

The Tyler Family Band - a father and his two sets of children touring the British Isles, 1843-1889

Gavin Holman, 14 February 2022

Joseph Tyler (1811-1903) was born at Romford, Essex to parents Anthony and Sarah (née Gates). He married Hannah Reece (1808-1846) in 1828 at Marylebone, and they had seven children – James Henry (1831-), Joseph (1833-1883), George (1835-), Louisa Sarah (1837-1878), Thomas Ebenezer (1839-1895), Emma Elizabeth (1841-), and Amelia Emma (1845-). Joseph and his four sons made up the first Tyler ensemble, which made its debut in 1846.

Joseph's first wife, Hannah, died in 1846, and he subsequently met and married Georgina Newman (1829-1920) in 1849, with whom he had a further six children – John Anthony (1856-1904), Robert Argyll (1858-1891), Georgina (1861-1933), Albert (1864-1919), Victoria (1865-1943), and Henry (1868-1958). These children, together with his grandsons Arthur Thomas Tyler (1861-1906), Frederick Alexander Tyler (1861-1894), and William Silas Tyler (1862-1922), formed the basis of the second 'Tyler Band' from 1867 onwards.



Joseph Tyler

The first Tyler Family Band

Little is known of the family until they begin their musical journeys in 1846, other than in 1841 they were living in Garden Place, St Mary Newington, Lambeth, and Joseph Tyler's occupation was listed as 'musician'. Joseph had clearly taught his sons to play musical instruments – though there is no mention of Louisa, Emma, or Amelia ever being part of the musical family business.

The Tyler family (Joseph and his sons) firstly completed two seasons in London at the nobilities' concerts and the Royal Gardens, Vauxhall, during 1843-1845. They then spent the 1845-1846 season entertaining the spa visitors at Harrogate.

The family's next known public appearance was at the Town Hall, Wetherby, on 5 October 1846, as part of a concert promoted by Julian Adams, who had brought up all of his band of solo performers from London. This ensemble included Signor Guibelei, vocalist of the Italian opera; Julian Adams himself performing on the pianoforte and concertina; Herr Kohler with solos on the newly-invented saxhorn; Messrs Tyler and Anderson performing solos on the clarinet and flute; and the Juvenile Quintetta Band (Tyler Family).¹ Tickets for this concert were sold at 3s, with back seats being 1s 6d.

The family then embarked on a tour of the country with Louisa Vinning 'The Infant Sappho', a 9-year old singer, who had captivated audiences with her voice and the story of her early years – how she could dream up beautiful original music.² Her father, John Vinning,

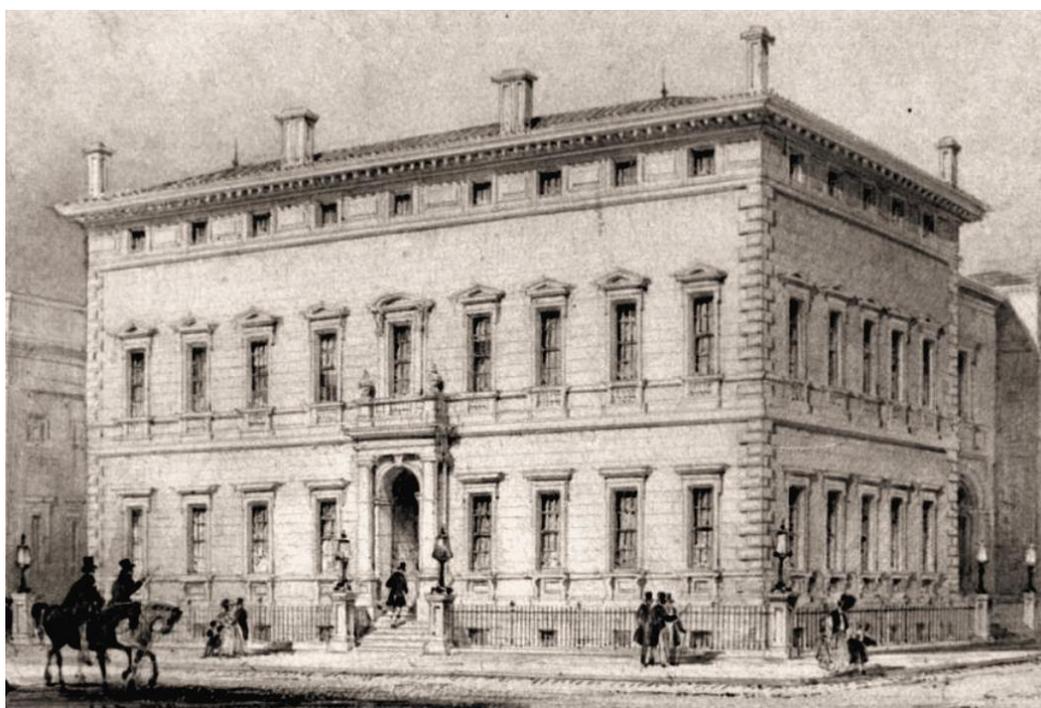
¹ Leeds Mercury, 3 October 1846

² Schweitzer, Maris - <https://www.ladyscience.com/features/curious-case-of-the-infant-sappho-2020>

managed his daughter's singing performances and arranged the tour, including the Tylers as instrumentalists.

They started their joint engagements in Liverpool on Monday 12 October 1846, and then appeared at the Manchester Athenæum for a full week and more from 19 October. Tickets cost 2s and 1s, with reserved seats, 2s 6d.

“The Tyler family announced to take part in the entertainment consists of, Mr. Tyler, who is himself proficient in instrumental music, as his connection with Jullien's and Wieppert's bands testifies; James, 12 years old; Joseph, 10; George, 8; and Thomas, 6. The exact gradation of years is not more striking than that of size in the youths, whose personal appearance is an index of their age. They are dressed in a uniform, which we may describe as a fancy Prussian, and the instruments they perform upon are - the corno di bassetto for the father, a curious uncouth looking German instrument, something like an elongated clarionet, very little known in England, of deep clear tenor tone, and capable of being used for the bass parts; a flageolet used by James; the 1st horn & clarionet by Joseph; 2nd horn & clarionet by George; and the drum and triangle, performed on by the youngest boy, whose diminutive stature excited much attention.”³



The Athenæum, Manchester, c. 1850

The pieces that the family performed in their first Manchester concert were: duett, “*All' idea di quell Metallo*” (Verdi); glee, “*The Red Cross Knight*” (Calcott); “*The Merry Swiss Boy*”, a solo by James Tyler on the flageolet; “*Recollections of Last Night's Ball*”. This last piece particularly caught the imagination of the audience:

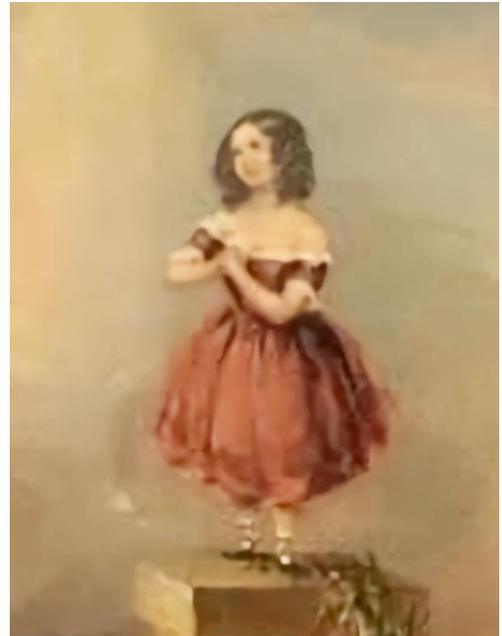
“It exhibited the full extent of their training and their ability. The composition consisted of a medley, made up of snatches of most of the fashionable quadrilles, gallops, and waltzes of the present season, abrupt in transition, and admirably adapted to show the exact time kept. The idea embodied in the composition is that of a musician who, after retiring from the ballroom, to his rest, is haunted in his dreams by the indistinct recollection of the scene he has passed through & without finishing any one, bars and snatches of all the various pieces he has been performing, run in a rapid whirl along with

³ Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 21 October 1846

his busy fancy, producing a *melange*, a sort of *olla podrida* at the conclusion, the struggle for the honour of concluding the whole takes place between the good old “Sir Roger de Coverley” as a country dance, and the more loyal strains of the National Anthem of course prevailing. The thought was novel, wrought out with much of cleverness, and so beautifully interpreted that it was encored and repeated.”

The Vinnings and Tylers returned to Liverpool for a week’s engagement at the Concert Hall in Lord Nelson Street, from Monday 9 November 1846, the Tyler’s being promoted as a ‘Petite Military Band’. The troupe also performed at the Liver Theatre, Liverpool, and the Craven Rooms, Birkenhead, later in the month. The Liver had been hired for £20 and £2 for gas, by Mr Vinning, but the performance was marred by a disturbance caused by a drunken Edward Worrall. Five or six gentlemen from the pit jumped on the stage and restrained the drunk, who was taken away and arrested.

Next stop for the tour was Rotherham Town Hall, on 4 December 1846, followed by the Music Hall, Sheffield for the following week, finishing the year at the Angel Hall Assembly Room, Chesterfield, on 16 December. They returned to Liverpool, briefly, on 9 January 1847, before heading off to Scotland, starting at the Waterloo Rooms, Edinburgh, on 20 January.



The Infant Sappho

“The youthful brothers Tyler, who alternately occupied the platform with this captivating svren [*The Infant Sappho*], exhibited much precocity of talent in their interesting performances. There are four of them, of different ages and sizes - the youngest of whom seemed as if he had risen from the cradle to beat the drum. The eldest, though yet a boy, played the “*Swiss Boy*”, with variations, on the clarionet, with surprising facility, which rivalled even the artistes of Jullien's band. The masters Tyler, who play with their father, keep the most correct time, and the most beautiful harmony results from their wonderful performance.”⁴

The Tylers’ performances here included selections from “*Norma*”, “*Nino*”, and “*Les Huguenots*”. In addition to their theatre performances the Tyler Family also performed for ‘families of distinction’ at the Hopetoun Rooms in the city.⁵ Early March 1847 saw the company performing at the Glasgow Assembly Rooms; and thence to Dunfermline on 13 April, and the Thistle Hall, Dundee from 21 April, the Trades Hall, Arbroath on 28 April – where the Tylers were promoted as:

“Performing on the most difficult Wind Instruments with a facility only to be equalled by Professors of eminence, giving the effect of a Petite Band Militaire.”⁶

Next, was the City Hall, Perth, from 3 May; and, finally, the County Rooms, Aberdeen, from 8 June. This was to be the Tylers’ last joint engagement with Louisa Vinning, “*The Infant Sappho*.”

The Tyler Family now took to the road, back into England, with their own solitary act. First stop was at the Athenæum, Sunderland on 28 June; then the Lecture Room, Nelson Street,

⁴ Caledonian Mercury, 21 January 1847

⁵ Caledonian Mercury, 18 February 1847

⁶ Arbroath Guide, 24 April 1847

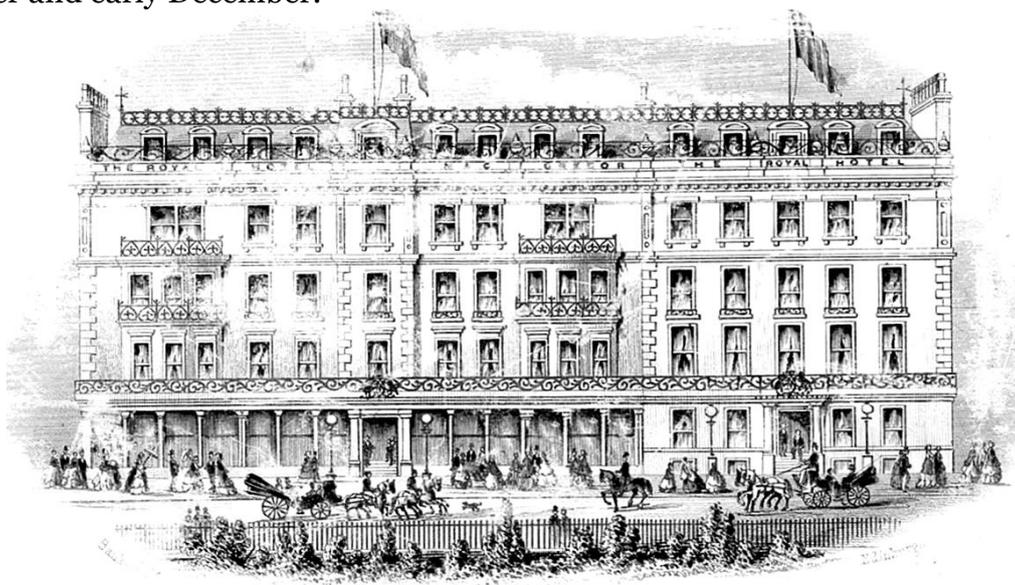
Newcastle, from 29 June; Music Hall, Albion Street, Leeds, from 14 September. They had added M.C. Cottuli to their group – a Spanish violinist and singer. The Manchester Mechanics Institute engaged them on 18 September;⁷ the Music Hall, Leeds, on 30 September; Wakefield, on 8 October; the Oddfellows Hall, Barnsley, on 12/13 October; Liverpool, on 16 October. This last appearance was shortly before their departure for Ireland, appearing at the Music Hall, Dublin, on 25 October. Their programme at this event was:

“All Idea” (from the Barber of Seville) (Rossini), polka “La Belle Amelia” (Tyler), “Dark Day of Horrors” – the celebrated duet from “Semiramide” performed by Masters Joseph and George Tyler, solo by James Tyler on the flageolet (Mayseder), selection “Echoes of the Highlands”, song “I’m Afloat” (Russell); “Swiss Melody”, glee “What Fairy-like Music” (De Pinna), “Polka” (Strauss), duet from “Norma” (Bellini), “Recollections of America” (or Black Music with White Faces, introducing “Lucy Neal”, “The Boatman Dance”, and the most admired Ethiopian melodies.”⁸

Belfast was next to welcome the Family, at the Theatre Royal from 8 November, using the same programme as played in Dublin:

“The family consists of the father and his four sons, the youngest a most interesting child of seven years of age, who sings with great steadiness in the concerted airs, and whose decided beat of the drum and management of the triangles shews the accuracy of his ear, and his excellent keeping of time. The eldest lad, who may be fifteen or sixteen, is a truly inimitable and brilliant performer on the flageolet - his tone clear and emphatic, and execution so flowing and easy as almost to conceal, by its facility, the difficulties he triumphed over, with much effect. The clarinet playing of the next eldest proved also masterly; and the boys, who did not each confine themselves to one instrument exclusively, displayed a feeling and knowledge of their art, the result of intuitive taste and excellent teaching combined. The Swiss melody for the four voices was sung with purity and character, and the instrumental part which closed each strain they rendered with great skill. The audience was highly delighted with their exertions, and rewarded them with rapturous applause.”⁹

This was followed by the Shakespeare Concert Room, Castle Lane, Belfast, at the end of November and early December.



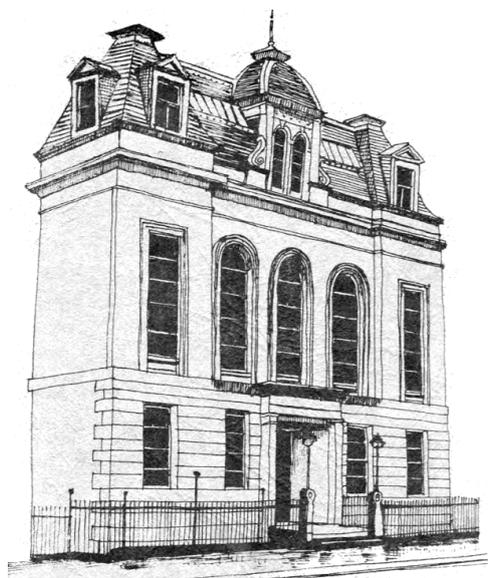
The Royal Hotel, 53 Princes Street, Edinburgh

⁷ Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 25 September 1847

⁸ Dublin Evening Packet and Correspondent, 23 October 1847

⁹ Northern Whig (Belfast), 4 November 1847

The start of 1848 saw the family travelling to Scotland, starting their tour with an engagement at the Free Abbey Schoolroom, Dunfermline, on 17 January, for a Temperance Soirée. Next was the Thistle Hall, Union Street, Dundee, in the week of 24 January – the troupe this time included Miss Manton as a vocal soloist. The Watt Institution Hall, Dundee, engaged them for a special concert on 3 February; the Salutation Hotel, Perth, was their venue on 7/8 February, which included an afternoon performance. They returned to Dundee to provide music for a soirée for the Mercantile Assistants' Association at the Thistle Hall, where Thomas Tyler sang "*The Lass of Gowrie*" and "*I'm Afloat*". The band finished their Scottish tour in Edinburgh, in mid-March with concerts at Tait's Royal Hotel Saloon, Princes Street, and the Calton Convening Room, Waterloo Place.



The Watt Institution, Dundee

Returning to England, the Tyler Family appeared on the bill of the Music Hall, Albion Street, Leeds, for the week of 3 April 1848, in conjunction with Professor J.H. Anderson:

"The *Great Wizard of the North*, in his Mystic Laboratory, performing new wonders of Natural Magic, combining Experiments of Chemistry, Electricity, Mechanism, and Hydraulics."¹⁰

The Tyler's programme – which by this time included Joseph playing the guitar – included: overture "*Fra Diavolo*" (Auber), a vocal quartette, Joseph Tyler flageolet solo (Mayseder), song "*I'm Afloat*" (Russell), "*Recollections of the Ball*" (Tyler).

Anderson and the Tylers' next appearance was at the Casino de Varietes, Victoria Rooms, Queen Street, Hull, for the week of 24 April.

The family's next known appearance is at the Court House, Rotherham, on 30 October 1848.

1849, saw the Tyler Family Band engaged for the season at the Jephson Gardens in Leamington Spa, from 7 May 1849. The quintet of players were occasionally augmented by various members of the spa Pump Room Band. The Family played every morning from 8 o'clock to half-past nine at the Pump Room. Their programme here included the pieces: "*Mighty Jove*" (Barber of Seville), "*Echoes of the Highlands*", "*Recollections of the Ball Room*", and "*The Irish Exile's Dream*." The concerts at the Jephson Gardens included: overture "*Fra Diavolo*" (Auber), selection "*The Barber of Seville*" (Rossini), polka "*The Prince Albert*" (Tyler), "*Recollections of Scotland*", duet "*Der Conte*" from "*Norma*" (Bellini), and galop "*The Eugenic*" (Labitzky).

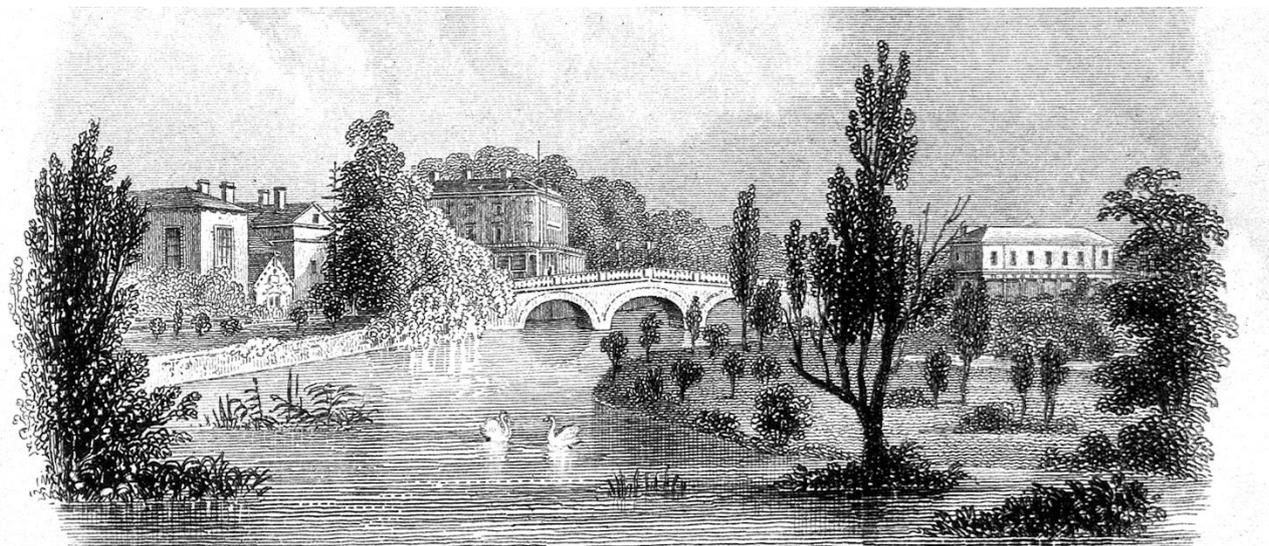
The Tyler Family were now known as the 'Town Band' for the season. Some concert programmes were:

Saturday 26 May 1849 – selection "*Grand Opera of Nino*" (Verdi), mazurka "*The Warsaw*" (Scapinzky), glee "*The Red Cross Knight*" (Calcott), polka "*The Fairies*" (Strauss), solacœa "*Son virgin Vezoza*" from "*I Puritani*" (Bellini), galop "*The Eugenic*" (Labitzky).

¹⁰ Leeds Times, 1 April 1848

Monday 28 May – selection “*Tancredi*” (Rossini), waltz “*The Bird of Paradise*” (Koenig), glee “*Blow Gentle Gales*” (H. Bishop), polka “*The Almacks*” (Tolbequé), romance from “*Les Huguenots*” (Meyerbeer), flageolet solo (Collinet).

Saturday 9 June – grand march “*Semiramide*” (Rossini), quadrille “*The Queen of the May*” (Jullien), polka “*The Post Horn*” (Strauss), selection “*Maid of Honor*” (Balfe), waltz “*The Ravenwood*” (Jullien), cavatina “*Tu redra*” from “*Il Pirata*” (Bellini), “*The Swiss Quadrille*” (Jullien), balleta “*Il segreto*” from “*Lucrezia Borgia*” (Donizetti).



Vicarage (Priory) Bridge & Pump Room, Leamington Spa, 1851

Monday 11 June – selection “*Belisario*” (Donizetti), “*March of the Russian Imperial Guards*” (Brepasant), waltz “*The Dublin*” (Labitzky), serenade “*Com e gentil*” from “*Don Pasquali*” (Donizetti), polka “*The Drum*” (Jullien), quadrille “*The Phantom Dancers*” (A. Mellon), ballad “*In This Arm Chair*” (Balfe), “*Alfin son Tua*” from “*Lucia di Lammermoor*” (Donizetti).

Saturday 30 June - selection “*Grand Opera of Nino*” (Verdi), waltz “*The Dublin*” (Labitzky), cavatina “*Tu redra*” from “*Il Pirata*” (Bellini), “*The Swiss Quadrille*” (Jullien), ballad “*In This Arm Chair*” (Balfe), polka “*The Clyde*” (Tyler), aria “*La Normandie*” (Meyerbeer), waltz “*The Ondine*” (Brepasant), galop “*The Fortuna*” (Strauss).

Monday 2 July – barcarolle & chorus “*Stradella*” (Flotow), quadrille “*La tête de Bronze*” (Musard), aria “*Lucia di Lammermoor*” (Donizetti), waltz “*The Donro*” (Labitzky), “*Pas de double*” (Brepasant), septetto from “*Lucia di Lammermoor*” (Donizetti), pas de deux “*La Sylphide*” (Schneitzhoffer), polka “*The Post Horn*” (Strauss), galop “*Furioso*” (Labitzky).

The Tylers concluded their season at Leamington with a benefit concert on 10 September and a final concert at the Court House, Warwick on 19 September. They moved on to the Mechanics Institution at Manchester, giving a series of concerts in October 1849, with the final one being on 27 October (having had a brief foray to the Preston Theatre on 22 October).

“Mr. Tyler and his four sons gave a concert, in the theatre of the Mechanics' Institution, on Saturday night, under the auspices of the directors. The youths have improved considerably in appearance since last year, and their musical talent is greatly developed, especially that of the eldest, who performs on the flageolet with considerable ability, and gave some solos that were much applauded. The concert was varied by the introduction

of vocal pieces, sung as solos by the youngest or by the four in concert, and, altogether, the entertainment was very pleasing. The attendance, owing to the extreme wetness of the evening, was but small.”¹¹

This was the last known appearance of the Tyler Family Band for over 17 years. It is not known why the family ceased their performances, but several factors may have contributed to this.

1. Joseph Tyler (senior) married his second wife, Georgina, on 24 April 1849, shortly before starting their Leamington ‘Town Band’ season.
2. James Tyler was 18 years old by this time, and he would have been looking to establish his own career.
3. The audiences and opportunities for the family band may not have been sufficient to support them at this time.

The second Tyler Family Band

During the period from November 1849 to June 1867, little is known about the Tyler family.

In the 1851 census, the family was living at 22 Cardington Street, St Pancras, and Joseph was listed as being a ‘professor of music’. In 1861, they resided at 62 Pratt Street, Camden Town.

Joseph Tyler took up a position of bandmaster with the 19th Surrey Rifle Volunteers, probably shortly after the battalion was established in March 1860. This battalion was based in Lambeth, under Major Commandant William Roupel. He was still associated with the battalion in 1862.

In 1867 Joseph, having instructed and trained his second family of children in the art of music, decided to establish the Tyler Family Band once more. By this time the dominant band instruments were brass, rather than woodwind, and his children learned to play saxophones and other brass instruments, including cornets, horns, euphonium, and ophicleide. Joseph’s son, Thomas, had married Emily Dunkin in 1859, and three of Thomas’ sons also found a place in the new Tyler Family Band – Arthur, Frederick and William.



19th Surrey Rifle Volunteers badge

The first public appearance of the new Tyler Family Band was at the Licensed Victuallers’ School Anniversary Dinner, at the Crystal Palace, on 3 July 1867. Their next recorded engagement was in a concert at the Corn Exchange, Faringdon, on 9 December 1867, where their performances on saxophones ‘*somewhat resembling huge meerschaums*’ were regarded as a novelty and received quite an ovation.¹²

At some time in the late 1860’s, Joseph Tyler was part of the Italian Opera in London, where he probably played the clarinet – he was apparently a very accomplished soloist in his own right.

¹¹ Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 3 November 1849

¹² Berkshire Chronicle, 14 December 1867

The family were engaged, in December 1869 and January 1870, as part of the musical contribution to the Comic Christmas Annual Pantomime "*Beauty and the Beast or Harlequin and Old Mother Bunch*" at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London. They were billed as the 'smallest brass band in the world'.

The New Year's treat for the children of the Hanover Church Sunday School, was held in the Hanover Square Rooms, Regent Street, on 22 January 1870. The Tyler Family Band performed various selections 'to the infinite delight of the audience'.



*Tyler Family Band, c. 1869 – from left:
Albert, William, Frederick, John, Joseph, Robert, Georgina, Arthur, and Victoria*

During late 1870 and early 1871, the band continued their association with the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, but it is not known what shows, events or performances took place. They were still performing at the Theatre when they took part in an entertainment in aid of the London Orphan Asylum, at St George's Hall, Langham Place, on 25 March 1871, where they were billed as the "*Band of the Lilliputian Lancers*".¹³

The 1871 census listed the Tylers living at 81 Upper Kennington Lane, Lambeth. They also had Arthur and William living with them – for some reason Frederick was counted at the South Metropolitan District School, Reigate Road, Sutton for the census.

During the summer of 1871, the Tylers - "Lilliputian Lancers" toured Scotland with Monsieur D'Arc's Marionette Entertainment Show, giving instrumental and vocal performances. They played on saxophones and 'other novel instruments, manufactured expressly for them by

¹³ London City Press, 1 April 1871

Distin & Co., London.’ Two of the venues visited were the Operetta House, Edinburgh, and the Thistle Hall, Dundee.¹⁴



Another photo of the family c. 1870

Christmas 1871 and New Year 1872 saw the ‘Tyler Family Real Juvenile Brass Band’ taking part in the seasonal pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Williamson Square, Liverpool. This was a production called “*King Winter*”, and featured the band leading a ‘Procession of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.’ Their stay in Liverpool continued with a performance at the St James’ Hall, Lime Street, in the Grand Fashionable Night for the Benefit of the Liverpool Shop Assistants’ Association, on 27 February 1872; and also held their own benefit concert at the Theatre Royal, on 7 March 1872 – as the ‘Tyler Family Juvenile Silver Band’.

The 1872 season continued with the band appearing at the Royal Pavilion Music Hall, Sheffield, for three weeks commencing 25 March. They performed at the Grand Bazaar, in Matlock, on 26 June, as the ‘*Silver Band and Chorus of the Juvenile Lancers*’; were engaged by the Chalybeate Spa directors in Harrogate to perform concerts to entertain the visitors to the town, for the week commencing 8 July for the remainder of the month. On 1 August, the band held their benefit concert and were well supported by the numerous friends and admirers they had gained during their stay in the town.¹⁵

During this stay in Harrogate, they had a photograph taken, by Thomas & James Holroyd, photographers of Esplanade House, Harrogate. Although both Holroyds were credited, it was James who took most of the photographs. This image shows them standing on steps in the doorway of a building.

¹⁴ Dundee Courier, 25 July 1871

¹⁵ The Era, 11 August 1872



*The Tyler Family Band, photographed in Harrogate in July 1872.
From left: John, Frederick, Robert, Joseph, William, Georgina, Victoria, Arthur, and Albert.*

Their London agent advertised their availability in *The Era*, in September 1872:

TO MANAGERS IN ENGLAND.

MESSRS. **PARRAVICINI** and **CORBYN**
beg to submit a List of various *Artistes* desirous of an Engagement in England :—

M. FIELDING and **Miss JOHNSON**, Sensational Duettists and Instrumentalists.

M. BECKEYF, the Celebrated Hungarian Dancer.

Messrs D'AUBAN and **WARDE'S TROUPE** for Christmas, Clown, Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Two Columbines. To Play also Parts in the Opening and Arrange their own Comic Scenes.

The TYLER FAMILY, the Minature Military Band of Nine Young *Artistes*.

ROMAH, the Sensational Aerial Gymnast

Back on tour once more, the family performed at Day's Crystal Palace Concert Hall, Smallbrook Street, Birmingham, in the week of 7 October; at the People's Concert Hall, Manchester, from 29 October to 9 November; and the Museum Concert Hall, Bolton, on week commencing 16 December.

“The ‘Lancers’ consist of nine youthful musicians, clad in military uniforms, who constitute a miniature brass band and chorus, much in the manner of the late Dr Mark's Little Men. They are creditably trained, and really discourse most excellent music.”¹⁶

Pantomime season once more, and the band was engaged to play at the Tyne Theatre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the pantomime “*Little Jack the Giant Killer*”, from 20 December 1872, through into January 1873.

1873 dates to follow, included the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, as part of the “*Forty Thieves*” show from 24 February; at the Pullman's New Music Hall, Bradford, for the week commencing 24 March; at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Wolverhampton, from 14 April, supporting the production of “*Faust and Marguerite*”, in which they were introduced by the ‘grand march of the soldiers’ and played several selections.¹⁷ The cornet solo playing of nine-year old Arthur Tyler, was particularly admired, gaining three encores. The Corn Exchange, Preston, was their next stop, supporting Hamilton's Excursions' “*At Home and Abroad*” diorama, from 5 May to 23 May, where ‘Tyler's Silver Band and Chorus of Juvenile Lancers’ appeared in handsome French and German military uniforms.

In the last week of May 1873, the band performed at the Mechanics' Institute, Bradford, and followed this with six days at the Alhambra Palace and Theatre of Varieties, Porter Street, Hull, from 2 June.

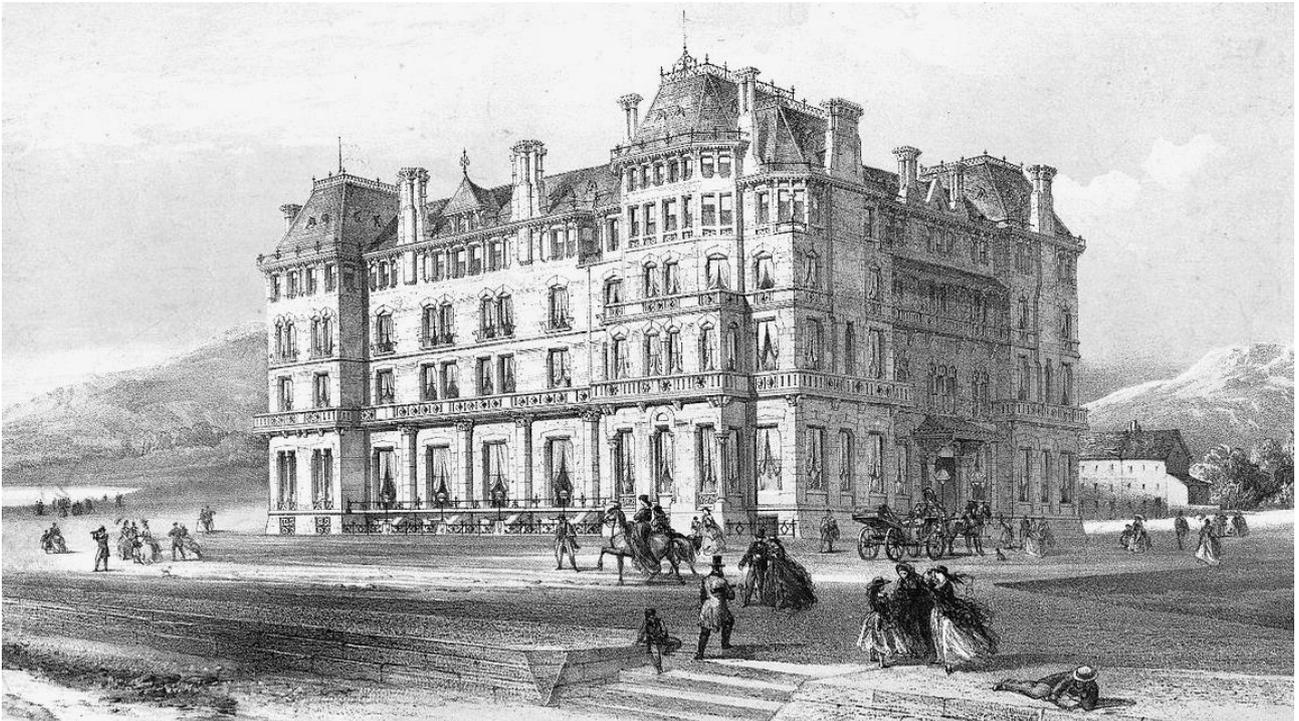
The Aberystwyth ‘Town Band’

Meanwhile, Joseph Tyler had secured a long-term engagement with the town of Aberystwyth. The council band committee hired the Tyler Family Band to perform during their summer season, from 9 June to 27 September 1873, at £10 per week. The arrangement were that the band would give a formal concert on Monday evenings [eventually changed to Tuesdays], the proceeds of which would be handed to the committee, and the band would also play from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon on the Terrace, on the Pier from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., and on the Terrace from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m., except on Mondays.

¹⁶ The Era, 3 November 1872

¹⁷ The Era, 20 April 1873

The Tylers arrived in Aberystwyth on Monday 9 June on the last train, and gave their first concert on Tuesday 10 June, in the Queen's Hotel Concert Room.



Queen's Hotel, Aberystwyth, c. 1875

"The room was about three parts full, and the audience included the leading residents and a number of visitors. The band, dressed in their lancer uniform, looked very smart and nice, and they were favourably received. It was well known that "the family" bore a good reputation as skilled musicians, but, clever as they were believed to be, their performances quite took the assembly "by storm", and people were heard to congratulate one another on the fact that at last Aberystwyth possessed a promenade band worthy of the "Brighton of Wales". The band sang and played with remarkable ability, but their rendering of "*The March of the Men of Harlech*" was wanting in verve; and the strains of this grand old melody sounded less spirit-stirring than usual. This is all the fault we have to find, and we must say that Mr Tyler and his youngsters furnished a musical treat of great merit. There were several encores, and the "*Spring Chorus*" from "*Babil and Bijou*" created quite a furore."¹⁸

"... the performance was superior, and afforded so rare a treat, that the most complete satisfaction was given."¹⁹

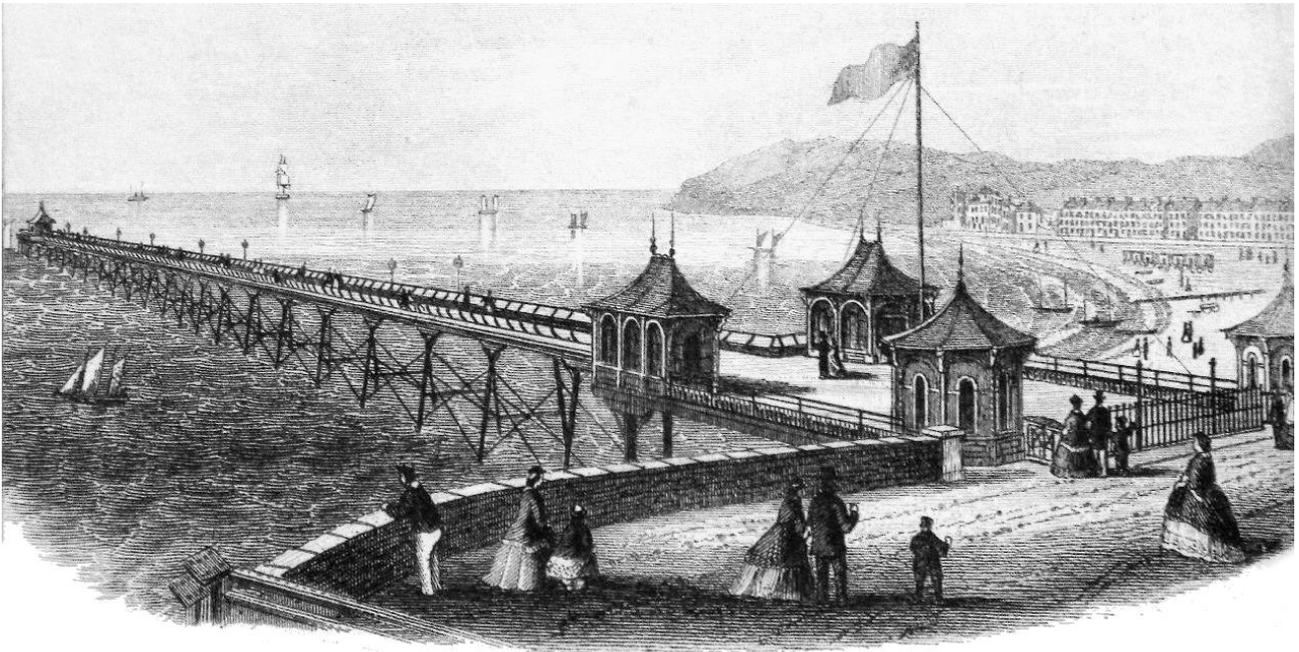
This first concert in Aberystwyth consisted of the following pieces: operatic selection "*William Tell*" (Rossini), "*Tyrolean Serenade*" (Riviere), polka "*Oxford and Cambridge*" (Graves), a cornet obligato, chorus "*Belle Brandon*" (Nish), selection of national melodies "*The Channel Fleet*", galop "*My Valentine*" (Rolle), "*March of the Men of Harlech*", operatic selection "*The Grand Duchess*" (Offenbach), spring chorus from "*Babil and Bijou*" (Riviere), selection "*Bonnie Scotland*", "*Swiss Melody*" with variations for Saxophone, valse "*Ingoldsby*" (Tyler), "*God Bless the Prince of Wales*", "*God Save the Queen*."

Their third formal concert was: march "*Superb*" (Riviere), overture "*The Bravo's Heir*" (Palgrave Simpson), song "*The Death of Nelson*" (Braham), serenade (Gounod), chorus

¹⁸ Aberystwyth Observer, 14 June 1873

¹⁹ Caernarvon & Denbigh Herald, 14 June 1873

“Belle Brandon” (Nish), galop *“Atalanta”* (Faust), march *“The Minstrel Boy”* (Krill), polka *“The Prophetic Belle”* (Chapman) [cornet obligato by Arthur Tyler], operatic selection *“William Tell”* (Rossini), serenade *“Tyrolean Echoes”* (Riviere), selection *“Christy Minstrel Melodies”*, galop *“Jack o’ Lantern”* (Coote).



Aberystwyth Pier, c. 1875

There were a number of discussions in the town council about the band and its ticketed, formal concerts. While the standard of playing was excellent, and clearly a credit to the town, the support from the townsfolk for the paying concerts was not as good as expected. Although the Queen’s Concert Room was given free of charge, and the Pier Company were also paying the band committee 30 guineas towards the fund, for the band’s performances there, the first concert only realized £9 18s 6d. The band itself did not tout for business – as previous ‘town bands’ had done – but it was hoped that offering family season tickets, for three people, on a subscription of £1 11s 6d. would help to bring more people to the concerts.²⁰

The sixth concert, on 15 July, included several amateur musicians from the town, and the Tylers’ performances were: march *“Concordia”* (Strauss), operatic selection *“The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein”* (Offenbach), serenade *“The Lover and the Bird”* (Guglielmo), waltz *“The Blue Danube”* (Strauss), selection *“William Tell”* (Rossini), chorus *“Love Among the Roses”*, selection *“National Melodies”* (Dibdin).

Concert number seven, on 22 July, again assisted by instrumentalists and vocalists from the town, had the Tyler Band performing: *“March”* (Riviere), selection *“La Traviata”* (Verdi), selection *“Bonnie Scotland”*, *“The Royal March of Persia”* (A. Vianesi), selection *“The Channel Fleet”*, Australian melody *“Write Me a Letter From Home”*, selection of Welsh melodies *“The Harp of Cambria”*, galop *“The Shah”* (Lamotte).

The eighth concert, on 29 July, comprised: march *“José”*, selection *“Fra Diavolo”* (Auber), *“Tyrolean Serenade”* (Riviere), waltz *“The Beautiful Danube”*, *“The Harp of Cambria”*, march from *“Athalia”* (Handel), *“Fair Shines the Moon”*, galop *“The Shah”* (Lamotte).

²⁰ Aberystwyth Observer, 5 July 1873

In mid-August 1873, the Tyler 'Town Band' had a brief holiday from their duties, when the Cyfarthfa Band visited the town and gave a few performances. This band, originally founded in 1838 by the iron magnate Robert Crayshaw, at Merthyr Tydfil, had an illustrious past, having played at the opening of the Crystal Palace in 1851, and winning the national brass band contest there in 1860.



Cyfarthfa Band, c. 1855

The Tyler band resumed their playing in the town and the evening concerts, which were greatly appreciated by their audiences. However, some of the amateurs, who featured from time to time, were seen to take the limelight from the band, and were of dubious quality in their musical capabilities.

“... But nevertheless, the band is engaged to play at these concerts, and the public pay to hear it; this being so, more of the band we ought to have, instead of some empty songs and ballads which I myself would not walk the length of the pier to hear, much less in a hot room which resembles a Turkish bath more than anything else when full of people.
– A Visitor.”²¹

The band's fourteenth concert, on 9 September, was: march “*Rudolphus*” (Gung'l), selection “*Lucrezia Borgia*” (Donizetti), chorus “*The Daisy Valley*” (Nish), selection “*Verdi*”, “*The Harp of Cambria*”, “*Post Horn Galop*” (Koenig).

During their sojourn in Aberystwyth, the Tylers occasionally undertook additional performances in addition to their contract with the town. One such was at the wedding of Miss Victoria Eugenia Jones to Reverend Octavius Davies, on 10 September, at which the band provided selections of music before and after the ceremony.

²¹ Aberystwyth Observer, 6 September 1873

Joseph Tyler responded to the correspondent of 6 September, who had bemoaned the number of amateur pieces in the band concerts (noted above):

“Sir, Permit me through the medium of your valuable journal to express my thanks to “A Visitor” for the flattering opinion given of my little Band in your edition of September 6th, but I beg to differ with “A Visitor’s” opinion that there shall be more Band and less singing at the weekly concerts. It is essential in musical programmes that variety should be observed as much as possible, with a view of keeping up the interest of a concert both musically and financially; and I sincerely beg to thank those ladies and gentlemen who have on so many occasions given their valuable vocal and instrumental assistance. I also hope that the remarks of “A Visitor” will not deter them from doing so in future. Yours truly, J. Tyler, Late of Her Majesty’s State Ball Band, Buckingham Palace, and the Orchestra of the Royal Italian Opera, London.”²²



Aberystwyth Marine Terrace, c. 1840

At their fifteenth concert, the band played: “*Lusitania March*” (Benedict), overture “*The Bravo’s Heir*” (Palgrave Simpson), “*The Swiss Boy*”, waltz “*Soldaten Lieder*” (Gung’l), “*Let the Hills Resound*” (Brindley Richards), “*Spring Chorus*” (Riviere), “*The Chilperic Quadrille*” (Hervé), serenade “*Beatrice*” (Verdi), bolero “*Atilla*” (Riviere), galop “*Flick and Flock*” (Hertell).

The Town Council band committee met in September and agreed to extend the Tylers’ engagement to 18 October.

The band’s seventeenth concert, on 30 September, consisted of: march “*Come Back to Erin*” (Claribel), “*The Channel Fleet*”, “*The Power of Love*”, waltz “*Pretty Bird*”, glee “*To All You Ladies Now on Land*” (Calcott), “*Recollections of Scotland*”, “*Let the Hills Resound*” (Brindley Richards), chorus “*Come o’er the Ferry*”, quadrille “*Merry Maids of England*” (Reyloff), redowa “*Queen of the Ball*” (Coote).

The penultimate town concert, on 6 October, included the band pieces: “*Lusitania March*” (Benedict), operatic selection “*William Tell*” (Rossini), glee “*To All You Ladies*” (Calcott), “*The Death of Nelson*”, waltz “*The Blue Danube*” (Strauss), march “*Aux Flambeaux*” (Gibson), “*Tyrolean Melody*” with variations for saxophone and cornet, quadrille “*French Bouquet*” (Riviere), “*Let the Hills Resound*” (Brindley Richards), galop “*The Wedding*” (Coote).

²² Aberystwyth Observer, 13 September 1873

Their final, formal concert took place on Monday 13 October, though they did hold a benefit concert of their own on Wednesday 22 September. This last official performance was: march "Superba" (Riviere), selection "Grand Duchess" (Offenbach), "The Channel Fleet", selection "La Traviata" (Verdi), "The Wedding March" (Mendelssohn), "Spring Chorus" from "Babil and Bijou" (Riviere), "The Ingoldsby Waltz" (Tyler), "The Chilperic Quadrille" (Hervé), "Ocean Galop" (Riviere).

Their benefit concert, which raised £13 for the band, also included the St Michael's Church Choir. The band's performances were: chorus "The Heavens are Telling" from "Creation" (Haydn), part-song "Father, by Whose Hand" (Claribel), part-song "Lowly We Bend Before Thee" (Meyerbeer), selection "William Tell" (Rossini), part-song "The Canadian Boat Song" (Moore), waltz "Italian Bouquet" (Riviere), and "The Postillion Galop" (Faust).²³

ABERYSTWYTH TOWN BAND FUND.					
BALANCE SHEET, SEASON 1873.					
Dr.	£ s d.		Cr.	£ s d.	
To Receipts :—			To Expenditure :—		
From Concerts at the Queen's Hotel Assembly Rooms.....	130	9 2	Mr J. Tyler and Band travelling expenses.....	5	14 11
Collected from Cards	120	13 4	Do., engagement for 19 weeks, at £10 per week...	190	0 0
Subscription Promenade Pier Company, per Mr J. Pell, Managing Director ..	31	10 0	Do., to benefit concert.....	13	0 0
Committee's Subscriptions.....	15	15 0	To Mr J. Morgan—Printing accounts and stationery	22	7 0
Season Tickets.....	9	9 0	To Mr Roderick Williams, for band stand	33	7 2
Corporation of Aberystwyth, towards cost of band stand.....	25	0 0	To Mr Kendrick—Commission on collecting from cards.....	6	0 0
			Town Crier	1	0 0
			Gas for Assembly Rooms	4	0 0
			Ap Thomas—Share of Concert	7	13 0
			Eos Morlais	3	3 0
			Advertisements	2	11 6
			Cheque Book.....	0	4 0
			To balance.....	43	15 11
	£332	16 6		£332	16 6

Following their summer in Aberystwyth, the Tyler Band returned to touring, on ad hoc engagements, as 'The Silver Band and Chorus of the Tyler Family'. These included the Oxford Music Hall, Burslem, from 3 November 1873; and the Star Theatre, Ashton-Under-Lyne, from 1 December. They joined the pantomime at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, from late December through to mid-February 1874. This production was "Little Lalla Rookh", where the band took part in the Grand Procession in addition to other musical items.²⁴

Their next stop was at the Theatre Royal, Greenock, from 9 March for a week, which included a 'Benevolent Entertainment' by the Oddfellows in aid of the Infirmary, on 10 March – at which the Tylers played "William Tell", "Daisy Valley", and "Bonnie Dundee". The following week they were engaged at the City Hall, Glasgow, and their first concert on 14 March included music from an organist and invited vocalists. The band played "William Tell" (Rossini), "The Daisy Valley" (Nish), polka "The Oxford and Cambridge Polka" (Graves), "Bonnie Dundee", "The Channel Fleet", American melody "Belle Brandon", waltz "Gentle Spring" (Riviere), and galop "The Post Horn" (Koenig).

²³ Aberystwyth Observer, 25 October 1873

²⁴ Liverpool Mail, 14 February 1874

Before leaving Glasgow, Joseph Tyler made an offer to the band committee for Rothesay, on the Isle of Bute, who were seeking to engage a band for the 1874 summer season. The band gave a specimen concert in the Victoria Hall, Rothesay, on 20 March. The band played an excellent programme, to the great delight and apparent satisfaction of the audience, and Joseph offered to strengthen his band if he was engaged. Despite the success of the concert, the band were not engaged – whether this was due to the committee rejecting them, or Joseph not accepting the committee’s offer, is not known.²⁵ The requirement to provide entertainment for visitors to the resort of Rothesay resulted in the formation of the town brass band the following year, in 1875.²⁶



Theatre Royal, Greenock, c. 1865

In the meantime, during March, the band committee in Aberystwyth was proposing to re-engage the Tyler Band for the 1874 summer season, with the inducement that a benefit concert be given to them with a guaranteed receipt of £20. A new amateur brass band had just been formed in Aberystwyth, which was seeking to rehearse in the Town Hall.

The last concert in Glasgow, on 21 March, included the Tylers’ performances of: march “*The Cannon*” (Riviere), selection “*La Traviata*” (Verdi), chorus “*Come O’er the Ferry*”, polka “*The Prophetic Belle*” (Chapman) [cornet obligato by Arthur Tyler], “*Tyrolean Melody*”, glee “*The Red Cross Knight*”, “*Bonnie Dundee*”, and galop “*My Valentine*”.²⁷

Moving on to Edinburgh, the Tylers performed at the Southminster Theatre of Varieties, for a week from 6 April; the Alhambra Palace, Hull for the week of 27 April; the Princess’s Theatre, Leeds, from 11 May; and at the Barrow-in-Furness Monstre Fete and Gala on 25 & 26 May.

At this time, in 1874, the band consisted of Joseph Tyler (clarinet, leader), John Tyler (aged 18, saxophone), Robert Tyler (16, euphonium & bass), Georgina Tyler (13, cornet), Frederick Tyler (13, tenor horn), Arthur Tyler (13, cornet), William Tyler (12, tenor horn), Albert Tyler (10, cornet & drum), and Victoria Tyler (9, drum & cymbals). They had also added handbell-ringing to their armoury of instrumental talents.

Aberystwyth welcomed the Tylers back to the town on 1 June 1874 for the summer season. Their first concert was on Tuesday 2 June, and included their pieces: introductory march, “*Welsh Melodies*”, “*When the Swallows Homeward Fly*”, overture “*L’Italiana in Algieria*”, “*Let the Hills Resound*”, operatic selection “*La Fille de Madame Angot*” (Lecocq), waltz “*Kate Kearney*”, and galop “*Three o’clock*”.²⁸

The second concert, on 9 June, included: march “*Polonaise*”, overture “*Dieu and Bayadere*”, chorus “*Let Me Like a Soldier Fall*”, selection “*The Death of Nelson*”, chorus “*The Daisy Valley*”, “*War March*” from “*Athalie*”, selection “*La Sonnambula*”, waltz “*The Italian Bouquet*”, operatic selection “*La Fille de Madame Angot*”, galop “*Postillion*”.

The third formal concert was held on 16 June, and the audience was ‘lamentably small’, but the band gave a splendid performance of their pieces: march “*Molly Darling*”, overture “*The*

²⁵ North British Daily Mail, 23 March 1974

²⁶ Holman, Gavin - Rothesay Brass Band: entertaining the excursionists fresh off the paddle-steamers on the Isle of Bute, 24 February 2021

²⁷ North British Daily Mail, 19 March 1974

²⁸ Aberystwyth Observer, 6 June 1874

Channel Fleet”, *“Tyrolean Melody”*, saxhorn duet *“I Know a Bank”*, bell selection *“The Chimes”*, selection *“La Sonnambula”*, chorus *“Buttercups and Daisies”*, cornet solo *“Happy Land”* (Master A. Tyler), and waltz *“The Queen of the Lakes”*.

The fourth concert, on 23 June, was much better attended, to hear the band play: introductory march, overture *“Italiana in Algeria”*, euphonium solo - Robert Tyler, *“Cujus animam”* from *“Stabat Mater”*, *“The Golden Chimes”*, *“Selection of Christy Minstrel Melodies”*, chorus *“God Bless Our Sailor Prince”*, waltz *“The German Bouquet”*, and galop *“The Corsair”*.

Concert five in the series, on 30 June, again consisted of a mix of local amateurs with the main attraction of the Tyler Family, who played: march *“The Guards”*, overture *“The Queen’s Messenger”*, chorus *“Belle Brandon”*, saxophone solo - John Tyler, *“The Chimes”*, operatic selection *“Sonnambula”*, selection *“Lowly We Bend Before Thee”*, chorus *“God Bless Our Sailor Prince”*, waltz *“Soldaten Lieder”*.



Aberystwyth Pier

The sixth concert, on 7 July, was more poorly attended, and the amateur musicians were missing also, with the Tylers performing the whole concert: introductory march, operatic selection *“Fra Diavolo”*, chorus *“Belle Mahone”*, duet *“I Know a Bank”*, *“The Chimes”*, march *“The Wedding March”*, chorus *“Let Me Like a Soldier Fall”*, operatic selection *“La Fille de Madame Angot”*, waltz *“Morgenblätter”*, part song *“In the Valley Where the Daisies Grow”*, galop *“Just Out”*.²⁹

The amateurs returned for the seventh concert on 14 July, with the Tylers playing: introductory march, overture *“Italiana in Algeria”*, chorus *“Where the Swallows”*, operatic selection *“La Traviata”*, *“The Chimes”*, selection *“Kyrie Eleison”* (Mozart), waltz *“Lily of the North”*, quadrille *“Genevieve de Brabant”*, chorus *“God Bless Our Sailor Prince”*, song *“The Lover and the Bird”*, galop *“The Prince of Wales”*.

A very large audience greeted the performers for the eighth concert on 21 July, with the Tylers music being: march *“Mondolinata”*, selection *“William Tell”*, *“Cujus animam”* from *“Stabat Mater”*, *“The Chimes”*, operatic selection *“Orphée aux Enfers”*, quadrille *“Prince Royal”*.

²⁹ Aberystwyth Observer, 11 July 1874

The tenth concert was held on Monday 3 August: introductory march, overture "*The Queen's Messenger*", chorus "*Belle Mahone*", "*The Chimes*", operatic selection "*Sonnambula*" with saxophone and cornet obligato, "*Kyrie Eleison*" (Mozart), waltz "*Italian Bouquet*", quadrille "*Alhambra*".

While the weekly formal concerts were reported in the local press, and even wider in Wales, there is no mention of the band's daily performances on the Pier and the Terrace, where they performed continuous selections to entertain the visitors and passing residents.

Concert eleven, on 10 August, continued the practice of featuring local amateurs, this time welcoming the return of a talented singer, Miss Balcombe, who had enlivened the concerts the previous year. The band's contribution to the evening was: introductory march, overture "*Italiana in Algeria*", chorus "*Let Me Like a Soldier Fall*", "*Tyrolean Melody*", hand-bells "*The Harmonious Blacksmith*", operatic selection "*La Fille de Madame Angot*", waltz "*Soldaten Lieder*", hand-bells "*Welsh Melodies*", galop "*Prince of Wales*".



St Michael's Church, Aberystwyth

The twelfth concert, on 18 August, consisted of the following band pieces: : introductory march, operatic selection "*Belisario*", chorus "*Trot Trot*", instrumental "*The Death of Nelson*", hand-bells "*Songs of Scotland*", "*The Wedding March*", bolero "*Atilla*", hand-bells "*Popular Melodies*", and galop "*Post Horn*".

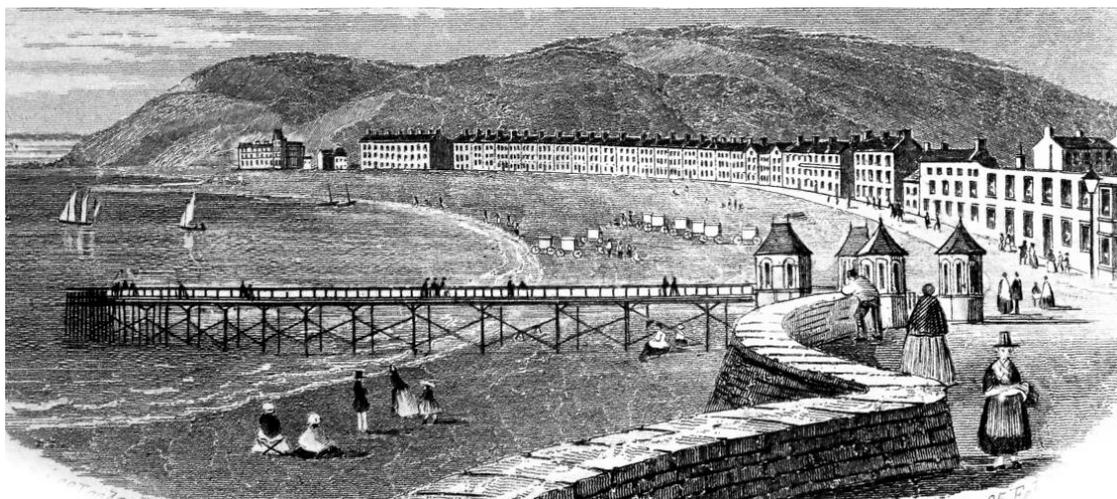
THE BAND and CHORUS of the TYLER FAMILY will shortly finish their engagement at the Queen's Assembly-rooms, Aberystwyth. Having a few weeks to spare previous to entering their winter engagements, they will be happy to attend Concerts, &c., in the Principality of Wales. Engagements are now pending at Llanidloes, Llanelly, Chester, Wellington, &c. Mr Tyler begs to say that the recent addition of his superior hand-bells has proved a very great success, being nightly encored.—Address—**THE TYLER BAND, Aberystwyth.**

The band made a guest appearance at an organ concert by Mr Evans, organist of St Michael's Church, on Tuesday 25 August, where they performed various selections, including hand-

bells *"The Harmonious Blacksmith"* and *"Welsh Melodies"*, selection *"William Tell"*, and the saxhorns duet *"I Know a Bank"*.

As their 'Town Band' engagement in Aberystwyth approached its end, Joseph Tyler was keen to advertise the band's availability.³⁰

The fifteenth concert in the 1874 season, on 8 September, included these band pieces: introductory march, overture *"Italiana in Algeria"*, chorus *"Belle Brandon"*, hand-bells *"The Chimes"*, operatic selection *"Norma"*, chorus *"The Daisy Valley"*, waltz *"Kate Kearney"*, galop *"The Post Horn"*.



Aberystwyth Terrace, from the Parade

The sixteenth concert, on 15 September, comprised, in addition to the amateur musicians' offerings, the band playing: march *"Mandolinata"*, operatic selection *"Barber of Seville"*, chorus *"God Bless Our Sailor Prince"*, *"The Chimes"*, overture *"Fra Diavolo"*, waltz *"Cambrinus"*, galop *"My Valentine"*.

On Thursday 17 September, the Tyler Band attended the annual treat of the St Michael's Sunday School, entertaining the children and teachers.

Concert seventeen, on 22 September, had a very good audience for the band, which performed: introductory march, operatic selection *"Guillaume Tell"*, hand-bells *"Harmonious Blacksmith"*, operatic selection *"Barber of Seville"*, lieder *"I Would That My Love"*, waltz *"German"*, galop *"Jack o' Lantern"*.

The town band committee met on 23 September to review the year, and the overall figures to date were: receipts from all sources, including the 17 concerts – £160 13s 5d.; payments – £194 8s od; several subscriptions were still due, and there was the previous year's surplus of £43 15s 11d.

The band's final contracted concert, on 29 September, consisted of them playing the following: introductory march, operatic selection *"Linda di Chamounie"*, chorus *"Trot Trot"*, *"Swiss Air"*, hand-bells *"The Chimes"*, operatic selection *"Norma"*, polka *"The Rataplan"*, serenade *"Beatrice"*, waltz *"Promotionen"*, and galop *"The Ocean"*.³¹

³⁰ Cambrian News, 11 September 1874

³¹ Aberystwyth Observer, 3 October 1874

On 6 October, the Tyler Family gave their last concert in the town – a benefit for their own purse. Supported, for the last time, by a number of the town’s amateurs who had performed with them during the season, the band’s final programme pieces were: chorus “*The Heavens are Telling*”, chorus “*Father, Whose Hand has Led Us*”, “*Kyrie Eleison (12th Mass)*”, quartet “*Lowly We Bend Before Thee*”, selection “*Sonnambula*”, saxhorn duet “*As it Fell Upon a Day*”, and hand-bells “*Welsh Melodies*”.³²

Leaving the seaside resort of Aberystwyth behind, the Tylers performed two concerts in Wellington, Somerset, on 19 & 20 October before sailing for Dublin. They were engaged at the Concert Room, Rotundo, Dublin, in association with Edwards’ “*Diorama*” from 26 October to the beginning of December 1874.

“The band of the “Tyler Family” was highly effective, particularly in selections from airs by Dibdin. They were also heard to much advantage in some vocal pieces, which were sung in excellent time, taste, and tune.”³³

After leaving Dublin, the band performed at the Oxford Music Hall, Burslem, later in December.

The Tyler Family’s first known engagement in 1875 was for a week-long church bazaar in the Albert Hall, Bolton, at the beginning of April 1875. They then undertook a short placement at the Theatre Royal, Lincoln, in early May, followed by a month at the Shodfriars Hall, Boston. While in Boston, on 27 May, they took part in the Great Northern Railway Engineers’ Soirée, a tea with over 1,000 people, at the Corn Exchange, Boston – providing musical entertainment for the participants; and also gave their services free at the opening of the new cottage hospital in the town.³⁴



Shodfriar's Hall, Boston, c. 1880

The Aberystwyth Promenade Pier Company and Mr Pell, of the Belle Vue Hotel, Aberystwyth, hoped to secure the services of the Tyler Family Band for the 1875 summer season. However, Joseph Tyler declined their request.

“The Tyler Band - Sir, Seeing the name of my band brought prominently forward at a meeting of the Aberystwyth Town Council, on June 1st, wherein Mr Pell stated that he had been advised not to reengage the Tyler Band for the present season, allow me to state to Mr Pell’s advisors that I had never offered our services either as town or pier band for the present season, nor was it my intention to do so, as the increasing popularity of the Tyler Band enables me to form musical engagements for the same in any of the spas or seaside resorts in the United Kingdom. On the contrary, on the 23rd of April I received a letter from Mr Pell, addressed to the Theatre Royal, Lincoln, offering an engagement for the Pier at Aberystwyth to commence on the first week in June, which was politely declined. I also beg to inform Mr Pell’s advisors that our present and future engagements in Lytham, Southport, London, and Paris, will keep us fully employed up to March next. I am, &c., J. Tyler, 1 Ernest Street, Regent’s Park, London”³⁵

³² Aberystwyth Observer, 10 October 1874

³³ Freeman’s Journal (Dublin), 27 October 1874

³⁴ Lincolnshire Chronicle, 4 June, 1875

³⁵ Cambrian News, 18 June 1875

The venues mentioned by Joseph Tyler in his letter are not evident in newspaper reports, indeed the next time their activities are reported is their appearance at the Preston Exhibition, in early September 1875. They then performed at the Star Theatre, Swansea, in the week of 25 October;³⁶ and at the Theatre Royal, Chester, week commencing 22 November, concluding with a benefit concert for themselves on 27 November; followed by a week at the Museum Concert Hall, Bolton, from 29 November. For these they were being billed as ‘Tyler’s Juvenile Military Band and Bellringers.’

The pantomime “*Beauty and the Beast, or Harlequin and the Fairies of the Land*” was produced at the Theatre Royal, Dublin from the end of December 1875 to 19 February 1876. The Tyler Band provided musical accompaniment for the performances, attired in silver costumes, as the ‘Beast’s Private Band’. The band were advertised as ‘ten in number’, which implies that Joseph’s third grandson, William, had joined the band.



Walter Crane's illustration for “*Beauty and the Beast*”, 1875

Having finished with the pantomime, the Tylers moved on to the Theatre Royal, Belfast, for two weeks from 28 February 1876. Their reviews for these performances were very positive:

“... Besides giving great artistic taste and finish excerpts from favourite operas, the troupe has performed on hand-bells every evening selections from well-known Irish melodies, in such a manner as to convince even the most doubting sceptic, that they have attained much proficiency in campanological science.”³⁷

This was their last engagement in Ireland, before travelling to Paris, later in March. There they were engaged as the stage band at the Theatre des Folies Dramatique, supporting the vaudeville review “*Les Mirlitons*”:

“The Mirlitons Club at Château-Thierrey desires to give a fête that will completely extinguish a rival institution, and so, on account of the annual bankruptcy of the Director of the local Theatre, invites the Folies-Dramatiques company from Paris. The Metropolitan artists consequently perform an operetta, a Pantomime, and a “review” of the year, in fact, there is a little of every imaginable style of entertainment in the seven scenes. The review contains some excellent imitations of favourite artists, notably of Madame Celine Chaumont, in *La Cruche Cassée*, by a pretty little girl, Mdlle. Jeanne May, and of Baron, of the Variétés, by Plet, late of the Gymnase. The Tyler Family, who come, I believe, from Dublin, give a performance on hand-bells that is, perhaps, the most

³⁶ Preston Herald, 11 September 1875

³⁷ London and Provincial Entr’acte, 4 March 1876

interesting element in the entertainment, and the extraordinary precision of their execution draws forth loud applause.”³⁸



Theatre des Folies Dramatique, Paris, c. 1890

From Paris, the Tyler Family fulfilled further engagements in Bordeaux and Marseilles during the summer months, returning to England in early September 1876.

Once more engaged as a stage band, this time at the Queen's Theatre, Long Acre, London, supporting the production of *Henry the Fifth*, from mid-September 1876 onwards. Thereafter, en route to their end-of-year pantomime destination, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, the band played two engagements at the Alhambra Palace, Hull, and then the Theatre Royal, Middlesbrough.

“The splendid band of accomplished musicians is now acknowledged by the Profession to be the best in England. ... formerly known as the Crystal Palace Juvenile Lancers. The entertainments given by this Wonderful Little Troop consists of superior Vocal and Instrumental Music, performed in handsome Military Costumes, to which is added a charming Selection of the most Popular Melodies of the day, produced from beautifully toned and perfectly tuned Hand-bells.”³⁹

“The Yellow Dwarf; or, the King of the Gold Mines and the Desert Fairy” was the pantomime at the Tyne Theatre, Newcastle, from 23 December, through to the end of February 1877, which was supported musically by the Tyler Family Band.

During their pantomime season in Newcastle, the Tyler Band managed to ‘escape’ once to give a concert in Congleton Town Hall, on Monday 15 January.⁴⁰

³⁸ The Era, 30 April 1876

³⁹ The Hull Packet, 8 December 1876

⁴⁰ Staffordshire Sentinel, 17 January 1877

TYLER'S SILVER BAND

AND BELL RINGERS

(formerly known as the Band of Juvenile Lancers),
now at the TYNE THEATRE, NEWCASTLE. The *Edinburgh Courant* says :—"The playing of this wonderful little band may challenge comparison with any band in the country of the same number of instruments." The *Irish Times* says :—"The Tyler Family band subsequently gave selections on the hand-bells, and showed their thorough acquaintance with the sciences of campanology, and on this occasion sustained the repute they had heretofore gained in Dublin."

A few vacant dates after February 24th.

Address, Tyne Theatre, Newcastle.

After the pantomime close, the Tyler Band resumed their tour of various theatres and vaudeville venues, starting with the Birmingham Concert Hall, from 8 March; the Prince of Wales Theatre, Wolverhampton, from 2 April; a spell in Harrogate in later April, followed by a benefit concert for the band in the Spa Concert Rooms, Harrogate, on 1 May 1877. This was followed by their engagement as the stage band for the production of "*Orphée aux Enfers*" at the Royal Alhambra Theatre, London, throughout June, taking time out to perform at a benefit concert for Charles Merion at the Metropolitan Theatre, London, on 5 June.⁴¹

The first two weeks of July saw the Tyler Family performing at the Molineux Grounds, Wolverhampton; followed by their appearances as the 'Exhibition Band' during the Fine Art Exhibition, Derby, for the last two weeks of the month. In August they were taking part in the promenade concerts at the Albert Hall, Plymouth. The band was booked to perform at Mr Villier's benefit concert at the Canterbury Theatre, London, on 6 September, but their expected appearance at that theatre for an ongoing engagement did not happen, due to a 'misunderstanding in the correspondence'.

"A very pleasing feature in the programme was a performance by the young ladies and gentlemen composing what is known as "Tyler's Silver Band." Excellent instrumentalists are they, and the music they discoursed called forth enthusiastic plaudits. Not only are they at home with cornet and trombone, and sax-horn and bassoon, and other various instruments, but they can also extract the sweetest of harmony from hand-bells, and are further quite up to the mark as vocalists as was evidenced on the occasion to which we now allude by their interpretation of '*As Beauteous Flora*.'"⁴²

Their next appearance was at the Floral Hall, Leicester, in concerts for the aid of the Indian Famine Relief Fund, sharing the stage with the Band of the Leicestershire Rifle Volunteers, on 28 and 29 September. Back to London's Metropolitan Theatre, from 1 October, where they were supporting the production of the Grand Ballet "*Erin*", arranged by Madame Collier. The vaudeville review at the London Pavilion Theatre, featured the Tyler Band, from 17 October to the middle of November. They took part in a benefit concert for Mr John Sweasey, at the Royal Music Hall, London, on 8 November.

Pantomime season once more – and the band gained a place in the production of "*Sinbad the Sailor*" at the Prince's Theatre, Little Horton Land, Bradford, from 24 December 1877 to 19 January 1878. From there they moved to the Star Music Hall, Leeds, on 22 January; the Temple Opera House, Bolton, on 28 January; the Alexandra Hall, Manchester, from 11 February; the People's Palace of Varieties, Liverpool, from 11 March; the Birmingham Grand

⁴¹ London and Provincial Entr'acte, 9 June 1877

⁴² The Era, 9 September 1877

Concert Hall, from 18 March; appeared in Mr Theodore Gordon's benefit concert at the Sun Music Hall, Knightsbridge, London, on 2 April, and continuing on there until 20 April. ⁴³

The children's extravaganza "*Whittington and his Cat*", at Weldon's Grand Circus, Sherwood Street, Nottingham, on 26 April, featured the Tyler Silver Band, which then moved on to the Manley Hall, Manchester, for the week of 10 June. The following week saw them at the Queen's Theatre, Manchester, in the production of "*New Babylon*", where they appeared in the 'Cremorne Gardens scene'. Leeds Horticultural Society Gardens engaged the Tyler Silver Band for the weeks of 5 and 12 August, performing in the evenings. They entertained the crowds at the Hunslet Working Men's Flower Show, on 19 and 20 August; the Molyneux Grounds, Wolverhampton, on week of 26 August; the Theatre of Varieties and Skating Rink, Alexandra Street, Southend-on-Sea, for the week of 7 October. This was followed by engagements at the Sun Music Hall and London Pavilion, London during the remainder of October and November 1878.



Theatre Royal, Sheffield, c. 1880

The 1878 pantomime was "*Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*" at the Theatre Royal, Sheffield, with Tyler's Silver Band once more playing their part. This ran from the end of December 1878 to the beginning of March 1879.

"One very pleasing innovation is the "bell" song, with bell accompaniment by members of Tyler's Band. This is quite a feature; the members not only take part in the pantomime, but, before the transformation scene begins to unfold its glories, they come before the curtain and perform a number of operatic and popular airs in a careful and pleasing manner."⁴⁴

The band's 1879 touring started at the Alhambra Palace, Hull, in vaudeville, from 14 March; the Gaiety Theatre of Varieties, Peter Street, Manchester, from 24 March. Back to London, to the Royal Forester's Theatre, Cambridge Road, Mile End, from 31 March; and the Oxford Theatre, London, from 14 April.

There is a gap in the record of the band's activities for much of the remainder of the spring and summer of 1879. They next appear at the Theatre of Varieties and Skating Rink, from

⁴³ The Era, 7 April 1878

⁴⁴ Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 21 January 1879

25 August; followed by Gordon's Theatre of Varieties, Southampton, from 8 September; the Middlesex Music Hall, Mogul Tavern, Drury Lane, London, from 27 October; the Criterion Palace of Varieties, Sheerness, from 17 November; Barnard's Concert Hall, Chatham, from 24 November; and the Birmingham Concert Hall, from 8 December.

The pantomime opportunity for the Tyler Silver Band was at Leicester this year. "*Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*" was produced at the Royal Opera House, Leicester, from 26 December through to the end of February 1880. Among the artists on the bill for the pantomime was Madame Sappho – who the original Tyler Family Band had last toured with when she was an child, in 1846. She was now a well-established professional solo vocalist.



Cave scene from an 1887 production of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

Once the pantomime finished, the Tyler Silver Band set off on their tour, starting at the Gaiety Theatre of Varieties, Manchester, from 8 March; the Winter Gardens, Southport from 22 March. Another trip across the Irish Sea to Dublin, performing in the Connaught Hall Promenade Concerts at the Exhibition Palace, Dublin, from 12 April, billed as "Tyler's Miniature Silver Band". They moved on, later in the week, to the Theatre Royal and Opera House, Cork, for their promenade concerts; back to Dublin to play in the Kingstown Assembly Rooms, from 26 April.

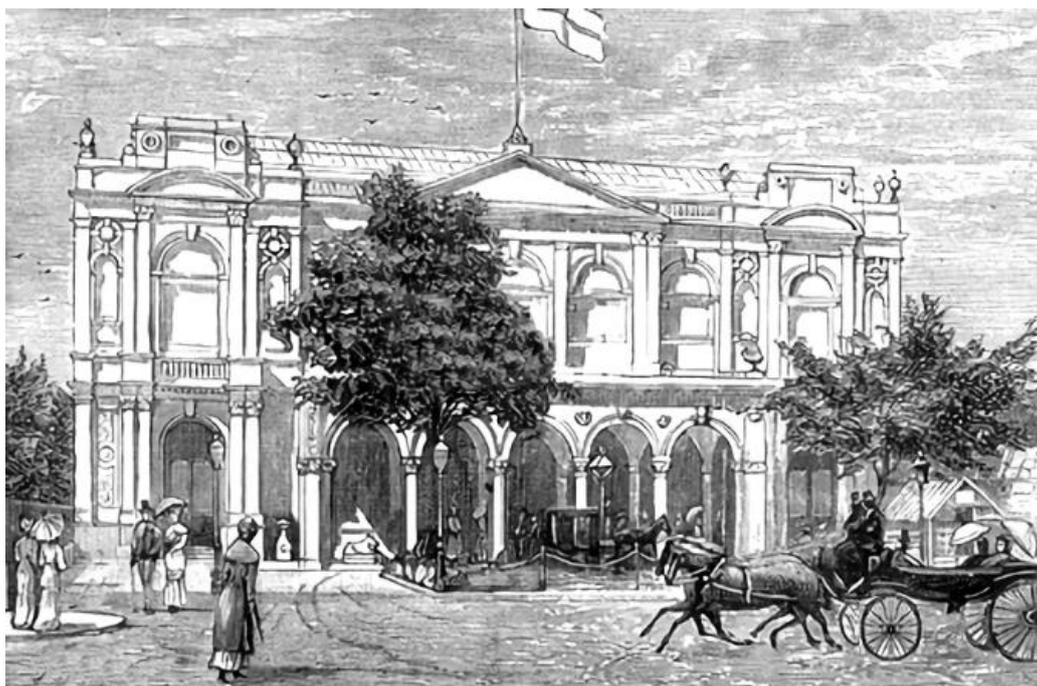
The Tylers returned to England, performing at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, from 17 May, 1880 for five weeks - having been joined, at some time in the last year, by a cousin Ellen Tyler, and cornet player G. Allwright. George Joseph Allwright (1855-1927) was a professional cornet and trumpet player, from Hammersmith, who played with various bands and orchestras.

"Tyler's Silver Band takes a prominent share in the entertainments. The pieces played by the full band, which include three young lady instrumentalists, are spirited and telling, and are admirably executed under the conductorship of Mr. Tyler himself. Miss Ellen Tyler is also a good vocalist. She sang a couple of songs in first-class style, and was loudly

applauded. A solo by Mr. John Tyler on the saxophone, a peculiar looking instrument of great compass and melodious tone, took well. A cleverly played cornet solo by Mr. G. Allwright received a similar compliment. The handbell ringing gave a very pleasing variety to the programme.”⁴⁵

“... one of the female members of the band has established her fame in Blackpool not only as an instrumentalist, but also as a vocalist of no mean order. We allude to Miss Ellen Tyler, who last night sang “*Cherry Ripe*”, “*Joyous Life*”, and other songs most admirably.”⁴⁶

Harrogate enjoyed a visit from the Tyler Silver Band, who performed in the Royal Spa Pleasure Grounds each afternoon, from 3.00 p.m., from 28 June to 17 July 1880.



Yorkshire Fine Art & Industrial Exhibition, built in 1879, now the York city Art Gallery

The Yorkshire Fine Art & Industrial Exhibition engaged the Tyler Band to perform, from 19 July to 31 July, and again from 23 August to 4 September 1880. Several other bands were also engaged for various performances and concerts throughout the exhibition. On 28 July the band held a joint concert with the Band of the York Artillery (conductor Mr Pink), the Band of the York Industrial School (conductor Mr Hulse), the Band of the Dragoon Guards (conductor W. Stewart Smith). The Tyler Band’s contributions to the evening included the song “*Valse Chantante*” sung by Ellen Tyler, airs and variations from Meyerbeer, a saxophone solo by John Tyler, a fantasia from Rossini, and a cornet solo by George Allwright.⁴⁷

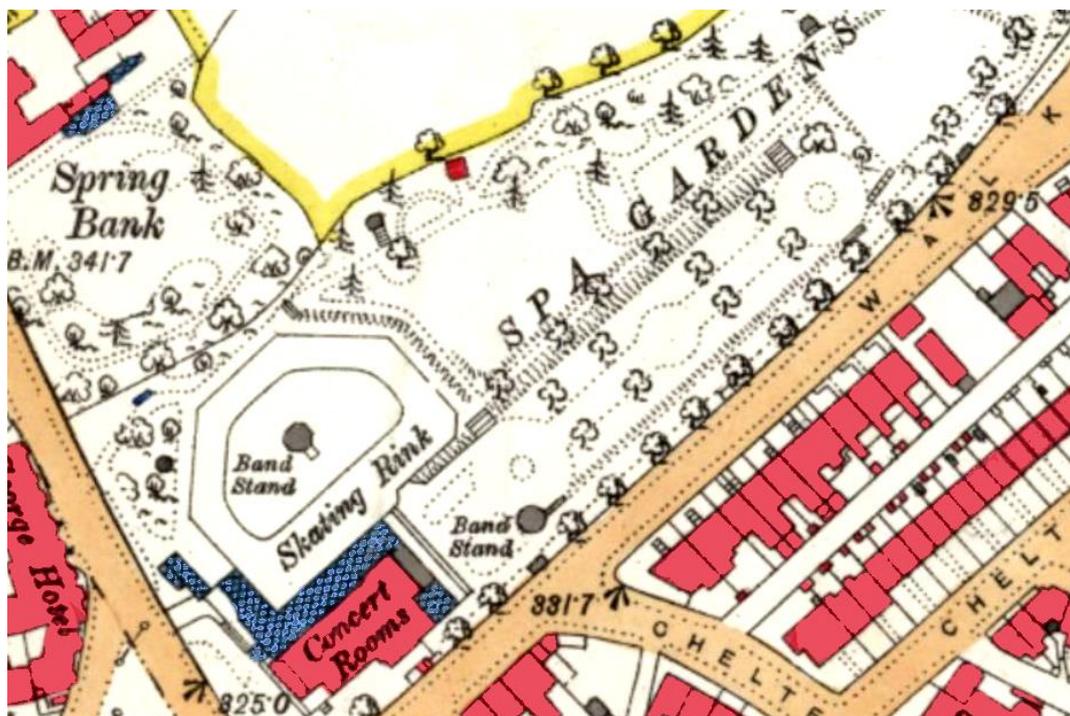
In between the band’s Yorkshire Exhibition engagements, they performed for two weeks back in Harrogate, at the Spa Concert Grounds. During this time they played music during the grand parade of bicycles around the Spa skating rink, which was part of the North of England Bicycle Meet in the town, on 2 August.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Blackpool Gazette and Herald, 21 May 1880

⁴⁶ Blackpool Gazette and Herald, 28 May 1880

⁴⁷ York Herald, 29 July 1880

⁴⁸ Knaresborough Post, 7 August 1880



Map showing the Harrogate Spa Gardens, skating rink and bandstands

Continuing the cycle theme, the Tyler Silver Band fulfilled a week's engagement at the Valley Parade Rink, Manningham Lane, Bradford, from 16 August, supporting a 'Grand Bicycle Performance, given by Mons. Albin on his Monster Bicycle'.

Back in York, at the Exhibition, in a concert in the Exhibition Great Hall, on 24 August, the Tyler Band's performed various selections of music, including a saxophone solo by John Tyler, and Ellen Tyler singing "*Clang of the Wooden Spoon*" and "*Magic Music*". To conclude their stay in York, the final concert on 3 September included the band pieces: march from "*H.M.S. Pinafore*" (Sullivan), operatic selection "*Don Juan*" (Mozart), songs by Ellen Tyler – "*Sing Birdie Sing*" and "*The Lost Chord*", John Tyler saxophone solo, songs from Mendelssohn's works, "*Soldier's Chorus*" (Gounod), several popular airs on the hand-bells, a fantasia on "*American Airs*", and other selections.

The band returned to London, taking up engagements at the Canterbury Theatre, from 13 September 1880; Britannia The Great Theatre, Hoxton, from 4 October; the Sun Music Hall, Knightsbridge, from 1 November; a benefit concert for Mr William Bailey at the Metropolitan Theatre, on 2 November:

"Tyler's Silver Band had a rather long stay [in the programme]; this did not trouble the audience, who thoroughly enjoyed their contribution, and loudly applauded the solos performed by three of its members."⁴⁹

The band remained at the Metropolitan Theatre, Edgware Road, until 12 November. A Saturday concert, on 13 November, was next, at Shoreditch Town Hall, with a host of other variety performers. On to Gatti's Music Hall for the week of 15 November; and back to the Metropolitan on 29 November. Their pantomime role this year was in the show "*Hop O' My Thumb*" at the Surrey Theatre, London, from 27 December 1880 to 19 February 1881:

⁴⁹ London and Provincial Entr'acte, 6 November 1880

“Tyler’s Silver Band added greatly to the musical embellishments of the Opening, and all visitors were likely to admire not alone their sweet harmony, but their neat and becoming uniforms.”⁵⁰

They made a return visit to York, engaged to play at the Yorkshire Fine Art & Industrial Exhibition once more, from 23 May to 4 June, giving performances each day at 3.30 p.m. and 7 pm.

“Yesterday evening Tyler’s Concert Band again occupied the orchestra at this institution, and gave a selection of instrumental and vocal music, embracing part songs, duets, Scotch melodies, dance and operatic music, cornet and saxophone solos, &c., from the compositions of popular musicians. Tyler’s band will be well remembered as having contributed largely to the entertainment of patrons of the Exhibition last year, and they continue to earn the approval of their audience.”⁵¹



Tynemouth Aquarium and Winter Gardens

North Shields, on 6 June, was the next venue for the band, performing at the Aquarium in Tynemouth; followed by a bazaar at the Public Hall, Whittlesey, on 29 and 30 June; a return visit to the York Exhibition from 2 to 15 July; the Pier at Llandudno, for four weeks beginning 18 July; thence to Cardiff, playing at the Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition in the Drill Hall, from 15 August to the middle of September. Their concert on 19 August included: introductory march (Godfrey), operatic selection “*Don Juan*” (Mozart), vocal duet – Misses G. and V. Tyler, valse “*Kildare*” (Seaman), popular airs on hand-bells, “*The Turkish Patrol*” (Michielas), operatic selection “*William Tell*” (Rossini), part song (F. Abt), solo cornet – Mr George Allwright, bijou gavotte “*Kattaun*”, and a selection of Irish melodies, vocal and instrumental.⁵²

The Gaiety Vento Theatre, Manchester, hosted the Tylers as one of their variety routines, on the week of 31 October 1881; then to the Theatre Royal, West Bromwich, from 28 November; and the Dudley Columbarian and Cage Bird Society’s annual exhibition at the Dudley Mechanics’ Institute, starting on 13 December.

⁵⁰ The Era, 19 February 1881

⁵¹ York Herald, 26 May 1881

⁵² South Wales Daily News, 21 August 1881

The 1881/2 pantomime, for which the Tylers provided musical accompaniment, was "*Herne the Hunter*", at the Royal Opera House, Leicester, which ran from 26 December to 17 February 1882.



Tyler's Silver Band, at Leicester, December 1881

The Tyler Band's 1882 touring engagements began at Lusby's Summer and Winter Palace, and East End Promenade, Mile End Road, London, from 20 February; then the Pavilion Theatre, London, from 6 March.

"These famous performers discoursed some charming music, the members playing together in a perfect manner that could only be attained by long and arduous practice. The soli, too, were rendered in a wonderfully skilful and musicianly style, the performance of the gentleman who played the cornet being especially well received."⁵³

The band took part in a one-off concert, at the Foresters' Hall, Clerkenwell Road, London, on 3 April; they were then engaged for another exhibition – this time the Peterborough Industrial and Fine Art Exhibition, at the Fitzwilliam Hall, from 17 to 29 April, performing twice each day; appeared at the Corn Exchange, Lincoln, in the week of 8 May; took part in entertainments at the Exchange Hall, Spalding, on 22 and 23 May; gave two concerts at Thorney, Cambridgeshire, on 24 and 26 May; and gave a concert at Crowland on 25 May.

A return to York, for a third year, to perform at the York Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition, starting the week of 5 June 1882, for a fortnight. Then to London, at the London Pavilion, from 3 July; performing at the Sleaford Art Exhibition from 10 to 24 July; gave a concert at the Thorney Horticultural Show, on 25 July, with a programme consisting of: march "*St Cecilia*" (Kattaun), selection "*Scotch Melodies*", operatic selection "*Pirates of Penzance*" (Sullivan), valse "*Mirabel*" (Le Thiere), quadrille "*Olivette*" (C. Albert), national airs selection "*British Fleet*", gavotte (Dunster), "*The Turkish Patrol*" (Michielas), march "*Our Queen*" (Riviere), selection "*National Airs*", valse "*Happy Thoughts*" (Round), cornet solo

⁵³ The Stage, 10 March 1882

(Koenig), fantasia “*Olivette*” (Audran), polka “*Sunbeam*” (Marriott), operatic selection “*William Tell*” (Rossini), and march “*Ernani*” (Bellini).

The band then travelled to Bradford, to support the Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition at the Bradford Technical School, for four days, starting on Wednesday 26 July. The National Telephone Company had instruments at the Exhibition connected to their exchange, which enabled the subscribers in Bradford to listen to the concerts in their homes or offices via the telephone. On Wednesday 26 July the Tylers’ evening concert was relayed to telephone subscribers and their friends in Dewsbury.⁵⁴ This telephone broadcast was repeated on Thursday and Friday evenings, even though the Thursday evening suffered a ‘strong earth current’, with the playing of the soloists to the finest note, their most elaborate double-tonguing or fingering being easily heard, and so could the applause of the audience, down to the last clap of the hands. On lady, commenting on the Wednesday performance, said she could ‘hear the interval’ – a somewhat paradoxical and surprising statement – what she meant was that she could hear the buzz of conversation during the interval. Although this was not strictly a broadcast, being point to point via the telephone network, it was the first known instance in the UK of a band’s performance being transmitted remotely to an audience.⁵⁵



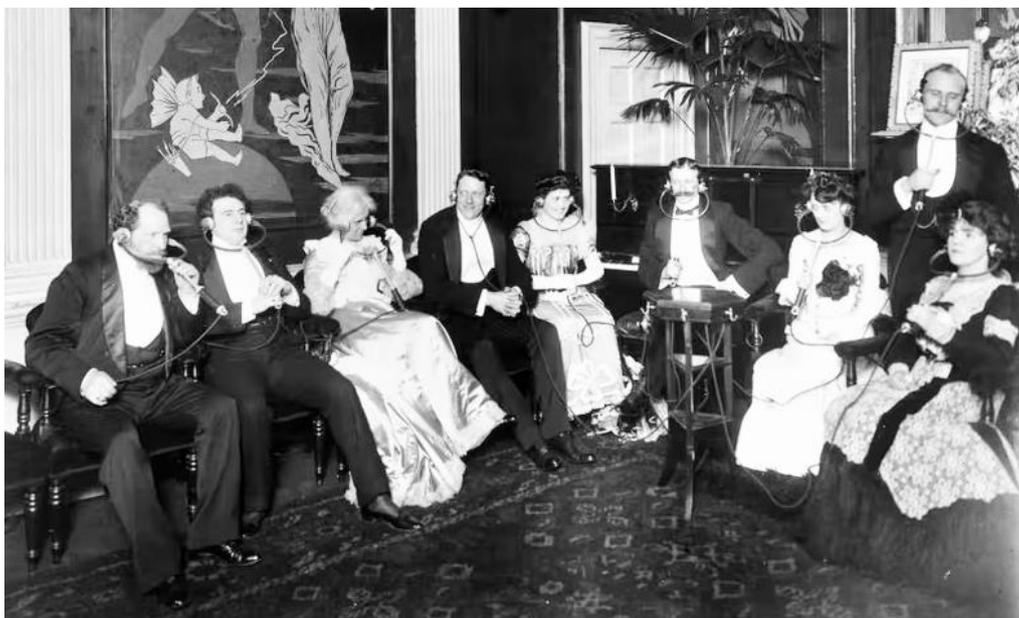
Telephone handset c. 1880

This type of broadcast, via telephone, became more common in the 1890’s with the introduction of the ‘Electrophone’, where live theatre and concerts were streamed into people’s home via telephone, and the audience listened on early headphones.

Having made a little bit of history, the Tylers were engaged for a week, from 7 August, at the Aston Lower Grounds, Birmingham, playing on the Terrace Promenade every evening at 7.30 p.m. They followed this with two weeks at the Worcestershire Exhibition, in Worcester, in early September. The band were clearly enamoured with the various exhibition engagements, for they next took a role at the Manchester Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition, at St James’ Hall, Oxford Street, from 23 October, for two weeks. Returning to London, they undertook a week’s placement at the Trocadero Theatre, Windmill Street, from 13 November, before heading back north, to Birmingham, to perform in the 1882/1883 pantomime – this time it was “*Sinbad the Sailor*”, at the Theatre Royal, from 26 December through to the end of February 1883.

⁵⁴ Dewsbury Reporter, 29 July 1882

⁵⁵ Holman, Gavin - *Broadcasting Brass Bands: the early years*, August 2021



Subscribers listening to a concert via Electrophone, c. 1895

The Tyler's 1883 touring began with a month at the Blackpool Winter Gardens, from 19 March 1883 through to 14 April. During their time in Blackpool the family heard of the death of Joseph Tyler (junior), aged 50, who had died in Glasgow on 13 March. He had been the solo clarinet of the West Cliff Saloon Band for three consecutive seasons.⁵⁶ On a happier note, Georgina Tyler married John Leopold, on 14 March, at St Thomas's, Birmingham.⁵⁷ John Leopold was also a variety artist, being a member of the 'Eccentric Brothers Leopold' act.

The band next moved on to the Folly Theatre, Manchester, from 16 April; and the Morecambe Winter Gardens in August 1883; and the Blackpool Winter Gardens in early December 1883. Their pantomime appearance this year was "*The Queen of Hearts and her Wonderful Tarts*" at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, from 26 December through to the end of February 1884.

"The next scene - the card palace of the four suits - is one of the biggest, if not the biggest set in the pantomime. It occupies the entire stage, and is built up entirely of imitation playing cards of Brobdignagian dimensions. All the four suits are arranged in perfect order, the handsome Court cards lending colour and life to a most beautiful and ingenious stage picture. Everything is in perfect harmony. The floor right away to the extreme end of the stage is covered by a carpet displaying in correct rotation the cards of the pack, and the magnificent dresses of the principals and dancers are quite in accord with the surroundings. Beautiful candelabra, resting upon dice, and five crystal chandeliers, hanging from the ceiling, shed a rich and dazzling lights upon the scene. Tyler's silver band - each instrumentalist being dressed up in imitation of a Knave of Hearts - precedes the corps de ballet - 52 in number - as they march in martial procession down the stage. The dancers furnish in themselves another complete pack of cards. They are dressed as knights in superb armour, and with helmets with crimson plumes and blue cloaks, and instead of a shield each one holds proudly in front of him a card of the pack."⁵⁸

The 1884 touring season started with the band providing musical support for W. Hamilton's 'Excursions and Latest Events', at Wrexham Public Hall, from 28 March:

⁵⁶ Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough, 16 March 1883

⁵⁷ The Stage, 30 March 1883

⁵⁸ Birmingham Daily Mail, 27 December 1883

“... a magnificent panorama and musical entertainment. The audience having been invited to imagine themselves starting by express train from Victoria Station, London - a most realistic representation in itself - are conducted by Mr Linden Travers, the gentleman in charge of the ‘Excursion’, on a most enjoyable trip round the world, the various places visited being graphically described, whilst the charming orchestral music by Tyler’s silver band is appropriately introduced at intervals and forms a pleasing accompaniment on the route. The splendidly painted scenery includes representations of the most noted ‘sights’ to be witnessed abroad, also scenes illustrative of recent events in Egypt and the Soudan, a colossal war tableaux, the bombardment of Alexandria, thrilling incidents on sea and land, exhibiting some really admirable scenic effects, and altogether making up a most delightful journey, the excursionists returning by sea passage from New York to Liverpool in the Cunard steamer ‘Servia’ on board of which the audience are introduced to Mr and Mrs Hamilton.”⁵⁹

Continuing the tour with Hamilton’s show, the Tylers were at the St James’s Hall, Lime Street, Liverpool, for four weeks from 7 April; St James’s Hall, Piccadilly, London, from 5 May; the Bow and Bromley Institute, from 12 May. Leaving the Hamilton show temporarily, the Tylers had a week at the Wolverhampton Exhibition, from 9 June; and contributed to a benefit concert at the Theatre Royal, West Bromwich, on 21 June, for the retiring manager of the theatre, H.C. Hazlewood. They briefly rejoined the Hamilton show in Manchester, at the Free Trade Hall from 16 August; before resuming their solo activities at



the Grand Theatre, Liverpool from 15 September; the Great Central Hall, E.C., London, from 11 October; the Star Music Hall, Bermondsey, from 3 November; took part in W. Bailey’s tenth anniversary show at the Metropolitan Theatre, on 4 November; and in Sam Adam’s annual benefit show at the London Pavilion, on 26 November.

It is not known if the Tylers took part in a pantomime in 1884/1885.

The Tyler Silver Band next appeared in Harrogate, for two weeks from 30 March to 11 April 1885, performing in the Spa Gardens to the many visitors over the Easter period, for a fee of £30.

“It is now some five years since this talented family appeared at the Rooms, and some little change is of course noticeable, especially in the younger members of the family. Time, however, has but served to mature the prowess of these clever musicians, and their performances appear to give satisfaction to their hearers. The programme on Saturday evening included: valse and march selection “*Bishop’s Songs*”, “*The British Patrol*”, selection from “*Iolanthe*”, and a couple of solos. Miss Victoria Tyler gave an effective rendering of the song “*Esmelda*” and secured a loud encore, to which she bowed her acknowledgements. A similar and equally enjoyable programme was furnished on Monday.”⁶⁰

They then travelled south, to the Winter Gardens, Bournemouth, for three weeks from 20 May 1885, where John Tyler on saxophone, and Victoria Tyler’s vocal solos, were particularly admired; next to the Albert Hall, Gloucester, from 8 June for a week.

⁵⁹ Wrexham Advertiser, 4 April 1884

⁶⁰ Knaresborough Post, 11 April 1885

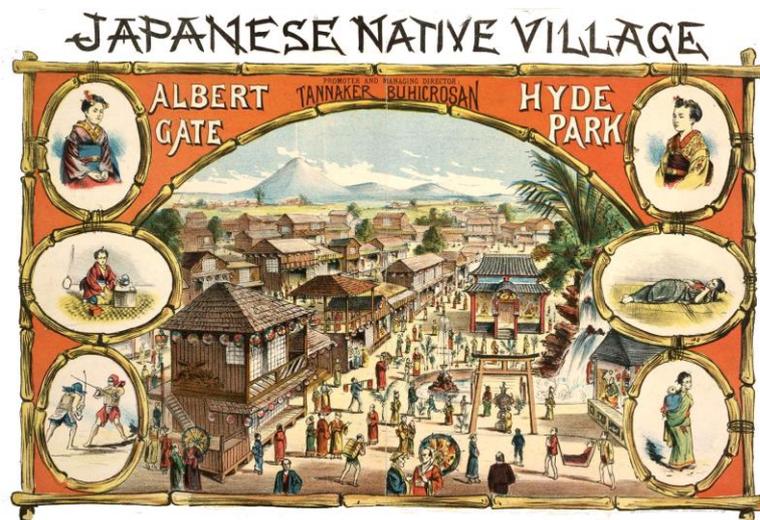
The Tylers were once more invited to Aberystwyth, to perform during the summer of 1885. They commenced their stay by providing suitable music at the opening of the new Promenade Pier on 29 June. They played daily in open-air concerts on the Pier, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and also took part in evening concerts in the town. One such was a benefit concert at the Queen's Assembly Rooms, in aid of the widows and children of the men who lost their lives in the fire at the University College of Wales, on 5 August.

During their stay in Aberystwyth, George Allwright, John Tyler and Albert Tyler were all lodging with Mrs Jones, at 42 Queen Street. It is not known where the other band members resided.

Their last concert in Aberystwyth, concluding the engagement, was on 19 September 1885.

“Touching the music, we must say that the Tyler family, attired in their pleasing, military-like costume, are all very excellent musicians. The music which they discourse is soft and sweet, without discord and inharmonious sounds jarring upon the ear or the more acute musical senses of the severer critic,. We fancy that the lover of music who is not so thoroughly educated - or thinks he is - in the art as to be able to detect the smallest mistake, enjoys the average class of music much the best; he is not eternally watching and listening for the weaknesses, but quaffs from the flowing bowl, and is contented and satisfied. In the Tyler family both classes - the critic and the ordinary man – will, we think, be thoroughly satisfied; what this band performs it performs well, and the character of the music generally is very good. Miss Tyler has also a full and pleasing voice, so that altogether the family is a clever and useful one.”⁶¹

Later that autumn, the Tylers were on the bill at the Birmingham Concert Hall, from 9 November; and a three-week engagement at the Japanese Village, Albert Gate, London, from 30 November. Their pantomime show for 1885/1886 was “*Cinderella*” at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, from 26 December, through to February 1886.



The 1886 touring season opened with the band joining the show “*A True Story*”, initially at the Theatre Royal, Nottingham, from 8 March 1886.

“To add to the effect of the military spectacles, a portion of the celebrated Tyler's Silver Band has been engaged, and their playing of several popular French martial airs gave much effect to the scenes in which they took part. A solo by one of the performers on the saxophone was brilliantly rendered.”⁶²

⁶¹ Aberystwyth Observer, 25 July 1885

⁶² Nottingham Journal, 9 March 1886

“A word remains to be said in high commendation of Tyler’s Silver Band, who furnish the music of the battle scene, and interpose some other music in a way which is wholly justified by its unusual character and excellence.”⁶³

The production then moved to the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, from 20 March; the Prince’s Theatre, Bradford, from 5 April; the Comedy Theatre, Manchester, from 19 April.

In the scene representing the siege of Paris, Tyler’s Silver Band appears marching at the head of the French soldiers, and last night they treated the audience to an excellent rendering of the “*Turkish Patrol*”.⁶⁴

They returned to London, for some engagements in the capital during May and June 1886. Turning their sights westward, they appeared in Plymouth, during July and August, playing on the pier; then to Redruth, where they played at the Additional Curates Fund Fête, in Silver Field, on 9 September. October 1886 saw the band back up north, at the Scarborough People’s Palace and Aquarium, from 4 October.

1887 saw the band take advantage of the numerous exhibitions that were mounted across the country to celebrate the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria. The first of these that the Tylers performed at, was the Leicester Sporting Exhibition, from 4 April through to 21 May. They then moved to the Dudley Jubilee Exhibition from 23 May; the Lincolnshire Exhibition from 20 June through to 16 August.⁶⁵ Their last known engagement this year was at the Sherbourne Varieties Theatre, Birmingham, in November 1887.

TYLER’S SILVER BAND
(Seven Musicians).
Vocalist, Miss V. Tyler. During the last Five Years this celebrated Bijou Band has been Engaged at most of the Winter Gardens and County Fine Art Exhibitions in England, and will be at Liberty during the Summer Months for any suitable Engagement.
Address, Mr JOHN TYLER, 105, Albany-street, London.

⁶⁶

April 1888 saw the Tylers performing at the Japanese Village Exhibition, at the Victoria Hall, Nottingham. They took part in the grand People’s Fête at Clarendonia – a month long extravaganza of events at the Victoria Park, Leicester, during August 1888.

In March 1889, the Tylers teamed up with Hengler’s Grand Cirque, which opened at the Agricultural Hall, Norwich, on 5 March.

“The band, directed by Mr John Tyler, is quite in accord with the superior nature of the whole entertainment. Indeed, it is a question whether the fine orchestra has not something to do with attracting these uniformly large concourses.”⁶⁷

⁶³ Birmingham Daily Post, 30 March 1886

⁶⁴ Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 20 April 1886

⁶⁵ Lincolnshire Chronicle, 12 August 1887

⁶⁶ The Era, 10 March 1888

⁶⁷ The Era, 6 April 1889

The band left Hengler's circus to become one of the resident bands at the Fine Art, Ecclesiastical and Industrial Exhibition, at York, which ran from June to October 1889.

"Tyler's Band at the York Exhibition plays with great taste. One of the principal instruments employed is the saxophone (by Mr J. Tyler). It is seldom heard except in large military bands or orchestras, and it is quite a novelty in a small band. The saxophone belongs to the family of brass wind instruments (six in number) invented by M. Sax."⁶⁸

Following the conclusion of the York Exhibition, the Tylers rejoined the Hengler circus on the Anlaby Road, Hull, from 7 October 1889. The band's last engagement with the circus was at Wellington Street, Glasgow, from 16 November.

The end of the Tylers

This appears to have been the end of the Tylers as a full family band. There are a few later mentions, but no more full engagements.

H. Tyler, of 12 Marsden Street, West Derby, Liverpool, advertised for positions for a trombone player (late of Tyler's Silver Band), in March 1890.⁶⁹

In the 1901 census, Joseph Tyler was living at 105 Albany Street, Regent's Park, with Georgina and Victoria, which had been their home since 1881, at least. During the 1891 census, Joseph was listed as boarding at 42 Grey Street, Hull, together with his son John.

Mr Joseph Tyler, who was a prominent member of the orchestra at the Lyceum during the days of the Kealava, has entered upon his ninety-second year. He was the founder of the Tyler Silver Band, which won much success in the provinces in the early seventies of the last century. Mr Tyler was also a member of the Covent Garden orchestra when the theatre was destroyed by fire. [in 1856]⁷⁰

In July 1910 "The Tylers - Emminent Saxophonists of the Tyler's Silver Band fame" were seeking engagements. It is not known which of the children these were, nor what engagements they may have had over the previous ten years.

Thus, the musical life of the Tyler family came to an end. They had criss-crossed the country over fifty years, playing solo concerts, providing music to shows, pantomimes, revues, circuses, and outdoor entertainment for spa and seaside visitors. A remarkable achievement, initiated and maintained by the tutoring, guidance, and management of Joseph Tyler – a great musician and an even greater leader of his band.

⁶⁸ Yorkshire Gazette, 27 July 1889

⁶⁹ The Era, 8 March 1890

⁷⁰ The Stage, 4 July 1902