

Mr. J.W. Lawrence,
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Tel. No. Dunnington 8065.

JWL/KS

25th July 1972.

Miss S.M. Rivers,
4, Flagwalk,
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Middlesex.

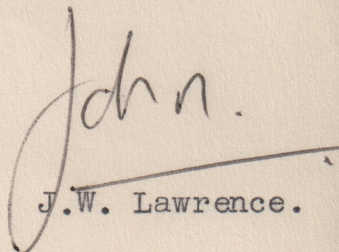
Dear Sue,

Many thanks for your letter of 24th July from which I was so pleased to learn that the singers had enjoyed the concert at Castle Howard. As you say, next year we shall have to try and arrange some rather better weather!

I did promise in my letter of 24th July that if any press cuttings came to hand I would immediately let you have these and in fact there was a report in last night's local rag. I, therefore, cut out the article and am enclosing it with this letter for your retention. By and large it appears to me to be quite a good report but I do really wonder sometimes whether some of these reporters really know as much about the musical content of the programme as their reports lead their readers to believe. However, whatever else he say, I think that the final paragraph is very significant and I heartily endorse it.

Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,


J.W. Lawrence.

ENC.

Fine singing at Castle Howard

THE London Concord Singers, under their conductor, Malcolm Cottle, gave a kaleidoscopic account of their talents in Castle Howard Chapel on Saturday. Obvious from the start was the mutual feeling of trust between conductor and 25 singers, and this was reflected in well-disciplined and confident performance.

In a rather dry acoustic, their best attribute was a good legato, particularly effective in the sacred pieces of the first half. The harmonic surprises of Gesualdo's *O Vos Omnes* were well controlled while Purcell's *Jehovah*, if a little deliberate in places, showed vitality of rhythm.

mic attack in the "super popular" section.

Of the two Bruckner pieces—*Locus Iste* and *Ave Maria*—the second excelled in what the first lacked by way of attention to the composer's variety of dynamics.

Closing the first half were two modern pieces. The first, written in 1898 by Charles Ives, was tremendous in composition and performance, a bitonal piece full of exciting sonorities. The second, written recently by William Mathias, had little to offer the singers or listeners beyond the usual overdone syn-copations and a fussy organ part designed to disguise the lack of choral texture.

Britten's *Five Flower Songs* are very tricky indeed, but here was the best singing of the evening with good tuning, splendid phrasing and precision

rhythm. After Vaughan Williams' mouth-melting *Turtledove*, we were whisked off on a multilingual lollipop tour of delightfully-styled Russian, Jewish, Hungarian and American songs, which underlined a high standard of diction.

Two very slight points of criticism: major thirds were often undernourished, as were some of the English vowel sounds.

Mr. George Howard, host for this charity concert, made public apology to Mr. Owen the organist for "running of the boards", a disease which has struck some of the registers of the Castle Howard instrument, and in the face of which the three organ pieces were stylishly executed.

Come again soon, LCS.

—A.R.C.

CANON M. STORRS FOX
TEL. HOVINGHAM 376

THE RECTORY,
BARTON-LE-STREET,
MALTON,
YORKSHIRE.

24th. July 1972.

Dear Mr. Lawrence,

So many people were delighted by the Concord Singers' concert in Castle Howard on Saturday evening that I must write to express our deep appreciation of a performance of such a very high standard. Several people have said that they hope that the Singers may be able to visit this part of Yorkshire on some future occasion. We owe you yourself a special word of thanks for making the arrangements and the members of the "Round Table" who gave it their support. I hope the Singers felt the visit was worth while, and enjoyed the setting for their music. Our only regret was that on such a rainy evening they could not have the additional pleasure of strolling in the lovely grounds of the Castle and enjoy that in the company of those who had come to hear them sing.

Yours sincerely,

M. Storrs Fox
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M. Storrs Fox

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