

In the presence of Mrs. Ursula Vaughan Williams

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS
CHORAL SOCIETY

ASSEMBLY HALL

Sunday, 20th November, 1960
at 2.45 p.m.

A SEA SYMPHONY

(VAUGHAN WILLIAMS)

REQUIEM

(BRAHMS)

HEATHER HARPER (Soprano)

JOHN DETHICK (Baritone)

FULL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Leader: RONALD GOOD)

Conductor **Dr. HAROLD MAY**

TICKETS (all bookable):

7/6, 6/-, 5/-, 3/6 and 2/6

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Programme and Book of Words - 6d.

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*The National Federation of Music Societies, to which this Society is affiliated
supports this Concert with Funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain*

THE programme being presented today represents the culmination of many weeks' hard work in rehearsal, particularly for the Choir, which in performing two major works in one programme has set itself a heavy task. In view of the printing of the whole of the words of both works in this programme there is not space for much description, and it is felt that the words will be of more assistance in following the music than explanatory notes. Suffice it to say that *Brahms's* REQUIEM, which opens the Concert, is one of this composer's most profound works; it is not a Catholic Requiem in that it does not take its text from the Mass, but from the Bible and Apocrypha. The work gives voice to deepest personal thoughts upon life and death and its appeal cannot diminish until humanity itself alters.

The SEA SYMPHONY is of very different calibre. It is a setting of a poem by Walt Whitman for large Orchestra and Chorus, and in the traditional four movements of a Symphony (not in Oratorio form). The Orchestration is brilliant, and although the work was composed in 1910 it still remains one of the composer's most successful and enduring works. It is being performed today, 50 years after its composition, in accordance with the wish of R.V.W., and we hope that those of the audience who are hearing it for the first time will thoroughly enjoy what should be an exhilarating experience.

It is a great pleasure to welcome Mrs. Ursula Vaughan Williams, widow of the composer. We appreciate her interest, and hope that she will find much pleasure in sharing our tribute to her late husband.

Miss HEATHER HARPER is a newcomer to Tunbridge Wells, and her fine London and broadcast performances in opera and oratorio have increased our pleasure in securing her engagement for today. We extend her a most warm welcome, and also to Mr. JOHN DETHICK, well known in the North and Midlands; he last appeared here in "Hiawatha" 7 years ago. We are very glad to hear him again.

Thanks are due to Mr. Roy Douglas (who worked with R.V.W. for many years) for his help and advice throughout; also to Mrs. Dorothy Berry, who, with Mr. Douglas, has rehearsed the Orchestra. To Mr. Ronald Good, who leads, for obtaining the services of eminent London players, and to the local members of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra who have so willingly agreed to play for us, and have given up much time to rehearsal.

C.W.

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

HEATHER HARPER (Soprano)

JOHN DETHICK (Baritone)

FULL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Leader : RONALD GOOD)

Conductor : Dr. HAROLD MAY

REQUIEM

(BRAHMS)

I. Chorus

Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted. *S. Matthew v, 4.*

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Who goeth forth and weepeth, and beareth precious seed, shall come again rejoicing, and bring his sheaves with him. *Ps. cxxvi, 5-6.*

II. Chorus

Behold, all flesh is as the grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the field. The grass is withered, and the flower thereof is fallen. *I Peter i, 24.*

Now therefore be patient, O my brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. See how the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, till it receive in time the early and the latter rain. So be ye patient. *James v, 7-8.*

Behold all flesh is as the grass, etc.

But yet the Lord's word standeth for evermore. *I Peter i, 25.*

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return again, and come with singing unto Zion. Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads alway, gladness and joy everlasting shall they obtain, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. *Isaiah xxxv, 10.*

III. Baritone Solo and Chorus

Lord, let me know mine end, and the number of my days : let me know how frail I am, that I be made sure how long I have to live.

Surely, Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth before Thee : And my lifetime is as nothing to Thee : Verily every man living is altogether vanity.

For surely man walketh as a shadow : and he disquieteth himself in vain, yea, all in vain : his riches, he knoweth not who shall gather them.

Now, Lord, what then do I hope for ? My hope is in Thee. *Ps. xxxix, 4-7.*

But the righteous souls are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. *Wisdom iii, 1.*

IV. Chorus

How lovely are Thy dwellings fair, O Lord of hosts !

My soul longeth, yea longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord.

My heart and flesh ring out their joy unto the living God.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house : they praise Thee, Lord, evermore.

Ps. lxxxiv, 1, 2, 4.

V. Soprano Solo and Chorus

Ye now have sorrow : but I will again behold you, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy shall no man take from you. *S. John xvi, 22.*

Thee will I comfort, as one whom his mother comforts. *Isaiah lxvi, 13.*

Now behold me, ye see how for a little while labour and toil were my lot, yet have I found much rest. *Ecclesiasticus li, 27.*

VI. Baritone Solo and Chorus

For we have here no abiding city, but yet we seek that to come. *Hebrews xiii, 14.*

Behold, I shew you a mystery : We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet : for behold, the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory ? O death, where is thy sting ? *I Corinthians xv, 51-52, 54-55.*

Worthy art Thou, Lord, of praise and glory, honour and power : for Thou, Almighty, hast created all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created. *Revelation iv, 11.*

VII. Chorus

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : even so, saith the Spirit : for they rest from their labours ; and their works follow after them. *Revelation xiv, 13.*

INTERVAL (10 mins.)

A SEA SYMPHONY

(VAUGHAN WILLIAMS)

I. A SONG FOR ALL SEAS, ALL SHIPS

Behold, the sea itself,

And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships ;

See, where their white sails, bellying in the wind, speckle the green and blue,

See, the steamers coming and going, steaming in or out of port,

See, dusky and undulating, the long pennants of smoke.

Behold, the sea itself,

And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships.

— — — — —
To-day a rude brief recitative,

Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship-signal,

Of unnamed heroes in the ships—of waves spreading and spreading far as the
eye can reach,
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations,
Fitful like a surge.
Of sea-captains young and old, and the mates, and of all intrepid sailors,
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never surprise nor death dismay,
Picked sparingly, without noise by thee, old ocean, chosen by thee,
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

Flaunt out, O sea, your separate flags of nations !
Flaunt out visible as ever the various ship-signals !
But do you reserve especially for yourself and for the soul of man one flag above
all the rest,
A spiritual woven signal for all nations, emblem of man elate above death,
Token of all brave captains and all intrepid sailors and mates,
And all that went down doing their duty,
Reminiscent of them, twined from all intrepid captains young and old,
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time, o'er all brave sailors,
All seas, all ships.

II. ON THE BEACH AT NIGHT ALONE

On the beach at night alone,
As the old mother sways her to and fro singing her husky song,
As I watch the bright stars shining, I think a thought of the clef of the universes
and of the future.
A vast similitude interlocks all,
All distances of place however wide,
All distances of time,
All souls, all living bodies though they be ever so different,
All nations, all identities that have existed or may exist,
All lives and deaths, all of the past, present, future,
This vast similitude spans them, and always has spanned,
And shall forever span them and compactly hold and enclose them.

III. (SCHERZO) THE WAVES

After the sea-ship, after the whistling winds,
After the white-gray sails taut to their spars and ropes,
Below, a myriad, myriad waves hastening, lifting up their necks,
Tending in ceaseless flow toward the track of the ship,
Waves of the ocean bubbling and gurgling, blithely prying,
Waves, undulating waves, liquid, uneven, emulous waves,
Toward that whirling current, laughing and buoyant with curves,
Where the great vessel sailing and tacking displaced the surface,
Larger and smaller waves in the spread of the ocean yearnfully flowing,
The wake of the sea-ship after she passes, flashing and frolicsome under the sun,
A motley procession with many a fleck of foam and many fragments,
Following the stately and rapid ship, in the wake following.

IV. THE EXPLORERS

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,
Covered all over with visible power and beauty,
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,
Unspeaking high processions of sun and moon and countless stars above,
Below, the manifold grass and waters,

With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

— — — — —

Down from the gardens of Asia descending,
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,
Wandering, yearning, with restless explorations,
questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-happy hearts
that sad incessant refrain, — 'Wherefore unsatisfied soul?
Whither O mocking life?'

Ah who shall soothe these feverish children?
Who justify these restless explorations?
Who speak the secret of impassive earth?

— — — — —

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried out,
Perhaps even now the time has arrived.
After the seas are all crossed,
After the great captains and engineers have accomplished their work,
After the noble inventors,
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

— — — — —

O we can wait no longer,
We too take ship O Soul,
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,
Amid the wafting winds (thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O Soul).
Caroling free, singing our song of God,
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

O Soul thou pleassest me, I thee,
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,
Bathe me, O God, in thee, mounting to thee,
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O thou transcendent,
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them.
Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,
But that I, turning, call to thee O Soul, thou actual me,
And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,
And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.

— — — — —

Greater than stars or suns,
Bounding O Soul thou journeyest forth;

— — — — —

Away O Soul! hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers — haul out — shake out every sail!
Sail forth — steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O Soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.
O my brave Soul!
O farther, farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!

WALT WHITMAN.

Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra

ASSEMBLY HALL

SUNDAY, 4th DECEMBER, 1960, at 3 p.m.

Beethoven Programme

Overture, Egmont Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat, The Emperor
Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Eroica

Solo Piano: **DENIS MATTHEWS**

Guest Conductor: **GEORGE WELDON**

Tickets: Reserved 7/6, 6/-, 4/6 from Assembly Hall Box Office (Tel. 3313 & 2822) during the 2 weeks before the concert. Unreserved 3/6, 2/6 at the Door only. Reductions for parties from Schools and Youth Organisations.

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

Conductor: **Dr. HAROLD MAY**

SUNDAY, 18th DECEMBER, 1960

Assembly Hall - 3 p.m.

CAROLS, with **OSIAN ELLIS** (Harp)

WALTER NEAL and **MARJORIE VINALL** (2 pianofortes)

Tickets (all bookable) 6/-, 5/-, 4/- and 2/6

MAUNDY THURSDAY, 29th MARCH, 1961

Assembly Hall - 7.30 p.m.

ST. MATTHEW PASSION (J. S. Bach)

OLIVE KEROL (Soprano) **LILY KETTLEWELL** (Contralto)

DAVID GALLIVER (Tenor) **JOHN WAKEFIELD** (Tenor)

HERVEY ALAN (Bass) **WILLIAM McCUE** (Bass)

WALTER NEAL (Piano Continuo) **FULL ORCHESTRA**

Tickets (all bookable) 7/6, 6/-, 5/-, 3/6 and 2/6

Reductions for parties at all concerts Special terms for Schools

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

(57th Season)

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Singing membership of the Society is open to all who sing. **New members are welcomed** (subject to a private audition by the Conductor). Those who would like to join may come to any rehearsal or write to the Hon. Secretary: Mr. CYRIL WOOD, c/o. Ibbett, Mosely, Card & Co., 7, London Road, Tunbridge Wells. (Tel. 446/7).

Rehearsals: Christ Church Hall, High Street on Mondays, at 7 p.m. from September to May.

Annual Subscription: £1 1s. (reduction for those under 21).

The Society is greatly indebted to its Vice-Presidents for their support, which helps to bridge the serious gap between income and expenditure which nearly always arises in giving choral concerts. It is hoped that all those interested in the performance of choral music will become Vice-Presidents by contributing at least one guinea a year.