

Salford Ironworks Brass Band - a chronology

Gavin Holman, 27 April 2022

The band was supported by Messrs. Mather and Platt's Ironworks in Salford, and it was active from 1873 to 1906. It was conducted by John Lord in the 1870's, James Holgate in 1884 and Rufus Fletcher in the early 1900's.

Mather and Platt gradually closed their foundry in Salford, moving to a new site at Newton Heath in the early 1900's. This may have been a contributing factor to the eventual demise of the Ironworks Band.



The following is a list of the known appearances of the band during its life.

- Friday 25 May 1877 – the band led the 567-strong contingent of St Aloysius', Ogden Street, Ardwick, in the Manchester Roman Catholic Sunday Schools procession.
- Saturday 15 September 1877 - Led the 3,000 members Manchester District Order of Ancient Foresters in the large trades procession for the opening of the new town hall in the city.
- Saturday 20 July 1878 – competed in the Northenden contest, conducted by John Lord, playing “*Les Huguenots*”. The judge remarked: “They did not play with enough decision, and the euphonium was rather tame; the bass was very good, and the time observed by the band was good, rendering the music on the whole creditable.”
- Saturday 31 August 1878 – the band provided musical entertainment during a bowling match at the Broughton Liberal Club.

- Friday 6 June 1879 – the band led the Salford contingent of Roman Catholic Sunday Schools in their Whitsuntide procession.
- Saturday 30 August 1879 – the band performed at the Liberal Fete at Manley Park.
- Saturday 25 October 1879 – the band provided music at a meeting of Radicals at the Pomona Palace.
- Friday 21 May 1880 - Took part in the Whitsuntide procession of Roman Catholic schools in Manchester, leading the 1,900 members of the St Patricks (Livesey Street) School.
- Wednesday 4 August 1880 – gave a concert in Peel Park, Salford, at 7pm.
- Monday 23 August 1880 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm.
- Wednesday 15 June 1881 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm.
- Wednesday 22 June 1881 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm.
- Wednesday 29 June 1881 - gave a concert in Albert Park, at 7pm.
- Wednesday 20 July 1881 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm.
- Saturday 6 August 1881 - the band performed at the Salford Liberal Association's picnic at Tabley Park, Knutsford.
- Wednesday 24 August 1881 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm.
- Friday 9 September 1881 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm.
- Saturday 2 September 1882 – the band led the procession at the demonstration of the Manchester and Salford Temperance Association through the city's streets, which included a further 19 bands. Eleven of the bands took part in a contest associated with the demonstration, at the Pomona Gardens, adjudicated by Collinson Poole. The Ironworks band, conducted by John Lord, gained second place and a prize of £3 – first place going to Pendleton Band.
- Saturday 7 July 1883 – the band took part in a contest at the Woolpack Inn, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton, promoted by the Pendleton Brass Band. They played the set test piece “*Macbeth*” (Verdi), conducted by John Lord. They gained third place, winning £4, losing out to Southport Rifles Band (1st) and Kingston Mills Band (2nd).
- Wednesday 18 June 1884 - gave a concert in Albert Park, at 7pm.
- Saturday 5 July 1884 – the band provided musical entertainment at the Liberal Demonstration at Little Hulton.
- Saturday 26 July 1884 – the band performed at the demonstration in support of the Franchise Bill at the Pomona Palace
- Friday 29 May 1885 - the band led the Salford contingent of Roman Catholic Sunday Schools in the Manchester Whitsuntide procession.
- Wednesday 1 July 1885 - gave a concert in Peel Park, at 7pm, with a collection made on behalf of the sufferers of the Clifton Hall Colliery disaster.
- Saturday 4 September 1886 – the band performed at the annual race meeting of the Salford Harriers at the Manchester Racecourse.
- Tuesday 21 June 1887 – the band gave concerts at Ordsal Park from 2-5 pm and 6-9 pm, as part of the celebrations for the Jubilee of Queen Victoria.
- Saturday 17 September 1887 – the band gave a concert at the Royal Jubilee Exhibition in Manchester



John Lord

- Saturday 22 September 1888 – the band was one of six bands providing musical entertainment during the Battle of the Flowers at Blackpool. The other bands were the Gloucester Regiment Band, Band of the Blackpool Battery of the 5th Lancashire Artillery Volunteers, Band of the 1st Volunteer Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, Band of the Lytham Rifles, and the Band of the Preston Rifles.
- Saturday 20 July 1889 – the band gave a concert at the Liberal Workers' Garden Party at Wood Hill, Prestwich, consisting of: march "*Athalie*" (Mendelssohn), overture "*La Fidèle Berger*" (Adams), valse "*A Summer Day in Munich*" (Cetlier), selection "*Patience*" (Sullivan), serenade "*Militaire*" (Morelli), song "*The Star of Bethlehem*" (Adams), valse "*La Gitana*" (Bucalossi), march "*De Turenne*" (Talle), song "*Love's Old Sweet Song*" (Molloy), selection "*Il Trovatore*" (Verdi). The Gorton Foundry Band was also present and gave a similar concert of their own.



Mather & Platt's Salford Ironworks, 1893

- Tuesday 21 June 1892 – the band played at the Liberal Demonstration which was held at the Belle Vue Zoological Gardens, Hyde Road.
- Wednesday 2 May 1894 – the band provided musical entertainment at a meeting of the Manchester Liberal Union at St James' Hall.

In 1902, Rufus Fletcher, who had successfully conducted bands in Heywood, including the Heywood Old Band, for fifteen years, moved to Salford and began conducting various bands, including South Salford Silver Band, and St Joseph's Band (Leigh). He also became the resident conductor of the Salford Ironworks Band.



Rufus Fletcher

- Sunday 16 August 1903 – the band gave a concert in Cheetham Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “*Distant Greeting*” (Doring), selection “*Un Bello*” (Verdi), selection “*Nabucco*” (Verdi), cornet solo “*Promise of Life*” (Cowen), selection “*Atilla*” (Verdi), and glee “*Forest Queen*” (Round).
- Sunday 23 August 1903 – the band gave a concert in Queen’s Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “*Avondale*” (Allen), overture “*Light Cavalry*” (Suppé), selection “*Mercadante*” (Round), cornet solo “*Flight of Ages*” (Bevan), glee “*Shades of Heroes*” (Cooke), and selection “*Operatic Bouquet*” (Kappey).
- Sunday 8 May 1904 – the band gave a concert in Cheetham Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “*Battle of Magenta*” (Marie), overture “*Tancredi*” (Rossini), selection “*La Traviata*” (Verdi), cornet solo “*The Lost Chord*” (Sullivan), glee “*Hail, Apollo*” (Round), and selection “*Masaniello*” (Auber).
- Sunday 22 May 1904 – the band gave a concert in Birchfields Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “*Liberty Bell*” (Sousa), overture “*Crown Diamonds*” (Auber), selection “*Tannhauser*” (Wagner), cavatina “*King’s Herald*” (Round), glee “*Hail, Mercury*” (Battye), and selection “*Anna Bolena*” (Donizetti).
- Sunday 20 June 1904 – the band gave a concert in Philips Park.
- Sunday 10 July 1904 – the band gave a concert in Cheetham Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “*Liberator*” (White), overture “*Il Barbieri*” (Rossini), selection “*Lortzing*” (Round), cornet solo “*Le Rosignol*” (Reynolds), fantasia “*Souvenir de Valence*” (Bleger), and selection “*Mose in Egypt*” (Rossini).
- Sunday 31 July 1904 – the band gave a concert in Birchfields Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “*Battle of Magenta*” (Marie), overture “*Tancredi*” (Rossini), selection “*Halevy*” (Round), trombone solo “*Ora Pro Nobis*” (Piccolomini), glee “*Hail, Apollo*” (Round), and selection “*Masaniello*” (Auber).
- Sunday 7 August 1904 – the band gave a concert in Alexandra Park.

- Sunday 14 August 1904 – the band gave a concert in Queen’s Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Rockbarton” (Arbuckle), overture “Tancredi” (Rossini), selection “Moses in Egypt” (Rossini), cornet solo “Le Rosignol” (Reynolds), selection “Lurline” (Wallace), and selection “Masaniello” (Auber).
- Sunday 11 September 1904 – the band gave a concert in Philips Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Avondale” (Allen), overture “Crown Diamonds” (Auber), selection “Tannhauser” (Wagner), cornet solo “O Song Divine” (Temple), glee “Hail, Apollo” (Round), and selection “Masaniello” (Auber).
- Sunday 18 September 1904 – the band gave a concert in Cheetham Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Rockbarton” (Arbuckle), overture “Crown Diamonds” (Auber), “Tannhauser” (Wagner), cornet solo “Dream of Paradise” (Gray), glee “Shades of Heroes” (Cooke), and selection “Lurline” (Wallace).
- Sunday 21 May 1905 – the band gave a concert in Philips Park.
- Sunday 2 July 1905 – the band gave a concert in Philips Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Champion” (Jones), overture “Light Cavalry” (Suppé), selection “Semiramide” (Rossini), cornet solo “The Everlasting Day” (Bevan), chorus “Fixed in His Everlasting Seat” (Handel), and selection “Moses in Egypt” (Rossini).
- Sunday 3 September 1905 - the band gave a concert in Boggart Hole Clough, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Le Roi des Mers” (Gurtner), overture “Il Barbieri” (Rossini), selection “Tannhauser” (Wagner), fantasia “Souvenir de Valence” (Bleger), selection “La Cenerentola” (Rossini), and selection “Lurline” (Wallace).
- Sunday 10 September 1905 - the band gave a concert in Whitworth Park, repeating its programme from the previous week.
- Sunday 10 June 1906 - the band gave a concert in Helmet Street Recreation Ground, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Henrique” (Rimmer), overture “Light Cavalry” (Suppé), selection “William Tell” (Rossini), fantasia “La Favourita” (Donizetti), selection “Lurline” (Wallace), and selection “I Puritani” (Bellini).
- Sunday 5 August 1906 - the band gave a concert in Gorton Park, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Knight of the Road” (Rimmer), overture “Bohemian” (Balfe), selection “Stiffelio” (Verdi), cavatina “King’s Herald” (Round), selection “Semiramide” (Rossini), and glee “Forest Queen” (Round).
- Sunday 12 August 1906 - the band gave a concert in the David Lewis Recreation Ground, Ardwick, conducted by Rufus Fletcher, which included: march “Avondale” (Allen), overture “Bohemian” (Balfe), selection “Dinorah” (Meyerbeer), fantasia “Souvenir de Valence” (Bleger), glee “Hail, Apollo” (Round), and selection “La Cenerentola” (Rossini).

