Douce Mausoleum

A stone pyramid, about fifteen feet high, with a flaming torch at the apex. One side bears a coat of arms and inscribed tablet. There is a vaulted burial chamber beneath the monument.

Architect(s)
John Blake of Winchester

Listing
Grade II (England and Wales)

Year Created
1748

History
This mausoleum appears to be the earliest example in Britain of the use of a pyramid rising straight from the ground as a funerary monument. It was built for the London surgeon and physician Dr Francis Douce (1675-1760). Craske has shown that, rather than being influenced by the tomb of Caius Cestius in Rome, Douce and his architect, John Blake, were copying the Egyptian form of funerary monument. They were very concerned with the geometry of the structure, and its orientation was carefully linked with the lines of the meridian. Douce, who was preoccupied to the point of obsession with the preservation of his body after death, left strict instructions in his will concerning its disposal. He also made a bequest to provide for the upkeep of the mausoleum.

Condition
Fair. The plinth needs attention (2002).

Sources
BoE: Hants (1967), 344;
H Colvin, Architecture and the After-Life (1991), 338;
Matthew Craske, 'Entombed like an Egyptian', Church Monuments (2000), 15, 71-88;
G Headley and W Meulenkamp, Follies (1990), 88;
VCH: Hants (1911) 4, 529-30.
Location
Churchyard of St Andrew,
Nether Wallop,
Hampshire.
SO20 8EY