

ABBAY CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN  
TEWKESBURY

*ORGAN RECITAL*

*by*

MARILYN MASON

SATURDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER, 1966 at 7.45 p.m.

*FIVE SHILLINGS*

## *Programme*

1. Concerto del Signor Torelli *Torelli-Walther*
2. Air and Variations *Martini*
3. Prelude and Fugue in G major *Bach*
4. Chorale No. 3 in A minor *Franck*
5. Evocation à la Chapelle Sixtine *Liszt*
6. Variations and Fugue on the  
English National Anthem *Reger*

## A NOTE ON THE PLAYER, THE PROGRAMME AND THE MUSIC

Miss Marilyn Mason is universally recognised as the foremost of America's many women organists. She has been Chairman of the Department of Organ of the University of Michigan - American universities take the organ and its music very seriously - and received the Doctorate of Sacred Music degree from the Union Theological Seminary in 1954. Miss Mason has given many recitals in North America, Mexico City, and various cities of Europe, and was the first American woman to play in Westminster Abbey, when she represented the United States at the International Congress of Organists in 1957.

The programme opens with a Concerto originally written by Guiseppe Torelli, a violinist of Bologna. It was transcribed for the organ by JOHANN G. WALTHER (1684-1748), a well known author and composer who was Town Organist of Weimar. It was there that Walther and J. S. Bach became close friends, and it is interesting to compare the birth and death dates of these two composers. Bach, incidentally, was godfather to Walther's eldest son. GIOVANNI B. MARTINI (1706-1784) was an outstanding figure of 18th century Italian music. Ordained priest in 1722, he became Chapel Master of an important church in Bologna; he is remembered as a man of vast musical knowledge, and his library is said to have included 17,000 volumes.

The Prelude and Fugue in G major by JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750) is somewhat overshadowed by his other great works, and deserves to be heard more often. It is a sunny composition that needs no special explanation.

In a lecture to the Royal College of Organists, the late Dr. Alan Gray said that the name of CESAR FRANCK (1822-1890) should be added to those of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms as having had the greatest influence on the development of modern European music. Franck's third Chorale has a special place in the affection of organ lovers, for it was the last utterance of a simple but saintly man; it is said on good authority that when the dying composer received the Last Sacraments, the manuscript was lying on the bed with the ink still wet. A magnificent opening leads to the first appearance of the Chorale proper; some development of the opening motif leads to a middle section of unearthly beauty, and the piece ends with a splendid, triumphant emergence of the Chorale.

Although FRANZ LISZT (1811-1886) was probably the outstanding pianist of all times, he had a great affection for the organ, for which instrument he wrote two pieces of monumental proportions. The *Evocation à la Chapelle Sixtine*, however, was written in 1862 for the pianoforte - like Bach and Walther, Liszt was a great arranger - and makes use of two compositions traditionally associated with the Sistine Chapel at Rome. These are the famous *Miserere* of Allegri, and Mozart's *Ave verum Corpus*. The programme ends with the Variations and Fugue of MAX REGÉR (1873-1916), written in 1901 to commemorate the death of Queen Victoria. Although this piece is on a large scale, it lacks the extreme complexity of Reger's greater compositions. The Fugue subject consists of the first three phrases of the tune.

H.S.