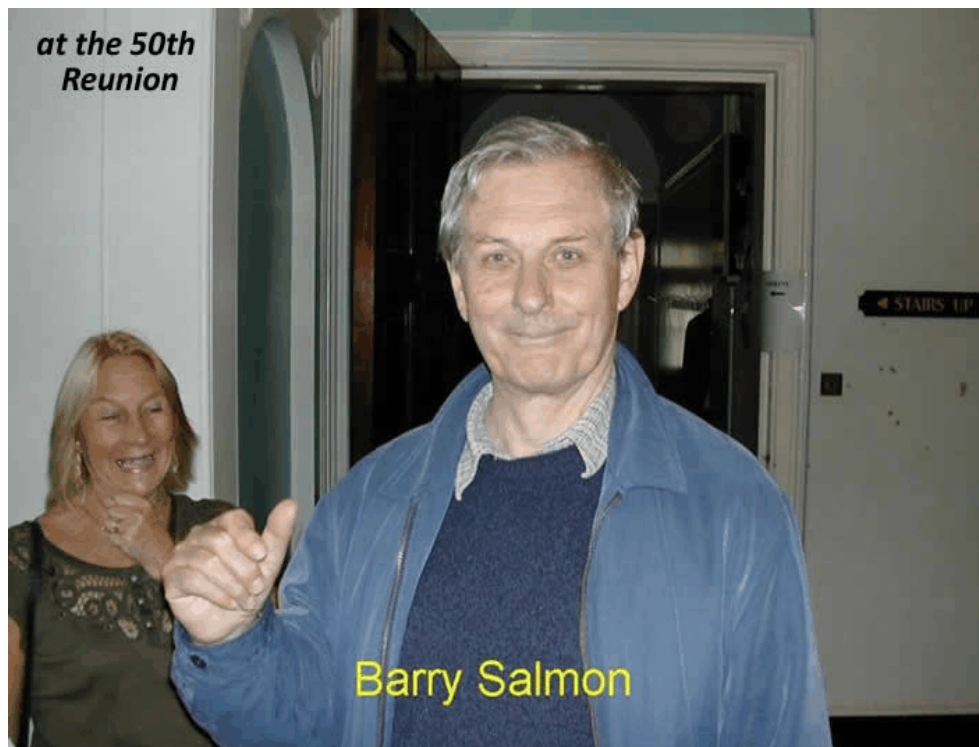


The One and Only Barry Salmon of Woolverstone Hall - as told by "Janus"

Mr. B. S. Salmon, who takes over the Music Department from Mr. Channon. From King's School, Canterbury, he went to St. John's College, Cambridge, as a choral scholar and then spent two and a half years in the R.A.F., gaining a flying commission as a navigator. Since leaving the Air Force he has taught at Bromley Technical School, Mortlake County Secondary School and Pierrepont School.



Mr. Salmon's arrival at the beginning of the year was eagerly awaited by all the supporters of Woolverstone's music. Was the order to be Byrd or Britten, Oratorios or quartets? It was soon apparent that every taste would be catered for.

Immediately, the delapidated remnant of the choir was rebuilt and enlarged, and it is hoped it will soon attain a high standard. Unfortunately, rehearsals have been somewhat thwarted by bad attendance—a regrettable show of apathy which will, I trust, not be repeated. Nevertheless a number of anthems have been successfully sung.

The Christmas term provided opportunities for the choir, and some instrumentalists, to play in 'Mother Courage', where the music was specially composed by Mr. Salmon, and in the Carol Service. For others, there was the jazz concert at the end of term. The musical highlight came in February with 'Amahl and the Night Visitors', a triumph of weeks of fervent practice. Once again a large number of school musicians took part. Then, of course, there were House Concerts and Concerts in Ipswich, where more people could profitably take advantage of the excellent opportunities. The Spring term was rounded off with a chamber music concert, and it is hoped that there will be more such occasions in future, when musicians will play for pleasure off their own bat. In this respect there has been much encouragement, particularly from Mr. Salmon, Mr. Thornbery and Mr. Matthews, who have encouraged boys, reluctant as ever, to play for their own enjoyment.

Finally, mention must be made of the Junior Orchestra, for which both Mr. Salmon and Simon Crawford have put in much effort and manuscript-paper. The large attendance to this and the junior percussion groups seems to ensure that we can confidently look forward to a flourishing musical life in years to come.

L. A. HOWES

'AM AHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS' by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Performed on 22nd, 23rd and 24th February, 1963

Principals :

Amahl
His Mother
King Kaspar
King Melchior
King Balthazar
The Page

Summer 1963

Paul Finch
Judith Gray
Larry Howes
Simon Crawford
Michael Bauer
Charles Page

Leader of the Orchestra :
Assistant Conductor :
Musical Director and Conductor :
Director :

Mr. G. N. Salmon
Miss Audrey Hill
Mr. B. S. Salmon
Mr. J. E. Matthews

This was the first production under Mr. Matthews and Mr. Salmon and it was particularly interesting for one who has been involved in previous productions to see a fresh approach. The opera itself is short but full of interest and charm and in parts extremely moving. The music, although tuneful, is not, I feel, except in a few parts, particularly memorable but it is certainly true that it is much more within the range of the boy and girl singers than was true of some of the arias in previous operatic productions in the school.

The story is a simple one based on the old legend of the Three Kings making their way to Bethlehem and stopping for the night at the cottage of a poor widow and her son, Amahl, a crippled boy; during the course of the night the boy, through his generosity in offering his crutch as a gift to the new-born babe, miraculously recovers the use of his legs and then starts out to accompany the Kings on the final stage of their journey.

The principals served us very well indeed. Paul Finch as Amahl sang beautifully and acted with great sincerity and conviction, creating thereby a real character; Judith Gray, as his mother, sang and acted with great maturity, while we were greatly indebted to three of our "veterans", Larry Howes, Simon Crawford and Michael Bauer, who filled the parts of the Three Kings to perfection. It was particularly pleasing in the case of Bauer to notice that although we had lost a beautiful treble voice, we had gained a very fine baritone. Charles Page as the page competently filled his supporting role.

The chorus work was perhaps not quite as successful, partly because their share in the action of the opera is rather limited and partly because of the difficulty of getting such a large number on and off the stage easily. (Never again, I suppose, after the Sixth Form revue will any Woolverstone producer dare to bring actors through the audience on to the stage !)

The orchestra, under Mr. Salmon, played extraordinarily well and it was very pleasing to see a large number of boys and girls in it. Again a very great debt of gratitude is owing to Mr. Green for the design of the scenery and to Mr. Turner for the construction of the set, together with all their helpers. The costumes were magnificent and one should make special mention of the splendid head-dresses worn by the Kings, for which we were indebted to Miss Kynaston-Shaw.

Obviously one could go on indefinitely mentioning all those who had a share in this production. All should be very pleased with the result.

Because of the shortness of the opera, it was prefaced by poetry readings given by a group of Sixth-formers. Whatever differences of opinion there might be about this, I for one felt that this was both fitting and well done.

L.J.

MOTHER COURAGE AND HER CHILDREN

Summer 1963

by Bertolt Brecht

Performed on December 7th, 8th and 9th, 1962

Principals :

Mother Courage			John Dorling
Eilif	}	her sons	Tom Carter
Swiss Cheese			Christopher Cooper
Katrin, her dumb daughter			Peter Emberson
Cook			Larry Howes
Chaplain			Simon Crawford
Yvette Pottier			David Murray
Commentator			George Donaldson
Music composed, choir and orchestra directed, by Mr. B. S. Salmon			

Producer : Mr. P. H. Hutton

Brecht's "Mother Courage" is a mediocre sermon on inhumanity and the futility of war. Any greatness it may achieve must result from originality of production and superlative performance. Yet by any standards it is a bold choice for a school play. It was excellent to see Wolverstone so daring.

Wisely, Mr. Hutton declined Brecht's inclination to cold detachment. He heightened the passion and exploited the humour involving his audience in a production of stimulating pace. The coldness was reserved for George Donaldson in the unthankful role of chronicle of time and place.

Breaking with Brecht on this point, it seemed unfortunate that the staging was not more unconventional. Need the curtains ever have been closed? Need the sets have been so detailed? Yet

such comment must not detract from the effectiveness of the waggon, the "destruction" backcloth, and many of the small props (take the butcher's meat), nor should it obscure the effective processions through the audience. Mr. Salmon's music was a triumph. Vital, vibrant, memorable—it was a highlight of the evening.

John Dorling in the name part looked and stood well. His voice sometimes lacked colour but his achievement was great. Here was understanding and emotion beyond what could reasonably be expected of a fifth former. His song was most touching. Simon Crawford, Chaplain, was a delightful study in movement and voice—a thoroughly convincing anti-clerical performance. Larry Howes was rather young and excessively enthusiastic as the Cook and lacked earthiness, but his singing was a major contribution. David Murray was painfully funny, a perfect tart.

Among smaller roles, David Cleary's Colonel was outstandingly funny and well controlled. Gerald Donaldson had more authority in his voice than experience in his bearing as the Commander, and Tom Carter's Eilif was effectively done until the rather inappropriate song and dance. Christopher Cooper was suitably slow as Swiss Cheese but he might have disguised his voice more. The dumb Kattrin had a difficult task and Peter Emberson was prepared to meet the subtleties. The frenzied drumming was particularly well done.

In so far as the play is by a modern master, giving unconventional theatrical opportunities, involving a great diversity of talent, and above all concerning a theme of crucial importance, "Mother Courage" had much to commend its choice. In the event Mr. Hutton and all those who helped him vindicated this choice.

R.J.W.

The school music this term has consisted of two concerts : the Music Circle Concert and the Speech-Day Concert.

The former, which is simply an opportunity for all instrumentalists in the school to perform, solo or in small groups, before an audience, had an interestingly varied programme, including Gounod's 'Le Valon', pleasantly sung by Bauer, a Shostakovitch piano solo splendidly played by Roussel, and the piano duet : 'An Autumn Ride' played by King and Crawford, which set feet tapping and at least one matron reminiscing.

The Speech-Day Concert began with a breath of Eastern promise from the Junior Orchestra, who played Charles Woodhouse's 'Eastern Dance' and then brought us back to earth with a short minuet. They are to be congratulated on the excellent orchestral unity with which they play. After this the choir sang two madrigals, in the second of which, Vaughan Williams' 'The Turtle Dove,' Pye had a chance to show his prowess as a soloist. Cloake then played the first movement of a piano concertina specially composed for him by Mr. Salmon, accompanied by the Senior Orchestra. Both composer and soloist deserve great praise. Finally the orchestra, and choral society did the Bach cantata : 'Sleepers Wake'. For this marvellous work the choir was somewhat smaller than had been hoped, although those present sang extremely well. The orchestra deserves mention however, for apart from Mr. Cook, the faithful wind teacher, who played the viola, the whole orchestra came from the school. Special praise to Mark Wing-Davey for his leadership, and to the second violins who struggled bravely. We hope that this taste of Bach will encourage the performance of more of his work in future.

S. J. W. CRAWFORD.

For the English, "The Messiah" has held a place well up in the top ten of the Oratorio Parade for many years, a position which it owes to its melodic rather than its dramatic content, and to the fact that, written as it is a series of separate pieces, it can be cut, shortened or selected from at will, according to the whim of the conductor or the proficiency of the performers. This makes it eminently suitable for a school to attempt, though as an exciting musical experience it falls short of many of the less frequently performed works for chorus and orchestra.

The performance given by the School Choral Society and orchestra on March 22nd reflected clearly the boys' preference for the more dramatic sections—"Surely He hath born our griefs", "Hallelujah!", "Worthy is the Lamb" for example,—which were sung with a zest and confidence lacking in some of the other choruses, particularly in the treble line. In fact, rather surprisingly, it was the orchestra and soloists who provided the chief delights of the evening. Mr. Salmon wisely took some of the numbers at a slower tempo than is usual and as a result he obtained from the orchestra a consistently high standard of intonation and ensemble throughout the work. It was a remarkably polished performance by mainly very young players and provided a firm sensitive lead to chorus and soloists alike.

Of the soloists, Larry Howes was the most promising. He had given much thought to the interpretation of his part and he has a mature enough voice to cope with the wide range of moods that are to be found in it—from "Thy rebuke hath broken His heart" at one end of the scale to "Thou shalt dash them in pieces" at the other. If he tends at the moment to over-dramatise, at least this is a refreshing change from the stodgy, bored versions of these well-known arias we so often hear from the concert platform. Simon Crawford showed admirable control and clarity in his arias, but his voice as yet lacks the richness of a true bass, so that one felt he was having to force the tone to give such pronouncements as "The Kings of the earth rise up" and "The trumpet shall sound" the weight and authority that they obviously demand. Noel Pinnington had a similar difficulty with the alto solos. His voice is still a treble one—if a low treble—and the vibratoless clarity of a boy treble is more appropriate to the higher register than the lower; so that he also seemed to be forcing his voice into a part it did not naturally

fit. But he managed remarkably well, tackling quite testing pieces in a most musicianly manner.

The soprano solos were taken by six boys, splendidly in Part I, rather diffidently in Parts II and III.

Perhaps the most gratifying things about this performance were the number singing in the choir—about 90—and the fact that the school was able to provide not only the large chorus but the soloists and most of the orchestra as well. It is a very long time since so large a proportion of the school have taken part in a musical production, or that one of our musical productions has contained so much music.

D.T.

Soloists :

<i>Treble :</i>	David Ashton, Guy Austin, Barry Jackson, Mark Redstone, Kevin Steele, Philip Tyler
<i>Alto :</i>	Noel Pinnington
<i>Tenor :</i>	Larry Howes
<i>Bass :</i>	Simon Crawford

Orchestra :

<i>Flutes :</i>	G. Hoad, J. Wild
<i>Clarinets :</i>	P. Finch, C. Snuggs
<i>Bassoon :</i>	O. Hotz de Baar
<i>Trumpets :</i>	V. Rothman, J. van Vliet
<i>Trombone :</i>	H. Hawkins
<i>Timpani :</i>	K. Simpson
<i>1st Violins :</i>	Mr. G. N. Salmon (Leader), M. Wing-Davey, R. Davies
<i>2nd Violins :</i>	Mr. H. Birch, R. Turner, J. Peaple, M. Sharp
<i>Violas :</i>	Mr. R. Cook, Miss J. Cresswell
<i>'Cellos :</i>	T. Stancliffe, N. Cloake
<i>Double Bass :</i>	Mr. R. Coleman, Mr. C. Thomas
<i>Continuo :</i>	Mrs. H. Agate (<i>Harpischord</i>) Miss C. Clark (<i>Cello</i>)

Conducted by Barry Salmon

Musical activity was concentrated at the end of term, apart from a visit to the Ipswich High School's production of "Noye's Fludde", and a visit from the "London Singers", who sang a number of part-songs.

There were two concerts : at the first, on Speech Day, the Male Voice Choir repeated two spirituals, the school choir sang two anthems, the Junior Orchestra performed, and the Senior Orchestra played the first two movements of Mr. Salmon's piano concerto, with Neil Cloake as soloist. At the chamber concert on the Sunday following a large proportion of the school's musicians performed. Both concerts were part of the Woolverstone Festival Week.

SIMON CRAWFORD.

Music Circle Concert

Last term's Music Circle Concert was more successful than expected, although a minority of the audience left during the intermission. A new look was added to the concert. This was the group known as the "Cellarmen". They were followed by an excellent but unlucky clarinetist. His instrument "broke down" after the first few bars. Howes played his 'cello, and there was a group of singers which was immensely appreciated.

The second half began cheerfully with a piano duet from Mr. Salmon and Cloake. There were two madrigals sung by an eminent bass, namely Forster. They were followed by another duet, this time for clarinets. This was played by Snuggs and Finch. The concert ended with a fine piece of music played by a sextet led by Crawford. I would particularly like to thank on behalf of the participants, the organiser of the concert, Simon Crawford, but most of all, the audience (for being so patient).

JEAN-ALAIN ROUSSEL

DRY ROT

Summer 1965

Some good clean fun (apart from the odd lavatory joke) from the Whitehall Theatre enlivened the middle of the Easter term. "Dry Rot" was a great success, and the idea of a staff play an exciting innovation. "It's wonderful," a brash adolescent remarked afterwards, "what the staff can do without any help from the boys."

Mr. Neil Clayton's production was admirably slick and efficient, and he had a pretty talented cast: Messrs. Watts, Middlebrook and Allchin in particular had the school in fits, not only because they were those three people making fools of themselves but because they were accomplished actors. Colonel Thomas and gormless philanderer Salmon excelled too, but I think the outstanding performance, apart from my wife's, was Mrs. Clayton's—a most soigné landlady, she dominated the stage.

Having said, and meant, which, and having applied for a visa to the prefects' room, I must add that I wish a better play had been chosen. I don't mean anything highbrow, good heavens no, they'll be expecting us to grow our hair long next; but the fact must be faced that in farce, between the set pieces, the rot is generally pretty wet. No doubt after this successful trial run the common room will move on to greater things.

P.H.H.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

Summer 1965

Unless one is a fanatic it is never easy to make up one's mind about opera. There is a feeling, as someone once said, that "Opera makes the worst of both worlds", that neither the music nor the drama can get its full measure of concentration. I am inclined to think that this is a particular danger of school productions of this notoriously difficult art-form. The difficulties are increased, too, by an all-male cast.

Yet I thought that "The Emperor's New Clothes" was a considerable achievement. In the first place it is a new opera, produced on this occasion without benefit of precedent, and very much in the modern musical idiom. Secondly, it was produced by a member of the Sixth Form. Thirdly, it involved a cast of seventy-two and an orchestra of twenty, all of whom came from the school, so that in the true sense it was a school production. Finally, it was designed, staged and costumed with remarkable taste and elegance.

I thought the big weakness lay in the chorus. Though they looked good they lacked "body" in the musical sense and, above all, a sense of mobility that might have come had feminine help been to hand. The solo singing came through better. Gabriel

Barta proved a sonorous Emperor and Peter Carlile his tuneful and attractive daughter, but it was Larry Howes and his fellow villain Paul Finch who took the honours, at least in the performance I saw. In both their cases the musical and dramatic combination came across convincingly. Graham Hoad and Graham Forster also did well in meeting the demands of music whose tempo and pitch were fiendishly contrived.

Much of the success of the opera was, of course, due to the orchestra and its handling by Mr. Salmon. Most of the score might well have tested the best at Glyndebourne and yet the orchestra stuck valiantly to the task which, after initial rehearsals, must have been as rewarding to them as it was to us.

In all, I enjoyed this venture enormously. It will not, alas, be possible to see and hear another of Simon Crawford's productions—here at least—nor of Larry Howes' performances, but I sincerely hope that we shall have more operas in the future, staged by the same family of designers and painters and again dressed to scintillation by Miss Kynaston-Shaw and her helpers.

But, please, cannot we also bring on the girls?

M.W.

CHAMBER CONCERT

Winter 1965

Unfortunately the whole proceedings of the Chamber Concert were less glamorous than they might have been. There were plans afoot to have the whole affair floodlit, but the electricians didn't register on the time of the concert (neither did three hundred and forty other boys, for that matter). The concert was well attended by masters (more their type of music perhaps?).

The programme was quite ambitious, starting off with the last three movements of the Trout Quintet. There were some pleasant highspots in this, slightly offset by the faulty intonation of the 1st violin. Next came three clarinet duets, stolid but polished, followed by the first movement of the Bach double violin concerto, which was well received. Stancliffe then gave us his rendering of Marcello's 'cello Sonata in F and Roussel his rendering of a Gavotte (Arne/Roussel). After the interval came the world première of a Salmon original, both interesting and well-played. The final item in the concert was Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (a popular item, however badly played). Still, it was well performed, despite some confusion over repeats, and the fact that it was taken at a brisk pace. Overall the concert was a success and appreciated by the fifty people who attended it.

MARK WING-DAVEY.

MUSIC NOTES

Winter 1965

The organised musical activity of the term culminated in the Speech Day concert on 17th July. The 'Speech Day choir' and the Junior and Senior Orchestras performed. To most of the parents it was just another Speech Day concert—the boys duly played and parents duly clapped, this was inevitable. However, as it happened, the standard was high; the Junior Orchestra performed well and finished together, the choir gave an excellent rendering of four Slovak songs, and the Senior Orchestra played a whole symphony for the first time in the history of the school's music. Indeed, this term the Senior Orchestra has reached an unparalleled apogee, yet still may aspire to further heights under the steady, guiding hand of Mr. B. Salmon

MARK WING-DAVEY.

The bulk of the drama in this work centres around the chorus, who must not only portray the blood-hungry Jewish mob and pompous Chief Priests, but also lead the congregation in solemn, meditative chorales. After some anxious moments in rehearsal, the chorus finally overcame some very difficult music to give a highly moving performance. Their achievement is the greater when one realises the majority of the school's best musicians were playing in the orchestra.

This orchestra, augmented by only four professional musicians, supported the chorus with confidence and reliability, and gave a fine account of itself in solo passages.

The soloists have notoriously testing parts, and Graham Hoad as the Evangelist and Grahame Forster who sang two arias as well as the Christus both coped very well. Gabriel Barta as Pilate delivered his part with the vigour it demands.

There can be little doubt that this was the most successful and rewarding musical production to date—and one which will serve as a model for future undertakings.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Mrs. Agate for once again lending us her harpsichord, and Mr. Salmon, whose seemingly inexhaustible energy, despite numerous frustrations, succeeded in raising the performance far above the standard normally expected of school productions.

N. CLOAKE.

JAZZ CONCERT

1966

This year's concert was a completely individual affair, owing to a lack in organisation.

The W.M.J.Q. gave a polished performance, thanks mainly to Mr. Salmon on the piano. Of the pop groups, E.S.P. were definitely the more polished and aroused the most excitement. The best singing in its field was that of Bill Sanderson, vocalist for Some Blues. In this group the need for balance was exceptionally obvious. In the Woolverstone Inc., too, the lack of balance between voice and guitar was noticeable. The Devil's Disciples were good individually but lacked the polish of the W.M.J.Q.. A vocal group. The Volume 6-1, provided some amusement and Vaughn Windle, compère, provided the rest. A special word for Graham Hoad, for his very polished performance and to Roy Clouter for his lighting.

As a whole the show was well presented but, unfortunately, too long.

G. M. SHARP.

"LET'S MAKE AN OPERA"

In March this year, the School presented "Let's Make an Opera", a playlet combined with the miniature opera "The Little Sweep"—words by Eric Crozier, music by Benjamin Britten.

The play starts with a group of children in their playroom—privileged children these, with a Nurse (Mrs. Robina Butler) to look after them, and a private tutor with slightly eccentric ways in the person of Graeme Foster. Boredom in the group is dispelled by the discovery of details of the hardships of poor children used as chimney sweeps 150 years ago. From this the idea of an opera written and produced by the children develops around the story of Sammy, sold by his poor father to a master sweep. Sam is sent to sweep the chimney at the Hall, but the children rescue him, hide him, and smuggle him away in a trunk presumably to a happier life.

Your reviewer remembers the earlier version of this play-opera which was put on by the School several years back. While distance in time may have distorted the memory, the earlier version, which was longer, seemed to join up the parts into one whole better than the present version, which gave the feeling of two separate one-act entertainments.

The team of juniors who played the children worked together well; they were Graham Towells, Peter Carlile, Andrew Wheaton, Lee Prebble, Gary Taylor, Peter Redpath, and John Melville. Peter Carlile's self-confidence served him well in his part, where he seemed naturally to take the lead in the group.

We were undoubtedly lucky to have Mrs. Evans and Mrs. Butler to take the important singing parts of the housekeeper and the nursery maid, voice and characterisation adding greatly to our enjoyment, and to the vivacity of the whole opera. Philip Tyler (tenor) and Graeme Foster (bass) completed an effective quartet, the former fascinating but hardly villainous enough as the sweep's assistant, and later, as a most effective slow-moving rheumatically rustic of a gardener. Graeme Foster was the wicked master sweep, and finally a dashing coachman. Credit must also be given to John Melville as Sammy, an appealing part in which he did well in spite of his rather small voice.

Finally, the credit titles. The producer, Mr. Peter Bond, must have worked hard, but at a couple of rehearsals your reviewer was impressed by his patience and calmness. Mr. Salmon's choice of orchestra seemed so absolutely right for this production, leading, supporting, but not distracting. Much credit must go to both of these, but a careful look would show how fully this was a School production, uniting boys and staff from all departments of the School, the masters, administrative and domestic staff and house matrons, visiting music staff, even wives and relations. Many enthusiastically find, for these shows, time which can hardly be called spare; our continued thanks are due to all. This opera was, however, even more of a School effort because the audience were involved in the singing, trained in a flash by Mr. Barry Salmon to be a chorus of birds. Our own self-conscious feelings were relieved by hearing the others in their turn being made, more or less willingly, to twitter, hoot, or creak. It all added to the fun, and a good time was had by all.

"STRIX"

The standard of music at Woolverstone has for many years now been generally high, and it will probably remain so despite the inescapable fall which accompanied the departure of our two main props, Richard Davies and Neil Cloake, along with their contemporary Paul Finch, at Christmas 1967. The trio left their final mark with a 'Swan Song' concert in which Davies showed his versatility by performing on the viola in addition to his well-known violin, and Cloake demonstrated his ability as accompanist as well as soloist.

The Easter Term contained rather fewer musical events. The Christmas Oratorio, on which a separate report is to be found elsewhere in the magazine. At the beginning of that term, however, the Senior Orchestra gained some very useful experience when an orchestra from Northgate joined us for an 'Orchestral Weekend' which consisted of two days' hard work by the combined orchestras, culminating in a semi-public performance of the works studied.

The Easter Term contained rather fewer musical vents. The entertainment 'Crime and Punishment' which is also reported in greater detail elsewhere, contained a number of musical items, including two songs of which the music was composed by Noël Pinnington (although Mr. Salmon helped with one of them). There was also a badly under-rehearsed Music Circle Concert which did not deserve to come off as well as it did. Last term's Music Circle Concert went reasonably well; Dawlings ably assisted by Roussel and Redway gave performances on clarinet and trumpet respectively, which showed that talent is rising from the lower parts of the school as well as disappearing from the top. Mr. Thornbery was persuaded to play his flute, which he did very well and the only disaster was a set of short duos for viola and 'cello (no names mentioned!) which were wrecked by an A-string which refused to remain in tune.

It is perhaps a pity that most of the musical talent of Woolverstone seems to be confined to the keyboard. It is to be hoped that this will not remain so for long; so many new boys have asked to take up wind instruments that there are not enough trumpets to go round. Our main default is in the strings, possibly due to the lack of a permanent teacher. However, there is in existence a school String Quartet, led by Mrs. Skailes, which hopes to function soon.

Rehearsals are now in progress for Carl Orff's 'Carmina Burana,' to be performed at Easter, again with the help of Amberfield Girls' School. This immensely difficult work, especially so for the orchestra, is the first we have attempted which takes more than two terms of rehearsal. It promises to be fun for performers and audience.

Exhilarating music at Woolverstone

"**CARMINA BURANA**," a choral and orchestral work performed at Woolverstone Hall on Saturday and yesterday, was a setting by the German composer Carl Orff of some very old songs found in a monastic establishment at Beuren in Southern Bavaria a long time ago. These were found to be the work of itinerant clerics or beggars who roamed in large numbers through parts of Europe during early medieval times, and lived on the community.

The subject of the poetry was mostly rough satire on the Establishment and songs in praise of drink and love, generally rather ribald.

Orff recently died, and his music generally endeavoured to return to old forms and in these songs he found a happy hunting ground. His selection lays emphasis on the fickleness of fate, the coming of spring with awakening of love and its attendant vagaries and a collection of lusty tavern songs.



The music for S.A.T.B. chorus, and a few soloists, was kept simple, except in rhythms which are quite tricky—the orchestra was given the task of illustrating atmosphere and underlining rhythms. Together they made an exhilarating mixture, a sort of "Rites of Spring" in miniature with a direct appeal to the senses. Personal element comes in with the young lover in a series of lyrical baritone solos very well sung by Christopher Underwood.

The mixed chorus of boys from Woolverstone Hall and girls from Amberfield sustained the choral part very well and a large orchestra, mostly from the schools, overcame the intricacies of their part with commendable accuracy, producing a very nice tone in softer passages. The two forces heard together obtained a remarkable volume of sound, notably in the first piece which is also used as a finale.

For a combined effort of this description the music was well selected.

Bernard Salmon, director of music at Woolverstone, conducted with authority and kept excellent control of his forces.

24 March, 1969 EADT

DIAPASON

I would like to apologise to the 1971 'A' level candidates and to Mr. Salmon for the mistake made in last year's notes. In those I said that only one person passed the exam, this should have been two.

This year the 'A' level candidate and five of the eight 'O' level candidates passed their respective exams. On the practical side twenty-one people took exams of which only four failed.

In the concert room (where we ventured twice during the year) the First Orchestra played the first two movements of Beethoven's First Symphony, thundered out Malcolm Arnold's "Little Suite for Orchestra" (in the middle of which the audience failed to notice the confusion in the wind section) and then joined the choir for renderings of a Bach Chorale and sections from Handel's "Messiah". The orchestra for the Arnold was the largest that the school has seen, totaling forty-five including the conductor. The Second Orchestra, not wanting to be overshadowed by these vast numbers, gave lively performances of three movements from Handel's "Water Music." In addition to these large works, Pullin (violin) and Shallow (french horn) each played a solo for which Mr. Salmon tried to make the piano sound like an orchestra (he understandably failed but the resulting music was very enjoyable to listen to).

Music in the houses has continued. There were two concerts in Orwell and an "Entertainment" in Hanson's. All of these three had a large number of juniors and middles in the foreground showing that Woolverstone music is still on the increase and will reach greater heights than it has done already.

To accommodate these younger musicians a wind band has been started by Mr. Cook which will give an early experience of ensemble playing to more of the school. The result of this should be very noticeable in the orchestra in about two years.

Also starting this year is a madrigal group under the amateur but practised Mr. Thornbery, this joins the instrumental group that he started at the end of last year. Both these, it is planned, will be meeting in his flat weekly purely for the fun of making music.

With the introduction of the Cultural Committee into the school I am expecting more organized trips to concerts as more people will be aware that concerts do occur from time to time in the area that are worth going to. (We have already had a trip to the Felixstowe Spa Pavilion).

This boom of music in the school should continue for several more years yet with the energy and the enthusiasm shown by Mr. Salmon (who has written the music for the musical to be put on this term) and the instrument teachers whose numbers have increased to seven with the addition of specialist clarinet and trumpet teachers.

ROBERT DAWLINGS

Dramatically the school was very active last year, the first event of note being the Music Hall (as opposed to the Musical). Under the masterful guidance of Mr. Thornbery there were several interesting spectacles, especially the Lowerne sisters—a group of young singers from a nearby American Airforce base. Perhaps the highlight of the evening was when Mrs. English and her daughter, Louise, gave us a rendition of 'Three Little Maids'—the third 'maid' being Mr. Thornbery!

An occasion that will take a long time to fade from our memories was the production of 'School for Spies', a play explaining what might happen if Suffolk were given Home Rule, written by Mr. Hyde, scored by Mr. Salmon and produced jointly by Messrs. Clayton, Salmon and Cox. The singing especially was enhanced by various girls from the Convent School and St. Joseph's, without whom it would have been very difficult to put on a production of such a grand scale.

'The Action of the Tiger' was a Drama Group production, the script for which John Cox pieced together from various literary sources. One of its main features was the experience it gave and drew from the actors since most of it was conceived on a 'workshop' level, with ideas being selected and rejected on a trial and error process. The actual performance was excellent and all credit must be given to John Cox, whose ideas and drive produced a performance that really was a credit to the Group.

The more people that are involved in a play, especially at a school, the more difficult it is to control and find time for individual attention. That 'The Tempest' acted by the third and fourth forms was such a success is again due to the untiring efforts of Mr. Cox. There is no denying that there was great talent among the Middles, but without Mr. Cox's efforts over the whole term, there would have been no 'Tempest' and therefore no opportunity to see any of this talent. There were several places where music was introduced into the play, and a select group from the lower sixth composed and performed various songs and interludes that gave the play more unity and continuity.

Fittingly, Woolverstone's dramatic efforts ended on an exceedingly high note with the performance of 'The Erpingham Camp' by Joe Orton. Just as fittingly, there was a very good chance that the whole thing was to have been called off the night before due to some 'technical hitches' in the dress rehearsal. Lines were not learnt, cues not rehearsed and nerves were somewhat strained. However, there was a performance (you lucky people) and all praise must go to Simon Geller who coped admirably with the task of producing and directing his first play.

There was also an Upper Sixth Review.

Over the past year, Music in general at Woolverstone has increased both in quality and quantity which reflects not only the ability but the keenness of those concerned.

"Dido and Aeneas" was certainly a challenging piece for the Choral Society, if only because there were more female solos than male. Fortunately Miss Olive Quantrill—who has recently had her choir in the finals of the 'Let the People Sing' Competition on the Radio—donated the services of some of her younger ladies and these, combined with the Choir and Orchestra, did themselves justice in the performance. The Madrigal Group under the direction of Mr. Thornbery held an Advent Carol Service in St. Michael's to which boys and villagers came, — less well publicised but equally commendable was the concert a group of sixth formers gave for some elderly people in the village hall.

The Spring Term was particularly productive, and at the Music Circle Concert, quantity was sacrificed for the sake of quality when among other things, members celebrated Britten's 60th birthday (somewhat belatedly) with a performance of his 'Psalm 150'. The Madrigal Group ventured further afield and toured several local venues giving concerts at old folk's homes and the Inner Wheel Dinner. The weekly visits of some boys to the Belstead Childrens Home culminated in a very informal, loud and hilarious 'gig' that finished with a bun fight—all good clean fun, no doubt. Various houses put on their own concerts, one of the most notable being Halls' which was later renamed the Saul's House Concert. Last but definitely not least was 'Pete's Treat', where the repertoire ranged from 'Twice Daily' by the late, lamented Adge Cutler to Genesis' 'The Musical Box'.

Because of exams, the Summer Term is usually the least productive, but thanks to some hard work by Mr. Salmon and the Orchestras, the Music Circle programme was comprehensive and the standard of performance was excellent—especially the Bach Suite No. 2 and the 4th Movt. of the Symphonie Fantastique, which let the concert go out with a metaphoric and percussive bang!

As soon as the 'O' and 'A' levels were over, the seniors immediately got down to rehearsing for two concerts which were rather optimistically planned for the Festival Week at the end of Term. The farewell 'folk' concert—if you can call 'Suppers' Ready', 'Tubular Bells' and Grand Funk 'Railroad' 'Folk'—was utterly devoid of any electric equipment (apart from 'Johnny Shannon's lights and Chalky's hairdryer' as the programme note said) yet still managed to end with a somewhat weird but highly entertaining version of Genesis' 'Supper's Ready' (referred to as Supper's Half-baked in the programme).

The 'coo' de grace' was executed on the last Sunday of term when the (sadly singular) performance of 'Jesus Christ—Super Star' was staged. Apart from the difficulties of finding soloists and chorus, stage and lighting crew and patient directors to put the show on in only 2 weeks, it was decided to use electric equipment (which usually presents countless problems). Fortunately, the casting was deftly managed so that not only did the soloists sing but also act the parts with conviction. Colin Fludgate and Nick Sibley were particularly good as Judas and Jesus, while Lesley Vineyard and Jane Gooch played **all** the female roles! Lesley (who also directed the performance) had her brow mopped most effectively by Simon Geller (co-producer and lap dog), and by far the most praise should go to Ian Saul—without whom both the Folk Concert and 'Superstar' would have been merely average, instead of vastly successful.

This past year has seen many groups, small and large, performing (and performing well) a wide range of music. From the Ugg and Mugg Band and the Barbershop Blues, through the Belstead Bombers, Chalky and the Charcoals and the Bleedin' Foreigners and culminating with the Madrigal Group, the School Choir and the School Orchestras, the schools' musical ventures have been most entertaining and (believe it or not) beneficial to those concerned. The best example of this is the group : Band of Gold / Coffee with Cream / Snapp who brought out their first single in July and have and will be making various appearances on stage and on the television. Their music may not be universally appealing—but these stalwart Woolverstonians are crying all the way to the autograph books and the bank.

This year has gone to show that, with the right amount of work and dedication, results in any and all types of music are possible. Since there isn't endless time at school for practice and performance, it is wise to make use of the holidays as a time for rehearsals—whether with your own pop group or for your Associated Board Examinations. With enough effort and enthusiasm, there is no reason why the musical success of this past year shouldn't be repeated every year.

R. R. P. BRYAN