WILSON, JOHN (1626-c.1695/6), playwright

Name: John Wilson
Date of birth: 1626
Date of death: c.1695/6
Parent: Marie Wilson
Parent: Aaron Wilson
Gender: Male
Occupation: playwright
Area of activity: Literature and Writing
Author: Cecil John Layton Price

christened at S. Stephen's, Walbrook, 27 December 1626, the eldest son of Aaron and Marie Wilson.

AARON WILSON

was born at Carmarthen in 1586, admitted to Queen's College, Oxford, 1601, graduated in 1611, and was collated to S. Stephen's, Walbrook, in 1625. A forthright Royalist, he came into collision with the people of Plymouth when appointed archdeacon of Exeter and vicar of Plymouth in 1633/4. He was arrested by Plymouth corporation when the Civil War broke out and was sent prisoner to Portsmouth. He fell sick there, but died at Exeter, 4 July 1643. His son,

JOHN WILSON,

entered Exeter College, 5 April 1644, went to Lincoln's Inn in 1646, and was called to the Bar, 10 November 1652. He, too, was a fervent Royalist, and was appointed recorder of Londonderry on 20 December 1666; like his father, he could not agree with the local corporation. Wilson was more successful as writer than as office-holder and, apart from his plays, translated Erasmus's *Moriae Encomium*, 1668, and published two political essays: *A Discourse of Monarchy*, 1684, and *Jus Regium Coronae*, 1686 (?) He was best known as the author of two comedies, The Cheats, 1662, and The Projectors, 1665, and two tragedies, Andronicus Comnenius, 1664, and Belphegor, 1690. The Cheats was very popular and held the stage to the end of the century. Act 3, scene 3, lines 145-193, contain many references to the Welsh, and the curious remark, ' I suckt a Welsh Nurse, and soe by a Synedoche may be calld a Welch Man.'

Author

Cecil John Layton Price, (1915 - 1991)

Sources

The Registers of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, and of St. Benet Scherehog, London (London 1919-20)

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

John Wilson, *The Cheats â€¦ from the MS. in the library of Worcester College, Oxford* (Oxford 1935) (ed. M. C. Nahm), 1935

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