

Volume 5

A collection of posts from the IBEW Blog 2021-2022

https://ibewbrass.wordpress.com

Gavin Holman, September 2022

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Introduction

The IBEW Blog was established in 2011 as an ad hoc collection of postings about some of the background, sources and news related to research in the history of brass bands, as collated in the IBEW website.

The IBEW website is the major reference source on the internet for the history of brass bands – as well as material and directories relating to the world of brass bands and brass musicianship today.

IBEW was founded in 1997 and the site now contains links to thousands of internet resources about brass bands. A comprehensive bibliography of brass bands is only one of many other resources freely available via the site.

There is an active Facebook group "The History of Brass Bands" where people can post and discuss any aspects of banding history. See:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/145016798904992/

Various other documents, articles, and books about the history of brass bands are available for download from my Academia site – *https://gavinholman.academia.edu/research*

These blog posts, collected from the IBEW blog, are those that are unique to the blog, and not covered by any of my other documents available separately via the Academia website.

West Creek Cornet Band

August 7, 2021

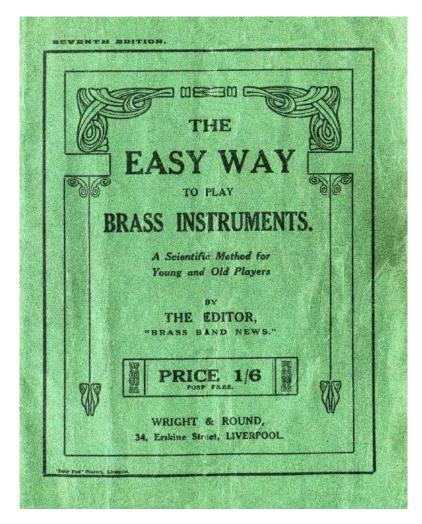
A correspondent sent me this photo of the drum of the West Creek Cornet Band – from Ocean County, New Jersey. Nothing is known about its history other than it was acquired in an estate sale in the 1970's. Charles Gibbons may have been the drummer or the band leader. A quick look online has not unearthed any further information about the band or Gibbons. The drum itself will probably be finding its way to a local museum or historical society in NJ.

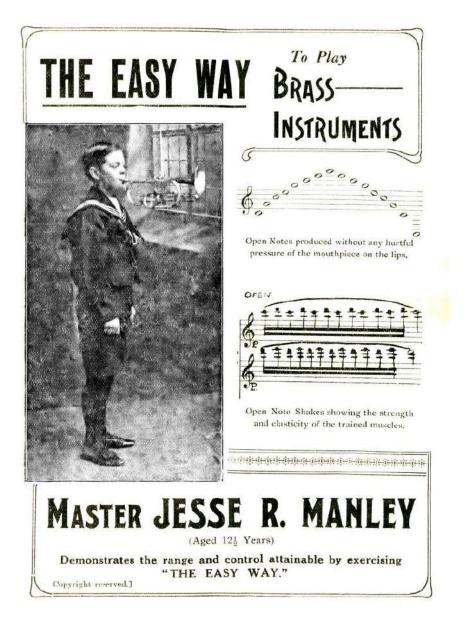


The Easy Way to Play Brass Instruments

August 29, 2021

The Easy Way to Play Brass Instruments was a series of articles that appeared in Brass Band News. They were collected and published a 40 page booklet in 1918, subtitled 'A scientific method for young and old players'.





Jesse Rupert Manley (1905-1976), who features on the frontispiece, is the son of Jesse Manley (1862-1933) the famous conductor (mainly with Aberdare Town Band) and adjudicator.

Jesse Manley, senior, in 1893

An 8MB PDF scan of the booklet is available as a download here:

http://www.ibew.co.uk/DV03076-ewtpbi.pdf



Victorian Rock Bands

September 7, 2021

For all percussionists out there – here is an example of a Victorian Rock Band.

<image><image>

THE ROCK BAND CONCERT COMPANY.

ż

BAYONNE.

AVE. C.

715

This is actually the Till Family Rock Band, who built large xylophone-type instruments with slabs of hornfel rock from the Lake District. These were one of a succession of lithophone playing groups over the Victoria era, the first being the Richardson Family's Monstre Rock Band.

Joseph Richardson spent 13 years creating the instrument which made its debut in 1840, and they toured with their performances for 10 years or so, even appearing before Queen Victoria twice.

The Till Family were much later, in the 1880's and made their way, on tour, from the Lake District, around the UK and eventually to the USA where they settled in New Jersey.

For more details, see Dr A.M. Till's webpage: <u>https://www.michaeltill.com</u>



Richardson Family Monstre Rock Band c. 1845

A Scottish Catholic Band from 1881

September 10, 2021

This photograph is of an unknown band, dated 1881, which consisted of 24 players – 7 cornets, 1 flute, 1 piccolo, 1 clarinet, 2 tenor saxhorns, 1 bass saxhorn, 2 tenor trombones, 2 bass trombones, 1 euphonium, 1 bombardon, 1 double bass, 1 bass drum, 1 side drum, cymbals, and triangle.



The bandsmen's names are written on the photograph, but many are incomplete or indistinct.

The best interpretation of them is, from left:

Father Cownall, M. McMullen, T. Walsh, ? Spillane, D. Haggerty, L. Dalton, W. Hearne, Father Butler, G. Kelly, D. Molony, H. Ashton, ?, ? Bassett, W. Spillane, W.H. Donnell, J. Wrafter, W. O'Leary, J. Whitaker, J. Shillier, H. Kennedy, ?, ? Bernard, F. Stephenson, V. Doyle, Father O'Reilly.

There were a good number of catholic bands in and around the Glasgow area in the 1880's and 1890's many associated with the immigrants from Ireland. Attempts so far to pin down the specific band, in relation to the named individuals, have not resulted in anything at all helpful.

Deanston Brass Band

September 30, 2021

Two photographs of Deanston Works Brass Band in Perthshire. The first c. 1860, the second c. 1910. The band was formed in May 1853. Its first conductor was Mr Watts, the manager of the Adelphi Cotton Mill in Deanston, where most, if not all, of the band were employed.



Deanston Brass Band c. 1860

The mill was the first in Britain to produce its own coins and paper money for issue to its workers, which was designed to overcome a shortage of currency in circulation at the time (the late 1700's). In 1858, a young boy named Daniel McDonald, who was a drummer in the band, lost an arm in an accident at the mill where he worked. It was also known as Doune Brass Band by local people.

The band was active through to WW1. After the mill closed the building was converted into a whisky distillery, in 1966.



Deanston Brass Band c. 1910

A Battersea Band Mystery

October 13, 2021

Ten years ago, I remarked on two images of the Bolton Borough Prize Band which had a phantom player (see: <u>https://ibewbrass.wordpress.com/2011/05/16/a-bolton-band-mystery/</u>)

A similar question arises with the two photographs of the Battersea Borough Prize Band. One contains the image of a child (a girl perhaps?) leaning on the bass drum. In the second picture she has been removed. She was probably the daughter of one of the players, who insisted on being in the photo. At some point the Band decided that her presence detracted from the formal nature of the picture and obtained a "clean" version.

Not much is known about the Band – certainly none of the players' names have been found, so the identity of the child is even more unknown. The Band was active in the early 1890's through to the 1920's. It bought a new set of Besson instruments, costing £295, in October 1904, with conductor Tom Morgan and secretary F.W. Baker (who also took the photograph). So, perhaps, this was the occasion of the photo session?



BATTERSEA BOROUGH PRIZE BAND.



BATTERSEA BOROUGH PRIZE BAND

And now for something completely different....

October 27, 2021

This blog normally focuses on the history of brass and similar "brassy" ensembles over the last 200 years. Many "works" bands existed during this time and some of the most famous brass bands of the past owed much of their success to their industrial or commercial patrons. A few still survive, though the sponsorship and patronage elements are very different these days.

Aside from the brass and military/concert bands, other forms of musical groups occasionally were formed by or in commercial companies. These included drum and fife bands, concertina bands, choirs and, even more rarely, banjo bands.

This example is the Manchester Corporation Tramways Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin Orchestra from the 1930's. They broadcast on the Regional Northern Radio Programme in January 1933, January 1935, and August 1935, conducted by Arthur F. Hill. It was formed in 1932 by Arthur Hill, and by 1938 it was known as the Birchfield Banjo Mandoline and Guitar Orchestra, but still mainly composed of Corporation employees. It is presumed to have disbanded during WW2.



Manchester Corporation Tramways Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin Orchestra, c. 1934

During this time the Manchester Corporation also supported two brass bands, based at the Hyde and Birchfields depots. Two earlier brass bands were also sponsored by the Manchester Corporation in the 1890's and early 1900's – at the Holt Town and Water Street depots. Sadly there are no known photographs of any of these four bands.

Scanned documents

November 16, 2021

I have started to add a number of scanned/digitised documents, in PDF format, to the **IBEW** archive. Additional items will be added in the future. The documents include some band histories, vintage contest and concert programmes, catalogues, etc.

If anyone has similar documents/scans, I would be happy to add them to the online archive – just let me know at gavin@ibew.co.uk.

The documents can be viewed/downloaded at *http://www.ibew.co.uk/misc104.html*



A young Oswaldtwistle cornetist

December 12, 2021

This is a young cornet player from Oswaldtwistle, photographed in the 1870's or 1880's by R. Longton. It is not known which band he played with, but there are a few local possibilities that were active around that time (in rough date order):

Church and Oswaldtwistle Model [Subscription] Band Foxhill Bank Subscription Brass Band Oswaldtwistle Subscription Brass Band 3rd Lancashire Artillery Volunteers Band (Oswaldtwistle)





Details of the photographer

Christmas 2021

December 18, 2021

For a festive-themed post I tried to find a vintage band photograph that portrayed Christmas or a similar winter celebration, but the only one I could come up with was the unknown, American band, below, photographed in a fake snowstorm.

The second photo is of the Snowflake Cornet Band, from Snowflake, Arizona – perhaps one of the more inappropriately named places in the USA. Best wishes for the festive season, and here's hoping 2022 is a little kinder than the last two years!





Snowflake Cornet Band, Arizona, USA

A pauper school band

January 25, 2022

The Central London District School Brass Band, Hanwell.

This was a paupers' school originally founded in 1849, but moving to new premises near Hanwell in 1856. The band was formed in March 1859, conductor G. Kuster, and at that time consisted of 16 boys. Boys were taught to play musical instruments and in the 1860s the brass band often accompanied mealtimes. The band was still active in 1914, conductor Charles Gregory. Later known as West London District Schools Brass Band.

The buildings in the background have been identified as the current Hanwell Community Centre – it's the only Victorian Poor Law School left standing in London. Charlie Chaplin was once a resident there.



There were many boys' bands in similar institutions from the 1850's to WW2, from orphanages, asylums, training ships, reform schools, and ragged schools. Details of some of these can be found in my paper **Music of Discipline and Reform**, available at:

http://www.ibew.co.uk/GH051-musicreform.pdf

Bramley Old Band

February 3, 2022

The Bramley Old Band, photographed in 1920 with a range of trophies from earlier contest successes. The West Leeds certificate and cup, in front of the bass drum, were won at the contest on 23 October 1909, where the band played their own-choice test piece, Richard Wagner's "Rienzi", arranged by William Rimmer, conducted by A. Fox. The National Band Festival certificate was from their second-place at the Crystal Palace Preliminary Shield in 1904. The two trophies on the left and right sides are unknown.

The band did win at Stanningley, and achieved second place at Pickering, both in 1910. It is possible that left hand one relates to a fourth place at Whitwood in 1920. There are no other known successes that would explain these two cups around this time. The next time the band was successful in a contest, was when it gained second place at the West Riding contest in 1934.



The band was formed as a reed band in 1828, and after a few name changes and a merger with the Bramley Model Band (a.k.a. Bramley Christian Mission Band) in 1898, it eventually folded in 1936.

Cynicus and the Big Brass Band

February 17, 2022

Martin Anderson (1854-1932) was a Scottish artist who produced cartoons and illustrations for many publications. He adopted the pen name 'Cynicus'. and was particularly popular in the 1890's and 1900's, and his work mostly survives today in the form of the many humorous postcards he designed.

One such is his painting of a brass band, marching along a street, seen from the front. It was a very popular postcard, which had a variety of overprints with different verses and town names, which could then be sold in any locations. The examples below show the card being repurposed for a number of towns, as well as there being two variations of the 'blank' version.

It was not uncommon for some postcard designs to be treated this way – you could take a standard image and make it appear to be relevant to a particular town or location. A similar approach was taken with his postcard design for "Our Local Express".

- White, Tina Life of a satirical postcard artist, whose pen name mirrored his tone *Dominion Post* New Zealand, 14 December 2019
- Davidson, Flora & Reid, Elspeth *The Fortunes of Cynicus: Victorian Cartoonist and Postcard Designer* Forest Lodge, 1995. ISBN: 978-0952597902
- Wikipedia <u>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynicus</u>





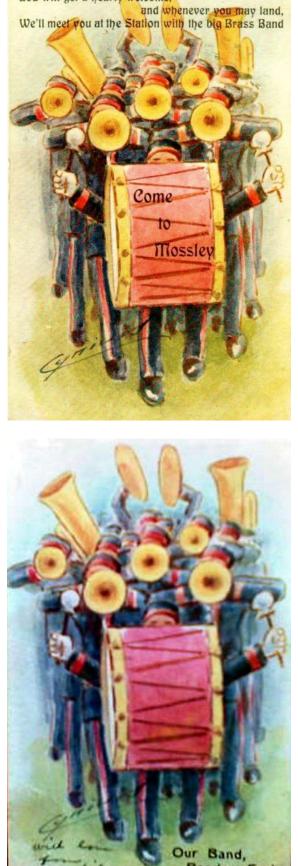




With outstretched hand and the big Brass Band We'll welcome you whene'er you land.







You will get a hearty welcome,

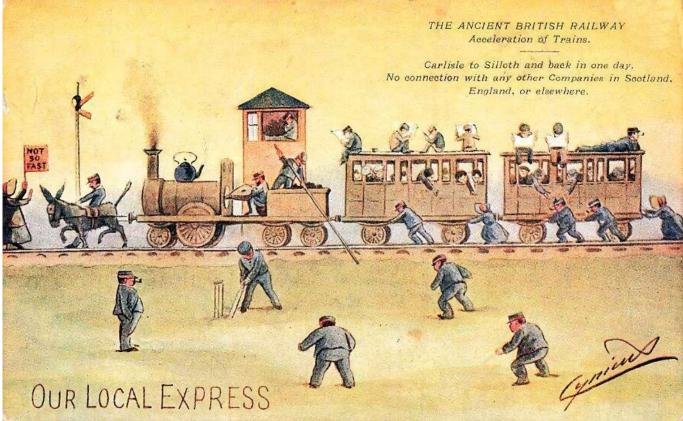
Ponders End

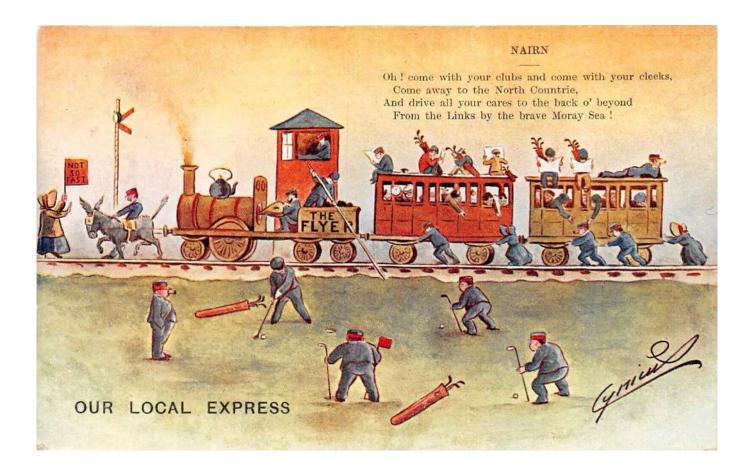


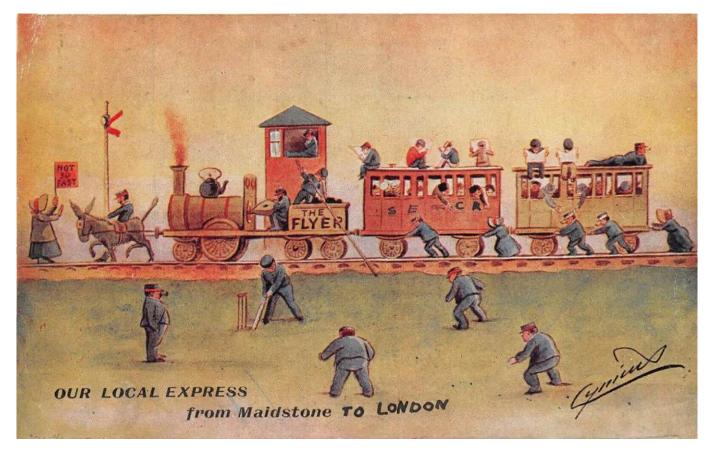
You will get a hearly welcome, and whenever you may land. We'll meet you at the Station with the big Brass Band

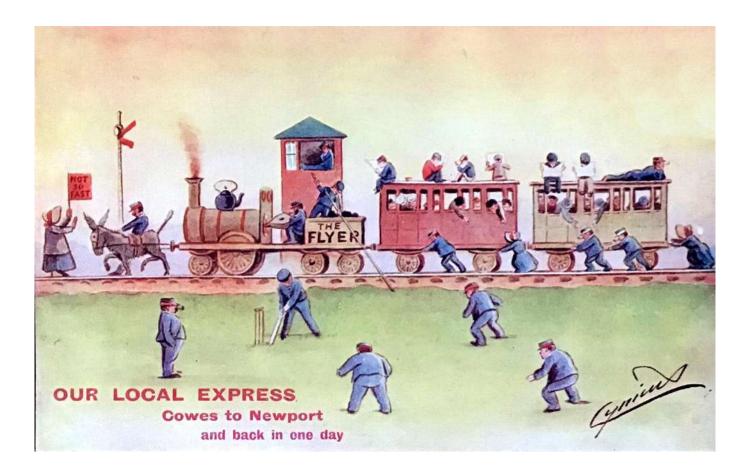












Band at the Rising Sun Inn

February 21, 2022

An unknown band standing outside the Rising Sun Inn, Broadwell, Coleford, Gloucestershire. William Baynham was the landlord (as named above the door) from 1911 to 1930. The band is likely to be one of several in the Forest of Dean area at that time, but I have not been able to match their uniforms to any contemporary images of those bands.



A sextet of bandsmen in a field

February 27, 2022

A sextet of bandsmen in a field.

Possibly members of Coniston Brass Band. The word 'Coniston' can just about be made out at the bottom of the drum – though it is not 100% certain. There are six men, possibly part of the band, or maybe the whole band. Standing in front of a (cricket?) field, with a distinctive building in the distance, and some people picnicking in the background. Three of the men are wearing 'white' crosses in their lapels. At this time this was the symbol for the Women's Christian Temperance Union – perhaps these were being worn in solidarity, or perhaps they signified something else altogether.

There were two Coniston bands – the first was active in the 1840's through to the mid-1870's. The second arose around 1890 and was still performing in the 1920's.



Aboriginal Peoples' Brass Bands in Canada

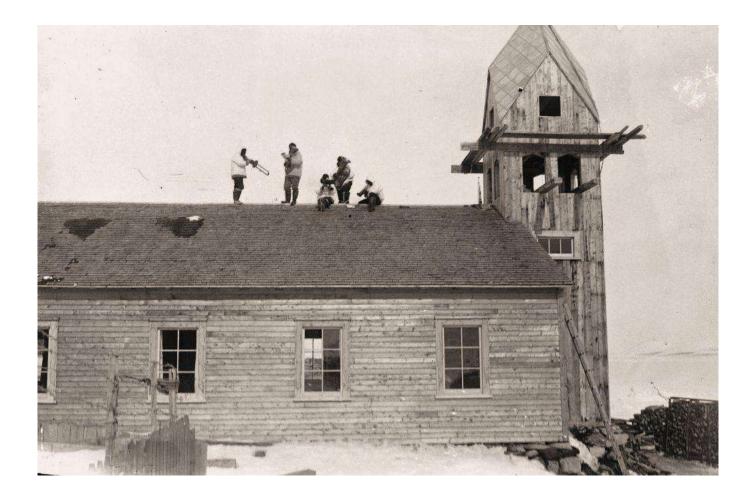
March 6, 2022

I recently discovered more about some of the indigenous peoples' brass bands of North America. Some years ago, Brian Stride established a research project for the brass bands in British Columbia, Canada. This included a number of bands of the First Nations peoples, which were often linked to religious organisations or various institutions. See: History of Brass Bands in British Columbia – <u>http://www.vabbs.org/hist_bb_bc.php</u>

On the other side of the continent, in Labrador and Newfoundland, there is a long tradition of Inuit brass bands associated with the Moravian Church. Mark Turner is a historian and facilitor who is combining his historical research with various projects to keep the musical traditions alive in the communities. See also: Labrador Moravian Inuit Brass Band Workshop – <u>https://brassbandworkshop.com</u>

Here are two examples of early Inuit bands, playing in Nain, Labrador.





Circus bands – 2

March 6, 2022

Another facet of brass bands in the 19th century that was far more prevalent in the USA than here in the UK, was the "professional" band which usually was linked to, or joined up with, the travelling circuses and wild west shows.

Although there were touring bands in the UK, on the theatre and music hall circuit, they were relatively few and tended to be family-based. In a similar fashion to the local village bands in the UK that joined then detached from the Volunteer force, town bands in the USA sometimes were adopted by or took it upon themselves to associate with a passing/travelling show. Many famous bandmasters and march composers learned their skills on the show circuit in the States. Following a query by Betsy Jones, a couple of years ago, I was happy to stumble across Windjammers Inc. [https://www.mywju.org] – an organisation dedicated to the music and history of the circus bands and bandsmen. I was able to provide them with details of some US bands that had toured with shows, together with selected images. This led to my investigating the circus, show and professional side-show bands in Britain, and my paper:

Roll up! Roll up! – 19th century circus and other professional bands in the British Isles, available from *http://www.ibew.co.uk/GH095-circusbands.pdf*



Unknown circus band



Unknown circus band



Rippel's Circus Band 1910



Rice & Dorman Circus Band 1919



Gentry Brothers Circus Band, Milwaukee, Wisconsin



sideshow band supporting "Interesting and Amuseing – Dancing Girls – The Dance of Art – Oriental Dancers"

West Carthage Fire Department Band and the disappearing dog

May 1, 2022

Another couple of photographs displaying the art of the retoucher in the early 1900's. These photographs of the West Carthage Fire Department Band from New York state, show the band proudly arrayed with their instruments.

In one, there is a dog – perhaps the band mascot or owned by one of the players. In the second one the dog has been removed. Obviously the band regarded the original image as being not quite serious/professional enough with "Rover" in the foreground!

This is the third such set featured in this blog – see also <u>A Battersea Band Mystery</u> and <u>A</u> Bolton Band Mystery.



Dog



No dog

Chocolate military bands

May 24, 2022

In the early 1900's the Dutch chocolate company Grootes produced a series of postcards and wrappers that advertised their chocolate, and also showed pictures of the military bands of various European countries.

Pieter Grootes began trading in grains in 1825, and started manufacturing chocolate in the mid-1840's, and was a well-respected brand for over a hundred years. The company ceased production in 1968 after increasing competition from American-style products and cheap copies of Belgian chocolate.



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D. & M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Germany



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D.& M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Austria



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D.& M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE)

Belgium



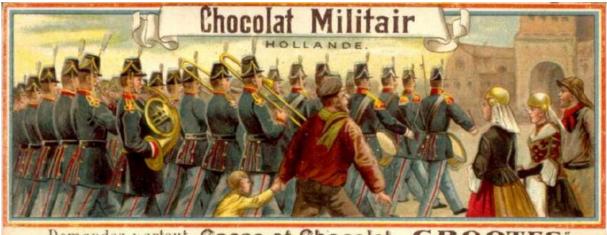
Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" . D. & M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Spain



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES D.& M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE)

France



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D. & M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Netherlands



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D. & M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Italy



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D.& M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Russia



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D. & M. GROOTES FRÈRES.-WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.)

Sweden



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D.& M. GROOTES FRÈRES. – WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE.) Switzerland



Demandez partout: Cacao et Chocolat "GROOTES" D. & M. GROOTES FRÈRES. - WESTZAAN. (HOLLANDE)

Turkey

Saint-Saëns and wind bands

May 25, 2022

I recently received a copy of a splendid book by Fabien Guilloux and Emanuele Marconi, from the Institut de Recherche en Musicologie and Le Musée des Instruments à Vent (La Couture-Boussey). I can recommend it as a fascinating examination of the role the composer played in the development of music for wind bands, and it is full of historical detail of the background of musical instrument history and the ensembles and music concerned. The text is in both French and English, and book be obtained via the museum's the can website: http://lemiv.fr/fr/catalogues



"On the occasion of the centenary of the death of Camille Saint-Saens (1835-1921), the Wind Instruments Museum of La Couture-Boussey and the Institute for Research in Musicology are joining forces to discover a little-known facet of the musician's personality: his constant commitment to wind instruments, at a time when such interest is rather rare on the part of renowned composers. His long artistic career corresponds to one of the most inventive periods in the history of music instruments making: flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets gradually adopt the modern form that we know today and the new families of saxophones, saxhorns or sarrussophones, born from the intuition of genius makers, enrich the sound palette of the orchestra. Curious by nature, tireless explorer, always in search of new associations of timbres, passionate about acoustic and technical inventions, Saint-Saens mingles with this breath of modernity. From the Tarentelle for flute and clarinet Op. 6 (1857) until the Sonata for bassoon and piano Op. 168 (1921), he composed some fifty works dedicated to wind instruments and surrounded himself with the best performers. By exploiting all the technical possibilities of the winds and their expressive richness, Saint-Saens thus opens the way to a renewal of the repertoire."

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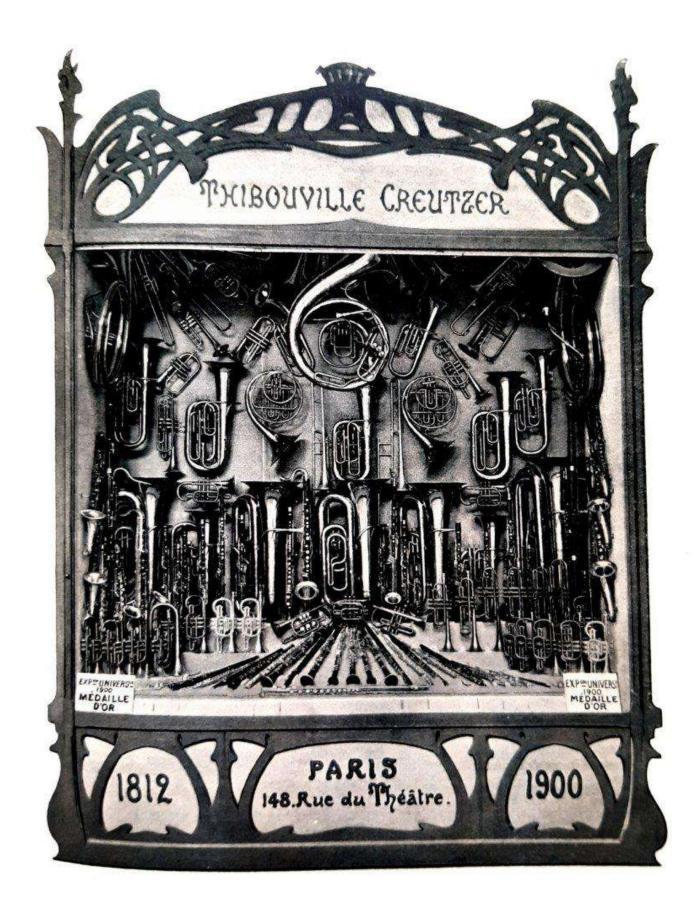
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14 Here are a couple of images from this richly illustrated book.



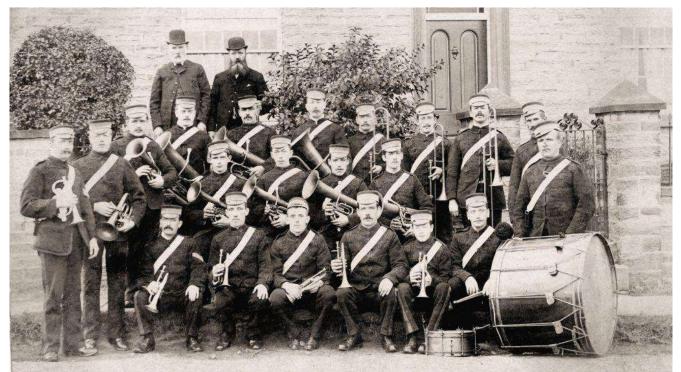
Group portrait of the Hermonie l'Industrie de La Couture-Boussey. Anonymous photograph, 13 × 19,5 cm, ca. 1875-1888. Le Musée des instruments à vent, La Couture-Boussey. Inv. 2021.0.12 © MIV / Emanuele Marconi

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Basic Brass Band History Books

August 7, 2022



Wath & Bolton United Brass Band

Hundreds of books and thousands of articles have been written about the brass band movement, and it can be a daunting task for those wanting to find out more about the history of brass bands.

The list, below, consists of a selection of some of the major general books written in the last 100 years or so. Many of these are available in public libraries, and selecting a few at random would give anyone a reasonable start to the subject.

A comprehensive Brass Band Bibliography (v.16 – 11,900 entries) is also available as a PDF download from: *http://www.ibew.co.uk/GH092-bbbibliography.pdf*

A number of my PDF articles and books are available for download on the **IBEW Historical Research** page, at: *http://www.ibew.co.uk/misc102.html*

General history of brass bands – mainly UK focus

- Bainbridge, Cyril Brass Triumphant Frederick Muller, 1980 ISBN: 0584103727
- Boon, Brindley Play the Music, Play! The Story of Salvation Army Bands SP&S Publications 1978
- Brand, Violet Brass Bands In The Twentieth Century Egon, 1979 ISBN: 0905858123
- Brand, Violet & Brand, Geoffrey *The World of Brass Bands* Egon, 1986 ISBN: 0905858360
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Bands of the Legion of Frontiersmen

September 29, 2022

This photograph is the Legion of Frontiersmen Band (Cambridge Command), 1914. The band was originally that of the Cambridge University Officers' Training Corps.



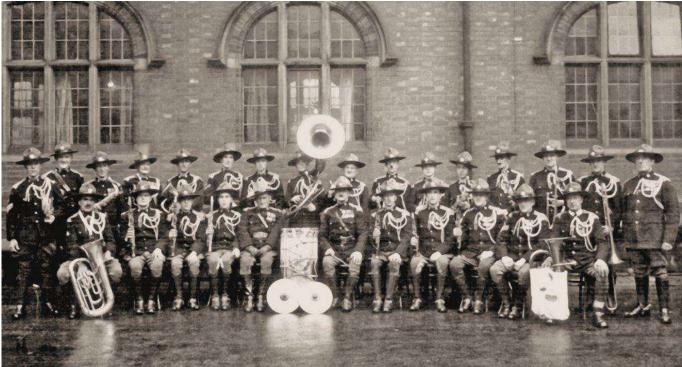
LEGION OF FRONTIERSMEN BAND, 1914.

The Legion of Frontiersmen was founded in London in 1905 by Roger Pocock. Aiming to be a civilian field intelligence corps, it formed branches across the Commonwealth to prepare enlistees for war and to foster vigilance in peacetime. As a paramilitary organisation it never achieved official recognition, but various branches still exist today. Various units established bands, and these were primarily military bands in their instrumentation – no full brass Legion band has been identified.

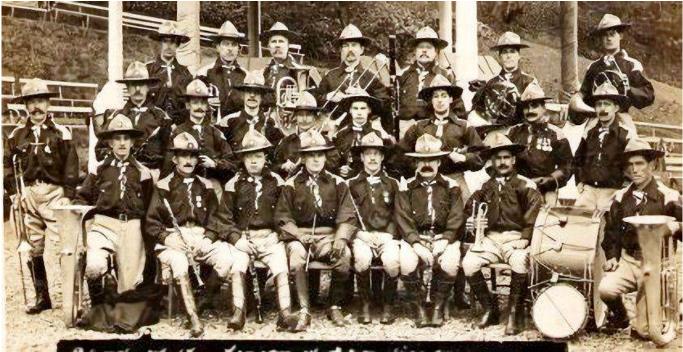
Some more of the Legion's bands are pictured below.

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Band of the Legion of Frontiersmen (Sheffield Squadron) – 1931



The Legion's band at Salisbury, 1910



Canadian Legion of Frontiersmen Band, 1912