

A second-rank actress, maiden name HEMET, performing at Covent Garden in the C18, Encroached on the Hampstead common land by building a villa called Heath Lodge, the cause of a lawsuit against her by other residents, 1775.

PARK, pp. 342/3, quotes original inscription:

Mrs. Jane Lessingham, / late of the Theatre Royal / Covent Garden. / Obt. 13 March 1783. / aet. 44. / Her grateful and affectionate son William Frederick, / caused this tomb to be repaired, anno 1802, / as a last token of respect to her memory. / William Frederick Williams / died October 24th, MDCCCV, / aged 33 years. /

In an addendum, p. xxxvi, Park adds:

Mrs. Lessingham, by will, dated Dec. 12, 1782, devised all her real property to Mr. Harris of Covent-garden Theatre, in trust for her sons Thomas, Charles, and Edwin. She adds, " and should Frederick not be better provided for, he must take his share with the rest, but not otherwise."

BARRATT, I, p. 286, and pp. 289/90 with picture of her role as "Oriana"; II, pp. 201/3, with pictures of Heath Lodge, Mrs. L. herself, and as "Mrs. Sullen"; III, pp. 80/81 her tombstone, and pp. 286/7 Heath Lodge again.