

Origin, History and Achievements of the  
Besses o' th' Barn Band

by Joseph Hampson

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SECOND

EDITION

# BESSES O'TH' BARN BAND

ITS ORIGIN

HISTORY  
& ACHIEVEMENTS  
INCLUDING LIST  
OF CONTESTS  
ATTENDED

&  
PRIZES WON

FROM  
COMMENCEMENT.

ALSO  
PORTRAITS  
OF  
BANDMASTERS.  
CONDUCTORS.  
MEMBERS. ETC.



COMPILED BY  
JOSEPH N. HAMPSON

303 ROGERS, ARTISTIC & COMMERCIAL PRINTER, NORTHAMPTON.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

## A NOTE ON THE TEXT.

Joseph Hampson wrote and published this book in 1892 or 1893. His pride in the achievements of the Besses o' th' Barn Band shine through his words, giving us some sense of the phenomenal interest in brass band music at the time. Hampson wrote long before the first recordings were sold, and a dozen years before the Besses would achieve worldwide fame via their performances for king and country, and their two global tours.

Joseph Nathan Hampson was a tobacconist and insurance agent in Whitefield. He was one of the founders of the Band's legal entity (see page 43) as well as playing the cornet (page 67). He died of heart failure following pneumonia on 6 July 1899, at the age of 35, being survived by his widow Emma and daughter Maggie.

Hampson's history of the Band, while not strictly accurate in all particulars, remains the only account of the Besses published to date. This edition reprints his original text with a few minor corrections. The pagination is slightly different from the original, and I have retained only one of the advertisement pages.

A sequel to this book, bringing the history of the Besses up to date, is in progress.

Paul May  
Surrey  
1 March 2011

## PREFACE.

IN introducing the following work to its many readers, the author has endeavoured so far as possible, and to the best of his ability, to meet the requirements and gratify the oft-expressed desire of thousands of true lovers of the Divine Art of Music, amongst both the masses and the classes, throughout the universe. Hard as has been the task, involving hours of careful study, prolonged interviews with old and aged members (much having been derived from direct personal experience, and more supplied by facts from various authentic sources), compiling and chronicling events and incidents for years past, yet, nevertheless, he has the gratification in having accomplished that which at first seemed almost beyond acquisition, and thereby being able to place before the public a work calculated in every respect to be interesting, instructive, and undoubtedly useful to its several admirers.

That such a work is essential to the advancement of Art in the Brass Band sphere, is a question altogether beyond argument; yet, strange to say, but nevertheless true, the author claims the present issue to be the first of its kind ever published. Never has such a work been more needed or repeatedly asked for, to which men possessing necessary knowledge, at the same time being thoroughly competent, have failed to respond. We have our biographies and autobiographies of all the great and good celebrities, whom as Shakespeare says,

Have lived to grace this age with noble deeds,

Yet nothing wherewith to bless the heroes of such well-merited and wonderful achievements, as manifested in the splendid acquirements of such an organisation as the Besses-o' th'-Barn Band, to whom we may accredit a career which stands altogether unsurpassed or unrivalled in the history of Musical Art.

Deeply as the author is sensible of the inadequacy of his talents to produce a memorial worthy of the subjects of this history (and so treat it as to wound the feelings of none), still he flatters himself that his exertions

may perhaps be productive, not only of a generous and laudable ambition in the preamble of the rising generation (for achievements such as are contained in the following pages must live to the remotest period of time and command the admiration of the latest posterity), but also an initiative to inspire an animated zeal into the minds of all who at the present time are engaged in similar work.

It may be truly said, that Music in itself possesses the power of inspiration never yet depicted by any other science or art; and to use the words of Calvin, the great reformer, “Of all the gifts with which the Creator has blessed man to serve him as a recreation and comfort, Music may be regarded as the *first*, or at least *one of the most elevated*.”

Many influences are at the present time operating on the public taste, but none with the same effect as Music. Nothing has a more increasing demand or a greater claim for development; Bands, Orchestras, Choral Societies, and institutions of every description conducive to the advancement of Musical Art, are springing up on every hand.

Never in the whole history of mankind has the cultivation of this Heavenly Art developed with such remarkable progress as manifested in the last half-century. In almost every household, from the highest to the lowest, the lord in his mansion to the peasant in his humble cot, the musical talents and abilities of one or other members of the family are wantonly displayed upon instruments of various kinds and calibre; works of all the great composers are introduced into the home circle, innovating and exercising such a beneficent influence and felicity for that true love of Music (especially amongst members of the working populace), which up to the last few years has merely been obtainable by the advantages of a very exceptional education.

As, however, in the matter of musical education, it is as in all other arts, that

In framing Nature, Art has thus decreed  
To make some good, and others to exceed,

it is only by comparison that we are able to gauge our ability, and acknowledging by contrast our inferiority, are imbued with a desire to climb another step in the ladder of proficiency.

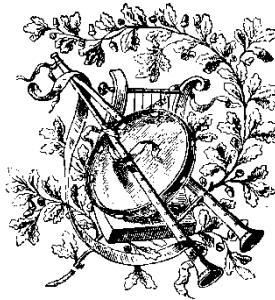
The call for a sequel to the history and success of the Besses-o' th'-Barn

Band having become too loud and importunate to be resisted, the pleasant task of writing it (which is purely and simply one of love) was undertaken; therefore, if such a work should prove the humble instrument of transfusing into the minds of any organisation some portion of that sublime spirit of emulation which glows in the heroes of our text, the author will consider himself abundantly compensated for his exertions.

**JOSEPH N. HAMPSON.**

The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils  
Let no such man be trusted.

*Shakespeare.*





Origin, History and Achievements  
 OF THE  
**BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BAND.**



DELIGHTFULLY situated on the turnpike road about five miles from Manchester on the one hand, and four and-a-half miles from Bury on the other, stands the quaint old Lancashire village of Besses-o' th'-Barn, now comprising about 2,000 inhabitants, but which at the date of the commencement of this history (nearly 100 years back) was simply a small hamlet of not more than a dozen tenements.

It is rather remarkable that a village of such repute should have assigned to it a name so wonderfully strange and peculiar, and many times has the question been asked, "from whence," or "how," did it derive its name? Its origin, however, is somewhat explained in many and various ways, but none appear to have attached to them the same amount of credibility as the following:

Very many years ago there existed a small country public house of barn-like appearance, the which was kept by a good-looking Lancashire lass called "Bess" or "Bessie"; and as the inn became a noted house of call, the casual remark when companions from surrounding districts were out for a stroll, would be, "let us go and see Bessie at th' barn." Quite naturally, by this rather remarkable coincidence, the name clung to the place, and when in course of time an aggregation of houses formed a hamlet, it



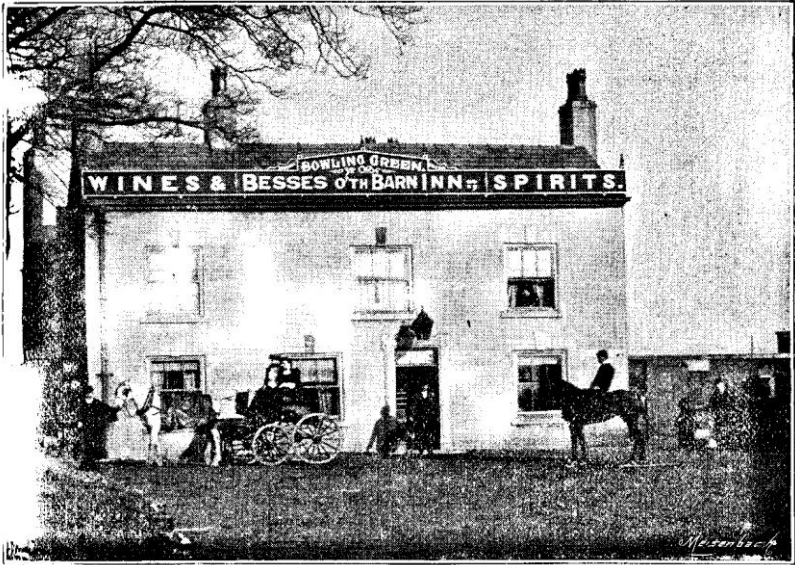
consequently received the appellation of Besses-o' th'-Barn.

A contemporary says:— “Bess-o' th'-Barn” is the way in which the Yorkshire papers spell the name of the place which is famous for its band. Curiously enough that is precisely as the name appears in Baines's map of Lancashire published in 1824, though in Baines's directory itself for that year the name is spelt as we spell it now.

Some three years ago Mr. W. Taylor Brierley wrote:—Dick Turpin and his famous mare may have visited the township of Pilkington; but, we imagine, he would not be “in the habit of stabling his steed” in a building by the side of the main road, midway between two towns so nearly together as Manchester and Bury. The earliest mention of Besses-o' th'-Barn that we have met with takes us back to within nine years of the hanging of Dick Turpin at York. In a newspaper published January 19th, 1747-8, we find an advertisement convening a meeting of creditors “at Bessy's-o'th'-Barn”; and, under date March 6th, 1749-50, we find an announcement of a sale by auction “at the house of John Fallows, known by the name of Besses-o' th'-Barn.” The ancient legend (presumably) which, when a child, I often heard propounded by the village wiseacres, was to the effect: — A noted highwayman (generally supposed to be Dick Turpin), in days gone by, was in the habit of stabling his steed in the old barn, which stood at the corner of the square in front of the Besses-o' th'-Barn Inn. Attached to this barn were two or three cottages; these were demolished some years ago to make room for a modern style of building. The name of this gallant steed was said to have been Black Bess, or Bess-o' th'-Barn, and it was from the exploits of this horse and its rider that the village obtained its name.

Odd as the term may appear to many admirers, yet justly proud are the inhabitants of such a title, which they cherish with a fervour almost incomprehensible, and at every mention of the name a something seems to strike through their hearts, lighting up the eyes into such a glow as to make one readily believe the term had a fascinating influence over them. Invariably, almost, when at home and amongst their friends and neighbours, the word “Besses” is used; but abroad and among strangers, Besses-o' th'-Barn must needs receive its full title, and that too in a spirit of delight which is never portrayed more vividly than when disclosing their place of abode. And to what may be attributed this ardent spirit of egotism? This love for the place of one's birth, or the endearing and passionate affection for the locality in which they are situated? The answer at once presents itself as “*Our Band.*” Yes! for years past this has been their idol;

their one source of bliss and gratification. The intense interest displayed at times being such that it would seem as though their whole life and its future existence depended on the success of their band.



YE OLDE BESSES-O' TH'-BARN INN (original practice place for the Band).

A local contemporary, giving an exposition of their enthusiasm, says:—

“The inhabitants of Whitefield and BesSES-o' th'-Barn are proud of their band and take no little interest in its welfare. Between seven and eight o'clock on an evening when the band is away at a contest, any stranger passing through the village would wonder what was the cause of so many small groups of people standing here and there on the roadside; but on nearing a group he would hear them talking about 'ear band.' Everyone seems to feel a certain amount of pride in being able to say 'ear.' The excitement is sometimes intense; and the enquiry, 'Hast th' news come?' or 'Han yo yearn heaw they'n gone on?' is to be heard at every turn; and when

the result is known, 'They'n won th' fust agen,' a smile of satisfaction and delight lights up the faces that only a few minutes before wore a look of anxious expression, and merriment pervades all round."

That the inhabitants of the neighbourhood and its immediate vicinity are passionately fond of music is without doubt; and nothing that I might say in support of such an assertion would go further to prove it than the following little anecdote as told by a gentleman who had invited one of his friends down to dinner. The guest having seated himself, began as follows:

"Upon my word what a music-loving race of people you must be in this part of the country; I had just emerged from out the station gates when my ears were greeted with a most lively air from the pianoforte, to hear which I hesitatingly stopped for a few seconds; turning round again and wending my way along the footpath, I had no sooner reached the corner than I was treated to a few strains of that beautiful song, 'Home, sweet home,' upon a pretty toned melodeon. Scarcely had I passed, before I was again entertained to a most beautiful rendering of a Beethoven's Sonata for violin and piano. My heart beamed with delight as I stepped forward to go away, and just as I was thinking how late I should be here, the heavy clash and ponderous tone of what I first took to be a grand organ, but simultaneously turned out to be a great brass band, burst upon mine ear, which exercised such an effect over me, that had you been there you would certainly have come to the conclusion that a sudden attack of nervous debility or paralysis had overtaken me. For the moment I was stupefied and could not move further; but presently, by some wonderful instinct or other, I was lured away to I know not where, only to be face to face with this wonderful band, who were busy at work, accompanying the trombone (a splendid artist) in his beautiful solo, 'Angel of light, O heavenly vision,' from Berlioz's 'Faust and Marguerita.' The effect was marvellous; my hair stood on an end; I was in ecstasies; my soul was enraptured; all around me seemed a vision of Heaven. Oh, what happiness! Oh, what joy!! Oh, what bliss!!!" (and tears rolled down his cheeks with emotion).

Continuing, says he, "I could not leave till it was finished, for I really felt spell-bound, and as though I were under other than mortal influence, but on retracing my steps and musing the while, mine ears were again struck by the strains of 'The last rose of summer,' from a cornettist, next door to which was a very clever executant on the concertina, playing Herold's Overture to 'Zampa'; and now to finish up with," says he, laughingly, "I find on entering the hall two of your children busily engaged on a small drum with two sticks. This I am sure is such an experience as I never had in all my life before, and certainly has made such an impression

upon me as to never allow me to forget my first visit to Whitefield and Besses-o' th'- Barn.”

Such incidents as these, however, are merely quoted in order to convey to the public mind in a slight degree the estimation in which this famous organisation is held, likewise the keen interest taken in music itself by their own district inhabitants, both individually and collectively. It must not, however, be supposed that this ardent spirit of zealotism has always existed, and that friends and supporters could be counted by the score. No! far from it, for like many other combinations of its own class and kind, Besses-o' th'-Barn Band during the early part of its career experienced years of dilapidation and misfortune.

In speaking of trials, troubles, and disappointments, we may I think characterise the following as a fair sample.

Seeing the poor and very unpromising state of affairs, and no better prospect under the then existing regime of business, one of the members at one time, a well-wisher and thorough bandsman in every respect, prompted by feelings of love for the welfare and prosperity of the band, took upon himself the responsibility of writing in private — though enclosing his name and address — without any authority from the committee, to a certain conductor, soliciting the favour of a reply stating his terms for tutoring the band.

The letter was written purely and simply under the conviction that the said gentleman's terms when presented to a few petty despots would be accepted. The reply, however, came directed straight to the Secretary, and on perusal shows up and explains some old-standing grievance.

[COPY.]

A———,  
 B———,  
*Dec. 1st, 18—.*

SIR,

Your letter has been mislaid by me, and I have delayed writing in the hope of finding it, but not being successful in that, I am writing on chance and directing to the Secretary, not being wishful to keep you longer in suspense or appear negligent myself.

I certainly was not a little surprised to hear from your band, above all others, and I cannot think why you should wish me (whom your band has so often stigmatized as anything but a gentleman, not even allowing me to be honest) to instruct you.

How could you trust me with your success? Are you not afraid that such a low

fellow (as you have thought proper to call me) would swindle you, as he has done before, by your own account!!!? Or taking a pleasanter view of matters, are you beginning to have your eyes and ears opened? I really hope such is the case for your own sake, as it augurs well for your future success. As I am not able to accept any offer from you at present, being so fully employed, I may be permitted to give, or rather offer, a little advice, and perhaps you may be prompted to believe at least, a portion of what I say.

Whoever you get as instructor, let him be a musician, and one that will openly explain your faults and show you better, and not flatter you, and say you play well when it has been quite the reverse; and above all, when unsuccessful do not comfort yourself in the belief that you have been swindled, and find fault with the judges, and say they are either incompetent or dishonest, or Both.

You may as well swallow the bitter pill at once, as it has to be and must be swallowed by you in the end; there is no use in licking it round, it only tastes the more bitter for it.

Believe me, finding fault with the judge or judges is only a poor way of getting out of bad playing.

On all occasions I gave your band fair play, and if your teacher had done the same you would have been much more successful. I never wronged either your band or any other, and on all occasions I did every one justice — for I always maintain I could only do myself justice in dealing fairly with others.

It certainly is refreshing to have an offer from your band, and I regret my inability to comply with your request, all the more, because I really believe I would soon have proved to you how much I was in the right and you in the wrong, and perhaps improve you musically as well as morally — at any rate, I would have endeavoured to show you that your humble servant was and is an honest man.

Yours, &c.,

C—————

In haste.

Imagine the surprise of the Secretary on receiving such a vituperative communication as this. He was naturally dumb-founded, being quite ignorant as to what had been done. The letter was read up and handed round to the members present at the first meeting following, and each one questioned as to who had been the culprit to court such correspondence.

Nobody knew — for the fact of the matter was, that the offender happened by chance to be absent that evening — but when all came to light it proved to be one of our noble enthusiasts, who along with the others shared his surprise.

When all was explained, it came about that this same gentleman had occasion to be judge at a few contests where the members of the "Old Band" had competed, and came off not altogether so successful as they thought they deserved to be, and the fact of the disappointment, I believe, led them or their followers to resort to the very bad practice of scandalizing the judge.

Eventually, however, that same gentleman *was* engaged, and *did* come to instruct the band, who under his *baton* did fairly well.

Everyone who has had experience, or in any way been connected with brass or reed bands, orchestras, choral societies, &c., can very readily form an idea as to the difficulties and trials met with in such organisations; differences of opinions, jealousies, quarrels, &c., with one and another of the members all tending to a disorganisation, have been paramount at different intervals, the which must necessarily almost always end in grief, leaving their unfortunates to realise the fact that friends and supporters in times of adversity are few and far between.

Of such delinquencies does the early part of the history of Besses-o' th'-Barn Band consist; but thanks to Providence, there are generally a few connected with a flock who are imbued with a spirit of determination, whose love for each other is such that a separation would mean almost a breaking of hearts, and whose whole heart and soul is centred in the very object with which they are connected, whose one ideal is Fame, and whose self-aspiring heart will not relinquish its throbbing till their never-tiring exertions have paved the way to Fortune, and the goal of prosperity is reached. These are they, which when Dame Fortune does bestow her gifts, and credit there be, should receive it, for theirs is a work of love in every respect. Such noble examples as these we find depicted in the characters of Jackson, Bleakley, Bell, and Ogden; and when we consider the high state of proficiency that has been reached by the band, their pre-eminence in musical competitions and performances throughout the kingdom, we cannot do otherwise than acknowledge the claim to a great amount of credit by these gentlemen.

Not the least remarkable also, is the fact that even at the present time, in what we might call the meridian of their success, the Besses-o' th'-Barn Band cannot boast of the privileges and advantages so voluptuously enjoyed by many of their rivals at a recent date. The assumption that they are supported by persons of independent and unlimited means is quite an erroneous conception, as the following remarks from an abler pen than mine will evince.

“In training the Besses, the bandmaster has not had the advantage of having all his men at one mill or place of business, with unlimited cash behind him. No! a village band of working men is Besses, with no more advantages than are possessed by thousands of village bands in England. No gentleman pays £100 for a professional teacher for Besses. No mill owner finds bogus work for a professional soloist to play with Besses. I do not say that the band would despise these advantages if they could get them, nor do I wish to cast the slightest reflection on those bands who do possess such advantages. No, I merely say that Besses has had to fight its way by virtue of its own merit, they having no support from any source whatever, other than that which is acquired by their own talented abilities, and the profits derived from the working of their own registered Social Club, to which some 200 members pay a small subscription of 1/- per quarter, or 4/- per year.”

Now, therefore, in consideration of such wonderful yet indisputable facts as these, can we for one moment suppress our feelings of admiration, exultation, and gratitude, for a body of men that have worked themselves up so creditably, to be forever a shining light in the musical world, a credit to themselves, their neighbourhood, and their country? For ever will Lancashire have reason to be proud, and boast of the production of a combination of musicians, who by their sterling quality have given such excellent proof of their pre-eminence over all other organisations in the matter of musical art throughout the kingdom. The splendid encomiums and complimentary remarks of the judges on the playing at Belle Vue contest, September, 1892, are something almost beyond description, and moreover, a tribute that has never been paid to any other band (more especially amateur) previously; they are indeed worthy of a golden frame, and a tribute undoubtedly fit to adorn the walls of every householder, not only in Besses-o' th'-Barn, but throughout the whole of Lancashire.

Says Hamilton Clarke:— “There is not a band in the whole of Her Majesty's service that could equal the standard of excellence as that particular band displayed.”

Says Carl Kiefert:—“Not even in Berlin could we get together a combination of instrumentalists to give a performance equal to it.”

Having thus given a short description of the village of Besses-o' th'-Barn, the general likes and dislikes of the inhabitants, together with a few other noticeable facts, we will now return to the history of the band itself.

Strange to say, but nevertheless true, the actual date of the commencement of Besses-o' th'-Barn Band is lost in ambiguity, and the fact

of there having been no record kept, nor documents of any description preserved, little or nothing to which may be attached any amount of credence beyond the following can be gleaned.

From one or two of the very few old members, whom grim Death with his scythe up to the present has been pleased to pass by, we are given to understand that when first originated it was a string band, over 100 years back, which afterwards turned to a reed band, formed somewhere about the year 1818, during the reign of George III., and soon after the famous battle of Waterloo. Others, however, contend that it started as a reed band from the beginning, but one and all agree that the sole founders at first were Messrs. John, James, and Joseph Clegg, three brothers, and cotton manufacturers of Besses-o' th'-Barn, two of whom besides being members themselves, bore all cost of instruments, uniform, music, &c.

Very different, I may say, were the class of instruments in vogue at that particular period to what we find at the present age, as will be seen by the appended list of members' names, along with their instrumentation, the which constitute the first conspicuous members of

BESSES-O' TH'-BARN, OR CLEGG'S REED BAND.

|                          |  |                  |
|--------------------------|--|------------------|
| Thomas Leigh             |  | F and C Clarinet |
|                          | Leader and Bandmaster.                                     |                  |
| James Blomerly           |  | C Clarinet       |
| Thomas Morris            |  | C Clarinet       |
| John Eastwood            |  | Piccolo.         |
|                          | Great uncle to Robert and Edwin Eastwood, present members. |                  |
| John Clegg               |  | Keyed Bugle.     |
| <i>a</i> Wright Fletcher |  | Trumpet.         |
| <i>b</i> Joseph Ogden    |  | French Horn.     |
| Andrew Hilton            |  | French Horn.     |
| <i>a</i> John Fletcher   |  | Trombone.        |
| <i>b</i> John Ogden      |  | Bass Horn.       |
| <i>b</i> Thomas Ogden    |  | Bass Horn.       |
| Thomas Peatfield         |  | Bass Drum.       |

Those marked *a* and *b* were respective brothers.

Being formed in this manner the band quite naturally, though evidently only for a short period, took the name of Clegg's Band, utilising as a practice place a rather peculiar and ill-conditioned little room (commonly called the old mangle room) attached to the old barn, which only a few years back was pulled down and replaced by the stabling now connected with "Ye Olde Besses-o' th'-Barn Inn."



Of this youthful band of enthusiasts, nothing further either of a traditionary or statistical character seems to have been recorded till 1821, three years later.

This year, along with 1837, should live in the memories of all true members and eulogists to the remotest period of time, causing them to dwell upon the resources with unmitigated joy and approbation, for in these two years were awarded the only two distinctions of merit acquired by the Besses-o' th'-Barn Reed Band, and if I mistake not were the only two competitions in which they engaged.

On the 19th day of July, 1821, being engaged to play along with numerous other bands (the names of which I am not familiar) in the procession celebrating the Coronation of George the Fourth, Mr. William Johnson, a very prominent leader of bands at that time, in order to while away the time during the marshalling of the people, drew the various bands together and made a subscription to form a prize for the band that should play best a piece of its own selection. At the close of the contest the prize, amidst the general acclamation of the public, was awarded to Besses-o' th'-Barn, who for their test piece played "God save the king." This stands as the first introduction to a long list of remarkable successes.

It may be interesting here to note the rather peculiar style of dress as adopted at this particular period, which consisted of a white cockade hat, scarlet tunic, and white trousers, which a few years later were supplemented by a tall silk hat, black cloth coat and vest, with white trousers.

And again, how simple to musicians of the present day, will seem the pieces, as selected for competition, the which would be accomplished by the least of unpretentious bands of to-day in a creditable manner, and with ease. This, however, will mark the rapid progress made in that direction during the last sixty or seventy years.

After practising in the old mangle room for something like nine years, the members of the band, through the hallucinations of a few petty despots, moved about from one place to another, suiting themselves as best they could, in search of more convenient premises; and in 1827 we find them occupying a small room situated over the brew-house belonging to the "Masons' Arms Inn," at Four Lane Ends (mid-way between Whitefield and Besses-o' th'-Barn). Here they remained for two or three years, after which they were hustled about to various other places, including, at times, even the members' own homes.

The next time they are brought before our notice is on the 21st June, 1837, Coronation Day. That day they scored a victory, which, as previously

remarked, along with that of 1821, ought to be remembered with pride as long as the band holds together; for on that day Victoria received the crown she had inherited from her ancestors, and on that day Besses-o' th'-Barn Band were presented with a crown, which they very cleverly won in a musical contest.

Being engaged to play in the procession of Oddfellows at Dixon Green, Farnworth (celebrating the coronation of Queen Victoria), at the close of the proceedings, a grand prize, in the shape of a crown, had to be contested for by all the bands, four or five in number, each band to choose its own selection. Besses having to play last, according to draw, selected for their piece "Hail! smiling morn," and on the judge (Mr. John Prestwich, a very distinguished vocalist of Farnworth) making known his awards, they were ultimately declared the winners.

During the short period that had elapsed, it would appear that the *personnel* of the band had been almost entirely changed; for included in the dozen members who took an active part in this competition, we find only two out of the first rank of competitors, as will be seen by the subjoined list of members' names who took part in the contest for the crown. Not even do we find the name of Mr. John Clegg among their number, that gentleman having severed his-connection with the band, as a playing member, some years before, but nevertheless regarding them in a philanthropical manner whenever an opportunity afforded him.

LIST OF MEMBERS WHO TOOK PART IN THE CONTEST  
FOR THE CROWN.

|                   |                           |                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Thomas Leigh      |                           | F and C Clarinet. |
|                   | Conductor and Bandmaster. |                   |
| William Jones     |                           | F and C Piccolo.  |
| Thomas Morris     |                           | C Clarinet.       |
| Thomas Schofield  |                           | C Clarinet.       |
| William Horsfield |                           | C Clarinet.       |
| Hugh Haddock      |                           | Keyed Bugle.      |
| John Hulton       |                           | French Horn.      |
| Jeremiah Nuttall  |                           | French Horn.      |
| Leonard Bradbury  |                           | Serpent.          |
|                   | Made by himself.          |                   |
| John Greenhalgh   |                           | Bass Trombone.    |
| Henry Cowburn     |                           | Bass Trombone.    |
| Charles Morris    |                           | Drums.            |

Complacently recognised, by all who knew him, will be the name of John Greenhalgh, who, a short time afterwards, was engaged for many

years as a trombone player at the Theatre Royal, Manchester; also that of John Hulton, father to Mr. Walker Hulton, of Prestwich; bandmaster for many years previous to Mr. John Gladney, and in the early days of Mr. Robert Jackson, the present bandmaster. Last, but not least, also that of William Jones, bandmaster for forty years of Park Lane School Band, whose decease, on April 7th, 1891, in his 73rd year, robs us of the last and only surviving member of the party that played on that memorable day.

Mr. Jones, to whom I am indebted for this and other information, was born on the 22nd day of August, 1818. He joined the band (Besses) whilst they were practising at the "Masons' Arms Inn," being then only twelve years old; his tutor, for two years previous, being John Eastwood, one of the first members. In after years, he became, at different intervals, instructor to them, and on May 31st, 1860, in appreciation of his services, he was presented with a photo of the band in a group, which he cherished to the day of his death with an unwonted fervour, as a memento of his younger days, and boasted with pride in an ostentatious manner of being the first individual to introduce the "cornet" into the district.



MR. WILLIAM JONES.

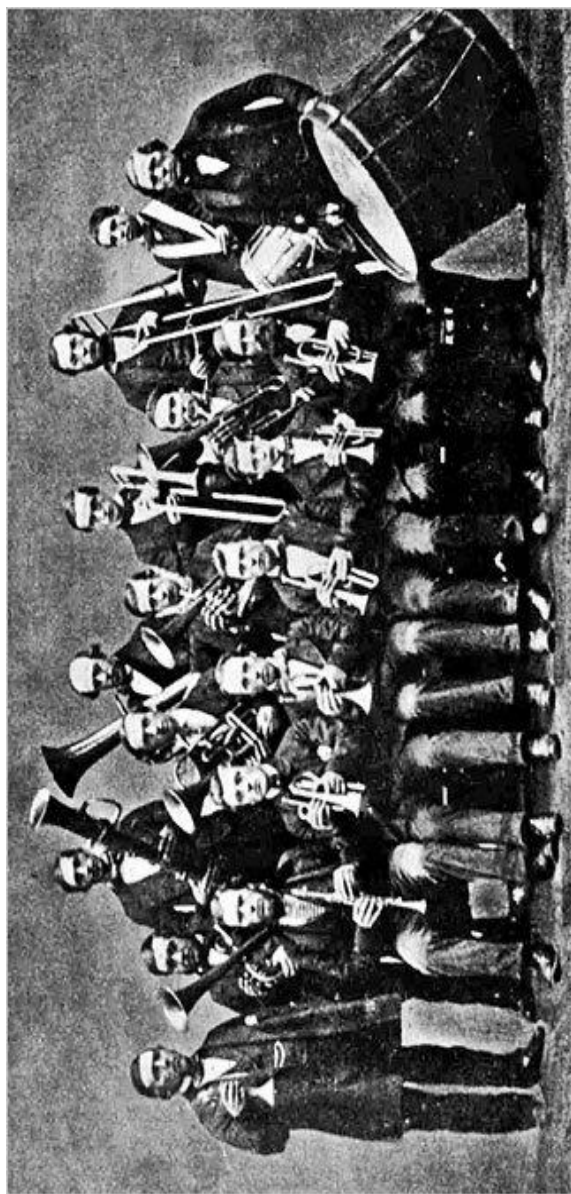
The band, during their career, had many engagements; among which was one of playing at the corner-stone laying of St. Margaret's Church, Holyrood, Prestwich, by the Duchess of Cambridge, October 3rd, 1849, this being the last occasion on which Mr. Jones played with them whilst a reed band. Another, was that of playing on the occasion of the marriage of Lady Elizabeth Grey Egerton to the Hon. Dudley de Ros, October 12th, 1853, a very remarkable event in the history of the band, as this was the last occasion on which the reed band appeared in public. Owing to some misunderstanding on the part of one or two members, during the afternoon performances, some rather vociferous altercations took place on the return home, which precipitantly brought to a close the career of Besse- o' th'-Barn Reed Band. Thus we find that a period of thirty-five years, interposed by a compendiary of vicissitudes, ultimately brings us to the one great epoch in the history of the band, which we may judiciously pronounce as being the preceding harbinger of success, and a consummation without which the splendid achievements that appear at a later date could never have been realised.

Dispensing with all reed instruments, no time was lost in procuring the necessary means required to replace them with brass; and in a very short space of time the following are brought before us as being

#### THE FIRST MEMBERS OF BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BRASS BAND.

|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Robert Bradshaw     | Cornet.         |
| Samuel Booth        | Cornet.         |
| Thomas Crompton     | Cornet.         |
| David Chadwick      | Cornet.         |
| Thurstone Eckersall | Horn.           |
| Nathan Crossley     | Horn.           |
| Jesse Hilton        | Tenor Trombone. |
| Benjamin Eastwood   | Bass Trombone.  |
| William Sharples    | Ophcleide.      |

This small body of enthusiasts, having no other alternative, pitched their tent (practice place) at the house of their leader, Mr. Robert Bradshaw; where they congregated nightly in order to diffuse among each other the talents of their several abilities. Toiling hard together for a short time, they, however, succeeded in obtaining the loan of the New Jerusalem Church School, Charles Street, Besse- o' th'-Barn (known better as the Temperance Hall), for their place of rehearsal. Here they remained for a short period, after which another series of changes, similar in character to those of an earlier date, ultimately landed them within the precincts of the old mangle-room again.



By this time their band had been augmented to the strength of eighteen performers, as will be seen by the characters who appear on the photo presented to Mr. Jones in 1860 (*see previous page*).

NAMES OF MEMBERS WHO APPEAR ON PHOTO PRESENTED  
TO MR. WILLIAM JONES.

|                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mr. William Jones  | Solo A flat Cornet.<br>Conductor. |
| William Stansfield | Brass Clarinet D flat.            |
| Walker Hulton      | Cornet A flat.                    |
| George Howarth     | Cornet A flat.                    |
| George Hulme       | Cornet A flat.                    |
| David Chadwick     | Cornet A flat.                    |
| John Lomax         | Cornet A flat.                    |
| William Tonge      | Tenor Horn.                       |
| Robert Bradshaw    | Tenor Horn.                       |
| James Allen        | Baritone.                         |
| William Crossley   | Baritone.                         |
| Henry Tattersall   | Tenor E flat.                     |
| Andrew Eastwood    | Tenor Trombone.                   |
| Benjamin Eastwood  | Bass Trombone.                    |
| Jesse Hilton       | Ophcleide.                        |
| William Sharples   | Bombardon E flat.                 |
| Squire Ogden       | Side Drum.                        |
| Mark Eckersall     | Bass Drum.                        |

Having now changed from a reed to a brass band, the members, after a short space of time, felt themselves actuated by a desire to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors, and, if possible, excel their previous victories on the contest field; therefore, to this end the services of Mr. James Alfred Melling, of Manchester, were secured, whilst Mr. Walker Hulton (a remarkably popular and devoted enthusiast, of a very generous disposition, whose wonderfully true and noble examples were as graceful as his features) acted as bandmaster.

Meagrely equipped with such instruments as they possessed, they in high glee made their *debut* at Denton, with Mendelssohn's grand chorus, "O great is the depth," Mr. Robert Jackson the present bandmaster, only having joined them a short time previously. This contest, however, along with a few others, proved nothing but a financial failure. Not the least daunted, but actuated by a spirit of determination, for honour and fame



WALKER HULTON, ESQ.

were their ideal, they tried again; this time with a selection from "L'Africaine" (Belle Vue test-piece, 1867), which resulted in success crowning their efforts with a fifth prize at Todmorden, 1868; Black Dyke, the celebrated Yorkshire band, taking first honours, and Bacup, the Lancashire champion, second. This stands as the first distinction of merit accorded to them as a brass band.

The valuable services of Mr. Melling were now apparently acknowledged, for in the same year another fifth prize was taken at Denton; followed in September of 1869 by a fourth prize at Belle Vue, Manchester, amongst all the leading bands of the day, viz., Bacup, Matlock, Dewsbury, Linthwaite, etc. These, in 1870, were supplemented by another fourth prize at Belle Vue, and a third prize at Middleton, in October.

It would now seem that perseverance and practice were all that were necessary to ensure success, with Mr. Melling at the helm, and most probably such would have received verification had not an unhappy circumstance occurred which causes me to relate the most painful episode in the whole of this history.

On Thursday, November 10th, 1870, whilst conducting one of his bands at the funeral of a late comrade, Mr. Melling became suddenly attacked with a fit from which he never recovered. He was immediately conveyed home from this scene of melancholious excitement, and everything that could possibly be thought of in the shape of restoratives were procured; but all to no avail, for on Sunday evening, the 13th inst., only three days later, he expired at the age of forty-one.



JAMES ALFRED MELLING.



It would be impossible to express the mingled sensations of grief excited by the news of this sudden calamity to one whose talented abilities and beneficent services were largely known throughout the country; for by his death the musical fraternity felt that a vacancy had been occasioned that could not easily be filled up. When the day of the funeral arrived (Thursday), a most impressive spectacle was witnessed; upwards of 200 musicians from various parts of the country, in addition to a band of fifty performers, selected from the orchestras of Charles Hallé, the Theatre Royal, Pomona, Belle Vue, etc., assembled with their instruments draped in black, to take part in the mournful proceedings. At three o'clock the band assembled in front of the house, and played, under the baton of Mr. Oliver Gags, "Sleepers, wake! a voice is calling," in a most impressive manner. After this the funeral *cortege* started, and took the route along Ward Street, York Street, and Chester Road, to St. George's Church, preceded by Mr. Joseph Higham, bandmaster of the 1st M.R.V., Mr. Thomas Higham, Mr. Swallow, professor of music, and numerous other musical professors, as mourners. Next came the band, playing the Dead March in "Saul," the other musicians carrying their instruments reversed; the drums, draped in black, followed by the hearse, and mourning coaches containing the widow, son, and relatives. On the way to the church, it would be an impossibility to convey an adequate idea of the multitude of persons who crowded from all parts of the town and country to witness this interesting yet mournful spectacle. All along the route every place that suggested a possibility of seeing a part of the procession was crowded; from the shop windows to the roofs of houses every space was occupied.

At the church the corpse was met by the Rev. Canon Whitelegg, rector of the parish, who read the burial service, whilst Mr. Swallow officiated at the organ with the Dead March in "Saul;" the band concluding by rendering "The Vital Spark" at the grave-side.

Never was the loss of a public benefactor more keenly felt, for Mr. Melling was known to the profession as a most expert and clever musician, who devoted his time and attention for many years to the arranging of music for several local and country bands; hence the veritable loss occasioned. However, "he is not dead whose fame survives," and in this case "the actions of the dead are lessons for the living;" but, says Sir Henry Englefield, "were public benefactors allowed to pass away like 'hewers of wood and drawers of water,' without commemoration, genius and enterprise would be deprived of their most coveted distinction." With the author of "Night Thoughts" we may say that

Some when they die, die all; their mouldering clay  
Is but an emblem of their memories;  
The space quite closes up through which they passed.  
That He has lived he leaves a mark behind,  
Shall pluck the shining page from vulgar Time,  
And leave it whole to late posterity.

Having suffered this bereavement, and just at a time when fortune seemed to be smiling upon them, the members had to look for another to take the place of their late conductor; therefore in March, 1871, the choice fell upon Mr. William Arkell, of Manchester.

This gentleman's success with the band was not very marked, owing to the fact, perhaps, of the unsettled state of affairs caused by the loss of their former instructor. His generalship lasted for a term of about three years, during which time two fourth prizes were taken, one at Belle Vue, and the other at Gorton.





THOMAS GERMAN, ESQ.



MR. WILLIAM ARKELL.

In 1874, Mr. Arkell was succeeded by Mr. Thomas German, principal trombone for many years of Hallé's Orchestra, who also took two prizes, viz., third prize at Belle Vue, 1874, and fourth prize at Pomona, 1875.

It may be mentioned here that the prizes gained under the conductorship of Mr. German are worthy of special note from the fact that the band figured higher in the Belle Vue prize list than on any previous occasion up to 1885. Again also the fourth prize, at Pomona, was gained among such noted bands as Meltham Mills, who took third prize, Black Dyke, the second, and Nelson the first prize, which consisted of £50 in cash, an euphonium value £27, a cornet value £20, and a silver medal to each member of the band, the whole constituting the largest cash prize that had ever been won by any band till the year 1886, when Besses-o' th' Barn took the first prize of £60 in cash at Edinburgh International Exhibition.

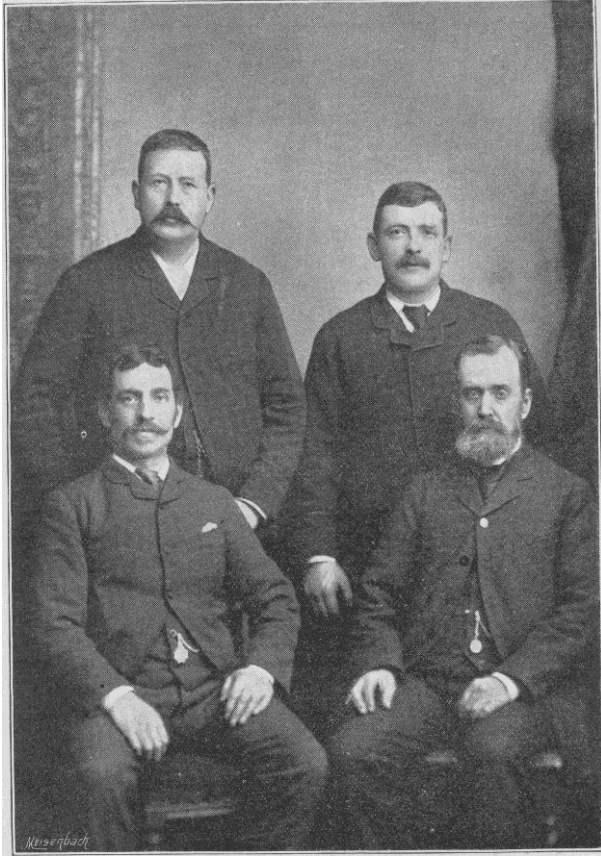
Even at this period the band does not seem to have recouped themselves from the loss sustained through the death of their veteran conductor. Things went on from bad to worse, till at the end of the year, through sheer discouragement, another disturbance ensued, which ultimately almost led to the breaking up of the band, causing all to give up with the exception of four members, viz.: Messrs. Robert Jackson, Edwin Bleakley, John Bell, and Abel Ogden.

To these four undoubtedly belong "the palm branch and triumphant song;" and to them the proud position of the band at the present time, to a certain degree, may be accredited, and not to those, who, through want of tact and diligence, seek to end their grief by one momentous clash of altercations which should finally lead to a sudden prostration.

If thou canst plan a noble deed,  
And never flag till it succeed,  
Though in the strife thy heart should bleed,  
Whatever obstacles control;  
Thine hour will come — go on, true soul!  
Thou'lt win the prize, thou'lt reach the goal.

*Mackay.*

Titles of honour conferred upon such as have no personal merit are at best but the royal stamp set upon base metal. Hard work is the price asked for success, the knowledge of which inspired this noble quartette to work together with renewed vigour, and surmount these serious misfortunes. They therefore determined, if possible, and at all risks, to keep the band going, very soon succeeded in recouping themselves by getting all vacant



R. JACKSON

E. BLEAKLEY

J. BELL

A. OGDEN

That which we are, we are,  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

*Tennyson.*

places filled up again with learners; each one taking his own allotted number of pupils and rehearsing them nightly at home.

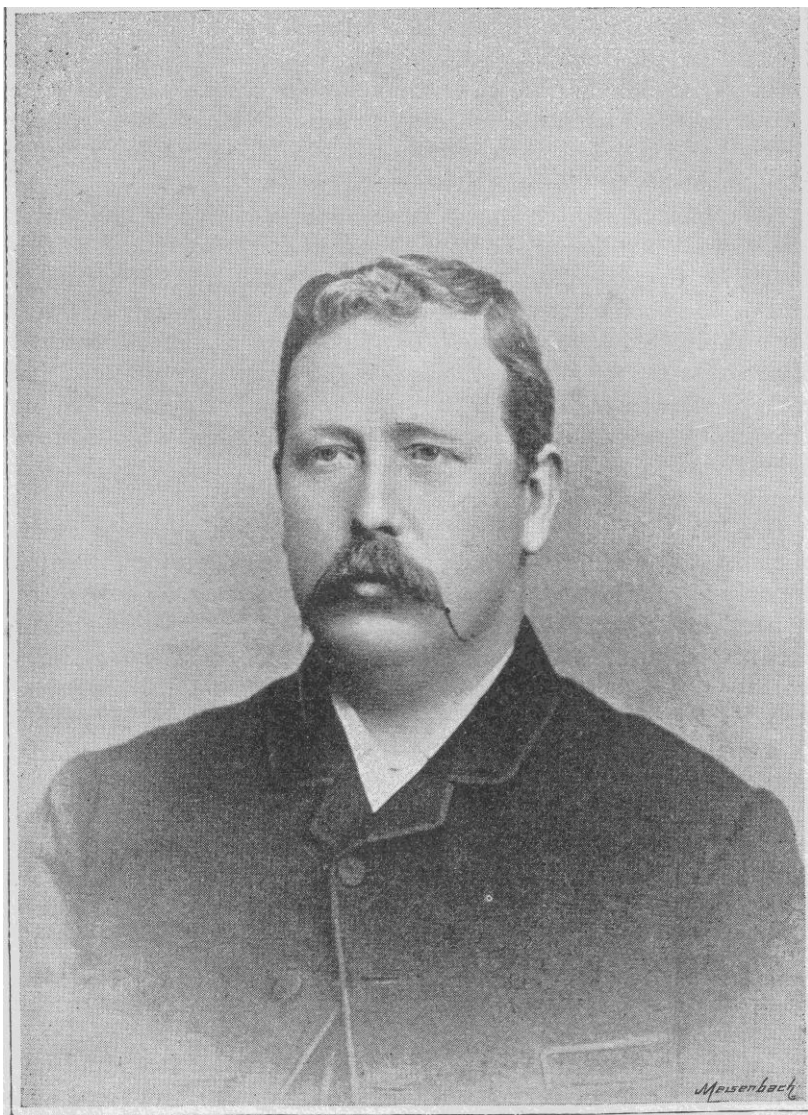
In the interim, Mr. Robert Jackson had succeeded Mr. Walker Hulton as bandmaster, but existing exigencies now made it necessary for him to take the conductorship whilst the band were labouring under such difficulties, a position to which he was duly elected, and fulfilled in a very creditable manner from 1875 to 1878, inclusive.

Mr. Jackson, to whom we must undoubtedly give very great credit, was born during the year 1853, a rather remarkable coincidence, for that was the year that the band changed from reed to brass. He commenced his musical career at a very early age with the "Whitefield School Band." Finding, however, that his chances of progress among such talent as this rather meagre organisation comprised, was of a rather unpromising nature, he wasted no time in the endeavour to secure a place in one that should prove more beneficial to him, and accordingly, at the age of 15, he was enrolled a member of the Besses-o' th'-Barn Band.

He had not been playing many months before he gave evidence of rare musical abilities, which secured for him the proud position not only of solo cornet, but bandmaster and conductor. The position of bandmaster he has held ever since; and during his three years' conductorship, the band took prizes as follows:— 1st prize, Farnworth, £20; 1st prize, Ramsbottom, £10, and 1st prize, Quickstep, 30s.; 3rd prize, Radcliffe, £2 10s.; and 5th prize, Heywood, £1 10s.; thus bringing the prize list up to three firsts, three thirds, five fourths, and three fifths, to the value of £166 6s.

He is the oldest member of the band, and amongst the many bands he has conducted, independently of his own, are Bury Borough, Besses-o' th'-Barn Congregational, Prestwich, St. Margarets, Holyrood, Middleton, Halliwell, Eccles, Radcliffe Public, Radcliffe Old, Ramsbottom, Unsworth, Hollins, Stubbin's Vale, &c; is the winner of several prizes as cornet soloist, and the recipient of many valuable presents from the several bands he has been connected with.

In his demeanour he is remarkably graceful, honest, and unassuming; a man of very few words, whose qualities of force and judgment are conspicuous in a superlative degree. In his face he carries the picture of happiness and contentment, and nothing that I could add would be more appropriate than the few remarks of "An admirer" in the *Brass Band News* of September, 1889. Says he:



MR. ROBERT JACKSON (a faithful friend).

“You know the original of the above photo to be a man of sterling worth; whether as a man or as an artist. A gentleman of Nature’s own making, as I suppose all *true* gentlemen are, is our mutual friend, Mr. Robert Jackson, familiarly and affectionately called ‘Bob’ Jackson in his immediate circle of friends. Since he joined the band, 19 years ago, he has worked and waited with only one object in view, viz.: to make the Besses Band the best brass band in the world. I am not going to say whether he has attained that object or not; I leave that to your intelligent readers. You will observe that I do not head this notice as the *famous* Besses-o’ th’-Barn; whatever fame belongs to the Besses Band is due to Mr. Jackson, and he has this year shown the band world what he considers a *good* band. True, the people of Whitefield and Besses-o’ th’-Barn support the band like Britons, and are fonder of the band almost than the bandsmen themselves; all honour to them for it. But of no man are they so proud as the subject of this sketch. I do not think he has an enemy in the whole world, and if he has, he never deserved the enmity. No one ever heard ‘Bob’ say an unkind word of a rival, and certainly never did he say an untrue one, for he is such a plain, honest, straightforward, and manly fellow, that he could not stoop to anything underhand. .

“You, I know have often seen him in the centre of the band, coat and hat off, sleeves rolled up, working like a man who meant business, for he never did let an error pass. He weeds clean as he goes along; he does not pluck half the weeds, and then turn back for those he left growing, but he has such a quiet, simple, and manly way of asking his men to correct faults, that it is a positive pleasure to be corrected by him. No shouting, or storming with him; oh, no. The ready joke, *en passant*, keeps all in good humour, and his soft answers turn away all wrath.

“Do not let it be supposed that I claim all the success of Besses-o’ th’-Barn for Mr. Jackson. No, a thousand times, no! The finish, the polish, and the exquisite grace that characterises all their performances is the result of that perfect artist, Mr. Alexander Owen; but before Mr. Owen beautifies a piece, it has to be built correctly by our friend who has also to keep the material ‘A1.’ I am quite certain that were it possible that the amateur band teachers of this country could each pass a few nights in Besses’ band room, and see the band practice for a first-class event, it would work a revolution in bands; perfect order, perfect obedience, and perfect good humour, combined with earnest art-seeking work reigneth there.”

Yes, of such is our esteemed and honoured friend, Mr. Robert Jackson. I remember well, a short time ago, when a certain member of the band had done something contrary to the wishes of the majority, Mr. Jackson was to



have given him a severe reprimand, but on the individual entering the room, looking not altogether in the best of humours, he was allowed to pass on without his attention being drawn to the matter. On being questioned as to his reasons for not introducing the censure, Mr. Jackson, in his soft and genial manner, very quietly replied, "I looked in his face, and very soon saw that he could not stand it." And so it is; he is so mindful of causing any unpleasantness that his wonderful powers of forethought are always brought into requisition, and used with discretion, before saving anything that might prove in any shape or form a stumbling-block in the way of progress. Never was there a heated discussion or argument but Mr. Jackson could quell it, and that without the least trouble too. The members look upon him as a father, a benefactor, and one that they can with safety submit any doubtful business to, as a *wise and prudent counsel*.

May it please the Almighty God to spare him to reign amongst them for years to come, in order to infuse that beautiful, soft, kind, genial, and brotherly love, into each and every individual, which is so wonderfully conspicuous in his own daily actions.

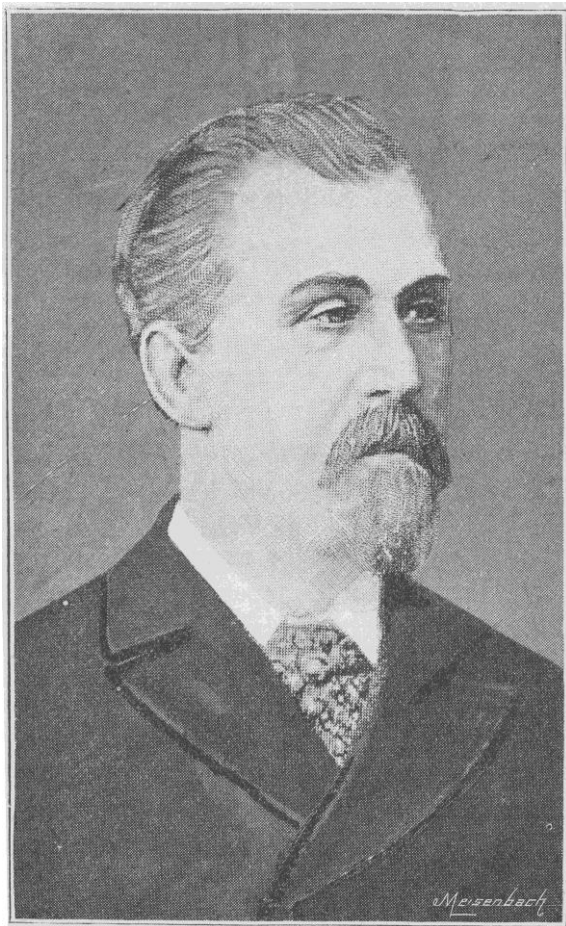
It is an acknowledged fact that the success of the band in a great measure is due to his own commanding influence over them, resulting in a remarkable sense of mutual affection and reciprocity one towards another.

Mine honest friend,  
I turn you not away, but like a master  
Married to your good service, stay till death.  
I ask no more.

Having been so far successful under Mr. Jackson's generalship, and wishing to improve still more on their former career, it was suggested, and agreed to accordingly, that the services of Mr. John Gladney of Manchester (conductor for many years, in fact, throughout the whole of the most brilliant career of the once famous Meltham Mills Band), be brought into requisition.

Mr. Gladney, who was born in the year 1839, devoted his studies at a very early age to the violin, flute, and piano. He, however, later on in life transferred his affections to the clarinet, with which he became associated with Jullien's celebrated orchestra, in addition to other well-known and famous operatic companies. He has also played for over thirty years with Sir Charles Hallé, a position he has only recently resigned on account of other pressing engagements with most of his bands. He is an old veteran of the contest field, whose name is familiar to every bandsman throughout the brass band world as a thorough musician, and a gentleman that has been

most remarkably successful as a band trainer and conductor; consequently, at the present time, he is in possession of a splendid variety of gold and silver medals, &c., won and presented to him by his bands.



MR. JOHN GLADNEY.

The introduction of Mr. Gladney to Besses not only revealed a decided improvement in the playing of the band, but brought about a most lucky circumstance, which, judiciously taken advantage of, at once proved a great benefactor to them on the contest field.

A certain band in Yorkshire having broken up, the instruments (a special make, which were provided, along with uniform, &c., by Angus Holden, Esq., M.P., at a considerable cost), were advertised to be sold by auction. Mr. Gladney, knowing full well the sterling value of them, at once advised the members of the band (Besses) to secure them. Not having, however, the necessary funds for their purchase, a few admirers and friends, once more came to the front kindly volunteering to provide them, and, accordingly, the instruments were obtained through Mr. Gladney at a cost of £160.

This occurred in December, 1879, the band turning out with them for the first time on New Year's Day, 1880.

The self-same instruments have been, and are, in use up to the present day, each one bearing the name, "Angus Holden, Esq." richly engraved on the bell.

Commencing with Mr. Gladney in 1879, the band attended a number of contests, taking two first prizes, two seconds, two thirds, and two fifths, to the amount of £56. The next year, 1880, two first prizes, five seconds, one third, and two fourths, were taken, to the value of £56 also.

During 1881-2, they did not take part in many competitions, but were successful in obtaining two first prizes, two thirds, one fourth, and one fifth, to the value of £41 15s.

At this time, the heavy expenses incurred by the purchase of their new instruments, the retaining of Mr. Gladney, and other necessary items for contest, it was found that the expenditure for the past few years had so very far exceeded the income, that the services of Mr. Gladney would necessarily have to be dispensed with, and this the members (though loth to part with one who had been their devoted champion of success), determined, in order to keep the band on its feet, and avert another clash similar to that of 1875.

Thus, after four short years, the career of Mr. Gladney was closed, leaving behind him, nevertheless, a compendium of successes totally eclipsing all that had been done previously.

## PRIZES WON UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. JOHN GLADNEY.

*From 1879 to 1882, inclusive.*

| 1879.               |                     | Value.           |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|
|                     | Prizes.             |                  |
| Bedford Leigh       | 3rd                 | 3 0 0            |
| Pemberton           | 2nd                 | 12 0 0           |
| Horwich             | 2nd                 | 5 0 0            |
| Heywood             | 1st                 | 15 0 0           |
| Padiham             | 5th                 | 2 0 0            |
| Rochdale            | 1st                 | 13 0 0           |
| Radcliffe           | 3rd                 | 5 0 0            |
| Tottington          | 5th                 | 1 0 0            |
| 1880.               |                     |                  |
| Blackrod            | 3rd                 | 3 0 0            |
| Westhoughton        | 4th                 | 2 0 0            |
| Padiham             | 1st                 | 19 10 0          |
| Bury                | divided 2nd & 3rd ) | 6 0 0            |
| Bury Quickstep      | 1st )               |                  |
| Bury Public         | 2nd                 | 7 0 0            |
| Rochdale            | 2nd                 | 7 0 0            |
| Clitheroe           | 4th                 | 5 10 0           |
| Harpurhey           | 2nd                 | 5 0 0            |
| Harpurhey Quickstep | 2nd                 | 1 0 0            |
| 1881.               |                     |                  |
| Blackrod            | divided 3rd & 4th   | 2 5 0            |
| Liverpool           | 3rd                 | 15 0 0           |
| Liverpool Quickstep | 1st                 | 1 10 0           |
| Middleton           | 5th                 | 1 0 0            |
| 1882.               |                     |                  |
| Blackpool           | 1st                 | 20 0 0           |
| Farnworth           | 4th                 | 2 0 0            |
| Total               |                     | <u>£153 15 0</u> |

With a view to being at less expense, and still maintain the position they had already gained, they now engaged the services of Mr. G. F. Birkenshaw, of Bradford, Yorkshire, solo cornettist and conductor.

Mr. Birkenshaw, whose name we find associated with all the crack bands of his day, is a very clever executant on the cornet.

He succeeded Mr. Owen, when that gentleman severed his connection with Meltham as solo cornet. As a man he is of a very gentlemanly, honest and straightforward disposition, and the fact of this, coupled with his exceptional capabilities, have won for him thousands of admirers throughout the kingdom. He is conductor of many bands at the present time and holder of many valuable trophies won at numerous competitions.

Mr. Birkenshaw's career with the band, however, was of very short duration, lasting as it did only for one season; though, nevertheless, the band under his care had shown a slight improvement upon their previous performances; for at the end of the year, out of twelve contests, they had taken one first prize, two seconds, two thirds, two fourths, and one fifth, amounting in value to £59 13s.



MR. G. F. BIRKENSHAW (Solo Cornettist and Conductor)



During this year (1883) some very remarkable and important changes took place, which in themselves led to a complete re-organisation throughout the whole of the band.

On the 28th May, a certain band connected with the Congregational Church School, at Besses-o' th'-Barn, which had been in existence for some nine or ten years, broke up, causing some seven members, viz., Benjamin Livsey, Frank Barlow, George Pollitt, Thomas Hampson, James Hilton, Thomas J. Hampson, and another, to be drafted into the old band; only just previously William Lawson had also been made a member; then again, Robert Eastwood, through persuasion, betook to his favourite instrument, the bass or G Trombone, which he had only a short time previously deserted; and lastly, on November 26th, John Frederick Carter, the famous euphoniumist of Boarshurst Band was engaged, whilst John Briggs shortly afterwards repaired to the baritone.

Under such very auspicious circumstances they went through the season's contests, finishing up, as will be seen, at Blackburn, December 8th. Here they played Mr. Gladney's selection from "Weber's Works," with Mr. W. Lawson as solo trombone (he having changed from second euphonium to that instrument only one month previously, through the retirement of that very able, old, and true veteran, and favourite, Mr. Abel Ogden), and John Frederick Carter as euphonium for the first time.

Through some very declamatory and decorous remarks by certain individuals at this contest, a few warm-hearted zealots and fellow-workman subscribers, whose whole heart and soul seemed to be embodied in the interests and welfare of the band, put their heads, and I might say the contents of their pockets, together (so far as circumstances would allow), set to work and subscribed the handsome sum of £40; determined if possible to raise a band that should hold its own against all comers, doing credit to themselves and neighbourhood as well.

Why, was the question oft-times asked, should we not be able to raise a band in this district equal to such splendid organizations as Meltham, Black Dyke, Oldham, Accrington, Boarshurst, Stalybridge, Mossley, &c., &c.? Never since 1871, the year that the once famed Bacup collapsed, had Lancashire been able to hold her own in a superlative degree, against such creditable combinations as Yorkshire afforded.

Buoyed up with the success of their endeavours, a deputation was quickly formed from among this body of ambitious enthusiasts to wait upon, for the second time, Mr. Alexander Owen, of Stalybridge, the renowned band teacher and cornet *virtuoso*, and ascertain his terms for

taking in hand the conductorship of our enterprising subjects, who were at this particular period rehearsing in the storeroom adjoining the "New Grove Inn," Whitefield, occupied by Mr. William Jones, tenor-horn player.

Mr. Owen, whose name and fame extend throughout the universe, may well and truly be described as one of the pioneers of musical art in the brass band sphere; he having accomplished feats and secured successes such as have not a rival, and stand absolutely without comparison in the whole history of the brass band world. His sterling qualities as a teacher stand irreproachable. As an artist he has few if any equals. His name we find associated with all the leading prize bands of his day, namely:—Meltham Mills, Stalybridge, Boarshurst, Oldham Rifles, Black Dyke, Leeds Forge, Kingston Mills, Clayton Le Moors, Mossley, Linthwaite, Saltaire, Rochdale Borough, &c. &c., and at the present day is conductor of almost thirty bands; in addition to having been also the only recognised conductor of the Stalybridge Harmonic Society for many years past, a position he has only very recently resigned, on account of his arduous and onerous duties. He is the recipient of many elaborate and flattering illuminated addresses, from those bands and societies with which he has been connected for years past, and the holder of many beautiful and costly presents acquired by the most wonderful executive talents with which he is endowed for playing on the cornet. A more modest, unpretentious, or unassuming individual one could not possibly meet with, and a thorough gentleman in every sense of the term, who, rather than do harm in return to one that had done him an injury, would extend towards him the hand of charity. This the writer has proved in many cases and can vouch for it.

In speaking of his talents and qualifications nothing could be more appropriately adapted, than a quotation of the few lines as dedicated to him in the *Brass Band News* for June, 1888:—

Good-morrow, Alexander; . . . .  
 I do not think a braver gentleman,  
 More active, valiant, or more valiant young,  
 More daring to be bold, is now alive  
 To grace this age with noble deeds;  
 . . . . .  
 The gentleman is learned and a most rare speaker,  
 To nature none more bound, his training such  
 That he may furnish and instruct great teachers,  
 And never seek for aid out of himself.  
 . . . . .  
 All the courses of his life doth show



*He* is not in the run of common men;  
 Where is he living – clipp'd in with the sea  
 That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales,  
 Which calls *him* pupil, or hath read to *him*?  
 And bring *him* out, that is but woman's son,  
 Can trace *him* in the tedious ways of art,  
 And hold *him* pace in deep experiments.

He is simply the rarest man i' the world.

. . . . .  
 . . . . . A famous man,  
 With what his valour did enrich his wit,  
 His wit set down to make his valour live;  
 Death makes no conquest of this conqueror,  
 For now he lives in fame.

. . . . .  
 The noblest mind he carries,  
 That ever governed man.

Long may he live in fortunes!

In contemplating the lives of most men, who by their greatness have rendered their name immortal, we regard them as heroes and are amazed at their wonderful power and accomplishments, and on reading them it is superfluous to say it is almost impossible to suppress the wonderful fire of admiration which a detailed account of their works kindles in our breast. But when we find one of almost superhuman genius, of superb qualifications and worthy of all distinction, content to hide (or let be hid) the fruits of their labours under a bushel, we are apt on reflection, and not unjustifiably, to blame and apply rather the tender rod of censure upon them at our own disappointment; for the works of our great masters are fruitful lessons for the scholar or student, and genius by this is certainly deprived of her most coveted distinction.

Owing to his modest frame of mind (a noticeable feature in Mr. Owen's disposition), I am reluctantly prevented from giving in detail an account or biography of his life, which would as a matter of fact be very interesting to my readers; therefore, as it is we shall all have to be content with a few of the many incidents in connection with his sparkling and brilliant career.



Mr. Owen, whom we may almost define as a self-learned man, and an ardent lover of music, was born during the year 1851. The wonderful precocity of his talents revealed itself at a very early age — indeed in his infancy. Our first introduction to him, however, is at the time he entered the contesting field with Stalybridge Band, 1868; after which, at the close of 1875, we find him engaged as solo-cornet with the celebrated Meltham Mills Band with whom he afterwards played throughout the whole of their most wonderful career. In such a proud position as this he was afforded ample opportunities for showing off his wonderful talents, which won for him many testimonials of his executive abilities, and thousands of admirers.

Prompted now by various influences he almost immediately took upon himself the task of conducting contesting bands. His remarkable success in this sphere, very soon elicited for him numerous engagements, amongst which were most notable those of Boarshurst, 1877 to 1884, and Black Dyke, 1879 to 1888.

His success with these two bands, especially, is all the more remarkable from the fact of his having, in a short space of time, worked them up so creditably as to actually defeat his own band, of which he was solo-cornet player, and that, too, when in the meridian of their success, namely, Meltham Mills.

In this capacity his influence very soon began to make itself known and felt by his several “opponents,” yet “friendly rivals,” on the contest field; for, as a conductor, he has taken twice as many prizes as any other gentleman.

However, Mr. Owen's terms were at once accepted; and accordingly he was engaged to give the first lesson, February 24th, 1884, when evidence of his sterling qualities were at once acknowledged, and for a proof of that gentleman's unquestionable capabilities, the splendid career of the band from that date up to the present time only needs to be considered which speaks volumes in his favour; they having achieved successes such as have never been equalled by any other band in the world.

Fortune now having favoured them in securing what they felt had been a necessity for years past, they set to work preparing for the first contest of the season — Trawden, from whence they returned with first honours, and a special prize for best euphonium player, Mr. J. F. Carter.

Buoyed up with this brilliant success for a beginning, they attended contest after contest, finishing up the season by making a clean sweep at

Derby with A. Owen's selection from Rossini's Works, for the first time, where they took, along with first prize, all the three special prizes for best euphonium, trombone, and cornet players. Thus at the end of the year, out of a total of fourteen competitions, they could boast of eight first prizes, three seconds, one fourth, and one sixth, exclusive of five special prizes, amounting in total value to £213 15s., and moreover defeating every band they came across (including all the cracks) with the exception of Honley (the remains of grand old Meltham, which itself existed only till the year 1887) who took the first prize at Southport to "Besses" second, also first prize at Belle Vue the same year. In all fairness to the band it should be here stated that Mr. Owen did not conduct at this particular contest (Southport) owing to the fact of his being invalided.

About 11.25 o'clock on Wednesday evening, May 21st, whilst on his way home from practising one of his bands (Lobb Mills, Todmorden), he was suddenly thrown out of his trap and very severely injured about the arms, face and body. Medical assistance was immediately procured in Dr. Wallace, of Rochdale, who in a few hours consented to Mr. Owen's request to be conveyed home in a cab.

It was greatly feared for a long time that this terrible accident would result in his playing qualities being taken from him, as his right arm had to be bandaged up, and all his teeth were loose, the former for many weeks, and the latter many months. Heedless of this, however, and anxious for his band's reputation, he made a journey up to Whitefield in order to give Mr. Jackson instructions on a final rehearsal with the Southport test-piece, "Joan of Arc." I well remember the time, Mr. Owen could neither use his right arm (for that he had bandaged up and in a sling) nor dare to open his mouth to talk; all his ideas having to be given by gesture and the movements of his left arm. He was likewise a visitor, and spectator, at the contest in the same way, but a few months afterwards saw him almost right again, though not so well as to allow him to play during that season.

But to return to the subject. What could they (the band) otherwise do now, but think that with the retention of Mr. Owen, their success was established? and who can say that their judgment was not judicious and well merited? or differ as to its justification?

The success of the season brought on numerous engagements for the winter months, which in themselves produced a very marked effect in the wonderful incentive it gave to the members to stick together, and fully prepare themselves for the contest season of 1885.

Having scored such success at the first-class contests of 1884 (although

they attended but few), and considering the brilliant victory at Derby, with the difficult selection “Reminiscences of Rossini” (that which Black Dyke, Boarshurst, Oldham Rifles, Accrington, &c., in fact, all the leading prize bands had been playing for a few years), they decided to keep to nothing but first-class competitions in future.

Mr. Owen had now almost recovered and they entered the contest-field with the greatest confidence of success.

The most notable among the list of competitions during the year was that at Alloa, the first “brass band competition” (open to all) ever held in Scotland.

In order to raise the necessary funds for travelling expenses, &c., the honorary members were now again to the fore in very readily organizing a football contest, at Besses-o' th'-Barn, which realized the handsome sum of £40.

With such a substantial sum the band never hesitated in the least, but took “Rossini” to Scotland.

Owing to the very scanty education and slight knowledge of brass band music possessed by our “braw lads o' Galee” at this particular time, the prizes, of course all went to the English bands; in fact, it was a complete walk over for our Lancashire and Yorkshire cracks, Besses taking the first prize of £40 in cash, Oldham Rifles the second, Honley the third, and Linthwaite fourth. A quick-step contest was also won by Besses, Oldham Rifles second.

That contest I shall always remember; 'twas a sight once seen never to be forgotten. Our friends over the border, never before having heard any of our Lancashire and Yorkshire prize bands, gathered in their thousands in the beautiful park within the policies of the “Earl of Mar and Kellie,” to see and hear this contest or fight for the supremacy of Great Britain.

The contest over, and the decision given, the utmost excitement ensued; the audience were in ecstasies, having been literally carried away by what seemed to them, from brass instruments, heavenly music, and wonderful playing of the English bands, and when our heroes (Besses) were preparing to again mount the platform, to give them another short selection, nothing would suffice but that they must *lift* them on, and this they *did* and *would* do, one by one, even to Mr. Owen himself.

Now, having finished, and preparing to go, the audience, amidst roars of applause, pressed forward to keep them on the stage, but immediately on

being informed by Mr. Owen that arrangements had been made in the meantime to catch a train to Stirling, due in about fifteen minutes, they at once gave way and responded to the call manfully, one and all, and what was more, sent a small contingent of men to clear the way, in order that nothing should obstruct or interfere with the band's progress. But, immediately they had gone forward, and the band behind struck up with the grand old tune of "Sandon," better known as "Edwinston," the audience again closed round, and entreated, frantically almost, to carry them shoulder high.

Never was such a scene witnessed before. In the park, trees, plants, and shrubs, were all trampled down by the great crowd, who, in their eagerness to catch a glimpse of one or another of the bandsmen, pushed forward with all their might and energy.

On emerging from the park gates, the street (though a rather wide one, which was lined on either side, close to the edge of the footpath with toy, fruit, and refreshment stalls of every description, such as is seen at a fair), was not wide enough to admit of the large stream of holiday-seekers and enthusiasts; consequently, the great amount of pressure from behind, forced those in front to go not as they would, nor as they pleased, and eventually the stalls were swept away in front of them. It really makes one laugh outright whenever recalled to mind. To see the toys, cocoanuts, oranges, sweetmeats, &c., &c., all rolling about the thoroughfare, and nobody, with the exception of interested parties, seeming to take the least notice of them; in fact, the crowd was so enraptured with the music that they could neither see nor hear anything else; and the bandsmen, one here, and another there, scattered among them, yet still playing, thinking of nothing but catching the train for Stirling.

On nearing the station, we found the stationmaster, along with those who had gone on before, standing on the bridge, and the train waiting till each member had arrived safely on the platform, amidst the waving of hats and handkerchiefs and wonderful ovations of the dense throng.

Such was the band's first visit to Scotland, and one, indeed, that can never be eradicated from the memory of any one single individual that had the good fortune to witness it. And, up to this present day, their announcement or appearance in any part of that country is the signal for a remarkable, warm, and hearty reception.

They finished the season by taking, out of eleven competitions, eight first prizes, one second, and two thirds, in addition to one special prize, amounting altogether in value to £264 1s.; quite an improvement on the

previous year.

At the end of this same year, another very important change took place. A certain building, adjoining the Red King Hotel, which had been erected at the expense of Mr. J. Hacking, late landlord of the Red King, formerly and previous to being rebuilt called William IV., was the subject of some comment by certain individuals in connection with the band, in reference to the feasibility of its suggestive adaptability for a band room, and social or workingmen's club. Accordingly, upon the recommendation of one or two, a meeting was convened for the purpose of discussing the same, which ended in a resolution being adopted, appointing and authorising a deputation, consisting of three or four members, to wait upon Mr. Hacking, relative to the acquiring of the premises.

This accomplished satisfactorily, a special meeting of band members and honorary members was called for the purpose of adopting, or otherwise, Mr. Hacking's terms, which proved to be £10 per year rental, with the option of purchase at any time for £150.

The meeting resolved unanimously (with the exception of two dissentients), to rent the premises for the first year, and if possible, purchase at the expiration of that term. And, finally, in November, 1885, articles and conditions were signed to that effect.

The building was now stripped from roof to floor, cleaned and beautified throughout, and in addition to a refreshment bar, the games of billiards, cards, draughts, &c., instituted. The result being a great inducement for honorary members to join, at a subscription of one shilling per quarter, the proceeds of which, after defraying all necessary or incumbent expenses, to be devoted to the tuition fund of the band; the band members to be financially responsible under the title of "Besses-o' th'-Barn Old Band Social Club Union."

The results of the first few months' working of the Club were very gratifying, and this, with the continued booking of engagements, which month by month increased, proved a very strong impetus to still pull together and try to verify the superlative claims of the past by a repetition of similar successes.

This they did, and entered on the season's work by taking the second prize at Colne; from thence to Alloa (Scotland), where they again took first prize of £40 in cash, and in like manner they went through the season, finishing up with a brilliant success at the International Exhibition, Edinburgh, by taking the first prize of £60 in cash, this being the largest

money prize ever won by any band. The number of contests attended was fourteen, and prizes taken were nine firsts, three seconds, and two thirds (one being a tie), in addition to three special prizes, amounting in total value to £355 10s.

One thing worthy of note during this season's contests was that at Liverpool, where the third and fourth prizes were divided between our noble worthies and Leeds Forge, this being the first competition in which the two bands engaged as rivals.

As most people are aware, this fine band took its name from the place with which they were connected as employees — The Leeds Forge, the proprietor being Sampson Fox, Esq., Mayor of Harrogate. This gentleman, for gentleman he was, provided the band with all necessary equipments; including two sets of instruments, two suits of uniform, the second of which was on a most elaborate scale, a good substantial sum for tuition expenses, and leave of absence from work for practice in cases of special competitions; in fact, everything that could possibly be desired, necessary to the development of a first-class band.

Moreover, seeing that the Besses-o' th'-Barn had occupied for a few years the premier position in contesting circles (a position which his own band had struggled hard to gain), as an inducement to them he gratuitously proposed to present to each member a handsome gold medal, in addition to an extra sum of money to be devoted to the working expenses of the band in general, in the event of their ever defeating the Besses-o' th'-Barn in any competition.

All this was done purely and simply from motives of love and interest for the welfare of his own townspeople and the furthering of the musical cause.

For a few years, Mr. Edwin Swift conducted, when he afterwards retired, and Mr. Owen took up the position.

In the securing of Mr. Owen, they quite naturally revelled in the conviction of their long-coveted aim being now an established fact. And so it was; but only to a certain extent, for at almost every contest wherever we find Besses, we can see Leeds Forge following on close to their heels. This occurred incessantly till August 2nd, 1890, when, at Wyke, they for the first time accomplished their object.

The fight had been a hard and very determined one, though it had lasted, as will be seen, for four years, and whether or not it was earned, there is not the least doubt it was every whit deserved, if only for the brave



and manly spirit of determination so wonderfully and conspicuously portrayed through the whole of their career.

In the meantime (sad to say), changes had taken place in connection with the management and directorate of the firm, which also had a most telling effect in other quarters. The band must not now and in future enjoy the privileges they once so lavishly possessed, and owing to some unexplained cause or other, after defeating Besses once more at Lincoln in the same year, and once at Hyde in 1891, the famous Leeds Forge Band ceased to exist.

The next year, 1887 (Queen Victoria's Jubilee), proved in many respects to be one of very exceptional note for Besses. The success which had attended their efforts on the contest field, and the acquiring of the club building, now placed them in a position to purchase the whole of the premises.

This accomplished, a movement was immediately set on foot for the purpose of forming the band into a *Limited Company*. Subsequently, a special meeting of bandsmen was convened, and the originator's views very affably explained.

The ideas phenomenally conveyed, as was expected, were received with every indication of approval, and steps were at once taken to carry them into effect; resulting in the Articles of Association being signed and sealed on March 30th, 1887. The following is an extract.

#### MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION.

*Dated March 30th, 1887.*

1st.—The name of the Company is the “BESSES-O' TH'-BARN OLD BAND UNION, LIMITED.”

2nd.—The offices of the Company will be situate in England.

3rd.—The objects for which the Company is established are:—

(1) To establish and maintain a Brass Band at or in the neighbourhood of Whitefield, in the County of Lancaster, for the performance of high-class music by forming into a Company under the above Acts, and taking over the musical instruments and other property of the Brass Band or Association called or known as the “Besses-o' th'-Barn Old Band Union” at present established at Whitefield aforesaid, and from time to time recruiting the Band by new members, all of whom shall be members of the Company, and to supply the Band with suitable instruments, music, equipments, instruction in music, and the appliances which may be necessary or expedient for promoting the proficiency of the Band; and also to purchase, take upon lease, exchange, hire, or otherwise acquire suitable land, buildings and premises for the use and accommodation of the Band, and any other property whether real or personal which may be necessary or convenient for the purposes of the Band, and also by the services of the Band, and from subscriptions, donations, legacies, or voluntary contributions to acquire funds for promoting and carrying into effect the aforesaid objects.

(2) To sell, improve, manage, develop, lease, or let from year to year, mortgage, dispose

of, or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property of the Band.

(3) To invest the moneys of the Band not immediately required upon such securities as may from time to time be determined.

(4) To enter and play at Brass Band Contests in Great Britain and Ireland; to acquire money by playing for remuneration in any other manner and to get up, conduct, and carry out any concert or other entertainment, or to join any other company, society, or person in carrying out any of the aforesaid objects.

(5) To do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.

4th.—The income and property of the Band whencesoever derived shall be applied towards the promotion of the objects of the Band as herein set forth, provided nevertheless, that the members of the Band performing on any occasion on which money shall be received, earned, or won by means of their services may receive out of such moneys such reasonable sums for travelling and other incidental expenses as the Committee of the Band shall from time to time determine. Provided also, that if (on taking the annual account of the Band in any year) there shall be a surplus of funds derived from the services of the Band beyond the amount required for the purposes thereof as aforesaid, and the payment and satisfaction of all the existing debts and liabilities such surplus shall be divided equally between such members of the Band as have been acting members thereof during the whole of the year immediately preceding the taking of such account.

5th.—Every member of the Band undertakes to contribute to the assets thereof in the event of the same being wound up during the time he is a member, or within one year afterwards for payment of the debts and liabilities thereof contracted before the time at which he ceases to be a member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up the same, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories amongst themselves, such amount as may be required not exceeding the sum of five pounds.

**W**e, the several persons whose names and addresses are subscribed, being members of the aforesaid Band or Association, called the “Besses-o’ th’-Barn Old Band Union, Limited,” are desirous of being formed into a Company in pursuance of this Memorandum of Association.

EDWIN BLEAKLEY,

98, Park Lane, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Bleacher.

PETER LIGHTBOWNE,

5, Lord Street, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Finisher.

JOHN THOMAS ALLEN,

Moss Lane, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Gardener.

BENJAMIN LIVSEY,

107, Manchester Old Road, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Warehouseman.

JOSEPH NATHAN HAMPSON,

16, Heap Street, Besses-o’ th’-Barn, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Finisher.

JOHN BELL,

The Green, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Finisher.

THOMAS HAMPSON,

Narrow Lane, WHITEFIELD, Lancashire, Labourer.

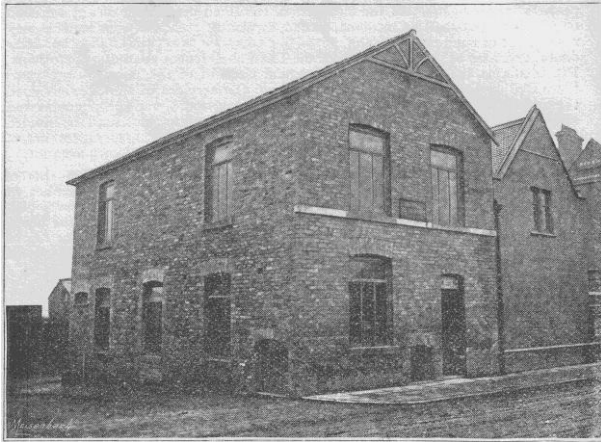
Dated this Thirtieth day of March, 1887.

Witness to the above Signatures, WM. T. JONES,

Clerk with Messrs. ALFRED GRUNDY, SON & CO.,  
Solicitors, Manchester.

Thus all was accomplished. “Besses-o’ th’-Barn Old Band Union, Limited,” is now the title. The monetary earnings of the members for the past twelve months had been willingly applied to the procurement of an

institution that should be for ever, while it stands, a source of gratification, pleasure and instruction, not only to them, the public, and their friends, but also their posterity. As recompense, the consolation afforded by the fact of their being the *first and only band in the kingdom* to provide an institution for the benefit of both the present and future generations, by forming themselves into a Limited Company, is ample and sufficient return for all their labours and acts of self-denial.



BESSES-O' TH'-BARN OLD BAND UNION, LIMITED, REGISTERED OFFICES, MOSS LANE, WHITEFIELD.

The contest season now upon them was again commenced, but not at first with any very vauntful results; due, probably, in the first instance, to the considerable laxity in practice, occasioned by the overwhelming excitement and eagerness, intermixed with a superfluous amount of work in bringing about the registration of the club, and secondly from the fact of having to play without solo-horn (Mr. G. Pollitt), whose daily occupation at that time necessarily detained him from attending the two first competitions. However, as the season advanced, the wheel of fortune turned considerably in their favour, for they closed the record by capturing the first prize at all the three Exhibitions — Liverpool, Newcastle, and Saltire. Altogether, eleven contests were attended, and the result was, six

first prizes, three thirds, one fourth, one fifth, and two specials, to the value of £246 9s.

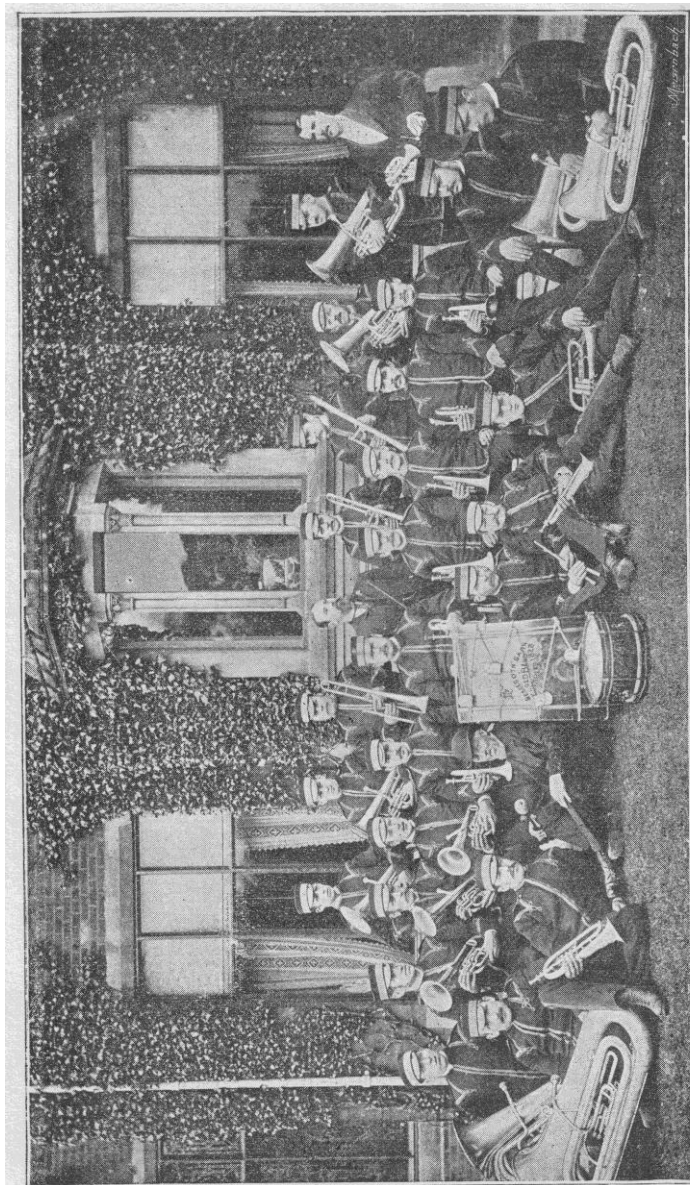
Following on the success at the Newcastle Exhibition came offer of an engagement for the week commencing October 10th.

Terms were forwarded and ultimately accepted; and as a rejoinder which speaks well for the band's *repertoire*, to say nothing of their capabilities, the programmes, two each day, contained not less than 100 different selections of music from the cream of composers, including: Handel, Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Bach, Meyerbeer, Gounod, Verdi, Berlioz, Spohr, Rossini, Wagner, Sullivan, Flotow, Balfe, Auber, Liszt, Weber, Donizetti, Gungl, Suppé, Weiss, Waldteufel, Bucalossi, etc., not one of which, except in the case of an encore, or special request, was repeated.

Considering the success which had followed Messrs. Owen and Jackson's honest, true, and never-failing efforts, it was deemed a matter of obligation and duty to shew the members' appreciation of their valuable services by some special mark of esteem. Under the auspices of the club, a tea-party, arranged for members of the band, the club, honorary members, and their wives, etc., was considered a most suitable occasion for the object.

After tea, Mr. George Wild, speaking in very complimentary terms, made the presentation — first to Mr. Owen and secondly to Mr. Jackson — which consisted of a very large and magnificent photograph of the band in a group, in handsome, English gilt frame. In addition to this Mr. Owen was also presented with a beautiful gold medal. Each member of the band also came in for one photo each, framed in polished oak, on a considerably smaller scale, though these measured thirty inches by twenty-five, and were valued at two guineas each. Mr. Edwin Bleakley, the next oldest member to Mr. Jackson, received in addition a very massive silver medal. Mr. J. T. Greenhalgh, treasurer of the club, whose daily calling had recently compelled him to resign, was also presented with one of the photos, an ebony walking stick, with ivory handle and engraved silver band, an engraved silver-mounted pipe, a tobacco pouch, and electro-plated match box. As an old and faithful worker for the band's interest along with a few others, he had been recognised for years, and the presentation was made by Mr. Owen himself, who very appropriately introduced each and every article to the use of Mr. Greenhalgh.

The contesting season of 1888 commenced by the realisation of a better stroke of good luck than heretofore. No less than fourteen contests were



J. Hilton. A. Dawson. W. Lawson. A. Owen. F. Entwistle. R. Eastwood. T. Hampson. J. F. Carter. F. Durham.  
 R. Grounds. J. Bell. W. Bogle. G. Pollitt. J. Lownds. R. Jackson. B. Livesey. W. Jackson. P. Booth. J. N. Hampson. J. Briggs. E. Eastwood.  
 E. Bleakley. F. Barlow. J. Chadwick. E. Taylor. P. Lightbourne. A. Bleakley.

*From the Photo as presented to Messrs. A. Owen, R. Jackson, and members, February 6th, 1888.*

attended, resulting in the taking of eleven first prizes, one second, one third, and one *nil*, in addition to four special prizes, to the total value of £327 18s.

One thing worthy of special mention during this season was the introduction of Mr. Owen's grand selection from Berlioz's masterpiece "Faust;" a selection (to use the words of Herr Franz Groenings, Brighton) "remarkable and bristling with points and difficulties from beginning to end." The reason which induced Mr. Owen to write this, another grand selection for his bands, was for the most part a matter of great significance, the explanation of which may prove of great interest to enthusiastic admirers and followers alike.

When, in 1884, he undertook the conductorship of the band, and introduced his "Reminiscences of Rossini," the success at the Derby contest of that year, proved a wonderful incentive to the members to persevere with it, and enter all contests that suggested the slightest possibility for them to attend, and whose rules provided for the choice of selection to be performed to be left to each band; or in other words, contests the rules of which did not enforce the playing of any special selection, commonly termed a test-piece. Consequently, from 1884 to 1886 inclusive, they had played Rossini at no less than nineteen contests, and only suffered defeat on five occasions, fourteen first prizes, three seconds, and two thirds being taken.

Their opponents, or rivals, whichever term seems most appropriate, looking on these remarkable, and, undoubtedly to them, insurmountable facts, which, on continued calm reflection, seemed more and more unpalatable and obnoxious; especially when we come to contemplate that the self-same selection had been *played by them for a few years before our noble aspirants ever dreamed of it*. To defeat them with their own *pet piece* in such a short space of time, and in such a manner too, was, to say the least, very highly commendable.

This state of things, however (and only quite naturally), very soon evoked a very strong feeling of antagonism. Mendelssohn's, Meyerbeer's, Webers, Verdi's, Spohr's, and Beethoven's works were now all drawn upon. Contest committees were induced, in many instances, to adopt in preference to these high-class selections, the more necessitous class of test-piece, and music publishers, having in view their own pecuniary gain, were not slow in posing and exercising their undoubtedly weighty influence in the contention that such a change was indubitably necessary to the advancement of art and musical progress. Be that as it may, however, I personally am of the firm conviction that the exclusion of what is termed

“own selection,” is *an unmistakable step in the wrong direction*, and decline to accept all forces of argument to the contrary. As I have said before, all this was done on the one hand from motives of pure interest in the belief that competing rivals would thereby to a greater extent gain their object, and, on the other hand, *from own personal and pecuniary interest*.

The fact of Rossini still holding its own, and even after and against the introduction of the high-class selections as pitted against it, it must needs now be debarred. Consequently the contest rules for Norland, 1887, provided for this by the institution of a certain clause enforcing Besses-o'-th'-Barn to play another selection, through having taken first prize the year previous with Rossini's works.

It was now decided by our worthies to play Mr. Owen's selection from Beethoven's works, against which were arrayed Meyerbeer's “L'Etoile du Nord,” Weber's works, Rossini's works, Beethoven's works, and Beethoven's “Leonora.” Owing to some rather unruly proceedings, emanating from an objection raised against Black Dyke, the contest ended in such an abrupt manner as to force the committee to pay two first, and two second prizes. Thus our heroes now came off again with first prize on making their first and indeed only *debut* with Beethoven's works.

What could gossip have to say now? The change, it was quite evident, had not produced the anticipated effect, but left our worthies in exactly the same position as before.

Test-piece! test-piece!! to the exclusion of Rossini's works and Besses, was now the exulting craze; the prompters of which, in the manifest eagerness to secure their own interest, spared no pains to foster this puerile fad. Not that I regard the introduction of test-pieces in the broad sense of the term with any dislike, or natural hatred. More the reverse; especially if they serve the true purpose for which they should be intended. But in the word *test-piece*, we have a term involving a very wide meaning, which, from a literary point of view, furnishes ample food for reflection. If we must accept the term as it first appears to us, and apply the same to a selection published for the sole purpose of a *test*, then we expect to encounter some rather unique and technical difficulties, something that would, in every sense of the word, *prove a test of individual and collective skill*; such an one would then undoubtedly deserve the eponym and credit so politely claimed for it. But of what calibre do the majority of test-pieces, as published at the present day, consist? The answer is obviously not far to seek; simply matter which the least of our poor or unpretentious bands can accomplish with a certain amount of credit and ease!! Most decidedly it acts as an inducement to our young and rising bands to persevere and try

their strength on the contest field (and would really be commendable if kept more in that stage), *but it certainly does not do much to support the standard of excellence as gained by our leading cracks, much less reflect any great amount of credit upon the pioneers of culture in musical art and progress in that sphere.*

Are we, as the pioneers of musical art in the brass band world, seeking to assert and retain our pre-eminence over all other nations, *progressing* or *deteriorating*? My opinions go most decidedly in the contention of the latter!! I care not for the bold and emphatic assertion so often repeated that, "our bands of to-day are favourably progressing." Such a declaration as this I take for what it is worth. Where does the feasibility of such a conception come in? Six or eight years ago only, we could count the leading cracks by almost a dozen; but how many have we now? no more than we can count on the fingers of one hand! And what can we avow has brought this state of affairs about? *'tis the test-piece craze!!!* Any band that can play a good "own selection," can likewise do full justice to our test-pieces; but it is not any band that can play one of these test-pieces could grapple with a first-class selection. For any sane person to contend, or endeavour for one moment to place them on a par with the magnificent selections as written by our wonderful trio of conductors (Messrs. Gladney, Owen, and Swift), would be a supercilious absurdity; for between the two there is *no comparison whatever*. In anything like Mr. Gladney's selections from "William Tell," Weber, or Beethoven's works, Mr. Owen's selections from Berlioz's "Faust," Beethoven, Rossini, and Meyerbeer's works, or Mr. Swift's "L'Etoile du Nord," or Spohr's works, we have an ample and sufficient test for twenty-four players, individually and collectively, *of any degree*; the rendering of which, by such noted bands as Meltham Mills, Black Dyke, Stalybridge, Oldham Rifles, Boarshurst, Accrington, Linthwaite, Kingston Mills, Wyke Old, Wyke Temperance, Leeds Forge, and Besses-o' th'-Barn, would keep the largest audience that could possibly be congregated together, spellbound to the close; and for artistic playing, refinement, true intonation and interpretation, *could not be excelled by any of the finest orchestras or military bands in the kingdom.*

So much for our Lancashire and Yorkshire cracks; likewise our noble trio, who themselves, and them only, hold and have held the reins of these exuberant combinations uninterruptedly for many years; a very broad and emphatic assertion, but nevertheless *true in every respect.*

But to return to the subject. The continued agitation *re* test-pieces (brought on, as defined before, mostly through the continued success scored by our well-termed invincibles in "own selection" competitions),



created quite a natural growing propensity; and the contest season of 1888 showed signs of far greater development in that direction, though hardly to such an extent as to thoroughly exclude selections "own choice."

The first test-piece for the year proved to be a pretty little selection from Wallace's "Maritana," and selected from Messrs. Wright & Round's Journal, Liverpool. With this same selection the band took part in three competitions during the year, taking first prize on each occasion.

In the meantime, Mr. Owen, knowing full well the consequences that would naturally result through the debarring of Rossini's works, had completed his "Faust," and the band made their *début* with this most difficult arrangement at Barnoldewick, June 2nd.

The performances of all the bands were given during an almost incessant downpour of rain, which tended, in no little measure, to mar the effect, and made the contest a miserable failure, perhaps not only from a financial, but a musical point of view. The judge, Dr. Spark, of Leeds, without hesitation, however, awarded the first honors to Besses-o' th'-Barn.

The claims of our worthy heroes were now considerably enhanced; for neither the decrying of Rossini, nor the more frequent adoption of test-pieces, evidently had interfered with their success one single iota. The oft-repeated inference that Besses could only play one piece, could never now be acknowledged with credibility, surely! Such declamatory arguments as these had, most assuredly received a very severe and sudden repellation, by the splendid achievements and noble victories of which they were the devoted champions. Our Lancashire lads had shown what perseverance, pluck, and indomitable courage, coupled with perfect unanimity and reciprocity in their natural affections one towards another, and above all their perfect obedience to the wise and well selected leadership, could do; for such it was. And in the facts before us there is contained a superabundance of evidence to place before the most exacting of critics, biassed or otherwise, to ponder over and decide for themselves.

It was now feared that the popularity and fame of the band was on the point of being threatened with disaster; for following on the success of the season came the resignation of Mr. Fred Durham, the band's solo cornettist, which it was feared would prove a sad blow; for that gentleman's connection with the band from 1884 had won for him thousands of admirers throughout the country by his general fine executive qualities; a fact which proved remarkably instrumental in the acquiring of many young bands, in addition to numerous other engagements which eventually proved a great inducement for him to retire and follow up his vocations in pastures new. His success in that department has since been very singularly marked.

The disappointment and evil apprehension in this coincidence, however, was ultimately allayed by the introduction, first of Mr. William Rimmer, of Southport, who shortly afterwards retired through ill-health, and thereby made way for Mr. W. E. Holt, of Rochdale, the present member.

The contest season was now upon us and the members, reflecting on past successes, were loth in anticipating or predicting anything contrary to a successful season. Their anticipations it was quickly proved, were well founded, for the season was commenced and carried throughout without the band sustaining one single defeat, thus *totally eclipsing all previous records*. Ten contests and ten first prizes, in addition to seven specials, to the value of £312 7s., a feat never accomplished by any band in the world with the exception of Old Bacup, who, in 1870, went through the season with seven first prizes amounting in value to £297 14s. This year stands out as the greatest among the noted three, 1869, 1870, 1871, in which they (Bacup) gained their one famous record, taking thirteen first prizes in succession. Besses-o' th'-Barn came next to this with twelve; whilst Meltham Mills, during 1877-78, took thirteen first prizes, tied once for first and second, and one third.

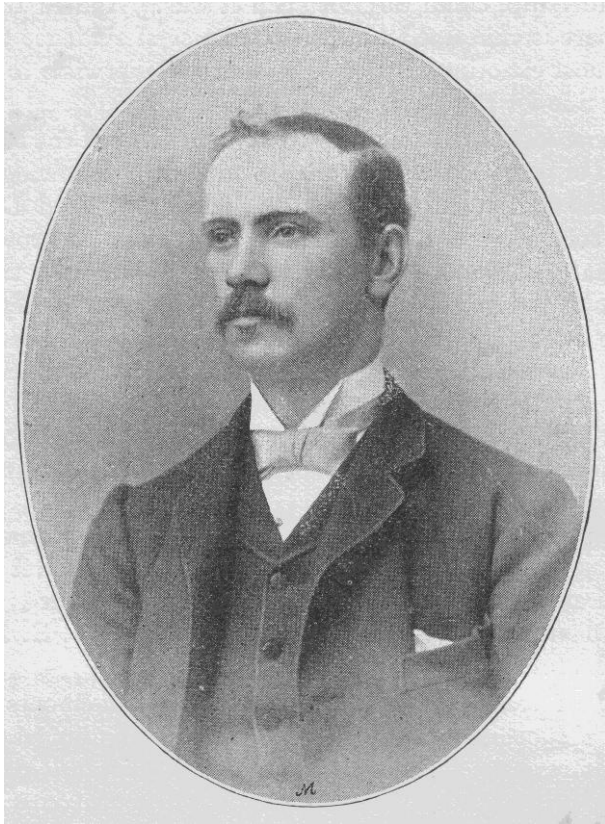
The popularity and fame of the band now spread far and wide; for with such credentials as they now possessed, coupled with the flattering literary observations, who could wonder at the intense eagerness, excitement and enthusiasm displayed, along with the innumerable tokens of credit showered upon them both at home and abroad.

Dame Fortune had indeed smiled upon them, and their undeniably redoubtable courage, so pleasing to look upon, had earned for them titles of honour, priceless as pearls to them and their surroundings, and of as equal importance as the battle of Waterloo to Wellington, or that of Trafalgar to Nelson.

The concert season had commenced and the band with such a brilliant record before them, as could only be expected, were in great request; the receptions accorded to them at almost every appearance being gratifying in the extreme, thousands of persons meeting them on their arrival at the different stations, and pressing forward in their eagerness, satisfied if only they could catch a glimpse of the heroes of such a startling record. Twenty-four first prizes, and thirteen specials, out of the last twenty-seven competitions, did indeed deserve more than ordinary credit.

Considering the very many excellent bands we now have in the country, with the natural local pride centring in them, the strong terms of approbation which our heroes have elicited from every point they have visited must be very gratifying indeed.

This is as it should be; and is mutually creditable: a proof of desert on one side, and of appreciation on the other, from all who hold musical progress in high esteem.



MR. WILLIAM ENOCH HOLT (Solo Cornettist).

Among the many engagements for the season was one at the great St. James' Hall, Manchester. I make special mention of this one in particular, simply from the alarming consequences that afterwards ensued. On returning home by the 10.45 p.m. train from Victoria, a very serious accident occurred resulting in the collision of three trains, the particulars of which, briefly stated, are as follows:—

On Saturday night, December 7th, the 10.45 train from Victoria to Bacup, had left the station punctually to time, and when it had reached the foot-bridge, which crosses from Lower Collyhurst to Cheetham Hill, it ran into a pilot engine belonging to the London and North Western Railway Co., which was standing at the time behind a North Western coal train consisting of about 27 wagons. The coal train was compelled to stop at Cheetham Hill Junction, being prevented from crossing the junction by signals shown by the pointsman in the box in order to keep the passage clear for another train which left Bacup at 9.40 for Manchester. The train from Manchester (that which our heroes were travelling by) was proceeding at a good speed when all at once it dashed into the North Western guard's van, the force of the shock being so great as to force the van, which contained the guard in charge and another man, off the "down line" on to the "up fast."

Precisely at the same moment the 10.34 train from Crumpsall, or Bacup train to Manchester, came on the spot and dashed into the injured break-van, carrying it some 50 or 60 yards. The impact was so great as to throw the passenger engine and break-van of 10.34, which was on the "up fast" to Manchester, into the 10.45 *from* Manchester. Luckily for all concerned, it being a clear moonlight night, the driver had discerned at a distance something wrong, which enabled him to pull up and slacken speed to a considerable extent, otherwise the consequences must have been of a most terrible and painful nature to relate. As it was the engine was very seriously damaged, that part of the first carriage consisting of the van was smashed to splinters, as was also the end of the second-class carriage adjoining. A third-class carriage was overturned, but the most severe sufferer was the first-class carriage which was completely telescoped. The woodwork flew in all directions and the wreck resembled matchwood.

The most extraordinary thing was, in the midst of all this havoc, there were so very few killed. A more miraculous affair was never witnessed. The second-class compartment next to the guard's van was occupied by several passengers, and although the end was smashed in, and almost the whole carriage telescoped into the first-class carriage, none of the occupants were fatally injured. Fortunately the first-class carriage was empty, else no possible chance could have saved the passengers from instant death. The third-class carriage which was flung on its side was, like

the rest of that class, filled with passengers. The occupants of each compartment being flung together in a confused heap, with immense difficulty struggled or were helped out. Many persons were very badly bruised and shaken, others with their limbs broken.

The engine and guard's van of the train from Bacup, which it may be stated here as a rather singular coincidence, contained the renowned Wyke Temperance Band, the honoured Belle Vue champions, who, fresh from their victory, were returning home after fulfilling an engagement at Radcliffe, were also flung off the rails; but beyond, the severe shock necessarily caused by the collision, nothing of any serious note occurred.

The terror of the sudden fright increased every moment as the several passengers surveyed the scene, and for one to try and describe their thoughts would be a matter utterly impossible. It was a terrible experience and one that could never be eradicated from their memories. The thoughts of our noble connoisseurs were directed only to their own fellow or brother-bandsmen; each one thinking, not of himself, but running about from one carriage to another in wild excitement, amounting almost to madness, in search of those whom they hopelessly expected had survived the dreadful calamity. Oh, what a heartrending moment. First of all was found the fireman of their own train lying dead under the goods guard's van, crushed down by the weight above him. Next was a young lady, hailing from Heaton Park, with her leg broken. Just then Mr. Robert Jackson, the bandmaster, appeared on the scene with his face smeared with blood proceeding from a large cut on the forehead, and his front teeth knocked out; Mr. Joseph Lownds, soprano, and Mr. Adam Dawson, baritone, the former with his face bruised and the latter in a very bad state of nervousness by the severe shock.

By this time about nineteen of the members had congregated together, but news of the other four or five it seemed impossible to get; they sought them in vain. Finally, with heavy hearts, musing on the gloomy prospects and dreadful news they had to convey, they decided to walk up the line to Crumpsall and there take cabs to Whitefield. Others, however, stopped a short time longer and came on by a special train despatched from Crumpsall.

On reaching the band-room or social club the wildest excitement ensued, the news having travelled like wildfire, and as each cab rolled up to the club its occupants were scanned with the most piercing and dilated eyes, in agony and utmost confusion.

Presently, however, in came the four or five missing members, whom it was afterwards found had missed the train, and knowing nothing of the catastrophe till they arrived at Whitefield, had been despatched home by

the old line *via* Bury, by the company's officials, in order to keep things as quiet as possible.

Imagine the shout of joy which rent the air and the smile of satisfaction which lit up the faces of the anxious throng when they made their appearance. Many were the expressions of thankfulness to the Creator that circumstances were no worse than they were and infinitely better than expectation.

The instruments when gathered together were in a sad plight, many being bruised beyond all description. These were immediately despatched to the repairing shop, and those of the members for whom it was deemed necessary, medical assistance procured.

This awful circumstance it was feared would very materially interfere with their several appointments, a foreboding which received an unpleasant verification. For several weeks afterwards the numerous engagements had to be attended minus three or four men, and it was not till the middle of March that the band became thoroughly recouped.

Those of the members who had been injured, and applied, received compensation, as did also the band, as a company, receive a sum of money in acknowledgement of loss sustained by the damage to instruments and uniform.

The effect of the accident it was quite evident, had not, however, proved so very disastrous as was at first anticipated, in respect to the predominant influence it might involve as a detriment to their contesting qualities. When the ball opened for the season 1890, we find them starting on exactly the same lines as they had previously left off, by taking the first prize at Hawes of £25 in cash, and repeating the same again at Edinburgh Exhibition, £50 in cash and richly-engraved gold and silver mounted cornet value 18 guineas.

Each contest seemed now of far greater importance than its predecessor, principally from the fact that two more victories, in addition to those already noted, meant the wiping clean out of the famous Bacup record, viz., 13 first prizes in succession. Twelve had already been gained and the next contest — rather remarkable that it should be so — was one of very great importance from many points of view, hence will be seen the wonderful amount of interest centred in it.

Sampson Fox, Esq. was to present for the first time a Champion Silver Challenge Cup, value 50 guineas, to the band winning the first prize at the Leeds Forge Brass Band Contest, July 5th. The cup was to be held by the winning band for twelve months, at the expiration of which term it must be returned and competed for again; the same to become the absolute property of any band who should first win it three times in any number of years.

The test-piece chosen was the same as that for Edinburgh, "Weber's Works," consequently our anxious enthusiasts' doubts as to the result were all allayed by the modest confidence which they were justified in holding of themselves, though not forgetting at the same time their sense of duty, and fully alive to the fact "that a battle is never won until it is really lost," and in their present position circumstances would not allow of them to disregard one single portion of that duty.

The day of reckoning having arrived, the much coveted trophy and its several attendant honours, however, were not captured; for on the judge's decision being given, Kingston Mills were awarded the first prize, and our enterprising favourites the second.

As would naturally be expected, much disappointment was experienced; for the loss of this most coveted competition, above all others, had undeniably vitiated what would otherwise have been a splendid victory, and such an one it is doubtless to say would ever again have been repeated, especially in days such as these, when contesting bands can be counted by the score.

As it is, the grand old Bacup, with Mr. John Lord, their bandmaster, still hold this *one great record*, in the keeping of which, there is for friends and admirers a consummation devoutly to be wished.

The next competition was Kildgrove, where they took first prize again with "Maritana," following which came the Wyke contest, as mentioned previously, where for the first time in four seasons they suffered defeat at the hands of the plucky Leeds Forge, a circumstance well merited, if only for the wonderful tact, perseverance, and determination, so vividly depicted in the *modus operandi* characterising all their performances.

The season ended in the realization of five first prizes and three seconds, out of eight contests, amounting in value to £229 10s.

The usual routine of engagements following close on the season's competitions, prepared our principals for the combative season of 1891.

Morecambe, on May 23rd, proved to be the first open competition, with a little selection from "Linda d'Chamounix" as test-piece. The first prize of 21 guineas was awarded to Besses, whilst the second and third prizes were

divided between Leeds Forge and Kingston Mills.

The next was under the auspices of Kingston Mills Band, at Hyde, June 13th, where Leeds Forge, for the third and last time, turned the tables on Besses-o' th'-Barn, by taking first prize to the latter's second. One thing worthy of note: at this particular contest Mr. Owen conducted and played with every band, seven in number.

Things now presented a far different aspect. Anxious admirers, friends, and enthusiasts, would know the why and wherefore of this sudden change and different position of affairs. The victory of Leeds Forge, over Besses had awakened in the former's locality a spirit of zealotism almost beyond description, and in the latter's a feeling of half-shyness; and as a consequence, party feeling began to run very high on every hand.

Whether the success our worthies had previously encountered had caused them to rest a little on their laurels, and as a consequence to pay rather less attention to practice, or that it was a stroke of what we commonly term "bad luck," or, on the other hand, whether a proof of better proficiency in the Leeds Forge, may be a question; but one thing is certain, it seemed to stir them up to a sense of renewed vigour. They had realised the veracity of Waller's words, "We learn wisdom from failure more than success." Their spirit of redoubtable courage and determination received its reward, for during the same season the two bands met face to face again on six different occasions and *Besses never once suffered defeat from them afterwards.*

Among the list of honours for the season, was another first prize of £55 in cash and the championship of Great Britain, at Kirkcaldy, Scotland; also the wresting of the Sampson Fox Champion Silver Challenge Cup, valued at fifty guineas, from Kingston Mills, the first holders, in addition to a silver medal for best euphonium player (Mr. J. F. Carter). A very successful season, consisting of seven first prizes and one second, was closed by a fourth prize at Belle Vue, making a total of £299 17s. in value.

Now we come to what we may term the most successful season in the whole of the band's history.







THE "SAMPSON FOX" CHAMPION SILVER CHALLENGE CUP (value 50 guineas).

The property of any band winning it first three times in any number of years.

As a rule, how often we find that the very success of a band has been its downfall! The popular exhibitions of favour and the many flattering encomiums bestowed upon them, almost incessantly day by day and week by week, all having a tendency to work upon the mind, influencing, irritating, brooding, and hatching the germs of self-conceit (one of the greatest failings among bandsmen, and a miserable stumbling-block in the way of progress), all assist directly or indirectly in producing a heedless attention to practice, party quarrels, jealousies, &c., &c. Many instances

could I quote, where combinations, superlative in degree, through a vain fostering of these seemingly pleasant influences, have fallen victims to their prey.

But the Besses men had never made this mistake, they being very careful, under the powerful, watchful and well-trusted guidance of their esteemed conductor and bandmaster, to guard against all these ills. They knew full well that it required as much or more diligence and devotion to *retain* as to *attain* their position of eminence.

Perfect unanimity, secured by obedience to wise judgment and trusted leadership, is capable of working wonders, as all men know, and no better proof of these moral virtues can be given than their remarkable victories throughout the country.

And herein lies the secret of their success. The ever kind, warm, friendly and brotherly relations existing between them, and coached up by their well-trusted, beloved, faithful and true bandmaster and conductor, has led them to speak in volumes of glorious music and harmony *as one man*. Without which feeling no true heart-and-soul-stirring music can proceed from any organization of any description, no matter what their other qualifications might be. Directly that same spirit of love for each other begins to wane, then shall we look with sorrowful eyes on their future prosperity!!

May the day be far distant when we shall have cause to look back with regret upon an error that should for ever blot out such a noble body of celebrities from among the daily records in this heavenly art.

The beginning of the year presented for a time some rather gloomy prospects, adversity seeming to beset them on every hand. Mr. J. F. Carter, the solo-euphoniumist, a true and faithful servant for many years past, had thought fit to retire from that responsible position. The news of his retirement came almost as a thunderbolt, and interested partisans, with whom he was indeed a great favourite, were loth for a time to believe it. After having been a member throughout the whole of the band's successes from December 1883, *and never missed one single competition*, it was feared that the severing of his connection with the band would prove an evil omen, occasion an insurmountable loss, and cause a vacancy, the filling up of which would be immensely difficult. As a soloist he had always been regarded as the *first and foremost on the contest field* and one that could always be thoroughly relied upon, without furnishing the slightest occasion for doubt.

The vacancy, however, was very soon taken up by Mr. Herbert Scott, of Greenfield, a very promising youth of the age of 18 years, whose qualifications are described as being remarkably creditable.

April 18th commenced the contest season at Kidsgrove, with Mr. H. Rounds' small selection from "Mozart's Works," after which came Stacksteads, on May 7th, with "Il Giurmento" as test-piece. In these two competitions the band was rather unfortunate, taking at the former, only second; and at the latter, fourth honours.

Our worthies' spirits, by these meagre results, were somewhat damped; more especially so, when just at this particular juncture, information of a very grave and onerous character had been brought to light, and which on investigation proved to be a malicious plot for the complete overthrow of the band.

Enquiries were at once instituted and set on foot with a view if possible to trace, expose, and punish the offenders. Researches proved that there had been letters of a very defamatory character written to a particular gentleman, who was to adjudicate upon a certain contest which had to take place at Morecambe, June 11th. The writer of the letters after stating, in very strong terms, what must be done in the awarding of prizes, &c., and threatening the consequences that would accrue from the ignoring of such, actually appeared so bold as to give his signature on the form, which contained also the heading of the band with which he was connected.

Information was at once given to Messrs. Wright and Round, the *Brass Band News* publishers, who themselves very politely expressed a willingness and eagerness to give full publicity to the same, in the event of the letters being secured. In the meantime our heroes, nothing daunted, even in the full knowledge of all that had transpired, went to the contest determined, in spite of all these drawbacks to *face the foe*.

The competition, strange to say, was attended to a certain degree with results *exactly* as foretold by the writer; but the judge (a thorough gentleman) instead of acting in accordance with the requisition, simply gave his awards according to his own honest convictions, previously to which he publicly announced the receipt of what he termed "libellous letters," and instead of reading their contents, in fear of a tumult, he had decided to hand them over to the press. The exposition was received with consternation by all concerned, the public curiosity being excited to an enormous degree; consequently the contest closed amid scenes of a very unruly character. Whether it was deemed inadvisable to publish the letters is unknown, but their possessors have contentedly allowed them to pass into the vale of obscurity. This to many, on reflection, may suggest itself as a wise and discretionary course to take, but others would fail to discern

reconciliation in such ignoble practices by a decision or action of this description.

The first prize of £21 in cash, was however, in the midst of all these mischievous stratagems, awarded to our plucky enthusiasts; and herein we may one and all agree, that this result was the signal for great uniform rejoicings; insomuch that the effects of' their often exhibited perseverance and indomitable courage had conquered and thereby won the day.

Success without adversity is good fortune, but success in spite of undeserved adversity, is the reward of sublime courage. "Notoriety," as says our worthy chronicler, "may be earned by shameless charlatans, who carry the positions which belong to merit by sheer audacity, but Fame denies them entrance into the impregnable citadel of the fortress where imperishable honours are bestowed on most of the worthy."

This remarkable incident seemed to break the spell of evil influence that had been hovering around them, and with new life and courage, foaming for the fray, they repaired to Hardrow Scour, Hawes, to contest the pre-eminence for the North Riding of Yorkshire Challenge Cup, valued at fifty guineas, and given for the first time, along with £25 in cash, to the winners of first prize. At this competition not one of the rival cracks put in an appearance; they leaving the contest to be decided between West Hartlepool Borough Band and our worthies, for whom the competition, as might be expected, was a complete walk-over.

It is greatly to be regretted, and did indeed seem bad, to let a competition with a fifty-guineas challenge cup and £63 in cash prizes go a-begging; a fact which certainly does not reflect much credit on those who hold themselves responsible for such actions.

The next competition was Bacup, with "Maritana" once again as test-piece. Here, again, was secured the first prize, for the fifth time with this selection, *without having sustained one single defeat*.

The Barrow-in-Furness annual competition came next; a favourite resort of our worthy heroes, and one of their *inimitable strongholds*, as we might say, whose enthusiastic inhabitants in their eulogies generally termed them "the invincibles," and very appropriately too, for the band have attended this contest year by year, without intermission, from 1885 to 1892 inclusive, without once sustaining defeat. Black Dyke, in 1888, tied with them for first and second prizes, which brings the total for Barrow to seven first prizes and one tie.\*

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\* Quartette Contest, Saturday, February 18th, 1893; Besses-o' th'-Barn again took first



THE NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE (HAWES) CHALLENGE CUP  
(value 50 guineas).

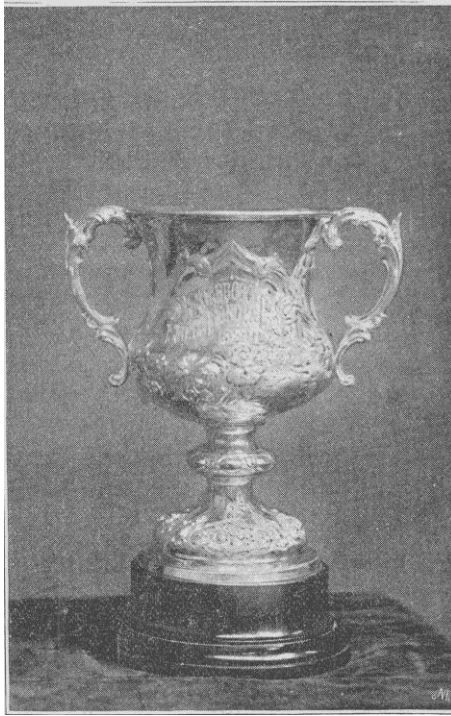
To be won three times in five years.

Following on this, came the Scarborough Brass Band contest, with the Yorkshire Challenge Cup, valued at forty-five guineas, given for the first time also, along with £30 in cash, and twenty-seven gold and silver medals to the winners of first prize. "Il Guirmento" was again the test-piece, giving our worthies another chance of vindicating their claim to supremacy.

The judge, Mr. Richard Marsden, of Alloa, Scotland, without hesitation, awarded the first honours to Besses-o' th'-Barn.

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prize, also first prize Cornet Solo, W. E. Holt.



THE YORKSHIRE CHALLENGE CUP (value at 45 guineas).  
To be won three times in five years.

The next in order was that at Longton, Staffordshire, where the rules debarred our subjects from playing either "Faust," "Rossini's Works," "Beethoven's Works," or "Heroic," "Weber's Works"; in fact, no selection that the band had taken a prize with.

It was at first intended to play Mr. Owen's "Heroic," a very difficult and brilliant selection, seeing that the band had never competed with it; and full compliment was paid to it at rehearsals, till only a fortnight before the contest, information was received in respect to an objection being raised by certain competitors against the playing of "Heroic." This, in reality, was not a fair objection, insomuch as that particular selection was only performed as a second piece (not for the prize), at Hawes, the month but one previous.

However, without any further altercation, the members turned their attention to another selection, the choice falling upon Meyerbeer's "Le Prophete."

The result of the contest when made known proved to be, Kingston Mills, first prize with "Faust"; Black Dyke, second, with "Rossini's Works," and Besses-o' th'-Barn, third, with, "Le Prophete."

Following on immediately, came Galashiels, first prize £50; Kirkcaldy, £60; and Hull, £40; at all three of which our worthies secured first honours, making a total value of £310 9s. for the month of August alone. A remarkably good stroke of business for one month.

Next on the list was Belle Vue, in which was centred a double interest this year above all others. For, in addition to the Belle Vue Challenge Cup, of which Black Dyke were the holders, the Sampson Fox Challenge Cup, it had been decided by that gentleman, should also be contested for here, and at the same time, instead of as usual at the Leeds Contest and Athletic Sports.

The fact of our Lancashire lads, the then holders, never having in the whole of their career, been included in the list of favoured first prize winners at this noted annual competition (ill-luck always seeming to follow them on this particular field of battle), caused them to regard and look upon that enviable trophy with feelings of adieu.

Disappointment in years gone by, had led them to exempt themselves from a few competitions in the firm belief that the fates were against them, but anxious friends and enthusiasts, with persuasive arguments, had prevailed upon them to persevere and try once again, if only to satisfy the public at large.

Courage, backed by energy, saw them mount the platform this year as usual, without hope and without fear, and give what they considered a repetition of splendid performances in times past. Yet, even after all these creditable attempts to gratify the desires of thousands of admirers by showing what could, with perseverance, be done with "Zaar und Zimmerman," they dared not then even hope for pre-eminent distinction when their task had been fulfilled.

Popular feeling, it would be superfluous to say, exhibited itself very highly in their favour, and when, eventually, the decision was announced in favour of our deserving creditors, the exhibition of concurrency in its justification almost rent the air with shouts of acclamation. The prizes, which constituted altogether the largest by far ever given, consisted of:

|  | £    | s. | d. |
|--|------|----|----|
| Cash   | 30   | 0  | 0  |
| Gold Medal   | 3    | 3  | 0  |
| Two Cornophones, presented by Messrs. Besson & Co. | 23   | 2  | 0  |
| Double B flat Bass, presented by Higham            | 25   | 0  | 0  |
| E flat Bombardon, presented by Hawkes & Son        | 31   | 10 | 0  |
| B flat Trumpet, presented by Mahillon & Co.        | 8    | 8  | 0  |
| Gold Medal — Best Cornet Player — Round            | 4    | 4  | 0  |
| Album of Music                                     | 1    | 6  | 0  |
| Belle Vue Champion Silver Challenge Cup            | 52   | 10 | 0  |
| Sampson Fox Champion Silver Challenge Cup          | 52   | 10 | 0  |
| Grand Total  | £231 | 13 | 0  |

The whole forming a grand prize of the total value of £231 13s. A local contemporary remarking on their success, says:—

“That tide of success culminating in the brilliant triumph at Hull on Saturday week, that placed the winnings of Besses-o’ th’-Barn Band for the month of August on a higher level than had ever been reached before, was considered only a week ago of so extraordinary and remarkable a nature, that if anyone had ventured to prophesy that they would, in one day, come to within an ace of smashing their newly-created record, he would have been openly derided. The most enthusiastic partisans of Besses-o’ th’-Barn looked forward to the Belle Vue contest with no very sanguine expectations. The band had never won a first prize there, and it was fast becoming an article of faith that they never would. The bandsmen themselves went to Longsight as the English soldiers went into action at Waterloo, “without hope and without fear.” It was known that the test to which they would be subjected would be more severe than any to which they had previously been put. It was known that if they avoided that test, their pusillanimity would be branded, and their claim to the championship flouted in every musical centre in the North of England. To choose that course would not only mean to give up the hope of holding for twelve months the handsome Belle Vue Challenge Cup, but to surrender ignobly, without even the semblance of a fight, that exquisitely wrought trophy which they so gallantly won at Leeds last year — The Sampson Fox Challenge Cup. They could not adopt that undignified and unmanly line of conduct; whatever the risks of defeat, they must be faced; it was infinitely better to compete and fail than not to compete at all. Having arrived at this decision, there was nothing for it but to do their level best to acquit themselves like good and true men in the crucial ordeal itself. This they did, and with the happiest result.”



When the news of this gigantic victory was flashed along the wires to Whitefield, and made known to the crowds of anxious admirers in waiting, scenes of the wildest enthusiasm prevailed, and preparations were made for giving our heroes a most hearty welcome on their return.

On arrival at the station, by the 9.20 train, the thoroughfare was completely blocked with people, many of whom had journeyed from Bury, Radcliffe, and neighbouring villages in order to take part in the demonstration. To the band, such a display of popular enthusiasm appeared as a most remarkable and very gratifying circumstance, for it was not an organised but a purely spontaneous recognition of their excellence.

That hoary proverb, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country," does evidently not receive verification in every place, for nowhere more than at Whitefield and Besses-o' th'-Barn is a belief in the band's supremacy more early inculcated, more rigorously insisted upon, or more generally diffused.

The prize was a grand one, and its several attendant laurels very materially helped to swell the exuberance of its lustre. The band had fought a good fight, and not in vain. More especially do we arrive at this conclusion when we encounter on calm reflection the complimentary remarks of the judges.

The winning of Belle Vue contest with the Silver Challenge Cups, placed them in the proud position of *holders of every Challenge Cup in Great Britain, for 1892*. A feat altogether unprecedented in the whole history of brass bands. A feat of which Lancashire ought to feel proud, and an everlasting tribute to the public of Besses-o' th'-Barn, Whitefield, and neighbourhood, more especially the members of the band, to hand down with sentiments of pride and satisfaction to their succeeding generations.

The few other additions to the successes for the season were the taking of two first prizes at Sandbach, and one fifth prize at "Old America" Exhibition, Manchester, which brought the season to a close with ten first prizes, one second, one third, one fourth, and one fifth, in addition to seven specials out of fourteen competitions, amounting in total value to £742 6s.; thus defeating the record previously held by Meltham Mills by over £250.



**BELLE VUE CHAMPION SILVER CHALLENGE CUP**

(value 50 guineas).

To be won in three consecutive competitions.

**LIST OF MEMBERS WHO TOOK PART IN THE CONTEST FOR  
THE CHALLENGE CUPS.**

Mr. Joseph Lownds  
Mr. William Enoch Holt  
Mr. Benjamin Livsey  
Mr. Robert Jackson  
Mr. Joseph N. Hampson  
Mr. Joseph Hardman

Soprano.  
Cornet.  
Cornet.  
Cornet.  
Cornet.  
Cornet.

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mr. Peter Booth                 | Cornet.             |
| Mr. William Jackson             | Cornet.             |
| Mr. Frank Barlow                | Flugel Horn.        |
| Mr. Alfred Bleakley             | Cornet.             |
| Mr. George Pollitt              | Tenor Horn.         |
| William Bogle                   | Tenor Horn.         |
| John Bell                       | Tenor Horn.         |
| Adam Dawson                     | Baritone            |
| James Hilton                    | Baritone            |
| Herbert Scott                   | Euphonium           |
| Thomas Hampson                  | Euphonium           |
| William Lawson                  | Tenor Trombone.     |
| Henry Yates                     | Tenor Trombone.     |
| Robert Eastwood*                | G or Bass Trombone. |
| Edwin Eastwood                  | Bombardon, E flat.  |
| John Briggs                     | Bombardon, E flat.  |
| Richard Grounds                 | Medium Bass B flat. |
| Edwin Bleakley                  | Monstre Basso.      |
| Mr. Alexander Owen — Conductor. |                     |




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\* The Eastwood family have been almost continually represented in the band from commencement — John Eastwood, their great-uncle, being one of its first members.

BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BAND.

A COMPENDIUM, OR SUMMARY OF FEATS, ACCOMPLISHED  
FROM 1884 to 1892, INCLUSIVE.

Have competed in 105 contests, with the following results:—

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| First Prizes  | 74        |
| Second Prizes | 13        |
| Third         | 9         |
| Fourth        | 4         |
| Fifth         | 2         |
| Sixth         | 1         |
| Nils          | 2         |
|               | Total 105 |

In addition to 41 Special Prizes in the shape of Instruments, Conductor's Batons, Gold and Silver Medals, &c., for best soloists, quick-step playing, &c.

Fifty-two of these competitions have been *test-piece* contests in which 32 First Prizes have been taken.

Have played Mr. A. Owen's arrangement of Berlioz's "Faust" in 21 competitions, and taken 20 First Prizes, *only having been defeated* on this selection *once*.

Have played Mr. Owen's "Reminiscences of Rossini's Works" in 27 competitions and taken 19 First Prizes.

Have won in "Own Selection" competitions  
**Prizes value £1,504 10s.**

Have won in Test-Piece competitions  
**Prizes value £1,490 13s.**

Out of the last 58 competitions have taken 46 First Prizes, and 25 Specials, against all the leading bands of the United Kingdom.

Holders of every Challenge Cup in Great Britain for 1892, viz.:—

Sampson Fox Champion Silver Challenge Cup, 1891-2.  
 Belle Vue Champion Silver Challenge Cup, 1892.  
 Yorkshire Champion Silver Challenge Cup, 1892.  
 Hawes Champion Silver Challenge Cup, 1892.

Winners of First Prize in all the leading Exhibitions of 1886-7 — 1890,  
 viz.:—

|            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Liverpool. | Newcastle. |
| Edinburgh. | Saltaire.  |
| Edinburgh. |            |

Winners of the Championship of Great Britain.

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1885—Alloa.     | 1890—Edinburgh.  |
| 1886—Alloa,     | 1891—Kirkcaldy.  |
| 1886—Edinburgh. | 1892—Galashiels. |
|                 | 1892—Kirkcaldy.  |

**Total value of Prizes from commencement of career —**  
**£3,359 17s**

Have competed against the following noted bands with results as given.

|                 | TIMES |               | TIMES             |
|-----------------|-------|---------------|-------------------|
| Black Dyke      | 38    | defeated them | 26 and tied once. |
| Kingston Mills  | 29    |               | 20                |
| Oldham Rifles   | 31    |               | 23                |
| Leeds Forge     | 36    |               | 32 and tied once. |
| Linthwaite      | 29    |               | 26                |
| Honley          | 20    |               | 13                |
| Wyke Temperance | 37    |               | 33                |
| Wyke Old        | 22    |               | 21                |

More it is scarcely necessary to give; suffice it to say that these are the principal combinations that have existed during the last ten years, and against whom our gallant worthies have had to fight.

After this compilation of such undeniable and indisputable facts in the History of Besses-o' th'-Barn Band who will have the hardihood to disclaim their right to supremacy, or declare that English people are unmusical; moreover, that our Lancashire and Yorkshire working-men are uneducated and insensible to the refined and exquisite pleasures of harmony?

Their virtues love; their faults condemn;  
 Partake their hopes and fears;  
 And from their lessons seek and find  
 Instruction, with a humble mind.

*Southey.*

APPENDED IS A LIST OF CONTESTS ATTENDED, PRIZES WON,  
THEIR VALUE, NAMES OF CONDUCTORS, SELECTIONS,  
JUDGES, &c., &c., FROM 1821 TO 1892, INCLUSIVE.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH'-BARN REED BAND.

*(Or then termed "Clegg's Band.")*

**June 19th — 1821 — Manchester — 1st Prize — Purse of Silver**

Conductor — MR. THOMAS LEIGH.

Test-Piece "God save the King."

**July 21st — 1837 — Farnworth — 1st Prize — Ornamental  
Crown set with Stones, &c.**

Conductor — MR. THOMAS LEIGH. Judge — MR. JOHN  
PRESTWICH.

Test-Piece "Hail! Smiling Morn."

LIST OF PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH' BARN BRASS BAND. DATING FROM THE YEAR, 1868.  
 Todmorden being the first contest in which they competed with success.

| Year. | Place.       | Prize. | Cash Value.      | Instruments,<br>Special Prizes, &c. | Total Value.     | Conductor.          | Selection.             |
|-------|--------------|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1868  | Todmorden .. | 5th    | £ s. d.<br>5 0 0 | £ s. d.<br>....                     | £ s. d.<br>5 0 0 | James A. Melling .. | " L' Africaine."       |
| "     | Denton ..    | 5th    | 3 0 0            | .....                               | 3 0 0            | "                   | "                      |
| *1869 | Belle Vue .. | 4th    | 8 0 0            | Instrument,<br>12 12 0              | 20 12 0          | "                   | " Le Prophete."        |
| *1870 | "            | 4th    | 8 0 0            | Instrument,<br>12 12 0              | 20 12 0          | "                   | " Ernani."             |
| "     | Middleton .. | 3rd    | 7 10 0           | .....                               | 7 10 0           | "                   | "                      |
| *1872 | Belle Vue .. | 4th    | 7 0 0            | Instrument,<br>20 0 0               | 27 0 0           | William Arkell ..   | " Souvenir de Mozart." |
| 1873  | Gorton ..    | 4th    | 2 0 0            | .....                               | 2 0 0            | "                   | "                      |
| *1874 | Belle Vue .. | 3rd    | 12 0 0           | Instrument,<br>23 2 0               | 35 2 0           | Thomas German ..    | " Faust" (Spohr).      |
| 1875  | Pomona ..    | 4th    | 10 0 0           | .....                               | 10 0 0           | "                   | "                      |
| 1878  | Farnworth .. | 1st    | 20 0 0           | .....                               | 20 0 0           | Robert Jackson ..   | " Martha."             |
| "     | Ramsbottom   | 1st    | 10 0 0           | 1st Quickstep,<br>1 10 0            | 11 10 0          | "                   | "                      |
| "     | Radcliffe .. | 3rd    | .....            | Side Drum,<br>2 10 0                | 2 10 0           | "                   | "                      |
| "     | Heywood ..   | 5th    | 1 10 0           | .....                               | 1 10 0           | "                   | "                      |
|       | Total ..     |        | £94 0 0          | £72 6 0                             | £166 6 0         |                     |                        |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

LIST OF PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O'-TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. JOHN GLADNEY,  
1879 TO 1882 INCLUSIVE.

| Date.       | Place.           | Prize.         | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special Prizes, &c. | Total Value. | Selection.   |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|
|             |                  |                | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.                             | £ s. d.      |  |
| 1879.       |                  |                |             |                                     |              |  |
| April 19 .. | Pedford Leigh .. | 3rd            | 3 0 0       | .....                               | 3 0 0        | "Stiffelio."   |
| May ..      | Pemberton ..     | 2nd            | 12 0 0      | .....                               | 12 0 0       | "  |
| " 31 ..     | Horwich ..       | 2nd            | 5 0 0       | .....                               | 5 0 0        | Glee, "When winds breathe soft;" and<br>Quadrille, "Marion." |
| June 21 ..  | Heywood ..       | 1st            | 15 0 0      | .....                               | 15 0 0       | "  |
| " 28 ..     | Padiham ..       | 5th            | 2 0 0       | .....                               | 2 0 0        | "Stiffelio."   |
| July 26 ..  | Rochdale ..      | 1st            | 13 0 0      | .....                               | 13 0 0       | Glee, "When winds breathe soft," and<br>"Marion."            |
| Aug. 18 ..  | Radcliffe ..     | 3rd            | 5 0 0       | .....                               | 5 0 0        | "Stiffelio."   |
| " 23 ..     | Tottington ..    | 5th            | 1 0 0       | .....                               | 1 0 0        | Glee, "When winds breathe soft," and<br>"Marion."            |
| 1880.       |                  |                |             |                                     |              |  |
| Mar. 27 ..  | Blackrod ..      | 3rd            | 3 0 0       | .....                               | 3 0 0        | Quickstep, "Distant Greeting," and<br>"Marion."              |
| May 15 ..   | Westhoughton ..  | 4th            | 2 0 0       | .....                               | 2 0 0        | Glee, "Hohenlinden," and "Marion."                           |
| June 26 ..  | Padiham ..       | 1st<br>Divided | 18 0 0      | 1st Quickstep,<br>1 10 0            | 19 10 0      | "Stiffelio."   |
| July ..     | Bury ..          | 2nd & 3rd      | 6 0 0       | .....                               | 6 0 0        | Glee, "Hohenlinden," and "Marion."                           |
| " ..        | Bury Public ..   | 2nd            | 7 0 0       | .....                               | 7 0 0        | "  |



LIST OF PRIZES (1879 TO 1882 INCLUSIVE) continued.

| Date.       | Place.          | Prize.                | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special Prizes, &c. | Total Value. | Selection.   |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|
|             |                 |                       | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.                             | £ s. d.      |  |
| Aug. 14 ..  | Clitheroe .. .. | 4th                   | 5 10 0      | .....                               | 5 10 0       | "Stiffelio."   |
| " ..        | Harpurhey .. .. | 2nd                   | 5 0 0       | 2nd Quickstep,                      | 6 0 0        | Quickstep, "Sir Garnet." Chorus,<br>"Worthy is the Lamb," and "Amen."<br>"Hohenlinden" and "Marion." |
| Sept. 11 .. | Rochdale .. ..  | 2nd                   | 7 0 0       | .....                               | 7 0 0        |  |
| 1881.       |                 |                       |             |                                     |              |  |
| April 16 .. | Blackrod .. ..  | Divided,<br>3rd & 4th | 2 5 0       | .....                               | 2 5 0        | Quickstep, "3 D. Gs." and "Marion."  |
| " ..        | Liverpool .. .. | 3rd                   | 15 0 0      | 1st Quickstep,                      | 16 10 0      | Quickstep, "Sea Lion," and "Rigolletto."   |
| Sept. 3 ..  | Middleton .. .. | 5th                   | 1 0 0       | .....                               | 1 0 0        | "Hohenlinden," and Quadrille, "Nugae<br>Canorae."  |
| 1882.       |                 |                       |             |                                     |              |  |
| June 17 ..  | Farnworth .. .. | 4th                   | 2 0 0       | .....                               | 2 0 0        | "Hohenlinden." Valse, "Wendische<br>Wiesen."   |
| July 1 ..   | Blackpool .. .. | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | .....                               | 20 0 0       | "Weber's Works."   |
|             | Total .. ..     |                       | £149 15 0   | £4 0 0                              | £153 15 0    |  |

All those marked thus (\*) are test-piece contests.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O'-TH'-BARN BAND, UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. G. F. BIRKENSHAW.—1883.

| Date.        | Place.         | Prizes. | Cash Value       | Instruments,<br>Special Prizes, &c. | Total Value.     | Selection.                                      | Names of Judges.                      |
|--------------|----------------|---------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| * June 2 ..  | Westleigh ..   | 3rd     | £ s. d.<br>3 0 0 | .....<br>Trombone,<br>7 10 0        | £ s. d.<br>3 0 0 | { Chorus, "Hallelujah"<br>{ Quadrille, "Marion" | Thomas German.                        |
| * " 16 ..    | Stalybridge .. | 2nd     | 10 0 0           | .....                               | 17 10 0          | " Bouquet of Beauties "                         | John Gladney.                         |
| " 30 ..      | Radcliffe ..   | 4th     | 2 0 0            | .....                               | 2 0 0            | " Hours of Beauty "                             | T. E. Embury.                         |
| July 7 ..    | Rochdale ..    | 3rd     | 3 0 0            | .....                               | 3 0 0            | { Glee, "Hohenlinden"<br>{ Quadrille, "Marion"  | John Gladney.                         |
| Aug. 18 ..   | Middleton ..   | 2nd     | 6 0 0            | .....<br>Gold Medal,<br>3 3 0       | 6 0 0            | " "   | Richard Marsden.                      |
| * Sept. 5 .. | Belle Vue ..   | 5th     | 10 0 0           | .....                               | 13 3 0           | " Il Giuramento "                               | { Messrs. Godfrey,<br>{ Hare & Amers. |
| " 22 ..      | Blackpool ..   | Nil.    | .....            | .....                               | .....            | " Moses in Egypt "                              | John Hartmann.                        |
| " 29 ..      | Bury ..        | 1st     | 12 0 0           | .....                               | 12 0 0           | { Glee, "Hohenlinden"<br>{ Quadrille, "Marion"  | J. Nuttall.                           |
| Dec. 8 ..    | Blackburn ..   | 4th     | 3 0 0            | .....                               | 3 0 0            | " Weber's Works "                               | George Mellor.                        |
|              | Total ..       |         | £49 0 0          | £10 13 0                            | £59 13 0         |   |                                       |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1884.

| Date.     | Place.        | Prize. | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c. | Total Value. | Selection.  | Names of Judges.                        |
|-----------|---------------|--------|-------------|--|--------------|---|---|
|           |               |        | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.                                | £ s. d.      |   |   |
| *April 12 | Trawden ..    | 1st    | 16 0 0      | † 0 10 0                               | 16 10 0      | "Gems of Mozart" .. .. .  | T. E. Embury.                           |
| * " 26    | Kearsley ..   | 4th    | 2 0 0       | .....                                  | 2 0 0        | "Hours of Beauty" & "Marion"<br>Chorus, "The Heavens are tell-<br>ing," Valse, "Wendische Wiesen" | T. E. Embury.<br>John Lord.             |
| *May 17   | Newchurch ..  | 1st    | 12 0 0      | .....                                  | 12 0 0       | Chorus, "The Heavens are tell-<br>ing," Quadrille, No. 1 .. .. .                                  | T. E. Embury.                           |
| * " 31    | Westleigh ..  | 1st    | 12 0 0      | .....                                  | 12 0 0       | "Joan of Arc" .. .. .   | T. F. Embury & C. Jones.                |
| *June 7   | Southport ..  | 2nd    | 16 0 0      | .....                                  | 16 0 0       | "Neptune" and No. 1 .. .. .   | T. D. Richardson.                       |
| * " 14    | Darwen ..     | 1st    | 12 0 0      | .....                                  | 12 0 0       | "Lift up your heads" and No. 1  | R. Barker.                              |
| *July 5   | Rochdale ..   | 1st    | 8 0 0       | .....                                  | 19 11 0      | "Hohenlinden" and No. 1 ..  | H. W. Dowdall.                          |
| " 19      | Radcliffe ..  | 2nd    | 8 0 0       | .....                                  | 9 0 0        | "Crispino" .. .. .  | John Lord.                              |
| *Aug. 4   | Manchester .. | 1st    | 20 0 0      | .....                                  | 34 14 0      | "Princess Ida" .. .. .  | T. E. Embury.                           |
| * " 9     | Littleborough | 2nd    | 10 0 0      | .....                                  | 10 0 0       | "Lift up your heads" .. .. .  | John Lord.                              |
| * " 16    | Rishton ..    | 1st    | 15 0 0      | .....                                  | 15 0 0       | "La Gazza Ladra" .. .. .  | Messrs. Godfrey, Vetter,<br>and Clarke. |
| *Sept. 1  | Belle Vue ..  | 6th    | 5 0 0       | .....                                  | 8 3 0        | "Rienza" .. .. .  | Chas. Godfrey.                          |
| * " 20    | Liverpool ..  | Nil    | .....       | .....                                  | .....        |   |   |
| Nov. 29   | Derby ..      | 1st    | 8 0 0       | .....                                  | 46 17 0      | "Rossini's Works" .. .. .   | Richard Marsden.                        |
|           | Total ..      |        | £144 0 0    | £69 15 0                               | £213 15 0    |   |   |

All those marked thus (\*) are test-piece contests. † Won by J. F. Carter. ‡ J. F. Carter. || A. Owen and F. Durham. § W. Lawson.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O'-TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1885.

| Date.   | Place.             | Prize. | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c. | Total Value. | Selection.   | Names of Judges.                          |
|---|--------------------|--------|-------------|--|--------------|--|---|
|   |                    |        | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.                                | £ s. d.      |  |   |
| *April 4  | Colne ..           | 1st    | 15 0 0      | Bombardon,<br>16 16 0                  | 31 16 0      | "Semeramide"   | H. W. Dowdall.                            |
| May 23  | Littleborough      | 2nd    | 7 0 0       | Cornet,<br>8 8 0                       | 15 8 0       | "Rossini's Works"  | W. W. Frayling.                           |
| " 30  | Alloa,<br>Scotland | 1st    | 40 0 0      | 1st Quickstep,<br>2 0 0                | 42 0 0       | "  | R. Marsden & W. W. Gray                   |
| *July 4   | Rochdale ..        | 1st    | 9 0 0       | Cornet,<br>13 13 0                     | 22 13 0      | "All we like sheep" and No. 1                            | R. Barker.                                |
| " 11  | Batley ..          | 1st    | 16 0 0      | .....                                  | 16 0 0       | "Rossini's Works"  | T. E. Embury.                             |
| " 25  | Middleton ..       | 1st    | 14 0 0      | .....                                  | 14 0 0       | "Worthy is the Lamb" and<br>"Amen," & "Wendische Wiesen" | H. W. Dowdall.                            |
| Aug. 3  | Barrow ..          | 1st    | 30 0 0      | Gold Medal,<br>2 2 0                   | 32 2 0       | "Rossini's Works"  | T. E. Embury.                             |
| " 8   | Queensbury         | 1st    | 20 0 0      | Baritone,<br>13 13 0                   | 33 13 0      | "  | Thos. T. Trinnell.                        |
| " 15  | Rotherham ..       | 1st    | 25 0 0      | .....                                  | 25 0 0       | "  | Chas. Godfrey.                            |
| *Sept. 7  | Belle Vue ..       | 3rd    | 15 0 0      | Cornet,<br>6 6 0                       | 24 9 0       | "Nabucodonosor"  | Messrs. Godfrey, Hart-<br>man and Vetter. |
| " 12  | Norland ..         | 3rd    | 7 0 0       | Gold Medal,<br>3 3 0                   | 7 0 0        | "Rossini's Works"  | John Gladney.                             |
|   | Total ..           |        | £198 0 0    | £66 1 0                                | £264 1 0     |  |   |
| During the season, two septette contests were attended by individual members with results as follows. |                    |        |             |  |              |  |   |
| Feb. 7  | Radcliffe ..       | 3rd    | 2 0 0       | .....                                  | 2 0 0        | Glee, "O, Statch me swift"                               | T. E. Embury.                             |
| " 21  | Heywood ..         | 3rd    | 2 0 0       | .....                                  | 2 0 0        | "  | A. K. Seddon.                             |
|   | Total ..           |        | £202 0 0    | £66 1 0                                | £268 1 0     |  |   |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

## PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH' BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1886.

| Date.      | Place.             | Prize.                | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c.                     | Total Value. | Selection.                 | Names of Judges.                               |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--|--------------|----------------------------|--|
|            |                    |                       | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.  | £ s. d.      |                            |  |
| * April 24 | Cologne .. ..      | 2nd                   | 11 0 0      | Trombone,<br>6 6 0<br>1st Quickstep,<br>2 0 0              | 19 6 0       | "Wagner" .. ..             | H. W. Dowdall.                                 |
| May 29     | Alloa, Scotland    | 1st                   | 40 0 0      | .....  | 40 0 0       | "Rossini's Works" .. ..    | Messrs. Marsden & Locker                       |
| * June 19  | Eastham ..         | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | "Bohemian Girl" .. ..      | Joseph Gaggis.                                 |
| " 26       | Hawes .. ..        | 2nd                   | 15 15 0     | 2nd Quickstep<br>1 0 0<br>Baton,<br>† 1 10 0               | 16 15 0      | "Rossini's Works" .. ..    | Herr Franz Groenings.                          |
| July 3     | Skipton .. ..      | 1st                   | 24 0 0      | .....  | 25 10 0      | " .. ..                    | T. T. Trimmell.                                |
| " 17       | Lindley .. ..      | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | " .. ..                    | T. E. Embury.                                  |
| " 24       | Norland .. ..      | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | " .. ..                    | T. T. Trimmell.                                |
| Aug. 2     | Barrow .. ..       | 1st                   | 30 0 0      | .....  | 30 0 0       | " .. ..                    | T. E. Embury.                                  |
| " 14       | Queensbury         | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | " .. ..                    | T. T. Trimmell.                                |
| " 17       | Elland .. ..       | 3rd                   | 10 0 0      | .....  | 10 0 0       | " .. ..                    | Chas. Godfrey.                                 |
| " 21       | Radcliffe ..       | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | " .. ..                    | T. T. Trimmell.                                |
| * " 30     | Liverpool ..       | Divided,<br>3rd & 4th | 12 10 0     | Euphonium,<br>16 16 0<br>1st Quickstep<br>Cornet,<br>9 9 0 | 12 10 0      | "York and Lancaster" .. .. | Messrs. O. Gaggis, J. Amers<br>and P. Simpson. |
| Oct. 1     | Fleetwood ..       | 2nd                   | 15 4 0      | .....  | 41 9 0       | "Rossini's Works" .. ..    | Messrs. Heron, De Jong<br>and Binus.           |
| " 23       | Edinburgh<br>I. E. | 1st                   | 60 0 0      | .....  | 60 0 0       | " .. ..                    | Messrs. Marsden, Goodall<br>and Lockyer.       |
|            | Total .. ..        |                       | £318 9 0    | £37 1 0  | £355 10 0    |                            |  |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

† Mr. A. Owen.

PRIZES WON BY BESSÉ'S TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1887.

| Date.    | Place.                  | Prize. | Cash Value. | Instruments, Special Prizes, &c.   | Total Value. | Selection.            | Names of Judges.                     |
|----------|-------------------------|--------|-------------|--|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
|          |                         |        | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.  | £ s. d.      |                       |                                      |
| June 4   | Barnoldswick            | 4th    | 5 0 0       | 1 0 0  | 6 0 0        | "Rossini's Works"     | J. Murdock.                          |
| " 11     | Blackpool               | 3rd    | 15 0 0      | .....  | 15 0 0       | "Cinq Mars"           | Herr Franz Groenings.                |
| July 15  | Lindley                 | 1st    | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | "Rossini's Works"     | J. S. Jones.                         |
| " 23     | Norland                 | 1st    | 20 0 0      | .....  | 20 0 0       | "Beethoven's Works"   | "                                    |
| " 30     | Radcliffe               | 3rd    | 5 0 0       | .....  | 5 0 0        | "Bouquet of Beauties" | Edwin Swift.                         |
| Aug. 1   | Barrow                  | 1st    | 30 0 0      | .....  | 30 0 0       | "Rossini's Works"     | A. R. Seddon.                        |
| " 15     | Lincoln                 | 5th    | 3 0 0       | .....  | 3 0 0        | "                     | H. W. Dowdall.                       |
| *Sept. 5 | Belle Vue               | 3rd    | 15 0 0      | Gold Medal,<br>3 3 0<br>Solid Silver<br>Mouthpiece,<br>† 1 10 0<br>Cornet,<br>† 12 12 0<br>Cornet, | 32 5 0       | "L' Etoile du Nord"   | Messrs. Lawson, Amers<br>and Hughes. |
| " 17     | Newcastle<br>Exhibition | 1st    | 30 0 0      | 12 12 0  | 42 12 0      | "Rossini's Works"     | J. S. Jones & Jno. Naylor.           |
| " 24     | Liverpool               | 1st    | 40 0 0      | .....  | 40 0 0       | "Cinq Mars"           | Herr Franz Groenings.                |
| Oct. 8   | Saltaire                | 1st    | 20 0 0      | Cornet,<br>12 12 0   | 32 12 0      | "Rossini's Works"     | J. S. Jones.                         |
|          | Total                   |        | £203 0 0    | £43 9 0  | £246 9 0     |                       |                                      |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests. † Won by F. Durham. ‡ Won by F. Durham.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O'-TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1888.

| Date.     | Placc.        | Prize.                | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c.      | Total Value. | Selection.                  | Names of Judges.                     |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|---|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|           |               |                       | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.                                     | £ s. d.      |                             |                                      |
| * May 12  | Heywood ..    | 1st                   | 18 0 0      | .....                                       | 18 0 0       | "Maritana" ..               | R. Barker.                           |
| " 26      | Southport ..  | 1st                   | 16 0 0      | .....                                       | 16 0 0       | "                           | Joseph Gags,                         |
| June 2    | Barnoldswick  | 1st                   | 25 0 0      | 2nd Quickstep                               | 26 0 0       | "Faust" ..                  | Dr. Spark.                           |
| " 26      | Boston ..     | 1st                   | 45 0 0      | .....                                       | 45 0 0       | "                           | J. H. Amers.                         |
| July 7    | Leeds ..      | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | 1st Quickstep.                              | 22 0 0       | "                           | "                                    |
| " 17      | Kidsgrove ..  | 2nd                   | 20 0 0      | 2nd Quickstep                               | 21 0 0       | "                           | J. Lawson.                           |
| " 21      | Cleckheaton   | 1st                   | 25 0 0      | .....                                       | 25 0 0       | "                           | Herr Franz Groenings.                |
| " 28      | Ingleton ..   | 1st                   | 24 0 0      | 2nd Quickstep                               | 26 0 0       | "Faust" & "Rossini's Works" | Joseph Gags,                         |
| * Aug. 4  | Crewe ..      | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | Euphonium,<br>I 4 0<br>Gold Medal,<br>3 3 0 | 37 17 0      | "Maritana" ..               | J. Lawson.                           |
| " 6       | Barrow ..     | Divided,<br>1st & 2nd | 25 0 0      | .....                                       | 25 0 0       | "Faust" ..                  | T. E. Embury.                        |
| " 11      | Halifax ..    | 1st                   | 25 0 0      | .....                                       | 25 0 0       | "Faust" & "Rossini's Works" | J. T. Richards.                      |
| * Sept. 3 | Belle Vue ..  | Nil                   | .....       | .....                                       | .....        | "Flying Dutchman" ..        | Messrs. Godfrey, Miller<br>and Pyne. |
| " 8       | Brighouse ..  | 1st                   | 20 0 0      | Cond. Baton,<br>† 1 1 0                     | 21 1 0       | "Faust" ..                  | John North.                          |
| * Oct. 27 | Glasgow I. E. | 3rd                   | 20 0 0      | .....                                       | 20 0 0       | "Wagner" ..                 | Herr Franz Groenings.                |
|           | Total ..      |                       | £303 0 0    | £24 18 0                                    | £327 18 0    |                             |                                      |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

† Mr. A. Owen.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O'-TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1889.

| Date.      | Place.           | Prize. | Cash Value.       | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c.              | Total Value.      | Selection.         | Names of Judges.      |
|------------|------------------|--------|-------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| * April 22 | Hanley.. ..      | 1st    | £ s. d.<br>21 0 0 | £ s. d.<br>....<br>Cornet,<br>12 0 0                | £ s. d.<br>21 0 0 | " Lyric Garland "  | T. E. Embury.         |
| June 1     | Haydon<br>Bridge | 1st    | 38 0 0            | 12 0 0  | 50 0 0            | " Faust "          | J. O. Shepherd.       |
| * " 15     | Southport ..     | 1st    | 16 0 0            | ....  | 16 0 0            | " Excelsior "      | Joseph Gaggs.         |
| " 29       | Hawes .. ..      | 1st    | 25 0 0            | Quickstep,<br>2 0 0                                 | 27 0 0            | " Faust "          | Herr Franz Groenings. |
| July 2     | Boston .. ..     | 1st    | 45 0 0            | Parade,<br>1 1 0                                    | 46 1 0            | " "                | T. E. Embury.         |
| " 6        | Leeds .. ..      | 1st    | 25 0 0            | Quickstep,<br>2 0 0<br>Trombone,<br>† 6 6 0         | 33 6 0            | " "                | Herr Franz Groenings. |
| * " 23     | Kidsgrove ..     | 1st    | 30 0 0            | Quickstep,<br>1 10 0<br>2nd Cornet Con.<br>† 0 10 0 | 32 0 0            | " Romeo & Juliet " | J. H. Amers.          |
| * " 27     | Brighouse ..     | 1st    | 20 0 0            | Quickstep,<br>2 0 0                                 | 22 0 0            | " Cinq Mars "      | R. H. Earnshaw.       |
| Aug. 5     | Barrow .. ..     | 1st    | 30 0 0            | ....  | 30 0 0            | " Faust "          | T. E. Embury.         |
| " 10       | Lincoln .. ..    | 1st    | 35 0 0            | ....  | 35 0 0            | " "                | J. H. Amers.          |
|            | Total .. ..      |        | £285 0 0          | £27 7 0   | £312 7 0          |                    |                       |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests. † Won by W. Lawson. ‡ Won by W. E. Holt.



PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1890.

| Date.   | Place.                  | Prize. | Cash Value.       | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c. | Total Value.      | Selection.           | Names of Judges.                         |
|---------|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------|--|
| June 21 | Hawes .. ..             | 1st    | £ s. d.<br>25 0 0 | £ s. d.<br>2nd Quickstep,<br>2 0 0     | £ s. d.<br>27 0 0 | "Faust" .. ..        | Herr Franz Groenings.                    |
| " 28    | Edinburgh<br>Exhibition | 1st    | 50 0 0            | Cornet,<br>18 18 0                     | 68 18 0           | "Weber" .. ..        | Messrs. Lawson, Miller,<br>and Dambmann. |
| *July 5 | Leeds .. ..             | 2nd    | 15 0 0            | .....                                  | 15 0 0            | " .. ..              | Herr Franz Groenings.                    |
| " 21    | Kidsgrove .. ..         | 1st    | 30 0 0            | .....                                  | 30 0 0            | "Maritana" .. ..     | T. Wadson & J. Gladney.                  |
| *Aug. 2 | Wyke .. ..              | 2nd    | 15 0 0            | 2nd Quickstep,<br>1 0 0                | 16 0 0            | "Weber" .. ..        | J. H. Amers.                             |
| " 4     | Barrow .. ..            | 1st    | 30 0 0            | .....                                  | 30 0 0            | "Faust" .. ..        | A. D. Keate.                             |
| " 9     | Lincoln .. ..           | 2nd    | 15 0 0            | .....                                  | 15 0 0            | "Rossini's Works" .. | Geo. Asch.                               |
| *Sep. 6 | Morecambe ..            | 1st    | 15 0 0            | Euphonium,<br>12 12 0                  | 27 12 0           | "Weber" .. ..        | J. Ainsworth.                            |
|         | Total .. ..             |        | £195 0 0          | £34 10 0                               | £229 10 0         |                      |  |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1891.

| Date.     | Place.          | Prize. | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c.  | Total Value. | Selection.                             | Names of Judges.                       |
|-----------|-----------------|--------|-------------|---|--------------|--|--|
|           |                 |        | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.   | £ s. d.      |  |  |
| * May 23  | Morecambe ..    | 1st    | 21 0 0      | .....   | 21 0 0       | " Linda d' Chamounix "                 | J. Ainsworth.                          |
| * June 13 | Hyde .. ..      | 2nd    | 16 16 0     | .....   | 16 16 0      | " Bohemian Girl " .. ..                | J. O. Shepherd.                        |
| " 20      | Hawes .. ..     | 1st    | 25 0 0      | Quickstep,<br>2 0 0   | 27 0 0       | " Rossini's Works " .. ..              | J. Ainsworth.                          |
| " 27      | Farnley .. ..   | 1st    | 21 0 0      | 2nd Quickstep,<br>1 0 0<br>Silver Medal,<br>† 1 10 0<br>Silver Chal. Cup<br>52 10 0 | 22 0 0       | " Faust " .. ..                        | T. E. Embury.                          |
| * July 4  | Leeds .. ..     | 1st    | 20 0 0      | .....   | 74 0 0       | " Rossini " .. ..                      | J. Ainsworth.                          |
| Aug. 3    | Barrow .. ..    | 1st    | 30 0 0      | .....   | 30 0 0       | " Faust " .. ..                        | "                                      |
| * " 15    | Kirkcaldy .. .. | 1st    | 55 0 0      | .....   | 55 0 0       | " Rossini " .. ..                      | Thomas German.                         |
| * " 29    | Kidsgrove .. .. | 1st    | 30 0 0      | .....   | 30 0 0       | " Il Guirmento " .. ..                 | J. Robinson.                           |
| * Sept. 4 | Belle Vue .. .. | 4th    | 12 0 0      | † Soprano,<br>8 8 0<br>Gold Medal,<br>3 3 0   | 23 11 0      | " Das Nachtlagar in<br>Granada " .. .. | Messrs. Kiefert, Evans,<br>and Jaeger. |
|           |                 |        | £230 16 0   | £68 11 0  | £299 7 0     |  |  |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests. † Won by J. F. Carter. ‡ J. Lownds.

PRIZES WON BY BESSES-O' TH'-BARN BAND UNDER THE TUITION OF MR. ALEXANDER OWEN.—1892.

| Date.      | Place.         | Prize. | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c.                   | Total Value. | Selection.         | Names of Judges.                       |
|------------|----------------|--------|-------------|--|--------------|--------------------|--|
|            |                |        | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.  | £ s. d.      |                    |  |
| * April 18 | Kidsgrove ..   | 2nd    | 25 0 0      | .....  | 25 0 0       | "Mozart"           | Herr Franz Groenings.                  |
| * May 7    | Stacksteads .. | 4th    | 4 0 0       | .....  | 4 0 0        | "Il Giurmento"     | J. O. Shepherd.                        |
| * June 11  | Morecambe ..   | 1st    | 21 0 0      | .....  | 21 0 0       | "Mozart"           | J. Ainsworth.                          |
| " 18       | Hawes ..       | 1st    | 25 0 0      | 1st Quickstep,<br>2 0 0<br>Silver Chal. Cup<br>52 10 0   | 79 10 0      | "Faust" & "Heroic" | Herr Franz Groenings.                  |
| * July 23  | Bacup ..       | 1st    | 25 0 0      | Cornet,<br>14 14 0                                       | 39 14 0      | "Maritana"         | W. Williams and<br>I. Dearnley.        |
| Aug. 1     | Barrow ..      | 1st    | 30 0 0      | .....  | 30 0 0       | "Faust"            | Howard Lees.                           |
| * " 6      | Scarborough .. | 1st    | 30 0 0      | 27 Silver Medals<br>7 10 0<br>Silver Chal. Cup<br>47 5 0 | 86 15 0      | "Il Guirmento"     | R. Marsden.                            |
| " 10       | Longton ..     | 3rd    | 35 0 0      | 1st Quickstep,<br>3 0 0                                  | 38 0 0       | "Le Prophete"      | Messrs. Englefield,<br>Coward & Hurst. |
| * " 13     | Galashiels ..  | 1st    | 50 0 0      | .....  | 50 0 0       | "Jean of Arc"      | J. Ainsworth.                          |
| * " 20     | Kirkcaldy ..   | 1st    | 60 0 0      | .....  | 60 0 0       | "Mozart"           | A. R. Seddon.                          |
| " 27       | Hull ..        | 1st    | 40 0 0      | 1st Quickstep,<br>1 10 0<br>Gold Medal,<br>14 4 0        | 45 14 0      | "Faust"            | Howard Lees.                           |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests. † Won by W. E. Holt.

## LIST OF PRIZES (1892) continued.

| Date.    | Place.                           | Prize. | Cash Value. | Instruments,<br>Special<br>Prizes, &c.   | Total Value. | Selection.           | Names of Judges.   |
|----------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------|--|--------------|----------------------|--|
|          |                                  |        | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.  | £ s. d.      |                      |  |
| *Sept. 5 | Belle Vue                        | 1st    | 30 0 0      | Gold Medal,<br>3 3 0<br>Two Cornophones,<br>23 2 0<br>BB flat Bass,<br>25 0 0<br>fl at Bombardon,<br>31 10 0<br>B flat Trumpet,<br>8 8 0<br>Gold Medal,<br>† 4 4 0<br>Album of Music,<br>1 6 0<br>Belle Vue S. C. Cup,<br>52 10 0<br>Sampson Fox S. C.<br>Cup,<br>52 10 0<br>1st Quickstep,<br>1 0 0<br>.... | 231 13 0     | "Zaar und Zimmerman" | Messrs. Hamilton Clarke,<br>Manuel E. Bilton, and<br>Carl Kiefert. |
| Sept. 26 | Sandbach                         | 1st    | 20 0 0      | ....   | 21 0 0       | "Il Guirmento"       | J. Ainsworth.  |
| *Oct. 1  | Manchester Old<br>America Ex'b'n | 5th    | 10 0 0      | ....   | 10 0 0       | "Nabuco"             | Messrs. Englefield, Cuning-<br>ham & J. O. Shepherd.               |
|          | Total ..                         |        | £405 0 0    | £337 6 0   | £742 6 0     |                      |  |

All those marked (\*) are test-piece contests.

† Won by W. E. Holt.

Bacup Band, from 1862 to 1871 inclusive, took thirty-two first prizes, tied once or first and second, eight seconds, two thirds, and four fourths, in addition to eleven special prizes, amounting in total value to £1,465 15s.

The highest prize taken by them was at Belle Vue, September 5th, 1870, which consisted of –

|                               | £   | s.        | d.       |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----------|----------|
| Cash                          | 30  | 0         | 0        |
| Gold Medal                    |     | 8         | 0        |
| Richly Engraved Silver Cornet |     | 16        | 0        |
| Bombardon                     |     | <u>25</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Total                         | £80 | 4         | 0        |

They still hold the record for taking most first prizes in succession—viz., thirteen first prizes, accomplished during the years 1869, 1870, and 1871.

Meltham Mills, from 1871 to 1883, thirteen seasons, took seventy-two first prizes, tied four times for first and second, twenty-three seconds, tied once for second and third, seven thirds, two fourths, and three fifths, in addition to thirty-five special prizes, amounting in total value to £3,401 2s. 6d.

Their highest prize consisted of –

|                          | £    | s.        | d.       |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|----------|
| Cash                     | 30   | 0         | 0        |
| Baritone (value)         |      | 19        | 0        |
| Cornet                   |      | 14        | 0        |
| Twenty-three Gold Medals |      | <u>72</u> | <u>9</u> |
| Total                    | £137 | 2         | 0        |

This was on the occasion of their taking the first prize for the third time in succession at Belle Vue, September 2nd, 1878.

Black Dyke have taken more prizes than any other band. Their having been old veterans of the contest-field since 1856 has enabled them to take over two hundred prizes, amounting to upwards of £4,000 in value, though they have not been quite so fortunate in the securing of first prizes. They have taken the first prize at Belle Vue, Manchester, on seven different occasions; in addition to the first prize, consisting of –

|              | £   | s. | d. |
|--------------|-----|----|----|
| Cash         | 40  | 0  | 0  |
| Silver Cup   | 20  | 0  | 0  |
| Contra Basso | 36  | 15 | 0  |
| Total        | £96 | 15 | 0  |

At the Crystal Palace, London, 1860. Value of prizes won at Belle Vue alone is over £800.

Mr. Phineas Bower, the present bandmaster, has played the solo euphonium for over twenty-three years.

Kingston Mills took the first prize at Belle Vue for the third year in succession, September 5th, 1887: it consisted of –

|  | £    | s. | d. |
|--|------|----|----|
| Cash   | 30   | 0  | 0  |
| Euphonium  | 30   | 0  | 0  |
| Twenty-five Gold Medals – one to each member of the band | 78   | 15 | 0  |
| Total  | £138 | 15 | 0  |

They also took the first prize of £60 in cash at the Glasgow Exhibition (1888), are old associates of the contest-field, and prizes taken amount to about £2,000 accurately speaking.

Wyke Temperance is the finest temperance band that ever the world produced! Have won many prizes, under the tuition of Mr. Edwin Swift, including two first prizes at the Crystal Palace, London; also two at Belle Vue, Manchester. They were the first band to win the Belle Vue Champion Silver Challenge Cup.

Wyke Old, now broken up, won the first prize of £72 in cash and an euphonium, value £25 10s., at the Irish Exhibition, London, October 1st and 2nd, 1888. The conditions were, however, that the winning band should stay and perform the whole of the week.

Nelson Band, from 1870 to 1876, took twenty first prizes and seventeen seconds, including a grand prize at Pomona Palace, Manchester, July 6th, 1875, consisting of –

|  | £    | s. | d. |
|--|------|----|----|
| Cash   | 50   | 0  | 0  |
| Euphonium  | 27   | 0  | 0  |
| Cornet   | 20   | 0  | 0  |
| Twenty-two Silver Medals – one to each<br>member of the band | 10   | 0  | 0  |
| Total  | £107 | 0  | 0  |

Leeds Forge, throughout their very short though remarkably creditable career, displayed more courage, perseverance and determination than any other organization of its kind that ever existed. As the greatest rival to Besses-o' th'-Barn (a creditable feature) they never were afraid to meet the latter combination on any terms. Their career, bright and sparkling as it was in its short duration, is accredited to the diligence, for the most part, of their enterprising enthusiasts, the "Committee," who were gentlemen of good position in the firm.

Glorious old Linthwaite! Mr. Edwin Swift's finest band used to play "L'Etoile du Nord" as no other band *could*. It was indeed a treat to hear it. They have figured in the Belle Vue prize list on no less than eleven different occasions.

Oldham Rifles — the greatest rival to Besses-o' th'-Barn during the years 1884, '85, and '86 — have suffered adversity during the last few years through the loss of several of their best members. Mr. James Robinson, tenor horn-player and bandmaster during their successful career, having been appointed conductor to the Alloa Instrumental and Alva Town Bands, Scotland. The band, however, is recouping, and their latest achievements on the contest field prove that ere long, with perseverance, we shall find them once more occupying their former position on the list of leading cracks.

Dewsbury, one of our oldest organizations, though never having risen to any very great point of excellence or note, have taken no less than fifteen prizes at Belle Vue, and rather remarkable is the fact that eight of these have been second prizes.

Heywood Old, who made their *début* with "Nabuco" at Old America Exhibition, Manchester, October 1st, 1892, and came off with first honours among all the leading cracks may, perhaps, be expected to give a good account of themselves during the coming season.

Accrington, one of our old favourites, with "William Tell," have pitiably lost, since the resignation of their veteran conductor (Mr. Gladney), all their wonted vigour — a fact which makes us sigh for the days of yore — sing then with "Dyke" and "Sheffield:"

Shall contests come, and contests go,  
 And the prizes for ever leave us?  
 No; no! we cry, it shall not be so,  
 Our honour is roused, believe us.  
 No contest more shall come and go,  
 Without we have a try,  
 Or twice ten thousand bandsmen,  
 Shall know the reason why.

Boarshurst, Meltham's most dangerous opponent in their declining years, was the most promising band of its day; but, on the resignation of Mr. J. F. Carter, their euphoniumist, all hope and energy seemed to be lost — two virtues which have never yet been regained!

Honley — the remains of grand old Meltham — flourished remarkably well from 1884 to 1887, when, utterly broken down in spirits by their reflections on former victories and those of that date (a fact to no man having gone through like experience, so very digestible), they suddenly collapsed.

Stalybridge Old, another of our noble pioneers, whose name will ever be remembered amongst partisans of the contest field, have also retired, so to speak, into the vale of oblivion.

Black Dyke have, during their splendid career, won no less than seven silver cups, value £63 17s., all of which are their own exclusive property.

Mr. Phineas Bower, bandmaster Black Dyke, has won far more prizes than any other individual as an euphoniumist.

Saltaire Band, conductor Mr. J. Paley, was the first to break the record of the famous Meltham Mills, at Ilkley, 1878.

Mr. Gladney's first contest with Black Dyke was at Leeds, July 7th, 1888; Mr. A. Owen having retired at Boston, the previous contest, June 26th.

The repertoires of Black Dyke and Besses-o' th'-Barn coupled, are supposed to be larger or *equal* to those of any half-dozen bands of a similar order put together.

The most successful season by far for Kingston Mills was 1892, during



which time they captured 11 first prizes, one second, and one third, exclusive of eight specials; amounting in total value to £455 0s. 6d.

Kettering Town, the finest band we have in the Midlands, gained the Championship Gold Medal for the highest number of points gained in one season, their total being 120 for eleven first prizes, ten seconds, and one third. The medal was given by Messrs. Silvani and Smith, of London.

Rushden Temperance and Kettering Rifles (both of whom are rivals one to another) and the last-named combination, figure as the three principal bands of the midland counties.

Skelmersdale Temperance, under the conductorship of Mr. W. Rimmer, have made themselves conspicuous during the last two years, taking nine first prizes and seven seconds, inclusive of special prizes during last season.

West Hartlepool Old Operatic have, during the last season, bid well for success. Go, others, and do likewise!

Alloa, the champion band of Scotland, whilst under the conductorship of Mr. Richard Marsden, swept the boards almost clean wherever they went for four seasons. Since the introduction of their new favourite (Mr. Robinson) their success is almost similar. But discretion must be the watchword, or the changing of players round the stand will prove disastrous.

Kirkcaldy, Galashiels and Alva, we may rightly term as the now greatest rivals to the former, and whose successes of late have been almost identical with each other.

It is stated on good authority that there are no less than 3,000 bands in Great Britain alone.



**Mr. Fred Durham,** *Cornet and Bass Trumpet  
Soloist, late Royal Military  
Musical College.*

Teacher of Reed, String, and Brass Bands.

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