



Tyndale Choral Society

Conductor: Ian Harrold

Reg. Charity No. 284840

King Olaf

by Edward Elgar

7.30pm Saturday 10th November 2007
Dursley Parish Church

www.tyndale-choral-society.org

THE ELGAR SOCIETY

The Elgar Society is the largest UK composer society, with nine regional branches and a worldwide membership. Its objective is to promote knowledge of the composer Sir Edward Elgar, his music and his life. This it does through:

- the sponsorship of recordings;
- the promotion and encouragement of Elgar performances and broadcasts around the world;
- its website, which has now attracted over 15% of the Society's current membership, many from abroad;
- the publication three times a year of a journal and newsletter, sent free to members;
- the publishing and recording activities of the Society's own imprint, Elgar Enterprises.

If you wish to join or receive further details about The Elgar Society, please visit the Society's website (www.elgar.org) or contact:

The Membership Secretary, 2 Marriott's Close,
Haddenham, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP17 8BT
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This evening's performance is presented with the kind support of the Elgar Society to mark the sesquicentenary of this great English composer.

Tyndale Choral Society

Programme

Scenes from the Saga of **King Olaf**

by

H W Longfellow and H C Acworth

Set to music

by

Edward Elgar

with

Jane Sherriff ~ soprano Lewis Brown ~ tenor
Christopher Monk ~ bass

and

Tyndale Concert Orchestra

Leader ~ Justine Tomlinson
Conductor ~ Ian Harrold

Rehearsal Accompanist ~ James Corbett

There will be a retiring collection in aid of the Cotswold Care Hospice

Elgar: Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf

During the mid-1890s, Elgar was busy with several choral projects. It was the time of *From the Bavarian Highlands*, *The Light of Life* and *The Black Knight*. The most ambitious of these was *King Olaf*. H.C. Acworth arranged and added to the sturdy, if not particularly timeless, verses of Longfellow, and they provided enough drama to trigger the developing composer's imagination. The piece was first performed at the North Staffordshire Festival of 1896.

While lacking the overall flow of later choral masterpieces (there are distinct 'numbers' throughout), the subject matter lends itself to a picturesque tapestry of the unfolding drama. Central to the structure are big choral set-pieces: *The Challenge of Thor*, *The Conversion*, *The Wraith of Odin*, perhaps finest of all, the scherzo-like *Thyri* (A little bird in the air), and the *Death of Olaf*. Between these is played out Olaf's ill-fortune with his various relationships with Gudrun, Sigrid and Thyri, the last inviting something approaching an operatic love duet. All of this is enclosed by an atmospheric *Introduction* and an extended *Epilogue*, where Elgar had the inspired idea of including a part-song already in print: *As Torrents in Summer*. While it bears little relevance to the drama that has happened, it is a joy to sing; the composer must have known it would go down well with the choirfolk of North Staffordshire!

Stylistically, there are still hints of Wagner (*Ironbeard's Farewell*) and even Sullivan (*A little bird in the air*) and Dvorak (whose *The Spectre's Bride* Elgar had much admired), but there is much too that could only be Elgar, looking forward to the *Enigma Variations* and *Gerontius* of only a few years later.

A brief guide to the 'Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf'

Introduction:

'Heimskringla' is the book of Norse legends from which excerpts are taken.

Challenge of Thor

Thor himself declares his terrifying strength and challenges Christianity.

King Olaf's Return

King Olaf returns from his travels in exile, accepts Thor's challenge, and vows to avenge his father's death and regain control of Norway, bringing Christianity.

The Conversion

Olaf comes to Drontheim, where Ironbeard leads his men ready to defend Odin and Thor. Olaf smashes the golden image of Thor with his axe; rushing forward to defend Thor, Ironbeard is killed with an arrow and dies proclaiming his loyalty to Thor. Olaf offers the men of Drontheim freedom from serfdom and peace through Christianity, which they accept.

Gudrun

Olaf marries Gudrun, daughter of Ironbeard, hoping thus to make recompense for killing her father. Gudrun has other ideas; Olaf wakes to find her brandishing a dagger which she claims is but a hair clip... Olaf knows better, and they part company the next morning.

Wraith of Odin

Olaf and his men enjoy an evening of gastronomic delights and copious amounts of ale. A one-eyed stranger arrives and thrills everyone with tales and sagas, and the words of Odin (as written in the Havamal). Overnight the doors were locked, but in the morning the guest had disappeared Olaf declared the stranger to be the ghost of Odin, and therefore proof of his success as a missionary.

It is unclear just who is or was Sir Morten of Fogelsang; perhaps just a musical refrain...

Sigrid

Sigrid is Queen of Svithiod (Sweden). King Olaf comes to woo her, and asks her to convert to Christianity. Sigrid refuses, and Olaf declares he won't marry a heathen, throws his glove, and flounces out of the door. The glove hits Sigrid's cheek and, furious scorned woman that she is, she vows to be Olaf's undoing.

Thyri

Burislaf the Vend (domiciled in Wendland; i.e. Poland and Pomerania) is a heathen, and father of Gunhild. Gunhild married King Svend the Dane, but unfortunately she died. King Svend then arranged for his pretty Christian sister Thyri to marry his father-in-law, old Burislaf. This marriage lasted for all of 8 days. Thyri bolted and fled to Norway, leaving her dowry and land, seeking King Olaf's help. The gossip was that she wanted to marry Olaf, which caused dismay, as this would mean war with both the Danes and Vends. However, Olaf married her.

Spring arrives in Norway, but Thyri is unhappy; not even a present of angelica root consoles her. She wants to reclaim her property in Wendland, and goads Olaf into promising to fight Svend and Burislaf to regain her dowry.

The plot thickens

King Svend the Dane marries the ugly heathen, Sigrid of Svithiod. Sigrid is still smarting from the glove-slap she received from Olaf, and goads Svend into avenging the insult. Svend goes off to sea, seeking Olaf.

The Death of Olaf

Olaf's dragons (the Viking ships with dragon head prows) go to sea and meet with the ships of Denmark and Svithiod; Olaf's forces are overwhelmed and Olaf dies, sinking beneath the waves.

Epilogue

Astrid, Abbess of Drontheim, hears a voice at midnight, telling of how God, the Cross, peace, patience, truth, and love will endure.

Soloists

Jane Sherriff (soprano) began her vocal training with Pamela Cook, musical director of the internationally renowned Cantamus Girls Choir, while reading for her B.Mus. degree at Nottingham University. After abandoning a teacher training course and work in the music retail business she took up singing professionally in 1989. She now studies with Jessica Cash in London, and her career involves performances as a soloist as well as concerts and recordings with professional choirs at home and abroad. She has sung with The Clerkes of Oxenford, specialising in the high tessitura singing required of their treble line, The Hanover Band, London Voices and The New English Chamber Choir. She is currently a member of the choir of St Michael's, Cornhill, and enjoys extensive work on the London Church Choir circuit. In the past year the most remarkable occasions included a frenzied day providing a Schubert *Ave Maria* at a christening in the Crypt of The Houses of Parliament, and a Bach *Jauchzet* at another in Chelsea, sandwiched round a wedding in The City; wading ankle deep through Streatham floods to get to a Fauré *Requiem*; and an evening sight reading part songs at the Peers Catch Club Dinner in The House of Lords.

Jane is delighted to be singing with Tyndale Choral Society once again, continuing the Elgar anniversary celebrations. Having added *For The Fallen* to her repertoire last November, and *The Light of Life* in April, she is now looking forward to the wonderful *King Olaf*. Besides Elgar, recent platform engagements have included Mozart *Vespers K339* in Pangbourne, Rutter *Requiem* in Weymouth and Brahms *Requiem* in Winchester. Next year sees a return to her esteemed baroque repertoire, with the rarely performed Homilius *Passion* in London and more familiar Bach *B Minor Mass* in Oxfordshire.

Lewis Brown (tenor) sang as a Lay Clerk at Selwyn, Clare and Jesus Colleges in Cambridge for several years before moving to Tewkesbury where he deputised regularly at the Abbey. His solo career has been varied, including performances of Bach's *St John Passion* (Evangelist) and *St Matthew Passion* (Tenor soloist), and Stradella's religious opera *San Giovanni Battista* (Herod's Counsellor). Although now working in London, he enjoys returning to Gloucestershire at weekends and has recently taken part in performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *The Creation* in Cheltenham and Pershore. He sang with us in our concert *For the Fallen* last year.

Christopher Monk (bass) is senior Lay clerk in Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum. He is a founding member of the Glevum Consort and regularly deputises in the Cathedral Choirs of Bristol, Gloucester and Worcester. In addition to choral singing, Christopher is in demand as a soloist throughout Gloucestershire, performing with many varied choirs and choral societies in addition to running his male-voice choir, 'Chor Anglais'.

INTRODUCTION

SOLI AND CHORUS.

There is a wondrous book
Of Legends in the old Norse tongue,
Of the dead kings of Norrway,
Legends that once were told or sung
In many a smoky fireside nook
Of Iceland, in the ancient day,
By wandering Saga-man or Scald;
Heimskringla is the volume called;
And he who looks may find therein
The story that we now begin.

RECIT (*Bass*)

*Summon now the God of Thunder,
Him who rives the heav'ns asunder,
Sing the words of mighty Thor
Challenging the world to war.*

CHALLENGE OF THOR

CHORUS

I am the God Thor,
I am the War God,
I am the Thunderer!
Here in my Northland,
My fastness and fortress,
Reign I for ever!

Here amid icebergs
Rule I the nations ;
This is my hammer,
Miolner the mighty;
Giants and sorcerers
Cannot withstand it !

These are my gauntlets
Wherewith I wield it,
And hurl it afar off;
This is my girdle ;
Whenever I brace it,
Strength is redoubled!

The light thou beholdest
Stream through the heavens

In flashes of crimson,
Is but my red beard
Blown by the night-wind,
Affrighting the nations !

Jove is my brother ;
Mine eyes are the lightning ;
The wheels of my chariot
Roll in the thunder.
The blows of my hammer
Ring in the earthquake !

Force rules the world still,
Has ruled it, shall rule it;
Meekness is weakness,
Strength is triumphant-
Over the whole earth
Still is it Thor's-Day.
Thou art a God too,
O Galilean!
And thus single-handed
Unto the combat,
Gauntlet or Gospel,
Here I defy thee !

(*Longfellow*)

KING OLAF'S RETURN

SOLO (*Tenor*).

And King Olaf heard the cry,
Saw the red light in the sky,
Laid his hand upon his sword,
As he leaned upon the railing,
And his ship went sailing, sailing
Northward into Drontheim fiord.
There he stood as one who dreamed;
And the red light glanced and gleamed
On the armour that he wore ;
And he shouted, as the rifted
Streamers o'er him shook and shifted,
" I accept thy challenge, Thor ! "
To avenge his father slain,
And reconquer realm and reign,
Came the youthful Olaf home,
Through the midnight sailing, sailing;
Listening to the wild wind's wailing,
And the dashing of the foam.
To his thoughts the sacred name

Of his mother Astrid came,
And the tale she oft had told
Of her flight by secret passes
Through the mountains and morasses
To the home of Hakon old.

Then strange memories crowded back
Of Queen Gunhild's wrath and wrack,
And a hurried flight by sea;
Of grim Vikings, and their rapture
In the sea-fight, and the capture,
And the life of slavery.
Then his cruising o'er the seas,
Westward to the Hebrides,
And to Scilly's rocky shore;
And the hermit's cavern dismal,
Christ's great Name and rites baptismal,
In the ocean's rush and roar.
Norway never yet had seen
One so beautiful of mien,
One so royal in attire,
When in arms completely furnished,
Harness gold-inlaid and burnished,
Mantle like a flame of fire.

Thus came Olaf to his own,
When upon the night-wind blown
Passed that cry along the shore;
And he answered, while the rifted
Streamers o'er him shook and shifted,
"I accept thy challenge, Thor!"
(Longfellow)

RECIT *(Bass)*.

*Tell how Olaf bore the Cross
To the folk at Nidaros,
Norland, Iceland, lands and seas
Winning to the God of Peace.*

THE CONVERSION

CHORUS

King Olaf's prow at Nidaros
Furrowed the golden shore,
His axemen and his bowmen
Lay round the shrine of Thor.

Round the stately fane at Maerin
King Olaf's housecarles lay,
And watch'd the men of Drontheim
Gather at break of day.

Mail-clad they came, and sworded,
Corslet and buckler ring
As they throng behind the Ironbeard
Who leads them to the King.

The shipmen grave of Iceland
Retir'd to give them room,
Their ringed mail was rusted
And gray with salt sea spume.

All halted, all were silent,
When, shiv'ring through the blue,
Smiting the walls of Asgard,
King Olaf's bugle blew.

OLAF *(Tenor)*.

Behold me, my people, and answer and say
If the gods of your fathers ye worship to-day ?
Or bend ye your will to the word of your King,
To the waters of Christ and the Cross that I
bring ?

IRONBEARD *(Bass)*

By my beard called of iron, O King, thou shalt
know
In the name of thy people, I answer thee,
"No."
Shall thy cross and thy waters purge out the
gods' ban,
Who feed on the flesh and the life-blood of
man ?

OLAF

Shall Thor and shall Odin be high gods agen ?
Then give to their altars their guerdon of men.
But shall blood of base losels and felons re-
store
The glow to the altars of Odin and Thor ?
Nay, a sacrifice rich to their shrines will I
yield,

My fairest in bower and best under shield.
My mightiest dies there, by sun and by moon,
Ironbeard and my fairest, his daughter
 Gudrun.

IRONBEARD

Not the fair or the mighty, Gudrun or her sire,
Shall pass by thy mandate, O King, through
 the fire.

See above in the sun gleams the image of
 gold,
Of Thor with the battle-maul gripp 'd in his
 hold;
If he seeks for a hero, his best thou shalt do,
Call the best of thine axemen and offer there-
 to.

OLAF.

O hearken, my people, behold me once more,
And may Christ lift my axe 'gainst the
 hammer of Thor.

Chorus.

As leap the lights of winter
Athwart the northern sky,
Against the golden image
Flash'd Olaf's axe on high.

As falls a berg in springtime,
Far shiver'd on the floe,
The golden shards of godhead
Crash 'd on the ground below.

Fierce Ironbeard sprang forward ;
A housecarle drew his bow,
And o'er the shattered image
Its champion lay low.

IRONBEARD.

All-Father, I come ! true to honour and troth,
To the faith of my fathers, and Odin the Goth.

O wide should the doors of Valhalla unroll
For a hero who gives for it body and soul.

King Olaf the Norseman ! perchance it shall
 be,
That thy Peace-God may rule o'er the
 Norlander free;

But with axe in his hand, and with sword
upon thigh,
And his face to his slayer doth Ironbeard die.

Chorus.

Then o'er the blood-stained Horgstone
 The Cross of Christ was seen,
The holy priests were praying,
 The singers sang between.
King Olaf's axe was lower'd,
 His bright blue eyes were dim,
As swung the golden censer,
 As swelled the solemn hymn.
The men of Drontheim trembled,
 They marvell'd and they knelt ;
Their helpless god was broken,
 The power of Christ was felt.

OLAF.

O brothers of Iceland, behold them, they
 kneel!
Of my Lord and His conquest, come, be you
 the seal.
Pass the gods of the Gothland; your serfdom
 shall cease,
For the sacrifice bloody I offer you peace :
The peace of the Christian; O, join in the
 prayer
That swells to the Lord of the earth and the
 air.

Chorus

Receive us, King; we kneel to Him
Who felled by thee the War-god grim;

Water bring, our brows to lave,
On our shields the Cross engrave;
Blood and battle let them cease,
Knit us to the God of peace.

OLAF (*with Chorus*)

Lord, receive them! King divine,
Breathe a blessing ; they are Thine.
(*Acworth*)

RECIT (*Bass*)

*Now the child of Ironbeard dead,
Fair Gudrun, doth Olaf wed,
Hoping thus, his wergild paying,
To redeem him from the slaying.*

GUDRUN

Soprano.

On King Olaf's bridal night
Shines the moon with tender light,
And across the chamber streams
Its tide of dreams.

At the fatal midnight hour,
When all evil things have power,
In the glimmer of the moon
Stands Gudrun.

Close against her heaving breast,
Something in her hand is pressed;
Like an icicle, its sheen
Is cold and keen.

On the cairn are fixed her eyes
Where her murdered father lies,
And a voice remote and drear
She seems to hear.

Chorus

What a bridal night is this !
Cold will be the dagger's kiss;
Laden with the chill of death
Is its breath.

Like the drifting snow she sweeps
To the couch where Olaf sleeps;
Suddenly he wakes and stirs,
His eyes meet hers.

OLAF (*Tenor*)

" What is that," [King Olaf said],
" Gleams so bright above thy head ?
Wherefore standest thou so white
In pale moonlight ? "

GUDRUN (*Soprano*)

" 'Tis the bodkin that I wear
When at night I bind my hair;
It woke me falling on the floor ;
'Tis nothing more."

OLAF

Forests have ears, and fields have eyes;
Often treachery lurking lies
Underneath the fairest hair!
Gudrun, beware ! "

Chorus

Ere the earliest peep of morn
Blew King Olaf's bugle horn ;
And for ever sundered ride
Bridegroom and bride!
(*Longfellow.*)

INTERVAL

RECIT (*Bass*)

*How the Wraith of Odin old
Song and tale and Saga told,
Coming as unbidden guest
To the hall, to Olaf's feast;
Sing ye now, and with the strain
Ancient memories wake again.*

THE WRAITH OF ODIN

CHORUS (*BALLAD*)

The guests were loud, the ale was strong,
King Olaf feasted late and long;
The hoary Scalds together sang ;
O'erhead the smoky rafters rang.
(Dead rides Sir Morten of Fogelsang.)

The door swung wide, with creak and din ;
A blast of cold night-air came in,
And on the threshold shivering stood
A one-eyed guest, with cloak and hood.
The King exclaimed, " O graybeard pale!

Come warm thee with this cup of ale."
The foaming draught the old man quaffed,
The noisy guests looked on and laughed.

Then spake the King : " Be not afraid ;
Sit here by me." The guest obeyed,
And seated at the table, told
Tales of the sea, and Sagas old.

As one who from a volume reads,
He spake of heroes and their deeds,
Of lands and cities he had seen,
And stormy gulfs that tossed between.

Then from his lips the music rolled
The Havamal of Odin old,
With sounds mysterious as the roar
Of billows on a distant shore.

Then slept the King, and when he woke
The guest was gone, the morning broke.

They found the doors securely barred,
They found the watch-dog in the yard,
There was no foot-print in the grass,
And none had seen the stranger pass.

King Olaf crossed himself and said :
" I know that Odin the Great is dead:
Sure is the triumph of our Faith,
The one-eyed stranger was his Wraith ! "
(Longfellow)

RECIT (*Bass*)

*Sisters, sing us now the song
How since Olaf came a-wooing,
Sigrid wrought for his undoing,
Of the insult and the wrong.*

SIGRID

Chorus

Sigrid sits in her high abode,
The haughty Queen of Svithiod,
And to the West looks she
For Norrway's King whose suit is told
By the ring from Lade's temple old,
Which lies upon her knee.

Lady, lady, lances gleam
On the farther side of the border stream;
Lady, the horses ford the flood,
They cross the meadow, and pass the wood,

You may hear the iron hoof-stroke beat
On the ringing stones of the village street ;
Rank on rank came spearmen tall,
But the crest of Olaf is o'er them all,
And the peace strings bind his sword;
See, he alights, he mounts the stair,
The Norrway King with the golden hair,
Queen Sigrid, greet thy lord.

OLAF (*Tenor*)

Sigrid, hail ! with royal hand
Knit to thee Norrway's King and land,
And the ring of Lade upon thy knee
We will change to a cross for thee and me.

SIGRID (*Soprano*)

Olaf, hail! my hand is thine,
But the gods of old I will not resign ;
Bow thou to thy Cross for woe or weal,
But where I have knelt, I still must kneel.

OLAF

Queen of Svithiod! hearken well,
Thy gods are mute on fiord and fell,
Nor ever shall their voice again
Be heard where Christ hath ris'n to reign.

SIGRID

I hear them speak! from pole to pole
The Norland gods their thunder roll ;
For Norland folk their sword the rod
For slaves who own the Southland god.

OLAF

I will give my body and soul to flame
Ere I take to my heart a heathen dame;
Thou hast not beauty, thou hast not youth,
Shall I buy thy land at the cost of truth ?

Chorus

King Olaf rises; sisters, say
Why does he thrust the Queen away,
Why dash his glove on the oaken floor,
And turn and stride towards the door ?
The gods protect the wrong'd and weak!
The glove has struck Queen Sigrid's cheek,
See the flash of her haughty eye,
See her stately form drawn high !
Haste thee, O haste, King Olaf, fly.

SIGRID

Thou art gone! nay, spur not through the
gate;
I am one that can watch and wait;
By yonder glove on the oaken floor,
By my father's head and the soul of Thor
By the hand she offered, Sigrid saith,
That Sigrid yet shall be Olaf's death.

(Acworth.)

RECIT (*Bass*).

*Hark! she flies from. Wendland forth,
Slighted Thyri, to the North:
There, as Olaf's wedded dame,
Will she set the North aflame !*

THYRI

CHORUS (BALLAD).

A little bird in the air
Is singing of Thyri the fair,
The sister of Svend the Dane ;
And the song of the garrulous bird
In the streets of the town is heard
And repeated again and again.
(Hoist up your sails of silk,
And flee away from each other.)

To King Burislaf, it is said,
Was the beautiful Thyri wed,
And a sorrowful bride went she:
And after a week and a day,
She has fled away and away,
From his town by the stormy sea,

They say, that through heat and through
cold,
Through weald, they say, and through wold
By day and by night, they say,
She has fled: and the gossips report
She has come to King Olaf's court,
And the town is all in dismay.

It is whispered King Olaf has seen,
Has talked with the beautiful Queen ;
And they wonder how it will end;
For surely, if here she remain.
It is war with King Svend the Dane,
And King Burislaf the Vend!

O, greatest wonder of all.'
It is published in hamlet and hall.
It roars like a flame that is fanned
The King—yes, Olaf the King—
Has wedded her with his ring,
And Thyri is Queen in the land !
(Longfellow)

DUET (*Soprano and Tenor*).

THYRI

The gray land breaks to lively green,
Bespangled all with flowers;
The throstles sing to greet the spring
Through lengthening sunlit hours.

But what care I for flowers on sward,
Or bursting buds on tree ?
My lands restored from Wendland's lord
Were better cheer to me.

A landless, dowerless bride am I,
The bride of Norrway's King,
What boots me, while I sit and sigh,
The coming of the spring ?

OLAF

Thyri, my beloved,
Hither come I bearing
Angelicas uprooted,
Sweet and fair as thou.

Earliest boon of springtime,
Sign of snow departing,
In their welcome fragrance,
Bathe thy snowy brow.

THYRI

Sweet are thy words, but O ! meseems,
A sweeter gift would be,
The boon that haunts Queen Thyri's
dreams,
Her dowry over sea.
Wide spread they from the Wendland shore,
And rich with fruit and flower,
The lands I weep for evermore,
O ! give me back my dower.

OLAF.

Fear not, doubt not, weep not,
As a Queen triumphant,
Towards the happy sunlight
Lift thy radiant eyes ;
To the strife of favours,
For thy love I gird me,
And the lands of Thyri
Shall I win for prize.

BOTH

Comes the spring unchaining,
Sunshine on his pinions,
All the world imprisoned
In the Ice-King's hall;
So the golden promise
Passed from lord to lady,
Warm with words of loving,
Lifts the heart from thrall.
(Acworth)

CHORAL RECIT

*After Queen Gunhild's death,
So the old Saga saith,
Plighted King Svend his faith,
To Sigrid the Haughty.*

*Still on her scornful face,
Blushing with deep disgrace,*

*Bore she the crimson trace
Of Olaf's gauntlet.*

*Oft to King Svend she spake,
" For thine own honour's sake
Shalt thou swift vengeance take
On this vile coward ! "*

*And to avenge his bride,
Soothing her wounded pride,
Over the waters wide
King Olaf sought he.*

(Longfellow)

THE DEATH OF OLAF

CHORUS.

King Olaf's dragons take the sea,
The piping south-wind drives them fast;
The shields dip deep upon the lee,
The white sails strain on every mast.
Leaping from wave to wave they round
The cape that bars the stormy sound,
And where the ocean opens wide
They see far stretched on either side
The Danish ships and Svithiod's ride;
High on his deck King Olaf stands,
The war-axe grasp'd in both his hands,
With helm of gold and jerkin red,
And fair curls blowing round his head,
First of his fleet, he leads the van
And seeks the battle, man to man.

But seaward, landward, cape and bay
Cast forth their foes on Norway;
Ten thousand shaven oar-blades sweep
The bosom of the troubled deep ;
As crash the prows, ring bill and shield,
And arm meets arm that will not yield;
Still where the foemen thickest throng
King Olaf's galley sweeps along,
And still her lofty sides to scale
Ply the fierce foemen oar and sail,
And pour their heroes bright in mail,
Woe, woe for Norrway !
O'erwhelmed, her stout sea-dragons fly,
Or, scatter'd, powerless, scarcely try
To join once more the fray :

Yet still, like sunbeam through a cloud,
Glimmers the helm of Olaf proud,

Faint and more faint to see:
Around it close the dark'ning spears,
It sinks, it sparkles, disappears,
King Olaf, woe to thee !

Thy latest fight is fought in vain,
No more the axe of Olaf slain,
No more the glittering crest,
Shall victory pluck from ruin's verge,
Or to the chase his spearmen urge;
Above him rolls the sullen surge,
That stormy heart has rest.

(Acworth)

EPILOGUE

SOLI AND CHORUS.

Bass Recit.

*In the convent of Drontheim
Knelt Astrid, the Abbess,
At midnight, adoring,
She heard in the silence
The voice of one speaking
Without in the darkness,
Now louder, now nearer,
Now lost in the distance.*

Soli and Chorus.

" It is accepted,
The angry defiance,
The challenge of battle !
"It is accepted,
But not with the weapons
Of war that thou wieldest !

" Cross against corslet,
Love against hatred,
Peace-cry for war-cry!
Patience is powerful;
He that o'ercometh
Hath power o'er the nations !

Chorus (unaccompanied).

" As torrents in summer,
Half-dried in their channels,
Suddenly rise, though the
Sky is still cloudless,
For rain has been falling
Far off at their fountains;

" So hearts that are fainting
Grow full to o'erflowing,
And they that behold it
Marvel, and know not
That God at their fountains
Far off has been raining !

Soli and Chorus.

" Stronger than steel
Is the sword of the Spirit;
Swifter than arrows
The light of the truth is,
Greater than anger
Is love, and subdueth !

" The dawn is not distant,
Nor is the night starless,
Love is eternal!
God is still God, and
His faith shall not fail us;
Christ is eternal ! "

*A strain of music ends the tale,
A low, monotonous, funeral wail,
That with its cadence, wild and sweet
Makes the long Saga more complete.*
(Longfellow)

Members of the Choir

Sopranos

Liz Barnes
Fiona Chandler
Mavis Church
Jenni Culverwell
Glenis Ewer
Anne Glanville
Christine Gourd
Clare Harrison
Marjorie Harrison
Diana Hobbs
Lynette Magnone
Doreen Manning
Marion Miller
Angela Pendlebury
Julie Phillips
Anne Shipton
Valerie Skinner
Joyce Theaker
Lesley Townsend
Sandra Tucker
Ros Wakefield
Vanessa Weaver
Elaine White
Elizabeth Young

Altos

Catherine Bennett
Jill Brown
Jenny Coles
Jacquelin Hill
Estelle James
Sally Lamerton
Lorna Lane
Caroline Marshall
Francis Neale
Anne Nuttall
Julia O'Connor Beach
Lisa Randell
Indigo Redfern
Kate Reeves
Wendy Richardson
Helen Roberts
Miriam Salman
Wendy Thomas
Alex Tomlinson
Eve Tudgay
Sue Walshaw
Lesley Wrangmore

Tenors

Philip Butcher
Jean Dabinett
John Ewer
Peter Harney
Alastair MacLeod
Audrey Sewell
Andrew Young

Basses

Frank Andoh
Brian Bolsher
Mike Chambers
James Corbett
Jonathan Golding
John Hicks
Brian Kitching
Derek Manning
Brian Neale
John Palmer
Dick Skinner
Geoff Whiley

The Tyndale Choral Society is affiliated to Making Music, which represents and supports amateur vocal, instrumental and promoting societies throughout the United Kingdom.

Tyndale Choral Society

Founder --- Mrs M Neale
President --- James Bowman CBE



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The Society is most grateful to its Friends for their generous support and continuing interest. If you too would like to become a Friend, please give your name and address to the Friends Secretary, 01453 543888 or any member of the Society.



The Society is indebted to Michael Stone of Ozleworth Park,
to Renishaw plc and STMicroelectronics, Bristol
for supporting this concert.

Looking forward to 2008



Absolute Beginners Class

Start date Monday, 14 January, Dursley Methodist Church
Come join us! Learn the rudiments of sight singing, and then join the choir in
rehearsals for its Summer Concert. Reserve your place now!



Summer Concert

Saturday, 5 July, St Mary's Church, Wotton-under-Edge

**Kodaly: Psalmus Hungaricus, Music Makers
Opera Choruses by Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Donizetti,
Leoncavallo, Mascagni**



Choral Workshop Day

Saturday, 27 September, St Mary's Church, Wotton-under-Edge

“Exploring European Sacred Music” with
Nigel Perrin, ex King's Singer, acclaimed choral director
and inspirational teacher.



Winter Concert

Saturday, 15 November, St James' Church, Dursley

Mendelssohn – St Paul

Rehearsals for 2008 begin on Monday 31 March at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church,
Dursley. New members in all parts will be most welcome. For further information,
please contact the Secretary, Julia O'Connor-Beach, on 01454 260877 or by email:
secretary@tyndale-choral-society.org