

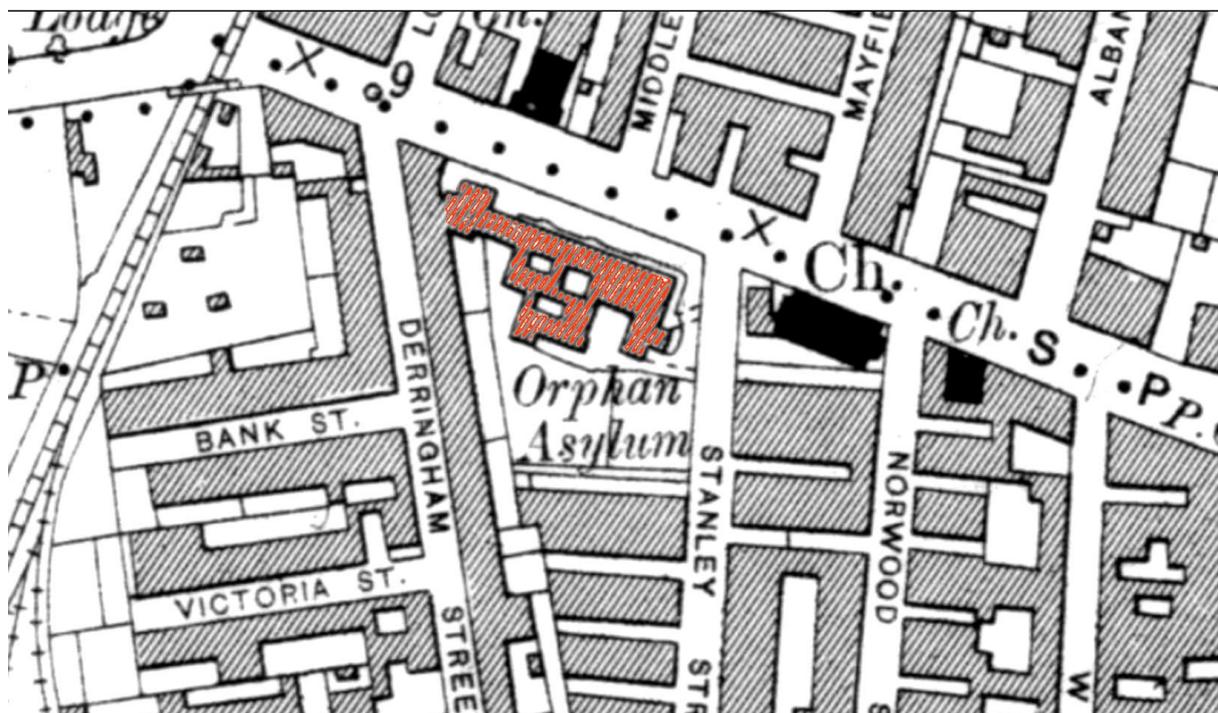
# The orphanage bands of Kingston upon Hull – musical children of two seamen’s charities

*Gavin Holman, 1 January 2026*

The port of Kingston upon Hull and other nearby towns in the East Riding of Yorkshire, had major fishing and other seafaring industries during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Sadly, many children were orphaned – a state not unique to these professions at the time – but various philanthropic people and bodies recognised the particular needs of seamen’s orphans and they established charities and homes to support them in the city. Two of these homes formed boys’ bands to help with the discipline and education of the boys and also provide additional income for the establishments.

## 1. The Hull Seamen's and General Orphan Society

The Mariners' Church Orphan Society was founded in 1853 to support the orphaned children of seamen. It was renamed the Hull Seamen's and General Orphan Society in 1866, and established an Asylum and Schools in premises at Spring Bank, Hull.

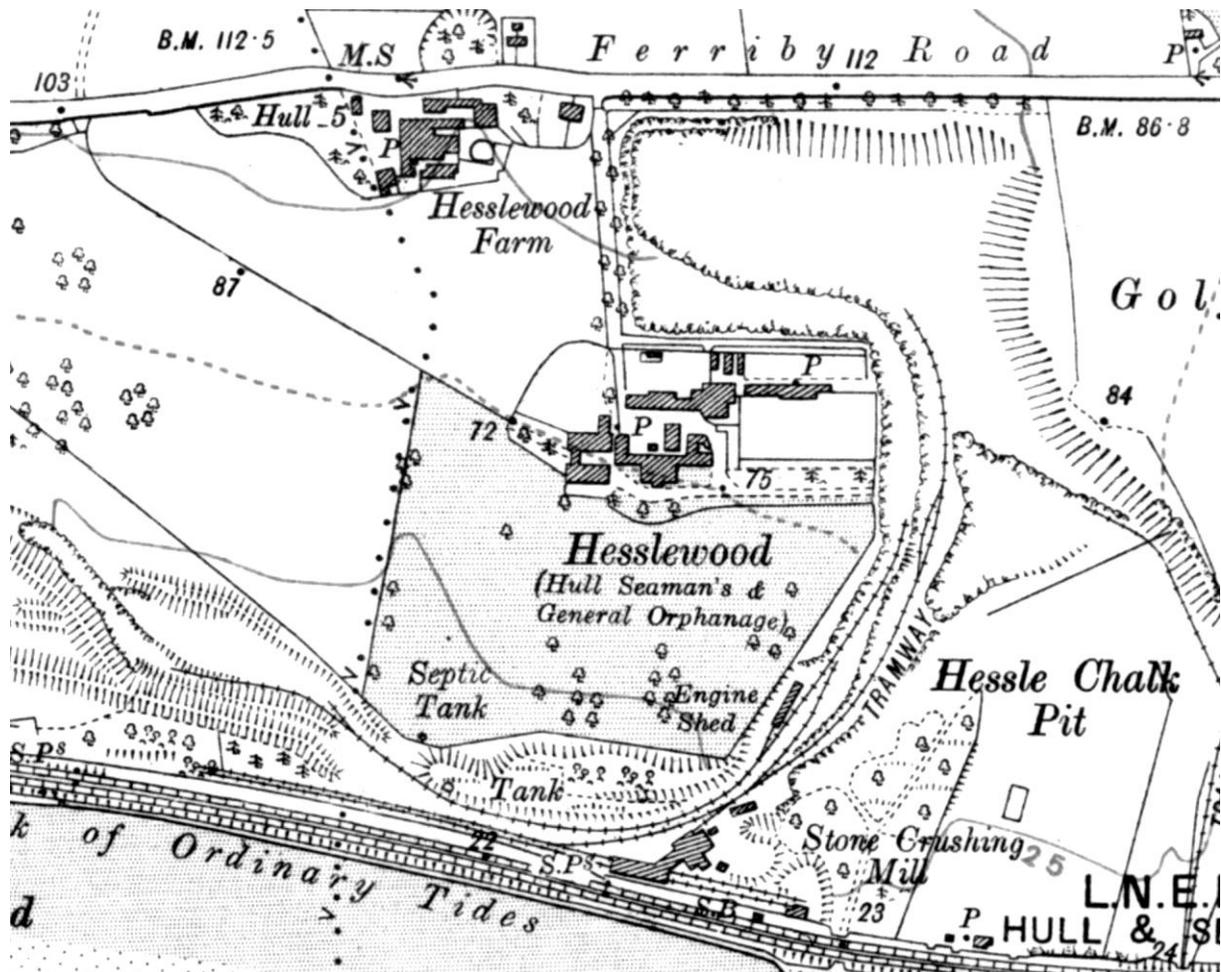


*Spring Bank Orphanage, 1906*

The Wilson family, who owned a very successful local shipping company, were major patrons of the home, donating money, paying for extensions to the building, and organising summer excursions for the orphans.

The institution and grounds covered more than two acres. Various extensions were made in subsequent years, including accommodation for girls, ultimately housing some 200 children. It accepted orphans of seamen connected with Hull itself and also Bridlington, Grimsby, Gainsborough and Goole. In 1921 the children

moved from Spring Bank to Hesslewood Hall, which had been purchased by the charity the previous year. The home eventually closed in 1985.



*The Hesslewood orphanage site, 1926*

Like many similar institutions, the home had its own boys' brass band which performed at events in the local area and further afield. Some of the boys went on to careers as military bandmen.

The Hull Spring Bank Orphanage Band was first known to be active in 1875, with their bandmaster Thomas Broady. Also known as the Hull Sailors' Orphanage Band and the Hesslewood Orphanage Band. The band was re-invigorated around 1925 when Harry Turner, a previous resident of the home, returned to take it over, raising £300 a year for the home. The band was still active in 1950. Conductors of the band included: R. Smith in the 1870s, James Arnet in 1890, J. Woodcock in 1904, H.M. Pitt in 1908-1914, Harry Turner in 1925 to 1943, and W. Bailey in 1946.

Some concert programmes for the band:

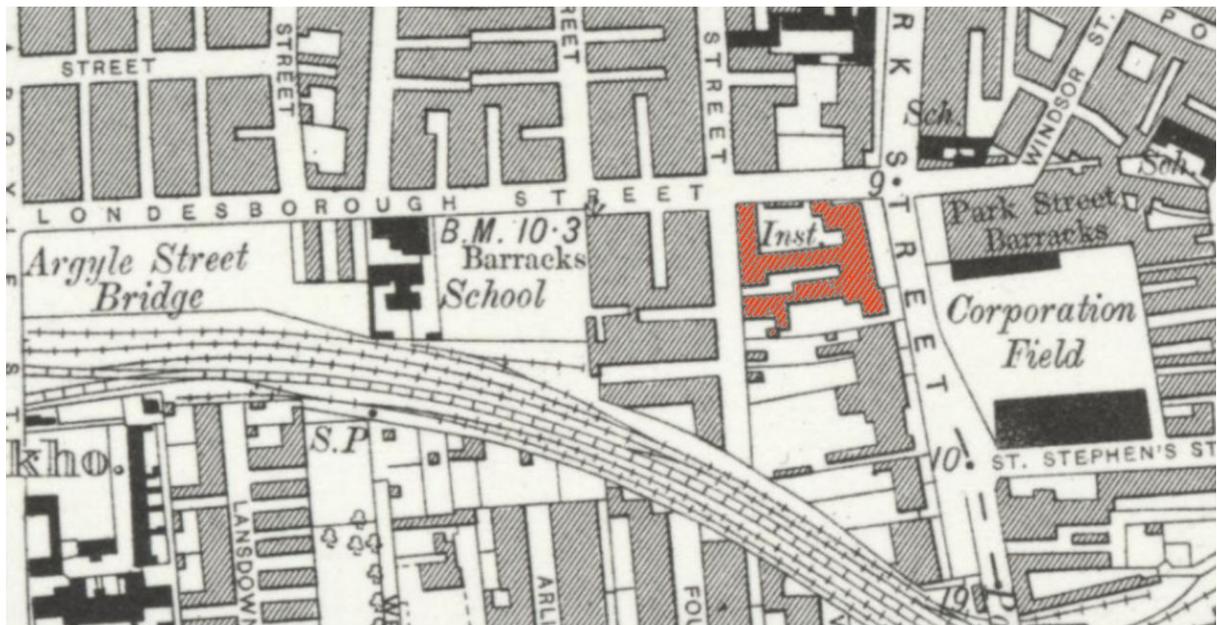
- Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 1899, West Park, Hull – slow march “*Victory*” (J. Ord Hume), overture “*Crown of Victory*” (Ripley), march “*Gladiator*” (Fogarty), intermezzo “*Among the Roses*”(Yeabsley), valse “*For You*” (May Ostlers), polka “*The Jolly Blacksmith*” (Suckley), overture “*Minerva*” (C. Richardson), galop “*Rustic*” (Dawson).

- Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 1908, West Park – march “*Triumphal from Rienzi*” (Wagner), overture “*La Joyeuse*” (Bela), cornet solo “*Sing me to sleep*” (Greene), valse “*Love’s Dream*” (Czibulka), selection “*Nell Gwynne*” (Planquette), gavotte “*The Way to the Heart*” (Lincke), trombone solo “*The Village Blacksmith*” (Weiss), fantasia “*Echoes of Songland*” (Kaps).
- Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 1909, Cannon Street Recreation Ground, Hull – march “*Les Mousquetaires*” (Lemothe), overture “*La Joyeux*” (Bela), morceau “*A Night in Switzerland*” (Hume), valse “*Love and Beauty*” (Fare), fantasia “*Joan of Arc*” (Wroun), descriptive piece “*A Sleigh Ride*” (Orde), valse “*Amulet*” (Westoby), galop “*The New Post Horn*” (Tidswell).
- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 1909, West Park – march “*March in C*” (Burn), fantasia “*O’er Land and Sea*” (Newton), patrol “*Bulgarienne*” (Kiefert), valse “*Souvenir*” (Waldteufel), fantasia “*Joan of Arc*” (Wroun), descriptive piece “*A Sleigh Ride*” (Orde), valse “*Les Amulet*” (Clair), galop “*The New Post Horn*” (Tidswell).
- Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 1909, Cannon Street Recreation Ground – march “*Shoulder to Shoulder*” (Kaps), morceau “*A Japanese Love Song*” (Thomas), selection “*Ruddigore*” (Sullivan), valse “*April Morn*” (Batten), minuet “*Queen Anne*” (Raymond), fantasia “*Joan of Arc*” (Wroun), valse “*Fleurs d’automne*” (Hume), redouble “*The Boys in Scarlet and Gold*” (Kiefert).
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 1909, The Oval, Nile Street, Hull– march “*Shoulder to Shoulder*” (Kaps), morceau “*A Japanese Love Song*” (Thomas), selection “*Ruddigore*” (Sullivan), valse “*April Morn*” (Batten), minuet “*Queen Anne*” (Raymond), fantasia “*Joan of Arc*” (Wroun), valse “*Fleurs d’automne*” (Hume), redouble “*The Boys in Scarlet and Gold*” (Kiefert).
- Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 1910, Cannon Street Recreation Ground – march “*True as Steel*” (Rhodes), valse “*Sweet as the Rose*” (Gomez), cornet solo “*Dear Heart*” (Mattei), cavatina “*King’s Herald*” (Round), intermezzo “*Starland*” (O’Connor), selection “*The Pirates of Penzance*” (Sullivan), valse “*Silver Stars*” (Henri), fantasia “*British Songs*” (Hume), selection “*Songs of London*” (Kaps).
- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 1912, West Park – march “*St Cecilia*” (Kattann), valse “*Sobre las Olas*” (Rosas), overture “*Ocean Queen*” (Richards), danse russe “*Cracovina*” (Asch), selection “*Il Trovatore*” (Verdi), intermezzo “*Hearts and Flowers*” (Tobani), fantasia “*Ein Abend in Toledo*” (Schmelling), valse “*La Mascotte*” (Godin), selection “*London Echoes*” (Kaps).
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June 1913, Stoneferry Green, Hull – march “*Amour de Patrie*” (Tuffilli), valse “*Undae Maris*” (Rouse), fantasie militaire “*The Relief*” (Masson), intermezzo “*S’il Vous Plait*” (Eilenberg), selection “*Haddon Hall*” (Sullivan), valse “*Edelweiss*” (Blumer), fantasia “*Gipsy Life*” (Hume), lancers “*Doris*” (Bucalossi), polka “*Take Me Too*” (Lincke).
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June 1913 – Dansom Lane Recreation Ground, Hull – march “*The Salute*” (Smith), overture “*Zitella*” (Hume), valse “*Pompadour*” (Gautier), fantasia “*Concord*” (Buoit), intermezzo “*Hearts’ Ease*” (Macbeth), selection “*Ruy Blas*” (Lutz), valse “*Wave Crest*” (Smith), fantasia “*Echoes of Pantomime*” (Kaps), twostep “*Starland*” (O’Connor).
- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 1913, West Park – march “*The 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment*” (Dunn), overture “*Sunshine and Shade*” (Parker), Spanish dance “*Toledo*” (Asch), selection “*Bohemian Girl*” (Balfe), valse “*Choristers*” (Phelps), intermezzo “*Rendezvous*” (Aletter), selection “*Top o’ the Tree*” (Kaps), gavotte “*Apres la Fete*” (Lath), march “*Jolly Coppersmiths*”.
- Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 1914, Cannon Street Recreation Ground – march “*Under the Star*” (Weiss), overture “*Lyre d’Or*” (Herman), valse “*La Plus Belle*” (Waldteufel), selection “*The Pirates of Penzance*” (Sullivan), intermezzo “*Secrets*” (Ancliffe), potpourri “*Melodious Memories*” (Finck), valse “*City Life*” (Translateur), selection “*Alfresco Revels*” (Baker), “*Moon Madrigal*”.

- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 1914, Dansom Lane Recreation Ground – march “*Petronel*” (Bennett), graceful dance “*My Lady Dainty*” (Hesse), overture “*A Poet’s Holiday*”, idyll “*Murmures des Fleurs*”, excerpts from “*Mascagni*”, valse “*Amourette*” (Westoby), entre’acte “*Hearts and Flowers*” (Tobani), Spanish dance “*Une Nuit a Toledo*” (Schmelling), popular melodies “*Finck a Lincke*” (Winter).
  - Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 1914, Stoneferry Green – march “*Under the Stars*” (Weiss), overture “*Lyre d’Or*” (Herman), valse “*La Plus Belle*” (Waldteufel), selection “*The Pirates of Penzance*” (Sullivan), intermezzo “*Secrets*” (Ancliffe), potpourri “*Melodious Memories*” (Finck), valse “*City Life*” (Translateur), selection “*Alfresco Revels*” (Baker), “*Moon Madrigal*”.
  - Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1914, The Oval, Nile Street - march “*Petronel*” (Bennett), graceful dance “*My Lady Dainty*” (Hesse), overture “*A Poet’s Holiday*”, idyll “*Murmures des Fleurs*”, excerpts from “*Mascagni*” (arr. Retford), valse “*Amourette*” (Westoby), entre’acte “*Hearts and Flowers*” (Tobani), Spanish dance “*Une Nuit a Toledo*” (Schmelling).
  - Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 1914, East Park, Hull – march “*The Yankee Navy*” (Sousa), gavotte “*The Way to the Heart*” (Lincke), selection “*Il Trovatore*” (Verdi), idyll “*Schlummerleid*” (Kokert), valse “*Sweet Syringa*” (Taylor), intermezzo “*Heart’s Ease*” (Macbeth), valse “*Sevilla*” (Matador), barn dance “*Just for Fun*” (Rora), American fantasia “*A Darky’s Dream*” (Bidgood).
- **See Appendix 1 for images of the home and the band.**

## 2. The Port of Hull Society

The Port of Hull Society for the Religious Instruction of Seamen was founded in 1821. Over the years, it became increasingly involved in the welfare of the men and their families, setting up the Sailors' Orphan Institution in Waterhouse Lane, Hull, in 1837. In 1867, a new children's home, housing up to 150 children, was opened in Thanet House, on Park Street, Hull, partly funded by a £5,000 donation from Sir Titus Salt.



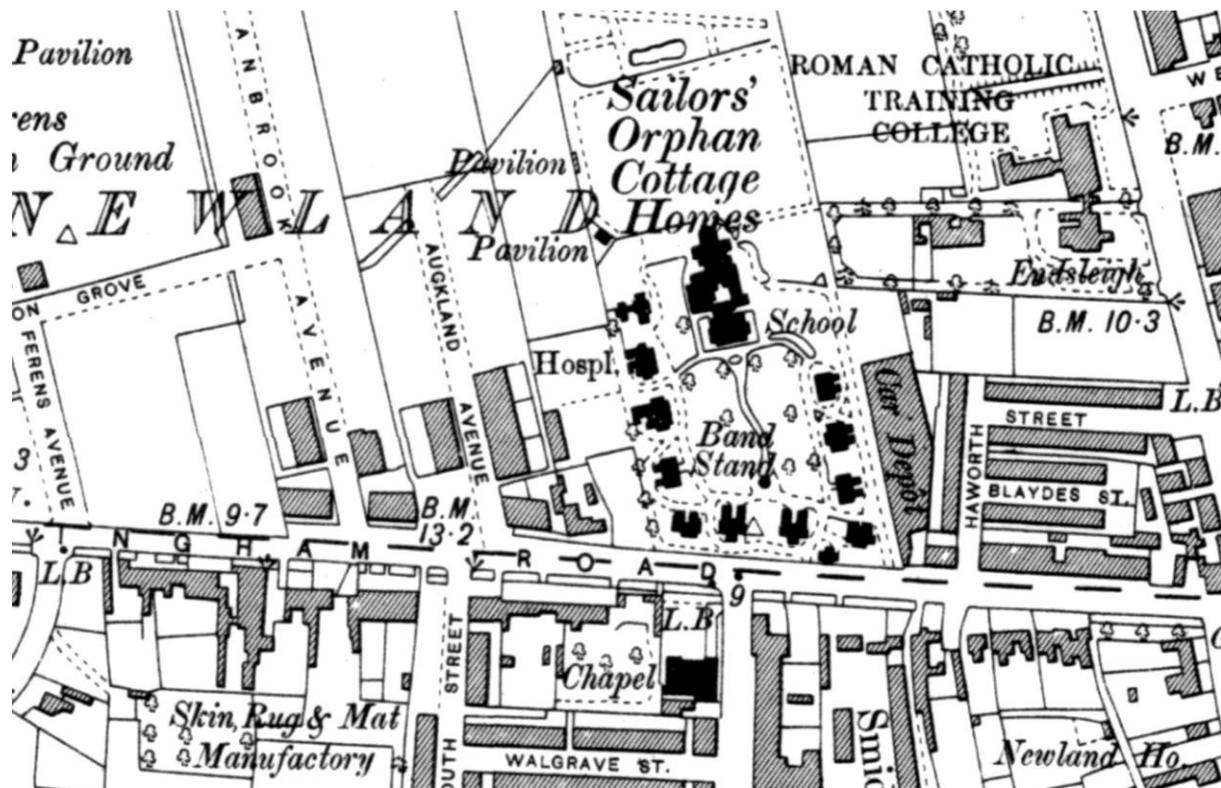
*The Park Street home*

Despite extensions in the early 1870s, by 1893 it was decided to build a new cottage homes development on Cottingham Road, which opened to its first residents in 1895. 'cottage' (actually a good-sized house) under the care of a resident house-mother. The ten cottages, each housing 25 children under the care of a resident house-mother, were arranged around a central green, with other buildings such as the school, hall and sanatorium at the far end of the site.

The Port of Hull Society's home band was first established in 1877. Soon after its establishment the band went on tour around the country raising money for the home and awareness of the plight of similar orphanages. It was known as the Park Street Home Band in 1896 and the Newland Homes Band in 1901. The band performed at many local social events and, for a number of years, it also went on tours around the wider Yorkshire Ridings, in the 1890s and early 1900s, raising funds for the Home. In 1907 these were largely halted after it was decided that the absence of the boys from the homes, and the attention they received, were not good for them.

Bandmasters were J. Mason in 1884, Joseph/James Arnott in 1889-1896, J. Woodcock in 1899, Mr Greig in 1900-1914, and Mr Bowers in 1921.

In 1950, the Port of Hull Society's Sailors' Orphan Homes were renamed the Sailors' Children's Society, and began a move towards supporting the care of children in their own homes where possible. The Newland site was finally closed in 2004 after several changes of use – still for disadvantaged people.



The Port of Hull Cottage Homes site at Cottingham Road

The Port of Hull Society's Home Band has a modest run of brass band contest appearances in the 1880s.

- 1<sup>st</sup> August 1881 - Bridlington Contest – won 3<sup>rd</sup> place, beaten by Meltham Mills & Linthwaite, but they beat Flamborough & Bridlington Artillery Bands and Bridlington Rifles Band.
- 9<sup>th</sup> June 1883 - Gainsborough Contest - playing “*Les Huguenots*”, with conductor Jesse Mason.
- 17<sup>th</sup> May 1884 - Gainsborough Contest - playing “*Torquato Tasso*”, conductor Jesse Mason.
- 4<sup>th</sup> August 1884 - Hull Contest – playing “*Il Giuramento*”, conductor Jesse Mason.
- 16<sup>th</sup> May 1885 - Gainsborough Contest – playing “*Kalliwando's Mass*”, conductor Joseph Arnett.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1885 - Hull Contest – won 3<sup>rd</sup> prize.

The band itself was still active in 1935.

Some concert programmes for the band:

- Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 1910, West Park – march “*The Crisis*” (Hall), gavotte “*Swiss Chimes*” (Hoffman), valse “*Venetia*” (Lowthian), selection “*Falka*” (Chassaigne), xylophone solo “*Selected*”, Indian romance “*Hobomoko*” (Reeves), valse “*Enora*” (Anon), selection “*Our Empire*” (Godfrey), selection “*A Darcy's Dreamland*” (Bidgood).

- Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 1910, The Pier, Hull – march “*Palatinus*” (Hall), gavotte “*Alexina*” (Asch), selection “*Songs of London*” (Karl Kaps), valse “*Pamelia*” (Woodcock), xylophone solo “*Selected*”, selection “*Echoes of Songland*” (Karl Kaps), cornet solo “*The Lost Chord*” (Sullivan), Indian romance “*Hobomoko*” (Reeves), selection “*Falka*” (Chassaigne).
- Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1910, The Oval, Nile Street – Russian dance “*Cracovina*”, valse “*Venetia*”, xylophone solo “*Selected*”, selection “*Songs of London*” (Karl Kaps), gavotte “*The Pasha*”, valse “*Luna*”, galop “*A Motor Ride*”.
- Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August 1910, East Park - march “*Palatinus*” (Hall), valse “*Waltz Dream*” (Strauss), xylophone solo “*Selected*”, selection “*Il Trovatore*” (Verdi), bell polka “*Big Ben*” (D’Albert), valse “*Pamelia*” (Woodcock), intermezzo “*Rendez Vous*” (Aletter), selection “*Cloches des Corneville*” (Planquette).
- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 1914, East Park – march “*Primzie*”, gavotte “*Weymouth Chimes*”, valse “*The Choristers*”, dance “*In the Shadows*”, selection “*Haddon Hall*”, intermezzo “*Les Cloches de St. Etienne*”, morceau “*Hearts and Flowers*”, cornet solo “*The Rosary*”, song “*Your Eyes Have Told Me So*”, selection “*Veronique*”, morceau “*The Church Parade*”.
- Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1914, Cannon Street Recreation Ground – march “*Patricia*” (Bidgood), intermezzo “*Heart’s Ease*” (Macbeth), valse “*Luna*” (Lincke), dance “*Moon Madrigal*” (Willeby), selection “*The Gold Mine*” (Williams), gavotte “*Bells of St Malo*” (Rimmer), intermezzo “*Fairyland*” (Hesse), valse “*Sobre las Olas*” (Rosas), idyll “*The Glow Worm*” (Lincke), selection “*Sergeant Brice*” (Lehmann).
- Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 1914, The Oval, Nile Street – march “*Paree*” (Bidgood), gavotte “*Orynthia*” (Hume), Alaskan song “*Cochecho*” (Joyce), selection “*Bohemia*” (Kapa), gavotte “*Editha*” (Mora), dance “*Moon Madrigal*” (Willeby), valse “*Bay Blue*” (Durley), gavotte “*Weymouth Chimes*” (Howgill), selection “*Haddon Hall*” (Sullivan).
- Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 1914, Dansom Lane Recreation Ground – march “*On the Qui Vive*” (Partridge), overture “*Fairy Tale*” (Laurendeau), valse “*Donau Wellen*” (Ivanocivi), gavotte “*Orynthia*” (Hume), selection “*Sergeant Brice*” (Lehmann), dance “*In the Shadows*” (Fincke), intermezzo “*Fairyland*” (Hesse), valse “*Amoreuse*” (Berger), Alaskan song “*Cochecho*” (Joyce), selection “*Best of All*” (Williams).
- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 1914, Stoneferry Park – march “*Sons of the Brave*” (Bidgood), intermezzo “*Heart’s Ease*” (Macbeth), valse “*Myosotis*” (Lowthian), dance “*In the Shadows*” (Fincke), selection “*Top of the Tree*” (Kaps), gavotte “*Les Cloches de St. Etienne*” (Howgill), song “*Your Eyes Have Told Me So*” (Hardy), valse “*The Druid’s Prayer*” (Dawson), morceau “*Hearts and Flowers*” (Czibulka), selection “*The Orchid*” (Caryll-Monckton).

On Monday 2 August 1897, both orphanage bands took part in the bank holiday Boulevard Sports in Hull, conducted by Thomas W. Smith and James Arnott.

- **See Appendix 2 for images of the home and the band.**

### 3. Other orphanage bands

Two other local orphanage bands were in existence around a similar time period. The Hull Railway Servants' Orphanage Band was active between 1892 and 1895. The Flamborough Orphanage Band was active in 1909.

### 4. Other orphanages

There were a number of other orphanages and homes in Hull during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but none of them supported musical bands – at least to the extent that they performed publicly. These included:

- Hope House (1811-1937) – the Hull Female Penitentiary - originally a rescue home for fallen girls.
- St Vincent's Orphan Home for Boys (1890-1995) – a catholic home for boys, run by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul.
- Pickering Home for Girls (Clarendon House Home for Girls) (c.1885-1980) – originally located, on Spring Bank, known as the 'Church of England Home for Waifs and Strays', moved to Hessle Road in 1915.
- Linnaeus Street Children's Home (1910-1950s) – home for the Hull Poor Law Union from about 1910.
- Hull and District Branch of Dr Barnardo's Home (1902-1951) – situated on Beverley Road.
- Hull Sheltering Home for Girls (1888-1959) - a rescue home for fallen girls.
- Cottage Homes, Hessle (1897-?) - the children's home of the Sculcoates Poor Law Union.
- Hull Ragged and Industrial School (1849-1912) - set up the industrial school ship Southampton for the boys in 1868.

### Further reading:

- Hicks, J.D. - *Our Orphans: the story of the Hull Seamen's and General Orphanage, 1853-1979* - Lockington Publishing Company, North Ferriby, 1983
- Holman, Gavin - *A Fanfare of Orphans - the brass band of the St-Georges-de-l'Isle orphanage in Saint-Fraimbault-de-Prières* - September 2022
- Holman, Gavin - *Music of discipline and reform - the bands of children's orphanages, industrial schools and asylums* - July 2019
- Holman, Gavin - *Music at anchor - engagements of the boys' bands from British industrial school, reformatory, and training ships* - February 2024
- *The Records of the Hull Seamen's and General Orphanage, 1853-1986* [held at Hull City Archives, ref: C DSHO]

# Appendix 1 – the Hull Seamen's Home and Band





*Spring Bank Orphanage Band, c.1895*



*Spring Bank Orphanage Band, 1917*



*Spring Bank Orphanage Band, 1919*



*Spring Bank Orphanage Band, 1920*



*Hesslewood Orphanage Band, 1925*



*Hesslewood Orphanage Band, 1920s*



*Hessle Wood Orphanage Band, 1930s*

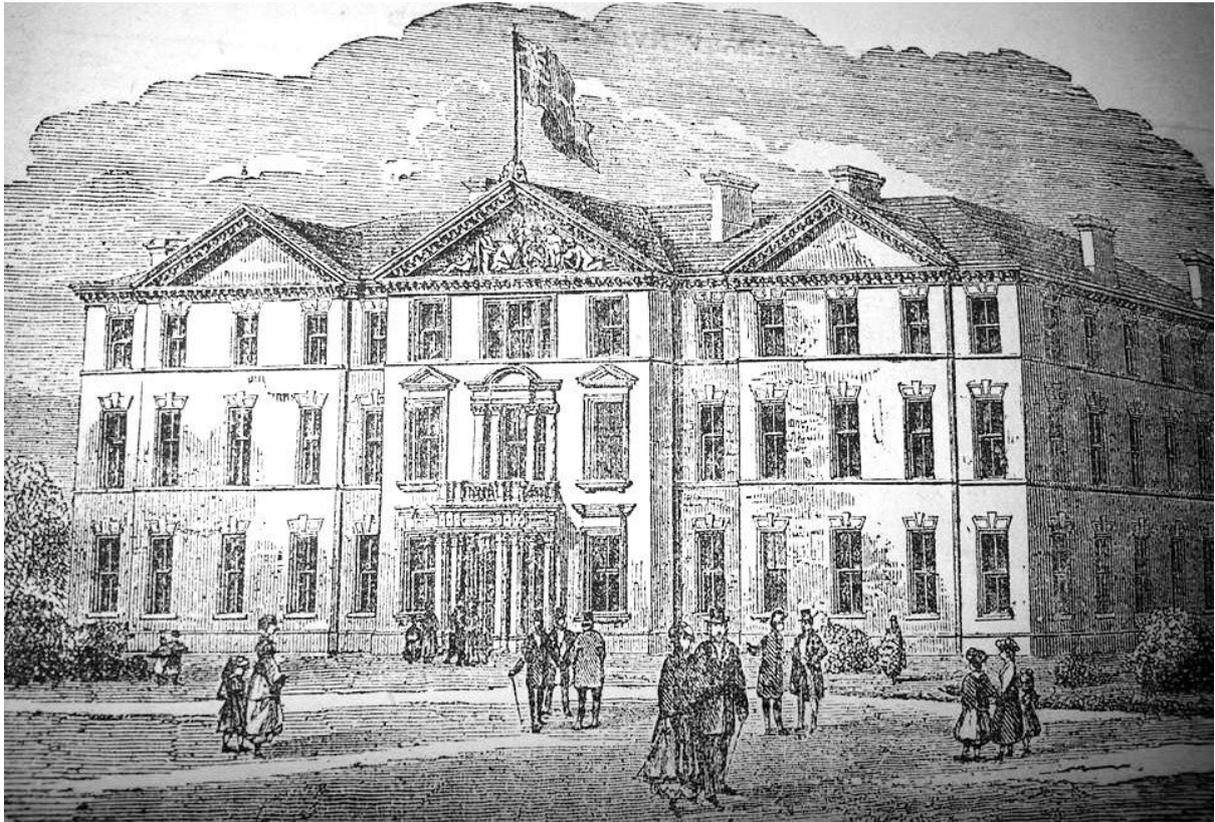


*Spring Bank Orphanage Charity  
Challenge Cup*



*Spring Bank Orphanage collecting box*

## Appendix 2 – the Port of Hull Society's Home and Band



*Post of Hull Society's Home – at Park Street*



*The new POH Society cottage homes at Newland*



*Sailors' Orphan Homes, Newland.*

*Full.*



*The cottage homes, 1902*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, 1878*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, 1900s*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, 1900s*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, 1900s*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, at Robin Hood's Bay, 1900s*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, at Thirsk, 1900s*



*Port of Hull Sailors' Orphans' Home Band, 1900s*



*Newland Homes Band, 1906*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



*Newland Homes Band, c. 1910*



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