



LAST Wednesday the following letter appeared in the "Evening Mail":

"During a discussion one evening, mention was made of Macdougall's Brass Band. As I am interested in bands could any of your readers enlighten me as to when this band existed, and if there are any of the players still living? — LOVER OF BRASS."

On Thursday morning Mrs. M. E. Johnson, of 68, Smeaton Street, Barrow, brought into the "Evening Mail" office the picture reproduced above.

Her husband, Mr. Walter Johnson, who died 12 months ago, was a member of the band. He is in the centre of the picture.

His brother, Mr. William Johnson, of 38, Pine Road, Barrow, was also a member of the band. He is the second from the left seated. In the centre of the front row is Macdougall himself.

It is hoped that other members of the band will recognise themselves though unfortunately the picture was stained rather badly and reproduction was difficult.

Because he was the first to make an enquiry Mrs. Johnson says that "Lover of Brass" may have the picture. If he applies to the Editor it will be handed to him.

Other members of the band

"One of the Band." writes: "I read in your paper that

Macdougall's Brass Band

'Lover of Brass' wants to know if there was a Macdougall's Brass Band. I happened to be a member of it about 48 years ago. I am 66 now.

"I was one of the side drummers and here are a few names of those who were in the band at that time: R. Crellin, J. Powis, T. Hatch, W. Johnson, T. Bethwaite, J. Bethwaite, G. Gillbanks, A. Norton, G. Ball, and myself, J. Ross. The band conductor was Mr. Holmes, and we practised on Sunday mornings in McDougall's wooden hut in Ironworks Road."

In Barrow sixty years ago

Further information comes from Mr. T. A. Lamb, of 9, Carlisle Street, Barrow, who writes:

I remember Macdougall's Band quite well, about 1900. It was not all brass; there were the clarinet and side drums and triangle. It was a youthful band and players wore a part uniform of cap and belt, similar to the Boys' Brigades, which were very popular in those times. Most of our Churches and Chapels had their Boys' Brigades in uniform, and at times, Macdougall's Band paraded with the Boys' Brigades. Some of the Churches had their Brigade bands, mostly drum and file.

"There were scores of youthful bandsmen in those days, and as a boy I've visited the old parade ground in Abbey Road where the Fire Station is, to

listen to the band's contests over 60 years ago.

"Perhaps some member of Macdougall's Band could give accurate information as to the composition of the band. I regret to say the players I knew have passed on."

Some of the names

Some of the members of the band who are living to-day are named by "Old Bandsman," who writes:

"Macdougall's Band was formed in 1909 or thereabouts. A full set of instruments was purchased by Mr. Macdougall, of Ironworks Road, and the band used to practise in his yard."

"A few of the players are still alive and I name the following: G. Trombone, G. H. Watts, 17, Roose Road; Tenor Trombone, W. Johnson, 39, Piel Road; Double B., J. Watts, Flookborough; Tenor Horn, Brown, 76, Worcester Street; Cornet, W. Johnson, Derby; ? W. Edwards, Ireland."

Its real name

Another former member of the band, Thomas Whitwell, 3, Snipe Ghyll, Martin, Ulverston, writes:

"The real name of this band was 'Barrow Military Brigade Brass Band,' but it always got called Macdougall's Brass Band on account of Mr. Macdougall being the President and he took a great interest in the Boys' Brigade and Band."

"I joined this band in 1910,

and was there until the end, as it disbanded in 1915. If "Lover of Brass" cares to get in touch with me I would be only too pleased to let him know all I can about the band. I am still interested in brass bands and am now playing with Ulverston Town Band."

The Band's origin

And, lastly, comes a very full account of the origin of Macdougall's Brass Band.

It commenced," writes Geo. H. Purcell, of 50, Bristol Street, Walney, "in Platt's Yard, where the Band congregated for the purpose of forming a brass band and not for practice."

"Then a Boys Brigade was formed by Jack Amos. The Band and Brigade formed up together for quite a while when the officers decided to get a better room for band practice and Brigade drilling, so they had a meeting together and decided to ask Mr. Macdougall to be president. There were two brothers John and Harry Macdougall, and they asked us who the letter was for. We decided to ask John and found we had picked the right one."

He built us a large hut on the land near his house and offices, bought us a second hand set of good brass instruments for £80, rigged the brigade out with a new uniform consisting of Glengarry cap, cross belt and leather waist belt. A real old trooper he turned out to be. His interest was tremendous and he could not do enough for us.

We practised and drilled, and made a good Brigade known then as the Barrow Military Brigade and Band. He then decided to take us to camp in August. He did all the arrangements and made it Northern Ireland so we set off for the Belfast boat which went direct to Belfast from the Barrow Docks on July 30 1908 (the day that they opened the Walney Bridge to the public). We went for 10 days camp: all in cost to each one was 13s. 6d., that was boat from Barrow, train from Belfast to Whitehead, 15 miles north, our keep, and home again. We went to Ireland for three years 1908, 1909, and 1910.

We then went to Coniston and various places until 1914, when World War I came about. Some went to the war and some went on munitions work. The lads who were the band split up, some going to the Steelworks Band and the Shipyard Band and turned out to be fine musicians, some going further afield to large bands in Lancashire."