

Bourton-on-the-Water Brass Band

Gavin Holman, 13 April 2021

Bourton-on-the-Water is a village in the Cotswolds, sitting just off the Fosse Way Roman road, south of Stow-in-the-Wold. Since the 1930's it has become a popular tourist destination, with its model village, motor museum, Birdland, and, not least, the quaint village centre through which runs the shallow River Windrush.

However, prior to it gaining fame as a place to visit, it was just another sleepy Gloucestershire village, served by the G.W.R. railway, and home to the usual mix of agriculture and small commercial businesses.

The Bourton-on-the-Water Brass Band was founded some time before 1873.



In 1875, members of band were:

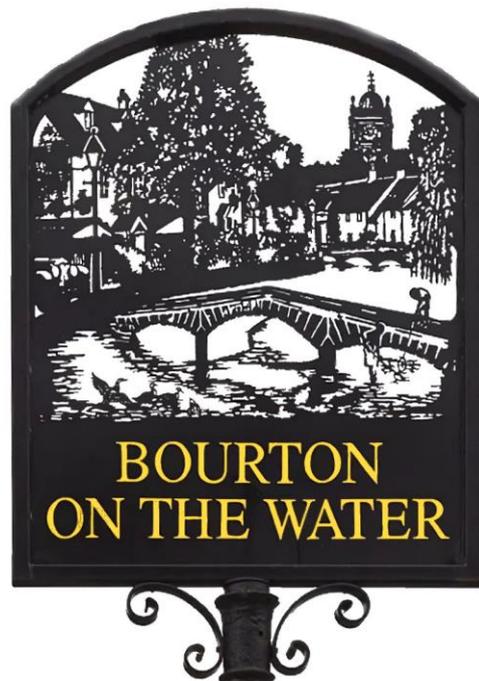
- William Troughton (b. 1845, carpenter, cornet)
- George Lawrence (b. 1828, mason, cornet)
- Richard Betteridge (b. 1842, coachman, cornet)
- George Clifford (b. 1830, a stone mason, cornet) – married to Caroline, a dressmaker
- Jim Wright (b. 1820, slater & plasterer, trombone)
- (Al) Fred Clifford (b. 1832, mason & builder, tenor horn)
- W. Butler (hay trusser, baritone)
- S. Hall (timber feller & sawyer, euphonium)
- R. Hall (timber feller & sawyer, bass)
- Frank Palmer (drum)
- C. Lock (conductor)

C. Lock was the band's conductor from 1875 to 1879. Henry Charles Barton (d. 1937) was the bandmaster from 1883 through to the late 1880's. Sadly there are no references to the band beyond 1889, and it is assumed that it disbanded shortly thereafter.

There was a later Bourton Bugle Band from 1937 to 1941, bandmaster G.H. Palmer, and a note that their band instruments were sold in 1941 (raising £60) which was invested by the Band Trustees in Defence Bonds.

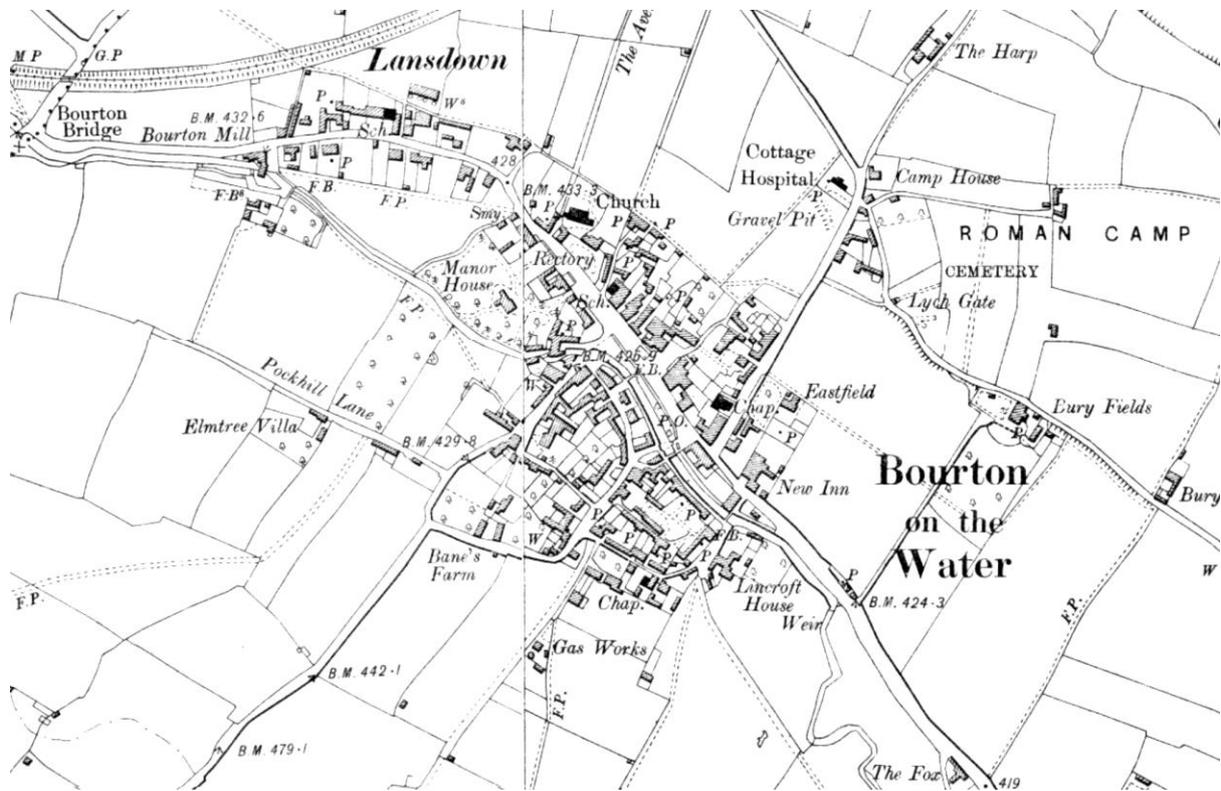
Some events in the brass band's calendar over the years:

- Thursday 23 October 1873 – the band accompanied the Bourton Temperance Society on its winter excursion to the village of Clapton, marching in procession along the route. After the meeting, the band played some lively pieces and also played at intervals on the return journey to Bourton.
- Tuesday 2 October 1877 – the band performed at intervals at the cricket match between eleven of the Bourton club and twenty-two non-members.
- Friday 19 July 1878 – the band headed the procession of the Bourton Baptist Sunday School children, who were conveyed in wagons to Little Rissington for their Sunday School Treat. The band played at intervals during the afternoon.
- Friday 13 June 1879 – the band played at the bazaar in the Lansdown Schoolroom in aid of the parish church restoration fund.
- Monday 4 August 1879 – the band led the march of the Loyal Rose of England Lodge of Odd Fellows, in Bourton, as they celebrated their 30th anniversary.
- Monday 18 August 1879 – the band played selections of music during the evening on the occasion of the Agricultural Labourers' Union Meeting in the village.
- Friday 22 August 1879 – the Bourton Band of Hope joined with the Stow Band of Hope and were led in procession by the Bourton Brass Band to the village of Lower Slaughter, where games and a tea were enjoyed, together with some of the “cup that cheers but not inebriates”.
- Friday 11 June 1880 – the various benefit societies held their club day in the village with the Naunton Band leading the Wellington Club, the Bourton Band with the East Gloucester Club, and the Stow Town and Volunteer Band with the New Inn club meeting. Processions to the church, followed by parades round the village, ending up with substantial dinners for each club.
- Thursday 1 June 1882 – the Burford Mutual Benefit Society held its Club Day, with the Bourton Band leading their procession from the Lamb Inn to the church and back. In the evening the band paraded the streets of Burford, enlivening the town with its musical strains.
- Tuesday 16 May 1883 – the Bourton Band led the Sherborne Friendly Society in its annual festival parade.



- Thursday 18 May 1883 - the Burford Mutual Benefit Society held its festival, with the Bourton Band leading their procession from the Lamb Inn to the church and back. The band played *Onward Christian Soldiers* as they marched up the church aisle.
- Monday 4 June 1883 – the Bourton Band led the procession of the Stow-in-the-Wold branch of the East Gloucestershire Benefit Society in their annual gathering at Stow.
- Wednesday 18 July 1883 – the Bourton-on-the-Water Temperance and Band of Hope Fete took place, with the Bourton Band leading a procession of more than 400 people and later in the evening performed a concert in the field between 8 and 10 o'clock.
- Tuesday 3 June 1884 – the Bourton Band led the Sherborne Friendly Society in its annual festival parade.
- Monday 30 June 1884 – the Band led the children of Aston Blank National School on their treat outing to the Elms, where they sat down to a plentiful tea and, joined by a large number of the villagers, ran races, scrambled for sweets, romped in the hay, and danced to the inspiring strains of the band.
- Tuesday 1 December 1885 – the Band paraded through the streets of the village during the day, together with the Rissington drum and fife band, celebrating the polling day for the election of the local member of parliament.
- Monday 24 May 1886 – the Band gave a concert in the centre of the village in the evening as part of the celebrations for the Queen's birthday.
- Monday 7 June 1886 – the Bourton Band led the procession of the Stow-in-the-Wold branch of the East Gloucestershire Benefit Society in their annual gathering at Stow. This was in conjunction with the Stow Oddfellows, who were led by the Cheltenham Town and Promenade Band.
- Tuesday 15 June 1886 – the Band led the Sherborne Friendly Society in its annual festival parade once more.
- Wednesday 11 August 1886 – the Band was engaged by the Loyal Vale of Bourton-on-the-Water Lodge of Oddfellows M.U. to lead their parade on the occasion of their first fete.
- Saturday 28 August 1886 – the Band welcomed guests from Chelsea when they arrived at Bourton, leading them in procession to the Manor House at Lower Slaughter for the reception of the newly-returned Member of Parliament, Mr C.A. Whitmore.
- Friday 3 June 1887 – the Bourton Band led the New Inn Club on parade for its anniversary feast, at the same time the Fifield Brass Band was leading the Wellington Club. As the rains deluged the afternoon, the Bourton Brass Band visited the houses of the principal inhabitants on the following day.
- Wednesday 17 August 1887 – the Band led the Loyal Vale of Bourton-on-the-Water Lodge of Oddfellows in their anniversary parade, and later gave every satisfaction in their playing on the fete field.
- Saturday 10 March 1888 – the Band played appropriate tunes in the centre of the village in the evening in honour of the Silver wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales.
- Wednesday 22 August 1888 - The band was engaged to lead the Loyal Vale of Bourton Lodge I.O.O.F. in their procession to their annual fete, and then proceeded to play for dancing later in the afternoon.

- Friday 7 June 1889 – the Bourton Band led the New Inn Club on parade for its anniversary feast, at the same time the Bourton drum and fife band led the Wellington Club.
- Wednesday 11 September 1889 – the Band played for the Church Bazaar at the Manor House Grounds.



Bourton-on-the-Water, c. 1900