

PREFACE

As I joined the Tunbridge Wells Choral Society as soon as the war finished in 1945, and have been Membership Secretary since 1954 I had an almost complete collection of programmes and a good many press reports. I felt that as the Society entered the early '90s it was time to start making a record of all that had been achieved since 1904 in the hope that it might be used in some way when celebrating the centenary in the year 2004.

I asked Peggy Flood to help me. She has been a member since 1960 and so is very familiar with the Choir. Together we have sifted through programmes and indexed works performed, soloists and conductors. We have also spent many hours in the Tunbridge Wells Library gazing at reels and reels of microfilm of the *Kent and Sussex Couriers* for the first part of the century. It was fascinating. We were tempted to explore many other avenues, and the advertisements Well! We are very grateful to the Kent and Sussex Courier and to the very helpful staff in the Reference Library.

Of course, while we were doing all this we were often asked: "When are we going to read all about it?" And so, just for starters, here is a shortened version of the Society's activities from 1904 - 1996. With any luck the Main Course will follow in 2004.

My thanks to Richard Gosling, who read and typed the script, and to Michael Webb, who prepared it for the printer. I would also like to thank the members for their interest and support. Finally, a special word of appreciation to John H. Johnson (Johnny), without whom the choir might never have survived.

Mary Standen