

1 Introduction

This dissertation seeks to shed light on the emergence of brass bands in a specific locality: Leigh and surrounding townships. The study will examine the era from 1850 to 1900 to show the development of brass bands in that locality. This era saw the first national events and the greatest increase in formation of brass bands caused by factors detailed below. By investigating a concentrated area, it is possible to identify several factors in this national phenomenon otherwise obscured in a broader study: the societal groupings of the band members, notable figures in the administration and musical development of the bands, and important information regarding the music performed by the ensembles. A careful analysis of the dates of formation of individual brass bands also gives an insight in to the growing momentum of growth of bands. This level of detail demonstrates the infrastructure necessary for a music ensemble such as a brass band to flourish. There are no reliable figures for the number of bands that formed during the period under review and an indication of the growth in this small district will give a better understanding of the acceleration in numbers through this period. (Herbert 1991 p 58).

The emergence of brass bands is intrinsically concerned with questions of class and identity. A study of this detail gives an insight into the way the working-class populace organised themselves and a clear chronological timespan showing the development of brass bands in the specific locality under consideration. The results of the dissertation will provide a clear view of the growth of a national musical movement expressed in one small district of Great Britain, in a way not previously undertaken.

The bands that were founded were comprised of working-class members (Taylor 2011 p 25). This class were at the lowest end of the social spectrum and did not possess the advantage of wealth or education: increasing industrialisation made the chances of an education less likely for children during the early part of the nineteenth century than previously (Elbourne 1980 p 53). The parents of working-class children often saw little point in schooling their children when they were sent out to work as soon as they were able to perform work (Hopkins 1979 p 72). The formation of a brass band required funds for the purchase of instruments, music, uniforms, and provide tuition. The casual historian would be inclined to attribute the beginning of the brass bands through beneficent industrial patronage. There were, without doubt, brass bands started in this manner; this is not typical of the beginnings of many brass bands.

It is no coincidence that the brass band movement started to gather pace in the middle of the nineteenth century; the prevailing external factors played a large part in creating the circumstances favourable to a musical identity from within the working class to emerge. The Industrial Revolution witnessed changes in manufacture, transport, and communications and these changes impacted on all aspects of society. (O’Gorman 2010 p 43). The improvements in manufacture meant workers changed their place of work, concentrating them around new centres of employment, and led to enormous growth in the urban population (Hopkins 1979 p 17). Developments in technology helped in design and production of instruments that were being demanded in increasing numbers. This stimulated the growth of manufacturers and retailers of musical instruments (Russell 1987 p 141). The spread of news and sharing of ideas was influenced by the speed of communications made possible by the extension of a national railway network and the harnessing of steam

power to mass produce newspapers and other printed information such as sheet music (O’Gorman 2010 p 47). The way these factors combined in the development of the brass band medium will be outlined in the dissertation.

An examination of local newspaper reports will assist detail the exact number of bands formed during the period under review. One of the gaps in brass band research is the lack of definitive numbers of brass bands. It is impossible to give exact figures of brass bands at any point in their history since no central registry of all brass bands has ever existed. This dissertation will reveal every brass band in the geographical area under consideration by analysis of newspaper reports. These reports contain a wealth of detail in the reporting of their activities. It is possible to chart a chronological growth in overall numbers. It is also possible to identify key figures involved with the bands and investigate their social background to establish their status; one of the key tenets of this dissertation is that the brass band movement was comprised wholly of working-class participants.

2 Definition of terms

Working class

The term “working class” is a Victorian term used to denote those people who were part of the “lower classes”. This term denotes an identity and consciousness of all workers measured against the interests of other classes. It is seen as an expression of forms of political and industrial organisation that this class of workers belonged to (Thompson 1963 p 194). For the purposes of this dissertation working class is defined as being involved in manual work, living in rented or employer-owned accommodation and working for an employer belonging to a social class above their own strata. "What distinguished the working classes from the other classes was that they were usually manual workers, ranging from the highly skilled and semi-skilled to the completely unskilled labourers" (Hopkins, 1979, p 2).

It is not just employment that defines class; class can also be defined by social standing, regularity of income, and housing. A distinguishing factor when considering issues of class is the neighbourhood the “working classes” habited. The working-class lived in pockets of housing near to centres of employment in both rural and urban concentrations, although the concentrations were not so intense in rural areas as those in urban areas. These areas were populated by people sharing the same type of employment. Housing is an indicator of an individual's social standing and census details reflect the class of persons an individual lived alongside with.

The half century from 1801 to 1851 saw a doubling of the national population from ten and a half million to twenty-one million (Hopkins 1979 p 17). It also witnessed a move into towns and cities and the average workmen became a townsman. This was not necessarily a result of long-distance migration, but a

steady short distance migration from the surrounding countryside in to the developing towns and cities. The attraction was the development of industrial jobs, aided by depressions in agriculture. (Hopkins, 1979 p 17) Discussing migration to towns, Elbourne notes that “Persons born in the same place, even though unrelated, appear to have deliberately clustered together in the same section town” (Elbourne 1980 p 21). This reinforces the idea that people of the same class would congregate together.

In Victorian times the affluent and wealthy lived away from the crowded confines of towns and cities if possible, moving to the suburbs and leaving the working classes in their own surrounds. This was noted by Briggs in a quote from Rev R. Parkinson discussing Manchester “There is no town in the world where the distance between the rich and poor is so great, or the barrier between them so difficult to be crossed” (Briggs 1963 p.114). The quote is discussing more than just geographical location: but nevertheless, was made in acknowledgement of the flight of the affluent to the suburbs.

The writer McLeod defines working class as a broad class, including craftsmen, miners, factory operatives and unskilled workers, separated by a difference in incomes, but “united by a sense of common identity against the dominant class”-the middle class (McLeod 1997 p 24). This statement emphasizes the notion that there is no one characteristic exhibited by a member of the working class; it is a broad group defined as much by its own perception of being a member of the lower class set apart from the employers, having to work for their sustenance.

Instrumental art music

Instrumental art music does not have a precise definition, much in the same way as 'working class' is difficult to precisely define. Instrumental art music is generally understood to be the transfer of music represented on a written music score. This enables that composed music to remain in that fixed form as an unchanged work. This stands in contrast with traditional folk music that is transferred by word of mouth, not by print, and is of course subject to variation and change as the performer sees fit. Cecil Sharp contrasted art music with that of folk music by stating art music was committed to paper and is "for ever fixed in one unalterable form" (Sharp, 1954 pp 19-20). However, as Elbourne notes, Sharp "did not foresee the development of aleatoric music" (Elbourne, 1980 p 92). Nevertheless, the communication of music sources by printed medium is a key constituent of the development of art music and is a feature in the development of brass bands during the period under consideration. Published music enabled the same music to be played on a national level at national contest held at Crystal Palace. Bands were all compelled to play the same piece of music to be judged on that performance. This was made possible because the music was printed and circulated to all bands prior to performance. Thus, all bands played the exact same parts as their fellow competitors; there were no geographic variations.

Taylor has shown that the most prominent genre of music performed by brass bands in the period 1860 –1930 is that of arrangements of operas by 'art music' composers. (Taylor 2011 p 62). Herbert has also noted that until the early twentieth century "the brass band repertoire primarily contained transcriptions of art music". (Herbert 1991 p 2). However, these conclusions do not take account of the many performances by brass bands when they played popular dance music for the

entertainment of revellers. Newspaper reports of the era contain accounts of brass bands playing for dancing when no programmatic detail was recorded. The brass bands would have had performed popular dances during the events, but no record was kept of what pieces were played. The emerging brass band music publishing companies circulated many of the dance forms that were in vogue from the middle of the nineteenth century as shown by Taylor in his listing compiled from specialist brass music publishers. (Taylor 2011 Appendix 1).

3 Industrial revolution

Industrial change

Industrialisation had been gathering pace since the eighteenth century, processes to improve production had led to a growth in factories; replacing the home as the centre of work for many families. This growth was powered by harnessing the efficiency of steam power. However, the industrial revolution was not just concerned with manufacture of goods: transport and communications were component parts of the change in new ways of work. The first public railway was opened in 1825 (Alvarez, Bogart, Shaw-Taylor, & You, 2017 p 9), the beginnings of a network of railways which eventually became a national network within the space of twenty years. Improvements in communications helped to spread ideas and technologies in a way that had not been previously possible (Lee 1970 p 52). The telegraph system led to public networks being established by 1839 and the mass manufacture of newspapers and other printed medium meant news and ideas could be transported around the country faster than previously.

The Industrial Revolution saw areas gradually evolve from a predominantly rural community to an industrialised urbanised society. Populations concentrated around centres of industry where employment was available. It has been suggested that towns with a population of between 3,000 to 15,000 were more likely to have brass bands form (Russell 1987 p 86). The production methods employed in industry saw changes to the lives of the workers thus employed. One of the features of expansion of industry was the increasing regulation and standardisation of lives. This work-discipline was a new experience for factory workers, Hopkins has summarised this as intensive labour within set hours, rather than completion of tasks by a given date. Hopkins cites the removal of personal contact with the employer due to the

increased size of the working place. The worker was a small cog in a large machine and the only contact with authority was likely to be that with an overseer. This reinforces the perception of the working-class being a separate class from that of the employer (Hopkins 1979 p 14).

Technology

The improving methods of production were manifested in numbers of instruments produced. It was possible to make brass instruments in an efficient manner without the need for craft methods used for stringed and woodwind instruments. Wooden instruments were still being built by skilled instrument makers whereas brass instruments could be manufactured at a greater rate of production. This meant that increased demand could be met more easily than instruments made by traditional hand-crafted methods. These brass instruments were simpler to play. It was possible for a player to grasp the mechanics of a valve instrument and transfer those skills to other larger or smaller brass instrument (Herbert 1991 p 19).

Social change

The change wrought by the Industrial revolution, although gradual, changed the way the working class lived. Workers migrated to housing near to factories and pits, concentrating the populace in urban environments rather than the more thinly spread rural concentrations in agricultural areas. These workers had to conform to the strictures of standard working hours. Whereas in cottage industries, the workers were able to work hours that suited themselves, they were now regulated by the hours demanded by employers (Hopkins 1979 p 15). This also had the effect that many workers had a small amount of idle time as fellow workers in their locality at the same time (Russell 1987 p 159).

4 Growth of brass bands

Numbers

The growth of the brass band movement was an evolutionary process; the musical ensemble that became the established brass band grew out of an ad hoc collection of musical instruments. Some brass bands can trace their history back to the early years of the nineteenth century, but there was no established instrumentation or regular constituent personnel for a brass band in the early years of brass band development.



Photograph courtesy of Wigan Archive Services

The above picture is believed to be that of an early brass band from the Leigh and District area. As is often the case when looking back over one hundred and fifty years, the documentary evidence to date and identify the band is not available. It is apparent that this ensemble is composed of mostly brass players. There are two clarinet players, second row, second and fourth from the left. Clarinets were often used in otherwise all brass groups throughout the nineteenth century. (Herbert 1991

Appendix 1 p 169). There is a mixture of uniforms, most players are dressed the same, but there are two players with ordinary civilian clothes and one further cornet player in a more elaborate uniform. The circular bass instrument second from the right on the front row was an instrument described by Bevan as tubas made in an unusual shape”, otherwise known as Helicons (Bevan 1978, p 190). These instruments are thought to have been invented in Russia in 1848. The shape helped in the carriage of the instrument whilst marching and was particularly suitable for bands that were expected to march. Helicons were superseded by the tuba as the standard bass instruments. The heraldic device painted on to the bass drum is not entirely visible but appears to suggest a military connection and this could well be an early Rifle Volunteer Brass Band. This picture is a typical example of a brass band before standardisation of instrumentation and the establishment of a typical brass band formation.

National profile

The year 1860 appears as a watershed in the history of brass bands. It was in this year that the Crystal Palace Contest was held, organised by the entrepreneurial Enderby Jackson. This was the first contest to demonstrate the national reach of this musical medium. Bands travelled to the contest on special excursion trains arranged by Jackson, the cost of which were discounted and incorporated in to the contest fee. By this means it was possible to bring brass bands together from all regions of England and Wales (Herbert & Myers 2010 p 578)

Occupational lists

Enderby Jackson organised his contests on a military scale and the registration forms required the prospective bands to detail all contests won in the last two years: this being a criterion for eligibility to enter the lower strata contest.

Another requirement was to list all the player occupations on the form to prove that they were of an amateur status (Herbert & Myers 2010 p 580). The occupation list also evidences that the players were largely, if not wholly, of working-class origin. In his book *The Brass Band Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Herbert asserts that "one of the achievements of the brass band movement is that it created the first mass involvement of working-class people in instrumental art music, not just in Britain, but possibly anywhere". (Herbert 1991 p 7).

5 Geography and population growth in area

Civic delineation

This dissertation is concerned with the growth of brass bands in an area described as Leigh and District. Leigh is currently a town in the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan, Greater Manchester, England. However, Leigh was formerly a collection of six townships encompassing Astley, Atherton, Bedford, Westleigh, Pennington, and Lowton. "Leigh was defined as an ecclesiastical Leigh, carefully defined, but Leigh itself had no civic definition" (Lunn, 1959). In 1875 the townships of Pennington, Bedford, and Westleigh amalgamated to form the civic delineation of Leigh, which became a Municipal Borough in 1899. Astley, Lowton, Culcheth, and Kenyon formed the Leigh Rural District. Atherton and Tyldesley have also been included in the area under research due to their connection with Leigh brass bands and the crossover in personnel between the districts.

Transport

Leigh was served for transport by a turnpike road and an extension to the Bridgewater Canal from Worsley to link up with the Wigan branch of the Leeds-Liverpool canal, being completed in 1795. The Bolton and Leigh railway was constructed by the end of March 1830, running from Bolton and terminating at the north side of the canal. Permission to cross the canal had been denied through the expedient of inserting clauses in the Bill before Parliament. Railways were in their infancy and the canal companies were very influential. The railway from the south side of the canal was subsequently opened on 3 January 1831 having been built by the Kenyon and Leigh Junction Railway Company: opposition to the railway crossing the canal had relented by this time and it was able to link both lines. By the middle of

the nineteenth century Leigh and District was well served by a variety of transport links. The importance of transport links has been discussed above, these links were important in Victorian urban development (Briggs 1963 p 14).

Population

The population of all townships in 1801 was 17,557 and by 1841 it had risen to 28,552. (Newall 1965 p 2) Although this may seem a large increase it was less than the overall increase in England and Wales during that period. This suggests that the area was not attracting any sizeable amount of immigration during this time. The districts had differing means of employment, Pennington had chiefly been engaged in the production of linen and silk weaving prior to 1841, whereas Westleigh owed its employment largely due to coal. (Lunn 1959 pp 1, 96). In the period 1851 to 1861 the population of Leigh and district rose from 32,734 to 37,700, witness to the increasing industrialisation of the general area. All the townships in the area under consideration experienced large increases in population during the years 1850-1900. The overall percentage increases for each of the townships was greater than percentage increases in England and Wales during the same period; suggesting these areas were attracting population in the form of immigration. The township of Westleigh attracted population due to the presence of pits in the area, with a resultant increase in habitation. Industrialisation in townships such as Bedford, Tyldesley and Atherton also attracted population and that is still evident in the "grid iron" development of housing around the factories concerned in manufacturing. (Newall 1965 pp 11-15).

6 Emergence of brass bands in area

Newspaper accounts have been used to help identify and date the formation of bands. The reports from local newspapers of the time were often very detailed and contain references to names and describe the events that bands were engaged to perform at.

The first mention of a brass band in the area under consideration is that of the St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church Brass Band. The band is named as the "New Brass Band" and the announcement is contained in an advertisement for a children's Christmas at the church entertainment. (Leigh Chronicle and Advertiser dated 24 December 1858).

**ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS,
BEDFORD.**

THE Children of the above Schools will have the pleasure of going through their Annual RECITATIONS, &c., on Christmas-day, Sunday the 26th, New-Year's-day, Sunday the 2nd of January, and Thursday the 6th, or the following Sunday, according to future announcement.

No means have been spared to render the Recitations, &c., as attractive as circumstances will allow at so joyous a season, and it is hoped that the children's meritorious exertions will not go unrewarded.

Amongst other select pieces may be mentioned the beautifully affecting sacred drama styled "The Chinese Mother," "Flowers for the Altar," Miss Edgeworth's celebrated "Rose, Shamrock and Thistle," "Maurice the Woodcutter," by Somerset; "Your life's in danger," "Fortune's frolic," &c., &c., with all objectionable matter erased.

It will be evident to every one that as it would be impossible to do all this, even in an humble way, without expense, persons attending are respectfully expected to contribute, as last year, for accommodation afforded:

Reserved Seats, 1s. ; other Seats, 6d. and 3d.

St. Joseph's New Brass Band will be in attendance
Doors open at Six o'clock. Recitations at Seven.

Image courtesy of Wigan and Leigh Archive Service

St. Joseph's Brass Band were active in church and civic events throughout the period 1860 to 1900, the band was the first to organise a brass band contests in

Leigh. The picture below is an undated picture of St. Joseph's Brass Band at the rear of the church.



Image from author's private collection

The picture shows a mature band with a full complement of players and instruments. The instruments are fitted with lyres; suggesting the band has just played, or is about to play, at an event-probably a march or procession. The band has four basses, three trombones, two baritones, two euphoniums, three tenor horns, six cornets, and interestingly, two flugels. Often two or more flugels were used by brass bands in the latter part of the nineteenth century but this never became standard practice. (Newsome 1999 p 247) The practise of using more than one flugel fell away as the instrumentation was standardised by the music printing industry and contest regulation. The trombones are not slide trombones but utilise valves. The use of valve trombones was prohibited at the Belle Vue (Manchester) Contest in 1873 following a player winning both a trombone and euphonium instrumental prize playing a valve trombone as well as euphonium. (Herbert 1991 p 107). The fact that a cornet player is separated from the rest of the cornet section indicates a prominent

position and it is likely to be the conductor. Bands were often conducted or led by a player unless engaged in competition. Fred Unsworth first conducted St. Joseph's Brass Band in 1883 and it is likely that it is Fred Unsworth in the picture (Leigh Chronicle 8 June 1883).



Late FR. COWELL, S.J.

The picture also features the Presbytery which was built in 1882. Pictures of the priests who had served at St. Josephs were published in a handbook for the grand bazaar held in May 1900 to raise money for the building of a new infants' school. The following picture shows the priest in the band picture to be Father Cowell who served at the church from 1884 before his death in service in 1897. He became the head priest in 1886. The above picture of St. Joseph's band is likely to have

been taken between 1886 and 1897.

Image taken from "St. Joseph's Leigh Souvenir Handbook of the Grand Bazaar. (author's private collection).

A meeting of silk weavers was convened at Leigh Town Hall on 27 December 1859 when Lowton Brass Band played at the beginning of the meeting. The band are referred to twice in the report: once as the Lowton Brass Band and again as the Lowton Common Band (Leigh Chronicle 3 December 1859). A Temperance Meeting was held at the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Lane Head, Lowton when the Lane Head Temperance Brass Band "graced the meeting with a tune" (Leigh Chronicle 4 February 1860). Lowton was only a small district and it seems possible these bands may be one and the same. However, an account of a procession in the Lowton

District mentions both bands individually and means there were two brass bands in this small locality in the same decade (Leigh Chronicle 29 June 1861). Little is known about the Lane Head Temperance band at this time, but the Lowton Brass Band were still active in the 1960s.

In 1859 the Rifle Volunteer Movement started in response to a perceived threat of invasion from France. This was a national movement, each County raising militia to defend the country and naming the various units after the County in which they were founded. Leigh and Atherton both founded units which were raised under the title of the Lancashire Rifle Volunteer (LRV) Corp. There was considerable excitement over these units in the newspapers and their activities were reported on in detail. One of the features was the fact that most of these units throughout the country decided to raise bands. Having the services of a band meant that the drill manoeuvres were helped, and enlistment was encouraged by attracting crowds to watch the units marching drawn to the sound of the band. "Unfortunately the majority of these Manchester Rifle Volunteer units took little care of their records and as a result their history is sparse." (Bonner 2008 pp 216-235). The only references available are newspapers reports due to absence of records kept by these units.

Atherton appear to have had the personnel to recruit a band from the beginning of the Corps: an account in the Leigh Chronicle dated 2 June 1860 records both the Leigh and Atherton LRV Corps marching to Leigh Parish Church, led by the band of the Atherton LRV. It is of note that all the Rifle Volunteer Movement bands appear to have been brass bands, unlike the existing military bands of the era which were, and largely still are, wind bands. This is evidenced by the fact that Rifle Volunteer bands entered many of the brass band contests from the eighteen sixties onwards. The Atherton LRV detachment held a dinner to mark the

formal notification of the Queen's acceptance of their service in March 1860. Music was provided by the Atherton Band and some glees were performed by Sergeant James Croft and others. (Leigh Chronicle 24 March 1860)

Both Atherton and Leigh LRV Corps paraded on 9 June 1860 at an estate owned by a landowner in Atherton to be presented with silver bugles donated by local dignitaries. The Atherton Band led the Atherton LRV to the appointed area playing "The Vauxhall Quick Step", followed by the Tyldesley Brass Band leading the Leigh LRV playing the "Blue Bell Quick Step" (Leigh Chronicle 9 June 1860). Later that month a meeting was held at Leigh Town Hall to discuss the formation of a brass band for the Leigh LRV. It was decided that this proposal should be acted upon and all members should solicit subscriptions from friends; each member was issued with a card and the total required was seventy pounds to start the band (Leigh Chronicle 23 June 1860).

The Leigh Chronicle reported that the Tyldesley Band had offered their services to the Leigh LRV Corps: "on condition that the Corp find the band a bandmaster, and if enough funds are collected, uniform the band the same as the other members". (Leigh Chronicle 30 June 1860). The formation of the Atherton band is not detailed: the Tyldesley Brass Band had not been recorded in newspapers previously, although there are many accounts of a Quadrille Band playing for dances in Tyldesley before 1860. It is possible the Quadrille Band became a brass band: an incentive may be the pay for their service with the LRV Corps.

The Leigh Chronicle of 19 January 1860 describes an inaugural tea party to celebrate the opening of a Mechanics Institute at Bury Lane, Glazebury. The

Mechanics Institute had been supported by the owner of a local corn mill, who provided funds for the purchase of books for the library. The Bury Lane Brass Band, as it was named, played for dancing afterwards. This band later became known as the Glazebury Brass Band. However, it was often referred to as the “Gill and Hartley’s Mill Band”, Gill and Hartley being the name of the owners of the corn mill. There is no indication that this was a band sponsored by employers as a works band, it seems this was simply used by the Leigh Chronicle as an identifying name. This band competed at a high level in the brass band world in later years and was one of the first brass bands to broadcast live on the radio. Interestingly, it ceased playing in 1937, the secretary at the time blamed its demise on the radio for falling off in support for brass bands. (Leigh Journal 11 February 1937)

The funeral of Henry Moss was reported in February 1861 (Leigh Chronicle) when he is described as the “much lamented and skilful tutor of the St. Thomas’ Brass Band.” Members of the band played the Dead march from Saul accompanying his coffin from his house to St. Thomas’ Church; being otherwise known as Bedford Church and this appears as the first account of the Bedford Church Brass Band. There is no detail of the number of players or instrumentation of the band, other than it is a brass band. There was no published arrangement of “Dead March” for a brass band at the time and it is likely that this arrangement was made by the leader or conductor of the band. This was often the case before music was freely available as has been noted by Newsome. (Newsome 1999 p 175) The below is an undated picture of Bedford Church Brass Band.



Picture courtesy of Wigan and Leigh Archive services

The above picture is undated although it is possible to date the picture to within a decade. The player on the second row, left end is William Smith, born in 1865, and the picture appears to show him as a man in his twenties or early thirties. Therefore, the picture will have been taken in the late 1880s or early 1890s. A fund raising event was held on Monday 17 October 1892 when Smith played a duet with a cornet player named Aldred. During the event an appeal was made for funds to buy new instruments and reference was made to the origins of the band. Mr. Clegg, one of the older members of the band detailed how the band had bought instruments “the band got thirty pounds in subscriptions and raised the other one hundred pounds themselves.” (Leigh Chronicle dated Friday 21 October 1892). This gives an indication of the cost of instruments at the time of the formation of the band. The picture above shows the band did not have a full complement of players. It is of

course possible not all the band was able to be present for the picture, but that is unlikely given the fact that it is a posed picture. The band are equipped with lyres - devices for holding music whilst marching - tending to suggest the band were due to play or had just completed a marching engagement. The band is almost at full complement in some sections, three trombones would be a usual section and there are three bass players instead of the usual four. However, the band only has five cornets which is less than was scored for the typical brass band of the era.

Contrasting this picture with one taken in 1905 below, one can see this is now a mature band with an instrumentation matching a modern brass band. William Smith is in the middle of the front row holding a conductor's baton as well as a baritone.

Again, the band are equipped with lyres suggesting the band were pictured before or after a marching engagement.



Image from author's own collection.

It was noted earlier that the Tyldesley Brass Band became the Leigh LRV Brass Band in 1860. In 1876 another band from Tyldesley, the Tyldesley Good Templars Brass Band, took part in a Wesleyan Band of Hope procession in Tyldesley. This band was led by Mr. Hinchcliffe and the Good Templars were a branch of the teetotal movement. The band later renamed itself the Tyldesley Temperance Brass Band and was strongly tied to the Tyldesley Methodist Church. (Roy Newsome archives, notes on brass band history). An advertisement for the Tyldesley Good Templars Brass Band was placed by the secretary John Marsh in the Leigh Journal and Times on Saturday 21 June 1879 to the effect that “this band is now open to receive engagements.” There are also references to a St. James Brass Band in Tyldesley but the only church with this name was a free church situated in Hindsford, which is a small district between Atherton and Tyldesley. This church opened in 1871 and closed in 1889. (Wigan and Leigh and district archive services). This band did compete in several competitions, but little further information has been traced in connection with the band. It was noted as competing in a contest at Southport Winter Gardens on 7 June 1884 when they were unsuccessful. On this occasion the band was referred to as from Hindsford and Tyldesley in the same report. (Leigh Chronicle 13 June 1884).

The next bands to be mentioned in print are the Firs Lane and Astley Temperance Brass Bands. The secretary of the Astley Temperance Brass Band placed an advertisement in the Leigh Chronicle asking for engagements (Leigh Chronicle 6 August 1881). Little information has been recorded about the Astley Temperance Brass Band, it is featured in some reports in the Leigh Chronicle and did compete in a band contest in September 1884. This contest was limited to brass bands within a seven-mile radius of Leigh and was organised by St. Joseph’s Brass

Band. The Astley Brass Band did play but in the words of the adjudicator gave “a very poor performance” (Leigh Chronicle 12 September 1884). Little is known about this band at this time. It undoubtedly existed, but like the Lane Head Temperance Brass Band, it did not appear to be actively involved in competitions as were most other brass bands of the period.

Also appearing with the Astley Temperance Brass Band at the contest in 1884 was the Firs Lane Brass Band. The first mention of this band is reported in the Leigh Chronicle when it played at an annual tea party and dinner at the Reading Rooms connected with the Kirkhall Lane Mill. Firs Lane is a small district in Leigh adjacent to Westleigh. There is no account of this band forming, but it appears to be an active band from 1881 onwards. The band played for dancing after the meal until eleven o'clock (Leigh Chronicle 24 December 1881).

Westleigh Brass Band was formed in the first few years of the 1880s. This band was sometimes named the Westleigh Mills Band. It is possible the location of a nearby mill was used to help identify it. There is no indication that the band was sponsored by an employer. The band began in 1880, the band first appeared at a procession in connection with the Bedford Wesleyan Temperance Society (Leigh Chronicle 27 August 1881)

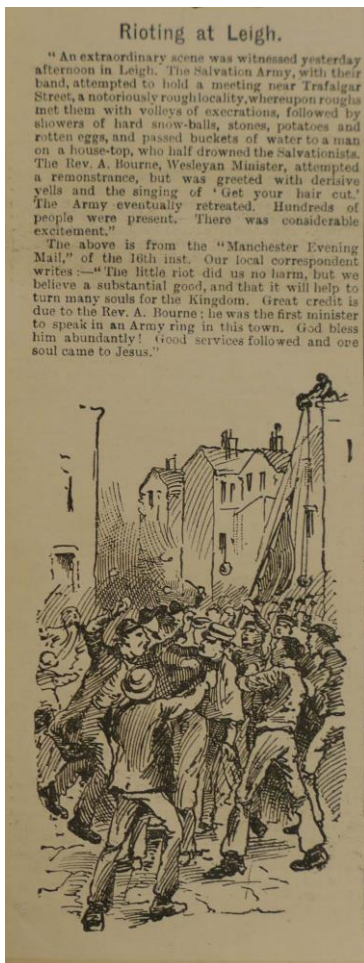
Atherton was well represented by brass bands in the 1890s. Atherton Temperance Brass Band was formed in 1891 and practised at a local school in Atherton. This band was affiliated to the Atherton Wesleyan Methodist Church. The band was later fortunate enough to build its own band room in the centre of Atherton and continued as a brass band until the early 1950s. Shortly after the Temperance band was founded, another brass band was formed in the town, the Atherton Public

Band. A concert to raise money for the purchase of instruments was held in the drill hall at Atherton 18 January 1893. The concert was advertised in the usual manner by the Secretary, John Lucas. (Leigh Chronicle Friday 13 January 1893.) There does not appear to be any reason for this brass band to be formed. It was conducted by Fred Durham, a celebrated cornet soloist and conductor of the Atherton LRV Band. It is possible that members of both Atherton Public and Atherton LRV Bands were the same, although this is unlikely. At this stage of research there is no indication why the band was formed.

In view of the above it is possible to establish that there were three brass bands in existence prior to 1860, Lane Head Temperance, Lowton Brass Band and St. Josephs' Brass Band. In 1860 Both the Leigh and Atherton LRV Brass Bands were formed, as well as Glazebury Brass Band. It should be noted that the Leigh LRV Band was previously the Tyldesley Brass Band. This band must have been in existence prior to 1860, but no record of the band has been found it became the Leigh LRV Band. There are references to a Tyldesley Quadrille Band playing for dancing in 1855 (Leigh Chronicle 27th December 1856) and it is a possibility that this is the one and same band, augmented by other players. Bedford Church Brass Band was founded sometime before 1861 and may have been in existence before 1860.

No new bands emerged until 1876, when the Tyldesley Good Templars Brass Band started. The 1880s saw a further surge in numbers, with the Westleigh Brass Band, Firs Lane Brass Band, and Astley Brass Band all beginning in this decade. Two further bands were added in the 1890s, the Atherton Temperance Brass Band and Atherton Public Brass Band. All the bands named were active in the era under consideration. This means that in the period 1850 to 1900 thirteen brass bands were formed in the Leigh and District area during the period under investigation.

The Salvation Army has a tradition of using brass bands in connection with its services, but little has been found out about an active Salvation Army Band in Leigh in the period under consideration. However, a report was unearthed that quoted a “riot” in Trafalgar Street in Leigh (Leigh Chronicle and Weekly District Advertiser - Friday 03 February 1893). The “War Cry”, a Salvation Army periodical, gave an account of their experience in the extract below.



A member of St. Joseph’s Brass band, John Unsworth, (brother of Fred Unsworth the Conductor) lived in Trafalgar Street at the time of his death, leaving nine children fatherless. (Leigh Chronicle April 10th 1891). The report in the newspaper describing the “riot” stated that “during a portion of the Army’s proceedings St. Joseph’s Brass Band passed along the highway and was loudly cheered by the bulk of those assembled” (Leigh Chronicle and Weekly District Advertiser - Friday 03 February 1893). This is the first account of a Salvation Army Brass Band in Leigh. The account itself states it was the first time the Salvation Army had appeared in Leigh.

Image by permission of The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre

7 Named individuals

Detailed below is a list of players from brass bands in the Leigh and District identified from newspaper sources. All the players have been identified with brass bands in the era under investigation.

Name	Occupation	Band	Instrument/role	Comments
James Croft	Fly Forger	Atherton LRV Band	Conductor	Born 1833. Changed profession to 'Professor of Music' in 1861 census.
Henry Moss	Glass cutter	Leigh LRV Band/ Bedford Church Brass Band	Bugler/ Conductor	Lived with parents, moved to Hulme, Manchester before returning to Leigh. Died 1861
Fred Unsworth	Heald knitter	St. Josephs' Brass Band	Cornet/ Conductor	Born in 1851, conducted band at a contest in 1883. Changed profession to teacher of music 1881.
John Unsworth	Blacksmith	St. Josephs' brass band.	Soprano cornet, euphonium.	Committee member of band. Died 1891. Brother of Fred
William Smith	Weaver	Bedford Church Brass Band	Euphonium/ Conductor	Born 1865, committee member.
Edward Ormerod	Blacksmith	Atherton LVR	Not known	Born 1835, working class, became colliery engineer

John Brown	Moulder/coal miner	Westleigh Brass Band	Conductor	First Conductor of Westleigh brass band.
Thomas Booth	Silk weaver	Leigh LRV Band/Lowton Temperance Brass Band	Cornet/Conductor	Born 1832. Founder member of Leigh LRV Band. Conducted the Lowton temperance Band
Charles Wood	Silk weaver	Leigh LRV Band	Bandmaster	Born 1842. Spent 40 years with Leigh LRV, became a publican.
George Baines	Coal Miner	Westleigh Brass Band	Player	Killed in the Abram Pit explosion 1881
William Gore	Coal Miner	Westleigh Brass Band	Cornet/Conductor	Presented with silver pocket cornet for services to band. Became conductor in
Ralph Boardman	Blacksmith	St. Josephs' Brass Band	Player	Died at work at age of 66. Founder member of band.
William Jameson	Coal miner	St. Josephs' Brass Band	Euphonium	Born 1862. Died 1889. Band played at funeral.
John Rigby	Bricklayer	Firs Lane Brass Band	Bass Drum	Born 1859. Died 1892. Band played at funeral.

All the persons detailed above had manual occupations that would be recognisable as working-class. The census returns viewed show all the above living in dwellings inhabited by persons of similar working-class occupations. James Croft

is one of the first named individuals connected with brass bands in the Leigh and district area. His father was described as a “whitesmith,” which occupation would now be known as a “tinsmith.” Croft changed his occupation to “Professor of Music” in the 1861 Census although he was still living with his parents in a working-class locality. Thomas Booth was a bandmaster of both the Leigh LRV Band as well as Lowton Brass Band, the census returns show him in varied occupations, from silk weaver, to farmer, and as a labourer at a glue works at the time of his death. (Leigh Chronicle 9 November 1883)

Of all the persons listed above, most remained working-class. However, some did rise to enjoy middle-class status. Fred Unsworth became an agent running a music shop in Leigh, advertising his services as a teacher of music and bandmaster. The other man from the list is Edward Ormerod. He was born in a small village near Accrington and moved with his family to Atherton when very young. He was employed as a colliery blacksmith, an occupation shared by Ralph Boardman. Ormerod invented a device that stopped cages transporting miners to the coal face going over the winding device. He later became a colliery manager. He was named as a founder member of the Atherton LRV Band in his obituary. (Leigh Chronicle 1 June 1894).

One member of a band that has not been analysed is Thomas Burke. He was born in Leigh in 1890 and played cornet in the Leigh Borough Band at the Crystal Palace Contest, winning a medal for best individual cornet player. (Vose 1981 pp 21, 84). Thomas was a miner in his youth but had a gifted voice and subsequently became a leading tenor during the early part of the twentieth century. He appeared at The Royal Opera House from 1919 and throughout the 1920s. It is likely that Burke did play in a brass band, but the Leigh Borough Brass Band only formed in

September 1907, following the disbandment of the Leigh LRV band so it is unlikely it was this band he played with. He was closely connected with St. Joseph's Church, living in a house backing on to the church and it is more likely he was a member of this band.

8 Music performed and sources of printed music

One of the difficulties the earliest brass bands experienced is the fact that there were few publishing houses producing printed music for this medium in the first half of the nineteenth century "since at this stage there was no standard instrumentation in place, publishers had little interest in publishing the music if they were unable to print it in profitable numbers." (Taylor 2011 Page 49).

Primary sources from newspaper reports feature growing numbers of references to brass band performances as they grew in numbers, however, they do not necessarily inform the reader what pieces the bands played. One of the earliest bands formed in the area under consideration was the Lanehead Temperance Band, Lanehead being a small locality of the village known as Lowton. At a meeting of the Temperance Society, "Lanehead Temperance Band gratified the meeting with a tune," following an address by a speaker. (Leigh Chronicle 4 February 1860). Often the newspaper sources refer to an event, a procession, parade, fete, or other gathering, and a band played afterwards for dancing. There is no programme detailing the pieces played. The Quadrille was a popular dance and there are frequently advertisements for entertainments when "an efficient quadrille band will be in attendance." There are other forms of dances such as dances are Lancers, Polka, Waltz, Glee, and Marches which are to be found even today in many brass band libraries. In his book *English Brass Bands and their Music 1860 - 1930*, Taylor has produced a catalogue of the secular brass band music from 1860 to 1930 based on research in several brass band archives. All the above styles are represented in this list together with publishers and dates of publication when known. (Taylor 2011 Appendix 1 p 100 - 134)

One of the first pieces to be named in newspaper sources is the "Dead March from Saul." This piece was used by the members of the Bedford Church Brass Band to escort the coffin of their bandmaster Henry Moss to church. (Leigh Chronicle Saturday 16 February 1861) This piece is ubiquitous in Victorian funerals and many brass bands were to play this piece at later funerals in the Leigh and District area. Bedford Church Brass Band also played "Martin Luther's Hymn" at Henry Moss's home address. There are no details with regards to numbers or instrumentation of the band. Nevertheless, this represents some detail of a musical ensemble playing western art music in a recognisable form at a pseudo civic event.

There are no libraries of local bands available for research: all the brass bands that existed in the locality, with one exception-Tyldesley Brass Band - are now defunct. Even if the band libraries were still intact and available to be viewed it is likely that old pieces no longer in use would have been discarded. It is possible the arrangement of "Dead March" used by the band would have been a bespoke arrangement done specifically for the band by a local musician or the conductor of the band. However, there were a series of advertisements placed in the Leigh Chronicle during the late 1850s by a "Registrar, Music seller and Agent," John Grime. The man was a proprietor of the Music Warehouse, Hindley Common, Hindley. This locality is contiguous with the Leigh area. The advertisements contained references to musical instruments at manufacturer's prices as well as music produced for brass bands by several printing houses.

A report from the Leigh Chronicle 14 April 1860 describes a meeting of the Friendly Co-operative Society at Hindley, attended by between 400 to 500 persons. The Hindley Brass Band and the Hindley Glee singers were present, and both gave performances. Mr. Grime played the piano. Mr. Grime obviously had a network with

local brass bands. This is further evidenced by a "Grand Miscellaneous Concert" which was advertised in the Leigh Chronicle on 27 October 1860. It was held at a school room in Bedford on behalf of the Independent Order of Oddfellows for the benefit of the Widow and Orphan's Fund of the same society. This concert featured a celebrated buffo, Mr. Delavanti, and Mr. and Mrs. Grime of the Wigan Choral Society. Also appearing at the concert was Mr. James Croft, playing the violin (James Croft was the earliest conductor of the Atherton LRV Band). Mr. Grime obviously travelled outside Hindley in his capacity as a local musician.

Whilst it is not possible to prove what music was used by local brass bands, printed or bespoke arrangements, it seems more than likely that local brass bands would have availed themselves of the services of Mr. Grime, who was himself a local musician and owned a music shop in the area.

A fund-raising event for the Westleigh Brass Band had a detailed report contained therein that stated Westleigh Brass Band opened the event playing a Glee entitled "Forest Queen." (Leigh Chronicle 13 April 1883). A glee is one of the popular styles of pieces referred to earlier and is an unaccompanied English part song, typically with a call and response style. This work was only published in 1882 and it shows the band were anxious to play the latest music offered to the brass band world. The manuscript was found by Dr Newsome at the offices of the music publishers, Wright and Round in Gloucester, and has recently been transcribed from the score by David Taylor in 2018.

The Brass Band News has been digitised by The University of Salford and is available to view and download. This publication was one of many in the second half of the nineteenth century catering for the emerging demand for news about the brass

band movement. It was published monthly and featured articles on every aspect of playing an instrument; as well as practical advice on how to administer and run a brass band organisation. The paper also contained adverts from manufacturers of instruments, printed music suppliers, and uniform companies with illustrated drawings of various military style uniforms. The paper provided samples of music as tasters, with details of how to obtain the full set of parts: this piece was published in the Brass Band News in 1882. It is possible the piece was seen and purchased through this medium by the organisers of the Westleigh Brass Band.

Conclusion

The results of the individual case studies show a small number of brass bands emerging in the middle of the 1850s: the first related to temperance societies, three church bands, then two Rifle Volunteer Movement bands. The remaining seven bands emerged during the rest of the century.

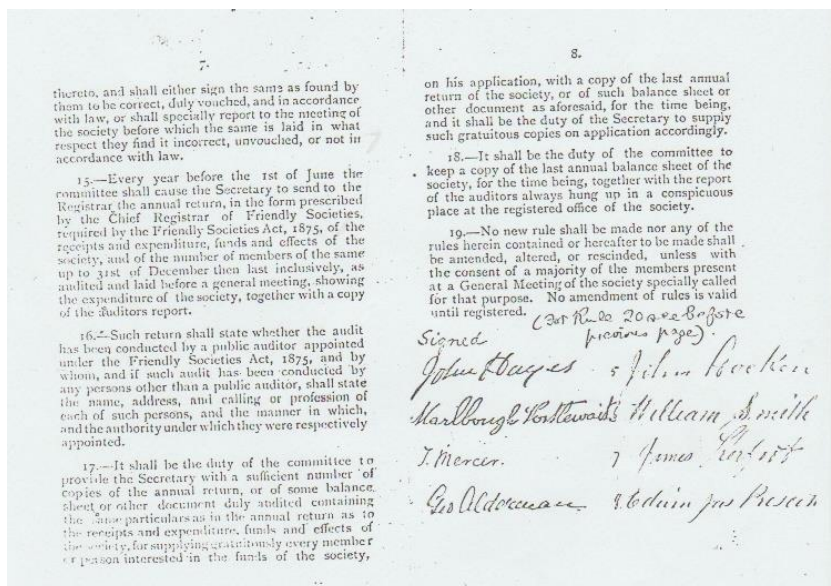
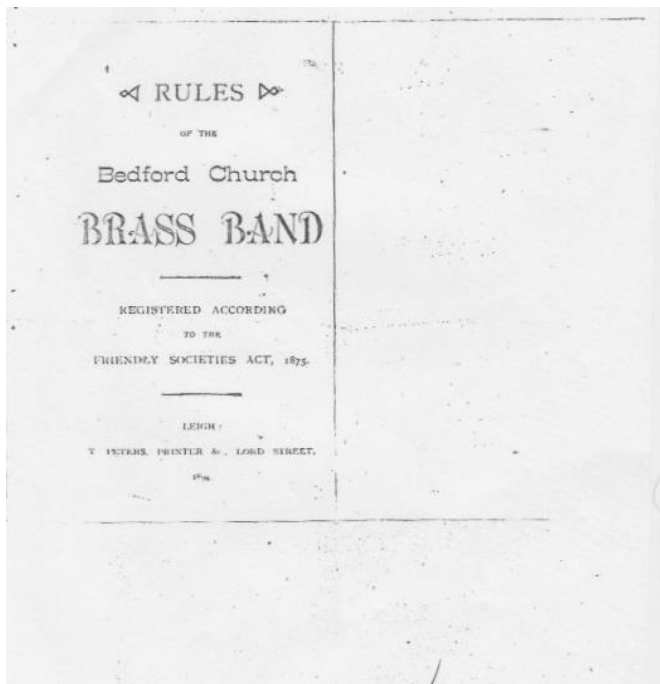
All the brass bands recruited players from within an existing community: Temperance Societies connected to Church or secular organisations, Church congregations, or the Rifle Volunteer movement, underpinned as it was by government funding. From the above it can be seen that the common factors are an existing societal link and shared working-class status. Some bands, such as Glazebury, Westleigh, and Firs Lane bands appear to have had a link with the Mechanics Institute. The Firs Lane Brass Band is the only one that does not have a discernible recruiting base. The above bands all appeared at local Mechanical Institutes (sometimes described as “reading rooms”). These institutions did not in themselves sponsor bands (Taylor 2011 p 41), but the ethos of these institutes had “an important bearing on music-making during the Victorian period as a whole” (Mackerness 1964 pp 147-152). It is possible the institutes played a significant role in bringing like-minded individuals together and this was the catalyst for Firs Lane Brass Band.

Following on from the above point it is evident that the bands had a function at their point of conception. The temperance bands played for processions and meetings connected with the temperance movement. The bands connected with churches played for fetes, processions of witness and other associated church

events. The Rifle Volunteer Corp bands played for parades to assist in recruitment and lend a sense of martial grandeur to musters. The Volunteer bands were also used at civic events in a role commensurate with an official capacity. As the decades progressed, the bands become more involved with contests and concerts extraneous from their original purpose, although they continued with the obligation to their founding organisations. Vic and Sheila Gammon contend the early bands played for social events as “an adjunct to the event”; later developments saw the bands playing at events where the music was a significant reason for the performance. (Herbert 1991 p 134).

All the individuals named in the accounts from primary sources show they were from the working class. Some of the named persons did enjoy a degree of social mobility and rose to the higher strata of social respectability, but the majority remained coal miners or cotton operatives.

The study has enabled a precise number of brass bands with a clear chronological time frame to be established in the Leigh and district area. It has also been possible to rectify mistakes made in formation dates. The Bedford Church Brass Band is widely reputed to have been formed in 1875, local newspapers reported on this fact in 1975. However, it has been possible to show that the band was in existence almost fifteen years previously (Funeral of band master Leigh Chronicle 16 February 1861). The reason for confusion regarding the date of formation may be found in the constitution of Bedford Church Brass Band. The band constitution was enacted under the auspices of the 1875 Friendly Societies Act: the lack of an official history may have caused confusion leading to the date of the Friendly Society Act being identified with the formation of the band.



Images from author's own collection.

The brass band competition is a subject that is a divisive one. The concept that a piece of music can be used as rendered down to a contest is abhorrent to many observers, an article published in a magazine edited by Charles Dickens gave a deeply satirical account of such a contest. (All the Year Round pp. 65-68). However, the reports in the newspapers make it quite clear that local brass bands were staging their own competitions to raise money. The fact that bands were

appearing being enough to attract large crowds to the venue: raising revenue is the primary motivation for organising contests. Of course, the lure of prize money had to be offered to attract bands to compete. The fact that bands were using contests to attract crowds and make money gives a reason for the growth in brass band competition during the era under consideration.

All the bands competed in competitions playing music from a written score. Some of the first accounts of the brass bands show them playing the “Dead March from Saul,” an extract of a composition by Handel. There is no doubt the bands were performing as entire ensembles, playing music for dancing to entertain revellers. The Westleigh Brass Band played a glee entitled “Forest Queen” that had only been composed the previous year. This evidences the fact that all the bands were performing music that had been arranged for an ensemble and would have been played from written music. The transition to a written score is evidence of the emergence of a working-class identity in instrumental art music.

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