

Hepworth Ironworks Band

Gavin Holman, 28 July 2023

The Hepworth Iron Company established its coal mines, fire clay pits and clay products works at Crow Edge, near Hepworth, from 1857.

The Hepworth Ironworks Band was founded in 1878 with members from the workforce at the ironworks. There was clearly an appetite for music in the area, as the Hepworth Silver Band was founded in the local village a mere four years later, in 1882. The two bands co-existed amicably for the duration of the Ironworks Band's existence, occasionally borrowing each other's players for engagements. The Hepworth Silver Band remains a musical force to the present day. The Ironworks Band did not enjoy the same contesting success as the Silver Band, but it was nonetheless a consistent presence in its area over its 72 year history. In 1936 they opened a new band room at Crow Edge, near the works, and furnished themselves with new uniforms consisting of wine-coloured jackets with blue trousers (a unique combination in Yorkshire, at the time).

The Hepworth Ironworks Band disbanded in 1950.



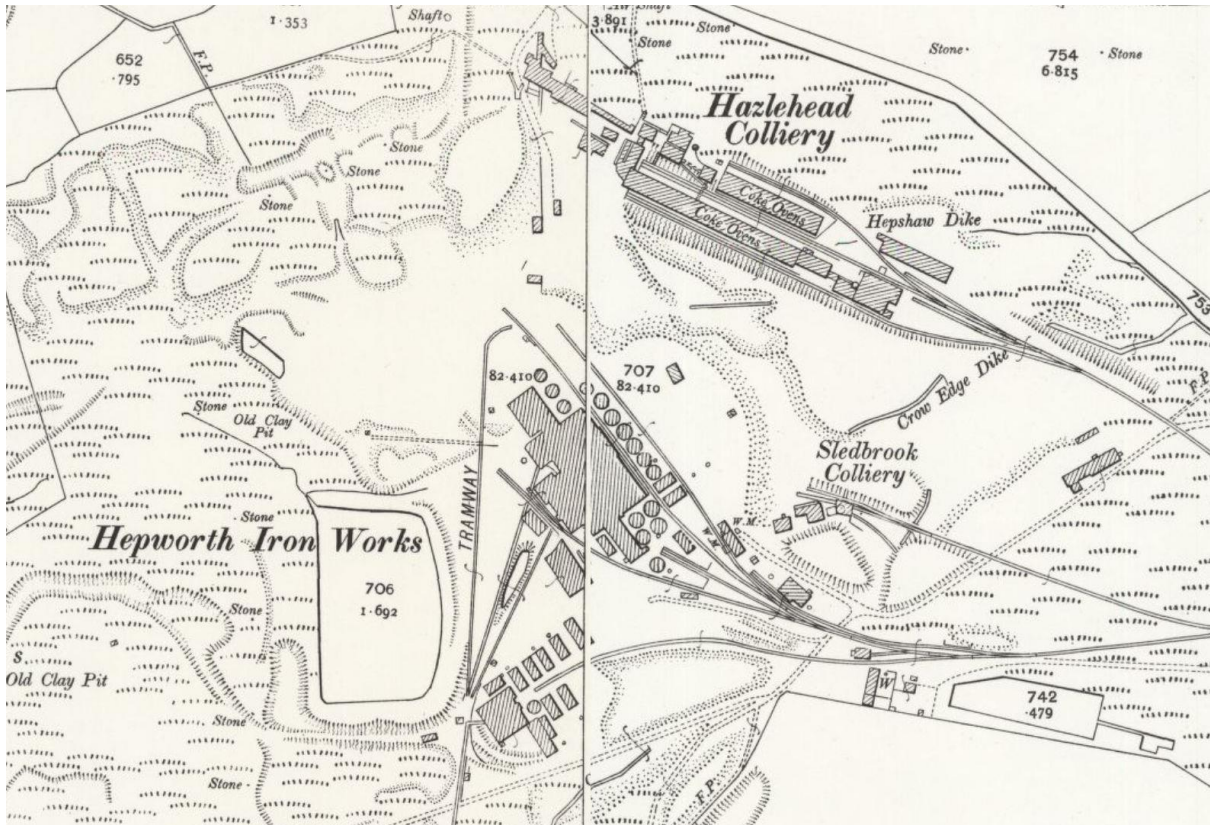
Hepworth Ironworks Band, c. 1915

The Hepworth Ironworks Band's first known contest appearance was at Holmfirth on 21 May 1888, where they gained 5th place. This was followed by the Holmfirth March contest on 10 June 1889, at which the band were again placed 5th, out of six bands, and the adjudicator commented:

"The opening bad in tune, and continued to the end of the march. The playing was not regular. The cornet tongued and tied the notes incorrectly. I would advise this band to get a good tuning, which would be a great improvement to them."

Other known engagements of the band are as follows:

- Sunday 26 June 1887 – performed at Penistone Sports, as part of the Feast Day.
- Monday 10 June 1889 – led the Holmfirth Methodist Free Church scholars in their Whit Monday procession.
- Monday 26 May 1890 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 3rd prize.
- Monday 18 May 1891 - led the Holmfirth Free Methodists in the Nonconformists' Whitsuntide procession. The Clayton West, Shelley, and Denby Dale bands also took part. The Holmfirth March Contest also took place that day, with the Ironworks Band being drawn number 3, but were unplaced.
- Monday 6 June 1892 - competed in the Holmfirth March Contest.
- Saturday 17 September 1892 - competed in the Glossop Contest, playing the test piece "*Il Giuramento*".
- Monday 25 May 1896 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 5th prize.
- Saturday 27 May 1899 - competed in the Glossop Contest, playing the test piece "*Lucia di Lammermoor*".
- Tuesday 24 May 1904 – the band played for dancing at the Stanhope Arms Hotel, Dunford Bridge.



The iron works site in 1905

- Monday 12 June 1905 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 3rd prize. Conductor, H. Fieldsend.
- Monday 4 June 1906 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 4th prize.
- Monday 20 May 1907 - competed in the Holmfirth Contest, playing the test piece "*True Friendship*", taking 4th prize.
- Saturday 25 July 1908 - competed in the Thurlstone Contest.
- Saturday 5 September 1908 – took part in the Gatehead YMA branch miners' demonstration.

- Monday 31 May 1909 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, with the march “*Flying Dragon*” taking 4th prize.
- Saturday 10 August 1909 – provided music for the Huddersfield and District Temperance League garden party at Hazelhead Hall, Crow Edge.

A railway line ran from the ironworks at Crow Edge, linking to the Sheffield, Ashton-under-Lyne and Manchester Railway's Woodhead Line at Hazlehead Bridge railway station. A tour excursion was often undertaken using the works' tank engine “*Hepworth*” and five British Rail ‘Shock Wagons’ which carried up to 120 people. There is no record of the Ironworks Band performing on, or for the excursions, but certainly two of the engine drivers, Harold and Tommy Hill, were members of the Hepworth Silver Band.



Harold and Tommy Hill, and “Hepworth” c. 1950

- Monday 16 May 1910 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, only managing to achieve fourth place. They were assisted by the cornet player, George Harris, of Glossop Old Band, who did gain the ‘best cornet player’ award on the day.
- Saturday 13 August 1910 – provided music for the Charlecotes (Penistone) and District Sports and Flower Show.
- Monday 5 June 1911 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 4th prize.
- Friday 9 June 1911 – took part in the Stalybridge Church of England united sing.
- Monday 27 May 1912 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 3rd prize. Conductor, George H. Mercer.
- Friday 7 June 1912 – took part in the Stalybridge Whit Friday procession.
- Monday 12 May 1913 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 4th prize.
- Monday 1 June 1914 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, taking 4th prize. Conductor H. Belcher.
- Monday 29 June 1914 – played music for the Hepworth Feast, together with the Hepworth Silver Band.
- Monday 24 May 1915 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, gaining the third prize, and also an award for their cornet soloist.
- Sunday 29 August 1915 – gave an open-air sacred benefit concert at Hazlehead.
- Monday 12 June 1916 – led the procession and entertained the Underbank Wesleyans School Treat gala.
- Tuesday 7 June 1927 - competed in the Huddersfield Band of Hope Union Contest, playing the test piece “*Il Flauto Magico*”.



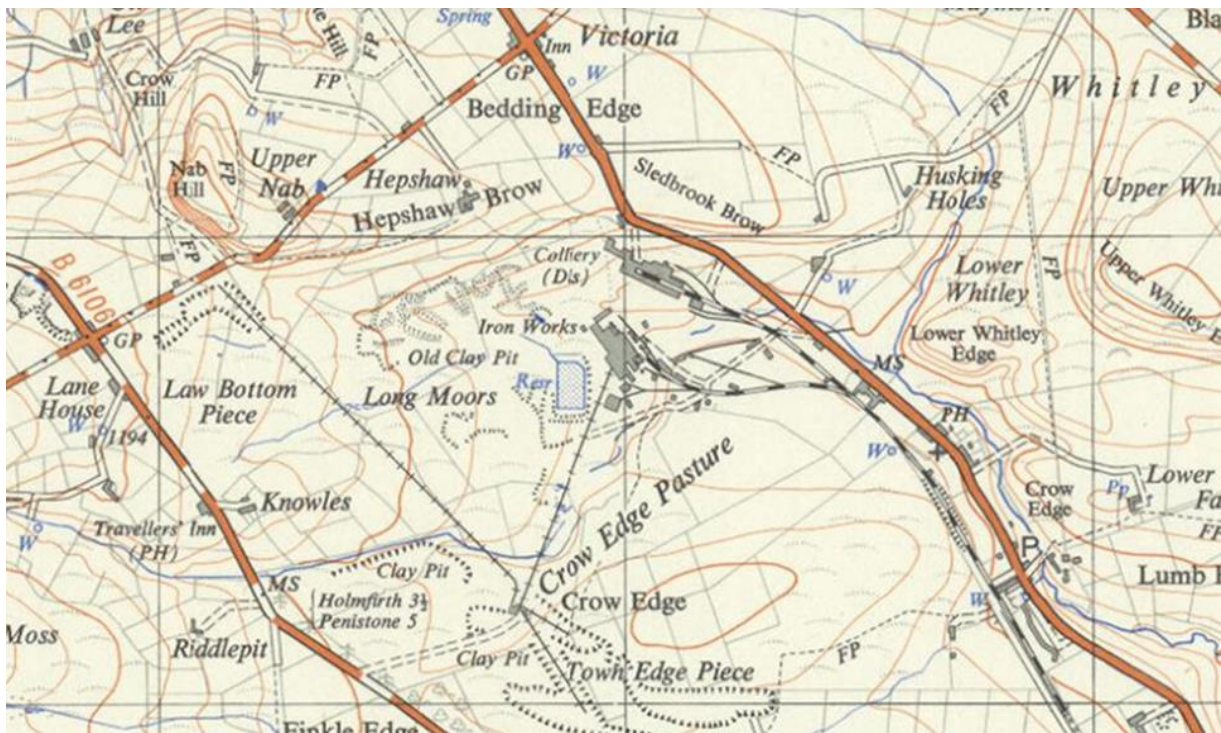
Hepworth Ironworks Band, 1920

- Sunday 17 July 1927 – gave an evening concert in the Penistone Recreation Ground.
- Sunday 8 January 1928 – gave a concert in Penistone Town Hall.
- Sunday 29 June 1930 – gave an evening concert in Fox Glen, Deepcar.
- Saturday 27 September 1930 - competed in the National Championships (Junior Shield B) Contest, at the Crystal Palace, playing the test piece *"In Old Vienna"*. Conductor Ernest Kaye.
- Saturday 1 August 1931 – competed in the Holmfirth March Contest, at the British Legion Forget-Me-Not Carnival.
- Saturday 9 September 1933 – competed in the Butlins Holiday Camp Contest (3rd Section) at Skegness.
- Sunday 26 November 1933 – the band took part in the Penny-in-the-Pound concert raising funds for the local hospital.
- Saturday 19 May 1934 – led the procession of the Hepworth and Mount Tabor Methodist Sunday School children.
- Monday 25 June 1934 – led the procession of the Hepworth Parish Church Sunday School children at Hepworth Feast.
- Sunday 1 July 1934 – performed at Penistone Feast, conducted by Ernest Kaye, with the Denby United Silver Band also in attendance, conducted by W. Kaye.
- Saturday 15 September 1934 – provided music for the Scholes Garden Fete in aid of the Holme Valley Hospital.
- Monday 6 May 1935 – took part in the Thurlstone celebrations and procession for the Silver Jubilee of King George V, playing *"Deep Harmony"* in the Market Place.
- Monday 24 June 1935 – played for the annual Hepworth School festival, which also included Hepworth Silver Band.
- Saturday 27 July 1935 – performed at the Fete and Demonstration in support of the National Government, at Cannon Hall, Cawthorne.



One of the excursion trains to/from the ironworks

- Saturday 17 August 1935 – played for the Cheer-Up Club Gala, at Thurlstone.
- Saturday 1 February 1936 – gave a concert, conducted by G.H. Mercer, in Penistone Town Hall in aid of the Hospital Cot Fund.
- Sunday 28 June 1936 – performed at Penistone Feast, together with the Thurlstone and Denby United bands.
- Monday 29 June 1936 – played music for the Hepworth Feast, together with the Hepworth Silver Band.
- Saturday 25 July 1936 – played for the Cheer-Up Club Gala, at Thurlstone.
- Saturday 5 December 1936 – competed in the Sheffield Victoria Hall Contest, playing the test piece *“Echoes of the Opera”*.
- Sunday 2 May 1937 – played at the morning service for “Spa Sunday” in Penistone.
- Wednesday 12 May 1937 – entertained the crowds at Penistone for the celebrations for the coronation of King George VI.
- Saturday 19 June 1937 – performed at the Gatehead School Feast
- Monday 28 June 1937 – played music for the Hepworth Feast.
- Sunday 18 July 1937 – gave a sacred concert by the Flouch Head Inn, Hazlehead.
- Saturday 24 July 1937 – played for the Thurlstone Cheer-Up Club Gala.
- Saturday 21 May 1938 – competed in the Spring Festival (Class C) at Belle Vue, playing the test piece *“Beautiful Britain”*. Conductor George Hespe.
- Monday 27 June 1938 – performed at Hepworth Feast.
- Monday 29 May 1939 – took part in the Catholic Procession in Huddersfield.
- Sunday 25 June 1939 – performed at the Penistone “Feast Sunday” Music Festival, together with the Denby Dale United Silver Band and the Thurlstone Brass Band.
- Saturday 2 September 1939 – competed in the Huddersfield & District BBA Contest (Section B), playing the test piece *“Recollections of Weber”*, taking 2nd place.



- Sunday 21 January 1940 – four bandmen from the Band, called the “Modern Brass Quartet”, took part in a concert for the Penistone and District War Comforts Fund at the Town Hall.
- Sunday 11 August 1940 – took part in the Moorland Hospital Effort at Flouch Garage.
- Sunday 29 June 1941 – performed at the Penistone “Feast Sunday” Music Festival, together with the Denby Dale United Silver Band and the Thurlstone Brass Band.
- Saturday 9 August 1941 – gave a concert in Greenhead Park, Huddersfield.
- Saturday 30 August 1941 – competed in the Huddersfield & District BBA Contest (Section B), playing the test piece “*Dawn of Spring*”, taking 3rd place.
- Saturday 13 September 1941 – competed in the Huddersfield Chrysanthemum Society Contest (Class B), playing the test piece “*Dawn of Spring*”, taking 2nd place.
- Saturday 16 August 1942 – competed in the Huddersfield & District BBA Contest (Section A), playing the test piece “*Oberon*”, taking 3rd place.
- Saturday 10 June 1944 – gave a concert in Greenhead Park.
- Saturday 5 August 1944 – performed, together with Hepworth Silver Band, at a garden fete in Hepworth.
- Saturday 26 August 1944 – competed in the Huddersfield & District BBA Contest (Section A), playing the test piece “*Der Freischütz*”, taking 3rd place.
- Saturday 16 September 1944 – competed in the Linthwaite March Contest, taking 2nd place.
- Sunday 27 May 1945 – gave a concert in Greenhead Park.
- Saturday 21 July 1945 – competed in the contest at the V.E. Carnival at Scapegoat Hill. The band gained second prize and took first place in the hymn competition.
- Sunday 29 July 1945 – performed at the Meltham Annual “Sing”.
- Monday 6 August 1945 – gave an evening concert in Greenhead Park.
- Saturday 25 August 1945 – won first prize in the Huddersfield & District B.B.A. Section A contest at Greenhead Park, conducted by Ernest Kaye, playing the set test piece “*L’italiana in Algeri*” (Rossini).
- Friday 22 February 1946 – L. Hirst, solo trombone player of the band, together with three other trombonists (H. Charlesworth, Hade Edge Band; J. Whiteley, Holme

Silver Band; and A. Boothroyd, Hepworth Silver Band), known as the Holme Valley Trombone Quartet, gave a radio broadcast concert on the North of England Home Service. The quartet was formed in autumn 1943.

- Monday 24 June 1946 – the band performed at Hepworth Feast, together with the Hepworth Silver Band.
- Saturday 17 May 1947 – performed at the Damhead United “Sing” for Holmebridge Feast, together with Hade Edge and Hinchliffe Mill Bands.
- Saturday 24 May 1947 – led the procession for the Hepworth Sunday School’s feast.



Hepworth Ironworks Band, 1950 – shortly before its end



The iron works site from the air in 1947