

14 November 1976

**Royal  
Tunbridge  
Wells  
Choral  
Society**

**MENDELSSOHN**

# **Elijah**

1976 - 1977

**ELGAR**

# **GERONTIUS**

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# **Elijah**

an Oratorio composed by  
**FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY**

Original libretto by  
Pastor Julius Schubring

Susan Kessler . . . . . *mezzo-soprano*  
Doreen Millman . . . . . *soprano*  
Henry Howell . . . . . *tenor*  
John Noble (Elijah) . . . . . *baritone*

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society  
The Choir of the Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School  
(Choirmistress: Miss Mortimore)  
The Canterbury Festival Orchestra  
(Leader: Maureen McKeown)

conducted by

**ALLAN WICKS**

Assembly Hall  
Royal Tunbridge Wells  
SUNDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 1976 at 3 p.m.

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## Orchestra and Artists

### The Canterbury Festival Orchestra

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society extends a very warm welcome this afternoon to our distinguished visitors from Canterbury. The orchestra came into being under its present title, in 1966, for a performance of Britten's *War Requiem* with the Canterbury Choral Society, and now plays regularly for that Society. Under their leader, Maureen McKeown, they have several notable successes to their credit, including performances of Mahler's 8th Symphony, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and the Berlioz *Requiem*. Later this year, at Christmas, they will be giving a performance of Mahler's 2nd Symphony.

#### ALLAN WICKS

Our conductor this afternoon is Organist and Master of Choristers at Canterbury Cathedral. He was born at Bingley, Yorkshire, and educated at St John's School, Leatherhead, and at Christ Church, Oxford. His previous appointments were at York Minster and at Manchester Cathedral. With this background it is not surprising that Dr Wicks has a special interest in the conducting of choral music. He has made a number of broadcasts and has recorded, at the organ of St Paul's Cathedral, Messiaen's *La Nativité*.

Sussan Kessler was born in Sydney, Australia, where she studied with Marjorie Walker. She won many prizes and awards, appeared on television and performed in opera. In 1973 she came to London and later that year went to Germany to study German at the Goethe Institute. Miss Kessler has a wide repertoire and has given many performances in France, Austria and Switzerland, as well as at the Wigmore Hall in London and throughout the provinces. Her most recent success was at the London Bach Festival earlier this year.



**Henry Howell** is Birmingham-born, but has spent a good deal of his time in Australia, returning to this country in 1973. He is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music and is one of the founders, and a former director and manager, of the Queensland Opera Company, with whom he sang 30 major roles as principal tenor. In this country, he has performed with the London Choral Society at the Royal Albert Hall, and has recorded for the BBC with the New Opera Company at Sadlers Wells.



**Doreen Millman** hails from Canada, and in 1967 — whilst still a student at the University of Toronto — she sang with the Canadian Opera Company. Later, she appeared with the Symphony Orchestra of Kingston, Ontario, as soprano soloist in 'Elijah'. Miss Millman has spent the past five years in this country and during that time has performed works by Wagner, Sullivan, Bach and Verdi.

**John Noble** is best known as a concert singer, but he has also appeared with Covent Garden Opera, the English Opera Company and the Handel Opera Society. He created the title role in the British stage premiere of 'Wat Tyler'. He has sung with all the major musical organisations in Britain, in many international festivals throughout Europe, and has performed under the batons of both Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Charles Groves.



**Christopher Harris** — the Society's chorus-master for today's concert — was born in Tunbridge Wells and educated at Skinners School. He won an organ scholarship to Jesus College, Oxford, and later graduated MA at Cardiff University. He is widely-travelled, and among his recent performances was a recital given at St Paul's Cathedral in Boston, Mass. He is now Head of Music at Skinners School and Organist at St John's Church.



Felix Mendelssohn

## ELIJAH

Mendelssohn completed only two oratorios the first of which, *St Paul*, was given its first performance in Germany in 1836 when the composer was 27 years of age.

Soon afterwards, he was anxious to find a suitable subject for a new oratorio, and letters of the period exchanged with a friend in London reveal the first mention of a possible '*Elijah*'.

But it was only after long and exhaustive correspondence that Mendelssohn finally accepted an old family friend — Pastor Julius Schubring — as his librettist. Even so, the two were frequently at cross-purposes, for the Pastor envisaged a 'musical sermon', while Mendelssohn was determined to write an oratorio with considerable dramatic impact.

The result was that Mendelssohn himself revised Schubring's original text — a task which took him six years to complete. It was while the work was lying fallow in this way that Mendelssohn received, in 1845, an enquiry from the Birmingham Festival asking whether '*he could contribute a novelty which would give distinction to the great Midland Meeting of 1846*'.

This enquiry acted as a catalyst and despite the limited amount of time, and the intolerable heat of the summer of 1846, Mendelssohn managed not to disappoint the good people of Birmingham. The composer himself conducted the first performance in the Birmingham Town Hall on 26 August 1846, and in April of the following year he again conducted the work at the Exeter Hall, London, at a performance given by the Sacred Harmonic Society.

But by this time, years of over-work had undermined Mendelssohn's health. The great pressure under which he always worked, the amount of composing and editing work he undertook, his meticulous attention to detail of both music and words, and the heat of the previous summer all took their final toll, and Mendelssohn died on 4 November, 1847, just six months after his triumphant success.



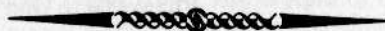
## Part I

Introduction . . . . .	As God the Lord of Israel liveth
Overture	
Chorus . . . . .	Help Lord!
Duet and Chorus . . . . .	Lord bow Thine ear to our prayer
Recit . . . . .	Ye people rend your hearts
Air . . . . .	If with all your hearts
Chorus . . . . .	Yet doth the Lord see it not
Recit . . . . .	Elijah get thee hence
Double Quartet . . . . .	For He shall give His angels
Recit . . . . .	Now Cherith's brook is dried up
Recit and Duet . . . . .	What have I to do with Thee?
Chorus . . . . .	Blessed are the men who fear Him
Recit Chorus . . . . .	As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth
Double Chorus . . . . .	Baal, we cry to thee
Recit . . . . .	Call him louder
Chorus . . . . .	Hear our cry O Baal!
Chorus . . . . .	Baal hear and answer
Air . . . . .	Lord God of Abraham
Quartet . . . . .	Cast thy burden upon the Lord
Recit . . . . .	O Thou who makest Thine angels spirits
Chorus . . . . .	The fire descends from Heaven
Air . . . . .	Is not His word like a fire?
Air . . . . .	Woe unto them who forsake Him
Recit . . . . .	O man of God, help thy people
Recit Chorus . . . . .	O Lord, Thou hast overthrown
Chorus . . . . .	Thanks be to God

## Part II

Air . . . . .	Hear ye Israel
Chorus . . . . .	Be not afraid

Chorus .....	And then shall your light break forth
Recit Chorus .....	The Lord hath exalted thee
Chorus .....	Woe to him
Recit .....	Man of God
Air .....	It is enough
Recit .....	See now he sleepeth
Trio .....	Lift thine eyes
Chorus .....	He, watching over Israel
Recit .....	Arise, Elijah
Air .....	O rest in the Lord
Chorus .....	He that shall endure to the end
Recit .....	Night falleth around me
Chorus .....	Behold, God the Lord passed by
Recit Quartet and Chorus .....	Holy, Holy, Holy
Chorus .....	Go return upon the way
Recit .....	I go on my way
Air .....	For the mountains shall depart
Chorus .....	Then did Elijah
Air .....	Then shall the righteous
Recit .....	Behold God hath sent Elijah
Chorus .....	But the Lord from the north
Quartet .....	O come, everyone that thirsteth





## **Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society**

Founded in 1904, the Society gives local people an opportunity of performing, and listening to, choral music to very high standards in the company of professional musicians. New members are always very welcome and are invited to write for details to The Secretary, G.D. Stredder, Birchetts Court, Stockland Green Road, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. A cordial invitation is also extended to new Patrons and Vice-President of the Society, which is supported both the National Federation of Music Societies and the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Some idea of the scope and range of the Society's work in recent years can be seen from the following list of performances in Tunbridge Wells.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>1976</b> | <b>BACH</b> B minor Mass                 |
| <b>1975</b> | <b>ORFF</b> Carmina Burana               |
|             | <b>HOLST</b> Hymn of Jesus               |
|             | <b>VERDI</b> Four Sacred Pieces          |
| <b>1974</b> | <b>BACH</b> St John Passion              |
|             | <b>HANDEL</b> Messiah                    |
| <b>1973</b> | <b>ELGAR</b> Spirit of England           |
|             | <b>VAUGHAN WILLIAMS</b> Sea Symphony     |
|             | <b>WALTON</b> Belshazzar's Feast         |
| <b>1972</b> | <b>VERDI</b> Requiem                     |
|             | <b>BACH</b> St Matthew Passion           |
| <b>1971</b> | <b>ELGAR</b> The Dream of Gerontius      |
|             | <b>VAUGHAN WILLIAMS</b> Dona Nobis Pacem |
|             | <b>BRAHMS</b> Requiem                    |
| <b>1970</b> | <b>MENDELSSOHN</b> Elijah                |
|             | <b>BACH</b> St John Passion              |
|             | <b>VERDI</b> Aida                        |
| <b>1969</b> | <b>BEETHOVEN</b> Choral Symphony         |
|             | <b>ELGAR</b> The Music Makers            |
|             | <b>LAMBERT</b> Rio Grande                |
| <b>1968</b> | <b>HANDEL</b> Messiah                    |
|             | <b>VERDI</b> Requiem                     |
| <b>1967</b> | <b>HAYDN</b> Creation                    |
|             | <b>ELGAR</b> The Dream of Gerontius      |
| <b>1966</b> | <b>BRUCKNER</b> Mass in F minor          |
|             | <b>ROSSINI</b> Stabat Mater              |
|             | <b>COLERIDGE-TAYLOR</b> Hiawatha         |

Forthcoming concerts at the Assembly Hall

## **The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society**

### **CHILDREN'S CAROL CONCERT**

Sunday, 19 December 1976 at 3 p.m.

An afternoon of traditional Christmas music with many favourite carols, and a few new ones as well. A special feature of this year's carol concert is that the Society will be assisted by a special choir of 60 children drawn from primary schools in the Tunbridge Wells area.

**Conductor: Anthony Smith-Masters**

**Accompanist: Sheila Quine**

### **THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS**

Sir Edward Elgar: text by Cardinal Newman

Sunday, 17 April 1977 at 3 p.m.

**Conductor: DEREK WATMOUGH**

Tickets available from members of the Society or direct from the box office at the Assembly Hall.

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### **The Green Room Club**

#### **HOLMES – WELSH – GOLDSTONE TRIO**

Sunday, 28 November 1976 at 3 p.m.

#### **ST. MARGARET'S WESTMINSTER SINGERS**

**Conductor: Richard Hickox**

Sunday, 23 January 1977 at 3 p.m.

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### **Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra**

Sunday, 5 December 1976 at 3 p.m.

Weber . . . . . *Overture: Der Freischütz*  
Glière . . . . . *Concerto for Harp*  
Dvorak . . . . . *Symphony No.9*

Sunday, 6 February 1977 at 3 p.m.

Tchaikovsky . . . . . *Romeo and Juliet*  
Greig . . . . . *Piano Concerto (A minor)*  
Brahms . . . . . *Symphony No.3*



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Patrons of the Society contribute a minimum of £10 each season and receive two free tickets for each concert.

Vice-Presidents contribute a minimum of £3 each season and receive one free ticket.

The names of Patrons and Vice-Presidents are prominently displayed on concert programmes.

If you would like to support us in either of these ways, will you please contact the General Secretary, whose name appears at the foot of the page.

We express our thanks to existing Patrons and Vice-Presidents for their past and continuing support, and to the management and staff of the Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells.

General Secretary, G.D. Stredder, Birchetts Court, Stockland Green Road, Tunbridge Wells TN3 0TY. Telephone: Langton 2887.

The National Federation of Music Societies, to which this Society is affiliated, gives support towards the costs of concerts with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council also provides guarantees.