

Milford Times: May 27, 1899

### M.B.B.

In the fall of 1845 the Milford Brass Band was organized and instruments were obtained from George Prince of Buffalo, through Adam Couse of Detroit. At that time Couse was the only music dealer in Detroit, but did not keep band outfits. As the writer now remembers, the original roster was as follows:

Philip Wells, E flat clarionette.  
Sardis F. Hubbell, 1<sup>st</sup> B flat clarionette.  
Harry C. Andrews, 2<sup>nd</sup> B flat clarionette.  
Egbert F. Albright, 1<sup>st</sup> B cornopean.  
Chester Thompson, 2<sup>nd</sup> B cornopean.  
John Van Alstine, 1<sup>st</sup> French horn  
2c French horn.  
Willard Hubbard, B flat tenor trombone.  
Albert Hubbard, E flat bass trombone.  
Horace B. Hubbard, E flat bass orphecleide.  
Calvin Eaton, bass drum.

Harry C. Andrews met with the others during the time of organization, but withdrew before any playing was done and who the person was that took his place has passed from this writer's remembrance. It may have been Giles Norton, or perhaps Norton played 2c French horn. In answer to inquiry, someone has written that Henry Weavus was the 2c French horn player. Henry Weavus writes that he did not play in the band but thinks that Truman Fox was 2c French horn player. And now comes a letter from Mrs. Antoinetta (Fox) Rankin stating that her brother Truman Fox did not belong to the band.

After a time Saul Kinsman played in the band, using an E flat clarionette, making a very substantial addition.. The first teacher was Mr. Knowlton of Pontiac, who for some reason gave only a few lessons. The next was James Boswell of Detroit, who was leader of the Brady Guards Band of that place. He was liked very much as a teacher, as well as a man, and was an exceedingly fine player on a [sic] E flat bugle.

John Kinsman writes in a recent letter: "After they had played five or six months they got the bighead on, as all new bands do; so they thought they would go into the concert business and advertised for Brighton, Howell, Byron and Fenton. They finally busted at Byron, and some of them had to borrow money to get home." Now that is a good story, but can be more truthfully, if not as interestingly told by one of the band who acted as treasurer. The places at which the band played were Kensington, Brighton, Howell, Byron and Fenton and Mr. Boswell was the leader. One of the attractions was Boswell's solo on the ophecleide. It was hoped that the concerts would net a little money to aid in paying a teacher but would have netted a loss if both Mr. Boswell and Mr. S.W. Rowe, who furnished and drove the team, had not made a rebate from agreed rates so that receipts and expenses exactly balanced.

The third and last teacher was T. Dwight Nutting, who came from Lodi Plains to Milford for the purpose of studying medicine with Dr. Foote, and also to incidentally pay his addresses To Mary Foote—mostly the latter—and with the most gratifying results. Mr. Nutting was successful as a teacher, was esteemed by the community as a citizen, and under his tuition the band did their best playing. It was originally the plan to write briefly in regard to Mr. Nutting's life after severing his connection with the band, but that is another story, and can be best told at another time. Philip Wells was the soul of the band; without him it would have had no beginning, and without him would not have existed as long as it did. It died, finally, in the spring of 1848, at which time John VanAlstine removed to Byron, Chester Thomson and E.F. Albright going to Brighton on the first day of May of that year. Not long after the Hubbards went to Saginaw. With the possible exception of John Van Alstine, Egbert F. Albright is the only one of the original members that now survives. Did the old M.B.B. have a successor? Some persons now living think it did, and others that it did not.

John Kinsman afterwards organized and was leader of a band, but the writer is credibly informed that it was more in the line of an orchestra for dancing purposes than an out-of-door military Fourth of July band.

E.F.A. (Egbert F. Albright)

Milford Times: June 3, 1899

## **M.B.B.**

EDITOR TIMES:

I noticed in your paper of last week an account of the first brass band of Milford, written by E.F. Albright. I would ask the favor of rectifying a few errors he made relative to myself. I don't pretend to say that the band "busted" at Byron; it was only some of the members that were "busted" for I chipped in with others to send to one of the members so that he could get home.

Then, again, he says: "Did the old M.B.B. have a successor? Some persons think it did and others think it did not. John Kinsman had an orchestra but no out-of-door, 4<sup>th</sup> of July band." Now, for the purpose of giving him and others some information, I will say there have been five bands organized in Milford since the first one disbanded. Four of them lived just about as long as the first band did but we organized the fifth one in 1862, with the following members: J.C. Kinsman, John Stevens, Ed. Bennett, Dr. Booth, H.D. Tenny, Thomas Thornhill, Robert Potts, Dell Stephens, Thos. Birdsall, Deck Tower, Chas. Andrews, Lester St. John, Geo. Giddings and John Goite. This band kept up its organization for about fifteen years. It was a financial success and very few changes in members were made. Of the number, only four have passed over the river, Thos. Birdsall, C.E. Bennett, Deck Tower and Dr. Booth. Two years after this band disbanded we organized another band, of which particulars may be given later, if necessary.

Yes, I did have an orchestra for over 55 years and was leader of the cornet band for fifteen years. James Savage was our teacher for two years at five dollars per week and we never lacked for funds to pay all expenses. Now, please allow me to say to the young gentlemen, and also ladies of Milford, that there is more musical talent in this town than in any other town of its size in the state. Why not organize a band? I hope if the boys don't soon make a move that the ladies will, and I will help them financially.

Yours respectfully,  
J.C. KINSMAN.

Milford Times: July 29, 1899

## **A Little Band History**

EDITOR TIMES:

A few weeks ago I gave a short history of the second cornet band of Milford, and since that time I have had a great many questions asked about the third band, so with your permission I will give, for the benefit of Mr. Albright and others, a true history of it. This band was organized in 1876—or the "year that Samuel J. Tilden was elected president"—and the following named persons were members of it, J.C. Kinsman, J.O. Goite, Alf. Kinney, George Dickerson, George Pettinger, Chas. Pettinger, John Osborn, Elisha Osborn, James Osborn, Ben Ingalls, Geo. Ingalls, Ed. Chapell. This band only lived about three years owing to three of the most prominent members leaving town at one time, but it always paid its own expenses, and the most remarkable part is that they are all living now. If you don't believe it was a lively little band, just ask some of them if they ever played at Hartland for a Grange picnic.

There were two other bands organized in this town but I will say nothing at present about them.

Now I want to talk to you young men of Milford. Many of you were born here and have got to be voters of this town and still you never have heard a band that was organized at home. I understand that there is a slow move towards organizing one. Now would it not be delightful on moonlight evenings to have the band come out and discourse to the people some sweet music occasionally? Then again when the 4<sup>th</sup> of July comes around just put on your uniforms and at sunrise come out and play the "Star Spangled Banner" and have a few guns fired. Then the people will feel proud of you and the young ladies will admire you and will say 'don't they look splendid?'

Respectfully yours,  
J.C. KINSMAN

10-14-1899

Milford has a band. Not ready for public appearance, perhaps, but will be in the near future. They met on Monday night last for their first practice and will meet again next Monday night to practice and organize. The members are George and Joe Dickerson, John Goite, Chas. Tick, Elmer McCullough, Lee Hill, Hardin Eddy, Floyd

Wooton, Fred St. John, N.E. Stephens, D. Calhoun, F.E.W. Wells, Roy Chappell, and Roy Williams.

11-11-1899

Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Kinsman came down from Flint Tuesday and in the evening were treated to a pleasant surprise arranged for them by Mr. and Mrs. J. Reed. Neighbors and friends from town and country had been invited and a large company gathered in response to the invitation and gave a warm welcome to Mr. Kinsman and his bride and extended to them their sincerest wishes for continued happiness. Mr. Kinsman entertained the company with selections on the violin, which were interrupted, however, by a serenade by the Milford band, whose presence was unknown to the host until this time. As the organization of a band was one of Mr. Kinsman's pet projects it was quite fitting that he should be one of the first to be serenaded.....(Just married at the age of 72.)B