

Keep it in the Family – the Family Brass Bands that entertained the USA and UK in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

Gavin Holman – October 2017

Family bands were not uncommon in the later 1800s and early 1900s. Those in the USA are known particularly through their promotional cards. Such bands were active in other countries also, but photographs and other information about them is sparse. Many combinations of instruments were featured in these bands, although, more often than not, they tended to be all (or mostly) brass, or all (or mostly) string ensembles. The former groups are those that are the subject of this paper.

Large families of parents with their children, and sometimes other relatives, would usually form the basis for these bands. The younger children quite often being used to play percussion instruments. Some bands were amateur in their activities, and remained resident in their local area. Others adopted the professional mantle and travelled the country giving concerts, appearing at shows, circuses and on the stage.

Although the various family bands had different line-ups and instrumentation, they were quite popular as entertainment troupes, sometimes singing, dancing and performing sketches in addition to their, often, multi-instrumental abilities.

The list below, of more than 160 bands, is by no means complete or exhaustive – many bands were short-lived or did not leave a “footprint in time”. By their nature, most were limited in span to the few years between infancy and adulthood – assuming they maintained their success. Unusually for the time, though less so in the USA, the bands had a fair representation of female performers – dictated by the family itself. Any further information about these bands or others will be very welcome. In most cases the bands were in the United States, those in other countries are indicated.

Ah Foo Family Brass Band

from Queensland Australia. Active in the 1880s and 1890s. Jimmy Ah Foo and his wife Evelina Vessey ran hotels, market gardens and carrying businesses, on the goldfields of Charters Towers, in Cooktown and on the Palmer River, Springsure, Barcaldine, Longreach and Rockhampton. Jimmy and Evelina had 13 children, who were all highly musical. The children formed the Ah Foo Family brass and string bands, providing the musical entertainment for their



parents' hotels as well acting as the first town band in Longreach. The children included Emily Dearlove, Frederick Alexander, William, Oscar Alfred Thomas, Mary Ann, Annie Maria, Elizabeth Isabelle Constance ('Elsie'), Ada and Cedric Walter



Ajax Family Brass Band – William Ajax was born in Llantrisant, Wales and emigrated to Utah. With his wife Emma he raised nine children who formed the family band. He ran a very successful mercantile store in Centre, Utah, known as the “*Eighth Wonder of the World*” - to the extent that the town was named after him, eventually becoming a ghost town after his death and the closure of the store. His family band entertained the visitors to the town

Barnes Musical Entertainers – Miami, Florida, were a family brass band who played for many of the groundbreaking ceremonies for the huge hotels in Miami Beach



Barr's Family Band - Active around 1915 in Waverley, Ohio. Consisted of father Charles Barr, his wife Sarah, and children Frank (tenor horn), Marion (drums), Charles (cornet) and Herschel (euphonium)



Beaty Family Cornet Band, Reliance, Virginia. Active in the 1910s. Consisted of: Thelma Beaty (snare drums), Calvin Beaty (father, cornet), Walter Beaty (euphonium), (Thomas) Russell Beaty (tuba), Lester Beaty (baritone horn), Henry Beaty (bass drum)



Bell Family Band was active in Strathroy, Ontario, Canada, in the 1870s

Bellinger Family Band - Active in the 1900s in Watertown, New York. In 1900 the family consisted of Ezra D. Bellinger (38), his wife Augusta (nee Kelsey, 37) and children Floy Anne (12), Matie E. (10), Jennie (4 - d. 1903), Dorothy M. (6) and Frederic (3). Frederic later went on to form his own band which toured regionally and made some recordings. Ezra also led the Bellinger Ladies' Band in the town



Berger Family Cornet Band

was one part of the Berger family's musical offerings, which also included their "orchestra". The ensemble reinvented itself regularly to respond to public tastes of the moment. The Berger Family ensemble was made up of Henry Berger, a German American church organist and organ builder based in York, Pennsylvania, his wife Anna, and children Henry, Anna Theresa, Louisa, Fred, Henrietta, and Bernhart. They began performing together as early as 1862, along with their music teacher's son, Ernest Thiele. Under the management of father Henry, they were contracted by the MacFarland Dramatic Company in early 1863, and by mid-1863, following Henry senior's death, were touring



with the Carter Zouave Company, a vaudeville troupe that most likely featured the Berger girls in their popular girl Zouave band. After that contract ran out, and now managed by mother Anna, they began performing with the Peak Family, a popular family of Swiss bell ringers, and eventually formed their own bell-ringing ensemble.



In July 1871, the Bergers advertised their wares as "the only complete troupe of Swiss bell-ringers who have ever appeared in this country, parlour orchestra, and silver cornet band - the principal members of which are young ladies (including solo cornettist Anna Theresa Berger)" – the novelty of talented female brass players accounting for a large share of the Bergers' popularity.

In January 1870 the band performed on the Crescent City (Evansville), Indiana, band wagon – a member of Crescent City Band remarked on the oddity of seeing women playing through the streets, but also that "any music would sound well in that wagon". They appeared at Haverley's Theater in Chicago, Illinois, in January 1877; and in the Opera House, Rochester, New York in November 1878. At an 1877 concert in Havana, Cuba, Anna Theresa Burger was reportedly showered with money thrown on stage in appreciation of her dazzling cornet solos. Later members of the troupe were Anna T. Berger, Ida Thorpe, Emma Anderson, Etta Morgan, Gertrude Mather, Josie Maddock, Alice Kellog, George Bowron, F.G. Berger, Henry G. Berger and Fleming Adama. They gave their farewell concert in May 1880 at the Academy of Music in Troy, New York. Below are two pictures of Anna Berger



Biehl Family Orchestra -

Anthony Biehl lived in Davenport, Iowa, with his wife Lulu and three daughters - Lucy (b. 1883, clarinet), Leona (b. 1885, horn) and Grace (b. 1889, cornet). The other two girls in the photo are not known. Anthony owned a mandolin factory in Davenport and was a popular performer and teacher of music. Grace Biehl was promoted as a young cornet soloist. After WWI the Biehl family joined the Dubinsky Brothers Stock Company, which ran several touring tent productions. The whole family



played music and acted in comedies and melodramas, mostly out of Jefferson City, Missouri. The daughters married other performers and after their father's death in 1929 they kept the production going as the Biehl Sisters Orchestra at least until 1937 or even later

Bezucha Brothers Family Band

– based in Hillsboro, Wisconsin consisted of Frank and five of his brothers and a sister, It was popular in the Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha and Chicago areas in the 1920s. The siblings were (Charles) Frank (b. 1884), Sophie (b. 1886), Joseph (b. 1888), Anna (b.1890), Washington (b.1891), Edward (b.1893), Bessie (b.1899) and Leo (b.1901)



Bigelow Family Band -

Active around 1914, in Bowling Green, Ohio, consisting of father John Bigelow (b. 1860, bass drum), Georgia Bigelow Bryan (b. 1898, euphonium), Edith (b. 1905, trombone), Jack (b. 1893, cornet), Harry (b. 1901, french horn), Della Jocelyn (b. 1895, cornet), mother Etta Bigelow (b. 1874, tenor horn), Josephine "Joey" (b. 1908, snare drum), John Jr. (b. 1903, euphonium), Pauline Virginia "Fritzi" (snare drum). Between 1893 and 1911 John and Etta had



8 children. John would buy his children the finest instruments, but each child had to learn to play them without lessons. Jack started cornet when he was 10 and he helped his sisters, Della and Georgia. Harry played an alto horn and John, Jr., the trombone - also an organ later on. Edith played the trombone, piano and organ, and later played professionally with Rita Rio and his orchestra. Josephine played the drums, Virginia "Fritzi" joined the rest of the family at an early age singing, dancing, and playing the drum, later learning the tuba, clarinet, saxophone and other instruments. John, the father, played the bass drum and Etta, the mother, alto horn. They played band concerts on the square in Bowling Green and around the area. Jack formed the All-Girl Band in 1921, including his five sisters and first wife, Elizabeth. They traveled the states playing the Keith Orpheum Circuit and the RKO Circuit and for 25 years played at the Wood County (Ohio) Fairgrounds in conjunction with radio station WFOB. In 1927 for a publicity stunt, the band went high over Maumee Bay in a United Cigar Store airplane piloted by the famous Col. Roscoe Turner. The next day's headlines in The Toledo News Bee were "Fritzi Teaches Birds to do Black Bottom." During 1929, with the band, Fritzi was first featured in her specialty one-man band "Dinah" number. She played sax, clarinet, trombone, trumpet, piano, drums, tuba and ended with a tap dance. It was a real showstopper

Botteron Family Band,

Chamberlain, Indiana. The musicians were 11 of the 16 children of Frederick Louis Botteron and Mary Jane Stone, aged from 9 to 26 years old in 1895. Some of the older brothers had been in the Chamberlain Cornet Band. When it disbanded they bought the instruments and uniforms and taught their siblings to play. The band performed at reunion picnic of the Lutheran Church in St. Joe, Indiana, in August 1895, and the reunion of the 33rd



Indiana Battery (of which Frederick Botteron was a member) in Huntington, Indiana in October 1896

Bowers Family Brass Band

was active in the Black Hills of South Dakota in the 1890s and 1900s. Members were father John Calvin Bower, his wife Keziah, and children John Sidney (cornet), Nettie (tenor horn), Louisa (Lulu) (euphonium), Rose (trombone), Warren Mayo (cornet), Rhoda Alice (drums), and Quinnie (tuba). Rose Bowers spent time working for the suffragettes in New York in 1915, and used her bugling skills to aid their work. In 1870, Calvin and Keziah (called Kizzie) Bower set out from Lodi, Wisconsin headed for Vermillion, Dakota Territory in a covered wagon with four small children, two boys and two girls.



The family lived in Vermillion for about fifteen years and added four more girls to the family. The oldest girl, Alice, was nicknamed "Od". In 1885, the whole family moved to the Black Hills in two groups. The first group pulled a prairie schooner loaded with John Deere farm equipment and the second group travelled in a covered wagon. Most of them claimed homesteads on Battle Creek below Hermosa. The Bower Family Band soon became the leading musical organization of the central Black Hills. They played at all kinds of entertainments, led Fourth of July parades through the streets of Keystone and provided band music when presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan made a whistle stop in Hill City. Laura Bower Van Nuys, the youngest of the Bower family, wrote a biography of the family, *"The Family Band, From the Missouri to the Black Hills, 1881 - 1900"*, published in 1961 by University of Nebraska Press. Walt Disney Studios bought the rights to the story and produced a movie in 1968 based on the book called, *"The One and Only, Genuine, Original Family Band"*. The Original Band, with Jimmy Baldwin as the leader was cornets: Mayo Bower, Ned Bacon and Joe Hayes; baritone horn: Ed Hayes; trombone: Nattie Bower; tenor horns: Patsy Hayes and A.C. McDonald; alto horns: Laura Bower; Carrie Bower; Aubert Canfield and Willie Graham; tuba: Quinnie Bower; drums: John Hayes, Cliff Pike and Charles Canfield. For further information see:

Bramusa Family Band

– England. Active from 1904 to 1921, performing at various venues around the country. An "all-British family of juvenile musicians". The original Bramusa Family Band consisted of the father, mother, four eldest daughters and two sons - four cornets, horn, euphonium, tuba and percussion. They were billed as the "Seven Bramusas" from 1906 with the seven oldest children as performers. They



performed their extravaganza "Music Afloat" in Sheffield in 1908. Clara, the drummer, was ten years old in 1909. In the 1911 census the family were lodging at 23 and 25 Duncan Road, Southsea. The family consisted of Samuel Frank Johnson (b. 1861), his wife Agnes Ann (b. 1863), and children Gertrude Esther (b. 1887), Theodore Ystwith (b. 1889), Cariad (b. 1890), Elsie Deborah (b. 1892), Marnesuel "Nessie" (b. 1894), Thomas Charles (b. 1897), Clara Agnes (b. 1898), and Douglas Berkeley (b. 1900) and Annie Miriam "Mimi" (b. 1906). The youngest two children were not part of the original "Seven". Samuel was born in Bucklebury, Berkshire and Agness in Milford Haven. The children were born in various places in the UK (Blaina, Aberystwyth, Wimborne, Kidderminster, Maindee, Abertillery, and Beenham)





Brand Family Brass Band, performed at the New Dime Museum, 111-117 Randolph Street, Chicago, in October 1884. The band featured the “*smallest bass drummer in the world*”. Other attractions in the museum included Madame June, the largest giantess in the world, General Shade the miniature marvel, Professor Gilbert and his mechanical marvels, the Circassian Queen Zanie Zenobia, and Whitfield, the monarch of facial artists

Bratley Family Brass Band – Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, England. Founded in 1945 by Charles Bratley of Willoughton, with his wife and five sons. By 1950 they had made over 78 appearances for charity and were all members of Gainsborough Britannia Brass Band. The band in 1950 was: Charles Bratley (father, side drum), Ken, 24 (Eb bass & tenor trombone), Frank, 22 (euphonium, musical saw, trombone), Bruce, 20 (cornet, piano accordion), David, 15 (tenor horn, Ronald, 14 (cornet), and Mrs Bratley (conductor)



Bridges Family Brass Band –

Based in Trigg, Kentucky. The band was [Ivy] Lorene (b. 1894, daughter of Ghent, flugel horn), Peyton (b. 1898, son of Ghent, cornet), Nellie (b. 1892, daughter of Dale, cornet), unknown cousin (cornet), Ben Grigsby (drums), and brothers [Mark] Dale (b. 1871, alto horn), Ghent (b. 1867, tuba), Jessie (b. 1887, euphonium), and John (b. 1874, euphonium)



Brierley Family Brass Band – Hindley, Lancashire, England. Active in 1880, leader Arthur Brierley, with six other members of his family including Maggie and Joseph. Still active in 1881

Brown Family Band, from Freeburg, PA. Active in 1906. Leader Henry Brown, with his wife on drums and cymbals and his nine daughters on various brass instruments. In 1906 the eldest daughter was 28, the youngest, 11 - all wearing a pretty white and blue uniform.

Brown's Family Orchestra,

from Wilmington, Delaware. The family was father Herbert (b. 1884, violin and french horn), mother Luella (b. 1886, piano and saxophone), Ralph (b. 1910, bass), Vera (b. 1915, drums, traps, bells and xylophone), Martin (b. 1916, cornet), Albert "Pud" (b. 1918, saxophone), Gordon (b. 1919, cymbals and alto horn). The family travelled with its own tutor, a licensed school teacher who made sure that Whether in Maine or California the Brown juniors get the instruction just the same as if they were in their school at home.



Played at the Masonic Hall, Newport, Delaware in April 1923, in Florida during winter 1926/7 and Revere Beach, near Boston, in summer 1926. When crossing the continent, they stopped along the route and played at theatres. They travelled in a well-equipped house on wheels – an "auto pullman car" which had a fold-out platform that was used whenever they needed a stage. The family eventually left Wilmington and relocated to Shreveport, Louisiana

Browning Family Brass Band

appeared at Marshfield's 61st annual Central Wisconsin State Fair in August 1963. The band consisted of six sisters and two brothers with their parents. In addition to the brass instruments the sisters played accordions, marimbas and danced. In 1956 the children used their pocket money to buy a corn-popping machine, the initial investment of Browning Kids Inc. Eugene Browning, his wife Margaret, daughters Carol, Anne, Mary Margaret, Linda, Patricia, Barbara, sons Eugene jnr., and Robert Allen. The family made hundreds of personal appearances and also featured on radio and television.



Buckskin Ben's Family Brass Band

Ben Stalker married his wife Mary in the mid-1880s and was inspired to start his Wild West show. Mary picked up a rifle for the first time, and practiced until she became a crack shot. She also agreed to participate in what would become their featured "*Human Impalement Act*", where she stood stock-still against a wooden backboard while Ben threw knives around her profile. They raised five children (Alice, Jennie, George, Myrtle and Ella), and all became full-fledged sharpshooters and musicians. Each show consisted of six to eight half-hour acts and began with a musical performance by the exceptionally popular Buckskin Ben Family Band in which every family member played an instrument. The band consisted of father Ben (trombone), mother Mary (euphonium), Alice (tuba), Jennie (trombone), Charles Davis (Alice's husband, drums), Myrtle and Ella (alto horns), George (cornet) and Noah Waddell (Ben's trick-rider sidekick, cornet). It appeared



for 14 weeks at Coney Island in 1905, and travelled for entire seasons with larger circuses and carnivals throughout the East, Midwest, Canada, and Mexico. In July 1904, in Penn Park, York, Pennsylvania, the Layton Carnival Company show opened. One of the acts was Buckskin Ben's Wild West Show, which was a family of 11 typical westerners, all of whom were accomplished musicians and played in the family band in addition to their more tradition "wild west" skills of bronco riding, sharp-shooting, throwing knives



and amusing acts with their dogs and ponies. By May 1907 the family had added lassoing and a monkey to the act and was giving performances at the Riverside Amusement Park in Indianapolis, Indiana. When not on tour, the Stalker family and their show resided in Cambridge, Indiana. The

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show, renamed Buckskin Ben's Wild West Dog and Pony Show, continued in operation until 1929 when Ben retired at the age of 86



Burns Family Band – Chicora, Pennsylvania. Was active in the 1930s, six members including cornet, trombone, euphonium and drums, dressed in kilts and Scots garb



Campbell Family Cornet Band, consisted of two gentlemen and three ladies, performing at a picnic in Cherokee, Kansas in September 1884

Childs Family Brass Band and Juvenile Comedy Company, from Stanton, Nebraska, was active in the late 1880s. It performed at the G.A.R. reunion at Norfolk, Nebraska, in August 1888, and in the Masonic Hall, Worthington, Minnesota in August 1892. The band in 1888 consisted of father F.J. Childs (cornet), Mrs F.J. Childs (baritone horn), Murray (aged 9, bass tuba), Bessie (aged 6, alto horn), Jessie (aged 4, alto horn), and Maud (aged 2, cymbals)

Clark Family Cornet Band was made up of the children and grandchildren of Mr and Mrs Elhenan Clark (pioneers of Algona, Iowa), the women lending a hand, or a lip, wherever needed. The band performed at the 4th July celebrations in Livermore, Iowa in 1893.

Cleveland Versatile Troupe

- Yorkshire (North Riding), England. Active in 1910 to 1915. A professional group of eight young brass instrumentalists (who also sang and danced) - with a family connection - led by Mr Hance Newell. Also known as the Cleveland Brass Troupe. In May 1913 Hance Newell sent a postcard to his friend George Palmer (pianist at Olympia, Stacksteads, near Bacup) informing him of the Troupe's progress, and noting that the following week they would be performing in Mossend, Lanarkshire. One of their shows was titled "The Colonel's Birthday"



Cole Family Band was active in Arkansas in 1919



Collins Family Cornet Band of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. There were eight members of the family, playing nine instruments, Robbie Collins doing the double act of tuba and bass drum

Corbett's Family Silver Band - Newcastle upon Tyne, England. Active in 1878 to 1899. A band formed and owned by Mr E.R. Corbett. John Thompson, bandmaster, was associated with the band until his death in 1882. The band performed at the celebrations in Newcastle in 1881 on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of George Stephenson, the railway locomotive pioneer

Cuthbert Family Cornet Band – Long Beach CA. Dr W.I. Cuthbert arrived in Long Beach in 1887 with his two daughters Nina and Georgina. Georgina was weak with illness and used a wheelchair until the better climate of California made her better. The family band was founded in 1886, and consisted of eight uniformed members. It played at religious gatherings and other events in the town, including the opening of the Long Beach Alliance Assembly in July 1889. The band folded before the end of the century.

Davis Family Band – Seattle, Washington. Active in 1912, consisted of the first 6 children of James A. Davis and Christine Anderson - ie: Clara (tenor horn), Ruth (tuba), Glory (euphonium), Frank (trombone), Russel (cornet), and Samuel (cornet)



Dellinger Family Brass Band, from Lowesville, North Carolina, consisted of Alby Dellinger and his six children, three boys and three girls. They performed at the Lincoln Farmers' Union Picnic at Lowesville, in August 1914. The band members pictured here are, from the left, Birdie Dellinger Beatty, Bessie Dellinger Cherry, Ellis Dellinger, Alba "Alby" Dellinger, Laddie Nixon, Ernest Cherry, Boyd Cherry, Jim Sifford and Charlie Dellinger. The young girl in front is thought to be Nettie Dellinger, the boy is unknown



Denman Family Band, Wyandotte, Michigan. In the 1880s, this featured their five children: Charles, Belle, William, Bertha and John. Charles grew up to become an accomplished cornetist and the leader of the Belleville Citizens Band. In November 1892 the band gave a concert at the Arbeiter Society hall in Wyandotte, when Charles performed an excellent cornet solo



Dillinger Family Band, from Union, Missouri. Active around 1890. John Jackson Dillinger and his family members. John Jackson played clarinet, his wife Nancy Jane, the drums. Other family members included his sons John William, James Marion, Thomas Jefferson and Francis Jackson "Bud", and daughters Mary and Rosetta



Dixon Family Band – Malone, New York. Active in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Consisted of George W. Dixon (tuba) and his children Marie Philomene Rose (b. 1878, cornet), George Henry (b. 1881, cornet), Alfred (b. 1883, trombone), Edward (b. 1886, valve-trombone), Samuel (b. 1889, valve-trombone) and Lottie (b. 1892, drums). George W. Dixon was born in London, England in 1849 and emigrated to the USA in 1868, marrying Philomena Allard in 1876.



Dunson Family Brass Band – active in Alabama. The family of Walker Lee Dunson and his wife Margaret Elizabeth. The children were Martha Texonia, Walker Lee jnr., Marcus Henry, William Sanford, Virginia Louise, Francis Aileen, Robert Calvin and Ruby Eunice



Egermeyer's Family Brass Band furnished the music for a concert in Carroll, Iowa in October 1895

Etheredge Family Brass Band

was active Saluda County, South Carolina. The band consisted of the Etheredge brothers Samuel, Mark, Henry, Martin and some of their siblings Letha, Watkins, Tyre, William, Arthur and West. They took their name from their former slave owner, Joseph Etheredge, of Edgefield County, who sold some land, 195 acres, to Samuel Etheredge, who parcelled it up to his sons around 1900



Faust Family Brass Band were 10 in number, performing in Fielding and various other locations in New Zealand, from August to November 1885. Active in and around Sydney, Australia, from then through to 1889

Feagans' Family Band

– Petersburg, Illinois. Active in 1911. Members were: father Joseph Rufus Feagans (cornet), mother Emma Kate Feagans (drums), Flora Feagans Kern (tuba), Flossie Feagans (trombone), Fern Feagans (alto horn), Fredona Feagans (alto horn), Edna Feagans (drums and traps), H. Kern (cornet), L. Feagans (clarinet), Frank Feagans (baritone), Rex Feagans (alto horn). In 1911 the band performed at the following shows: Cosmopolitan Carnival Company, Bulger and Cheney Shows, Glacier Lyceum Bureau, Lakeside Ohio Park, Nixon Brothers Carnival Company, Kemp Sisters' Wild West Show, Riggs Amusement Company, Gay's Dog and Pony Show, Robison's Shows, Gollmar Brothers Shows, Great Carver Shows, Texas Bud's Wild West Show, Buckskin Ben's Wild West Show



Fetler's Family Band was from Riga, Latvia. Rev. and Mrs. Vaseely Andreyevich Fetler-Malof had 13 children that formed the band. Fetler ran afoul of the Russian Orthodox church in Latvia and he was banished from the country in 1914, emigrating to America, living in New York and Philadelphia during the war years. After the war, he and his family returned to Latvia. Around he began to include his talented children as a musical ensemble for his evangelical services. When the



politics of the new government of Latvia became too authoritarian, the Fetler family moved to Sweden where they discovered that they could make money with concerts of a family band. The children already knew several languages, so they put together a show of songs and instrumental music that toured Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Germany, and Switzerland. In 1938 they found themselves in Munich, Germany where they decided it was time to leave, so they sailed for America. Making their home in the USA they started their concert tours again, often providing music to their father's lecture/sermons. By this time Vaseely was known as William and his wife as Barbara. In 1939 the children were: Daniel, 24, trumpet; Timothy, 23, clarinet; Lydia, 22, cornet; Paul, 19, trombone; John, 17, trombone; Philip, 16, bass horn; Elizabeth, 15, alto horn; Andrew, 14, baritone horn; David, 12, cornet; Peter, 9, drums; James (Jacky), 8, bandmaster; and Joseph, 5, cymbals. It is assumed that the thirteenth child, Mary was married by this time.

Flowers Family Brass Band gave a Grand Musical Entertainment at the Opera House, Ravenna, Ohio, in November 1876; and in Davenport, Iowa, in March 1879. The band was father, mother, seven sisters and three brothers. They made their home in Muscatine County, Iowa in 1879

Forbes Family Brass Band – as can be seen from this partial picture, the family included at least three girls and a boy, one of whom was named Edith. They performed a concert in the Opera House, Paw Paw, Michigan on 20 April 1883. The band received their brass instruments on 20 July 1883, and gave a concert with them in Cheboygan, Michigan on 28 September 1883 (Miss Edith showing especially fine talent), then Perrysburg, Ohio on 15 December 1883, Marysville, Ohio on 31 December 1883, and the Opera House, Logan, Ohio, in January 1884. Also known as Forbes Family Juvenile Orchestra and Brass Band



Ford Family Brass Band – toured with Barton Brothers’ Circus from December 1909 to December 1910, in Australia. Their performance in Maryborough, Queensland, in June 1916, included bell-ringing, xylophone solos, illustrated songs and orchestral overtures. This supported their other main activity which was operating an “Electric Pictures” show, screening feature films such as *“The War Baby”* and Charlie Chaplin’s Essanay file *“A Woman”*

Frank Family Band was from Hornellsville, New York. Mr and Mrs Frank and their five children, Ernest, May, Frankie, Eddie and Annie



Freeman Family Band – Dundas, Ontario, Canada. This was a sextet of 2 cornets, alto horn, tenor horn, over-the-shoulder bass tuba, and bass drum played by the parents and 4 children (2 girls, 2 boys) and was active in 1868. It performed at the celebration of the anniversary of Canada's independence at the factories picnic at Morris' Grove in July 1868



Freeman Family Band – Dundee, Illinois. Active in the early 1900s, consisted of father Fred Freeman, wife Augusta and sons Herman (b. 1880), Fred (b. 1883), Henry (b. 1884), Louis (b. 1885), and William (b. 1887)



Gault Family Band - Pretty Prairie, Kansas. Active in the early 1900s. Consisted of Hugh Coffey Gault, his wife Maggie Fidelia (nee Eiker) - played tuba, and their children George (cornet), James (euphonium), Lilian (clarinet), Hugh (cornet), Francis (trombone) and Ralph (tenor horn)



Graham Mesa Brass Band – Rifle, Colorado. A family band, active around 1910. It consisted of father Isem Wilber Graham (b. 1856, cornet), his wife Erugenia (Jennie, nee Mullen, b. 1872) (bass drum), and sons Millard Elmer (b. 1890, tuba), John Albert (b. 1894, cornet), Claude Allen (b. 1892, trombone), Henry Lewis (b. 1896, trombone), Vern Clayton (b. 1907, side drum), Joseph Eber (b. 1899, flugel horn), and Wilbur Isem Graham (b. 1905)



Hager Family Brass Band participated in a Christmas concert at The Commons, Columbus, Indiana, in December 1975. Members of the band making their second appearance at The Commons were Francis, Veronica, Tim and Michelle Hager

Haines Family Brass Band consisted of Master Floren “Floyd” Haines (b. 1870, cornet and violin), Madame Genevera Haines (b. 1848, alto horn, pianist and xylophone), Miss Lola (b. 1869, cornet), Master Chauncey (b. 1872, trombone), Master Rockhill (b. ?, clarionet), Master Roland “Roy” (b. 1873, second violin), Master Carl Gailen (b. 1875, solo alto and cornet), Miss Ileana “Flo” (b. 1877, snare drummer), Master Herbert (b. 1879, smallest bass drummer in America), and father John Columbus Haines (tuba and double bass). It performed at Grand Theater in Wheeling, West Virginia, in August 1889, and the Wonderland Musée and Theater in Buffalo, New York, in June 1890, sharing the stage with Mozart the Magician and Zoe the Circassian Princess. John Columbus Haines was born in 1842 and lived in Alliance, Ohio. He was a member of the Ohio 19th Regiment Band in 1862-1865, founded the Alliance Band with his brothers in 1865, and was still leader of the Alliance Band in 1875. He married Genevera Lenore Jones in 1868. The Haines Family Band was active from 1885, ultimately with all 11 children (including Genevieve, b.1881, Lillian, b. 1883 and Rea, b. 1885). In 1893 the family moved to Detroit, and many of the children subsequently became professional musicians.

Hallman Family Cornet Band

provided entertainment at the cake walk and ice cream festival in Schubert's Grove, Hereford, Pennsylvania, in August 1901, only three months after the band was formed. Other performances were in Bally in April 1902, the Chapel in Hereford and also East Greenville in October 1902, Coopersburg in December 1902, Shoenersville Sunday School Picnic in July 1903, Hereford in September 1903, at the St John's Sunday School picnic in Andreas Grove, near the Little Lehigh, in Lower Mancungie, Pennsylvania, in August 1904. Still active in 1914. They were based in Zionsville, Lehigh County and, in



1909, consisted of William M. Hallman, father and leader; Mrs Amanda Hallman, mother, organist and bass drum; Miss Emma, 17, tuba and euphonium; Miss Elsie, 15, alto horn; Master Norman W., 13, baritone and trombone; Master Lloyd C., 8, cornet; Master Miles Leighton, 5, alto horn and side drum; Wilson Hallman jnr, solo cornet; Percival Hallman, brother of the leader, alto horn

Harris Family Band –

Blandburg, Pennsylvania. Active around 1900. Father Alfred John Harris and several of his sons playing a variety of brass instruments



Harris Family Band – Tullahoma, Tennessee, was active in 1897. Members included Mr Harris, his daughters Maggie and Callie Lou, and sons Harry, Claud and Walter

Harrison Family Brass Band – performing at the annual musical congress at the Y.M.C.A. athletic park in Richmond, Indiana, in August 1890. Sharing the bill were Blind Tom, “the greatest musical prodigy” and Rev. Riggs the “warbling preacher”. Two of the girls in the band were Essie and Katie Harrison

Harrison Family Brass Band – Glossop, Derbyshire, England. Active in 1869

Harry Family Band - Active 1888, from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, performing in the Metropolitan Hall, Reading. Also in 1897 in Conshohoken, Pennsylvania



Hatch Family Brass Band was led by Dr Hatch and performed at St Paul's Church, Lincoln, Nebraska in April 1889. The band also played swiss bells, saxophones, and banjos in addition to their brass instruments

Hawk Family Brass Band – consisted of father Arthur Benson Hawk (b. 1870), his wife Ella May (b. 1872, née Griffith), son Zariel Griffith (b. 1899, trombone and cornet), and daughter Zarita E. (b. 1903) who was an accomplished violinist, vocalist and brass player. They had been giving musical entertainments since January 1914 in conjunction with the Sunday School and at the Colony Hall in Crystal Springs, Florida, and continued to give concerts there through to about 1921, when Zariel married, followed a few years later by Zarita



Zarita Hawk

Hawthorne Family Band - Performed at the Princess Rink, Fort Wayne, Indiana in March 1888. Active in Portland, Indiana, through 1889



Hayes Family Band - Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. Active around 1923. Consisted of parents Homer Tennyson Hayes (b. 1885), his wife Bessie May (b. 1891, née Bullock) and their six children: Victor Tennyson (b. 1910), Homer Spencer "Nip" (b. 1911), Wallace Hamilton "Wally" (b. 1913), Lucille Vivian "Ceil" (b. 1915), Theodore Harmon "Buddy" (b. 1916) and Bertha May (b. 1918) - playing various instruments from tuba down to cornet. Father Homer had played with the J.P. Sousa Band. The family band expanded to include their other four children in



time – Kenneth Owen (b. 1921), Frederick Willard (b. 1923), Ruth Virginia (b. 1926) and Marjorie Eleanor (b. 1928)

Helsby Family Brass Band

from Bolton, Lancashire, England. Formed around 1895. On a Sunday afternoon there was a large family gathering at one of the family's houses, when someone said 'Well. There are enough of us, why not form a band of our own again!' They sent a hat round and the collection amount to 4 shillings and 6 pence. They went to see an instrument firm, where they struck a deal and 13 Helsby's and a drummer started a band. In June 1902, the band led the members of the Methodist New Connexion Church around the



parish at Brownlow Fold, before laying the foundation stones for their new building. In December 1903, the band gave a concert at the Central Mission Hall in Bolton, with C. Helsby giving two cornet solos. Another tale told is one day while carrying out a Church procession in Farnworth one wit called out in excited tones, 'Hello Helsby there, I say Helsby!' Every member looked round on hearing his name called, causing a temporary breakdown in the performance. July 1908 saw the band take part, with five other bands, in the Bolton Co-operative annual Children's Festival, despite torrential rain some 6,000 children attended and were served with 32 barrels of coffee and 15,000 buns. In about 1912 the family became scattered across the country and this was the end of the band. Many of the family members went on to play in other local bands, notably one, Mr Thomas Helsby, became conductor of Eagley Brass Band.

Henschke Family Brass Band

from Keyneton, South Australia, was founded by Paul Gotthard Henschke. He was the owner of a farm and vineyard which had produced its first commercial vintage 20 years earlier, by his father, Johann. Paul (b. 1847) married Johanne Mathilde Schulz in 1871 and together they had seven children, Sophie Hulda (b. 1871), Louise Alma (b. 1874), Julius Philip (b. 1876), Paul Alfred (b. 1878), Gustav Reinhold (b. 1883), Albert Julius (b. 1888) and Otto Rudolph (b. 1890). The Henschke vineyard is one of South Australia's premier wine producers today. The Henschke vineyard website gives 1888 as the founding date of the family brass band, but "Henschke's Brass Band" was active earlier, performing in Truro, South



Australia in May 1885 at the Truro Recreation Park and Rechabites Advance Tent anniversary sports. It was still active in 1905, playing for the consecration of the new bell for the Lutheran church at Parrot Hill

Hewitt Family Band – From the picture it looks like father and three children. They performed in at the Gaiety Theater, Abilene, Kansas in May 1904, having arrived from Oskaloosa, Iowa. In April 1906 the band, with five members (including a “little tot”) were with the Huston-Franklin Orpheum Company when it visited the Davidson Theater, Fort Scott, Kansas. In April 1909 they gave a concert at the People’s Theater, Leavenworth, Kansas, and joined the A.S. Lewis Big Show in a performance at the Post Gymnasium, Leavenworth on 14 May 1909



Hoon Family Brass Band – were from Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania and consisted of James Hoon (b. 1847), daughters Grace Merlynn (b. 1870) and Leola Belle (b. 1873), and son Albert James “Al” (b. 1871) – their mother was Elizabeth Rosalind (née Sterling, b. 1850) who was not part of the band. Their first appearance was when Pat Harris opened his museum on Sixth Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They were engaged for a week, but made such a hit that they were retained for three months. They gave a grand concert in White Hall, New Castle, Pennsylvania in May 1883. In March 1884 it appeared at the Hagar, Campbell & Co.’s Dime Museum, 9th and Arch Streets, Philadelphia – sharing the bill with Eli Bowen “*the legless man*”, Patrick O’Brien, “*the Irish Goliath and his blushing quarter-ton bride*”, the “*strangely spotted Leopard Boy*”, Miss Amelia Hill “*only 12 years old and weighs 320 pounds*”, Donddretti “*the man with the iron jaw*” and others. It performed again at the Sixth Street Museum in Pittsburgh in September and October 1884, as a quartette (again with Eli Bowen); and Forepaugh’s Dime Museum in Philadelphia in November 1884. They were then engaged at Robinson’s Dime Museum, Canal and St Charles Streets, New Orleans, Louisiana, in December 1884; Cole’s Dime Museum, 319 Felix Street, St Joseph, Missouri, in February 1885 (for four weeks) – sharing the bill with Major Littlefinger and Wife, the Wild Girl, and Carter the Thaumaturgist.

In addition to their contracted shows they performed one-off concerts, e.g. at the Masked Ball of the Ladies of the Jewish Congregation, at McLaughlin’s Hall, St Joseph, on 2 March 1885. Moved on to St Louis, Missouri in April 1885, performing at Gregory’s Dime Museum, when the band was seven

in number (sharing the bill this time with the Congress of Fat Women, “*over 25 of the largest women in the country being exhibited*”). Thence to Stanhope & Epstean’s New Dime Museum, Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois, in June and July 1885 (with the Fire King, or Human Salamander, the Alligator Queen, Josie the fat girls and Hager’s waxworks – which included Victor Hugo and Gladstone). The band returned to Robinson’s Dime Museum in New Orleans in November and December 1885 (with P.T. Barnum’s Zulus, Little Flora, “*the child snake charmer*”, and Lizzie Sturgeon – “*who sews, plays the piano, paints, writes and embroiders with her feet*”). Further engagements were Stanhope & Epstean’s, Chicago, June & July 1886; Sackett & Wiggins’ Mammoth Dime Museum, 94 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota, in October and November 1886; Wonderland, Detroit, Michigan, in February to April 1887; with Beckett’s Circus at the Princess Rink, Detroit, in April 1887; Wonderland, Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington D.C., in December 1887. The family toured for ten years overall until the girls finally married, James Hoon setting up a jewellery business in New York, and his son Al taking to the stage with song illustrations and a moving picture machine.

Houchins Cornet Band –

Greenville, West Virginia. Founded around 1897 by ten members of the Houchins family, six sons of Rufus Houchins (b. 1829) - William M. (b. 1857), Edward M. "Ed" (b. 1865), Charles Thompson (b. 1865), [Walter] Ryan (b. 1867), Thomas Clinton "Clint" (b. 1869) and Omer R. (b. 1879); and four sons of his brother Clayton Houchins (b. 1839) - James Fletcher "Jim" (b. 1866), [William] Ezra (b. 1871), Virgil Clayton "Verge" (b. 1873), Henry Butt (b. 1875). Jim Houchins was their leader, and editor of the local newspaper. The band dissolved after several of the members fell victim to matrimony.





Howarth Family Brass Band – led by Mr Benjamin Howarth in Penrith, New South Wales, Australia, in April 1892. Performed for Arbor Day in Penrith in August 1893. It assisted the local Salvation Army band in processing through the streets in the celebrations during the General Election in July 1894, and performed at a concert to honour Captain Flanagan of the local Salvation Army later that month. Benjamin Howarth was born in Tottington, Lancashire in 1848, and emigrated to Australia with his family in 1882. Previous to leaving England he was bandmaster of several brass bands, two of which were prize bands. He was also bandmaster of the Penrith Brass Band in Australia. He had three children with his wife Hannah – Emily Ada (b. 1870), James F.W. (b. 1875) and Harry (b. 1877). Certainly the boys were in his family band, possibly also Emily

Hromas Family Brass Band – Waukomis, Oklahoma. The band was active in 1920 and consisted of Anton J. Tonda Hromas (b. 1872) and his sons Frank B. (b. 1904), William Frank “Bill” (b. 1902), Louis William (b. 1900), Charles Louis “Charley” (b. 1897), Joseph Charles “Joe” (b. 1894) and Anton Joseph (b. 1892). Also pictured are his wife Bozena “Bessie” (née Milacek, b. 1873) and daughter Bessie A. (b. 1908)



Jacobs Family Band, from Illinois, consisting of eight children led by Professor A.F. Jacobs. The picture on the right is assumed to be a few years prior to 1896, when there were only six children in the band. They were engaged at Sival's Wonderland in St Louis, Missouri in February 1894 (with Leah May "the English giantess 8' 3" in height", Gertie Platz "the mastadonic marvel, weighing 811 pounds", the Crowleys "a pair of skeleton midgets" and more...). Then, for the season, from June 1894, at Upper Creve Coeur Lake, St Louis. In January 1895 were engaged at the New Wonderland Museum, Sixth Street, St Louis. May 1896 saw them give a concert in Krug Park, St Joseph, Missouri, when the programme was: march "*University of Pennsylvania*" (Alder), medley "*Overture on Broadway*" (Beyer), cornet solo [Frank Jacobs] "*Three Star Polka*" (Bagley), characterisque "*Peanut Dance*" (Wilson), overture "*Light Cavalry*" (Suppé), "*March of the Marines*" (Brooke) with snare drum solo by little Joe Jacobs (aged 6), tuba solo [Master Bert Jacobs] "*First Air and Varie*", mazurka "*Di Concert*" (Dell'Ora), descriptive "*Indian War Dance*" (Bellstedt), selection "*Tannhauser*" (Wagner).



Another concert, later that month was: march "*Burlington*" (Arthur Pryor), overture "*Martha*" (Flotow), waltz "*Les Sybarites*" (Fahrbach), gavotte "*L'ingenue*" (Arditi), march "*King Cotton*" (Sousa), march "*Senegambia*" (Voelker), overture "*Little Rosebud*" (Boettger), waltz "*Prohekuss*" (Millocker), fantasie "*Albion*" (Baetens), march "*The Sunday Call*" (Thome). Following these concerts the band was subsequently engaged for the entire summer season at Krug Park, sponsored by the St Joseph Railway, Light, Heat and Power Company, playing four evening concerts, at 8pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, and three afternoon concerts at 3pm on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. They appeared at Wonderland in Detroit, Michigan in November 1896, on bill that included Perkins' performing seals, Billy Wells the iron-skulled man, Mabel Milton the long-haired lady, and Grace Courtland the Witch of Wall Street. From December 1896 to March 1897 they appeared at Heck and Avery's Museum in Cincinnati, Ohio, together with Rose Munro – "*the only lady Scotch bag-pipe player in the world*". Harry Bay, Cleveland baseball player in 1908, had been a member of the Jacobs Family Band when he was a youngster – even though not part of the family

Jamison Family Brass Band was active in the late 1890s in Wisconsin



Johanek Family Brass Band was active in the 1910s, in Wisconsin (in and around Stangelville), and consisted of father Stephen/Stephan (b. 1864), mother Anna (b. 1868, née Zachek), and their children who included: Wencil James “Jim” (b. 1900), Mary (b. 1892), Jacob Joseph (b. 1895), Joseph John (b. 1896), Frank (b. 1902, d.1913), Anton Thomas (b. 1905), Charles (b. 1905), Stephan (b. 1904), Edward (b. 1907), Stella (b. 1908) and Emma (b. 1912)

Johns Family Brass Band – Based in Medora, Illinois, in 1884 this consisted of William Frederick Johns (b. 1849, Eb cornet), his wife Ann Lucella (née Simpson, b. 1855, Bb tenor horn), Estella “Stella” (b. 1874, Eb alto horn), Lulu (b. 1876, bass drum and cymbals), Michael Filbert (aged 10, Eb alto horn) and Daniel Siebert (aged 18, Eb bass). The latter two boys were in his employ – Michael “bound” and Daniel apprenticed. They performed at the strawberry and ice cream festival in Medora, Illinois in May 1884; gave a concert at Rice’s Grove, Alton, Illinois, in July 1884. The band was still active in 1887

Jones Family Brass Band -

Orville Milford Jones was born in Sparta, Wisconsin, in 1842, becoming a farmer in De Kalb, Mississippi after the Civil War. He married Ella Louvenia "Venie" Nethery and had 13 children who formed the band. The children were Gertrude S. (b. 1867), Ella Maud (b. 1868), John Milford (b. 1871), Guy Percy (b. 1872), Wallace Walter (b. 1874), Orville Milford jr. (b. 1876), Arthur Benjamin (b. 1878), Thaddeus Milo (b. 1880), Ina Louvenia (b. 1882), Eddie Grey (b. 1883),



Bonnie Elizabeth (b. 1886), Claudius Vivienne (b. 1888) and Herbert B. (b. 1892). The band was hired to accompany the Congress nominee Captain J.H. Jameson on his tour round counties in Mississippi during August and September 1894

Jordan Family Band – Union, Arkansas. Active in the 1910s. In 1912 the band was father Jesse Price Jordan (b. 1861) and children Elijah Noah (b. 1890), Ollie Leonora (b. 1892), Esther Victoria (b. 1894), Daniel Pauplin (b. 1896), Thomas Jefferson (b. 1897), and Georgia Tobethia (b. 1901). Jesse and his wife, Amanda (née Mallett) had six other children – the four eldest were probably married/living away, and the youngest Lulu Iva (b. 1904) and Weleetka (b. 1907) were not in the band



Kimmel Family Band -

Comprised Rev. George Thomas Kimmel (b. 1845), his wife Amelia Jane (b. 1851, née Mahon), and their 12 children: Ruth Naomi (b. 1872), Mark Ira (b. 1874), Lydia Sarah (b. 1876), Simon Oscar (b. 1878), Hope Ever (b. 1879), Paul Virgil (b. 1880), Grace Ann (b. 1882), George Thomas (b. 1884), Rufus Wilford (b. 1886), Loda Belle Queen (b. 1888), Russell John (b. 1890), and Aretas Tahrea (b. 1882). The family travelled all



across the US from Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Florida. The band performed in

Brewton, Alabama in April 1894, various locations in Florida in May 1894, the College Hall, Earlington, Kentucky, and Seebree, Kentucky in May 1896. Rev. George Kimmel died in July 1896 while the band was en route to California.

Kindy Family Brass Band – Active in the 1890s in Fulton, Michigan. The band included Abraham Joseph Kindy and his brother William with some of their children



Kinney's Brass Band – Rhode Island. A family band active in the 1880s or 1890s



Kyes Family Brass Band provided musical entertainment at the George N. Morgan Post and Corps in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in January 1896

Kyme's Family Brass Band, led by George Kyme and his six children, performing in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia in November 1900, and touring Queensland in 1901, Victoria in 1903. One of Professor Kyme's routines was to demonstrate how to teach a brass band in two hours, and "*various methods by which those desirous may become musicians with almost lightning rapidity*". Their programme in May 1903 included brass band music, recitations, mouth organ contest, musical remedy for the drink curse and an ocular demonstration of musical mnemonics. George Kyme was born in Hull, England in 1857 and emigrated to Australia, marrying Alice Marie Gibson. Their children (of whom the first 6 formed the band) were: Ada Margaret (b. 1884), Thomas Howard (b. 1887), Catherine May (b. 1890), William Herbert (b. 1892), Alice Isabel (b. 1893), George Leonard (b. 1893), Bessie Emma (b. 1896), John Robert (b. 1898) and Allan Gladstone (b. 1901)

Lambden Family Band - Tadley, Hampshire, England. Active in the 1910s. The father was Tom Lambden, with wife, five daughters and two sons, playing a variety of brass instruments



Lawrence Family Band was based Middletown, Connecticut. It advertised itself as “America’s Largest Musical Family”. W.J. Lawrence was in charge of the Salvation Army headquarters in Middletown. Together with his wife, eleven children and son-in-law George Wilmer, he created a family band of 14 players, performing for the first time as the full band in 1927 in Middletown. William John Lawrence was born in Redruth, Cornwall, England in 1884, where he learned to play the cornet. He emigrated to the USA in 1911 with his wife and children. The band consisted of William Lawrence



(solo cornet), Mrs Emily Lawrence (Bb bass), George Wilmer (cornet), Dorothy Annetta (b. 1904, baritone), Jessie Rosalind (b. 1905, trombone), Emily L. (b. 1907, cornet), Hazel Loretta (b. 1912, euphonium), Winifred Mable “Winnie” (b. 1914, solo alto horn), William John “Jack” (b. 1915, second cornet), Lela Evelyn (b. 1917, 2nd alto horn), Albert (b. 1919, bass drum), Ethel Mae “Babs” (b. 1920, cymbals), Reginald Lloyd “Reggie” (b. 1922, snare drum) and Lucy Evangeline “Kelly” (b. 1924, triangle). The band was still active in January 1930, performing at the Salvation Scouts Rally in Hartford, Connecticut



(b. 1904, baritone), Jessie Rosalind (b. 1905, trombone), Emily L. (b. 1907, cornet), Hazel Loretta (b. 1912, euphonium), Winifred Mable “Winnie” (b. 1914, solo alto horn), William John “Jack” (b. 1915, second cornet), Lela Evelyn (b. 1917, 2nd alto horn), Albert (b. 1919, bass drum), Ethel Mae “Babs” (b. 1920, cymbals), Reginald Lloyd “Reggie” (b. 1922, snare drum) and Lucy Evangeline “Kelly” (b. 1924, triangle). The band was still active in January 1930, performing at the Salvation Scouts Rally in Hartford, Connecticut



Lehmann Family Brass Band performed as part of Harry Heike's Dime Museum when it visited Vicksburg, Mississippi, in May 1885. The Museum had just arrived from the World's Exposition and also featured Professor Ryland's dog and monkey circus, Thespia the wonderful London \$25,000 half lady illusionist (a living swinging bust), and Mademoiselle Salvina, the feminine Samson

Libbey Family Brass Band, of El Monte, California, consisted of ten members, and provided a program of evangelistic music at the Merkel Assembly of God Church in Abilene, Texas, in August 1946. In October 1973, with eight members in the band, they performed at the Second Christian Gethsemane Church, Detroit, Michigan

Liberty Family Brass Band, of 4 East Park, Rochester, New York, was active in 1883. Edward Liberty, his five daughters and one son formed the band. It performed at the departure of a local well-known citizen on the St Louis Express, at the Central Station in June 1884. In early August 1885, they were engaged by Manager Hickey of the Griswold Opera House, Troy, New York, to play at Pleasant Island for the remainder of the month. It advertised itself as the "*Original*



and Only Liberty Family Brass Band, Ladies' Orchestra, Comedy, Concert and Speciality Company". The band took part in the "Soldiers and Sailors Monument Fund" benefit at the New York State Arsenal in December 1885. May 1886 saw the band playing at the Harvard Rink in Rochester, with Miss Elle playing a trombone solo. Edward Liberty was born around 1846 and

married Charlotte Kines in 1865. Their children were Mary (b. 1866), John (b. 1867), Charlotte (b. 1868), Nellie "Elle" (b. 1870), Evangeline (b. 1871) and Catherine (b. 1872)

Loftness Family Band – Kroschel, Minnesota. Was active in 1925. The band was father Peder Loftness (euphonium) and children Mamertus Gorgonius "Mert" (b. 1905, cornet), Sylverton Jomen (b. 1907, trombone), Alice Violet (b. 1909, tenor horn), and Iris Kordula (b. 1912, cornet)



Maddern Family Brass Band gave their farewell concert at the Townsend Hall in Buffalo, New York on Saturday 17th June, 1854, before leaving on a Grand Concert Tour, having been engaged by Mr S.C. Thayer. The band was composed principally of females

Markee Family Brass Band, Quincy, Illinois. Active there in 1899. Moved to Chillicothe, Missouri in 1907. It was provided with a contract to furnish music at the Fair in Palmyra, Missouri, in September 1941. The band consisted of father Robert C. Markee (b. 1845), his wife, Lucille (b. 1856), and sons Charles (b. 1873), Robert (b. 1875), Benjamin (b. 1877), Roy (b. 1879), Frank (b. 1881), Ralph (b. 1885), Myron (b. 1887), Walter (b. 1889), Earl (b. 1891), William (b. 1893) and Chauncey (b. 1898)



Marsh Family Band - St Louis, Missouri. Was active in the 1900s, consisting of Isaac M. Marsh (b. 1859, cornet), children Junie (b. 1884, cornet), John (b. 1891, cornet), Angelina (b. 1889, trombone), and Isaac's wife Sarah (née Smith, b. 1864, trombone). Performed at the St Louis World's Fair in 1904



Marten Family Brass Band was active in 1904. Performed at the Santa Fe Reading Room, and also the Auditorium in Newton, Kansas in January 1905. Performed; at the Girard Opera House, Kansas in March 1907. They were engaged to play for the skating rink in Galveston, Texas from February to March 1908

Martin Family Band – White, Florida. Was active in the mid-1920s, consisted of Edward Napier Martin (cornet), his wife Annie Bell (nee McCall) (cornet), and children Edward (euphonium), Estile (tenor horn), Anna Marie (tenor horn), Geneva (tuba), also Thelma and Enrico



Martin Family Brass Band, of Quitman, Cleburne County, Arkansas, was composed of father, mother, eight sons and three daughters. C.W. Martin was born in Faulkner county, and his wife and eleven children in White and Cleburne counties, and he started training his children musically in 1905. Initially the band was not so large, but had been “regularly furnished by the stork”! In 1913, the youngest member was a girl of 2 years, Ruth, who could not yet beat the drum and was therefore dubbed the “little mascot”. No one in the family chews tobacco, drinks coffee or any intoxicants, nor smokes cigarettes, and they all belonged to the Missionary Baptist Church. The children wer Guy, 24; Fred, 22; Paul, 20; Roy, 18, Iri, 16, C.W. jnr, 14; Carlton, 11; Flora, 8; Mary, 6; Dan, 4; and Ruth, 2. Two other children had not survived. C.W. Martin travelled as a drummer for 20 years and was widely known among the great army of the Knights of the Grip. He also ran a mercantile establishment in Quitman, Martin's Fair Store, which his family attended to while he was on the road. After the band folded, Fred Martin and his wife conceived the idea of organising boys' bands across the state of Arkansas and, by 1928, 18 bands had been set up with over 1,000 players

McGibeny Family Brass Band

played from the portico of the City Hotel in Salina, Kansas on 27th February 1878. Reportedly they “did very finely”. In March 1880 the family, consisting of father, mother and eight children (aged 17 to 4) were secured for a tour of seven weeks by Mr Mishler of Reading, Pennsylvania, having given nine concerts in that place in October 1879. They gave a concert in the Opera House, Logan, Ohio, in January 1884 (when 11 of a family of 12 performed – and “*the baby cries by note*”). In January 1887



they performed in the Opera House, San Bernadino, California, with press comments: “*the family, 15 in number, deserves fame outside of their artistic attainments, for in these degenerate days fifteen in a family with the parents yet apparently in the prime of life is enough to entitle any family to mention, if not to fame. The music was characterized by artistic work of brilliant quality*”. The concert was: “*Wedding March*” (Mendelssohn) conducted by Master Jamie; song “*What we do*” with Florence, Dockie, Grace, Carl and Jamie; cornet solo “*The Favourite*” (Hartmann) by Mr Frank; “*The Sleigh Ride*” (White); McGibeny Family; string quartette “*Largo*” (Handel) by Viola, Alice, Hugh and Victor; vocal duet “*Where is My Little One*” (Perkins) by Mrs McGibeny and Little Leo; violin solo “*Cavatina*” (Raff), by Miss Viola; vocal quartette “*Wandering Down*” (McGranahan) Allie, Hugh, Victor and Fred; “*Anvil Chorus*” (Verdi) McGibeny Family; cornet duet “*Swiss Boy*” (Bent) Mr & Mrs Frank McGibeny; comic song “*Mother Says I Mustn't*” (Hobson) Master Jamie; violin solo “*2nd Nocturne*” (Ernst) Master Hugh; sketch “*The Quarrel and Reconciliation*” (Greene) Florence and Grace; vocal quartette “*The Bridge of Sighs*” (Thomas Hood); recitation - Miss Allie; “*Grand March, Tannhauser*” (Wagner) McGibeny Brass Band

Meserve Family Cornet Band performed in front of the New Park Theater, Portland, Oregon, in July 1888. There were 15 members of the band

Mettler's Banda Familia was recognised for many years as the champion family band of the county, in Gaffney, South Carolina. It performed, in its own bandwagon drawn by six beautiful spotted Shetland ponies, at the Lawrenceburg Fall Festival, Indiana, in September 1931. Over the years they travelled from coast to coast, from lakes to gulf, with circuses and shows, culminating with the Bantley All American Show playing at the Cherokee County Fair in Gaffney, in September 1937. Mary Mettler played mellophone, little brother Gene was known as the world's youngest animal trainer. There were five children, including George Mettler

Midgeley Family Brass Band, from Hartlepool, Durham, England. Active in 1940 through to 1953, leader H. Midgeley

Mills Family Brass Band, from Cedar Falls, Iowa, consisted of the father, two sons and two daughters



Mitchell's Concert Band - Woodland Sauk, Wisconsin. Active in the 1890s. A family band consisting of father William Henry Mitchell (b. 1855, cornet) and daughters Myrtle Rosabelle (b. 1885, flugel horn), Aurelia Ellen "Orie" (b. 1881, trombone), Effie Abbie (b. 1879, tuba), Bessie Alice (b. 1891, cymbals), Jessie Evans (b. 1889, side drum) and Olive May (b. 1887, bass drum). William was a band leader, whose band took first place at the corn palace in Sioux Falls, and created his family band after his wife Julia died in 1894. They



travelled and gave concerts for about 11 years in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska. Their concerts were quite a novelty given six little girls in uniform. Their numbers consisted of solos and duets, both vocal and instrumental, and elocutionary numbers interspersed with selections of military band music. Some concerts were: Methodist Church, Fox Lake, Wisconsin, in October 1899; a carnival at Lakemont Park, Altoona, Pennsylvania in July 1907



Mollmann Family Band - Hillsboro, Illinois. Active around 1900. Members were father Antone Mollmann (b. 1845) and sons Anton (b. 1877), Henry (b. 1880), Gerhardt (b. 1881), Herman (b. 1883), John (b. 1885), William (b. 1886), Fred (b. 1890), Frank (b. 1891) and Thomas (b. 1893). The family band formed the core of the Hillsboro Cornet Band, which had 22 members by 1918, conducted by John Mollman



Montgomery Family Brass Band – active in Alabama



Morfeys Family Juvenile Brass Band – Ipswich, England.

Consisted of Mrs Sophia Morfeys and her five youngest children. In 1851 the family lived at 58 Whittow Road, Ipswich, and consisted of William Morfeys (b. 1800, bricklayer), his wife Sophia Fides Levett (b. 1800, music teacher), Arthur (b. 1823, bricklayer), Ann (b. 1832, music teacher), Jabez (b. 1839), Ebenezer (b. 1841), Edgar (b. 1842), Frederick (b. 1845) and [Louisa] Maude (b. 1846). Six older siblings had already left home. Their first appearance was at a temperance meeting in Ipswich in October 1851, followed by a concert at Exeter Hall, London for the Temperance League, in March 1852, where the family “*were introduced as the children of a working man, reclaimed by the temperance movement*”. At a similar meeting at the Victoria Theatre, Lambeth in April 1852, the Morfeys Family shared the stage with the Shapcott Family Band – both families having “*sprung from the ranks of the working classes, and pledged adherence to the teetotal cause*”. June 1852 saw them at Hawkstone Hall, Southwark, a group of eight performers, singing, playing the piano and brass instruments - “*the acme of precocious acquirement was a song by the Infant Maude (under 6 years of age)*”. In August 1852 they were at the Surrey Zoological Gardens with the Shapcott Family Band again. The Bent Arms, Lindfield, Sussex hosted their concert (seven players) in September 1852. At the Assembly Rooms, Sandwich, Kent, in November 1852, five little members performed, including Maude.



Further appearances were: Corporation Hall Sheerness, December 1852; Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute, January 1853; Lecture Room, Great Berkhamstead, and Newbury Town Hall, February 1853; Chichester, April 1853; Bent Arms, Lindfield, and Assembly Rooms, Cranbrook, May 1853; Literary Institute, Greenwich, June 1853; heading a temperance procession from Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Surrey Zoological Gardens, September 1853; return to Ipswich, the Lecture Hall, May 1854; Lecture Room, Aylesbury, and Leighton Buzzard, July 1854; temperance demonstration at Exeter Hall, London, August 1854; Bedford Institute and the Public Room, Newport Pagnell (where Maude's "*Daughter of the Regiment*" brought forth rapturous applause, December 1854; Lecture

Hall Bazaar, Norwich, Town Hall, Harwich and Assembly Room, Halesworth, October 1855; Saxmundham and Leiston, November 1855; Assembly Rooms, Norwich, December 1855; Wymondham, January 1856; Corn Exchange, Norwich, February 1856; Town Hall, Luton and Temperance Hall, Dunstable, April 1856; Dunstable Crimean War Peace celebrations, June 1856; Toddington Peace celebrations, with the Toddington Brass Band, the Luton Band of Hope Gala and Pavenham Temperance Fete, July 1856; Huntingdon, October 1856; Good Samaritan Hall, Little Saffron Hill, Clerkenwell, December 1856; Huntingdon Temperance Festival and Chatham Working Men's Institute, January 1857; Ebebezer Chapel, Chatham, April 1857; Sevenoaks Temperance Gala, July 1857; Manor House Tavern, Walworth, Surrey, August 1857; St Helena Gardens, Rotherhithe, September 1857; Winchester Hall, Southwark, for the 3-month season October to December 1857; Holder's Concert Hall, Birmingham, January 1858; Huntingdon Institute, April 1858; Queen's Royal Theatre, Dublin, for two months May-June 1858; New Town Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, including the "*Grand Serenade*" (cornets and trombones) composed for them by E. Melling, December 1858; Mechanics Institute, Hull featuring a cornet solo "*Salut à l'Angleterre*" by Ebenezer Morfey, and later the Victoria Rooms, Newcastle, January 1859; Upper Welsh Harp Hotel Pleasure Grounds, Edgware Road, London, June 1859; Royal Surrey Gardens, August 1859, Knightsbridge Music Hall, November 1863. Sophia Morfey died in 1869.



Sophia

Moss Family Silver Band, from Pontypool, Wales, performed at St George's Hall, Walsall in September 1888 – sharing the bill with Signor Le Garcia and his balancing feats on a rolling ball, Val Miller's ventriloquial entertainment, Signor Bosco's illusions and the Silvani trick bicyclists. Performed a tour in April/May 1889 with Madame Rentz Stanley's American Combination. It was engaged, at considerable expense, by Captain Green to perform at the Pump House Hotel, Llandrindod Wells, during the summer season in 1891. The band consisted of 8 members

Musgrave Family Band
was active in Kansas



Nichols Family Band – Greenwood, Nebraska. Active in 1885, consisting of John Kelly Nichols (b. 1839, cornet), his wife Charlotte (née Leasing, b. 1855, alto horn), and children Rose E. (b. 1871, cornet), Anna (b. 1877, trombone) and Frank Henry (b. 1873, tuba)



Noss Family Band, New Brighton, Pennsylvania. Also known as the “Noss Jollities of Musical Comedy”. They were a family of eight including the parents, Henry Noss (b. 1837) and Charlotte (later Mary after Charlotte died), the children being Flora (b. 1865), Ferdinand (b. 1866), Charlotte (b. 1868), Frank (b. 1870), May (b. 1872), and Bertha (b. 1877). Their first professional local performance was in Homewood, around 1880, where a circus man from Maine saw them in action



one day and offered to manage them on a 16-week tour of Maine. Their career took off from then. They played at the Library Hall in Indiana, Pennsylvania in November 1886; the Ralston Hall, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in February 1887; and the Skating Parlour, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, in March 1887. When the parents dropped out of the act, Ferd, Flora, Lottie, Frank and Mary billed themselves as “The Five Musical Nosses” and made for New York. There they became a vaudeville success. They retired in 1925 with the coming of the “talkies”. They toured the entire United States, Canada, Cuba, and Mexico many times over



Overlands Family Silver Band –
Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, England.
Active in the 1920s



Page Kiddies Band - In 1927, Harvey and Eloise Page family created the Page Kiddies Band with their children, and they travelled throughout the United States, performing on the vaudeville stage in hundreds of small and large town theatres, on radio, and many other venues. The brothers and sisters were: Mildred (b. 1920) on drum, Harvey jnr. (b. 1913) on trombone, Mariner (b. 1919) on alto saxophone, Eloise "Snooky" (b. 1912) on trumpet, Alma (b. 1915) and Ethel (b. 1910) on tenor saxophones



Parrott Family Brass Band of
Neosho, Kansas, consisted of father,
mother and five daughters



Patten Family Brass Band was based in Hubbard, Minnesota and consisted of Denton Simpson Calvin Patten (b. 1861) and his seven children, Squire (b. 1883), Otto H. (b. 1884), Benjamin Liston (b. 1886), Donna Odessa (b. 1889), Jesse James (b. 1891), John Carey (b. 1893) and Mary Serilda (b. 1893). The band was active in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Denton's wife, Samantha, died in 1898



Peak Family's Brass Band – arrived at Fort Benton, Montana, on the steamer “Red Cloud” in July 1880, to provide music for the 4th of July celebrations in the town. It performed at the Academy of Music, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in June 1882.

Pearson Family Brass Band – Bishopwearmouth, Durham, England. Performed at Morpeth in August 1864, and at the Sandhoe Rifle Club competition at West Oakwood, Hexham in September 1864. Consisted of Mr Pearson, his three daughters and Master Pearson

Pfaff Family Cornet Band performed at the 50th anniversary ceremonies of the Ridge Valley Reformed Church, Argus, Pennsylvania, in September 1904. The band included mother Mary Ellen Pfaff, daughter Sallie and sons Lewis, Walter, Calvin, Fred and Horace

Pfeiffer Family Band - Active in the 1880s, based in Iowa, led by George Pfeiffer



Rackett Family Cornet Band, of Quincy, Missouri, consisted of six members. Performed at the Palmyra, Missouri, 4th July celebrations in 1883; the Palmyra Fair in October 1883 - the band charged \$150 for their appearance at the five days of the fair; Hanley's Opera House, Palmyra in January 1884; the Opera House, Palmyra, in February 1915.

Ridgway Family Brass Band – Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. This was active in 1926. Father Ernest Henry Ridgway, his brother (either John or Frederick), sons Cyril (b. 1899), Edward (b. 1904), William (b. 1907), Sydney (b. 1910) and Walter (b. 1911), and daughter Edith (b. 1902). Ernest Ridgway was born in Stanmore, Middlesex in 1876 and emigrated to Australia with his family in 1888.



Roach Family Brass Band were closely associated with the Center Presbyterian Church, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, and performed there many times between July 1913 and January 1916

Robinson Family Band – Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Active around 1915. Consisted of father Edwin Ledger Robinson (b. 1867) and six of his children – Edwin (b. 1891), Edward (b. 1894), Arthur (b. 1897), Alfred (b. 1898), Christopher (b. 1900), and Albert (b. 1902). The family had emigrated from Sittingbourne, Kent in 1910



Rosser Family Cornet Band came from Hutchinson, Minnesota. They provided music at the Good Templars' Convention, in Minneapolis, in June 1894; and performed at the Good Templars' Hall, Princeton, Minnesota, in August 1897 – *“the manner in which the little girls handled their horns pleased the audience”*. The band was active throughout the state of Minnesota, supporting the temperance movement, until January 1901, when they moved to California. George W. Rosser was born in Canada in 1856. His children, who formed the band, were: Watkin (b. 1878), Roscoe (b. 1879), Anabel (b. 1881), Bessie (b. 1883), William (b. 1885), Matt (b. 1892) and Albert (b. 1894)

Rowland Family Band were active in the early 1870s in England and Wales. They were engaged to perform at Aberystwyth during the summer season of 1875, at £10 a week, having spent 13 years in Southport and more recently at Astley's Amphitheatre in London. The band consisted of eight members of the family, as a brass band and a string band

Ruthstrom's Family Brass Band –

Broadcast their music on station WBZ, Springfield, Massachusetts (333.1m) in February, April, July and September 1926. The band played at the Lincoln-Dixie Theater, Chicago, in March 1928; Miller Theater, Woodstock, Illinois, in April 1928, Palace Theater, Wisconsin Rapids, in June 1928; Sioux Falls, South Dakota in August 1928; the WCCO, Minneapolis, radio broadcasts in September 1928; and the Emancipation Day celebrations in Albion, Michigan, in August 1929. They were engaged at the Pantages Theatre, Minneapolis, Minnesota, for a week in June 1928. The members ranged in age



from 2 (the infant drum major) to 21 years. According to the press advertisements: *"Far from their native country, Lapland, John Ruthstrom and his nine sons, comprising the world's only family brass band, are appearing at Pantages theatre this week. John Ruthstrom, a born musician, has tutored all of his sons in music and wherever the family band has appeared – whether in Sweden, Norway, Denmark or in England – exceptional enthusiasm has been manifested. A short time ago the band came to the United States at the urgent solicitation of an eastern Scandinavian society, and many of the country's foremost theaters have utilized the act as a headline attraction. The members have played before the royalty of Europe and the program of numbers includes Scandinavian folks compositions, classical works and the jazziest of American jazz tunes."*

St Clair Family Gospel Band –

from Clymer, Pennsylvania. It was composed of Rev. Robert St Clair, a Methodist minister, his wife Elsie and seven of their eight children (the youngest joining the band in 1932). The band gave numerous concerts in the Pennsylvania and Ohio from 1930 to 1937. In 1931 they spoke and played in 12



different states. The children were Esther (b. 1912), Mildred (b. 1915), Virginia (b. 1916), Helen (b. 1919), Ivagene (b. 1921), Roberta (b. 1924), Robert (b. 1926) and Richard (b. 1930)



St Leon Family Juvenile Brass Band, performed in Gus St Leon's Great Palace Circus, in Mackay Queensland, Australia, in May 1895, and Bourke, New South Wales, in November 1895

Samford Family Band – Center, Texas. This was formed when a Mr. Jones taught members of the band to play a horn. The five Samford brothers learned to play the horn, then bought their own horns. The Samfords formed the Elm Grove Band. They were Duke Wright (b. 1886), John Thomas “Johnnie” (b. 1873), [William] Ownie (b. 1881), Herman Merrill (b. 1874) and Matthew (b. 1883). Later they changed the name to the Center Band and other people were added to the band. The name changed again to the Samford Band. They played throughout Texas at fairs, concerts, political gatherings, etc. Once, they marched in a parade in Houston, competing with other bands

Schmidt Family Brass Band – performed at the Bay Port High School, 1217 Cardinal Lane, Green Bay, Wisconsin, in October 1998

Schreyer Family Band from Niederpoyritz, Dresden, Germany. Active around 1910 to 1915. Consisted of father Oscar Schreyer and his children Elizabeth (alto horn), twins Renata (bass horn) and Kätchen (cornet), Antonia (drums), Edward (bells). Originally the band just had the elder three girls, the other two joining when they got older.



Schurch Family Brass Band

lived in Exline, Spink, South Dakota. The girls in the pictures were Rose (b. 1917), Bertha (b. 1914), Mabel (b. 1912), Pearl (b. 1920) and Ethel (b. 1915). Father was Henry Ernest Schurch (b. 1887), wife Lena (née Nuhring, b. 1897). The boys were Henry (b. 1923), John (b. 1926) and Wesley (b. 1929). The band was active in the late 1930s and 1940s



Sears Family Brass Band provided music at Farmers' Grove, Monroe, Wisconsin, for the 4th July celebrations in 1862

Shapcott Family Brass Band

– Based in Exeter, Devon, England. Living at 26 Holloway Street, Exeter in 1850. John Shapcott (b. 1804) formed the band with his seven sons, and it was active as early as 1837. The band was linked to the



temperance movement which was gaining momentum at this time and was in great demand at temperance meetings. They were still active in 1851, consisting of a brass band and saxhorns. Also known as Shapcott & Sons Brass Band. The band consisted of father John and his sons: George Alford (b. 1827), John Thomas (b. 1827), Robert William (b. 1831), Theophilus (b. 1833), Samuel (b. 1836), Thomas Steele (b. 1837), Frank Henry (b. 1845). Frank performed at 3½ years old, and was accompanied on tour by a nurse. The band visited Farnworth, Lancashire, England, in the mid-1840s, giving a concert in the Queen Street School. This inspired the employees of Barnes' Mill to approach the owner, Thomas Barnes, to start a brass band for the workers, which subsequently was formed in 1848.

Some of the venues for their shows were: Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London; Royal Polytechnic Institution; Alhambra Palace, London; Agricultural Hall, London; Mechanics Hall, Nottingham; Town Hall, Birmingham; Free Trade Hall, Manchester; Music Hall, Edinburgh; Chard Arms Hotel, Chard; Sion House Academy, Jersey; and the Crystal Palace, Sydenham. During the concerts John Shapcott was known to give a lecture regarding the history of the “*Musical Shapcott's*” progress in their musical abilities, attributing their success to having been members of the Temperance Movement, and to having made good use of their hours of leisure “*instead of devoting them to conviviality at the tavern*”.

At a concert in the Public Rooms, George Lane, Bridgewater in October 1849, it was reported that “*the Shapcotts are talented performers on the Sax-horns, and their musical capabilities, represented as the consequence of temperance, exhibit an example of the advantages of the temperance cause, both interesting and pleasing. The father of the youths recounted to us between*

the performance of the pieces mentioned in the programmes, the history of his and their progress in their musical studies, attributing their efficiency to having been members of the temperance movement, and having made good use of their hours of leisure instead of devoting them to conviviality at the tavern. To the temperately inclined, the proficiency of this family in their musical studies would be sufficient to operate as a strong inducement to join the movement, in order to realise the same pleasing success as they have achieved”.

In Bradford in October 1850, we hear that *“the little Frank is a complete musical prodigy. At the age of only four years and five months, his musical abilities are astonishing. Mr. Shapcott’s seven sons are all under the age of 22 years of age; and the entire family are so thoroughly English - so perfectly devoid of the remotest approach to theatrical professionalism - so full of good, genuine, refined, elevated homeliness, that we know of no performers more worthy of the notice of well conducted and religious house-holds.”*

John Shapcott died in 1852. Approximately 10 years later, some of his sons decided to reform the band, namely: Theophilus, Thomas Steele, James, and Robert William Shapcott. This time they adopted the name of the *“Brothers Shapcott”*. They performed vocal and instrumental concerts, playing Neoform Horns, and English Concertinas. They introduced a new drummer protégé - Master Thomas (aged only 3) who was the son of Thomas Steele Shapcott.

Sheets Family Brass Band -

Joseph J. Sheets (b. 1866) created his family band around 1901. He lived in Columbus, Indiana, with his wife Josephine (b. 1867) and children Clara (b. 1889), Alta (b. 1888), Albert (b. 1893), Carl (b. 1894), William (b. 1897), George (b. 1899) and Edward (b. 1902). The original band consisted of himself, his elder four children, and also Gary Davis and Will Gresham. One of their earliest concerts was at City Hall, Columbus, in June 1901. Other engagements included:



Hartsville, August 1902; Perry’s Grove, August 1903; Clifford, April 1904; Taylorsville, May 1904; carnivals in Madison and Vevay, June 1904; joined the Dixie Carnival Company in Shelbyville for the season from June 1904, providing music for the Sipe Dog & Pony Show; Jefferson County Fair, Madison, July 1905. They obtained new uniforms in 1906 – khaki trimmed with purple. Went into vaudeville in March 1907 at the Orpheum Theater, Columbus. Played with the Vaudeville theatre at the Grand Opera House, Marion, Ohio in May 1907. Went on the road with Buckskin Ben’s wild west show during summer 1907. In February 1909 the band returned from a season on a theatrical boat which sailed the Mississippi River to New Orleans. It was still active in 1915

Shepard Family Band - originated in Lawrenceville, New York, toured through New York and New England, settling in Royalton, Vermont. They were active in the late 1880s and 1890s. Little is known about them other than that gleaned from the various promotional postcards or cabinet cards that they produced. These mainly show the family holding brass instruments, but they also performed as string, banjo and vocal ensembles, and may also have performed various sketches. The family consisted of: Mr. J. M. Shepard – First Violin, Bb Bass Horn & Basso Soloist. Mrs. J.M. Shepard – Second Bb Cornet, Organist & Soprano. Miss Kittie Shepard – Cornet Soloist, Leader of Brass Band, Banjo Artist and Ballad Songstress. Miss Laura Shepard, Bb Tenor Horn, Baritone Soloist, Solo Violinist, Banjo and Character Sketch Artist. Miss Lessie Shepard – Eb Alto Horn, Second Violin, Irish & Dutch Specialty Artist. Miss Georgie Shepard – Little Bass Drummer, Bb Tenor Horn. And Master Burtin Shepard – Violin and Triangle, Vocal Artist and Bass Drum.



Shreve Brass Band – Waterford, Indiana. Active around 1910, conductor Frederick Shreve (b. 1877) with many of his family as players



Silver Family Concert Band -

Charles Earl “Bert” Silver was born in 1861 into a show business family. In 1904 he started tent shows and had the first motorized circus in the United States, with four touring cars, four trucks and an advance car. Bert and his entire family played in the Silver Family Concert Band as part of the circus, and also gave concerts. In 1916 the circus had to be disbanded because the tents and trucks were confiscated by the U.S. Government for use in World War I. When the circus disbanded the family settled in Greenville, Michigan. His family consisted of wife Ellen Vescelious (b. 1872) and children Martha Frances (b. 1885), Guy Earl (b. 1887), Laura (b. 1889), Pearl (b. 1891), Ruby (b. 1893), Richard (b. 1895) and Kitty (b. 1897)



Sittrick’s Family Cornet Band performed with Heck & Avery’s Museum in Cincinnati, Ohio, in September 1897, on the bill with the Klondike Sisters, from the Yukon, and Etta Lake, the only living elastic skin lady. The band was Mr Sittrick, his three sons and three daughters

Slade's Family Brass Band – Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England. Active in 1867

Smith Family Cornet Band performed in Osage City, Kansas at the 4th July celebrations in 1879

Smith Family Brass Band – from Tarpon Springs, Florida. Active in 1919

Smith’s Family Brass Band – provided entertainment at a dinner celebrating the anniversaries of Friendly Societies in Accrington, Lancashire, England, held at the Red Lion Inn in August 1852.

The very next day, the band accompanied the brethren of the Independent Order of Foresters in the town, following their dinner at the Black Horse Inn, in a procession towards Baxenden

Stebbings Family Band – Humboldt, Saskatchewan, Canada. Active in the late 1930s. A Salvation Army family. The band consisted of Harry Stebbings (b. 1887, cornet), wife Amy (née Bellamy, b. 1895, cornet), and children Dorothy (b. 1923, tenor horn), Mary (b. 1926, trombone) and unnamed son on euphonium

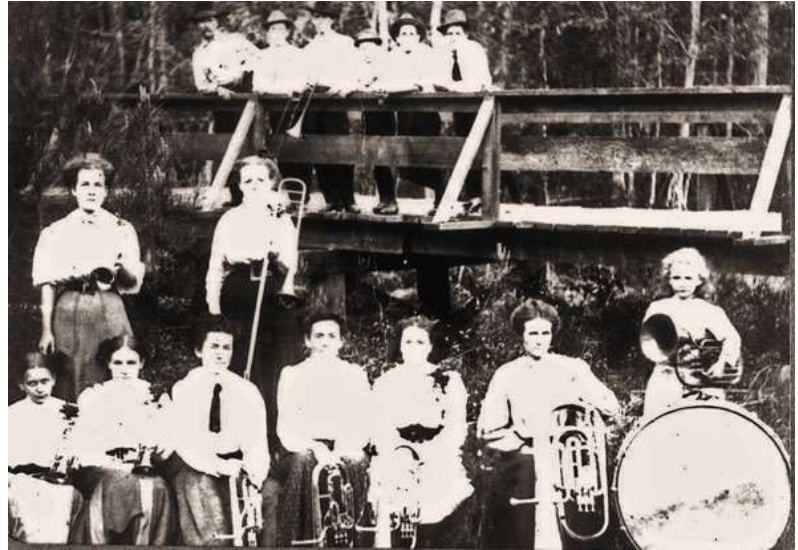


Steiner Family Brass Band from Frankfurt am Main, Germany, consisted of Herr Steiner and his four children



Stevens Family Brass Band – active from September 1883, when they were on the bill of Hagar & Campbell’s Dime Museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, advertised as “*the Greatest Musical Marvels of the Age*”. They continued to perform in and around Philadelphia for the next few years. The band was resident in Reading, Pennsylvania in July 1888, when they took a contract to tour with the Rexford Brothers’ Circus for the season

Stewart Family Band was based in Alma, Bacon County, Georgia



Stewart Family Band lived in Illinois



Streit Family Cornet Band of Vernon, Texas, was active in 1912. Fred Streit (b. 1862) and his seven sons formed the band. His sons were Fred jnr. (b. 1883), George (b. 1886), Carl (b. 1888), John (b. 1890), Albert (b. 1891), Oscar (b. 1893) and Ernest (b. 1901)



Strohl Family Cornet Band was active in 1870. It provided music for the Baptist Sunday School excursion to Crystal Cave, Berks County, Pennsylvania, in July 1883. Professor William H. Strohl (b. 1836), his wife Esther Z. (née Erb, b. 1841) and their children Charles (b. 1868), Emma (b. 1873), George (b. 1864), Rose (b. 1880), Thomas (b. 1858), Rebecca (b. 1866), Michael (b. 1860), Marie “Mamie” (b. 1871), William (b. 1862) and Esther (b. 1875)



William Strohl



Emma Strohl



Rebecca Strohl

Swanson Family Band were based in Kane, Pennsylvania in the 1930s. It consisted of Mr & Mrs Clifford Swanson and their children Melvin, Paul and Isabel. Gave a concert at the Swedish Mission Church in Kane in March 1931, at Warren in April to June 1931, Fagundas in August 1931. The band continued giving concerts around the area through to November 1933.



Taylor's Family Brass Band – Horncastle, Lincolnshire, England. Active in 1891, 1892. Consisted of F. Taylor and his sons

Tenney Family Cornet Band – Consisted of Mr & Mrs Frank Tenney (b. 1848), his wife Penitha (b. 1852) and their five children, Ernest (b. 1868), May (b. 1873), Frank (b. 1875, playing Eb tuba), Edward (b. 1876) and John (b. 1878). It appeared at the Academy of Music, Nunda, New York in August 1883, performed at Silver Lake, near Wyoming, New York for the 4th July celebrations in 1884

Thomas Family Band – Hartford, Connecticut. Consisted of Mr & Mrs Thomas and their five daughters



Thomas Family Band – Seward, Nebraska. Active in the 1890s with father Johann Christop “John” Thomas (b. 1844) and his sons John Jacob (b. 1868), William (b. 1871), George (b. 1873), Charles Carl (b. 1876) and Ferdinand Ehrman (b. 1879), together with his son-in-law W. Schmidt



Tyler's Family Brass Band

– England. Active in 1869. Active through to October 1889. A professional family group of nine juvenile instrumentalists that styled itself "the Smallest Brass Band in the World". In the 1870s and 1880s the family toured Ireland and Britain with a "silver band" and hand-bell act. Advertised as James Tyler's Juvenile Brass Band in 1874. A concert in Aberystwyth in June 1874 was: March "The Guards", Overture "The Queen's Messenger", Chorus "Belle Brandon", Operatic selection "Sonnambula", Selection "Lowly we bend before Thee", Chorus "God bless our Sailor Prince", Valse "Soldaten Lied", Finale "National Anthem". The toured in Devon and Cornwall in 1886, playing in Plymouth and Redruth in August 1886. In March 1890 H. Tyler (Tyler's Silver Band) was advertising for engagements for a trombone player (address 12 Marsden Street, West Derby Road, Liverpool). In July 1910 "The Tylers - Eminent Saxophonists of the Tyler's Silver Band fame" were seeking engagements. Victoria Wyatt (d. February 1943 at Burnham-on-Crouch) was the daughter of Joseph Tyler and a drummer and vocalist in the family band



Utter Family Brass Band – from Rocky Comfort, Missouri. The band were all members of the family of David Jefferson Utter. It was also known as the Nubia Brass Band



Vandenberg Family Band – Freedom, Wisconsin. Active in 1920, consisting of brothers Gilbert (b. 1871), Lambert (b. 1864), Gerhardt (b. 1872), Cornelius (b. 1867) and Theodore Vandenberg (b. 1876)



Wagner Family Band – Winedale, Texas. Active around 1890. Leader Joseph George Wagner



Walker Family Brass Band were from Hastings, Iowa, and consisted of Mr Walker, his wife, two daughters and three sons. They appeared providing music for an excursion on the steamer Hattie May, around Lake Minnetonka, near Minneapolis, Minnesota, and also on stage with The Hawkeye Man (R.J. Burdette) – the “first living humourist”, in August 1878. In September 1879 they accompanied Scrap Iron Bill and his Iowa Excursion on tour, performing in Faribault, Minnesota en route to St Paul. August 1881 saw them giving a series of concerts at the Lake Park, St Louis, Minnesota. In September 1881 they accompanied an excursion on the Spread Eagle up the Mississippi River from Alton, Illinois to Grafton and back

Walker Family Brass Band – active in Launceston, Tasmania, in January 1884 through to December 1886

Walton Family Band - Salt Lake City, Utah. Active in the 1890s. Consisted of father Wesley Kimball Walton (b. 1850) and his ten sons – Donal (b. 1885), Thaddeus (b. 1887), Lester (b. 1878), Paul (b. 1889), Reuel (b. 1880), Charles (b. 1877), Reuben Dyke (b. 1882), Simpson (b. 1890), Mark (b. 1895) and Arthur (b. 1898)



Webb Family Brass Band – England. Active in 1879. Consisted of the father and five boys. Performing in Woolwich, Kent in 1879, and Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset in 1884. Possibly a professional touring family band, or perhaps resident in those areas at those times

Weber Family Brass Band – active in Atchison, Kansas in December 1879; Ottawa, Kansas in January 1880; Jay’s Opera House, Empora, Kansas in March 1882; Union Hotel, New Ulm, Minnesota in September 1883

West Family Band – Hancock, Georgia. Active in the late 1870s. Consisting of Thomas James West (b. 1821, cornet) and members of his family: sons John Richard West (b. 1846, tuba), Thomas Sterling West (b. 1848, horn), Julian West (b. 1850, euphonium), and Charles Lane West (b. 1851, drums), with Oscar Cone (b. 1849, horn), Tom Daver Wright (euphonium),



Whitaker Family Band – based in the USA in 1911



Whiteman Family Brass Band – Middletown, Ohio. Consisted of Mr Whiteman and his three children



Williams Family Band – Athens, Alabama. Active in 1918, members were: William Anderson Williams (b. 1874, cornet), and his children Hasse Flournoy (b. 1906, cornet), James Mac (b. 1898, trombone), William Luke (b. 1902, tenor horn), Claude Lee (b. 1900, tuba), Lota Kathryn (b. 1915, piccolo), Jesse Jonas “Jake” (b. 1908, side drum), Effie Earline (b. 1910, cornet) and Clayborn Paisley (b. 1904, bass drum). The band were approved, by an act of Congress, to go as a group and entertain the troops in WWI. The two oldest boys, Mac and Lee, were to be drafted. William went to the local board and volunteered them all if they were allowed to stay together and entertain the troops. The band was ready, but the War ended before they were called



Winkelman Family Band – Penn, Iowa. Active in 1915, consisting of father Henry Peter Winkelman (tuba) and sons Early Henry (b. 1899, trombone), Lester (b. 1901, cornet), Royce (b. 1903), and Paul (b. 1912, drums)



Wirth Family Brass Band consisted of Johannes Wirth (b. 1835) and his sons, John (b. 1858), Harry (b. 1860), George (b. 1867) and Philip (b. 1864), living in Darling Downs, Queensland, Australia. In 1870 they joined Ashton's Circus for a while. The band eked out a living in the 1870s by playing at processions, parties and balls. Between 1876 and 1878 they were working as musicians based in Tamworth, where there was a railway construction camp. John Ridge engaged the Wirths as bandsmen in 1879 and 1880, for his Royal Tycoon Circus. Ridge put the show into wagons, touring western New South Wales and southern Queensland. After Johannes died in 1880, his sons carried on with band performances. John was an outstanding cornet player, Harry played the bass, George the tenor horn; Philip played trombone but could play any brass instrument well. They extended their capabilities beyond music into circus performances also



Wolf Family Cornet Band was led by Uriah Wolf (b. 1859) with his two sons, Irvin (b. 1888) and Elwood (b. 1892), and his two daughters, Edna (b. 1886) and Verna (b. 1890). They lived in Jackson, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, and played at the 60th birthday celebrations of Mrs Theodore F. Krauss in Allentown, in April 1902

Woodward Davis Family Band, Mineral Wells, Texas.

Led by William Walker Woodward (b. 1879) and his sister, Mrs E.L. Davies (Minnie, b. 1876), with their ten children, aged from 5 to 16 years in the picture on the right taken in 1917. They were known to be active around 1914-1918. William had five children with his wife, Maude Lesley Campbell, who were: Guy (b. 1900), Lois (b. 1909), Les (b. 1912), William Dale (b. 1913) and another. Minnie had five children through her marriage to Edward Lee Davies: Lawrence (b. 1900), Vaughan (b. 1902), Dorothy (b. 1906), Ellen (b. 1910) and Edward jnr. (b. 1910). William Woodward ran a jewellery store in Mineral Wells, and Minnie was a secretary at the Retail Merchants' Association. The band also served as the "Gem Theater Band" as in the next photo. They both also ran the local Junior Rotary Band in Mineral Wells, pictured, below, in 1924, which their children also played in. In 1924 Guy Woodward was principal cornet of the Rotary band and conducted two other bands. Dorothy played cornet in the band while teaching violin and piano.



William Woodward ran a jewellery store in Mineral Wells, and Minnie was a secretary at the Retail Merchants' Association. The band also served as the "Gem Theater Band" as in the next photo. They both also ran the local Junior Rotary Band in Mineral Wells, pictured, below, in 1924, which their children also played in. In 1924 Guy Woodward was principal cornet of the Rotary band and conducted two other bands. Dorothy played cornet in the band while teaching violin and piano.





An unknown family brass band was active in Marathon, New York, in October 1906. It consisted of the father on bass horn, mother on cornet and five children on other brass instruments

Unknown family brass band from Eau Claire, Wisconsin



Unknown family brass band from Hartland, Wisconsin



Unknown family brass band from Hurley, Wisconsin



Unknown family brass band from Mount Pleasant, Michigan



Unknown family brass band from Stratford, East London, England



Unknown family brass band from the USA, consisting of five girls – Celia, Stella, Mary, Teddy and Agnes



Unknown family brass band from Arkansas



Unknown family brass band - Pentwater, Michigan



Unknown family brass band
from Oregon



Unknown Salvation Army
family brass band from
England



Finally, here are a few more unknown family bands from the USA





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Further information

Noss Family:

<http://www.bchistory.org/beavercounty/BeaverCountyTopical/arts.crafts.culture/NossFamilyBand/Nossindex/NossIndex.html>

Pictures of some the bands above, and other unknown family bands, can be found in the **IBEW Vintage Brass Band Pictures** pages – see: <http://www.ibew.co.uk/vbbp-uk.htm>

Gavin Holman – October 2017

<http://gavinholman.academia.edu>

<http://www.ibew.co.uk>

NEW STUFF TO ADD

Maby Family

Active in Bridgwater, Somerset in 1859. Consisted of the father, two girls and three boys, aged from 7 to 15. Performed operatic selections from Verdi, Meyerbeer and Bellini. Their rendering of *L'Etoile du Nord* was particularly acclaimed. Master Henry Maby played cornet, Master Edward clarinet, Miss Kate saxhorn.