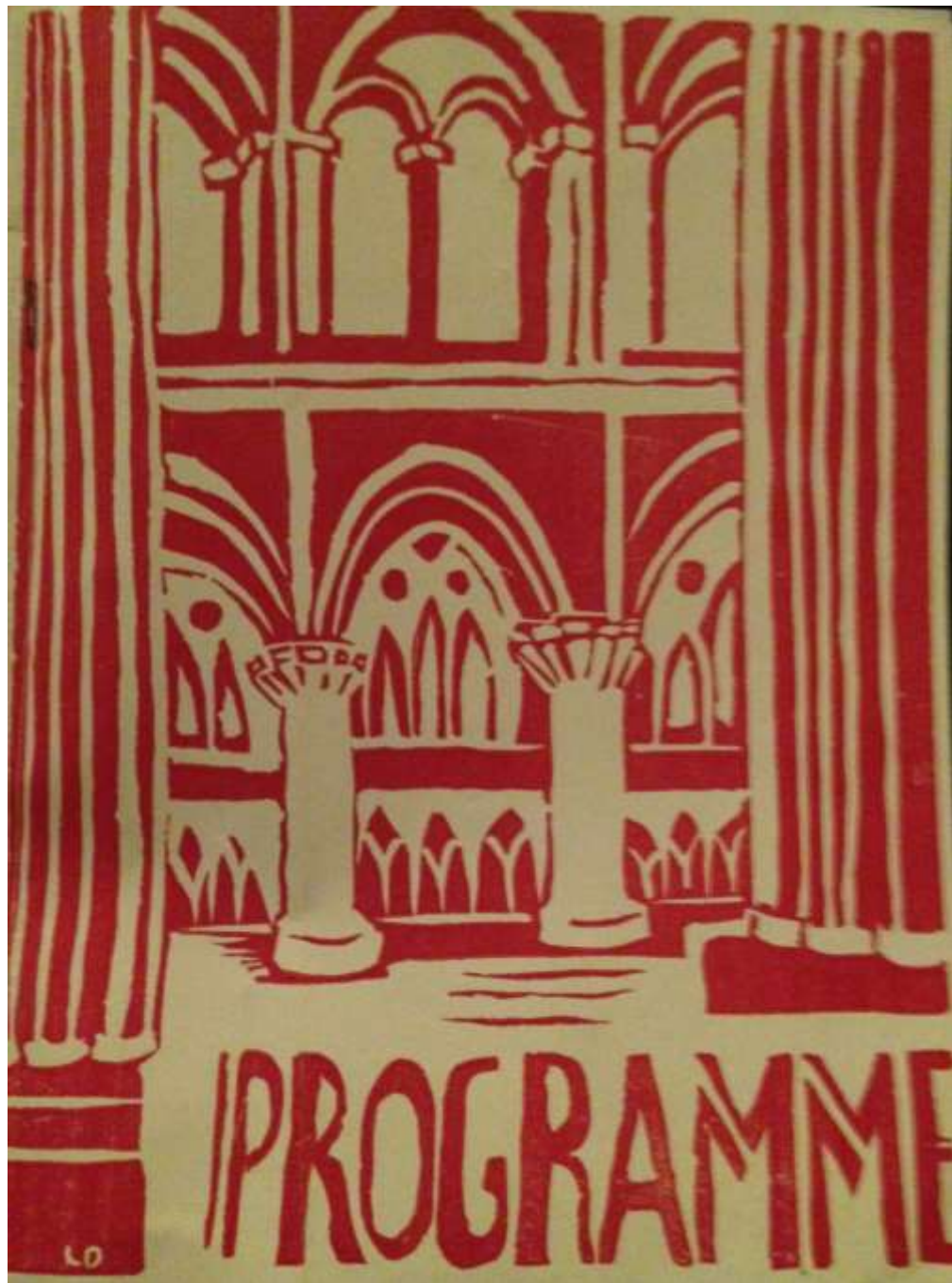




The Dramatic Society presents

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL

by T. S. Eliot

Thursday and Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1960.

MALTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL portrays something of the life and death of St. Thomas of Canterbury. The 29<sup>th</sup> December 1170 was an important day in the life of the Christian church, for on that day St. Thomas through his martyrdom triumphantly asserted a fundamental principle - that the Church will never willingly submit to be controlled by the power of a Totalitarian State.

For many years Thomas as Chancellor of England had worked happily with King Henry II in restoring order in the country, and he proved himself a popular leader; but when he was appointed by Henry as Archbishop of Canterbury "he put off the secular man completely," and to Henry's annoyance resigned the Chancellorship. He felt that the position of Archbishop was a superior one to that of Chancellor because he was then the head in England of the Church, and the Church was, and should be, entirely independent of Kings, Barons or State.

Through the "Constitution of Clarendon" Henry sought to place the Church in subjection to the King. There was a long and bitter struggle. Finally Thomas fled the country and remained nearly seven years abroad. There were attempts at reconciliation at Montmirail and elsewhere without any real success.

Although the ordinary people did not understand all the issues involved, they knew who were enemies of the Church, and Thomas was venerated as a champion of the people against royal and baronial oppression. There was a great longing for their "Father in God" to return to England but at the same time they know it was dangerous for him to do so. This is the situation when the Play opens.

Characters in order of appearance:

A Chorus of women of Canterbury.

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| First Voice     | Heather Watson     |
| Second Voice •• | Elizabeth Crowther |
| Third Voice ••  | Joan Lindeman      |
| Fourth Voice •• | Anne Hewitt        |
| Fifth Voice ••  | Elizabeth Hanson   |

Elizabeth Barker  
Joan Sanderson  
Margaret Fraser  
Rosamund Downey

Three Priests of the Cathedral.

Brian Durno  
Antony Thorp  
Kevin Delaney

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A Messenger              | Rodney Glover        |
| Archbishop Thomas Becket | Mr. R. W. Lumb       |
| Four Tempters            | Mr. V. A. Martindale |
| (and Knights)            | David Thackray       |
|                          | John Kirkham         |
|                          | Mr. D. J. Lloyd      |

|            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| Attendants | Stephen Boak  |
|            | Anthony Kirby |
|            | Rodney Glover |

Produced by Mr. Leslie W. Lawley

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Part I - The Archbishop's Hall on 2nd December, 1170.

INTERVAL

Refreshments will be on sale.

Intorlude - The Archbishop preaches in the Cathedral on  
Christmns morning; . 1170.

Part 11 - First in the Archbishops Hall, later in the  
Cathedral on 29th December, 1170.

Choral chants composed by Mr P. T. Taylor and sung by  
Christopher Clifford, David Shaw, Gerald Sykes, Peter Thorp  
and Mr. Taylor.

|                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Stage Manager                | Mr. P. G. Mason     |
| Electrician                  | Mr. J. B. Greaves   |
| Set Construction             | Mr. A. Dowding      |
| Make-up and Costumes         | Mrs. P. M. Jennings |
| Wardrobe                     | Mary Witty          |
| Prompt                       | Joyce Hudson        |
| Front of House and Publicity | Mr. J. F. Reed      |
| Refreshments                 | Miss K. M. Dawson   |
| Treasurer and President      | Mr. B. R. Rolls     |
| Programme cover designed by  | Judith Dallimore    |

The abstract paintings on each side of the Hall were composed by  
Beryl Sawyer to illustrate the theme - "Cathedral".

Our grateful thanks are due to the Abbott of Ampleforth and to  
the Vicars of St. Michael's Church, Malton and St. Peter's  
Church, Norton, for the loan of vestments and furnishings.

This play, which had nearly two years' run in London theatres and highly successful tours in the provinces and America, was originally written for the Chapter House of the Cathedral of Canterbury. It deals with the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket, before an altar in that Cathedral, on 29th December 1170. This famous crime was committed as a result of the long quarrel between the Archbishop and King Henry II; but the play does not deal with that quarrel. It may be called a study in the making of a saint.

The first scene shows Becket returning from his seven years' exile in France and the rest of it is taken up by the visits to him of four TEMPTERS. The first three come from his past - from the good times of his youth, from the days of his power as Chancellor (like our Prime Minister), from the days when a baron's revolt might have had him for Leader. These are dressed with modern suggestions, for the author sees the whole story not just what happened long ago but what is always happening - very much at this moment. The Fourth Tempter, and the subtlest, comes from Becket's mind, and represents his dreams of his own future.

By the author's wish, the same actors play the four Knights; and after the Murder (which is shown in a series of pictures) they will explain to you in modern and colloquial prose, why they did it.

The arguments that each uses are exactly parallel to those which the Tempters used to Becket.

As you will see from all this, you are for this time the people of Canterbury. To us, in the interlude between parts i and ii, the Archbishop preaches his farewell sermon on Christmas morning. For us speaks the chorus of Poor Women of Canterbury, expressing what we ordinary folk feel both of the horror of the tragedy and the grandeur of the witness made by becket to the supremacy of God in human affairs. They speak in words far deeper and finer than we could find, since our greatest living poet wrote them; but we all share the thoughts and feelings which those words represent, just as we share both the sin which causes tragedy and the glorious grace which redeems us from it.

E. MARTIN BROWNE

who was responsible for the original production.