

Brass Band People

a selected historical directory of musicians
associated with the brass band movement
(J to S)



Richard Law - Bacup Prize Band

**compiled by
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Introduction

This directory largely concentrates on people associated with the brass band movement in the UK, though there are some entries for brass musicians and soloists elsewhere in the world.

It is highly selective, with little in the way of specific criteria for choice, and it only scratches the surface of the many thousands of musicians who have played their part in what is arguably the greatest continuous amateur musical movement. I have identified nearly 20,000 distinct brass bands which were active over the last 200 years in the British Isles alone and, although estimates will vary greatly, I guess between 500,000 and 1,000,000 players will have been part of those bands over time. Very few of these players have been recorded, and most will probably remain anonymous. A number of the more famous or accomplished musicians have been the subject of biographies, or entries and mentions in other publications, and it is my hope that historians and enthusiasts will continue to research, collect and preserve the stories of these individuals. Sadly paper records and, worse still, personal memories, are fleeting and are too often lost.

Most of the profiles of these bandsmen and bandswomen are extracts from contemporary reports in newspapers or the brass band press. In addition there are some later biographical notes from more current sources. A few brass band historians are actively researching the musical lives of such players, and articles regularly appear in *The British Bandsman*, *Brass Band World*, and online at 4barsrest.com.

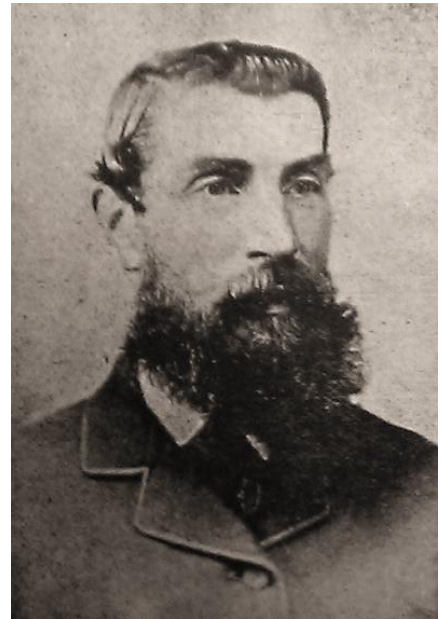
Although little is known about the great majority of the aforementioned hundreds of thousands of players, some of the more notable personalities have had aspects of their life and work recorded in some form. Where such records are known, they are listed in the *Brass Band Bibliography* (see below). Finally, if anyone has any material or pictures relating to 'brass banders' of the past, I would be delighted to see it, and to include them in a future edition of this directory.

Further information & some general biographical works:

- **Biographies** – the comprehensive *Brass Band Bibliography*, which includes a list of over 400 biographical works, is available online as a PDF download at <http://independent.academia.edu/GavinHolman>, or via the 'Historical Research' page in the IBEW, at <http://www.ibew.co.uk>
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- Reinhart, Carole Dawn - *Women Brass Musicians - Historical Documentation and the Influence of the International Women's Brass Conference on their Profession* - PhD Thesis, University of Vienna, 2009. Available from the IWBC - www.myiwbc.org
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Jackson, Benjamin Denton (1841-1917)

Mr. B.D. Jackson, who is a native of Bramley, near Leeds, was born in 1841. He is a member of a family well-known to all musicians, being the brother of Mr. J. Jackson, late bandmaster of the now defunct Leeds Forge Band. He commenced his musical career as second French horn player in the Bramley Band, of which his father was leader for thirteen years. In 1864 he was engaged as euphoniumist under R. S. Burton, Esq., at the Cheltenham Concert Rooms, Harrogate, and remained there until the latter part of 1865. He was then offered employment at the Spinkwell Mills Dewsbury, in order to secure his services as solo euphonium in the band connected with the firm, which offer he accepted, the band being under the conductorship of his brother, Harry Jackson, a well-known cornettist. Mr. Jackson's first appearance as a conductor was with the Dewsbury Rifle Band in 1868, which, under his direction, was very successful notably at Morley, Hull, Wakefield, Paddock, Blackpool, &c. He was appointed conductor of the Dewsbury A1 Band in 1873, and this band was eminently successful at contests. In 1874 he was engaged as conductor to the Wyke Old Band, with whom he remained for 3 years with marked success.



The Batley Old Band, being desirous of improving their condition, invited Mr. Jackson to become their teacher and conductor. When he accepted the office, in 1881, the band was in a very rough state, none of the members having ever taken part in a contest. They were, however, young men, and Mr. Jackson's abilities and perseverance soon brought the band into prominence, and at the present time there are few bands that can boast of so rapid an improvement in the same time as the Batley Old Band, and the credit of this belongs in a great measure to Mr. Jackson. In conclusion, Mr. Jackson is highly esteemed in this district by a large circle of friends and acquaintances, both for his amiable character as a man and his talent as a teacher and conductor of brass bands, and it is hoped that he may long be spared to exercise his abilities on their behalf.

(Report published in 1893)

Jeffrey, George

George Jeffery was tenor horn with the Hastings & St Leonards Gospel Temperance Band, which ceased to exist well before WW2. He also played in the Hastings 1 (later Hastings Citadel) Salvation Army Band. Caleb, one of his sons, was the bandmaster and went to prison when the Salvation Army were persecuted for holding open air services on the beach. If you've seen "Brassed Off" when Pete Postlethwaite is in hospital and the band play outside wearing their miners helmets, Brighton Congress Hall SA band actually cycled out to Lewes and played hymn tunes by the light of carbide cycle lamps outside the prison to keep Caleb's spirits up. He wore his Bandmaster's uniform to prison before he had to change into prison clothing. One of George Jeffery's other sons, Tom, was the bandmaster of Hastings 2 (Silverhill) band.

Keen-Hopkins, William (1887-1944)

William Victor Keen-Hopkins, born 25 March 1887, Blockley, Worcestershire, was a member of the Blockley Brass Band c.1900 with brothers Edwin (1885-1959), Sidney (1889-1951) and Jim (1868-1929) - also members of the band were his relatives Charles and Alfred Figgures.

Kershaw, William (1875-1950)

Born in Murrurundi, Australia, he was taken to the gold fields at an early age by his father. He became a miner and Bandmaster in Emmaville, then worked as a clerk for the Glen Innes Council as well being Bandmaster for the Glen Innes Silver Brass Band for many years.

King, James (1809-1888)

Born 1809 in Dublin, died 1888 in Derby. Enlisted in the Royal Staff Corps in 1821 aged 13 as a bugler, then joined the 5th Dragoon Guards in 1829-1850 when he was medically/discharged in Longford Ireland, due to injuries to his legs, his papers state he was the Bandmaster. He was a prolific composer of Military Music having penned well over 40 pieces, all of which are held by the British Library. He was the Bandmaster for the Derbyshire Yeomanry 1863-1870. James' 4 sons were also accomplished musicians.

Kirkby, Joseph (1879-1910)

It is with the most profound regret & sorrow we record the death of Mr. Joseph Kirby of Freckleton St., Kirkham, b. 1879, which sad event took place at the Moss Side Fever Hospital, on Saturday after a brief illness. Ever since it became known of the dangerous character of the disease with which he was afflicted, there were numerous anxious inquiries day by day, by a host of friends in the town and surrounding districts. To the bereaved widow and children and all the relatives the most sincere sympathy is extended. The deceased had for several years, been one of the most prominent members of the Kirkham Subscription Prize Brass Band, and was one of the best trombone players in the country, having won prizes at Blackpool, Wigan and elsewhere. The interment took place in the churchyard of the Kirkham Parish Church, the remains being borne to their last resting place by members of the band. The bells at the Parish Church were muffled. It was at the express wish of Mr. Kirby that the band did not play at the funeral, but it is stated they will render sacred selections at the graveside on Sunday afternoon. The flag at the Kirkham Social Club was hoisted half mast in respect to the deceased.

[Obituary in 1910]

Lamb, James

Was conductor of the Kirriemuir Brass Band in July 1896, when he was presented with a silver-mounted baton with a suitable inscription.



Laycock, Arthur (1887-1929)

Arthur Laycock was born in Todmorden. He was a well-known cornet and trombone player. He was the son of Thomas and Mary [né'e Sutcliffe] Laycock. After his 9th birthday, his parents bought him a second-hand cornet, and arranged for him to visit Arthur Hirst, the conductor of the local Cornholme Band, for private lessons. He gained considerable fame with various brass bands in the district and around Britain. At the outbreak of World War I, he joined the 16th Durham Light Infantry and played in the regimental band. Later, he suffered facial burns from a domestic accident - when he tried to take a flaming chip pan outside - and Harry Mortimer had to deputise for him. Harry remembers Arthur as an immaculate, if pedantic, man paying painstaking attention to his appearance and to his playing, and was once heard to say Perhaps one day I might be as good a cornet player as Arthur Laycock to which someone replied "Yes, you might, but you will never look as well-dressed as he does."

Lee, Thomas

[report from 1884]

Mr. Thomas Lee, of Edgefold, Worsley, a blacksmith by trade, is a native of Bury, Lancashire. At an early age he learned to play the clarionet and flute, upon which instruments he became proficient. When about the age of 20, he left Bury to reside at "Besses" near Prestwich, where he became the leader of the Besses Old Band, which position he held until called upon to form a band for the Earl of Ellesmere, of Worsley Hall. This band was composed of eight instruments, three clarionettes, flute, bassoon, bass, serpent, and two horns. Mr. Lee, the leader, played the E flat clarionet, Edward Rishton first Bb clarionet, John Jones second Bb clarionet, George Lea the flute, John Ridyard the bassoon, John Welsby the bass serpent, James Ridyard the first horn, and Richard Ridyard the second horn. After a short period Mr. Lee succeeded in bringing his newly-formed band to a state of very fair proficiency, and it was frequently in requisition at the hall for garden parties, at Westwood Pleasure Gardens, and also at Walkden recreation grounds, at all of which places it gave entire satisfaction. The whole of the members were natives of Walkden and the surrounding district. About the year 1854, this band was broken up owing to a Yeomanry Band coming into existence, and Mr. Lee, not playing a brass instrument, was on that account obliged to resign.

Leslie, James (1872-)

[Report from 1904]

Mr James Leslie began his career in Methil Town Band twelve years ago as a trombonist, and many a racy anecdote can be narrated of the period when brass bands



were still young in Scotland. In those early days he also wielded the bass instrument, and it is greatly to his credit that that now famous Fife teacher Mr Carmichael, remarked of him that he was one of the famous bass players in the county. But it is as the solo euphoniumist that Mr Leslie is now heard. He took possession of that instrument some four years ago on the retirement of Mr P. Brown. It speaks volumes for the progress he has made in that comparatively short time that he should be in the happy position of being able to win the gold medal at Lochgelly contest. This creditable performance he accomplished last year when pitted against the cream of Fife soloists and the pick of instrumentalists drafted in from neighbouring counties. Mr Leslie is only 32 years of age, so that it is not unreasonable to expect that he may attain to even greater distinction among the prominent bandsmen of Scotland.

Manley, Jesse (1863-1933)

Jesse Manley was born at Yarcombe, near Honiton, in 1863. He moved to Wales where he married and settled in Aberdare, Glamorgan. He formed the old Ysugorwen band and was its conductor when Mr M. D. Thomas MP, (later Lord Rhondda) was its President. He created a world record with the Aberdare Town Band in the early 1900's by winning 20 first prizes, 3 seconds and 3 thirds at the Crystal Palace. At one time in his career, 1910-14, he was the professional conductor of nine Scottish bands, while he was the resident bandmaster of Kirkcaldy Trades Band. He was also the conductor of Gravesend Town Silver Band, and on leaving this position he was presented with an illuminated testimonial. He became an adjudicator at many championships, 9 in succession at Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester, and was the only Welsh representative to officiate three years in a row at Crystal Palace. Besides being a conductor, bandmaster and adjudicator he also wrote music – one piece was a march “*Kings Highway*”. He died in 1933, aged 70 at his home in Aberdare.

Mann, Joseph (1823-)

Was born in Mixenden, Halifax about 1823 and moved to Shaw, nr Oldham, in the mid 1850s because he was invited to start a brass band by a cotton company called A & A Crompton.

Marshall, George Redriff (1861-1943)

Bandmaster of the Feltham Prize Band for 50 years (1884 to 1934)

George Marshall was born in Richmond, Surrey in 1861 where his father was the licensed victualler of the Brown Bear Public House. His father was a capable musician which gave George a good start and at just a lad he became side-drummer in his school band.

In 1879 he moved to Feltham, Middlesex and joined the village band where he was fortunate in securing the practical interest of the bandmaster Mr G Gage, who did all he could to help him including additional lessons. George started as second horn player, was speedily promoted to first horn, then to baritone and finally euphonium.

He was known to practice one Sunday from before 6am through to 1.30 am the following day, and still said he was not musically tired. Later in life he ably demonstrated that his knowledge was not confined to one instrument for at contests he played on the euphonium, trombone, baritone and clarinet as necessity arose.

In 1883 he joined the Headquarters Band of the 8th Middlesex Volunteer Regiment, which became the 2nd V.B. Middlesex, conducted by Mr Sheppard and from 1899 by Mr W J Douglas Sheriff. Whilst with this band George gave a solo performance at Reading on May 15th 1897 and won the 14 guinea euphonium given by Messrs. Higham and Co for being best soloist. In 1903 on resigning from this band he was presented with the King's Long Service Medal.

George also inaugurated the Feltham Band in 1884 and for 50 years he held the position of bandmaster. He trained the band so well that it was successful in winning many prizes and became the Feltham Prize Band. He was known for recognising and encouraging talent and for the training of his own players rather than waiting for ready-made players to come along. He guided and trained many new players and he became affectionately known as 'Genial George' by all who knew him. He also taught his son and daughter to play musical instruments, his son forming his own Dance Band in the 1950's.

There was scarcely a band in the area that George Marshall had not helped at some time or been associated with, here is a list of the bands mentioned in his obituary: Ealing, London Prize, Fulham, Borough, Kingston Military, Stokes Military, Surrey Military, 3rd V.B., East Surrey, Grenadier Guards, Sevenoaks Town, Staines Town, Woodcock's Military, Sunbury, Molesey, Isleworth, Brentwood Gas Works, Yiewsley, Hampton, Molesey Mechanics, Brentwood, Ilford, Uxbridge, Mr Rendell's Military, Hounslow, East Surrey District Regt., Tottenham Town, Great Western Railway and Vicker's (Erith) Military Band.

He was for five years with the City of London Yeomanry (Rough Riders) Band and also conducted Leyland Motors Social and Athletic Club Orchestra. George was also an ardent worker in connection with the Uxbridge and Hillingdon Band. Amongst the many notable events in his career he assisted in playing the Fusilier's colours to the Guildhall and also played upon the occasion of the "C.I.V.'S" departure for the South African War and also upon their return.

He started the Royal Park Richmond band performances and played there for 12 seasons and in Bushey Park for one season. The Feltham Prize Band was engaged to give season performances for the Boroughs of Twickenham, Heston and Isleworth and the Feltham U.D. Council and for 30 years was engaged by the London County Council. He was well known to competitors and audiences alike at the National Band Festival and championship contest held at the Crystal Palace where he acted as an official.

Despite working full-time all his life in a number of posts which included over 36 years at an Ivory works in Feltham and then at Leyland Motors Ltd at Ham, and taking a keen interest in the work of hospitals and charitable institutions following a serious accident when in his teens, it is noteworthy that on his marriage certificate, dated 1907, his profession is stated as a musician.

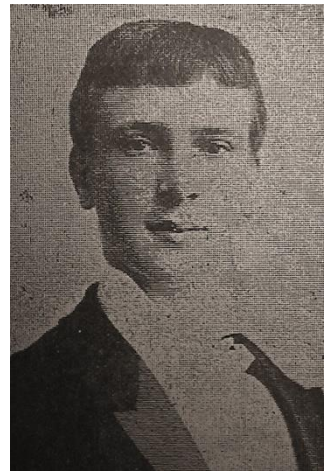
[Information provided by Rowena Marshall – granddaughter]

Metcalfe, Henry James (1835-1906)

Henry James Metcalfe, was active in brass bands, composing & publishing in Wolverhampton for about 30 years until his death in 1906. He also ran a journal for at least 16 years, and printed that and his own music in his own house. He actually did get listed in the back of Algernon Rose's 'Talks With Bandsmen' (~1895?).

Morgans, Tom (1874-)

Mr. Tom Morgans, whose reputation throughout Wales as solo cornet of the Llanelly Town Band is one to be envied, was born on November 14th, 1874. Coming of a musical family, almost every member of which is a instrumentalist, and his father being a cornetist and a bandsman, it is not to be wondered at that he very early showed a bent for music. When he first started can hardly be stated, for he seems to have grown in for at eight years of age he had made considerable progress and often appeared a local entertainments in easy song solos such as "Jenny Jones," "Last Rose of Summer,' &c. At 9 years of age he joined the local Volunteer Band (of which his father was a member) as 3rd cornet and soon he was promoted to 2nd cornet. His progress was phenomenal, in a very short time he had swept all before him and became solo cornet, being entrusted with the solo work in "I Lombardi" "Favorita," "Round the World," and similar first-class music.



His executive ability was marvellous in one so young, which will be readily understood when we state that at the age of 13 years, a small lad in knickerbockers and Eton collar, he simply electrified the audience at a grand ballad concert in the Parish Hall, contributing "My Pretty Jane" and "Rule Britannia." His performance was received with tremendous enthusiasm, and his fame at once became more than local. He received several engagements in various parts of South Wales as concert soloist, and his repertoire consisting of the magnificent solos of Levy, Hartmann, Round &c., he never failed to create a sensation. His pluck and nerve were immense, and when only fourteen years of age he accepted an engagement to play at a performance of the "Messiah." The difficult trumpet obligato of "The Trumpet Shall Sound" he rendered upon an A-Natural cornet in such a manner as to astonish the London artistes present, who highly complimented him on his exceptional ability. As a mark of the esteem in which he was held, the gentry of Llanelly in 1829 presented him with a beautiful silver-plated Echo Cornet value 16 guineas. Through the medium of London artistes who had heard him as a concert soloist, he was twice offered permanent appointments in the Metropolis; but on account of his youth they were wisely declined. But although a marvelous executant he is by no means one of those whose sole ability consists in the production of musical fireworks. He had the good fortune to early attract the attention of a local gentleman who is a most artistic cornettist of great experience - G. F. Blake, Esq., and so successfully did he imbibe from this gentleman proper appreciation of that which is the truly beautiful in music, that to hear his treatment of the simplest theme is a treat.

Towards the close of 1890 he joined the Town Band as Solo Cornet and thus gained the dual advantage of benefitting both by the tuition of Mr Samuel and by gaining experience in wider circles. He has, in this capacity, been brought into contact on the contest stage with the best talent of the day, and has never yet suffered by comparison. Of his playing at Belle Vue, 1892, J. Englefield, Esq., RM., 1st Life Guards, speaks thus: "Cornet very nice style. Cornet played solo with great taste. Cornet cadenza very good," &c. In the same year he won, out of 14 competitors the S.W. Association Medal at the Merthyr contest, and at Neath on Easter Monday last the eminent contest judge, Mr. R. Stead, thus wrote of him "This graceful movement was exquisitely played by the cornet soloist; playing with refinement and style that was charming." Mr Tom Morgan is also a theoretical musician of some ability. Musical study has been to him a pleasure and not a task; and to such good purpose has he worked that before 18 years of age he had passed several Trinity College examinations; and Mr T.A. Haigh had published a march of his, "The Hero of the South," and invited various other productions which are now on the eve of publication. Of his march "Triumphant," Mr. Haigh wrote: "A good heavy march, admirably suited for contesting." He has also devoted a little time to band teaching, and there is not the slightest doubt but that by-and-bye he is destined to play an important part in the Brass Band world.

(Report published in 1893)

Mortimer, Rex (1911-1999)

Rex Mortimer was born in Luton on the 27th February 1911 into a banding family. Fred, his father had moved from Hebdon Bridge to Luton where he had great success conducting the Luton Red Cross Band. His next appointment was Bandmaster with Fodens Motor Works Band, Mr Halliwell being the professional coach. In 1924 Rex and his family moved to Clifton Road, Elworth, his elder brother Alex had already joined the band some months earlier on principal euphonium, his brother Harry joined on principal cornet.

In 1925 Rex started an apprenticeship as a pattern maker in the Foden Works. Banding was in his blood as it was with all the Mortimers, after experimenting with a variety of instruments including the trombone he finally settled on the euphonium. In 1928 Rex joined the band on 2nd euphonium next to his brother Alex. The band had just completed a hat trick at the Open, under the baton of Mr Halliwell, Rex made his first major contest debut on the third part of this hat trick, what a way to start a musical career. In 1930 Rex was made Musical Director of Fodens Band where he would conduct all contests, this was the start of a great era of which Rex was to play a part, winning the National in 1930 followed by two consecutive hat tricks, all in the thirties. These were very busy years, the band calendar always being full including a tour to South Africa, regular tours to Scotland and the south of England resulting in bandsmen being absent from home and work sometime for several weeks.

In 1950 Rex took over the Foden Quartet with great success winning several premier titles. Rex helped his father in running the band and in a conducting role as Fred's health began to fail, on his father's death in 1953 Rex took over as Bandmaster, Harry being Musical Director. In 1956 Rex was appointed to Musical Director, success came soon winning the National in 1958 on 'A Shining River' and the Open in 1964 on 'Lorenzo'. Rex was the only Mortimer to win both the Open and National contest with Fodens Band – a great achievement. The Iles Medal was awarded to Rex in 1962 at the Open contest Belle Vue for services to brass bands. Rex also coached several other bands during this period of his musical career, one worth mentioning is Cammel Laird who under his baton won the Area in 1964, Fodens' being in 2nd place. This was not appreciated by the Foden management and he was not permitted to conduct another band in the same contest as Fodens again.

Newton, Sam (1864-)

Sam Newton was born in Ashton in 1864 and at a very early stage commenced his career as a musician, for at the age of ten years he took up his position as cornet player in the Oxford Mills Reed Band, which was then under the baton of Mr. John Gladney. That gentleman noticing the ability of the lad, and perhaps thinking that a great field would open out for him, suggested the euphonium as a fit instrument for him, which suggestion Sam embraced. We need not discount on the merits of this venture, as it is well known that Mr. Newton has proved that he is fully entitled to be placed in the front rank of his profession. In 1885 Sam joined the Kingston Mills Band, and in that year figured his first contest at Belle Vue, when the band came off with the first prize. In the years 1886-87 the band was equally successful and in the latter year gaining their gold medals.

Two years later we find Mr. Newton engaged in a euphonium contest at Kidsgrove, in which he succeeded in carrying off the first prize, as was also the case on June 6th, 1892, at West Stanley. At Blyth, on August 25th, 1892, Mr. Newton gained the medal for best euphonium player, and again at Oakham on Sept. 12th, 1892. Of late years Mr. Newton has been engaged with many bands for concert work and has always acquitted himself in a most creditable manner. We are glad to find that Mr. Newton is extending his sphere of usefulness by taking in hand (after the retirement of Mr. Gladney) the Oxford Mills Band. Being asked to what influence he placed his

success Mr. Newton replied "That it was owing to the excellent tuition and advice he had received from Mr. John Gladney from the earliest period of his experience."

(Report published in 1896)

Nicholl, Joseph Weston (1875-1925)

Joseph Weston Nicholl was the son of Samuel Nicholl. He was known as a violinist, organist, pianist, musician and composer. He was also involved in the brass band world. He was conductor of the West Riding Military Band [1908-1910] and of the Black Dyke Mills Band [1910-1912]. He also composed and arranged music for the bands. His compositions included *The Viking*, a tone poem recorded by Black Dyke Mills Band [1923], a *Festival Overture* and a *Commemorative Ode and March* for the Jubilee of the opening of People's Park.

Nicholls, William (1824-1890)

William Nicholls died 2 January 1890 at 75, Penistone Road, Sheffield, aged 65. For many years he was a faithful servant to Mr. Stones, of Cannon Brewery. The deceased was a native of Brampton, his father (Mr. Christopher Nicholls) being one of the founders, along with Mr. Slack's family, of the Brampton Band, afterwards called the Chesterfield and Brampton Band, then the Crystal Palace Prize Band, later on the Chesterfield Volunteer Band. He was a member of the band, and played the first trombone during the years between 1855 and 1865, when the band won so many prizes at the principal band contests in England, amongst which was the fourth prize at the Crystal Palace, against All England, in 1860 ; second prize at the same place, in 1861; and, in 1862, first prize at the Crystal Palace, against over one hundred bands from all parts of England. The prizes, at this contest alone, in money and instruments, amounted to £105.

Ogden, John Thomas (1859-1916)

Mr. J. T. Ogden is a native of Radcliffe and was born in 1859. At the early age of ten, his father being a prominent member of the Mount Zion Band, he secured a Tenor Horn for him which he struggled hard with for two years. Then a sad occurrence came in the death of his father, after which he withdrew from the musical world for five years. He then joined the Radcliffe Good Templar Band and soon became famous as a solo horn player. It was quite evident from his rapid success that he was qualified for a more important position in the band, and he was therefore induced to take the soprano. The band was then under the conductorship of Mr. Willam Wood. Shortly after, the band changed its name to Radcliffe Old, and commenced contesting under Mr. Owen. During his (Mr. Ogden's) stay with the band he was the recipient of many prizes for soprano playing. In consequence of his excellence as a player he was engaged by Middleton Borough; also by Eagley Mills.



He afterwards returned to Radcliffe Old Band as Conductor, during which time they attended six contests, winning one first, three seconds, and two thirds. After this the band lost several of its best players, which of course deteriorated them. Kingsston Mills Band engaged him in 1890, and he has since joined in their many victories. In the November (1892) issue of a contemporary publication, Mr. Ogden was

pronounced the best soprano player in England and even this flattering description of his abilities was not saying too much, for he is complete master of his difficult instrument, his tone, taste, and powers of execution being most remarkable. He is a model sopranoist and a true musician. He has assisted at times some of the best bands in Lancashire and Yorkshire, including Besses o' th' Barn Oldham Rifles, Heptonstall, Middleton Borough, and several others, Mr. Ogden is a thorough bandsman and one who is never more happy than when on the contest field. Those in want of a good soprano player cannot do better than try the famous Mr. Ogden, when circumstances will permit him accepting same.

(Report published in 1893)

[a report from 1904] - Mr J. T. Ogden, Alloa, who this season wields the baton in the interest of the Dunfermline Town Band, has had a varied albeit successful career. Thirty-five years ago, as a vocalist in the church choir at Radcliffe, Manchester, and as one of a bevy of musically inclined boys who figured as handbell ringers, young Ogden gained that training and experience which have eminently fitted him for the strenuous work he has since accomplished. Even in those early days he was taught to appreciate the importance of contests, for at Belle Vue, Manchester. the youthful handbell ringers of Radcliffe were pitted against best that England could produce. The performance, we are told, was a creditable one for the youngsters, for they were eulogistically praised by the judge, and even their opponents who, by the way, had attained to manhood's stage, were unstinted in their admiration. By and by Ogden blossomed forth as a brilliant soprano player. Far and near his fame spread, and on special occasions he assisted such well-known combinations in the north as Linthwaite, Irwell Bank, Oldham Rifles, Heptonstall, and Besses o' th' Barn. He founded the Eagley Mills Band, led them on to victory for a time, but once more he returned to his old haunts at Radcliffe. this time as conductor. A more popular and successful appointment it would difficult to conceive. The results exceeded expectations of the most sanguine, and Mr Ogden's pupils wrought with might and maint for the glory of Radcliffe. Mere youths then, they are now scattered all over England - every one of them holding a lucrative appointment in a first-class band. Not only as a conductor but as an adjudicator, Mr Ogden was in great request. There is, however, one incident in his career as a judge which time will never blot out from his memory - not because the circumstances are altogether unpleasant, but chiefly for the reason that he received what he himself described as the worst shock of his lifetime. He had been engaged as judge for a contest at Leicester. He knew absolutely nothing of bands who were to participate, and judge then his feelings when on arriving at the field he founde that Messrs Gladney, Owen. and Swift - men who had been his tutors for fully 25 years - were in charge of several of the contestants. It was with some trepidation that Ogden entered the judge's box, and it was under deep excitement that he penned his notes. Yet, although his task on this occasion was a trying one, he recalls with pleasure that formidable trio of band leaders actually complimented him in the highest possible terms for the exceeding fairness and sensibleness of his awards. A few seasons ago Mr Ogden crossed the Border and undertook the care of Alloa Band. His work in that district has not been all that he could have wished for; yet, when everything is considered, the results have not been disappointing. This season he assumes the command over Dunfermline Town Band. We should say that the instrumentalists of Dunfermline are to be congratulated, and that most cordially, in having as a leader one who has proved himself to be a competent and efficient worker, a good and fearless critic, and who has himself as soprano and solo cornet, won no fewer than 25 premier awards.

Pearce, Arthur Oakes (1871-1951)

Arthur Pearce, known as the "The Prime Minister of Bandmasters", was born in Alverthorpe near Wakefield in 1871 and died in January 1951. He began playing at 13 years



on the side drum at Ovenden in Halifax then progressed on to Baritone and Solo Horn with the Halifax Temperance Band, then on to Soprano and finally on Solo Cornet with Copley Band in Halifax. He also played Cornet with Brighthouse and Rastrick in 1902, the Duke of Wellington's Band in Halifax and conducted the famous King Cross Band at London in 1909 to 6th place. He began conducting Black Dyke in January 1912 and retired in December 1948. On his death certificate it gives his occupation and also says 'Conductor of Black Dyke Mills Band'.

As well as playing for Brighthouse and Rastrick Temperance he conducted them in local contests in 1906, 1907 and 1908. He came back to conduct them at a contest in Halifax in 1918. He did a couple of contests conducting Sowerby Bridge in 1916 and 1917 (whilst at Black Dyke) . He conducted Black Dyke once in the British Open and once in the National Finals (1945) and three times in the Yorkshire Area 1943, 1945 and 1946.

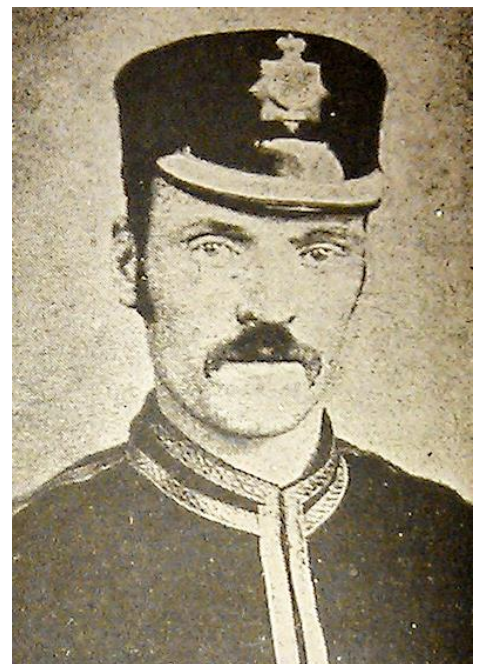
Pearson, Richard Weston (1865-1949)

Richard Weston Pearson (b. 24th April 1865), played Tuba in the Kettering Rifle Band From 1883 until around 1905 when he was "poached" by the Elswick Hopper Band at Barton on Humber in Lincolnshire. He worked for Elswick Hopper cycle manufacturer at Barton on Humber and employed as a labourer in tube and sheetmetal working and brazing and of coarse, played in the band competing in the many brass band competitions that took place around that period. He also carried on his Shoe making skills that he developed whilst living in Kettering. Richard Weston died February 1st 1949 (Aged 83)



Pitts, Walter (1866-)

Walter Pitts, the present solo cornet of the Batley Old Band was born in 1866. His musical career commenced at the age of 13 years with the now defunct Dudley Hill Band (near Bradford), under the direction of Mr. John Fowles, His first instrument was the flugel horn, upon which he played the second parts. After about three months' practice, however he had to render the solo cornet part on the same instrument, and continued thus for upwards of twelve months. Owing to the band being dissolved, Mr. Pitts retired for about two years. He then joined Birkenshaw Band as solo cornet, and rendered them valuable service in the contest field - the band only being in its third year of existence and attending five contests and obtaining three prizes. At this period he competed in his first and only single-handed contest, and was awarded the second prize. In April, 1891, Mr. Pitts decided to throw in his lot with the Batley Old Band as second solo cornet, and in November of the same year he accepted the position of leading cornet, which he still retains. His contest performances during 1892 were very well received and favourably commented upon by the various adjudicators. Of a modest disposition



and generous by nature, he is often found assisting various bands in the district when his duties with the Batley Old permit him. (*Report published in 1893*)

Powell, Thomas James (1897-1965)

T. J. ("Tom") Powell was born in Tredegar, Monmouthshire on the 12th October 1897. As has been the case with many musicians in the Brass Band movement, he started as a boy in the Salvation Army, and was playing side-drum in the youth band at the age of seven. He transferred to the Tredegar Senior Band on cornet and studied theory and harmony during this period with Mr. Hurley, who was Bandmaster there. Just prior to the first World War, he joined the Tredegar Town Band but then left South Wales to serve with distinction in the Band of H. M. Royal Marines, he furthered his studies during the war in the Marines School of Music.

In 1920 he was appointed Musical Director of the Melingriffith Volunteer and Cadet Corps Band which was connected to the Melingriffith Tinplate Works at Whitchurch, just outside Cardiff, he lived locally for many years at 81 Velindre Road, Whitchurch. This was the beginning of an association which lasted all his life, and the names of "Melingriffith" and "Tom Powell" will be forever linked together. He conducted with Mr. Tom Moore - a top cornet with Besses of the Barn - who had been coaching the Band in those early days and within three years the Band progressed very rapidly from class "C" to Class "A". At the same time he coached the Cardiff Transport Band and had quite some successes with them. Over the years the Melingriffith Band grew in reputation with Tom Powell conducting, and "T. J." eventually came to adjudicate all over the country and was in great demand as a coach, despite the fact that he never advertised.

Composing was a great joy to him. Early in his career with Melingriffith he wrote a March called "Appreciation" dedicated to Mr. David Millward who was secretary of the Band at the time and who helped Tom in his early days. He excelled at writing Marches and "Appreciation" was a forerunner of more than 50. Some have never been printed, but are on manuscript in the library of the Excelsior Ropes Band who succeeded Melingriffith on the closing of the Tinplate Works. Many of the Marches were named after Welsh Castles - "Castell Coch" (the Red Castle) was visible from his home and "Castell Caerdydd" (Cardiff Castle) and Castell Caerphilli (Caerphilly Castle) were close by. "Caernarfon Castle" was written in 1958 when H. M. The Queen announced that Prince Charles was to be made Prince of Wales. His march the "Contestor" has been recorded by Black Dyke Mills, amongst many others. Harry Mortimer once referred to him as the "Welsh Sousa". He composed not only Marches of course, and there are many selections, waltzes, studies and solos etc., to his credit, he arranged many pieces for Brass band, including a complete book of Welsh hymns. Several of his works are often broadcast and frequently used as test pieces.

There are some interesting anecdotes about the inspiration for some of his works - "Snowdon Fantasy", was written after Tom Powell had visited Snowdonia with Mr. Hughes - a North Wales Bandmaster, who lived at the foot of the mountain. "Forest Bells" was inspired by the pealing of church bells in the Forest of Dean when he was walking through the Forest to rehearse Pillowell Band there. He wrote many pieces for solo instruments with Bank accompaniment: his quintet "The Tops" is a favourite of many bands. Some works were composed specifically for particular Melingriffith bandmen, and for want of titles he reversed their surnames - thus "SNIKTA" is an Eb Bass Theme and variations, while "ELYOD" a euphonium solo and variations. He was an exceedingly quick writer of manuscripts, often he would try out an idea on the piano, and have full band parts and score ready by the next rehearsal.

He received many honours. He was presented to H. R. H. Princess Marina by the South Wales & Monmouthshire St. Johns' Ambulance Brigade function in Caerphilli when he was awarded a medal for loyal services to the Ambulance Brigade and for several years he was president of the South Wales & Monmouthshire Brass Band Association. He was invited to conduct at many

important functions with the National Brass Band. He was one of the few holders of the Silver Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians of London, presented to him at Belle Vue in 1958. He was presented with the Diploma of Honour of the N. B. C. C. of Great Britain. As an ex-marine he was always spick and span and expected his Band to be likewise. Mr. Alan Spence-Thomas (whose family owned the Melingriffith Works) was a Captain in the Welsh Guards and he designed the M. G. B. uniform to be similar to the Guards. He too was insistent that the Band should be well turned out for all occasions, and over the years, very many prizes were won for marching and deportment - more often than not marching in one of "T. J.'s" compositions.

Tom Powell inspired all who were around him and commanded their great respect, conductor and composer and also in his qualities as gentleman and friend. His tragic death on the 29th January 1965, whilst guest conducting the Cory Band, brought to an end a life which had been spent in ungrudging Service to others. The Brass Band movement lost a champion. Undoubtedly Wales' "Man of Brass". A tribute by E. Vaughan Morris in "The Conductor" magazine of April 1965 - T. J. Powell "A mighty friend".

[W. G. Atkins September 1969]

Thomas James Powell was born at Tredegar, Monmouthshire, Wales in Great Britain on October 12, 1897. At the age of eight he began playing with a Salvation Army brass band, as a drummer boy. He was the youngest band member at the funeral of General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. As a young man he played with the Tredegar Band. He studied music at the Royal Marines Band School of Music at Portsmouth and at the Royal Navy School of Music at Eastney. Powell married Mary Catherine Stratford and they had two sons and five daughters. In 1920 he was appointed musical director of the Melingriffith Works Band at Whitchurch, near Cardiff, a post he held for many years, he lived locally for many years at 81 Velindre Road, Whitchurch. Over the years Thomas Powell was musical director of several other brass bands in Wales and the West of England. The most famous of these was the Cory Workman's Band. Under his direction the Cory Band became the outstanding band in South Wales and on several occasions was a contender for the British Open Championship at Belle Vue, Manchester. Belle Vue Zoological Gardens in the City of Manchester is the location of an historic series of band contests held regularly since 1853.

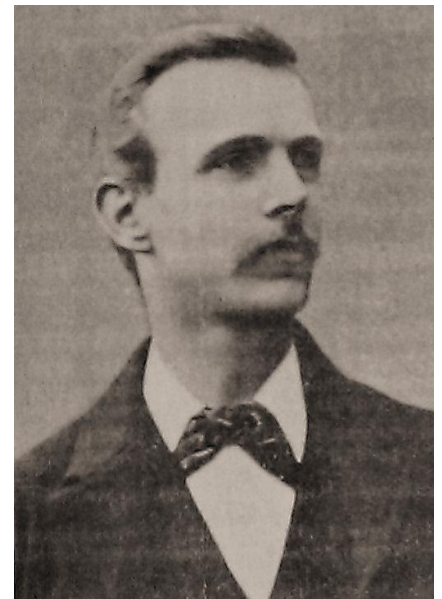
During his career Powell conducted well over 100 live broadcasts over the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). He died of a heart attack while conducting the Cory Band on a BBC broadcast in Cardiff in 1965. Many honours and acknowledgements were presented to Thomas James Powell in recognition of his unique contributions to the brass band movement. In 1958 he was awarded the silver medal by the Worshipful Company of Musicians and was also made a member of this distinctive organisation. He received the "Baton of Honour" for his services to the brass band movement. He was active as an adjudicator throughout the country and was selected several times to judge the National Championship finals and also the British Open Championships at Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester. Powell had a great interest in youth bands. He was also associate conductor for the National Brass Band of Wales.

In addition to conducting, adjudicating, tutoring and organizing, Thomas Powell made perhaps his greatest contribution as a composer for brass bands. His compositions number nearly 50 and include marches, suites, fantasias, waltzes, solos and ensembles with band accompaniment and brass trios, quartets and quintets. About half of his music is published and several of his fine marches have been published for military band as well as brass band. Powell wrote 14 or 15 marches and all are suitable for contesting purposes. His series of marches named after Welsh Castles have been especially popular; Castell Coch, Castell Caerdydd, Castell Caerffili, etc. Powell was known on the other side of the water the "Welsh Sousa" and he was one of the few composers in the world to write exclusively for the brass band medium.

[Fordyce Fox]

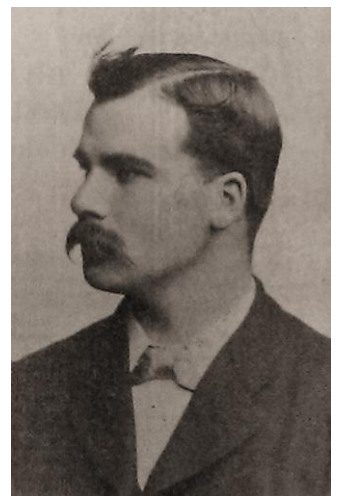
Reay, John (1868-1917)

Mr. John Reay, of Carlisle, is well known as one of the most popular and talented amateur cornettists of the north. Born in Brampton in 1868, he, like many other celebrated players, gained his first experience in the village band. While still a mere boy he played at concerts to delighted audiences who were astonished at the clever triple tonguing of one so young. Leaving his native town he gave up playing for five years, in order the more assiduously to devote himself to his profession as a chemist. After passing the examinations of the Pharmaceutical Society, he again took up the cornet. It is less than two years since he commenced contesting, and his career, both as a soloist in bands, and in single-handed cornet contests, has been remarkable. He has won first prize under eleven different judges. He commenced on Year's Day, 1895, by winning a splendid cornet at Workington Eisteddfod. He has secured the cornet solo prize at Carlisle Band Contest in succession. He also won the solo at Newcastle, out of 19 bands. In cornet contests he has won Workington Eisteddfod twice in succession, and at Haltwhistle twice in succession, also at various other places. *[Report published in 1896]*



Reynolds, Walter (1866-)

Walter Reynolds was born at Bursledon, near Southampton, on Dec. 9th, 1866, and is now in his 27th year. Losing both parents at an early age, and having no brother and but one step-sister, he was placed at the age of 10 years in Dr. Barnardo's Homes. While in this institution he learned the rudiments of music, and played the cornet and then euphonium in the Band, with considerable success. He left the home at the age of 15 years to follow up the trade of shoemaker at Earl's Barton. In his leisure time he had applied himself to studying music, and at once joined the village band (now the Earl's Barton Old Prize Band), of which he was appointed bandmaster, soon after turning the age of 16. This position he held for 2 or 3 years. He then founded the Earl's Barton Britannia Band, which soon added the word "Prize" to their title, gaining a place at their first venture, not having yet been in existence 12 months. While with this band, Mr. Reynolds was the recipient of several presentations, together with an illuminated address, all of which are very much prized by him.



After severing his connection with this band about 1890, he removed to Burton Latimer, a village about 3 miles from Kettering. Mr. Reynolds has achieved considerable success as a

teacher of bands, in training them for contests, &c. He has also conducted several choral societies, including performances of "Messiah," "Creation," "Samson," "Judas Maccabeus," etc. But it is as a euphonium player he has won the greatest honours. At Stanwick last year in the single-handed contest, the judge (Mr. Stead) said he had never heard a finer euphonium player, and after awarding him 1st prize, paid him an extra compliment by awarding a special from his own pocket. He was also awarded 1st at Dewsbury Euphonium contest last year, having only competed twice single-handed. He has a host of press notices, testimonials, etc. Mr. Reynolds joined the Kettering Town in October last. He judged the recent contest at Skelmersdale, and gave the greatest satisfaction. When it is added that Mr. Reynolds often plays the organ at chapels it will be seen he is what may in truth be termed a good all-round musician.

(Report published in 1893)

Ryan, Randolph (1864-1912)

Randolph Ryan was born at Farnworth, near Bolton, in 1864, and is 29 years of age. He first came to Kettering 10 years ago, with the Irwell Bank Band, to the first band contest held at Kettering. He was engaged by the Kettering Rifle Band to play with them, after hearing him on the soprano at the contest, and they were not long in finding out that Mr. Ryan was a young man of great promise as a musician, and he quickly made his mark in the town and district by his splendid playing. He did not, however, stay long with the Rifle Band, but transferred his services to the Town Band. As a band teacher and conductor, Mr. Ryan has no equal in the Midlands, and but few in the country. The Town Band was in a very poor state when Mr. Ryan commenced with them, but he has by his extraordinary ability and perseverance made it the Champion Band of the Midlands. During the past 3 years under his tuition the band has won more prizes than any other band in England. As a soloist Mr. Ryan is exceptionally good, and as a conductor he has the men well under control, being firm but not severe, and he has won golden opinions from all who have come in contact with him. But it is on the contest field that he has won his greatest laurels. When other bands have had their professional conductors with them, Mr. Ryan has encouraged his men with Nelson's ever-memorable words, "Kettering expects every man this day will do his duty," and his words have been almost magical in effect.



It was Mr. Ryan's ambition some years ago to qualify as a contest judge, and his ambition has since been gratified. Last year he was engaged to judge the great band contest at Bo'ness, in Scotland, also a contest Wales, and at present to judge a contest on the 13th of May at Ashby-de-la-Zouch. He has been obliged to refuse several offers on account of other engagements. In judging he has always given the greatest satisfaction, and to any contest committees who have not yet engaged a judge I would strongly recommend Mr. Ryan for a sound, honest, and fearless decision. Mr. Ryan also won a medal for best cornet last year at Eastwood Contest, (judge, J. Sidney Jones, Esq.), which proves that as an instrumentalist he is also in the very front rank.

(Report published in 1893)

Samuel, James (1853-)

Mr. James Samuel, who has so often led the Llanelly Band to victory, and who is immensely popular in the Tinsplate Town, is an old Llanelly boy, where he was born on November 6th, 1853. Being left an orphan at the early age of 5 years, he was removed to the Orphan Asylum, Myrtle Street, Liverpool. Here at the age of 12 under the tuition of Mr. J. Stubbs, he commenced his study of the clarionet. He was evidently determined to adopt music as a profession, for he worked hard and at the age of 15 joined the Coldstream Guards, under the late Mr. Fred. Godfrey, as a 2nd clarionet player. His stay here was but short, for 1870 saw him transferred to the 6th Dragoon Guards, with whom he served until 1889, having for 13 years been Band-Sergeant and solo clarionet under Mr. Dan Goring. Most of these latter years were spent abroad, principally in India. Returning to England towards the close of 1888, the first opportunity saw him - with the instinct of a true Llanellyite - make straight for his native town. The Town Band had for some time been on the look-out for his return, and they then pressed him to accept the position he now holds, which he did in the summer of 1889. How successful he has been is sufficiently well-known. He is a hard worker, and anyone hearing his band cannot but feel that they are under the influence and guiding hand of a born musician. Mr. Samuel is also conductor of the Llanelly Orchestral Society, in which he has done good work. He is besides a magnificent clarinettist, and as such is in great demand for concert and oratorio work. We feel sure that he is but on the threshold of what he is capable of entering into, and confidently expect that in the future he will rank still higher.

(Report published in 1893)

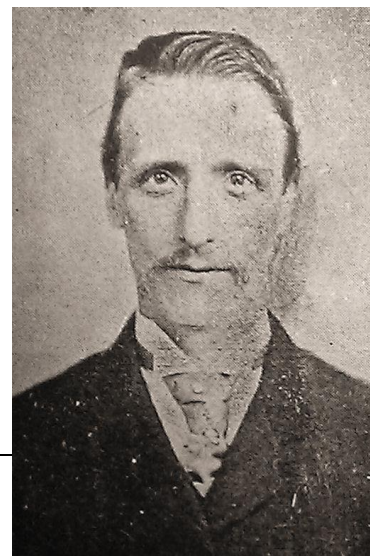


Smith, Harry (1927-1977)

Though never a player himself, Harry Smith became involved in banding as a result of supporting his sons Mark and Matthew, (Euphonium/cornet), in their developing hobby. A tireless enthusiast, Harry soon became involved with several West Midlands Bands (Pressed Steel Fisher/Coventry School of Music/ Walsall Metropolitan), as secretary, or other key administrative roles, which quickly led to his involvement in the then 'Birmingham and District Brass Band Association'. The Association soon recognised Harry's vision and devotion and he became Secretary, leading it through it's re-branding as the 'West Midlands Brass Band Association'. Harry soon became recognised nationally and was involved in the 'British Federation of Brass Bands' as Treasurer, as well as area committees and Associations around the country. His forward thinking, ability to enthuse others and contagious love of the movement, led to his involvement at all levels, and some life-long friendships with several nationally recognised Icons of the day. Sadly, his life was cut short at the age of 49, robbing the movement of one of the true initiators and forward thinkers of the 1970s Brass Band scene.

Stubley, Thomas E.

T. E. Stubley entered the Batley Old Band in 1879, commencing on the A clarionet, and afterwards taking up the 2nd cornet. The soprano becoming vacant later on, various efforts were made to secure a good player for that instrument, but without success. Eventually it was offered to Mr. Stubley, who, with the exception of a few months, has admirably discharged the duties of soprano



player for nearly twelve years. At all times an ardent worker for the band, Mr. Stubley has by his example and influence contributed largely to the prosperity of the band, not only as a bandsman, but also as member of the committee. With reference to his performances on the contest stage, he has invariably been complimented for the careful and finished manner in which he has manipulated the soprano. He has also for some years filled the position of deputy bandmaster. His services have often been requisitioned by bands in the neighbourhood, with good offers for a permanancy, but he has remained true to the Old Band.

(Report published in 1893)

Sutcliffe, Herbert

Started his musical career at 15 years of age as a player in the Cliviger Brass Band with which he was associated for seven years before going to Hebden Bridge, and from thence to Nelson Old Prize Band. After a season there he had a season with Goodshaw Band and then joined the Irwell Springs Band of which he was still a member in 1931. In 1925 he assisted them to win the second prize in the World Championship Contest at Crystal Palace, playing a cornet. He started as bandmaster for the Lowerhouse Mills Band in November 1929, at which time there were only 15 members against a total of 26 by the middle of 1931.



Bandmaster HERBERT SUTCLIFFE

Swift, Edwin (1843-1904)

Edwin Swift was born at Hoylehouse Clough, Linthwaite, in 1843. He was the son of a hand-loom weaver, and left school at nine years of age to begin work as a shuttler. He early evinced a great fondness for music, studying it in every spare moment, and he joined a fife and drum band. In time he began to play a cornet, and joined the Linthwaite Band at ten years of age. He became a very proficient cornet player and continued his studies, even writing while working at his loom. Through his influence and energy the Linthwaite Band entered into contests, and under his conductorship won prizes at Belle Vue, Manchester, in 1869. and other places, becoming one of the finest brass bands in the North of England. In 1871, having, though entirely self-taught, become a good musician, he devoted himself entirely to teaching and conducting brass bands, and arranging and composing music for them. In three departments he was very successful, as shown by the large number of bands he taught at different times and led to success. With his Wyke and Linthwaite bands alone he won considerably over £11,000 in prizes. He made many effective arrangements of



music from classical works, with which the Linthwaite and other bands have been very successful at contests. For a great number of years he had been a judge at such contests. He was also a contributor of music to several brass band journals. He died on 9th February 1904 at his residence, 59, Manchester Road, Milnsbridge, a victim of cancer, and he had been in failing health for nearly six years. He left a widow, three sons and three daughters.