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*Dear friends & relations  
all over the world*

I am constantly amazed at the emotions that this NEWSLETTER raises in my many friends: almost every time I bring out my camera to capture a happy moment in my travels my host often says, "Will that appear in the NEWSLETTER?" Well, I only wish all my photographs could. One friend, recently, told me more in sorrow than in anger that he was sorry his photo hadn't been included last year, and another friend wrote to tell me that he was very sorry indeed that he hadn't been mentioned at all. I nearly gave up the idea of continuing this NEWSLETTER - for I don't want to upset very dear and close friends who mean so much to me. But, yet again, I'll have to take that risk, pleading that the 90% of you who are NOT mentioned herein will understand; those who are included represent you all - you are my life - I love my life.

October 1988

My back deck had been steadily rotting ever since I moved into this house nearly 7 years ago. A splendid young man, who had been doing some work for a Trinity choirman, came to replace it, and on 2nd of October he finished it. Wow, what a difference! I asked him if he would do some more improvements to my house - yes!

Six days later I bought a new car - a 1989 Colt E - wholly super, glorious and very clean. After taking delivery of it I drove it home to the sounds of stereo Beethoven and Elgar. Heaven wasn't far away.



Two days later I met SIMON PRESTON at Newark airport (his coming to play at Trinity Church was the spur to my buying my new car!) He gave a brilliant recital for us and, at a party afterwards with a few friends, during a lull in the conversation, I threw out a 'tennis-ball' remark to see who would hit it back to me (as is the customary Princeton practice) beating me all ways up. Sure enough, it happened again: I said, "My mother was once in a lift with Paderewski." My hostess immediately responded, "I've been in an elevator with the Duke of Windsor!"

The following week Flammer published yet another of my arrangements "Blessed Jesus" (from Faure's Pie Jesu), and two days after that I discovered no less than THREE specks of dust on the back of my new car: horror!

## November

Popped down to Fort Worth Cathedral in Texas to lead a 2 day workshop for choir-masters. I was amazed to discover that one choirmaster had driven 6 hours to be there!

Two days later I flew 3,000 miles for a conference near Seattle. My hotel room had a supa view of Mount Rainier, 70 miles away, but the air was so clear and the mountain was so large that it seemed only 10 miles away. The conference dealt with musical and liturgical issues of the Episcopal Church. At the opening service, attended by the Presiding Bishop (who looked very tired - he works far too hard), we were preached at by JEFF SMITH, the Frugal Gourmet of TV fame who has an adoring following of chefs from coast to coast. He galvanised us by what he said and the way he said it, remarking that the Eucharist should be a lavish feast, not a 'TV dinner'. And to demonstrate his point he had arranged an enormous feast for us all immediately after the service which he had cooked himself. Watta man!

At the end of the month two more of my works were published: "This Joyful Easter-tide" (SATB & organ - fun), and "God of Grace and God of Laughter" (two treble voices and keyboard) with words by CARL DAW. He liked it.

## December

Collected 750 NEWSLETTERS from the printers and began to send them to friends all over the world - I ran out and had to have another printing!

23rd. Opened all the Christmas cards you dear friends had sent me - it took 2½ hours, for many of you had included letters which I read as my CD player boomed forth Vaughan Williams' symphonies. That was a nostalgia time, and very precious - thank you!

The realm of co-incidence continued to bless me with my Italian cousins: cousin ELIZABETTA BERTALOT, daughter of my cousin RENZO, came to Princeton for a couple of months to baby sit for a visiting Italian professor and his family; it was a particular joy to welcome her to my home where we posed in front of a



photograph of her father and brother, Giovanni ("John") and myself taken in front of St. Peter's, Rome, three years before when I had enjoyed the most amazing vacation, discovering a whole branch of my family that I didn't know about ("wall-to-wall Bertalots"). Incidentally Renzo, who was just retiring as the secretary of the Italian Bible Society, told me that he had published my four Bible Songs which I had composed for him; they were performed at a gathering of the Waldensian Church a few months later.

On Christmas Eve we sang Darke in F with trumpet descants to celebrate the centennial of HAROLD DARKE'S birth - he was my dear organ teacher many years ago at the Royal College of Music, and I treasure a warm friendship with his son, Michael. (See later on).

Spent a very happy few days with BOB & ANN BURTON in Lexington, Kentucky. The last time I stayed with them, in 1976, cousin Andy was with me (then a first year medical student). My hosts put me in the same bedroom - nostalgia time, again! Ann showed me her children's clothing store, "Animal Crackers" - business was booming but her



stock was not suited to Bob! Bob introduced me to their cat, Sacha. "It thinks that its name is 'No'", said Bob, "because I keep on saying, 'Sacha, no!'"

January 1989

1989

Led a Bible study at GEORGE & KINNV GALLUPS' lovely home; 29 people were there - wow! (These irregular monthly gatherings bless me considerably - not least because of the intelligent input of so many of those who come.)

Godson/cousin PETER called me from England to say that he had just become a father. His wife, NOREEN had produced SEBASTIAN - a thoroughly English boy, for Noreen had stayed with her in-laws (my cousins DICK & SHEILA in Reigate) for three months just to

make sure. (Peter and Noreen live in Zambia, in an almost inaccessible part of that part of Africa; it was good, therefore, a few days later to receive another call from Pete and to hear Sebastian gurgling over the trans Atlantic line as well.)

Two days later I flew to Columbia, South Carolina, to lead yet another two-day workshop on training children to sing and to sight-sing. It gave me the greatest joy to meet old friends again, such as DAVID



LOWRY (L) and my hostess, BRENDA PRUITT, but also to meet for the first time ROBERT POWELL, whose setting of the Gloria is sung in almost every Episcopal Church in the USA almost every Sunday. He was kind enough to say that his choir also sings my music!

Three days later I received a letter from cousin ANDY in New Zealand to say that his WENDY had just given birth to CHLOE. The relations are expanding at an alarming, yet pleasing rate! Chloe has the distinction of being the first girl to be born in the family for 66 years! How have we survived?

Disaster struck twice in one day: my lovely new car was dented in TWO car parks on the same day - calamity!

Four days later something happened to me the like of which I'd only read about: I was enjoying a drink at a party in the Rector's home, when a man came up to me, whom I knew well, also with drink in hand, and said, after some preliminary remarks, "If I should die tonight, what would happen

to me?" Fast thinking was in order, and a very clear statement of the Good News of the Gospel was delivered - he seemed pleased, and went off elsewhere. I had another drink.

Two days after that my young builder, John Krueger - who'd been fitting a couple of double glass doors to my house since finishing the deck, told me that he was about to start on the kitchen. So I moved everything out (what a mess!) and prepared myself for the camping life for a few weeks.

### February

2nd: JOHN KRUEGER began to dismantle my old kitchen. The next morning I read, in my Bible study, Haggai 1:9 - "Your only concern is your own fine home!"

The same day it was announced that a flu epidemic had hit the USA: 10,000 students from the University of Pennsylvania were off sick! (When Americans do something, they sure do it wholesale!)

Ever since I came to the USA in 1983 CHARLES MYERS (organist of Clitheroe Parish Church) had been trying to persuade me to write a regular series of articles for Musical Opinion. Finally I got down to it and mailed my first offering - which included a photograph of STEPHEN CLEOBURY (King's College, Cambridge) and myself in Texas last year, wearing stetsons. I gathered, later on, that this photograph caused something of a mild sensation in English musical circles!

Three weeks after John Krueger had moved into the kitchen he had almost finished - wow, what a difference he'd made! Lovely hand-made cupboards and serving areas, lights, efficiency and glory as far as the eye could see; he'd often stayed until midnight trying to complete his task quickly. (The 'little jobs' of finishing took longer - but my camping days were over.)

### March

Led a one-day workshop at Westminster Choir College (WCC) in Princeton on how to teach children to sight sing. It was attended by 40 choirmasters who had driven from eight States - I was staggered! Six of Trinity's excellent boys helped me - demonstrating just what they can do - even I was impressed!

Two days later I was overwhelmed, twice, by the beauty of my kitchen. (It's all MINE!) The next morning I read in my Bible (2 Samuel 7:29) "Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant." Yes, indeed!

For some time George and Kinny Gallup, together with choirparent ANN MCGOLDRICK had been keen that the Princeton Singers give a concert in aid of the Crisis Ministry - a local church organisation which feeds the hungry in Princeton and Trenton. Things were beginning to roll, and so we had a photo session to push the publicity along:



JB 'discussing a point' with (L-R) ANN MCGOLDRICK, GEORGE & KINNY GALLUP and LOIS DOWEY of the Crisis Ministry.

A few days later, thinking about my up-coming vacation in England, I wondered if Trinity's organ scholar, RODNEY AVERS,

might like to tagalongerme. I gave the matter due thought.

Went to Washington for a few days after Easter to enjoy a break with JOHN & MARGARET DRAVSON - friends from my childhood years. Margaret showed me the famous cherry blossom trees around the historic monuments' area of that most beautiful city. It was a moment of peace before a dreadful event broke upon Princeton a week later.

(Rodney Ayers said 'yes' to coming to England in August; I determined to take off 16lbs before the summer - my bathroom scales were complaining!)

### April

The awful news broke that CISSY STUART, a very dear friend of everyone at Trinity Church and indeed of the whole Princeton community, had been murdered in her house, on a Sunday afternoon, whilst we were singing Choral Evensong; she lived exactly opposite the church, and what made the news doubly worse was that she was stabbed in the back and not found for two days. Dear Cissy had welcomed me when I came to Princeton 7 years ago; I stayed in her house both when I was being interviewed and also when I began my job here, whilst waiting for my house to be ready. She had attended a Bible study that I had led only two weeks before. Everyone was stunned. At her funeral in Trinity her son said how angry he was that such a thing could happen, but also that he and his wife had wondered what Cissy herself might have said about the situation. His wife had conjectured, "Better me, God, than some young thing!" Yes, indeed. (But even now no-one has been arrested.) The following day I led another Bible study - that was hard, but it was real.

Called ROGER JUDD, sub organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, to ask if Rodney and I could stay with him in the summer - yes!

Received a happy call from the Crystal Cathedral in Los Angeles, where I was to lead a children's choir course in the summer. They wanted me to give the sermon at the closing service, as well as to conduct the music - Wow!

It was a joy, a week later, to welcome RICHARD COCK to stay for a few days. Richard is a dear friend from South Africa - organist of Johannesburg Cathedral, senior producer for the South African Broadcasting Corporation and chairman of the J'burg branch of the RSCM (a Wow is in order, I think). He was over here to arrange a tour for his choir next year and we discussed the possibility of some other plans (see later, if there's room) - and came to hear my choirs at Trinity as well as visiting the American Boychoir School here in Prince-



ton, where he met ROBERT PALMER (left), the associate director of music there, who is also my assistant choirmaster at Trinity: that was a happy visit.

The following week I conducted a performance of ELIJAH with four choirs, soloists, organ and orchestra - after only one full dress rehearsal. It was rather like direct-

ing traffic in Times Square (hairy but exciting) - everyone seemed to enjoy it.

### May

Rodney Ayers covered himself with glory at Westminster Choir College (where he was finishing his third year of study) by winning no less than FOUR prizes - the major organ scholarship, prizes for being the best conductor of his year and the most promising church musician, and also the prize for getting top marks in his exams - 3997 out of 4000!

The following week JASON WEST arrived from Los Angeles to stay with me for seven days whilst he observed Trinity's choirs and visited cronies at Westminster Choir College, where he had been a student. That was a happily stimulating visit. He also



enjoyed my new kitchen! I looked forward to staying with him in the summer after I'd directed the choir course at the Crystal Cathedral; he promised to take me bathing

at Laguna Beach. My determination to take off weight was strengthened!

The week after that I led yet another 2-day course for choirmasters on 'how to teach kvire kids': my hosts were Bill and Joanne Greene, in Rochester NY. Joanne is a psychologist and she talked to me about her specialty: "It's helpful," she told me, "to repeat back to someone who's unloading on to you what they have just said, only in different words: such as 'No one likes me.' = 'You're feeling lonely, aren't you?' This helps them to know that you are really listening to them." Wow - I found that REALLY helpful.

The day after I returned my Princeton Singers gave a concert in Philadelphia, for which we received a standing ovation. They are such a great group - but we were going through a difficult process - we had determined, after our successful tour of England in Aug '88, to cut our numbers from 32 to 24 in order to raise standards. This was causing us all many headaches, for it would mean that we would have to say goodbye to many old and valued friends.

The following week NORMAN & MARGERY HOWARTH arrived from Hong Kong to stay for a few days. These were friends of MANY years standing - both had been members of my Blackburn Singers, almost when I had founded them 25 years before (!) They'd since moved to the last outpost of the Empire (where Norman was in the anti-vice squad) and were now en route to retire back in England. It had been a particular joy, in August '88, to see them both at the Princeton Singers' concert in Blackburn cathedral -whatta co-incidence!

(My bathroom scales registered that I had taken off 14lbs - only 2 more to go!)

Trinity Church gave a party to say farewell to JOHNNY CROCKER, our Rector, who was

retiring. A former senior warden, GENE HARING said, "I've been told to be brief, so I'll only mention Johnny's good points!" That brought down the house.

June

Trinity Church's Old Choristers' Association was formerly launched at a weekend reunion. This gave me particular joy, for, at exactly the same time, Blackburn Cathedral Old Choristers' Association (which I had also helped to found) was celebrating the 50th anniversary of my predecessor's appointment there [and also, incidentally, my own 25th anniversary of starting at the cathedral.]

May Princeton's Association flourish as much as Blackburn's is.

That same day the Crystal Cathedral televised a performance of one of my anthems ("To God let us sing our praises") I heard about it later, and was thrilled - for these TV programs are relayed not only throughout the USA and Canada, but also in Europe.

At Evensong that day in Trinity, our choir sang my arrangement of ABIDE WITH ME. Afterwards two members of the congregation came up to me and said that they'd like it sung at their funerals. I forebore to ask for dates!

The following week I threw a party for Trinity's Adult choir in my house. This had been booked for nearly a year, in the belief that John Krueger would have finished. The trouble was that he was so good that I kept on finding other things for him to do - such as adding a loft ladder, remaking my front steps, and so on. The party was due to start at 7.30pm. John finished his final work at 6.55pm. Talk about timing!

At the men, boys' and girls' choir final dinner of the season in the church hall, attended by over 150 people, we said farewell

and thank you to four of our young people who had each sung in the choir for ten years, and were now going to University. One had won a place to Princeton (the head girl), another to Brown, a third to Harvard and the fourth to Yale! Remarkable, but not untypical of the Princeton scene. The last three had also been members of my Princeton Singers - English friends will remember these young men with pleasure from our 1988 England tour. (We're thinking about another!)

My Princeton Singers gave their concert in aid of the Crisis Ministry, and raised over \$6,000.00 - some guests paid \$100 each for their tickets. That was a most moving occasion, not only because of the beauty of the singing and the success of the money-raising campaign, but also because we knew that this was the last time that a number of our members would be singing with us. There was hardly a dry eye in the house as we sang our encore, "You'll take the high road and I'll take the low road... but me and my true love will never meet again..."

The next day I flew to Chicago for a 5-day conference of the American Cathedral Organists' Assoc. ("AAM"). It was notable for most congenial fellowship with my fellow organists who flew in from every part of the USA, but also for an amazing party, held on board a cruise liner in Chicago harbor on the last night; what a joy it was for us all to see two past Presidents of the Association dancing: Sister MICHAEL ANNE SSM, and BEN HUTTO. We cheered them to the echo. (See photograph, over....)

The following week I flew to Los Angeles to direct the long-awaited choristers' course at the Crystal Cathedral, and to stay with several dear friends. The course was notable for its superb organisation (JIM GILLIAM, who's in charge of the cathedral's boychoir, was responsible for this). It was held in the cathedral's retreat center - 100 acres



*Sister Michael Ann & Ben Hutto, arm in arm in AAM!*

of tropical countryside, with lake, glorious new accommodation in Mexican style, swimming pool, flower beds which sported every variety of tropical flower, and the danger of snakes. The children, in addition to singing under my direction, were also given instruction in how to play handbells, Orff instruments and recorders, and also how to paint in the style of Monet. I was both amazed and exhausted by all I saw and heard, and surely needed a few days afterwards to recover in JASON WEST's company. He took me, as promised, to Laguna Beach where the water was icy but the beach hot! (I'd taken off 17lbs). That was a GOOD TIME.

(I also spent, with Jason, a most happy afternoon bathing in FRED SWANN's private pool - Fred being the most distinguished organist of the Crystal Cathedral: the combination of delightful company, glorious sunshine and our host's delicious cuisine made that an afternoon to treasure.)

On returning to Princeton I had the pleasure of meeting, at long last, MICHAEL PERRY, who had written the original of the CALYPSO CAROL which I had arranged for SATB choir

and which is now sung on four continents. He was at WCC to deliver some lectures, and was about to take up his new appointment as Rector of Tonbridge. I looked forward to calling on him in his new home a few weeks later. Rodney Ayers and I took him to lunch at the local Greek restaurant. When he saw the logo on the menu he said, 'Be careful about this motif - it appears on "Hymns for Today's Church" and also on a book called "The Joy of Sex"!'

That week I led a five day course, six hours a day, on Boychoirs at WCC. Choirmasters had come from 15 States for this as well as from Canada, and it turned out to be one of the most remarkable weeks I have ever spent, not only because I discovered that I could more than fill 30 hours with all I have picked up during my life on this subject, but also because of the wholly amazing response of all those present. I asked for daily assessments (as is the American custom) from my students as to how I was doing; marks from 1 (awful) to 10 (supa). Most of the choirmasters were kind enough to give me a pretty regular 10 per day - but one, on the first day, gave me a 9½ with the pencilled note "Will improve".

On the first evening I also led a hymn-sing in the College Chapel, which was packed with musicians attending my and other courses for that week. Rodney Ayers played (beautifully) for me, and we finished with my arrangement of ABIDE WITH ME - which got a standing ovation. An American publisher was there, and she took a copy away with her. Later I was told that it had been accepted for publication, (Augsburg) - so stand by if you like your music emotional - copies should be available fairly soon, I believe.

The following week I flew to Denver, Color-



ado, to lecture at another week's course on choirtraining. This was also a total delight, for many reasons: my host was DONALD PEARSON, organist of Denver Cathedral who runs an amazing music program at his Cathedral (see a forthcoming article in Musical Opinion about this). Two of my fellow lecturers were RALPH CARSCADDEN, a canon of Seattle Cathedral, whose company is as delightful as his lectures are stimulating (they are VERY stimulating), and TODD WILSON - a brilliant organ recitalist, who had us sitting on the edge of our seats when he gave a recital in the cathedral. The conference was held at a most beautiful center 40 miles from Denver in the heart of the Rocky mountains, 7,000 feet high. Our heads were in the non-existent clouds for the whole week, so beautiful were our



L-R: DON PEARSON, RALPH CARSCADDEN, JB and TODD WILSON at 7,000ft in the Rockies!

surroundings. It was hard to come back to Princeton after such a 'mountain-top' experience - but the week after I returned, Rodney Ayers and I flew to England for a month's totally amazing vacation.

Now this is the difficult part of this NEWSLETTER for I cannot even begin to mention all the wonderful friends we met, some of whom took days off from work to welcome us into their homes; none of my dear relations and Godchildren are named and only two of our 18 hosts with whom we stayed are included! But thanks to everyone we met, every day was a mountain-top experience - so glorious that we could hardly stand it! We travelled as far as Carlisle in the north (where I 'inspected' a superb choircamp - it passed) to Exeter in the south, where, in a village church, we sang a glorious hymn by Brian Wren which moved me considerably (read on). 30 members of Blackburn Cathedral old choristers' assoc came to a party with me in a pub - I met a former pupil of mine from RNCM Manchester days, ANDREW SHAW, who was playing the organ for MARTIN HOW's RSCM course in Canterbury Cathedral - he invited me to 'play the choir in' - what a thrill: we walked on the Malvern Hills with MARTIN HOW - here it was that Elgar came for inspiration - the hills were alive to the sound of music - and we dined with HARRY BRAMMA the new director of the RSCM - a superb chef whose powers of leadership are already very evident to all who know him. In Shoreham, on the south coast where I grew up, I was offered the post of organist of the 1130 parish church - I was sorely tempted - and later, ALAN THURLOW (Chichester Cathedral) promised me lots of diocesan work if I should retire back there - how nice to be wanted!

It was a particular joy to dine with MICHAEL and DOROTHY DARKE in their glorious old cottage which nestles, literally, in the fold of a hill near Haselmere; where we found his nephew, ANDREW DARKE, staying the night. Andrew had been a member of my Blackburn Singers - and Michael was, of course, the son of HAROLD DARKE who had taught me the organ when I was a student at the Royal College of Music 40 years ago.



**(L-R) MICHAEL, DOROTHY and ANDREW DARKE**

Michael told us, over a delicious dinner, that his father had said, when he was organist of King's College Cambridge during the war, that his finest chorister was a boy called RONALD ARNATT. Dr. Arnatt is currently President of the American Guild of Organists and in charge of the church music program at Westminster Choir College in Princeton. Rodney is a pupil of his!

Typical of the wonderful welcomes we received wherever we went was the reception we enjoyed when we visited Judge BRIAN DUCKWORTH who, with his wife CAROLYN and three boys, RUPERT, BEN & FELIX, live in an idyllic 16th century house near Blackburn. Rupert sang with me as a boy in the choir of Blackburn Cathedral, but I hadn't seen him for about 10 years; he hadn't changed. But I had seen Brian and Carolyn - for they had come to Princeton only a few weeks before to see their daughter HENRIETTA graduate from Lawrenceville School (just around the corner from my home!) She'd been on a year's exchange visit there. And

to stretch the arm of co-incidence even further, when Brian, Carolyn and Henrietta had attended morning service at Trinity Church, Princeton, they'd met one of my young choirmen, who had just graduated from Princeton High School, and these two young things were now touring the Grand Canyon together! Ho hum! The Duckworths gave us a supa Englysshe Tea in their garden, with cucumber sandwiches, scones with strawberry jam with thick cream and two sorts of cake. (Alice and the Mad Hatter would have approved!) The scene was made complete by the energetic cavorting of their two dogs as



we 'caught up' on our gossip, and by the flying of the stars and stripes (in Rodney's honour) as we left. That was an afternoon to remember!

An almighty surprise awaited Rodney when we stayed the night with bishop TED ROBERTS (former bishop of Ely and chairman of the council of the RSCM) and his lovely wife, DTANA. Before dinner Ted presented me with

a tie (which he was throwing out - it was too loud for him, but just right for me!) He then sat down next to Rodney and said, "Because you are devoting your life to church music I thought you might like to have this prayer book which has been in my



family for over 250 years. It dates from a time before America was invented!" Rodney was speechless, as was I! It is now his most treasured possession and represents for him, and for me, the overwhelming hospitality which we received every day from a multitude of very precious and dear friends and relations. THANK YOU!

I must just add that we did stay a night in Windsor Castle with ROGER JUDD - he now lives in John Marbecke's house right next to St. George's Chapel; it was quite an experience to have a bath in this 400-year old timbered house, and be able to see tourists just a few feet away. (Hope they couldn't see me!) It was also very good to see STEPHEN JONES, the Succentor of St. George's Chapel, who had made my Princeton Singers so welcome 12 months previously. We quaffed several glasses of alcohol together in Roger's historic 'new' home.

And we also visited the Three Choirs' Festival in Gloucester - the cathedral was celebrating its 900th anniversary (or as someone else incorrectly put it, 'its 900th centenary!') What a thrill it was to be there and see HERBERT SUMSION, former



ROGER JUDD, STEPHEN JONES & JB: in front of John Marbeke's house - it's all Roger's now!

Gloucester organist, who was only one tenth the age of the cathedral - and also to bump into a host of other friends - JOHN RITTER (who is coming to Princeton in the spring), JOHN SANDERS (current organist of Gloucester) - "I liked the photograph of you and Stephen Cleobury wearing stetsons!" We sat behind ALLAN & ELISABETH WICKS (recently retired from Cant\_erbury) at one concert. "This is my first Three Choirs!" I said. ""It's my first, too!" said Allan. It was super to enjoy ROY MASSEY's ebullient company again; he conducted a most musical Choral Evensong in the cathedral, sung by the massed choirs of Gloucester, Worcester and his own Hereford choir...we had to queue for 30 minutes to get in to the service - it was jam packed.

Afterwards we bumped into PHILIP MOORE (York Minster) and RICHARD SHEPHARD. "Is it true," I asked Richard, "that you compose in ink?" "Yes!"

An especially enjoyable afternoon was spent near the end of our vacation when we visited a former chorister of mine from my St. Matthew's Northampton days, 31 years ago (!) VAUGHAN MEAKINS, whom I last saw on his wedding day, lives with his wife, MAGDA, and son, MATTHEW (why 'Matthew'?) in a cottage near Aylesbury in the middle of England. It really shook me when I saw Matthew for the

first time for he is the exact age Vaughan was when I first went to St. Matthew's, and moreover, he looks exactly like his father! Vaughan is doing wonderful things with music - his school choir had just won, for the second year running, the BBCTV "Best Choir" competition; he happened to have several videos of his superb choir handy - I was thrilled to look at them.

Rodney and I then drove down the road a couple of miles to meet KEN ROBERTON, music publisher, who lives in the largest inhabited windmill in England. He showed us all over house (which doubles as his office) - all five storeys. He left us both panting far far behind him as he ran up and down the stairs - which was a bit humiliating, because he's only 75! (He looks a young 60). AS a result of that happy hour he promised to publish my latest carol "SEE THE BABY JESUS" - "It will be the sensation of 1991" he said!

But the most extraordinary thing was to meet, purely by chance, no less than three men who had been choristers at RSCM courses I had directed many years ago. Two of them I met at Gloucester - I just happened to be standing next to them. (What about all those people I wasn't standing next to?) The third appeared after Rodney and I had played the organ in Westminster Abbey; we'd been invited to a party in the home of MARTIN & PENNY NEARY: as we were going in, someone else was leaving. "Hallo, John," he said, "do you remember me? I was a chorister on a course you directed in Norwich Cathedral twenty years ago!" "Good heavens," said I, "what are you doing now?" "I'm headmaster of Westminster Abbey Choir School!"

And so we returned to Princeton to begin another busy season - the choirstalls are full to bursting (we have 75 children from 8 to 17 in our choirs, with adults to

match) with singing visits to Connecticut, Philadelphia and Washington Cathedral arranged. The Princeton Singers have begun in an amazingly exciting way - better than ever - and my plans for next summer are even more exciting than the summer just gone - if that is possible. See the next issue of the NEWSLETTER!

BARRY ROSE has just spent a week with me, and has invited my PRINCETON SINGERS (who have been called the finest chamber choir in the USA) to record a CHORAL EVENSONG for the BBC - to be relayed, August 29th. We are one of the very few secular choirs to be so honored, and one of only two USA choirs, so I believe, to be invited - Wow! Please listen.

Thank you ALL, dear friends and relations, for this most wonderful year (and please forgive me if your name doesn't appear in this NEWSLETTER - I would wish to share so many of my moments of joy with you all...) May the coming year for you be richly blessed, fruitful and full of the sort of joy that no-one can take from you. To quote two lines from that hymn by Brian Wren which so moved me when I sang them in that village church near Exeter in August:

"Life is great if someone loves me,  
Holds my hand, and calls my name."

Hold someone's hand and call them by their name; they will bless you for showing that you love them, as I bless you.

Happy Christmas  
w/ supa New Year  
Dec 1989

Blackburn Old Chorister JOHN MARR generously offered to print AND post the England edition of this NEWSLETTER: so, dear friends, it's being published simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic this year - Thanx, John!