



### **Anthony Ettrick**

Let's take a few moments to see where Wimborne's [Holt's] Anthony Ettrick fits into a very active time in 17<sup>th</sup> Century British history.

After the civil war and the death of Charles I in 1661 many communities found themselves side-by-side with others nearby that had been supporters of either the Parliamentarians or the Royalists. Wimborne, Corfe and Poole were all Royal strongholds but Royal fortunes had still not settled and nor had religious alliances and many supporters of Cromwell could be found throughout the area.

After Cromwell's death, Charles II was asked to return to take the throne and he was very popular with many of the people - but on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1685 he died following a brief illness without an official heir. He was succeeded by his brother, King James II, who was very well liked of all the Kings in the line of the Stuarts. However James II was a Roman Catholic and some Protestants under his rule opposed the idea of his taking the throne - and the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Monmouth, James Scott; who was the eldest illegitimate son of Charles II, thought he'd use his Protestantism; claim the throne and displace his uncle James. He had strong support in the South-West Counties generally but his forces were defeated at the Battle of Sedgemoor (Near Bridgewater) and so the 'Monmouth Rebellion' - as it was known, came to an end with the Duke fleeing for his life across Cranborne Chase and the New Forest. He was heading for Poole and intended to escape to Holland. A reward of £5000 was offered for his capture [about £350,000 in current times] and not surprisingly with that reward on his head he was captured at Woodlands near Ringwood. There is a place called Monmouth Ash where he is reputed to have been finally found.

So back to Anthony Ettrick; he was a local magistrate and was brought out as being the closest magistrate available to handle the Duke of Monmouth's case. He took the Duke back to his own home at Holt Lodge near Wimborne and from there sent him under guard back to London where there was no trial' ; Monmouth already having been declared guilty of treason by the king.

In the Bloody Assizes that followed; ruled over by Judge Jeffries, 320 supporters were condemned to death and over 800 transported to the West Indies. In an area of the country in which many people supported Monmouth's Rebellion it might be expected that Ettrick would have upset many of those in the area through his duty to keep Monmouth captive. He did of course, have little alternative.

For whatever variety of reasons there were, Ettrick did not see eye-to-eye with Wimborne Minster's authorities and swore he would not be buried in the Minster or outside it. He later had a change of heart and either he or his executors

eventually resulted in the Minster authorities allowing him to be buried 'within' the wall of the Minster; so neither being inside nor outside. Having resolved this he commissioned a coffin, on which he surprisingly had the date of his death written – or rather the year he thought he was going to die, 1693. Ettrick wasn't too exact with his prediction – in fact by a decade - and as it would have been far too expensive to have another stone coffin made, the original date was amended to 1703. The tomb is easily visited inside Wimborne's Minster and has been one of the many attractions in which visitors find an interest.

There is a short summary outlining the story of Anthony Ettrick in the book "Highways and Byways of Dorset" – by Joseph Pennell (1906)

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***"The tomb which most delights the tourist is that of Anthony Ettrick of Hold,[Holt] being the magistrate who committed the Duke of Monmouth after his capture at Woodlands. The coffin is brilliant and indeed gaudy with frequently renewed paint, for Anthony left to the mister twenty shillings a year to keep his sarcophagus in order. The minster has not faltered in this trust, for the wooden coffin is as gay as a gilded toy box. It is placed in a niche so as to be half way through the church wall.***

***The legend is that this worthy man was offended with the people of Wimborne, and declared that he would never be buried in the church nor out of it. This dreadful threat no doubt worried the citizens of Wimborne at the time, but Anthony's executors solved the difficulty by introducing the device of the niche, which is neither in the church, nor out of it. Thus were the neighbours soothed, and thus were they spared the grief of losing their Ettrick. They were far-seeing, for the tomb; now the subject of a pictorial postcard; is of present profit to the town by attracting the curious.***

***" He therefore had this handsome coffin made to cheer him and deciding he should die in 1691, caused that date to be carved on the panel. He lived however until 1703, and hence two sets of figures are superimposed on the monument, to the great comfort of the verger who discourses upon the melancholic Ettrick daily "***



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