; the note is always 1/2 step lower than the flute.

Oboe – same as flute.

Eb clarinet – same as Eb alto; sounds an octave higher.

Bb saxophone – same as cornet; tenor saxophone sounds octave lower.

French horn in F – sounds like the Eb alto part; the notes are written a whole step lower.

Treble trombone and baritone – same as cornet; sounds an octave lower.

Any exceptions to the formula given will be noted in the comments appearing at the side of the various exercises.

The score for the harmonized pieces at the back of the book includes all instruments.

2. Fingering charts for all instruments, similar to those in the pupils' books, are included in the early pages of this Conductor's manual. In addition the fingering of all notes introduced in any lesson is shown at the beginning of that lesson. Fingerings given are for Boehm system clarinet and flute, conservatory system oboe, Heckel system bassoon, and the single French horn in F or Eb. (The Eb alto book also shows the French horn fingerings where they differ from the alto.)

3. The symbol of the pointing finger is used to indicate the first actual use of any note for the instrument concerned.

4. Throughout the 25 lessons teaching suggestions and other information of interest appear at the side of the page. Considerable space is also available wherein the director may record ideas which will be of help to him in teaching the same material again.

## General Suggestions

1. A certain amount of preliminary work is advisable before an instrument is placed in the hands of a pupil. The beginner is eagerly anticipating the day when he can begin to use the instrument and in order to hasten that time will gladly undertake the learning of things that later might seem too much trouble. All problems relating to the notation used in Lesson 1 can be taught or reviewed; these will include particularly the whole note, half note, quarter note, whole rest, half rest, staff, and name of note used. Such things as time signature, clef, measure, bar, and double bar can be taught before the first lesson or taught incidentally in connection with later lessons. An instrument of each kind can be brought to the class, and each pupil can learn the names of the principal parts of the instrument he is to play, as well as the special care necessary in handling that instrument, manner of taking it out and replacing it in the case, and general instructions in the way the instrument is to be held. The mechanics of tonguing can be established by asking the pupils to whisper or sing the word "too" for the exercises in Lesson 1, the director counting aloud or conducting; preliminary work can also be done on forming the embouchure. (See suggestions on Tone Production, page 12.)

The writer has found that it usually takes some time to get the class established and ready for actual playing, since some will have instruments needing repair, others will have to secure them, and still others will not decide to join the class until they have seen some of their friends actually taking part. A pupil starting late is not only seriously handicapped himself but he detracts from the interest of the others. The preliminary rehearsals unify the class and enable the director to spend his full time teaching the use of the instruments when the time comes.

2. The class, if not too large, should be seated in a semi-circle; in any event, every pupil should be in plain view of the director and facing him. Players in back rows are likely to be neglected.

3. Insist on good position; it is much easier to develop good playing positions from the first than it is to correct bad posture when it has become habitual. Young players may tire at first; give them frequent rests.

4. If drummers are included in the group with other instruments, the director should see that they use a pad most of the time. The drums should be convenient, nevertheless, and the pupils allowed to play on them a little at each rehearsal. Players of other instruments are so susceptible to the rhythm of the drum that drummers' mistakes are likely to prove disconcerting. Even if taught

in a class by themselves, drummers should do most of their practicing on a pad.

Teach all drummers to play the snare drum. If there are several in the class, they may take turns at the bass drum and cymbals.

5. In the early lessons do not spend much time on tuning, since the players will not have an embouchure to enable them to play in tune for some time. Any instruments that seem to be particularly out of tune with the others should be corrected. The author does not believe in long, formal tuning periods at each rehearsal for any band; often the bands that spend the most time in this way still play badly out of tune. Tuning is largely a note-by-note process, and the director and player should be on the alert to correct out-of-tune playing throughout the rehearsal. This condition can be caused by a faulty instrument, an imperfect embouchure, or an incorrect adjustment of the tuning device; the pitch of reed instruments can be affected by a faulty reed.

6. Although absolute accuracy should be the ultimate goal, do not attempt to perfect one exercise or lesson before trying the next. It is better at each rehearsal to work over the material in two or three lessons for the following reasons: it is more interesting to the pupil; encourages reading rather than learning by rote; gives both the advanced pupil and the retarded pupil something to do within the range of their ability; and takes care of the pupil who has missed several rehearsals. Any number that has been especially troublesome should be reviewed even after many lessons. In reviewing, don't simply play the material over; ask questions of the pupils and present something constructive; analyze the cause of the difficulty, isolate it, and work on it intensively for a few minutes. Work that has seemed too difficult for some pupils can often be grasped by them if it is dropped for several rehearsals and then reviewed. The danger in this procedure, however, is that the teacher may overlook the review.

7. Form the habit of asking a question or of making some constructive comment after finishing a number; don't simply say, "All right, now we'll try the next number." Perhaps you can make a suggestion to an individual or take a minute to help some section.

8. Today most school-band directors favor teaching the beginner to beat time with his foot as a means of helping him to read rhythm; properly used, it can be a very definite aid, but it should be considered only a teaching device and should be dispensed with

after the player has become a fairly accurate reader. There is considerable danger of its becoming nothing but a valueless and distracting habit. See page 23 for further discussion of the use of the foot in the teaching of rhythm reading.

9. In class work form the habit of making definite assignments and have as many as possible play the assigned work alone. The assignment should be short, so that the pupil will concentrate on the problem at hand. If he really tries, he will notice his own improvement, which might not be true of a longer assignment. Playing alone before the class will check self-consciousness in its early stages. Make sure that all understand just what is expected of them.

10. Don't stop in the middle of a short exercise to correct a fault of an individual player. Finish the exercise, make the necessary correction, and then play it again to fix the correct rendition in the mind of the pupil. The short exercises in *Easy Steps to the Band* make it possible without considerable loss of time.

11. Form the habit of glancing continually about the class to detect bad posture, faulty embouchure formation, undesirable facial expressions, bad breathing, poor finger positions, and incorrect fingering. Many directors make the mistake of "gluing their eyes" to the music when teaching beginners.

12. The definitions, explanations, and suggestions included in the individual books of *Easy Steps to the Band* appear in very small type in the Conductor's score. Take advantage of these helps by calling attention to them and incorporating them in your teaching.

13. Familiarize yourself with the plan of this Conductor's book. See page 7, especially No. 1.

14. Make it a practice to read carefully all comments in connection with the exercises and lessons; many will seem obvious and be of little help to the experienced or well-trained director, but a few helpful suggestions may be found that will make all the time spent worth while. It is unfortunately true that many teachers neglect or overlook the seemingly-apparent essentials of band teaching; a few reminders, therefore, may not be out of place for even the experienced director.

15. Whenever worthwhile teaching ideas occur to you, write them in the margins or any other blank spaces in this book. You probably will feel at the time that there is no danger of forgetting them, but failure to record an idea of value often means that it is soon lost in the rush of routine duties.

16. Throughout the course there are many opportunities for the teaching of alternate fingerings for all instruments, especially woodwinds. The extent to which it is done will depend upon the

size of the class, the time available, and the director's own knowledge of the use of these fingerings and positions. Some directors prefer to teach alternate fingerings as early as possible. Others believe in thoroughly establishing primary fingerings and later making a special drive on the use of alternate fingerings and positions. (The author inclines somewhat toward the latter method, provided alternate fingerings are not neglected altogether.)

Many suggestions concerning the use of alternate fingerings are found in the comments throughout the book. The director may use his judgment in teaching them. A special chart showing alternate fingerings for clarinet will be found on page 33. The scales and chords following Lesson 25 have many possibilities for the use of alternate fingerings.

17. In some instances it is necessary for the director to produce a playing group in the shortest possible time. It is usually to the director's and pupils' advantage, however, to go slowly and really digest the material covered. Time limitations will determine the thoroughness possible in working out each lesson and the amount of related material to be introduced. Average groups holding one to three rehearsals a week will find a complete school year's work in the books; groups with above-average background or talent will be able to do much better.

Should the director wish to cover the course as rapidly as possible, he can save considerable time by omitting the familiar melodies that are found toward the end of each lesson, since many pupils will practice these on their own initiative. Most of the material in the early part of the lessons is essential and should not be omitted.

18. The harmonized numbers at the back of the book may be introduced following the lessons shown below; the director will find that practically every problem has previously been treated in the lessons, although it may be necessary occasionally to teach a new chromatic tone.

Choral—Lesson 14

America—Lesson 15

Shadowland Waltz—Lesson 15

Easy Steps March—Lesson 16

Junior Band March—Lesson 18

Sunset Meditations—Lesson 20

Our Boys Will Shine—Lesson 21

America, the Beautiful—Lesson 21

Carnival King Overture—Lesson 22

Our School March—Lesson 23

The Salute March—Lesson 24

19. Don't lose sight of the fact that most of your pupils are

studying music for pleasure. Keep the ideals high, of course, for the greatest possible pleasure in music is realized with good performance. Remember, too, that you are shaping the personality of boys and girls as well as teaching music.

20. The progressive director will continually be on the alert to make his explanations interesting and understandable to the pupils, to improve his own diction and use of grammar, and to maintain a

contagious enthusiasm for music. Don't go into idealistic discussions. Don't talk too much. Don't scold all the time; deal with disciplinary problems good-naturedly but promptly and thoroughly.

Note:—Many of the preceding suggestions are in a sense duplicated later in the lesson comments. These ideas, nevertheless, will bear repeating and in many cases are presented in greater detail.