

WILLIAM BEALE 1784 - 1854

William Beale was born in Landrake on the first of January 1784. As a village boy he sang in the church choir. He later became a chorister at Westminster Abbey under Dr. Arnold until his voice broke. He then served as a midshipman on the *Revolutionnaire*, a 44-gun frigate which had been taken from the French. During this period he was nearly drowned by falling overboard in Cork Harbour. On leaving the Navy he became a member of the Royal Society of Musicians in 1811 and on 12th January, 1813, won the prize cup of the Madrigal Society for his beautiful madrigal, 'Awake, sweet music'. In January 1816, he was appointed gentleman of the Chapel Royal, St. James Palace. At this period he was living at Westminster. On 1st November 1820, he signed articles of appointment as organist to Trinity College, Cambridge but only stayed at that position for a year before returning to London and becoming organist at Wandsworth Parish Church and then St. John's, Clapham Rise. He continued occasionally to sing in public until later in life, and in 1840 he won a prize at the Adelphi Glee Club for his glee for four voices, 'Harmony'.

He died on the 3rd May, 1854 at Paradise Row, Stockwell.

Beale was twice married. Firstly to Miss Charlotte Elkins, a daughter of the groom of the stole to George IV, and secondly to Miss Georgiana Grove, of Clapham.

His compositions, which principally consist of glees and madrigals, though few in number, are of a very high degree of excellence, and often rival in their purity of melody and form, the best compositions of the Elizabethan madrigalists.

In November 1927 the Parish Church Council decided to place a Brass Tablet on the safe in memory of the Landrake composer, William Beale, the safe having been given by the London Madrigal Society.