

The National Federation of Music Societies to which the Waverley Singers are affiliated gives support towards the cost of this concert with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Grateful thanks are due to Mr. and Mrs. Lunn of Bracknell for the kind loan of the organ used in this performance.

The Waverley Singers' next performance will be on Saturday, 10th April, 1976 at Odiham Parish Church.

BACH'S MASS IN B MINOR

Soloists: Sandra Wilkes (Soprano), Margaret Cable (Contralto), Neil Jenkins (Tenor), Christopher Keyte (Bass)

Applications for audition for membership of the choir may be made to the Secretary, The Mews, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey (Tel. Frensham 2563). Rehearsals are held in Farnham at 8 p.m. every Thursday.

Saturday, 8th November, 1975 at 8 p.m.

PRINCES HALL, CIVIC CENTRE, ALDERSHOT

FAURÉ'S REQUIEM

WALTON'S BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

FIONA DOBIE - *Soprano*

JOHN BARROW - *Baritone*

THE WAVERLEY SINGERS

THE WAVERLEY ORCHESTRA
(*Leader: Kenneth Anderson*)

Conductor:

JOHN COTTERILL

FIONA DOBIE was born in Glasgow and educated at Hutchesons' Girls' Grammar School. She studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music from 1969-1973 and then was awarded a Sir James Caird Scholarship to the Royal College of Music where she has just completed a two year postgraduate course. She was a prizewinner at both colleges.

She has sung in various oratorio, concert and opera performances throughout the country which include B.B.C. solo recitals, several television appearances in Scotland and this year's Tilford Bach and English Bach festivals.

She recently won a Countess of Munster award to continue her studies with her present teacher Lyndon van der Pump and also to visit Munich to study with Hans Hotter.

JOHN BARROW is no stranger to local audiences and he has sung with the Waverley Singers on many previous occasions.

He appears at the major music festivals in Britain, is heard regularly in the Royal Festival and Queen Elizabeth Halls and has sung at the "Proms".

Operatic engagements have included Covent Garden, The English Opera Group, The Handel Opera Society and numerous smaller companies.

He is a frequent broadcaster on the radio in opera, oratorio and song recital programmes, and on television has created leading roles in two operas that were commissioned for B.B.C. 2. In addition his commercial recordings for HMV, Jupiter and Contour have received much favourable press criticism in both Britain and America.

His appearances with the Waverley Singers have included Mendelssohn's 'Elijah', Tony Hewitt-Jones' Seven Sea Poems, Bach's 'Christmas Oratorio', Elgar's 'The Kingdom' and Brahms' 'Requiem'.

JOHN COTTERILL was born in Welwyn Garden City in 1935 but has lived in Farnham since 1942. Keenly interested in music all his life, he founded the Waverley Singers in Farnham in 1955. He is also Conductor of the R.A.E. Symphony Orchestra, Farnborough to which position he was appointed in 1965 and of which orchestra some players in tonight's orchestra are also members. He has appeared as guest conductor with other local societies and is well known in local music generally and as a violinist.

PROGRAMME NOTES

FAURE'S REQUIEM was completed in 1887 and was first performed in Paris the following year. It was written in memory of the composer's father and when Fauré himself died in 1924 it was sung at his funeral. The work is unusual in that Fauré chose the sections of the Requiem text which suited his own gentle approach to the subject. In particular, the Dies Irae section with its vision of eternal damnation is omitted, while the text In Paradisum is added at the end to provide a quiet and transcendent conclusion.

WALTON'S BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST, despite having been composed in 1931, still retains its capacity to excite, astonish and even shock its audience. In such contrast to the Victorian traditions of settings of Biblical texts, the work has even been described as secular. Walton does much more than provide a brilliant setting of one of the Bible's most colourful stories; he matches the religious feeling behind that story with choral music of an intensity rarely matched in any oratorio. The passion and violence of its style are as intense as ever, even though the dissonance and jazz rhythms may be less startling now than when they were first heard forty years ago.

The work is basically in three sections. The first describes in the words of Psalm 137 the agony of the Jews in exile; the second is a description of the feast with its barbaric hymn of praise to the pagan gods of Babylon and culminating in the death of the King; the third represents the release of exultation by the fall of Babylon and a paean of excited praise, only briefly interrupted by a backward glance at the desolation of the great city. The splendour of the orchestration, the superbly selected text by Osbert Sitwell, and the typical onward thrust of Walton's difficult choral writing, much of the time for double chorus, all maintain a tension throughout this gripping work even after the final chord has ceased.

REQUIEM - - - - - GABRIEL FAURE
(1845-1924)

1. Introit et Kyrie - - - - - Choir
2. Offertoire - - - - - Baritone and Choir
3. Sanctus - - - - - Choir
4. Pie Jesu - - - - - Soprano
5. Agnus Dei - - - - - Choir
6. Libera Me - - - - - Baritone and Choir
7. In Paradisum - - - - - Choir

INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST - - - - - WILLIAM WALTON
(b. 1902)

Thus spake Isaiah:

Thy sons that thou shalt beget
They shall be taken away,
And be eunuchs
In the palace of the King of
Babylon
Howl ye, howl ye, therefore:
For the day of the Lord
is at hand!

By the waters of Babylon,
By the waters of Babylon
There we sat down: yea, we wept
And hanged our harps upon the
willows.

For they that wasted us
Required of us mirth;
They that carried us away captive
Required of us a song.
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her
cunning.

If I do not remember thee,
Let my tongue cleave to the roof
of my mouth.
Yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem
above my chief joy.

By the waters of Babylon
There we sat down: yea, we wept.
O daughter of Babylon, who art
to be destroyed,
Happy shall he be that taketh

thy children
And dasheth them against a stone,
For with violence shall that great
city Babylon be thrown down
And shall be found no more at all.

Babylon was a great city,
Her merchandise was of gold
and silver,
Of precious stones, of pearls,
of fine linen,
Of purple, silk and scarlet,
All manner vessels of ivory,
All manner vessels of most
precious wood,
Of brass, iron and marble,
Cinnamon, odours and ointments,
Of frankincense, wine and oil,
Fine flour, wheat and beasts,
Sheep, horses, chariots, slaves
And the souls of men.

In Babylon
Belshazzar the King
Made a great feast,
Made a feast to a thousand of
his lords,
And drank wine before the
thousand.
Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the
wine,
Commanded us to bring the gold
and silver vessels:
Yea! the golden vessels, which
his father, Nebuchadnezzar,
Had taken out of the temple that
was in Jerusalem.

He commanded us to bring the
golden vessels
Of the temple of the house of God,
That the King, his Princes, his wives
And his concubines might drink
therein.

Then the King commanded us:
Bring ye the cornet, flute, sackbut,
psaltery
And all kinds of music: they drank
wine again,

Yea, drank from the sacred vessels, And this was the writing that was
And then spake the King: written:

Praise ye
The God of Gold
Praise ye
The God of Silver
Praise ye
The God of Iron
Praise ye
The God of Wood
Praise ye
The God of Stone
Praise ye
The God of Brass
Praise ye the Gods!

Thus in Babylon, the mighty city,
Belshazzar the King made a great
feast,
Made a feast to a thousand of his
lords
And drank wine before the
thousand.

Belshazzar whiles he tasted the wine
Commanded us to bring the gold
and silver vessels
That his Princes, his wives and
his concubines
Might rejoice and drink therein.

After they had praised their
strange gods,
The idols and the devils,
False gods who can neither see
nor hear,

Called they for the timbrel and
the pleasant harp

To extol the glory of the King.
Then they pledged the King
before the people,
Crying, Thou, O King, art King
of Kings:

O King, live for ever . . .

And in that same hour, as they
feasted
Came forth fingers of a man's hand
And the King saw
The part of the hand that wrote.

'MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN'
'THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE
BALANCE AND FOUND WANT-
ING'.

In that night was Belshazzar the
King slain
And his Kingdom divided.

Then sing aloud to God our
strength:
Make a joyful noise unto the God
of Jacob.

Take a psalm, bring hither the
timbrel,
Blow up the trumpet in the new
moon,

Blow up the trumpet in Zion
For Babylon the Great is fallen,
fallen. Alleluia!

Then sing aloud to God our
strength:
Make a joyful noise unto the
God of Jacob,

While the Kings of the Earth lament
And the merchants of the Earth
Weep, wail and rend their raiment.
They cry, Alas, Alas, that great city,
In one hour is her judgement come.

The trumpeters and pipers are
silent,
And the harpers have ceased to
harp,
And the light of a candle shall
shine no more.

Then sing aloud to God our
strength.
Make a joyful noise to the God
of Jacob.
For Babylon the Great is fallen.
Alleluia!

ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Kenneth Anderson
Sally Breeze
Sally Brundan
Sidney Fincham
Maurice Hancock
Donald Mills
Gerald Moss
Robert Perry
Gordon Stewart
Hilda Thomson
Catherine Willis
Peter White

VIOLAS

Constance Fincham
Sally Brundan
Brenda Collins
Sidney Fincham
Heather Garner
Maurice Hancock
Felicity Phillips
Geoffrey Stark

CELLOS

Kathleen Anderson
Clifford Garner
Lewis Nicholson
Liesbeth Preece
Fiona Stewart
Veronica Watts

DOUBLE BASSES

Clare Long
Nicholas Davies

HARP

Janice Beven

PIANO

Margery Wakefield
(who is also the Waverley
(Singers' accompanist for
rehearsals)

ORGAN

David Victor-Smith

PICCOLO

Elisabeth Collins

FLUTES

Janet Maddock
Glen Turnbull

OBOES

Alison Herbert
Barry Collisson

COR ANGLAIS

John Bradshaw

CLARINETS

Llewellyn Niblett
Alan Dewey
Jeanette Forteath

E FLAT CLARINET

Alan Dewey

BASS CLARINET

Jeanette Forteath

BASSOONS

Alan Rutherford
John Williams

HORNS

Gordon Carr
Michael Baynes
Peter Civil
Margaret Gundarar

TRUMPETS

Malcolm Smith
Andrew Hendrie
John Hammond

TROMBONES

Noel Fraser
Malcolm Frammingham
Leslie Lake

TUBA

Clifford Bevan

TIMPANI

Christopher King

PERCUSSION

Leslie Lawrence
Susan Lawrence
John Gillings
Nigel Shipway

It is now more than forty years since William Walton shocked and yet excited choirs and choral societies with his Belshazzar's Feast. The text, selected and arranged by Osbert Sitwell, is taken from the book of Daniel and is enclosed within verses of Psalm 137 and Psalm 81. The score is a marvellous tapestry of orchestral colouring, rhythmic vitality and harmonic invention - a completely new concept in choral writing, breaking away from the English choral traditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Yet despite the work's many complexities, it held very few problems for the Waverley Singers and their conductor John Cotterill who performed it at the Princes Hall, Aldershot last Saturday evening. From the choir's first utterance it was clear that they had been very thoroughly prepared. The diction was always clear and Walton's syncopated rhythms were tightly controlled by the conductor. The choir showed that it appreciated the harmonic implications of Walton's melodic lines by secure chording and ensemble, particularly in the unaccompanied passages. The double semi-chorus section just before the end would have benefitted from a few more voices in order to achieve a fuller and more balanced tone as the blend in the pianissimo passages here was marred by one or two obtrusive voices. Not least, this work makes enormous physical demands on the singers. The choir's response was magnificent and unflagging in its task, the tone remaining as fresh and full in the final triumphant "Then sing aloud" as it had been in the opening lament "By the waters of Babylon".

In the few bars in which the choir is not actually engaged the action is carried on by the baritone soloist. John Barrow, after a hesitant start, gripped the attention of the audience with his fine declamatory style in the unaccompanied recitative, and in the dramatic melismas recounting the slaying of Belshazzar, He brought a dramatic intensity to the performance which is so essential to the interpretation of the work.

Soloist and choir were admirably supported by the Waverley Orchestra led by Kenneth Anderson. The balance was excellent except for the very loudest moments where the upper strings were rather swamped by brass and woodwind. In his scoring Walton was as inventive and demanding as in the choral writing. There was some distinguished playing in all sections of the orchestra, and under the clear beat of the conductor there was no room for error. Their performance matched that of the choir and made, for those taking part and listening, a memorable experience.

One of the problems of performing Belshazzar's Feast is knowing what other work to balance the programme with. To devote the first half of the evening to Faure's Requiem was a particularly effective choice. It was a complete contrast to the Walton in every possible way. The smooth controlled tone of the opening, the long legato phrases of the Sanctus, and the nicely shaped climax in the Agnus Dei did nothing to detract from what we were to hear later. John Barrow sang the Baritone part with a fine sense of style and a feeling for the mood of the piece. The Soprano soloist, Fiona Dobie, has a nice clear voice and her Pie Jesu was musically sung with good control of tone over the long phrases.

The undoubted success of the evening and the obvious enjoyment of the audience was reflected in the long applause which greeted John Cotterill and his performers at the end of the evening. RW.