

*Ode on Dr. Boyce (1779)*<sup>1</sup>

[Baker list, #400]

**Editorial Introduction:**

William Boyce (1711–79) was a well-known organist and composer. Boyce became aware of the talent of Charles Wesley’s sons and gave Charles Jr. lessons on the organ. When Boyce died in early 1779, Charles Wesley Sr. wrote an ode in his memory. The ode was published in November 1779 in the *Arminian Magazine* (2:606), with the note that it had been written on February 7, 1779.

It was likely also in 1779 that the ode was printed as a broadsheet, with a subtitle saying that it had been “set to music by Charles Wesley.” This would be Charles Jr., adding his gifts to the poetic gifts of his father in honoring Boyce. The broadsheet was probably a program used when the musical rendition was performed. Some surviving copies of the broadsheet have musical descriptions added in manuscript, apparently in the hand of Charles Wesley Jr.<sup>2</sup>

**Edition:**

[Charles Wesley.] *Ode on the Death of Dr. Boyce*. [np, 1779?].

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<sup>1</sup>This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: November 16, 2009.

<sup>2</sup>See copies in the Methodist Archives at the Rylands Library (DDCW 3/5 & 5/112). A version appears as well in MS Funeral Hymns, 91–92.

**ODE ON THE DEATH OF DR. BOYCE.**  
**Set to Music by Charles Wesley.**  
**Solemn Symphony.<sup>3</sup>**

- |         |   |                           |
|---------|---|---------------------------|
| 1       | Father of harmony, farewell!<br>Farewell for a few fleeting years!<br>Translated from the mournful vale,<br>Jehovah's flaming ministers<br>Have borne thee to thy place above,<br>Where all is <sup>4</sup> harmony and love.                 | Chorus                    |
| Da capo |   |                           |
| 2       | Thy gen'rous, good, and upright heart,<br>That sighed for a celestial lyre,<br>Was tuned on earth to bear a part<br>Symphonious with the warbling choir,<br>Where Handel strikes the golden strings,<br>And plausive angels clap their wings. | Air                       |
| 3       | Handel, and all the tuneful train,<br>Who well employed their art divine<br>T' announce the great Messiah's reign,<br>In joyous acclamations join,<br>And, springing from their azure seat,<br>With shouts their newborn brother greet.       | Recitative<br>accompanied |
| Chorus  |   |                           |
| 4       | Thy brow a radiant circle wears,<br>Thy hands a golden harp receives,<br>And, singing with the morning stars,<br>Thy soul in endless raptures lives,<br>And hymns, on the eternal throne,<br>Jehovah and his conquering Son.                  | Air<br>& Grand Chorus     |

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<sup>3</sup>This line, and all others on this page in **red font** appears in *handscript* on broadsheet. The side comments appear on left hand side of page in original. They are apparently by Charles Wesley Jr.

<sup>4</sup>Ori., "his"; corrected by a manuscript slash in the broadsheet, and printed as above in *Arminian Magazine*.