

Hello, Hello, Hello – the brass bands that made arresting music for their audiences

Gavin Holman, 4 October 2020

It may be coincidence, but the first police brass bands were formed around the same time as various army volunteer force companies were also establishing bands.

Those in the vanguard of this “thin blue line” component of the brass band movement were initially the various Divisions of the Metropolitan Police Force, with the Woolwich Police Brass Band of R Division being formed in 1859. This was quickly followed, in 1860, by bands in K (West Ham), and H (Stepney) Divisions, with L Division (Lambeth) following suit in 1861. Two bands outside London were also established that year – the Metropolitan Dockyard Police Band in Portsmouth and the Nottingham Borough Police Brass Band.

AUGUST 3, 1861.

PUNCH

OUR MUSICAL POLICE.



AS the police are forming bands for musical amusement, there is no knowing how funnily the taste for it may show itself, or how much it may enliven their grave bearing in the streets. A policeman when off duty will beguile his leisure time with practising the flute, and when invited out to supper at some kitchen in his beat, will be asked to bring his fiddle, if he play upon that instrument, or else to entertain the company with a solo on the drum. *Soirées musicales* will be held nightly by our servants, whereat the principal performers will belong to the police; and every now and then, when the family is out of town,

A1 or Z2 will be invited to a *matinée*, where “*ung peu de music*” will be promised in the note, and will relieve the conversation and perhaps assist the appetite. Cooks, it is well known, are a weakness with the Force; and there is very little doubt that if a sentimental “bobby” discover that his lady-love has any ear for music, he will lose no chance of gaining her affections (and cold mutton) by making instrumental music instrumental to that end. We can well conceive his standing in a *Don Giovanni* attitude just opposite her area, and awakening its echoes with the notes of “*Deh Vieni*,” played on the ophicleide, while the cats in the vicinity squeal in dismal concert with his melancholy strain.

Such are some of the results which we think likely to ensue when music becomes generally practised by policemen, and we trust their constant practice may ulti-

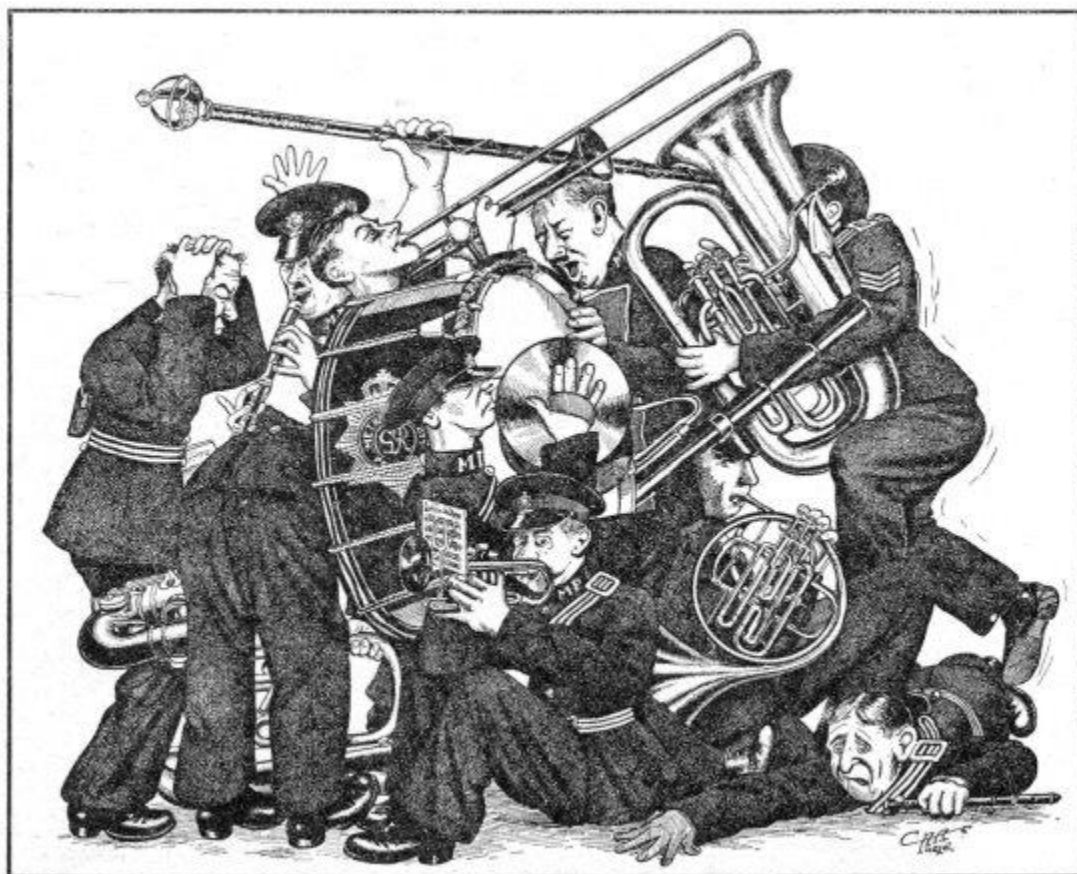
A contemporary account gives the Metropolitan Police bands’ objectives as – “to contribute to the rational recreation of the members of a most important and deserving branch of the public service, and develop any musical talent that may be found existing among them – and in this way its influence for good upon both the members of the band themselves, and their confrères must be considerable.”

These early bands were followed by others in the London Metropolitan Police Divisions and, over time, in various towns and cities across the country.

The bands varied in their instrumentation – some started as full brass bands, later becoming military style bands with woodwind instruments, others began and ended life as mixed instrumentation concert bands.

The bands were popular in their localities, and helped to promote a positive image of the police force. Officially used for police, mayoral and other parades, they also – as with any other band – gave concerts, supporting local police events, charities and in the wider community, raising funds for their own accounts and their host organisations.

For an early example, the H Division Police Band gave a concert in December 1860 which included *Les Huguenots*, *I Puritani*, *the Russian Hymn of Kloof*, *the Dutch National Anthem*, and *Auld Lang Syne*. Another concert of theirs, in March 1863, at the School Room, Royal Mint Street, Whitechapel, included *Les Huguenots*, *Hail Smiling Morn*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Wedding March (Mendelssohn)*, *Lucretia Borgia*, *Hampstead Heath Quadrille*, *the Great Eastern Polka*.



6. SOMEBODY SHOUTED "COUNTER-MARCH!"

A police band in disarray – for more cartoons in this collection, see:

<https://ibewbrass.wordpress.com/2020/05/24/police-band-cartoons/>

British Police Bands

A Division Police Brass Band (Westminster) - Active in 1872, conductor William Dickinson. Still active in 1875.

B Division Police Brass Band (Chelsea) - Active in 1862. Assumed to have folded by 1879, as the band's musical instruments were sold by auction in December that year.

Band of Staffordshire Police - Previous name of current band - see: *Florence Brass*

Band of the Cheshire Constabulary [Current band] - Founded in 1952 - Former names: Stockport Police Band (to 1967). [Further information - see: Anon - Scarlet and Blue Police Band [Cheshire Police Band] - Cheshire Constabulary, 1992; Callister, Ian - Band on the Beat (Cheshire Constabulary brass band) - Cheshire Life, July 1992, pp.28-29.]



Cheshire Constabulary Band

Band of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (Exeter) - Stepping out on the musical beat in early 1976, the band established an enviable reputation for high quality entertainment - be it in village or concert halls, parish churches or cathedrals, garden fetes or city streets. It was a sad farewell on the 17th December 2004 when the Band played its final concert to a capacity audience at The University Great Hall, Exeter.

Band of the Metropolitan Police (London) – see: *Metropolitan Police Band*

Birmingham Police Brass Band - Active in 1869



Blackpool Silver Prize Band - Formed March 1926 as Blackpool Special Constabulary Silver Prize Band. Active through the 1940s/50s

Blackpool Special Constabulary Silver Prize Band - see: *Blackpool Silver Prize Band*

Bootle Police Brass Band - Active in the 1900s, bandmaster Mr Hall

Bow Division Police Brass Band (West Ham) - see: *K Division Police Brass Band*

Bow Police Brass Band (West Ham) - see: *K Division Police Brass Band*

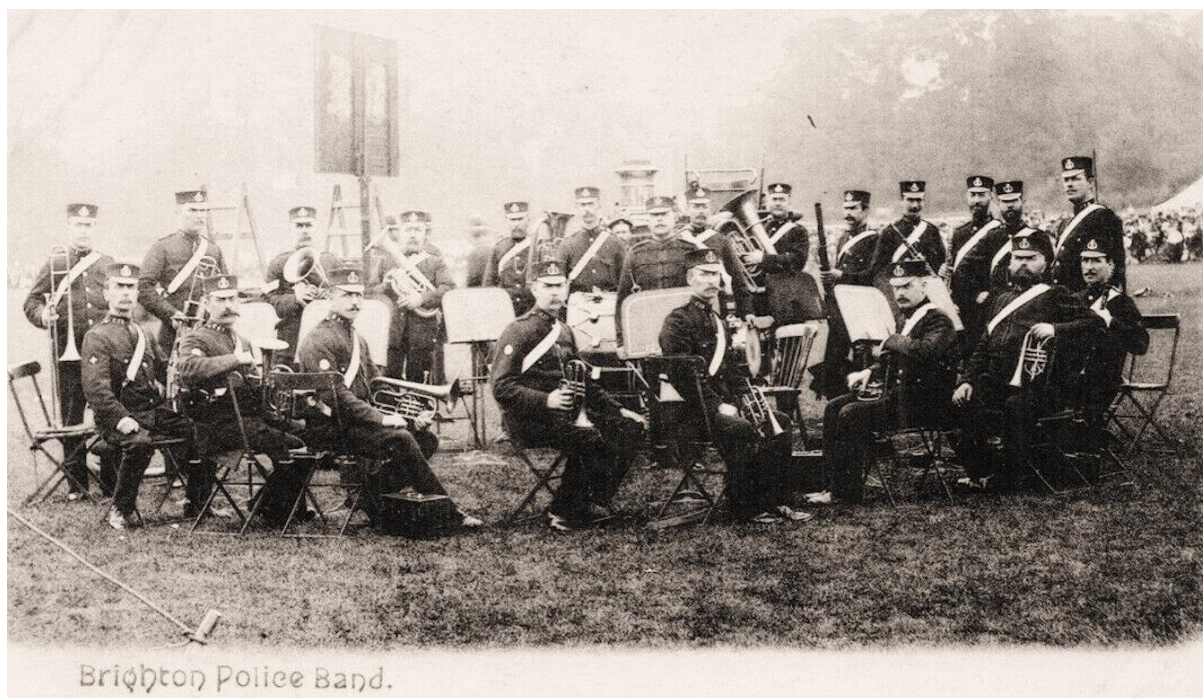
Bradford Police Brass Band - Active in 1904, conductor A.H. Chapman. A concert in Horton Park in May 1904 was: Greetings from Egypt (Tobisch), Rosamunde (Schubert), Haddon Hall (Sullivan), Casino Tanse (Gung'l), Danse de Satyrs (Le Thiere), A Life on the Ocean (Binding), Les Cloches de St Malo (Rimmer), Happy Days in Dixie (Bidgood).



Bradford Police Band

Bridgend Division Special Constabulary Band – see *Tondu and Aberkenfig Silver Band*

Brighton Police Band – Founded in early 1884 and active through to the 1930's. Its initial membership was: PC's W. Parker, Randall (1st cornets), G. Cane & Parrick (2nd cornets), Ranger (repiano), Standen & Bean (3rd cornets), Sergeant Daly (1st tenor horn), PC's Tarry (solo horn), G. Stoner (2nd horn), W. Cane (1st baritone), Cool (2nd baritone), Sicklemore (solo euphonium), Avis (euphonium), J. King (bass trombone), Overington (tenor trombone), H. Tuppen & J.W. Butler (Eb bombardons), Benstead (bass drum), and Reene (side drum)



Brighton Police Band

Bristol Police Brass Band - Active in 1879, conductor T. Glover, bandmaster Mr Mortimer (police constable). Still active in 1888

Burnley Borough Police Brass Band (1) - Founded in 1888. Jarvis Chadwick was a founding member on cornet. Disbanded around 1896. A successor band was formed in 1902, with many of the original police officer players.



Burnley Police Band

Burnley Borough Police Brass Band (2) - Founded in January 1902. Disbanded in May 1905, when the instruments, uniforms and music were returned to the Burnley Watch Committee



Burnley Police Band

Burnley Police Brass Band - see: *Burnley Borough Police Brass Band*

Bury Police Band - Active in 1908

Cambridge Borough Police Band - Active in 1904

Carlisle Police Brass Band - Founded in 1905



Carlisle City Police Band

City of Leicester Special Constabulary Band - Previous name of current band -
see: Foresters Brass 2000

City of London Police Brass Band - Active in 1874. Still active in 1891.
Conductor H.A. Rattray in 1879, Hiram Henton in 1891

City of Stoke Police Band (Stoke-on-Trent) - *see: Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Brass Band*

City of Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Band *see: Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Brass Band*

Cleveland Police Community Band - [Current band] - Founded in 1971 as Teesside Constabulary Band, later becoming Cleveland Police Band. Renamed Cleveland Police Community Band in 2013



Cleveland Police Community Band

Coventry City Police Band - Previous name of current band - *see: West Midlands Police Band*

D Division Police Brass Band (Marylebone) - Active in 1862, conductor Adam Keighley. Still active in 1865.

Derby Borough Police Brass Band - Formed 1936, still active in 1952.



Derby Borough Police Band

Derby Constabulary Band - see: *Derby Borough Police Brass Band*

Derby Police Band - see: *Derby Borough Police Brass Band*

Divisional Police Brass Bands - see: *See A, B, D, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, N, P, R, S and T Division Police Brass Bands*

Dublin Metropolitan Police Brass Band - Active in 1878 to 1900. Conductor J. Conroy in 1888-1900

Durham Constabulary Brass Band - [Current band] - Founded in 1967



Durham Constabulary Band

E Division Police Brass Band (Holborn) - Active in 1863 to 1878. Conductor Mr Lane in 1863, Mr Pierce in 1868, Major Woodhouse in 1878.

Ely Police Band - Active in 1907

F Division Police Brass Band (Kensington) - Founded in July 1888, with 41 performers. Still active in 1892. Bandmaster T. Oakley in 1891.

Florence Brass - [Current band] - Founded in 1920 - Former names: Bucknall Ex-Servicemen's Band, Staffordshire Police Band, Staffordshire Special Constabulary Band, Stoke on Trent City Police Band, Band of Staffordshire Police (to 2001). Conducted by Mr Henshall in 1928



Staffordshire Special Constabulary Band, 1946

Foresters Brass 2000 (Leicester) - [Current band] - Founded in 1902 - Former names: Bread Street Mission Band, Leicester Ivanhoe Band (1910s/1920s - competing in a brass band contest at Overseal, Leicestershire in July 1921, under conductor C. A. Anderson (drawn 5 of 11 bands, they were not placed). Still active as Ivanhoe Band in 1923), North Evington Working Men's Club and Institute Band (1928, conducted by Mr S. Brown to 1939), 9th Battalion Home Guard Band, City of Leicester Special Constabulary Band (1946), Leicester Foresters Band (1958), Band of the Ancient Order of Foresters (1978-2000) - Note: Amalgamated with Brass 2000 in 2000



City of Leicester Special Constabulary Band

G Division Police Brass Band (Finsbury) - Active in 1863 to 1889. Conductor Mr Lake in 1863-1880, Mr Pierce in 1868, Major Woodhouse in 1878, Mr Tidswell in 1880-1884, Mr W.J. Dean in 1885-1889. A concert in March 1889 included: Boulanger's Grand March, Arcadia Overture, Soldier and a Man, L'Oisban du Bois (euphonium solo by PC Preston), England selection, Home Sweet Home (cornet solo, Inspector Pitcher), The Bay of Biscay (euphonium/Preston), Tow Bowling (trombone solo, PC Bennett).

Gateshead Constabulary Brass Band - Active in the early 1870s. Still active in 1881. Conductor J.H. Amers in 1881

Glasgow City Police Band - Founded in 1881 - thought there is mention of a Glasgow Police Brass Band in 1877. Still active in 1892

Glasgow Police Brass Band - see: *Glasgow City Police Band*

Gloucestershire Constabulary Band - [Current band] - Founded in 1990



Gloucestershire Constabulary Band

Govan Police Band - Active in the 1890s

H Division Police Brass Band (Stepney) - Founded in autumn 1860, conductor W. Lake, president Inspector Holloway. Still active in 1866.

Hastings Police Band - Active in the 1890s and 1900s

Hull City Police Brass Band - Active in the 1960s

Hull Police Brass Band - Active from 1864, conductor R. Smith, to the 1900s



Hull City Police Band

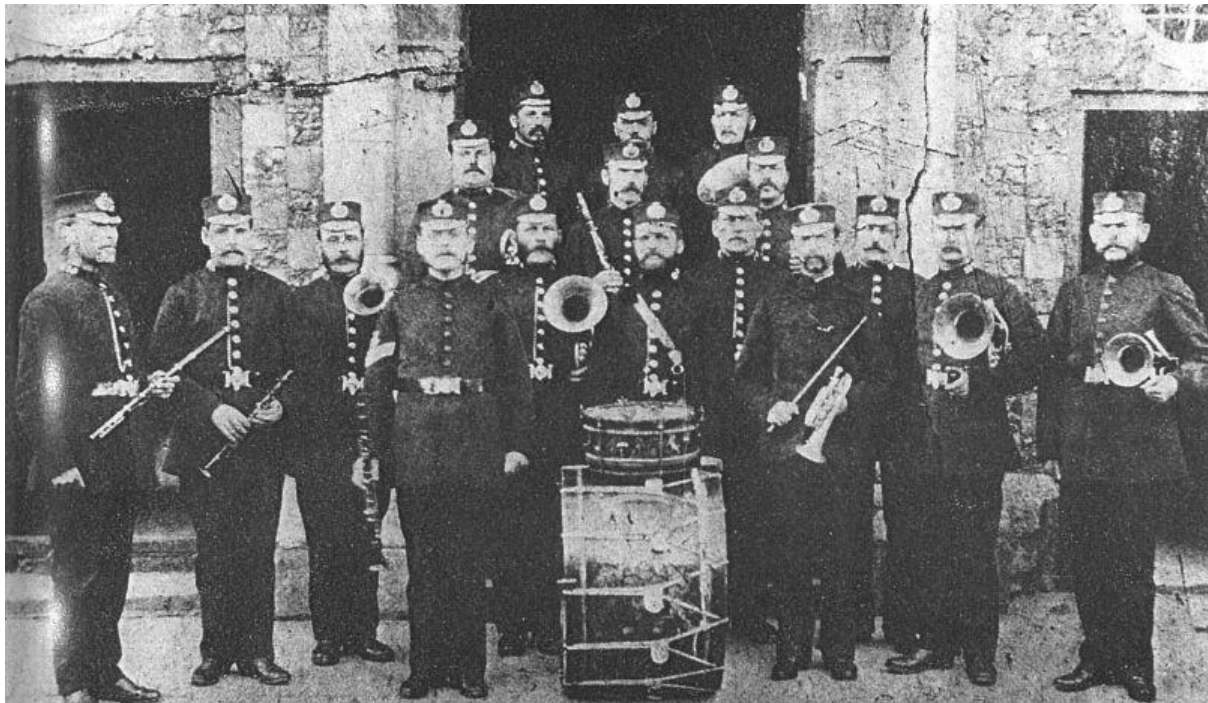
K Division Police Brass Band (West Ham) - Founded in 1860, consisting of 35 policemen from Bow and West Ham, conductor W. Lake. Made its public debut in November 1860, by which time there were 40 performers. 22 players in 1873. Still active in 1884.

Kent Police Band - [Current band] - Founded in 1977. [Further information - see: Hammonds, DG - Kent Police Band Souvenir Booklet - Kent County Constabulary, 1989]



Kent Police Band fanfare team

King's Lynn Police Band - Active in the 1880s



Kings Lynn Police Band, Norfolk, 1880's



Kings Lynn Police Band, Norfolk

Kingsland Police Brass Band - see: *N Division Police Brass Band*

L Division Police Brass Band (Lambeth) - Active in 1861. Conductor J.C. Kent in 1877. Still active in 1895.

Lambeth Division Police Brass Band - see: *L Division Police Brass Band*

Lancashire Constabulary Band (Hutton) - Founded in 1938 as a military band and reformed after WW2. Converted to brass in 1964 and active through to the 1990s.



Lancashire Constabulary Band, 1979

Leeds Constabulary Brass Band - Active in 1888. A successor band was formed in 1899

Leeds Police Brass Band (1) - see: *Leeds Constabulary Brass Band*

Leeds Police Brass Band (2) - Founded in 1899



Leeds City Police Band

Leicester and Rutland Police Band - Active in the 1940s and 1950s

Leicester Borough Police Band - Founded in March 1873, conductor J.A. Smith (through to 1882). Folded in 1906 when the council took exception to the band rehearsing during work hours.

Leicester City Police Band - see: *Leicester Borough Police Band*

Leicester Police Brass Band - see: *Leicester Borough Police Band*

Leicester Special Constabulary Band - Previous name of current band - see: *Foresters Brass 2000*

Liverpool Constabulary Band - Founded in April 1868, with 15 members, conductor Mr Beardall. Still active in 1897. Conductor A.P. Crawley in 1890-1897. A concert programme in Sefton Park in 1887 was: *Le Lac des Fees* (Auber), *Ave Maria* (Schubert), *Blumen der Lust* (Gungil), *La Fille du Regiment* (Donizetti), *Olympia* (Kottaum), *The Better Land* (Cowen), *Maritana* (Wallace). A concert in Sefton Park in August 1897 was: *Tannhauser* (Wagner), *Fingal's Cave* (Mendelssohn), *Iolanthe* (Sullivan), *Love in Idleness* (Allan Macbeth), *Irish Songs* (Godfrey), *Poltergeist* (Faust)



Liverpool Police Band, 1868



Liverpool Police Band

Liverpool Police Brass Band - see: *Liverpool Constabulary Band*

London City Police Brass Band - Active in 1890, conductor Mr Hoskings



London Constabulary Band, 1897

London Constabulary Band - see: *London City Police Brass Band*

M Division Police Brass Band (Southwark) - Active in 1884, conductor Mr Carter.

Manchester City Police Brass Band - Active in 1886, conductor Mr Doughty.
Still active in the 1920's



Manchester City Police Band, 1880s



Manchester City Police Band, c.1920



Manchester City Police Band, c.1920

Manchester Police Brass Band - see: *Manchester City Police Band*

Metropolitan and City Police Orphanage Brass Band (Twickenham) -
Founded in January 1873, with 20 boys aged up to 14, conductor Mr Alcock. Still active in 1893

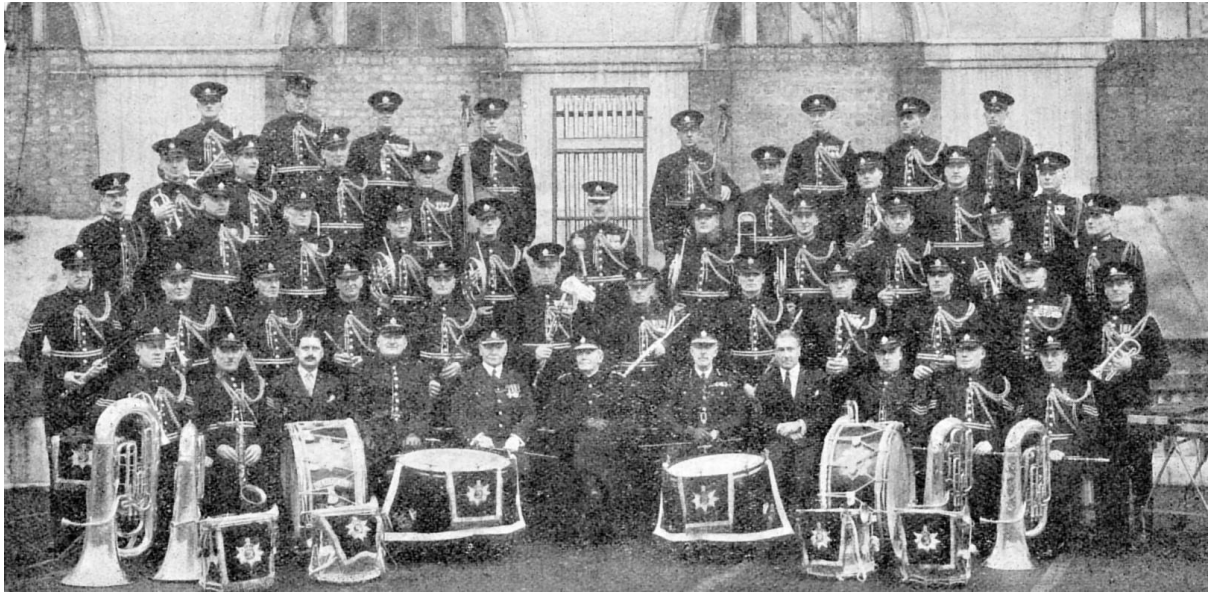
Metropolitan Dockyard Police Brass Band (Portsmouth) - Founded in 1861, conductor Mr Jones, consisting of 30 constables, practising in the Volunteer band room at the Dockyard Factory.

Metropolitan Police Band (London) – Active in the 1970's and 1980's. Consisting of serving officers from various London divisions, it was civilianised in 1988, allowing ex-servicemen and civilians to join, eventually being disbanded in 1997



Metropolitan Police Band, c. 1971

Metropolitan Police Central Band (London) – Active in the 1940's



Metropolitan Police Central Band, 1945

Metropolitan Police Dockyard Brass Band (Devonport) – Active in the 1920's,
when there were some 700 Metropolitan Police officers stationed at the
three dockyards of Portsmouth, Chatham and Devonport.



Metropolitan Police Dockyard Brass Band, Devonport

Middlesbrough Police Brass Band - Founded in 1868, disbanded in 1903

N Division Police Brass Band (Islington) - Active in 1862 to 1870. Conductor Mr Sibold in 1863, Mr Ison in 1867. Also known as Kingsland Police Brass Band - based in the Hoxton subdivision.

Newcastle City Police Band (Newcastle upon Tyne) - Formed in 1930 and still active in 1948

Newcastle Constabulary Brass Band (Newcastle upon Tyne) - Founded in December 1865, conductor T.S. Watson. Conductor Thomas Wheatley in 1882. Still active in 1884

Newcastle Police Brass Band (Newcastle upon Tyne) - see: *Newcastle Constabulary Band*

Northumberland Police Band - Active from the 1970s to 2005. Renamed Northumbria Police Band and later, in 2001, Gateshead Brass

Northumbria Police Band - see: *Northumberland Police Band*

Nottingham Borough Police Brass Band - Founded in January 1861, conductor Mr Carter, made its first public appearance in May 1861. Active through to the 1900s. Conductor Mr Redgate in 1890, Sergeant Harley in 1904. Charles Gray was a member in May 1861 when he won a 120 yard foot race against Joseph Dudley of the Derby Police

Nottingham Police Band - see: *Nottingham Borough Police Band*

Nottingham Special Constabulary Band - Active during WW2 in the 1940s. Not to be confused with Nottingham Police Borough Band (founded in 1887, and still active) - a military band in formation.

Oxford City Police Brass Band - Active in 1877 to 1893

P Division Police Brass Band (Peckham) - Active in 1868. Still active in 1888, bandmaster Mr Gibbons.

Police Orphanage Brass Band (Twickenham) - see: *Metropolitan and City Police Orphanage Brass Band*

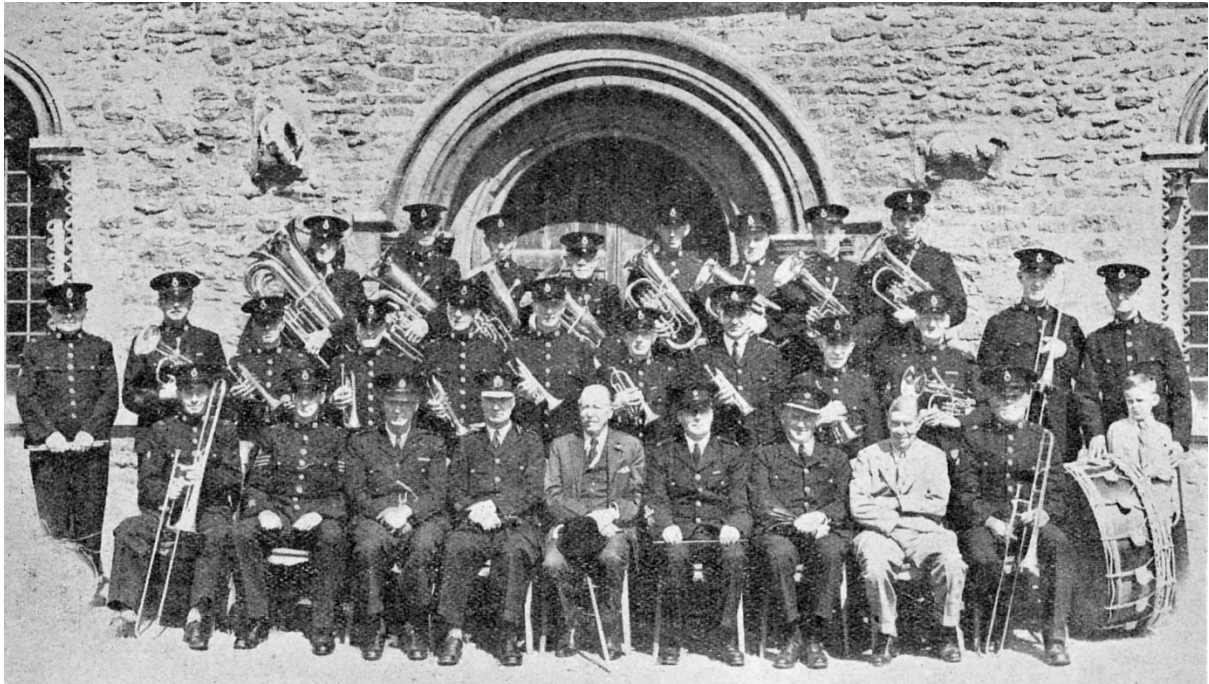
Portsmouth Police Brass Band - Founded in late 1901, conductor Mr Strawn. Active through the 1900s

R Division Police Brass Band (Greenwich) - Active in 1875, conductor Mr Fowden. Still active in 1881.

R Division Police Brass Band (Woolwich) - see: *Woolwich Police Brass Band*

Rochdale Police Brass Band - Founded in 1882 , conductor Mr Dawson. Still active in 1914

Rutland Police Band - Active in the 1940s and 1950s



Rutland Police Band, 1945

S Division Police Brass Band (Hampstead) - Active in 1863. Still active in 1887.
Conductor Mr Keighley in 1866, J. Pougher in 1887.



BAND OF THE 'S' DIVISION.
METROPOLITAN POLICE.

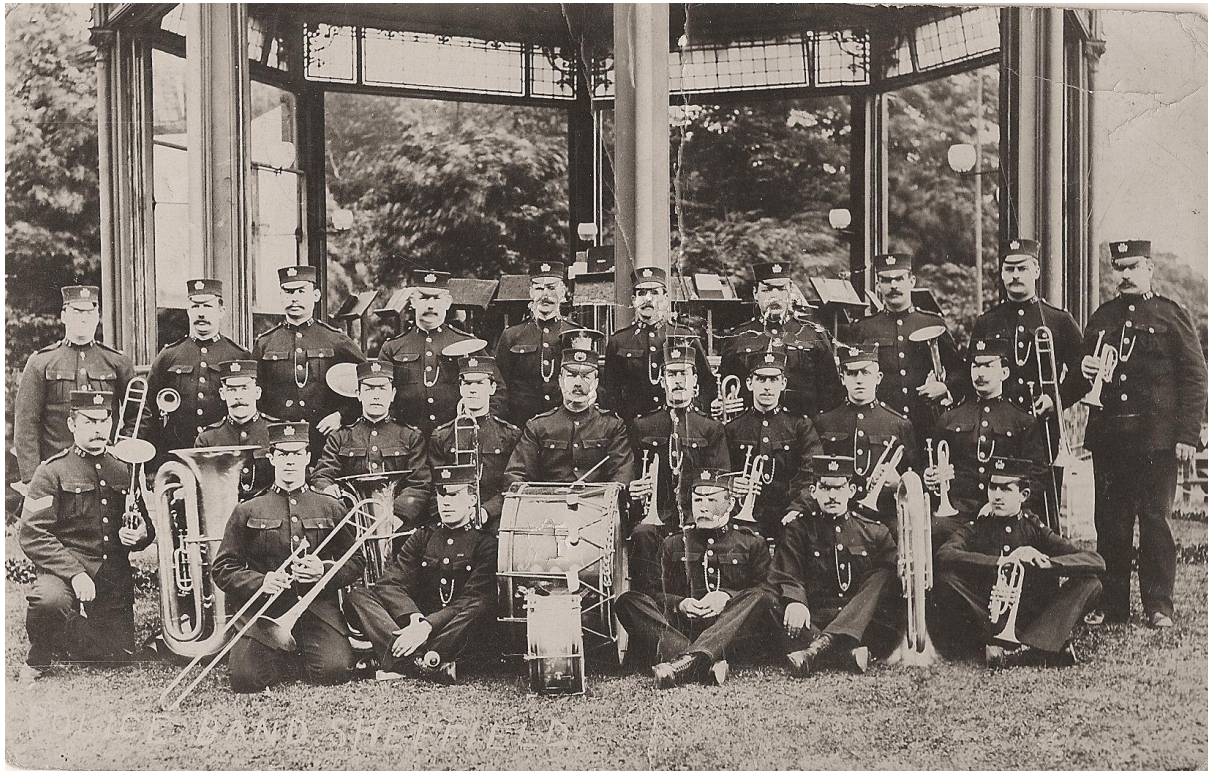
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S Division Police Band

Salford Police Band - Active in 1903 when it played at the first municipal concert in the Teneriffe Street Hall, Salford. The audience was estimated at over 1,000 and many were unable to get in.

Sheffield City Police Band - see: *Sheffield Police Band*

Sheffield Police Band - Formed in 1864 (obtained its instruments in January that year), instructor Herr Stradiot, disbanded in the 1930s. Fred Parkinson bandmaster in 1905-1912. Conductor A.W. Lamb in 1906



Sheffield Police Band

South Shields Borough Police Band - see: *South Shields Police Band*

South Shields Police Band - Formed in 1888. Still active in 1915



South Shields Borough Police Band, 1889

South Yorkshire Police Band - [Current band] - Founded in 1979



South Yorkshire Police Band, 2013

Southampton County Borough Police Band - Active in 1928



Southampton County Borough Police Band, 1928

Southampton Police Brass Band - Active in the 1900s

Southport Special Constabulary Band - see: *Tudor Silver Band*

Stafford Police Brass Band - Active in the 1970s and 1980s

Staffordshire Police Band - Previous name of current band - see: *Florence Brass*

Staffordshire Police Brass Band - see: *Stafford Police Brass Band*

Staffordshire Special Constabulary Band - Previous name of current band - see: *Florence Brass*

Staffs County and Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Band (Stoke-on-Trent) - see: *Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Brass Band*

Stepney Police Brass Band - see: *H Division Police Brass Band*

Stockport Borough Police Brass Band - Active in the 1950s. Possibly a precursor to the current Cheshire Constabulary Band (formed in 1967)

Stockport Police Band - Previous name of current band - see: *Band of the Cheshire Constabulary*

Stockport Police Band - see: *Stockport Borough Police Brass Band*

Stoke Police Band (Stoke-on-Trent) - see: *Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Brass Band*

Stoke-on-Trent City Police Band - Previous name of current band - see: *Florence Brass*

Stoke-on-Trent Special Constabulary Brass Band - Active from the late 1940s to the 1970s

Sunderland Borough Police Band - Formed in autumn 1863, tutor Mr Ticehurst. Still active in the early 1960s. Conductor W.W. Lax in 1869-1892

Sunderland Constabulary Brass Band - see: *Sunderland Borough Police Band*

Sunderland Police Band - see: *Sunderland Borough Police Band*

Swansea Police Brass Band - Active in 1885

T Division Police Brass Band (Hammersmith) - Active in 1868, conductor Mr Lake. Still active in 1893. Conductor J.S. King in 1884-1893.

Teesside Constabulary Band - Previous name of current band - see: *Cleveland Police Band*

Thames Valley Police Brass Band - Founded in 1973. Played its final concert at St Mary's Church, Thames in March 1995. Conductor Gordon Saunders 1984-1995

Tondu and Aberkenfig Silver Band - Active in 1940, at which time the principal cornet was Henley H. Jenkins. Henley went on to create the Bridgend and District Brass Band and also a dance band which played in the Bridgend Palais for a number of years. Other players included James Croft who went on to join Bridgend Band, Frank Able (cornet) who played in Ogmore Valley Silver Band until he died in the 1990s and Frank Merchant (euphonium) who also played in Bridgend Band in the 1950s and Ogmore Band back in the 1960s/70s. Band still active in 1948. In 1940 it was also acting as the Band of the Bridgend Division Special Constabulary

Tudor Silver Band (Southport) - Formed in 1937 as Southport Special Constabulary Band. Became Tudor Silver Band in November 1949. Active into the mid-1950s

Twickenham Police Orphanage Brass Band - see: *Metropolitan and City Police Orphanage Brass Band*

V Division Police Brass Band (Wandsworth) - Active in 1880.

Walsall Borough Police Brass Band - Founded in autumn 1873. Active to WW1.



Walsall Borough Police Band

Walsall Police Brass Band - see: *Walsall Borough Police Brass Band*

Warwickshire and Coventry Constabulary Band - see: *West Midlands Police Band*

West Ham Police Brass Band - see: *K Division Police Brass Band*

West Mercia Constabulary Band (Worcester) - [Current band] - Founded in 1988



West Mercia Constabulary Band

West Midlands Police Band - [Current band] - Founded in 1928 - Former names:
Coventry City Police Band (to 1976)



West Midlands Police Band

West Yorkshire Police Band (Wakefield) - [Current band] - Founded in 1899 -

Note: Police Bands have entertained the public in West Yorkshire for over a century. Bradford City Police Band was formed as long ago as 1899, with Leeds City following some fifteen years later. In 1974 the Leeds and Bradford forces amalgamated to form The West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police, and both bands merged at that time to become The West Yorkshire Police Band. Initially military in style, with woodwind, brass and percussion, in 1984 a new ethos was agreed and from that date the band has been styled in the traditional Brass Band format.



West Yorkshire Police Band

Whitechapel Division Police Brass Band - see: *H Division Police Brass Band*

Winchester Police Brass Band - Active in 1915

Woolwich Dockyard Police Brass Band - Active in 1881, bandmaster Sergeant Chapman

Woolwich Police Brass Band (1) - Formed in 1859 with 18 policemen doing duty at the Royal Arsenal.

Woolwich Police Brass Band (2) - see: *Woolwich Royal Arsenal Police Brass Band*

Woolwich Royal Arsenal Police Brass Band - Founded in summer 1887.
Conductor Mr Richards in 1888



Woolwich Police Band

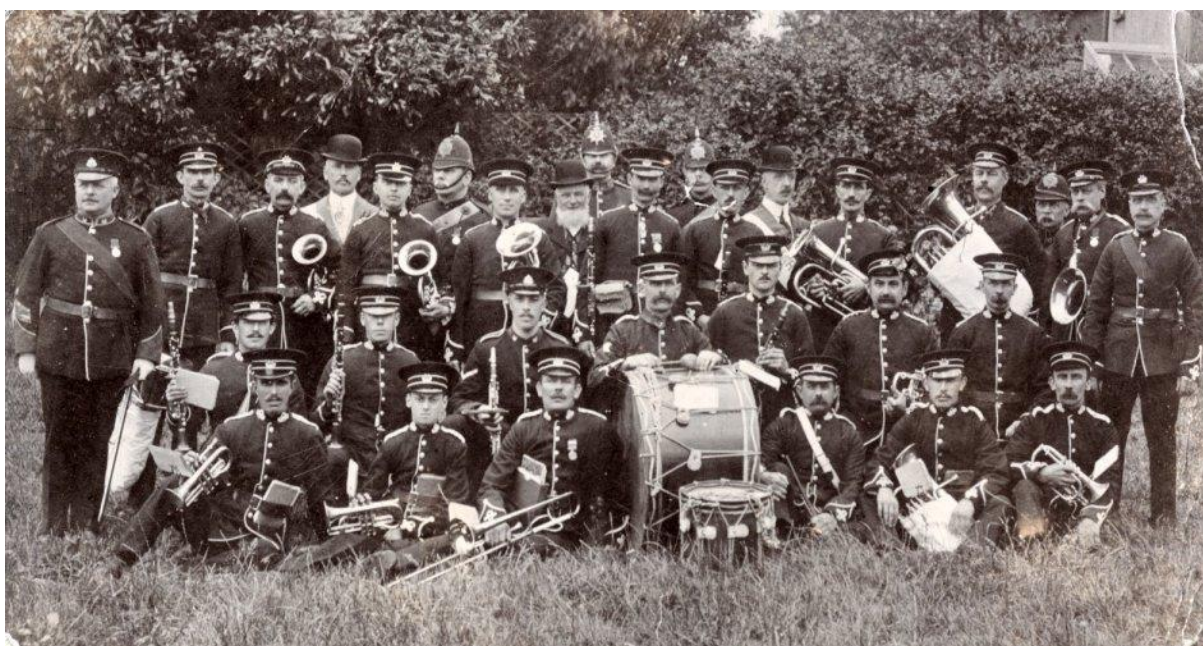
Y Division Police Brass Band (Holloway) - Founded in 1882, conductor G.S.
Page. Still active in 1895.



Unknown Police Band



Unknown Police Band



Unknown Police Band



Unknown Police bandmen

