

Edward Symes



Local historians, George Brown and John Page, have taken a particular interest in the large chest tomb in the churchyard to the south of the vestry door. The inscription and the chest tomb have just been renovated. It is now possible to read that the tomb is dedicated to Edward Symes and his second wife Elizabeth Phelps, and that Edward was a Surgeon of this Parish. Edward was a church warden and benefactor, giving money to the poor on St Thomas's Day (Dec 21st). There is a plaque in the organ loft about his gifts.

Elizabeth lived in the house next to the church called Old Courthay. Ancestry research showed that Edward married Elizabeth in the village on December 6th 1763.

In researching Edward's life as a surgeon/apothecary, a document dated May 28th 1761 has been found, which describes an Edward Symes, of the City of Bristol. Given that there were very few apothecary surgeons at that time, it is possible that this purports to be our Edward.

“Edward Symes, late of Bath, but now of the City of Bristol, apothecary, maketh oath and faith that he hath for some time past, and still continues, to live with Bartholemew Dominiceti in Bristol for the preparing and delivering all simple and compound galenical and chymical medicines... which are faithfully prepared according to the London and Edinburgh and Quincy's and Lemery's Dispensatories..and this deponent, by the order and direction of the said Dr Dominiceti hath likewise adopted his exact method of placing simple medicines in their proper classes of cathartics, diuretics, cephalics. In order to prevent

*mistakes of any kind in the delivering such simples, compounds
,galenicals and chymicals”*

Dominiceti, an Italian, lived in a house in Guinea Street in Bristol, which was featured in a documentary of Bristol houses. He promoted the use of the spa waters of Hotwells, but he was discredited and left Bristol for London soon after this document was signed.

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