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Samuel Sebastian Wesley's Tomb

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## Opera in London

DAVID GARRICK

With commendable courage, Mr. Reginald Somerville has taken his opera *David Garrick* out of the hands of the Carl Rosa Company and mounted it for a run at the Queen's Theatre. For this purpose Mr. Somerville has made sundry changes in his work, its original form being that of grand opera. That it met with a very cordial reception when presented at the Queen's Theatre on March 2 was a satisfactory sign that the public is ready to listen to British music in the lighter forms in spite of the fact that on this occasion it did not quite turn out to be the 'comedy' opera it was described as being. But Mr. Somerville's genuinely melodious score carried the day, and his flow of real melody completely won the goodwill of his listeners. The opera is founded, by Mr. Somerville himself, on the Robertson comedy, which it follows fairly closely. Personally I think it follows it too closely. There was not all the fun the public looks for in the lighter musical entertainments. The mounting was extremely good, and it was quite refreshing to see a British production so well put on the stage. Mr. Paul Shelving, of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, was responsible for the designs of dresses and scenery, and he did his work well. Mr. Nigel Playfair was the producer. The representation introduced an uncommonly good tenor in Mr. Leonard Ceiley, who appeared as David Garrick. His work showed great promise and his singing was excellent. Miss Madeleine Collins as Ada Ingot, Mr. Herbert Cameron as Ingot, and Mr. Miles Malleon as Squire Chivvy were among those who served the composer best. It was very satisfactory to find such care bestowed upon a British work, for every detail had been carefully considered, not forgetting the orchestra, which is a particularly fine body, directed by the composer himself. F. E. B.

### THE PEER GYNT MUSIC AT THE OLD VIC.

By utilising the whole of Grieg's incidental music to Ibsen's moral drama, *Peer Gynt*, the attraction of the production at the Old Vic., which took place on March 6 and onwards, was increased considerably. I do not propose to speak of the dramatic merits of the play, for it was written for a definite purpose as a national warning. I do not remember that the music was given when the play was performed some sixteen years ago, but in this instance it was of immense service in keeping alive the interest of a wonderfully interested audience at the Old Vic. In its form of a suite or suites the music is well-known, but it assumed a different and no less pleasing complexion when heard with the literary context. The whole had been arranged and got together by Mr. Charles Corri, the conductor, whose task cannot have been an easy one. But everything went smoothly, and the music itself was beautifully played in just the right mood of intensity, and it received the great compliment of being listened to eagerly. F. E. B.

### COWEN'S INCIDENTAL MUSIC TO PINERO'S THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE

Once again Sir Frederic Cowen acts as musician-in-ordinary to Sir Arthur Pinero. He has provided the incidental music to Sir Arthur's new play *The Enchanted Cottage*, produced at the Duke of

York's Theatre at the end of February. The musician's opportunity comes when the piece takes on its fantastic garb and deals either with the ghosts of those who have inhabited the cottage or with the imaginings of the leading female character, Laura. Needless to say that Sir Frederic Cowen, with his vast experience and his large resources, supplies all that is wanted. And I note with satisfaction that he does not rely solely on weird harmonies for an emotional appeal, but frankly writes melody. The lovers of the various periods and the dream are all illustrated by melodic passages of great charm and effect, with becoming characterisation suitable to the dates represented. The music is to be issued as an orchestral suite, and I think there will be as much approval for it in the concert room as there is in the theatre, where it is so well played—first under the composer, and afterwards under Mr. Edward Clarke. F. E. B.

### THE LONDON HIPPODROME

Like most entertainments of the kind, the new show at the Hippodrome, *Round in 50*, will give musicians some uncomfortable moments. We wonder at the small—almost negligible—amount of good singing, both solo and choral. Perhaps, however, the singing is better than we think, for the orchestral playing is so uniformly on the loud side that the singers are generally submerged, coming to the surface only on an occasional high note. Some day an enterprising management will prove that good singing and original light music are hardly less of an asset than good low comedy work, and far more so (and much less expensive) than lavish mounting. The strength of *Round in 50* lies in its having a story (an adaptation of Verne's *Round the World in Eighty Days*), some gorgeous production, an effective use of the cinema, and some very droll work by George Robey, Renée Reel, and two of the Lupinos. Thanks to these constituents the show is far above the average, and should make the Hippodrome slump-proof for the rest of the year. H. G.

## Church and Organ Music

### SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY'S TOMB

BY H. T. GILBERTHORPE

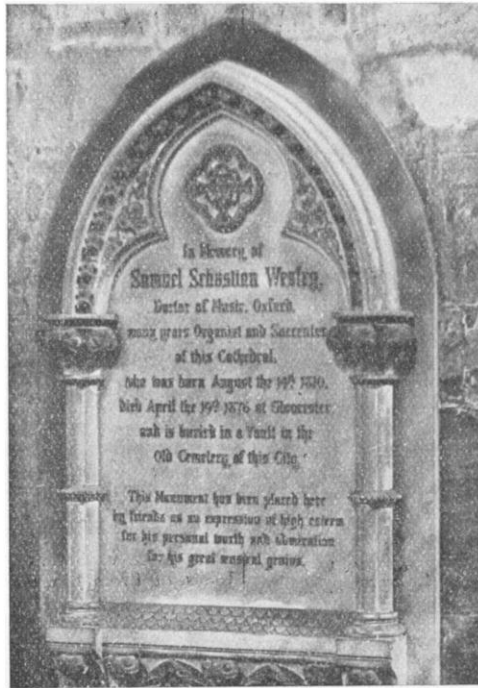
It needs no great daring to affirm that Samuel Sebastian Wesley was one of the brightest stars that ever shone in the English musical firmament. His music is known and loved wherever English speaking people are gathered together 'in quires and places where they sing.'

Wesley died at Gloucester on April 19, 1876, at the age of sixty-five, and by his own wish was buried at Exeter by the side of his only daughter. These facts are recorded by Mr. John E. West in his valuable book 'Cathedral Organists, Past and Present,' and also in other works of reference. Nevertheless, many people, otherwise well informed upon matters connected with the career of Wesley, have, to say the least, a very hazy idea as to where he was buried.

During the recent Congress of the National Union of Organists' Associations, when the members met at Messrs. Novello's rooms in Wardour Street, Mr. John E. West related the great difficulty he had had in finding Wesley's grave. He told how he

spent over an hour, in the broiling heat of a summer afternoon, wandering around the Old Cemetery at Exeter before he could find the spot that he was seeking. Dr. Ferris Tozer drew attention to the fact that many people do not know that Wesley was brought to Exeter for burial, supporting this assertion by quoting the words of the Very Rev. Henry Gee, Dean of Gloucester, who, on page 32 of a book entitled 'Gloucester Cathedral, its Organs and Organists' (recently published by the Chiswick Press) says that S. S. Wesley was buried at Winchester.

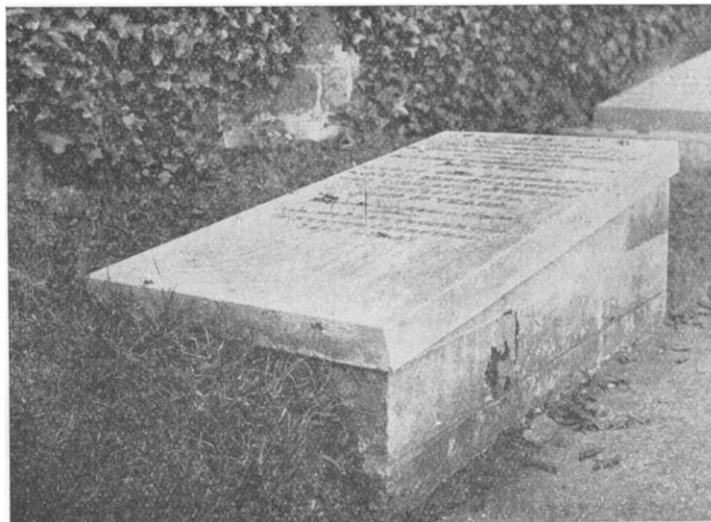
Wesley's grave is in the upper part of the Old Cemetery at Exeter, under the shadow of a portion of the old city wall. Its flat granite slab has nothing about it to attract the casual visitor's attention, and shows many signs of neglect. The metal letters forming the inscription have become corroded, and the stone round about them is very worn and discoloured. Some years ago the grave presented such a dilapidated appearance that the late Dr. W. B. Gilbert (composer of the well-known tune 'Maidstone,' usually sung to 'Pleasant are Thy courts above'), who saw it



1840, aged 9 weeks. Also of the above named Samuel Sebastian Wesley, who died at Gloucester, April 19th, 1876. Aged 65 years. Doctor of Music, Oxford. Organist and Succentor of Exeter Cathedral, 1835-1841.

As will be seen by the accompanying photograph, the lettering is now very bad, and it is not easy to decipher the inscription from a distance of a few yards. The whole appearance of the grave is such as to convey the impression that it is utterly forgotten and uncared for. Surely there must be some amongst the lovers of the priceless heritage which Samuel Sebastian Wesley has bequeathed to English Church music for all time in such works as *The Wilderness*, *Blessed be the God and Father*, *Ascribe unto the Lord*, and many other equally beautiful anthems and services, who would be

willing to bear their part in defraying the cost of placing a suitable and *permanent* memorial over the last resting place of this great man. There is a memorial tablet to Wesley's memory in the north aisle of the nave of Exeter Cathedral, and to the right of it is a tablet (not shown above) which has



THE TOMB OF S. S. WESLEY IN THE  
OLD CEMETERY, EXETER

whilst on a visit to Exeter, raised a fund to defray the cost of re-cutting the inscription. Probably the metal letters were supplied at the same time.

The inscription on the stone is as follows:

In memory of Mary, daughter of Samuel Sebastian Wesley of this City, who died February 13th,

recently been put up in memory of the late Dr. D. J. Wood. A memorial in the Cathedral is, however, not the same thing as one which marks the actual burial place, and judging from the present appearance of the grave, if nothing is done there, and wind and weather are allowed to work their will upon the

present stone, in a few years' time the inscription will have been practically obliterated, and the place will become unrecognisable as that where lies, awaiting the Resurrection, one of the greatest of English Church musicians.

### THE ORGAN IN THE CHURCH OF ST. LAWRENCE JEWRY

BY SIDNEY J. AMBLER

The fine Church situated at the south-east corner of the court-yard of the Guildhall, London, ranks as one of Wren's happiest inspirations, and is dedicated to the Saint and Martyr born at Huesca, in the kingdom of Arragon, Spain. St. Lawrence was a Deacon of Bishop Sixtus, and a Treasurer of the Church of Rome, A.D. 259, and was martyred by being laid on a gridiron and roasted alive under the persecutions of the Emperor Valerian.

The Church of St. Lawrence Jewry is the Parish Church of the united parishes of St. Lawrence Jewry, St. Mary Magdalene, Milk Street, and St. Michael Bassishaw. The last-named parish was united with the other two more than twenty years ago, and since then the patronage of the benefice has been in the hands of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's and the master and scholars of Balliol College alternately.

The only noteworthy object rescued from the old Church in the Great Fire of 1666 is the picture of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, which was hastily cut from its frame over the altar before the conflagration reached the Church, and was thus saved from destruction. It now occupies a position in the vestry. The dimensions of Wren's fabric are approximately 80-ft. in length and 65-ft. in breadth, with a height of roof of 40-ft., flat and panelled. The acoustic properties of the building are perfect, there being resonance without undue echo.

The earliest records of an organ appear to be in a Vestry Minute of 1683:

'The Committee having seen drafts and proposals of Mr. Harris and Mr. Smith for the Organ, and how it should be made, and being satisfied that they were both good workmen, it was put to the vote whether of them should make the organ, and it was speedily carried that Mr. Harris should make the same, which is ordered to be done by Mr. Harris accordingly. After Mr. Harris was ordered to be the maker of the organ as by the order above, it was agreed by Mr. Harris that he would make the same according to his proposals, and that he would not expect any money till the organ is finished and approved by the Parish. If the same was not approved he would take it away; and he would finish the organ within three months after the joiner and carver should finish their work.'

The carver here referred to was no less than the great artist, Grinling Gibbons, whose craftsmanship is here seen to this day in its perfection. Volumes could be written of the wealth of carved woodwork to be found in the Church and vestries, but it must suffice to say that it is doubtful if a finer example of an organ-case can be found anywhere, whether judged from the standpoint of craftsmanship or good taste in design.

A later Vestry Minute states that Harris was given £100 to go on with, and had to find security for repayment if the work was not approved of. Harris was afterwards paid £300. The carver and joiner received £285 for their work, but the Vestry considered this price was excessive.

A further extract reads:

'It is ordered that Mr. Browne shall proceed in playing the organ [1685] in the Parish Church, and be organist for one year from the time he begin [began] to play the same, he having for his satisfaction left himself to the goodwill of the Parish.'

He was later given a salary of £20.

There appears to be no authentic record of the names of the stops of the original Harris organ as it left that builder's hands in or about the year 1685. For the earliest

reliable specification of an organ at St. Lawrence, we have, however, a manuscript of a Mr. Henry Leffler, at one time organist of St. Katharine Cree and an official of the Bank of England, whose descendants are at present members of this institution, and personally known to the writer. Mr. Henry Leffler, writing in 1800, gives the list of stops as follows:

Three sets of keys from GG—C, short octaves. Swell from Fiddle G to D, by Byfield. *Great* (10 stops): Open Diapason, Stopped Diapason, Principal, Twelfth, Fifteenth, Tierce, Larigot, Sesquialtera (four ranks). Cornet to C sharp (five ranks). Trumpet. *Swell* (seven stops): Stopped Diapason, Principal, Cornet (three ranks), Trumpet, Hautboy, Vox Humana. *Choir* (three stops): Stopped Diapason, Principal, Flute.

The Choir (Chayre) organ, as customary, was placed behind the organ-stool, and this old Choir case with the Harris pipes—or some of them, at least—is to be seen now in the same relative position.

I have recently taken out some of these pipes and examined them. From the composition of the metal they are undoubtedly of Harris's make, and voiced on about 1½-in. wind.

About 1856 Russell rebuilt and enlarged the organ and some more case-work was added; and later still Henry Jones, of Brompton, made further extensions.

In the year 1875 Gray & Davison totally rebuilt the organ, retaining all the old case-work, extending the perimeter of the loft, and providing new screens and panels, mainly confined to the south side. This work is much inferior both in workmanship and material. The following is the list of stops of the Gray & Davison organ:

*Great* (ten stops): Double Diapason, Open Diapason, Open Diapason, Clarabella, Octave Flute, Octaviant, Quint, Super-Octave, Mixture (five ranks), Trumpets.

*Swell* (ten stops): Lieblich Bourdon, Open Diapason, Keraulophon, Rohr Flöte, Voix Celeste, Geigen Principal, Mixture (three ranks), Cornopean, Oboe, Clarion.

*Choir* (seven stops): Lieblich Bourdon, Salicional, Lieblich Gedacht, Viol d'Amour, Suabe Flute, Flageolet Harmonic, Corno di Bassetto.

*Pedal* (six stops): Open Diapason, Violone, Quint, Violoncello, Super-Octave, Trombone.

*Couplers* (five): Swell to Great; Swell to Pedal; Swell to Choir; Great to Pedal; Choir to Pedal.

Four composition pedals to Great; three composition pedals to Swell.

Compass, CC to A; Pedal, CCC to F.

In this organ the original Choir case was preserved, as already stated, in front; but the Choir organ wind-chest was placed inside the larger case, to cover up the pipes of which the dummy fan trumpet was added to the case-work.

Norman & Beard in 1900 converted the tracker key and pedal action to tubular pneumatic, but not the drawstop action, the general set-out remaining as before. A new feeder reservoir was placed over the door leading into the south aisle, with Watkins & Watson high-pressure engine. All the pipes were re-voiced, and harmonic trebles supplied to the chorus reeds. New keys, frames, jambs, draw-knobs, and pedal board were added.

The specification as it stands is practically as it was in 1875, slight changes having been made in the names of the stops. The only practical alteration is the conversion of the pedal Quint into a Bourdon, and the addition of an octave-coupler to the Swell.

The Rector and churchwardens are contemplating the cleaning and renovation of this fine instrument, and at the same time remodelling the interior to the extent of starting with a new building frame. It is not proposed to alter in any way the fine case or to modify the old pipe-work, but some tonal additions are desirable to improve the balance, and what is of greater importance is the rearrangement of the console, with the inclusion of piston action for the stop combinations. At the time of the last rebuild the