

## **'Cheering and appropriate airs' for a railway celebration.<sup>1</sup>**

### **Our project**

This small project is designed to provide an authentic musical backdrop to events leading up to and including 2025. It is designed to introduce people to the sounds of the S&DR opening day celebrations in the days before the brass band was invented. The outputs will be free downloadable recordings of S&DR Railway Celebratory Music plus, a schools' project introducing students to early instruments and a public concert.

### **Historic background**

Music was a key part of the S&DR celebrations with every new part of the railway to be opened accompanied by a band, often positioned inside adapted band waggons. Mr Meynell's band from Yarm embarked on two waggons behind 'Experiment' so that the rest of the journey was accompanied by music. When the Yarm branch opened on the 17 October 1825 the same band joined '60 respectable tradesmen' at Mr Meynell's New Inn (now the Cleveland Bay) and the band performed 'appropriate airs...some gentlemen also favouring the company with a variety of songs, and were joined in the choruses by the members of the band' (Durham County Advertiser October 22nd 1825). The Haggerleases branch benefited from two opening ceremonies in 1830, the first with a musical accompaniment by the West Auckland amateur band and the second by the Staindrop amateur band, both in adapted waggons.[viii] At the opening of the Middlesbrough branch, 'bands of music were also in attendance' (Durham Chronicle January 1st 1831). The band which accompanied the opening of the Shildon Tunnel in 1842 is un-named but it went into the tunnel along with the flag waving procession.

### **What music will be recorded?**

A selection of 8-10 tunes will be selected from known music played by the S&DR most likely from the list below.

*From the Opening Day Banquet:*

-  God Save the King
-  Hail Star of Brunswick
-  The Railway
-  Duke of York's March
-  Rule Britannia
-  Here's a Health
-  Old Towler
-  Scots Wha Hae
-  Weel may the Keel Row
-  Should Auld Acquaintance

*Later S&DR Railway Celebrations (optional depending on funding and time available):*

-  Bonnie Pit Laddie (1830 Haggerleases Branch phase 1, by the Staindrop Amateur Band who also played Weel May the Keel Row)
-  Merrily Danced the Quaker's Wife (Prince of Wales Tunnel opening, Shildon 1842)
-  6th June 1857, at the S&DR Co's gathering to celebrate the laying of the foundation stone of a pedestal on which to place Locomotion No 1 and a tender outside the S&DR station [North Road Stn]. Hoggett's band [the current Cockerton Prize Silver

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<sup>1</sup> A description of the music by the Chairman of the S&DR who was also the band leader (Jeans 1974, 70)

Band] 'played some good music' and arrived 'playing Mozart's 12th Mass with taste and precision - - D&SD'ham&NYksTimes Sat June 13th 1857. (James Hoggett lived at Beethoven House in Northgate, Darlington. He brought a number of people together to play music and eventually formed a saxhorn band in 1863).

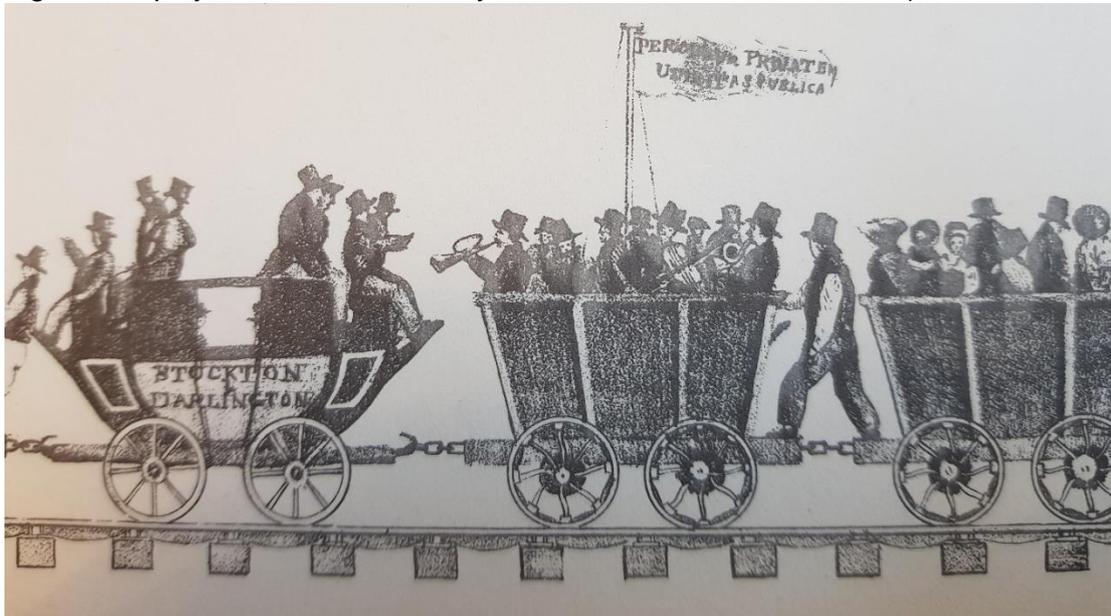


Figure 1. An extract from an 1827 lithograph showing the opening of the S&DR in 1825 with one bandwagon (there were in fact two). A fiddle and two horns can be seen and possibly a trombone which must have been challenging in such a tight space.

## The Band

Queen Victoria's Consort is made up of some of the U.K's leading early brass musicians and brings to life a stunning collection of original 19th Century brass instruments, these instruments are from the collections of the individual members (Robert Vanryne, Tim Hawes, Jeremy West, Susan Addison and Andy Kershaw) and from the 'Kershaw Collection' QVC has performed at The London Transport Museum, Steam on the District Line, Buckingham Palace, Burgh House, Cambridge University and Alexandra Palace to name but a few. The ensemble has featured in the Telegraph and on both BBC and ITV London news. The ensemble has collaborated with historical companies such as English Heritage and Lincoln Castle as well as actors from Shakespeare's Globe and 'Time Will Tell'. For more information about the musicians and their instruments see <https://www.queenvictoriasconsort.co.uk/>

## The Instruments

The choice of instruments will depend on the final selection of music and their availability, but are likely to include:

- 🎺 Keyed Bugle (1811 patent)
- 🎺 Early Cornopean (c1825)
- 🎺 Trombone
- 🎺 Serpent
- 🎺 Possibly clarinet and flute (depending on arrangements)
- 🎺 Percussion

## **Community benefits**

- 👉 In consultation with the Durham Music Service (or other teaching staff) we will devise a workshop for local schools involving early musical instruments and possibly the parlour game of creating a kitchen orchestra.
- 👉 A public concert at a venue to be agreed, possibly Locomotion in Shildon, the Railway Institute in Shildon, the Georgian Theatre in Stockton or Central Hall in Darlington. We could also possibly have concerts on trains between Shildon and Stockton, although that might be something better carried out in 2025.
- 👉 Free downloadable music appropriate to the time available for talks, interpretation, celebratory events, for background music in museums and films made as part of the celebrations. This to be available before 2025.

## **Who will pay for it?**

We hope that a variety of organisations might be interested in chipping in. Initial ideas include:

- 👉 Local Councillor Budgets
- 👉 Area Action Partnerships
- 👉 National Heritage Lottery
- 👉 Northern Regional Brass Band Trust
- 👉 Arts Council?

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