

London Gallery Quire 656

Weep not for me you Standers by

Anon.

John Symons of Brixham
The Shropshire Harmony, c. 1816
 Edited by Nicholas Markwell

[♩=80]

Soprano

1. Weep not for me you Stand - ers by which do be - set me Round
 2. My Life is like the Dust or Clay com - par - ed to the Same
 3. I must be gon[e] for E - ver more and Leave you here be - hind
 4. When Christ comes Rid - ing on the Clouds to Judge the world a - broad

Alto

Tenor
 [Air]

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Bass

9

1. 2.

for in the Grave I now must Lye un - til the Trum - pet sound sound
 my spi - rit shall Re - turn to Rest the place from whence it came came
 un - till the Re - sur - rec - tion comes and Jud[g]-ment to man - kind -kind
 an - gels and Saints cry - ing a - loud Rise Dead and meet the Lord Lord

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This tune, with its anonymous text, is found in *The Shropshire Harmony*, a manuscript book by Thomas Owens (1755–1834) of Bishop’s Castle, Shropshire, in use by 1816 (this date is found on one of the pages). It is headed *Ps the 15th or to the Funaral Hymn by Jno Symons* and previous editors have observed that this text is not a metrical paraphrase of Psalm 15. Indeed—the most likely explanation being that this heading is not the name of the tune, but an indication that it may be sung either to a metrical paraphrase of Psalm 15 (*Old Version*, as there are few *New Version* settings in the book) or to *A Funaral Hymn*, the four stanzas of which are written on blank staves below the music. It should be noted that Owens’ handwriting is exceptionally clear.

The original source for the first stanza may be an engraving on a gravestone in St Mary’s Parish Church, Brixham, Devon, which presumably pre-dates the manuscript (its precise location within the church is now unknown). All four stanzas are found on an embroidery sampler by Mary Ann Parsons, aged ten, dating from c. 1820. As none of the three sources agree, the version given in the manuscript has been preferred. There is no punctuation in any of the sources ; the original spelling of the ms is retained.

The tune was composed by John Symons, whom Sally Drage has identified as being a church musician from Brixham. She has found that he owned a lease on a copper mine at Bickerton, Cheshire, and probably met Owens whilst passing through Bishop’s Castle on the way. He contributed a further five tunes to the book, one of them being unfinished and then completed by Owens.