



The Popjay tomb, photo courtesy of Helen Taylor 2011

The Popjay Tomb

The Popjay tomb stands in the Churchyard at Wylve, the story behind it dates back a long time.

“Wily

... but the church-yard affords a tomb, to which a curious anecdote is annexed.

On the South side of the church is a vault enclosed with rich iron work and masonry, but the tomb is gone to ruin, and has been removed. The tradition respecting it is this: A person by the name of POPJAY, of mean extraction, went abroad in early youth, and after some years returned (to Wily) in his carriage, and with a show of having acquired considerable wealth; he caused this expensive tomb to be built, and the bodies of his mother and sister, who had been dead some time, to be disinterred and placed within it; but shortly after, he left the country, and the tomb remains still unpaid for, nor is it known what became of him. This happened about 100 years ago.

It appears by the Parish Register that several of that name were here buried, but considered as paupers: “Edmund Popjay, May 1693; John, son of John and Grace his wife, 1666; John Popjay, 1687; Elizabeth, died 1693; Edmund, died 1704; Grace, died 1730; John Popjay, buried 1787.”

History of Modern Wiltshire, Vol. 2, published 1825 by Sir Richard Colt Hoare