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The Drum Tablature Tradition of American Military Music of the Early Nineteenth Century: Levi Lovering's *The Drummers Assistant*, or *The Art of Drumming Made Easy*

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THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN MILITARY DRUMMING are deeply rooted in English and European traditions.¹ After the Revolutionary War several drum tutors were published in the United States.² Of the extant texts, *a New, Useful, and Complete System of Drum-Beating* (1812) by Charles Stewart Ashworth (b. 1777) is perhaps more familiar to scholars interested in the history of American military music.³ Ashworth served as the director of the United States Marine Band from 1804 through 1816, and

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1. For concise overviews of the development of military traditions see Raoul F. Camus, *Military Music of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 3–39; idem, “Military Music of Colonial Boston,” in *Music in Colonial Massachusetts 1630–1820*, ed. Barbara Lambert, 2 vols. (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1980), 1: 75–103; and Achim Hofer, *Geschichte des Militärmarsches*, 2 vols., *Mainzer Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, vol. 24, no. 1 (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1988).

2. Richard J. Wolfe, *Secular Music in America 1801–1825: A Bibliography*, 2 vols. (New York: New York Public Library, 1964), lists five tutors printed between 1810 and 1824: no. 5537, Herman Mann, *The Drummer's Assistant, Containing Instructions for Beating the English and Scottish Ditties* ([Dedham, Mass.: H. Mann & Co., 1811]); no. 310, Charles Stewart Ashworth, [*A New, Useful, and Complete System of Drum-Beating* (n.p., 1812)]; no. 9757, *The Young Drummer's Assistant, Being a New System of Notes for Drum-Beating* ([New York: Nathan Weston, Jr., 1815]); no. 7694, J. L. Rumrille and H. Holton, *The Drummer's Instructor, or Martial Musician* (Albany, [N.Y.]: Packard & Van Benthuysen, 1817); and no. 5466, Levi Lovering, *The Drummers Assistant, or The Art of Drumming Made Easy* (Philadelphia: Bacon & Co. [1818]); no. 5466A, idem, [reissue from same plates], (Philadelphia: J. G. Klemm, [c. 1823–24]). The tutor by Mann and the anonymous *The Young Drummer's Assistant* are unlocated.

3. One imperfect exemplar (the title page is missing) of Ashworth's tutor is preserved in the New York Public Library. Bradley Spinney, *Encyclopedia of Percussion Instruments and Drumming* (Hollywood, Calif.: Hollywood Percussion Club & Clinic, 1955), reprinted copies of Ashworth's Marine Corps enlistment documents (1:18–19) and his section on drum rudiments and beats (1:20–33). See also Camus, *Military Music*, 94, 102–3, 105, and 111.

his text is mentioned in a drum and fife tutor from the Civil War era.⁴ Less well known is Levi Lovering's *The Drummers Assistant, or The Art of Drumming Made Easy*.⁵ Lovering was not associated with a band of national importance and no melodies were included in his tutor. There are several other printed books containing material on drum instruction.⁶ Since these texts are fife-and-drum tutors, the materials on drum instruction lack detail and are limited for the most part to written instruction, with few musical examples.

No drum instructors or fife-and-drum methods with drum instruction were published in the United States prior to 1810. Nevertheless, at least two manuscript drum tutors do survive: an anonymous one from the late 1770s (more than half of the contents is contained in Lovering's), and Benjamin Clark's "Drum Book of 1797."⁷

Experienced players taught the art of drumming by rote to young drummer boys. English instructional techniques were predominant. Eventually, a military drummer of the Continental Army was instructed from the twenty-first chapter of the *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* (first published 1779), written by Baron von Steuben (1730–1794), a Prussian officer, who after falling out of favor with Frederick the Great, offered his services to General

4. See Wolfe, *Secular Music*, 1:28; and Spinney, *Encyclopedia*, 1:15. Ashworth's text was well regarded as late as 1862 by drummer George B. Bruce: "After carefully examining all the Drum books that have been published during the past twenty-five years, the author finds none to compare with 'Ashworth's Rudimental School,' which has, however, long been out of print." (George B. Bruce and Daniel D. Emmett, *The Drummer's and Fifer's Guide or Self Instructor* [New York: William A. Pond & Co., 1862]), [3].

5. Cynthia Adams Hoover, "Epilogue to Secular Music in Early Massachusetts," in *Music in Colonial Massachusetts 1630–1820*, 2:715–867, briefly discusses Lovering's text (pp. 723–26) and reproduces from the 1818 edition (the only known surviving copy is in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, US-WOa) the title page and engraved recto of the last page (pp. 724–25, fig. 377), showing the plan of a battle, each side having a fifer and a drummer.

6. Wolfe, *Secular Music*: no. 3575, Daniel Hazeltine, *Instructor in Martial Music, Containing Rules and Directions for the Drum and Fife* (Exeter, N.H.: C. Norris & Co., [1810]); no. 7506, Charles Robbins, *The Drum and Fife Instructor* (Exeter, N.H.: C. Norris & Co., 1812); no. 7201, Rufus Porter, *The Martial Musician's Companion, Containing Instructions for the Drum and Fife, Together with an Elegant Collection of Beats, Airs, Marches, and Quick Steps: To Which Is Added Instructions for the Bass Drums* ([Maine: 1815]); no. 7520, Alvan Robinson Jr., *Massachusetts Collection of Martial Musick* (Hallowell, [Maine]: E. Goodale, 1818); no. 7521, idem, 2d ed. (Durham, Maine; J. J. Williams, 1820).

7. The anonymous "Drummer's Book of Music" and Benjamin Clark's "Drum Book of 1797" are located in the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston (US-Bhs).

Washington.⁸ Von Steuben's first responsibility was to bring order and military regulation to the new American army. Unfortunately, no specific musical notation is included with the chapter's text.

Before examining Lovering's *Drummers Assistant* and other works contemporary with it, a brief review of the techniques and styles of European military drumming will prove helpful, particularly in understanding notational and rote-learning devices, which are usually associated with the American methods.

Few examples of notated percussion music exist before the early seventeenth century since drummers improvised their parts, particularly in military music. However, many literary and iconographic sources before 1600 show the wide use of a military-style snare drum.⁹ These instruments were customarily associated with secular music. Drummers usually accompanied the Swiss mercenary regiments that served throughout Europe until the nineteenth century.¹⁰ The tradition of Swiss drumming and its associated guilds dates from at least 1332, as records from the Chronicles of the City of Basel indicate.¹¹ The Swiss influence on English and Scottish drumming is still apparent in the styles of today.

The earliest source of notated percussion music is Arbeau's *Orchésographie*.¹² In it Arbeau discusses the basic march beats used in the military music of his day (fig. 1a) and informs us that "the drum rhythm contains eight white *minimae*, the first five of which are beaten and struck: the first four of these with one stick only and the fifth with both sticks at once. The other three beats are silent."¹³ Arbeau goes on to explain how the

8. See Camus, *Military Music*, 78; and Baron Frederick William von Steuben, *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, new ed. (Boston: I. Thomas and E. T. Andrews, 1794; reprint, Mineola, N.Y.: Dover, 1985), 89–91.

9. The most comprehensive treatment of percussion instruments is still James Blades, *Percussion Instruments and Their History*, 3d ed. (New York: Faber & Faber, 1984). See his several plates of military drums. Hofer, *Geschichte*, 15–75, gives an informative survey of early references to the use of percussion instruments.

10. Blades, *Percussion Instruments*, 209–10. See also his article "Drum" in *The New Grove Dictionary Of Musical Instruments*, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1984), 1:601–11.

11. Blades, "Drum," 1:607.

12. Thoinot Arbeau [Jehan Tabourot], *Orchésographie et traicte en forme de dialogue* (Lan-gres: Jehan des Preyz, 1589; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1989). Translations used in this paper are adapted from Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchesography*, trans. Mary Stewart Evans, with a new introduction and notes by Julia Sutton (New York: Dover, 1967).

13. "La mesure & battement du tambour, contient huit minimes blanches, desquelles les cinq premieres sont battues & frappées seauoir les quatre premieres chacune d'un coup de baston [*sic*], seul & la cinquieme des deux battons tout ensemble, & les trois aultres sont teues & retenues, sans estre frappées" Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, fol. 8r; quoted in Hofer, *Geschichte*, 69; Arbeau, *Orchesography*, 20–21.

FIGURE 1a. fol. 8r.

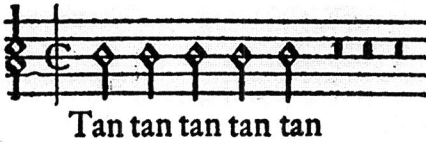


FIGURE 1b. fol. 15v.

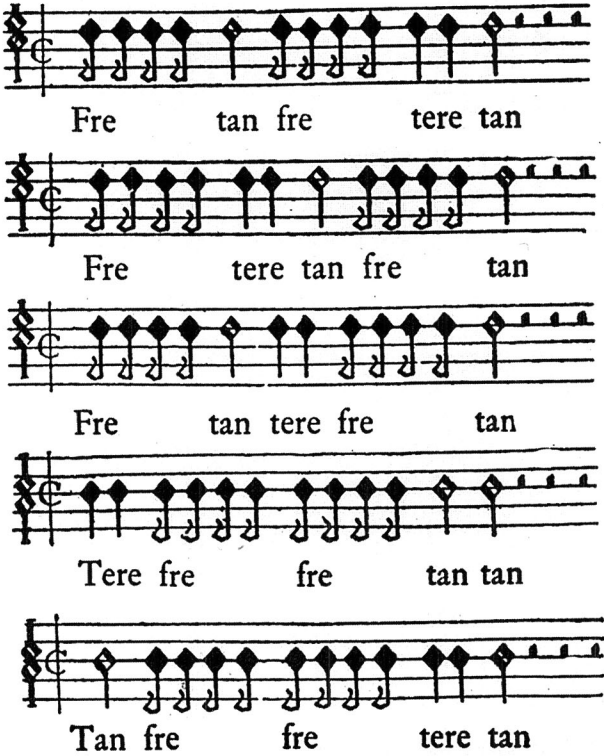


FIGURE 1. Thoinot Arbeau (Jehan Tabourot), *Orchésographie* (1589 edition).

soldier is to place his left foot on the first note and his right on the fifth. A rather humorous, yet complicated, interchange between the master and his ever inquisitive pupil, Capriol, reveals a tempo of a comfortable walking speed for the military march.¹⁴ Of special interest are Arbeau's verbal syllables given to the various note values. The *minima* is *tan* or *plan*, *semiminimae* (always grouped in pairs or multiples thereof) are *tere*, *fusae* (always in groups of four or multiples thereof) are *fre* (a trilled *r*, perhaps indicating the quick sound of a short roll).¹⁵ Arbeau unfortunately does not indicate precise stickings; he only says that *tan* is "a tap made by one stick . . . , *tere* is by two taps of the stick, *fre* four taps of the stick."¹⁶ Figure 1b illustrates a few of the more intricate of the seventy-seven beats that Arbeau gives.

In a curious Italian text, Bonaventura Pistofilo's *Il torneo* (1621), there is a short section devoted to performance on the drum.¹⁷ The notation indicates left- and right-hand strokes by upward and downward note stems (fig. 2).¹⁸ Since the military drum was usually carried on a sling and rested on the left leg, the left stick would be in the upper position, hence the logical notation of left hand up, right hand down.¹⁹ Pistofilo agrees with Arbeau in almost all respects of note grouping and rhythmic patterns. However, the syllables are *ta* and *pa*, a dot above the note probably indicating an accent.

14. Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, fols. 8r–9r; *Orchesography*, 21–22. The speed of each step was probably about ♩ = M.M. 60–80. For more detailed discussions see Hofer, *Geschichte*, 71–74, and Sutton's note in Arbeau, *Orchesography*, 211–12. For a brief discussion of military tempi in the fife and drum literature, see Camus, *Military Music*, 7–8, 87–89.

15. Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, fols. 9r–v; and *Orchesography*, 22. An early use of similar onomatopoeic syllables is found in Clément Janequin, *La Guerre: Escoutez tous gentils (La bataille de Marignan)*, in *Chanson polyphoniques*, ed. A. Tillman Merritt and François Lesure, 6 vols. (Monaco: L'Oiseau lyre, 1965–71), 1:23–53. The practice was also used in early trumpet methods. See, for example, Cesare Bendinelli, *Tutta l'arte della trombetta 1614*, *Documenta Musicologica*, 2d ser., no. 5 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1975), fols. 3r–4v; idem, *The Entire Art of Trumpet Playing 1614*, trans. Edward H. Tarr (Nashville: Brass Press, 1975); and Girolamo Fantini, *Modo per imparare a sonare di tromba* (Frankfurt: Daniel Vusatch, 1638; reprint, Nashville: Brass Press, 1972; trans. Edward Tarr, Nashville: Brass Press, 1976), 7–19.

16. Arbeau, *Orchesography*, 22, and Hofer, *Geschichte*, 72.

17. Bonaventura Pistofilo, *Il torneo* (Bologna: Clemente Ferrone, 1627), 109–26. Excerpts are reproduced in Blades, *Percussion Instruments*, pl. 106; and Hofer, *Geschichte*, 75–77.

18. Pistofilo, *Il torneo*, 118.

19. For example, see Blades, *Percussion History*, pls. 101 and 103; and Camus, *Military Music*, figs. 1–3.

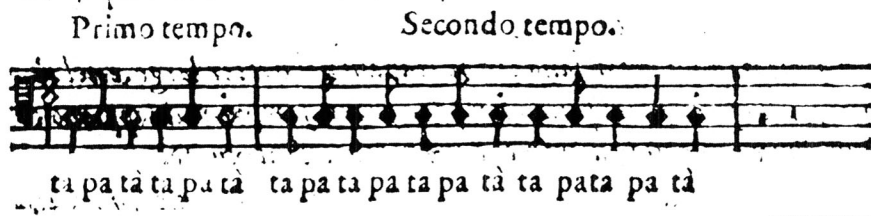


FIGURE 2. Bonaventura Pistofilo, *Il torneo*, 118 (detail). Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.

References to the drum used in warfare clarify its function to communicate battle orders to the troops. Francis Markham articulates this role in detail in the chapter “Of Drummes and Phiphes” from his *Five Decades and Epistles of Warre* (1622):

... the *Phiph* is but onely an Instrument of pleasure, not of necessitie, and it is to the voice of the Drum the Souldier should wholly attend . . . the *Drumme* being the very tongue and voyce of the Commander, he is to have an exceeding carefull and diligent eare. . . as to beat a Retrait when he is commanded to Charge, or to beat a Charge when men are to retire, . . . that the armie might perish by the action. . . that every Souldier bee diligent to learne and understand all the usefull beatings of the *Drumme*, . . . to make plaine unto them the alteration of notes, and how they differ in their significations.²⁰

Distinctive beatings for specific military situations have long been associated with the drum. Markham refers to the general duties of the drummer and also to different beats called the Watch, The Summons, March, Retreat, Troupes, and Battalion or Battery.²¹

20. Francis Markham, *Five Decades and Epistles of Warre* (London: A. Mathewes, 1622) 57–58; quoted in Hofer, *Geschichte*, 62–63. See also Blades, *Percussion Instruments*, 217–18. Earlier discussions of the drum’s signal function are Ralph Smith, *Rules for Drummers and Fifers* (1557), quoted in Henry George Farmer, *Memoirs of the Royal Artillery Band: Its Origin, History, and Progress* (London: Boosey & Co., 1904), 20, Hofer, *Geschichte*, 61–62, and Camus, *Military Music*, 11–12; Leonard Digges, *An Arithmetical Warlike Treatise* (London: Richard Field, 1590), 85, quoted in Hofer, *Geschichte*, 61; and Robert Barret, *The Theorie and Practike of Modern Warres* (London: R[ichard] Field for William Ponsoyby, 1598), 18, 101, 152, quoted in Hofer, *Geschichte*, 62.

21. Markham, *Five Decades*, 58–60; quoted in Hofer, *Geschichte*, 63–65. For other early references to the drum’s functions in battle, in addition to the sources cited in n. 22, see Arbeau, *Orchesography*, 20; Pistofilo, *Il torneo*, 111; and Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle* (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy, 1636; reprint, Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1965, 1975), bk. 7, p. 56. See also Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle: The Books on Instruments*, trans. Roger E. Chapman (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957), 555.

A Royal Warrant (ca. 1632) from Charles I also gives instructions to military drummers. It states that an old English march had been performed poorly through the “negligence and carelessness of drummers.” Charles directed that the march be played with the “ancient graviety and majestie.”²² Again concerning this English march, in 1643 the anonymous author of *Warlike Directions, or The Soldiers’ Practice* wrote:

I have thought meete for the benefit of each Drummer which is not yet perfect in the March, to prick down the old English March newly revived in the plainest forme I could invent. Wishing that all Drummers would leave off other forms invented, either by themselves, or others herein unskillful, that there may be an uniformity in this Kingdom, as in all other Nations.²³

The problem to which the author referred was the drummers’ love of improvising and embellishing a standard beat. Arbeau implied this tradition but did not discourage its practice. In fact, he suggested that drummers select the patterns which pleased them most.²⁴ Historically, national armies preferred distinctive and easily recognizable drum beats. The warrant from Charles I attempted to notate the specific English march in question. Figure 3 reproduces the notation used for the march and my suggested transcription.

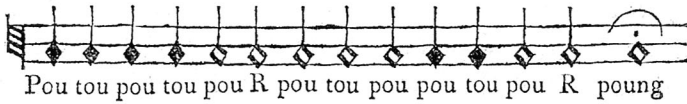
At first appearance the notation seems quite similar to Arbeau, but the exact meaning of the syllables *pou*, *tou* is not clear. The letter *R* may mean more than just a single right hand stroke, a four-stroke roll (lrlR), or drag stroke (rrL or llR). The words *poung* and *potang* are somewhat

22. The “Royal Warrant of Charles I, 1632,” was first edited and printed by Horace Walpole, *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors*, 2d ed. (London: R. & J. Dodsley and J. Graham, 1759), 200–202. Sir John Hawkins discussed and included Walpole’s copy in his *General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 5 vols. (London: T. Payne & Son, 1776), 2:173. One copy of the original order was known to be in Kneller Hall, Royal Military School of Music, Twickenham, until the 1940s. Hofer, *Geschichte*, 832, n. 101, states that this copy of the warrant was probably destroyed or lost during World War II. It was reproduced in Ch. Ffoulkes, “Notes on Early Military Bands,” *Journal of the Society for Army Research* 17 (1938): pl. after p. 194, and reprinted in Lewis Winstock, *Songs and Music of the Redcoats: A History of the British Army 1642–1902* (London: Leo Cooper, 1970), 17–18. The English march is also copied in *Warlike Directions, or The Soldier’s Practice*, 2d ed. (London: Harper, 1643), 4–7; mentioned in Blades, *Percussion History*, 218. Another copy of the warrant was made by Randle Holme III (written before 1688), “Academy of Armoury,” Harl. 2034, fol. 75, British Library, London, and is reproduced in Blades, *Percussion History*, pl. 105. Hofer, *Geschichte*, 78, copies the warrant and music, basing his transcription on Blades, *Percussion History*, 220.

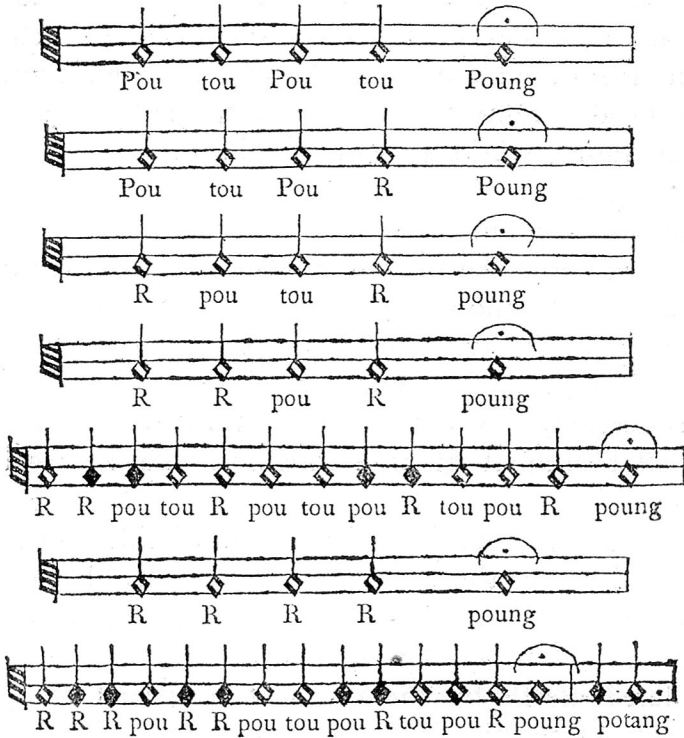
23. *Warlike Directions, or The Soldier’s Practice*, 4–7; quoted in Blades, *Percussion History*, 218.

24. Arbeau, *Orchesography*, 22.

VOLUNTARY before the MARCH.



The MARCH.



Subscribed ARUNDELL & SURREY.

This is a true copie of the original, signed by his Maj^{tie}

ED. NORGATE. Windfor.

FIGURE 3. "The March," from the "Royal Warrant of Charles I" (1632). Detail.

FIGURE 3b. Transcription by the author.

The figure shows three staves of musical notation in treble clef, 2/4 time. Each staff contains a sequence of notes with stems indicating direction (up for left hand, down for right hand). Below each staff is a sequence of letters representing drumstick patterns:

Staff 1: R L R L R R R L R L R R L R R R L R R L R L R R L R

Staff 2: R R L R L R R L R L L R R R L R R R L R L L R R R L R L R L L R L R R R L R

Staff 3: L L R R R L L L R R R L R L L R L L R R R L R L R L L R L R R R L R L R

more problematic. Do they describe a particular stroke or a sound? Does the fermata suggest holding the note with a roll?²⁵

Richard Holme III in “Academy of Armoury” (written before 1688) was more specific on technical matters. He said: “A good drum beater can perform on his drum as well as any other can on his musical instrument.”²⁶ He continued by mentioning such beats as the flam, dragge, roofe, diddle, and the rowle. He also treated the single and double beatings. The vocabulary used for the march continues to be used in variant forms to the present day.

The French scientist and music theorist Marin Mersenne in his own annotated copy of his *Harmonie universelle* (1636) cited several beats similar to those of Arbeau (fig. 4).²⁷ The text (book 7, proposition 28) discusses Arbeau’s onomatopoeic syllables and suggests other beats as substitutes. Following Pistofilo’s notations, the upward stems signify the left hand, downward the right. Mersenne refers to a *baton rond* (single stroke RLRL), a *baton rompu* (a round beat, double sticking RRL), and a *baton meslé* (compounds of single and double strokes RLRRLRL).²⁸

Arbeau’s patterns were no doubt combined into various intricate marching cadences. A few drum signals, beats, and marches do survive from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. For example,

25. Blades, *Percussion History*, 219, suggests a roll or a held note.

26. Holme, “Academy of Armoury,” fols. 75–76; quoted in Blades, *Percussion History*, 219.

27. Mersenne, *Harmonie*, pl. after bk 7, p. 56.

28. Mersenne, *Harmonie*, 555. The RLRRLRL pattern later became known in English as the paradiddle, diddle referring to the double strokes.

Batterie du Tambour françois. Les batteries se appellent
 1 Batoy rond 2 Batoy rompu, 3 Batoy mêlé—
 Baton rond se fait quand les deux batons frappent l'un après l'autre

Batoy rompu se fait quand chaque batoy frappe deux fois de suite l'ancien deux coups de chaque main

Batoy mêlé est quand chaque batoy frappe tantost une fois de chaque main tantost deux fois

FIGURE 4. Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*. Detail from the plate after p. 56 of vol. 3, book 7, prop. 28.

the brothers André and Jacques Philidor, associated with the court at Versailles during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, copied and therefore preserved a goodly number of military drum parts.²⁹ The original music was notated in normal note values, with no special vocabulary or sticking given in the manuscript sources.

29. For a detailed discussion of this repertory see Susan G. M. Sandman, "Wind Band Music under Louis XIV: The Philidor Collection. Music for the Military and the Court" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1974); and the same author's, "The Wind Band at Louis XIV's Court," *Early Music* 5 (1977): 27–37. Hofer, *Geschichte*, 112–69, 802–16, also discusses this repertory.

The French military music of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries contains more idiomatic drum beats, i.e., flams (♩♩) and drags (♩♩♩). Music of the early Republic reflected an even more specific vocabulary: *Le coup simple* = ta or t (♩), *le coup double* = fla or f (♩♩), *le rat de 5 coups* (♩♩♩♩♩) = rat, *le coup de charge* (♩♩♩) = tra, *le rat de 3 coups* (♩♩♩) = rat, *le roulement* (♩♩♩♩♩♩♩).³⁰ A few examples of eighteenth-century military drum music survive in English and Scottish sources. For example, a manuscript, originally belonging to Robert Collins, a fife-major of the royal Artillery (1805–34), contained four items of the Scots Duty.³¹ An anonymous German method (1777) from Berlin preserves the onomatopoeic syllables. It also combines the graphic notations of the earliest sources with traditional notations (fig. 5).³²

This introduction to early drum notation should provide some insight into the long-standing tradition of the notational and rote-learning techniques used by military drummers prior to the American Revolution. Let us now turn directly to Lovering's text and its place in the American military drumming tradition.

* * *

Little is known about Levi Lovering. He came from Massachusetts and lived in Bridgeton, New Jersey, in June 1818; this information he himself supplied in the preface to the first edition of his tutor.³³ Levi Lovering, son of Jesse Lovering (b. 1745) and Mercy Jenning (b. 1750), was born on 22 December 1776 in Holliston, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, about twenty miles west of Boston.³⁴ The Massachusetts Census of 1800 lists Levi as a resident of Athol, Worcester County, a small

30. See Georges Kastner, *Manuel général de musique militaire à l'usage des armées françaises* (Paris: Didot frères, 1848; reprint, Geneva: Minkoff, 1973), [musical examples], 19. Fifty-five pages of musical examples extend from Mersenne's trumpet calls to mid-nineteenth-century European military usage.

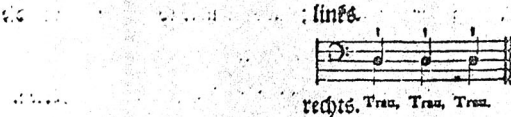
31. "The drum beats . . . are found in a manuscript entitled 'Scots Duty' in the Farmer Collection, Glasgow University Library" (Henry George Farmer, "Scots Duty," in *Handel's Kettledrums and Other Papers on Military Music* [London: Hinrichsen, 1950; reprint, 1965], 34).

32. *Kurze Anweisung das Trommel spielen auf die leichteste Art zu erlernen* (Berlin: George Ludwig Winters Wittwe, 1777).

33. Lovering, *Drummers Assistant*, 3–4.

34. Susan Cifaldi, Librarian, Company of Fifers & Drummers, Ivorytown, Connecticut, provided invaluable assistance in piecing together the broad outline of Lovering's life.

Nach diesen fängt man drittens mit beyden Händen, und mit gleicher Stärke die Note Trau folchergestalt an zu üben, daß der Spieler kaum selbst höret, daß die Note Trau mit beyden Händen gespielt wird, z. E.



Alsdann fährt der Spieler fort, sich mit der Note Trau und Lau zu üben, z. E.



Ferner muß der Spieler Viertens, mit der Note Rau, die den Wirbel macht, so kurz wie möglich, rechts und links anspielen, z. E.

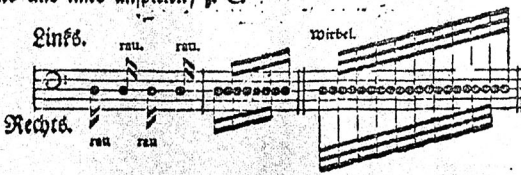


FIGURE 5. Kurze Anweisung das Trommel spielen (1977), p. vii.

town about fifty miles northwest of Holliston.³⁵ He probably went to Athol to join other members of the Lovering family, who were settling farmland in the Millers River valley. Levi married Sally Eames of Holliston on 29 January 1802; two children were born to them in Athol by 1805 (Sarah, b. 1 August 1803–d. Bridgeton, New Jersey, 4 January 1818; and Marcy, b. 16 November 1805).³⁶ The Connecticut Census of 1810 lists a Levi Lovering living in Windsor.³⁷ How or why he moved to New Jersey is unknown but may have been related to the training of militia. No census records for New Jersey survive until 1830, and church records of Bridgeton, Cumberland County, have not been available.

35. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of 1800: Massachusetts* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1959), 288.

36. *Vital Records of Athol, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (N.p.: Systematic History Fund, 1910), 58, 146. The death of their daughter Sarah was recorded in a Bridgeton, New Jersey, newspaper, the *Washington Whig*, 19 January 1818.

37. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of 1810: Connecticut* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1961), 473. This entry also lists a son and a daughter, both under ten years of age, in addition to the two daughters born in Athol.

Levi died on 2 September 1857 and is buried in the Hayden Row Cemetery in the town of his birth, Holliston, Massachusetts.³⁸ One last piece of data from a Holliston church record reveals that a relative, Thaddeus Lovering (1735–1799), was a fifer. As a child, Levi may well have received his first musical training from this man.³⁹

The Drummers Assistant, or The Art of Drumming Made Easy was published in Philadelphia by Bacon and Co., while the second edition was issued by J. G. Klemm. Figure 6 clearly shows how the publisher's name was altered on the original plate. The second edition has a publisher's number 131, which was added according to Wolfe for the Bacon reprinting.⁴⁰ The book is printed in an oblong format (17.5 x 27 cm), and the cost of the text was seventy-five cents. The work was dedicated "To the Commandants of Regiments, and those who have charge of instructing the Corps of Martial Music."⁴¹ Lovering further defined the purpose of his book in the preface:

. . . It contains it is believed the first attempt to unite the theory with the practice of the art of drumming: Both of which, illustrated with rules at once comprehensive and so plain that they cannot be misunderstood, are made level with the most ordinary capacity. . . . The learner after the first few lessons will be able to practice the different Tunes and Beats without further instruction than he will receive from this book.⁴²

Although Lovering was clearly not the first to write a drum tutor, he seems to have believed that he was. Because of the "thinly settled country" in which he lived, he may not have been familiar with Ashworth's 1812 text or even the now-lost manuals from New England by Mann (1811), Porter (1815), and *The Young Drummer's Assistant* (1815).⁴³ Furthermore, Lovering seems to have been conversant with the British military style. One can see this by comparing his book to drum manuscripts

38. Holliston Historical Society, Hayden Row Cemetery Records, Holliston, Massachusetts. The record further adds the death date of Levi's wife Sarah, 2 January 1871, also buried in the Hayden Row Cemetery.

39. *Vital Records of Athol*, 144. An interesting medical condition associated with the Lovering family was brought to my attention by Ms. Cifaldi. The "pumple foot," or "Marie-Charcot-Tooth syndrome," was so closely connected to the Lovering family that it was once called "the Lovering curse." (Susan Cifaldi, personal communication, 12 April 1992). About this disease see A. C. England and D. Denny-Brown, *AMA Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 67, no. 1 (January 1952): 1–22.

40. See nn. 2 and 5.

41. Lovering, *Drummers Assistant*, 2.

42. *Ibid.*, 3–4.

43. See n. 7.

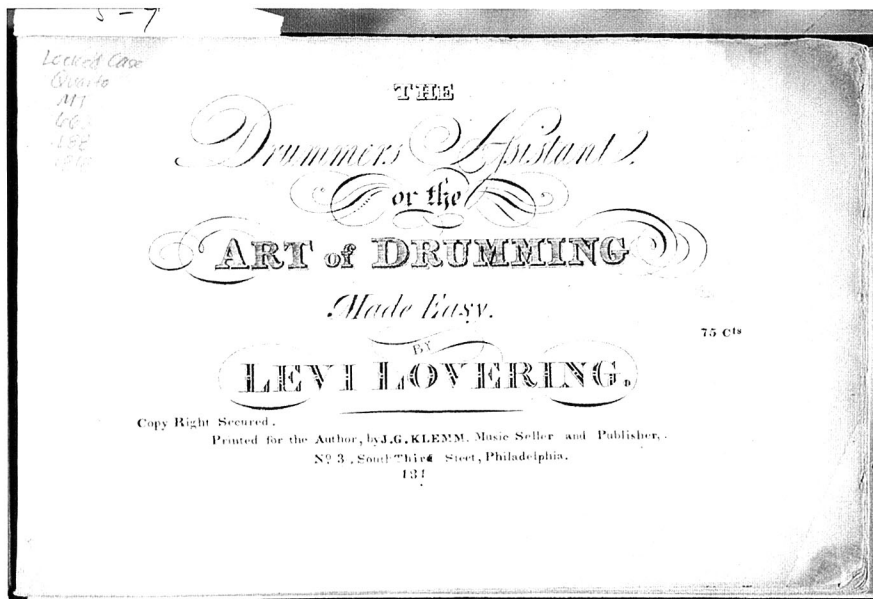


FIGURE 6. Levi Lovering, *The Drummers Assistant, or The Art of Drumming Made Easy*. Title page of the second edition. Courtesy of the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society.⁴⁴ In the anonymous tutor, which dates from late 1770s, we see a simple two-stave notation, upper for left hand, lower for right (fig. 7). More than half the same marching tunes from this incomplete manuscript are contained in Lovering's tutor, many with almost the same beatings. This helps us to understand the persistence of particular traditional drum beats and recognize that the anonymous manuscript could have been a possible source for Lovering's own beatings. Benjamin Clark's 1797 manuscript drum book also confirms that drum beatings were carefully passed on in a manner similar to the tunes they accompanied (fig. 8). Minor variants appeared, but the basic structure of the beatings will have become permanently fixed in the printed and more widely disseminated sources of the early nineteenth century.

In *The Art of Beating the Drum*, Samuel Potter codified, in traditional notation, the British system of camp-duty beats and drum rudiments.⁴⁵ The extant American drum and fife-and-drum methods followed in

44. Ibid.

45. Sam[uel] Potter, *The Art of Beating the Drum* (London: Henry Potter, 1815; reprint, St. Augustine, Fla.: Trommel und Pfeife, n.d.).

SCALE OF RULES

LESSON I.

The first BEAT, is Tou; tou, Pou, pou, which is written thus,



And is beat as follows. Strike the DRUM with the Left hand twice, the first very light, the second a smart full stroke; (the left hand beats are placed on the upper line) then strike with the right hand in the same manner as with the left; taking care to throw the arm out briskly to the side of the body, and as high as the head, which will enable the learner to keep time:

Care should be taken when the Stick touches the Drum, to have the elbow close to the side.

Practice this beat, contracting at each stroke the distance to which the Arm is thrown out till the arms remain close to the side, and it becomes a close roll.

LESSON II.



The seven stroke roll: Beat tou tou, pou pou, tou tou, pou; the first six strokes as directed in the first Lesson, the last Pou should be considerably louder than the last note of . Pou pou is commonly beat.

FIGURE 9a. Levi Lovering, "Scale of Rules," from the second edition of *The Drummers Assistant*. Courtesy of the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


late 1770s Massachusetts manuscript already cited, thus suggesting an additional link within the tradition.⁴⁶ Lovering's "Scale of Rules," a series of fifteen lessons which instruct the embryonic drummer how to play the various beats comprises pages 5 through 9 (fig. 9a–e). The *tou* syllable denotes the left hand and is notated with the upward stem in a system similar to Pistofilo. The voided notes are to be played lightly (Ashworth calls this a "faint" stroke), and the filled-in notes are to be played hard with a "smart full stroke."⁴⁷ The first lesson then describes what is today usually called the long roll.

46. "Drummers Book of Music," 14.

47. Ashworth, *Complete System*, 4; and Lovering, *Drummers Assistant*, 5.


6

LESSON . III .



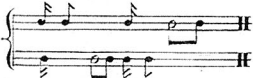
The Flams : Beat as follows, hold the Left hand stick about one inch from the Drum, the Right hand stick to be extended with a curving motion, the elbow thrown as high as the shoulder ; Strike with both at the same time, leave the right hand stick about one inch from the head of the Drum, and throw the left up to the position that the right was in, in the first Flam .

LESSON . IV .




Flam pou, Flam tou : Beat a flam and pou, throw up the right hand as above directed, and strike flam tou .

LESSON . V .



Flam Perididdle . Consisting of a Flam tou pou pou , Flam pou tou tou are beat in the same manner as directed for each when beat singly .

LESSON . VI .



The double Drag : Beat as follows, Tou tou, Pou tou , tou pou tou , then Pou pou , tou pou , pou tou, pou ; At the last tou of the Left hand Drag, throw up the left hand as before directed .

FIGURE 9b. Lovering, "Scale of Rules," *Drummers Assistant*, p. 6.

Next, Lovering lists the seven-stroke roll, the most commonly used short roll. Missing in his discussion is its shorthand notation—a quarter note with the numeral 7 above. It is later used in the examples of drum beats.

In figure 9b we see how the other beats were notated: *flams*—sixteenth notes above one another; *flam pou*, or flam tap; *flam perididdle*; and the *double drag* (the word *diddle* meant a double stroke by one hand, while *flam* is probably an English variant of Arbeau's *plan*, the term he used for striking both sticks together on the fifth beat of his patterns). *Diddle* describes the same beat as the syllables *tere* (double strokes) used by Arbeau. The drag stroke is partially notated by two notes, the shapes of which are the same as the roll beats. These could be played as exact quick strokes or possibly as a multiple-bounce stroke, very much in the same manner as Arbeau's *fre* stroke. If that type of performance practice were used, the word *drag* in English can be understood to define exactly the motion of the bouncing stick across the drum head. Today these two methods of performance are termed open and closed.

At the last pou of the right hand Drag, throw up the right hand in the same manner:

LESSON .VII.

The Single Drag: For the left hand Drag, beat Tou tou, Pou pou, throw up the left hand as directed in the first lesson: For the right Drag, Pou pou, Tou pou, throw up the right hand as above.

LESSON .VIII.

The Single Ruff: Left hand ruff Tou pou tou pou, ... throw up the left hand as directed in the first Lesson; Right hand, Pou tou pou tou, ... then throw up the right hand.

LESSON .IX.

Double Ruff: For the Left hand, beat Tou pou tou pou tou pou, then throw up the left hand, Right hand ruff, beat Pou tou pou pou pou pou, throw up the right hand.

LESSON .X.

The Five stroke Roll: At the last note of the left hand roll, throw up the left hand, and of the right, the right hand: Written thus: 5

FIGURE 9c. Lowering, “Scale of Rules,” *Drummers Assistant*, p. 7.

The single ruff is a quick alternation of single strokes (fig. 9c). Today this is usually notated as three grace notes preceding the main accented beat (). The double ruff is also known as the single *ratamacue*, a

word that clearly describes the actual sound of the beat (). The

remaining lessons illustrate the shorter rolls: 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (fig. 9d).


The order, number, and specific types of rudiments were by no means fixed by the early nineteenth century. Nevertheless, each manual lists the basic rolls, flams, and drags; furthermore, the various combinations of single and double strokes were not standardized. Yet one stroke, now almost completely obsolete, is of historical interest: the *Poing* stroke (fig. 9e), perhaps indicated in the English March (fig. 3). Lowering uses the same notational symbol and explains it as follows: “Strike the head about three inches from the lower side with a smart sliding stroke; throw up the hand as directed in the First lesson.”⁴⁸ Ashworth said only that

48. Lowering, *Drummers Assistant*, 9.

8


LESSON. XI.



The Eight stroke, or Long Roll : When this Roll occurs in a Tune, it will be written thus 


LESSON. XII.



The Nine stroke Roll : Is beat as the Eight, at the last note of the Left hand roll, the left hand is thrown up, and at the last note of the Right, the right. When this Roll occurs it will be written thus. 


LESSON. XIII.



The Ten stroke Roll : Is beat as the Eight stroke, at the last ten, bring down the sticks at once. This Roll will be written thus 

LESSON. XIV.



The Eleven stroke Roll : Is beat as the Eight, the last pou a hard stroke; and throw up the left hand : Written thus. 

LESSON. XV.





The Twelve stroke Roll : Is beat as the Eight, and will be written thus. 

FIGURE 9d. Lovering, "Scale of Rules," *Drummers Assistant*, p. 8.


the poing is a hard stroke ().⁴⁹ Note the similarities between his notation and Lovering's. A third interpretation of the poing stroke is found in David Hazeltine's *Instructor in Martial Music* (1810). His Lesson 16 states, "[The] *Poing stroke* is beat by giving a light flam and strike each stick nigh the hoop of the drum, lightly touching the hoop at the same time."⁵⁰


The middle third of Lovering's book consists of drum beats for twenty-three revolutionary and post-revolutionary march tunes. Precise transcriptions of these beats are not always possible from the drum notation alone since the notes do not carry exact rhythmic values.


49. Ashworth, *Complete System*, 4.


50. Hazeltine, *Instructor*, 5. See also Robinson, *Massachusetts Collection*, [8]. His Lesson 24 (with no accompanying musical notation), reads: "Poing stroke is performed by giving a flam and striking each stick upon the head of the drum, lightly touching the hoops at the same time," i.e., in modern terms a double rim shot. See Camus, *Military Music*, 102–3, for a more detailed discussion of the *poing* stroke, especially Colonial Williamsburg Music Master John Moon's interpretation of the poing stroke as placing the left stick on the drum head and striking it with the right.

9


 The Poing Stroke: Is beat in the following manner. Strike the head about three inches from the lower side with a smart sliding stroke; throw up the hand as directed in the First lesson.

 The Brace: Shews how many parts are beat at once


 A Repeat: Shews that the Tune is repeated from it to the next repeat, double bar, or close.

 A Close: Shews the end of a Tune.

SCOTCH FAVORITE, A MARCH.



MY LOVE SHE IS. A MARCH.



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FIGURE 9e. Lovering, "Scale of Rules," *Drummers Assistant*, p. 9.

Lovering assumed that his drum students already knew the various tunes. Moreover, when the melody was known to the drummer, its regular four- and eight-measure phrases greatly helped him play the proper rhythmic figures.

The first beat in Lovering's collection, "Scotch Favorite, A March," has an ambiguous rhythmic pattern. The melody is found, along with nine others used by Lovering, in Charles Robbins's *The Drum and Fife Instructor* (1812), a text which Lovering might have known.⁵¹ In addition to the high coincidence of melodic concordance, the syllables *pow* and *tow* are also used in explaining the roll, no doubt a reflection of the two authors' common heritage.⁵² Compare the transcriptions of figures 7, 8, and 9e set to the melody as given by Robbins (example 1).

The process of drum tablature transcription is complicated. A first attempt at Lovering's "Baltimore" march resulted in a simple duple

51. Robbins, *Instructor*, 18.52. *Ibid.*, 7.

EXAMPLE 1. Comparison transcriptions of "Scotch Favorite."

- a. Melody from Robbins, *The Drum and Fife Instructor*, 18.
- b. Beating from "Drummer's Book of Music," 28.
- c. Beating from Clark, "Drum Book," [5].
- d. Beating from Lovering, *The Drummers Assistant*, 9.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Scotch Favorite" in G major and 6/8 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system (labeled a, b, c, d) shows the melody in staff 'a' and drum beatings in staves 'b', 'c', and 'd'. The melody is: G4-A4-B4-C5-B4-A4-G4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | G4-A4-B4-C5-B4-A4-G4 | G4-A4-B4-C5-B4-A4-G4. The drum beatings are: b) L - R R R R R R L L L L L L R R L L R R L R R L L R L R L - ; c) L - R R R R R R L L L L L L R R L L R R L R R L L R L R L - ; d) L - R R R R R R L L L L L L R R R R L L R L L R L L R L R L - . The second system (labeled a, b, c, d) shows the melody in staff 'a' and drum beatings in staves 'b', 'c', and 'd'. The melody is: B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4 | B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4-C4. The drum beatings are: b) R R R R R L L L L L L L - R L - R R L L R L L R ; c) R R R R R L L L L L L L - R L - R R L L R L L R ; d) R R R R R L L L L L L L - R L - R R L L R L L R .

pattern (compare fig. 10 and ex. 2). However, when the melody was located in several collections, it was found to be in 6/8. Example 2 illustrates the various drum beatings to this tune from Clark, Hazeltine, Lovering, and Robinson. Clark's version is rather clear. Even the 6/8 patterns seem to be indicated by slurs. Hazeltine and Robinson offer written instructions for the types of strokes but no rhythmic patterns. The experienced military drummer of that day would have had little difficulty following any of these instructions because most of the strokes

FIGURE 10a. Setting by Benjamin Clark, from "Drum Book of 1797," p. 2r.

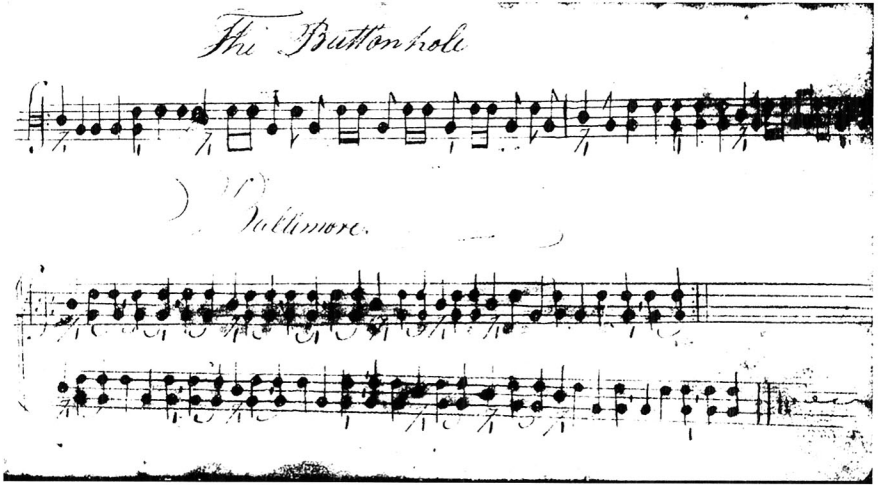


FIGURE 10b. Setting by Levi Lovering, *Drummers Assistant*, p. 15.



FIGURE 10. "Baltimore."

fit easily into this repertory of regular metrical patterns. Hazeltine gives verbal instructions for the “Baltimore” march:

1st Part. A seven and three double flams twice over, then a seven and one double flam twice over; then a seven and a two, a flam and a two, one single, and one double flam. 2d Part. A seven and two flams, a two and one single flam, and one double flam twice over; then a seven, and one double flam twice over; then a seven and a two, a flam and a two, and one single and one double flam. 2d Part. *Close way*. A nine and a half drag, and two and a half drags twice over; then a nine, and one and a half drags twice over; then a seven and a two; a flam and a two, and one single flam and one double flam.⁵³

Parts one and two match almost exactly what Lovering notated in his tablature. In the second part, *Close way*, Hazeltine and Robinson use the double drag rudiment, creating a more technical beating.

Lovering preserved the rich tradition of military drumming. He printed actual drum parts, while many of his contemporaries printed just the rudiments and pieces related to camp duty. The twenty-three drum parts, except for those of the camp duty, present an important source of this generally improvised style. When all the beats are matched with their companion melodies, this method will add to our understanding of the musical style. Lovering’s text will then speak with the same force it must have had some one hundred seventy years ago, thus assisting us in reviving the lively art of Revolutionary military drumming.

53. Hazeltine, *Instructor*, 10–11. See Robinson, *Massachusetts Collection*, 10–11.

EXAMPLE 2. Comparison of “Baltimore.”

- a. Preliminary transcription by the author without comparison to the melody.
- b. Melody from Hazeltine, *Instructor in Martial Music*, 27.
- c. Beatings from Lovering, *The Drummers Assistant*, 15. Compare the second part to Clark, “Drum Book,” 2r, and Hazeltine, *Instructor*, 10.
- d. Beatings from Clark, “Drum Book,” 2r (1st part only); Hazeltine, *Instructor*, 10–11 (2d part, *Close way*); and Robinson, *Massachusetts Collection*, 12 (2d part).

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Baltimore," comparing four different drumming transcriptions (a, b, c, d) against a melody (b). The score is organized into two systems of staves.

System 1:

- Staff a:** Preliminary transcription by the author. It is in 2/4 time and features a drum line with notes and rests. Below the staff are the following drumming patterns: L - R R R R R^RL L L L - R R R R R^RL L L L -
- Staff b:** Melody from Hazeltine, *Instructor in Martial Music*, 27. It is in 3/8 time and features a melodic line. A page number "p. 27" is indicated below the staff.
- Staff c:** Beatings from Lovering, *The Drummers Assistant*, 15. It is in 3/8 time and features a drum line. Below the staff are the following drumming patterns: L - R R R R R^RL L L L - R R R R R^RL L L L -
- Staff d:** Beatings from Clark, "Drum Book," 2r (1st part only); Hazeltine, *Instructor*, 10–11 (2d part, *Close way*); and Robinson, *Massachusetts Collection*, 12 (2d part). It is in 3/8 time and features a drum line. Below the staff are the following drumming patterns: L - R R^RL L^R R^RL L^R R^RL L^R L - R R^RL L^R R^RL L^R L -

System 2:

- Staff a:** Continuation of the preliminary transcription. Below the staff are the following drumming patterns: R R^RL L^R L - R R^RL L^R L - R L R R^RL R L L^R R^RL L^R
- Staff b:** Continuation of the melody from Hazeltine.
- Staff c:** Continuation of the beating from Lovering. Below the staff are the following drumming patterns: R R^RL L^R L - R R^RL L^R L - R L R R^RL R L L^R R^RL L^R
- Staff d:** Continuation of the beating from Clark, Hazeltine, and Robinson. Below the staff are the following drumming patterns: R R^RL L^R L - R R^RL L^R L - R L R R^RL R L L^R R^RL L^R

EXAMPLE 2 (continued)

a 7 7 7
 b
 c 7 7 7
 L - R R L L R LR R L L R R L L - R R L L R L R R L L R R L L -
 9 9 9
 d R - R L L R L R R L R R L L R L L R L R R L R L L R L L R L R R L R

 a 7 7
 b
 c 7 7
 R
 d 9 7
 R L L R L R R L R R L L R L L R L - R L R R L R L R R L L R