

# “NO HOLDING STAVELEY” AT WESTMORLAND FESTIVAL

## VILLAGE CHOIR TAKES SIX TROPHIES AT COUNTY MUSIC EVENT

### Splendid Competitive Work and Brilliant Concerts

#### GREAT RECEPTION FOR VALIANT HAWKSHEAD

The 1949 Mary Wakefield Westmorland Music Festival, which has been held this week in Kendal, has maintained much of its traditional character and splendour.

It began in a blaze of sunshine, and that summer-like spirit permeated the atmosphere from the start, and gave such a fillip to the attendance that new records were established. The streets of Kendal were gaily bedecked with flags and bunting and the old grey town had a truly festival appearance.

On Wednesday, the Staveley Village Choir achieved the distinction of winning every class, and the adjudicator commented that the men were every bit as good as the women.

#### Prolonged Applause for “Tarn Hows” Composition

In a memorable week's events, Tuesday will stand out as the essence of the meaning of the festival movement, for it was ever the wish of the founder that children should have an everlasting place. There was such enthusiasm this year among the competitors and public alike that the attendance constituted a record for the opening day.

In several directions new ground has been broken not the least of which has been the extension of the county's principal musical event to five days. One of the most heartening features for the future has been the marked increase in entries for vocal and instrumental classes among young people. Nothing could augur better for the festival. There has been a feast of good music for the thousands who attended the evening concerts, crowned by the two-day visit of the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra, under its permanent conductor, Mr. Charles Groves, who was also festival conductor.

Mr. Groves has been extremely popular with the singers, and the hope has been expressed that this may be the first of many such visits by one who is universally recognised as being among the most brilliant of the young choral and orchestral conductors in England today. That Westmorland Festival has been privileged to have had the benefit of his services is a matter of keen satisfaction. Mr. Groves has followed in the line of some of the

sing in the four-part competitions. Hurried consultations were made, and it was decided that if their conductor, Mr. H. Coates, a former Durham Cathedral chorister, could find a substitute, he would sing tenor, and the choir could still retain its place in the festival. Arrangements were made with Mr. Noble, to take charge of Hawkshead, and there was a slight delay in the competitions while the choir had one rehearsal and then went straight on to sing. They were given a great reception by the audience and other choirs, and their pleasing singing received the commendation of the judge—"not out of sympathy"—as he put it, but well deserved.

A revival of interest in ladies' trios was appreciated, and Dr. Chalmers Burns adjudicated six entries in the Friends' Meeting House. There were also four entries for mixed voice quartets. Though both classes were open to the festival area, Kendal was able to provide only one trio. Ambleside, Grasmere, and Staveley provided the rest. As in previous years, the Women's Institute choirs appeared in strength, and they had the pleasure of singing one of the most beautiful of the test pieces chosen for the week. North Westmorland figured prominently in the honours, and there was some regret that the northern part of the county had no representative choir in the four-part section, and in the concert.

#### THE AWARDS

imaginative, it was never too modern in outlook as to be beyond the scope of the ordinary listener. The audience gave prolonged applause after a delightful performance of a work which will undoubtedly gain in popularity.

A great day of music was brought to a close with a fascinating and superb performance of the Overture and Polovtsian Dances from "Prince Igor" by Borodin.

#### GRANGE CUP WON BY GRANGE

#### More Awards for Kendal Choirs

Yesterday (Thursday) was the final day for adult competitions, in which the Kendal choirs, and those from Milnthorpe, Sedburgh, Grange and Windermere took part.

In accordance with custom the male voice choirs opened the session, but there were only three entries.

Greenside Choir, Kendal, under Miss M. Hine, started the day well by winning the class and they had two more successes later with women's choirs and in the madrigal.

Kendal South Choir, who were conducted by Mr. J. Noble, were given the highest marks of the festival by the judge for their performance of the principal choral test piece. "Never

...had the benefit of his services is a matter of keen satisfaction. Mr. Groves has followed the line of some of the most distinguished British choral conductors who have visited Kendal in the past 50 years.

The principal judge has been Mr. David Yacamini, a Scotsman with a ready wit and sense of humour, who has endeared himself to all. He has had the assistance of Dr. Chalmers Burns, of Newcastle, and Mr. Ronald W. Gibson, Winnipeg, Canada, who was responsible for the sight-singing awards. Mr. Christopher Cowan, Sedbergh, is to judge the instrumental classes tonight (Friday) in place of Mr. Kenneth Ander-

Excellent arrangements were made at the theatre by the management, and the festival has had no hitches. Mr. Edwin Brockbank (Staveley), has been chairman of the committee, with Messrs. K. S. Himsworth and L. C. Somervell joint secretaries, Mr. J. W. Bargh (treasurer), and Mrs. D. Stavert competitions secretary.

Though Mr. George Rathbone, the president, was unable to be present, he composed the sight tests—as he did in pre-war years.

## “MESSIAH”

### Combined Choirs at Parish Church

Sponsored by Kendal Town Council and organised by the festival committee, the combined choirs of Kendal took part in a performance of parts of Handel's "Messiah" in the Parish Church on Tuesday evening. As a civic ceremony, the performance was attended by the Mayor and Corporation, who walked to the church, headed by the Borough Band and the sword and mace. At the church door the official party was met by the Rev. T. H. Coe (curate) in the absence through indisposition of Canon Bertram Jones, Vicar. The choir of 200 voices was under the direction of Mr. Charles Groves, the festival conductor, and the soloists were Ena Mitchell (soprano), Margaret McArthur (contralto), Rene Soames (tenor) and Scott Joynt (bass), with Mr. F. J. C. Dairymple at the organ. More than 1,100 people attended, but the accommodation of the ancient parish church was ample to meet the need. An impressive and inspiring performance was given, soloists and chorus giving of their best.

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### THE AWARDS

The awards were: Women's Choir—1 Staveley, 87 marks; 2 Endmoor, 84; 3 Patterdale, 83. Others: Grasmere and Ambleside, 80; Hawkshead, 79; Holme, 78.

Choral Society class — 1 Staveley, 88; 2 Patterdale, 85; 3 Ambleside, 84. Others: Hawkshead, 83; Grasmere, 82; Holme, 80; Endmoor, 79; Cartmel, 76.

Men's choirs—1 Staveley, 85; 2 Ambleside, 80; 3 Patterdale, 78.

Madrigal—1 Staveley, 87; 2 Cartmel, 83; 3 (equal) Holme and Endmoor, 82. Others: Ambleside, 81; Hawkshead, 81; Grasmere, 80; Patterdale, 79.

Women's Institutes or similar organisations — 1 Kirkby Stephen, 87; 2 Patterdale, 85; 3 Winton, 84. Others: Hawkshead, W.I. and Carver Women's Guild, Windermere, 83; Milnthorpe, 82; Outgate, 78.

Choral sight-singing — 1 Staveley, 90; 2 Holme, 89; 3 Ambleside, 88. Others: Endmoor, 87; Grasmere, 86; Patterdale, 85; Cartmel, 83; Hawkshead, 82.

Senior solo sight-singing — 1 Mrs. A. Fildes, Ambleside, 89; 2 Mr. Hales, Ambleside, 88; 3 Miss H. Marshall, 82.

John Syddall memorial cup for choir with highest aggregate in four choral classes. — Staveley (352 marks). Runners up, Ambleside (333).

Women's trio — 1 Greenside Ladies, Kendal (Mrs. Joan Sykes, Miss Doreen Hine, Mrs. Alice Pickles), 84; 2 Grasmere (Mrs. Clara Thompson, Mrs. I. Moberley, Miss Vera Farnell), 83; 3 Staveley (Joan Barker, Barbara Carswell, Sheila Dobson), 82. Others: Staveley (Winnie Turner, Phyllis Pennington, Isabella Dobson), 81; Ambleside (Mrs. Waterworth, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Fildes), 80; Ambleside (Mrs. Crossley, Miss Marshall, Miss Orr), 78.

Mixed voice quartet — 1 Grasmere, 85 (Miss N. Philipson, Mrs. Bessie Smith, Mr. J. Murdoch, Mr. H. Birch); 2 Ambleside, 83 (Mrs. Waterworth, Mrs. Horrax, Mr. Hales, Mr. Frost); 3 Ambleside, 75 (Mrs. Nicholson, Miss Clegg, Mr. A. Hickling, Mr. Nicholson). Others: Staveley, 74 (Joan Barker, Marjorie Bethom, Ian Meredith, William Bethom).

## 300 VOICES IN CONCERT CHORUS

...given the highest marks of the festival by the judge for their performance of the principal choral test piece, "Never weather-beaten sail," to an arrangement by Thomas Armstrong. In awarding them 90, the adjudicator said it was a most moving performance and one which had given him great pleasure. The choir also established a record in another direction, for they have now won the same class three festivals in succession, and on each occasion have been awarded the highest marks of the festival.

The Greenside Ladies' Choir had lovely balance and blend, and were commended by the judge for the delicacy. One mark behind them were Grange choir, who were told by the judge that, apart from one fault, they might have found themselves in a more exalted position. Grange, however, won the Grange Challenge Cup for choral sight-singing, and so it was that all the trophies went either to Kendal or Grange.

Mr. Yacamini had a special word of praise for the Kendal Choir. He said he realised it was a new choir, and he thought they had done very well in their first competitive festival throughout the competition the duties of official accompanist have been undertaken by Mr. H. Marchant, Lancaster.

### RESULTS

Men's choir. — 1 Greenside Choir, Kendal 88; 2 Grange Choral Society, 85; 3 Kendal South, 81.

Choral Society class—1 Kendal South, 90; 2 Greenside, 87; 3 Grange, 86. Others: Sedbergh Choral Society, 85; Eversley Choral Union, 84; Windermere Choral Society, 83; Kentdale Social Centre, 83.

Women's Choir—1 Greenside, 89; 2 Grange, 87; 3 Kendal South, 86. Others: Eversley Choral Union, 83; Windermere, 82; Kentdale Social Centre, 80.

Men's organisations—1 Netherfield Male Voice Choir, 78; 2 Kentdale Social Centre, 74.

Madrigal—1 Greenside, 87; 2 Windermere, 86; 3 Kendal South, 85. Others: Kentdale Social Centre, 82; Eversley 80; Sedbergh, 79; Grange, 78.

Choral Sight Singing — 1 Grange, 89; 2 Kendal South, 88; 3 Eversley, 87. Others: Greenside, 85; Sedbergh, 82; Kentdale Social Centre, 79.

### FAMOUS CHORAL WORKS

The festival chorus, with the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra, achieved marked success in the concert last night (Thursday), which was given before a crowded audience. The chorus numbered 350, and the chorus

voices was under the direction of Mr. Charles Groves, the festival conductor, and the soloists were Ena Mitchell (soprano), Margaret McArthur (contralto), Rene Soames (tenor) and Scott Joynt (bass), with Mr. F. J. C. Dalrymple at the organ. More than 1,100 people attended, but the accommodation of the ancient parish church was ample to meet the need. An impressive and inspiring performance was given, soloists and chorus giving of their best under somewhat difficult conditions owing to limited space in the chancel. Nevertheless, the performance lost none of its great poignancy, and reached its climax in the Halleujah chorus. The performance rounded off a most interesting and inspiring day's music.

## "MEN AS GOOD AS WOMEN"

### Wednesday's Events

The adult competitions began on Wednesday, when choirs from the Lake District, South Westmorland and Furness took part. The day was historical in that Staveley Village Choir achieved the unique distinction of winning every class, and a happy band of singers returned home with no less than six trophies. The choir, which was conducted for the first time at the festival by Mr. J. Noble, Kendal, was highly praised by the judge, who caused laughter when he stated that the men were as good as the women—and that was not often thought to be the case by the women-folk. Ably directed and with a keen sense of the music, the judge said the choir was excellent—and after awarding them three first prizes in succession commented, before he gave the adjudication in their fourth successful competition: "There's no holding Staveley." They gained the highest mark of the festival to date when they won the sight-reading, for which they were awarded 90 marks for a note perfect performance.

### CONDUCTOR SINGS INSTEAD

But the most valiant choir of the day came from Hawkshead. Owing to unforeseen circumstances, they found themselves without any tenors within a few days of the festival. It seemed that the only course open to them was to withdraw, as they could not fulfil the essential condition that those taking part in the concert must

worth. Mrs. Horrax, Mr. Hales, Mr. Frost; 3 Ambleside, 75 (Mrs. Nicholson, Miss Clegg, Mr. A. Hickling, Mr. Nicholson). Others: Staveley, 74 (Joan Barker, Marjorie Bethom, Ian Meredith, William Bethom).

## 300 VOICES IN CONCERT CHORUS

### B.B.C. Northern Orchestra

During Wednesday afternoon the choirs rehearsed "Acis and Galatea" (Handel) and "Five Mystical Songs" (Vaughan Williams), with the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra, and the festival conductor, in readiness for the evening broadcast in the Home Service programme, from 7-30 p.m. to 9 p.m. and from 9-15 p.m. to 9-55 p.m. The choirs rose to the occasion, and some fine singing resulted, much to the satisfaction of the conductor, the chorus-masters, Messrs. J. Noble and L. C. Somervell, and the audience of 800 people.

Reception over the radio was good, and thousands of Westmorland people in all the scattered towns and villages listened in to the concert, where they knew many of their friends were taking part, or in the audience. The orchestra, under its most able leader, Reginald Stead, played in masterly style, and to Westmorland people, so far removed from the home of the country's class orchestras, the playing was most exhilarating and exciting. The unanimity of purpose of a well-rehearsed body of instrumentalists was clearly obvious, and the audience was not slow to register its keen appreciation. In the Handel work, the chorus included the competing choirs, together with Kendal Choral Society, and numbered slightly fewer than 300 voices. Doris Gambell (soprano), Rene Soames (tenor), Cyril Hornby (tenor), and Scott Joynt, were the soloists and all gave of their best in polished manner. The Vaughan Williams work, with Robert Irwin as baritone soloist, formed part of the second half of the broadcast. The most important orchestra piece was a first performance of "Tarn Hows," an impression of the fells, written by Maurice Johnstone, the northern musical director of the B.B.C., and president of Westmorland Orchestra. It was conducted by the composer, and was in a pastoral style. There was some beautiful tone-colouring, and while the orchestration was vividly

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### FAMOUS CHORAL WORKS

The festival chorus, with the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra, achieved marked success in the concert last night (Thursday), which was given before a crowded audience. The chorus numbered 350, and the choral works were the famous "Requiem" by Mozart, and Brahms "Song of Destiny." In the Requiem, the soloists were Doris Gambell, Margaret McArthur, Rene Soames, and Scott Joynt. The chorus responded excellently to the baton of the festival conductor.

The second part of the evening opened with the "Song of Destiny"—one of the most moving of all Brahms smaller choral compositions. Two items by the orchestra were broadcast by the B.B.C. They were the lovely and stately "Pavane" by Faure, and the Symphony No. 2 in D. minor, by Dvorak. As on the previous evening the playing of the orchestra was magnificent. The singing of the Bach chorale "Glory now to Thee be given" brought to a close four great days of choral and orchestral music.

The festival continues today (Friday) with some of the principal vocal and instrumental events.

(Other Festival news on page 3. Pictures on pages 3 and 10).

### Mr. W. A. Spencer, Kendal

The death occurred at his home at Oakbank, Kendal, last week of Mr. William A. Spencer, secretary and finance officer to Westmorland Agricultural Executive Committee for the past nine years. Aged 66 years, Mr. Spencer came to Kendal from London over 20 years ago and was in business as a stockbroker until 1940, when he took up his appointment with the Agricultural Executive Committee. For 10 years he was treasurer of Kendal Rotary Club, and also held the office of vice-president. As a Freemason, he became a member of Union Lodge No. 129 on coming to Kendal. Mr. Spencer is survived by his wife, there being no family.

Tunstall W.I. — At the April meeting Mr. D. G. Hopewell gave an interesting lantern lecture on "The stately homes of England." The supper hostesses were Miss Briggs, Miss Boothman and Mrs. Coward.