

## **Hollacombe**

Hollacombe is located within Torridge local authority area. Historically it formed part of Black Torrington Hundred. It falls within Holsworthy Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 74 in 1801 69 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £00/10/10. In 1641/2 15 adult males signed the Protestation returns. A market is recorded from 14 cent..

A parish history file is held in Holsworthy Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

## **Maps**

The image below is of the Hollacombe area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 50/15,62/3
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 50SE,62NE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS378030
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
  - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS30SE
  - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 112
  - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 191
- Geological sheet 309 also covers the area

A fair is known from: 14 cent.. [It is intended to include the local section from The glove is up! Devon's historic fairs, by Tricia Gerrish, by kind permission of the author].

**Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954)**, included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Hollacombe is a tiny parish, with a pleasant but much over-restored church (1887), dedicated to St. Petrock. It was mainly an early 14th century church before the restoration, with a saddleback tower, unusual for Devon.

## **Holne**

Holne is located within South Hams local authority area. Historically it formed part of Stanborough Hundred. It falls within Totnes Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 359 in 1801 273 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 88 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

A parish history file is held in Buckfastleigh Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

## **Maps**

The image below is of the Holne area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 114/1
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 114NW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX706695
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
  - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SX76NW
  - Outdoor Leisure (1:25,000) mapping sheet 28
  - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 202
- Geological sheet 338 also covers the area

## **Illustrations**

The image below is of Holne as included in the Library's illustrations catalogue. Other images can be searched for on the local studies catalogue.



**Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954),** included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Holne parish is romantically beautiful. In Holne Chase, commanding the Dart valley, is a perfect earthwork, roughly circular in shape, with a single rampart and ditch. It is probably of late Iron Age date. On the high moorland in the W. of the parish are hut-circles and tumuli. The farmstead of Stoke was a Domesday manor.

The Dart is crossed near Holne by two good medieval bridges. The present Holne Bridge was built after the destruction of an earlier bridge by a flood in 1413; New Bridge, higher up the river, is of the same date.

Holne church (St. Mary) was originally a cruciform church, built c. 1300, with a W. tower and transepts. As at Ilsington, the church was enlarged about 1500 by the opening out of the transepts into aisles with granite arcades. The fine screen, with much good detail, has lost its vaulting and is otherwise mutilated. The carved pulpit is of the same date (early 16th century).

At the vicarage Charles Kingstey was born on 12 June 1819, while his father was curate-in-charge of Holne for a few months.

## Holsworthy

Holsworthy is located within Torridge local authority area. Historically it formed part of Black Torrington Hundred. It falls within Holsworthy Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 1045 in 1801 2076 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In the valuation of 1334 it was assessed at £02/03/04. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £17/01/04. In 1641/2 238 adult males signed the Protestation returns. It is recorded as a borough from 1309. A market is recorded from 14c.-1985.

A parish history file is held in Holsworthy Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

## Maps

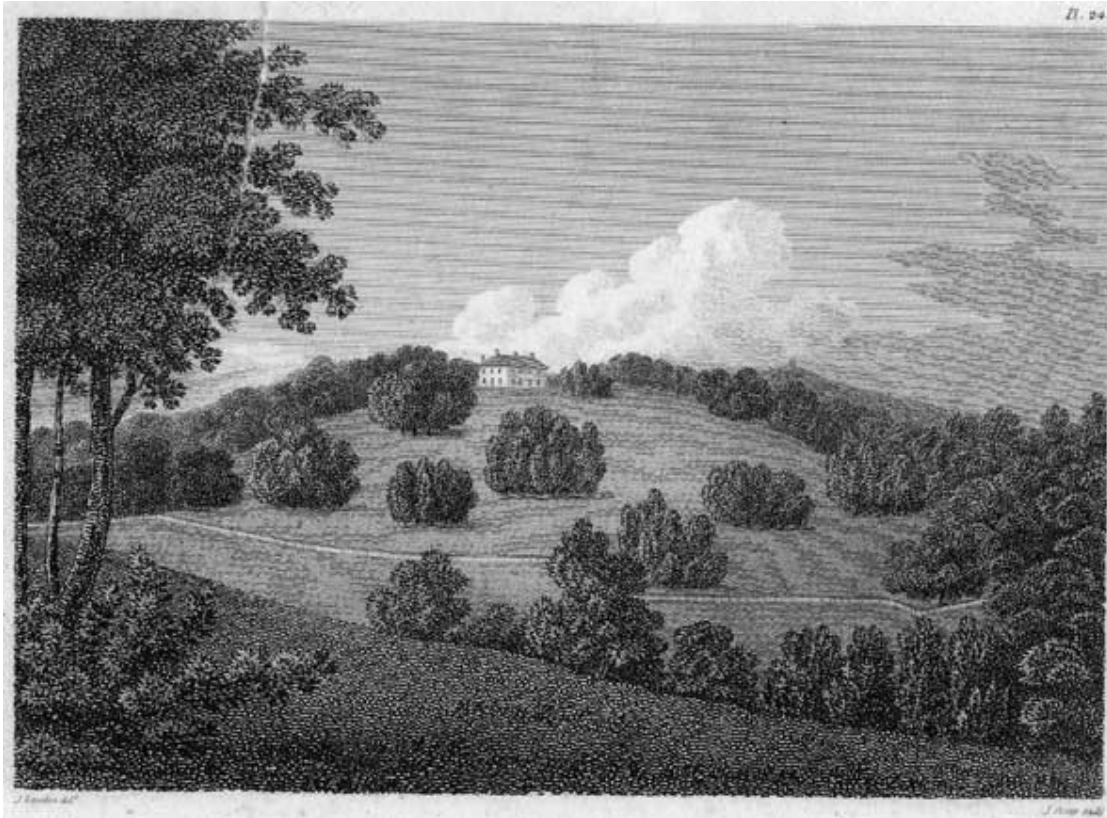
The image here is of the Holsworthy area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 50/14
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 50SW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS343038
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
  - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS30SW
  - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 112
  - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 190
- Geological sheet 323 also covers the area

## Illustrations

The image below is of Holsworthy as included in the Library's illustrations collection. Other images can be searched for on the local studies catalogue.



SC1177. Kingswood Lodge, the seat of Gideon Bickersdyke, Esqr., as it appeared in 1802.

A fair is known from: 14c.-1935. [It is intended to include the local section from The glove is up! Devon's historic fairs, by Tricia Gerrish, by kind permission of the author].

**Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954)**, included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Holsworthy is a small market town and a large parish in the bleak "yellow-clay" country of West Devon. Its market and fair were granted between 1155 and 1185, and St. Peter's Fair is still held on 9, 10 and 11 July. (Lesson Day, Holsworthy, 8-9.) It became a regional borough some time in the 13th century, governed by a portreeve, an office which still survives. Like many of the inland towns of Devon, Holsworthy reached its maximum population in 1841 (1,857 people) and has declined slowly ever since. It is now the dullest town in Devon to look at, having scarcely a single building of the slightest architectural merit. The church (St. Peter and St. Paul) has a noble W. tower of granite, built c.1500, but the rest of the church has been so restored that it is of little interest, except for the handsome organ, built by Renatus Harris.

Thorne, now a farmhouse, was a Domesday manor, and has some remains of a medieval chapel. Chilsworthy was a Domesday manor. Arscott (now called South Arscott) was the original home of the Arscotts, who began here in Henry III's time, and rose rapidly in the 16th., partly on a fortune made in the law. Soldon was a manor house of the Prideaux in the 17th cent. and contains a considerable amount of work of that date.

## **Honeychurch**

Honeychurch is located within West Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Black Torrington Hundred. It falls within Okehampton Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 66 in 1801 44 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 17 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

A parish history file is held in Okehampton Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

## **Maps**

The image below is of the Honeychurch area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 53/14
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 53SW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS628028
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
  - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS60SW
  - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 113
  - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 191
- Geological sheet 324 also covers the area

**Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954)**, included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

The ancient ecclesiastical parish of Honeychurch is now included in Sampford Courtenay.

Honeychurch church (St. Mary) is charming: very small, very remote, and completely unsophisticated. It is an almost untouched 12th century building, to which a W.

tower and S. porch were added late in the 15th century. In the tower are the three medieval bells in their original cage. The chancel arch was also re-made at that date, the roof renewed, and Perpendicular windows inserted in the old walls. The fittings are in keeping with the building: an excellent Norman font beneath a rustic Jacobean cover, a rustic Elizabethan pulpit, a complete set of late medieval benches (some with carved ends, but most of plain unvarnished oak), a crude wall painting in the nave (possibly the Royal Arms of Elizabeth), altar rails of simple country carpentry: all as well kept as the mother-church at Sampford. Honeychurch has one of the simplest and most appealing interiors of all English country churches. It lives up to its delightful name in a way that so rarely happens, and just to see it on a fine morning puts one in a good humour for the rest of the day.

**1902. Kelly's directory.**

Honeychurch is a parish, one mile north of the road from Exbourne to North Tawton, 2 miles north-west from North Tawton station on the main line of the London and South Western railway, 7 north from Okehampton and 7 east-by-south from Hatherleigh, in the Western division of the county, Black Torrington hundred, Hatherleigh petty sessional division, Okehampton union and county court district, rural deanery of Okehampton, archdeaconry of Totnes and diocese of Exeter. The church of St. James is a small edifice of stone in the Early English style, consisting of chancel, nave, south porch and an embattled western tower containing 3 bells: there are 60 sittings. The register dates from the year 1728. The living is a rectory, net yearly value £59, with residence, including 75 acres of glebe, in the gift of Sir Roper Lethbridge K.C.I.E. of the Manor House, Exbourne, and held since 1894 by the Rev. William Bentley, who is also vicar of Brushford. The Earl of Portsmouth is lord of the manor, it having been purchased in 1797 of the Glynn's. The principal landowners are Mrs. Arnold, of Nethercott, Iddesleigh, and Messrs. Simon Sloman, Thomas Sloman and Thomas Brook. The soil is dunland; the subsoil is clay. The chief crops are wheat, barley and oats. The area. is 787 acres; rateable value, £5,955; the population in 1901 was 36.

By Local Government Board Order, 16,404, which came into operation March 24, 1884, Venn Farm was transferred from Bondleigh to this parish. Letters through Sampford Courtenay R.S.O. arrive at 7.30 a.m. North Tawton R.S.O. 2½ miles distant, is the nearest money order & Exbourne, 3 miles, the nearest telegraph office

Wall Letter Box cleared at 6.30 p.m The place is included in the School Board district of Sampford Courtenay & Honeychurch, formed July 31, 18'74

The children attend the Board School at Sampford Courtenay  
Westacott  
Bentley Rev. William, Rectory  
Sloman Thomas J.P. Middletown  
Brook Thomas. farmer & landowner, Slade  
Hill, Edwin, farmer, Westacott  
Parr Samuel, farmer, Bude



Reed John, farmer, Glebe  
Sloman Simon, yeoman, East town  
Sloman Thomas J.P. yeoman, Middle town

## **Honiton**

Honiton is located within East Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Axminster Hundred. It falls within Honiton Vol 1 Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 2377 in 1801 3271 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In the valuation of 1334 it was assessed at £02/16/08. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £21/12/04. It is recorded as a borough from 1217. It had parliamentary representation from 1640-1868. A turnpike was established in 1754. The community had a grammar school from 1640. A market is recorded from 14c.-1985.

You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

## **Maps**

The image below is of the Honiton area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 70/4
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 70NE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is ST160005
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
  - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet ST10SE,SY19NW/E
  - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 030
  - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 192
- Geological sheet 326 also covers the area

## **Illustrations**

The image below is of Honiton as included in the Library's illustrations collection. Other images can be searched for on the local studies catalogue.



#### **HONITON, by W.G.Hoskins, 1954**

Extracted from the author's *Devon* with permission of the copyright holder.

Honiton is a cheerful little town, mostly of one long wide street, on the main London-Exeter road, which was its *raison d'être*. The original settlement of "Huna's farm" may have been on the hillside to the S. of the town where the former parish church of St. Michael now stands. The valley is dotted with old farmsteads linked by narrow winding lanes, of which Coombhayes Farm (c. 1600) and Higher Blannicombe are worth seeing. Near the Sidbury road is Heathfield Farm (16th-cent.).

The manor came to the Earls of Devon, and William de Vernon, the 5th earl, founded a borough here between 1194 and 1217. Until 1846 Honiton was governed by a portreeve. In that year it was incorporated, and became a "mayor town." It was a parliamentary borough from 1640 to 1868, with a singularly unsavoury reputation.

Honiton is said to have been the first town in Devon in which serges were made, and there was a flourishing woollen industry here in the 17th-18th cents. It was also notable from Elizabethan times for the manufacture of a fine lace, which became especially famous under royal patronage in the 19th cent. Like most inland market towns in Devon, Honiton reached its highest population in the 1840s, but its subsequent decline was not as drastic as most, and it is a busy little place today.

Fires devastated the town in 1672, 1747, 1754 and 1765 (when 115 houses were burnt down), so that it presents the appearance to-day of a late 18th- early 19th-cent. town for the most part. The High Street is typical of a late Georgian coaching town, with a good deal of decent 18th-cent. building. The oldest house in the town is Marwood House, at the NE. end of the High Street, built in 1619 by John Marwood, physician. He was the second son of Thomas Marwood, physician to Queen

Elizabeth, who enjoyed great fame as a doctor, having cured the Earl of Essex in 1592 when the best London doctors had failed to do so.

In the main street is Allhallows Chapel, used for nearly 300 years as a schoolroom. It has some 15th-cent. work, but was partly rebuilt in the 17th cent. and is now used as a local museum. The Congregational Chapel has its original 1774 building behind a later front. St. Paul's church was built 1835-8 in the Norman style by Charles Fowler.

The former parish church (St. Michael) stands on a steep hillside above the town. It is a distinguished building of late 15th-early 16th-cent. date, with large windows of clear glass, and something of the air of a cathedral. The chancel was probably rebuilt by John Takell (d. 1529) as is suggested by the inscription on two of the chancel piers. The interior was gutted by fire in 1911, when the splendid rood-screen perished, but a number of interesting memorials remain, including the tomb of Thomas Marwood the physician (d. 1617). There are fine views from the churchyard over the town to the Blackdown Hills.

On the Exeter road, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  m. SW. of the town, is St. Margaret's Hospital, founded as a leper hospital at an unknown date and refounded and rebuilt c.1530 by Thomas Chard as an almshouse. Some work of this period remains.

#### **HONITON FAIR, by Tricia Gerrish, 2004.**

ORIGINAL CHARTER: 1247. Granted by Henry III to Guy de Rupe Forti, at the Feast of St Margaret (20th July) for 3 days.

1257. Another charter given by Henry III to Baldwin de Insula/Isabella de Fortibus for a fair on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Whitsun week.

#### **A GLOVE FAIR**

Honiton Fair is said to date from about 1221, according to ancient Rolls. Its first known charter was given to Guy de Rupe Forti in 1247 for a three day fair around the feast of St Margaret. This replaced the earlier fair, which was probably at the feast of All Hallows. A second fair was added ten years later, celebrated at Whitsun, to Baldwin de Insula - or was it to Isabella de Fortibus? Opinions differ: Lysons *Magna Britannia* 1822 says it was to Baldwin, but Isabella was Lady of the Manor in her own right in 1257, and heiress to the de Redvers family. Honiton's St Margaret's Fair moved to the Wednesday following 19th July by 1890 (*White's Devon Directory*). In 1995 the opening ceremonies took place on Tuesday 25th July.

Sheep, cows and calves, and horses were all traded at Honiton's fair. A cattle market was held near the King's Arms and the horse fair near White Lion Inn. On Fair Day farmers from the surrounding area paid their yearly tradesmens' bills. Business was generally brisk, although in 1904 it was almost confined to one day, with very few sheep on offer, but plenty of cows and calves, and a number of horses for sale. Messrs. Hussey & Son conducted animal auctions for Honiton fair between the beginning of the 20th century and at least 1939.

By the 1920s a waning interest was reported by the Western Morning News in cattle auctions in the market. Just before the outbreak of World War II cattle, sheep and, in addition, pigs were on offer. Honiton's Horse Fair declined, due to mechanisation in farming, from its golden days when horses could be seen showing their paces from High Street to the turnpike near Sidmouth Road junction. 1969's fair still had a livestockmarket: trading around 200 cattle, 500 sheep plus 600 lambs, 500 pigs and 50/60 cows.

Honiton Fair was proclaimed at noon. A golden glove was hoisted on a garlanded pole. The Town Crier, in tricorne hat, red waistcoat, knee breeches and buckled shoes proclaimed the following:

Oyez, oyez. The glove is up. No man shall be arrested (for debt) until the glove is taken down. God save the Queen/King!

When the crowd had repeated this Proclamation three times, a bell was rung. The Civic Party moved on to the Angel Hotel (closed in 1989), where the glove was shown, and Hot Pennies were thrown down into the street. Next port of call was the King's Arms. Here the pole and glove were attached to its balcony and more Hot Pennies cascaded down. When this inn closed, in 1975, the Angel was used to display the symbol during Honiton's cattle fair. On Thursday, glove and pole were transferred to the White Lion, at the other end of town, for the horse fair. In the 1920s the procession was extended: going from the Angel to the Star and thence to the Three Tuns before arriving at the King's Arms to deposit glove and pole and to throw Hot Pennies.

Nobody can confirm how old Honiton's Hot Penny ceremony is - nor why it came into being. It has been claimed by a former Town Crier, whose family has long associations with Honiton, that it began in the 13th century, when gentry used to throw hot chestnuts to the serfs. Other historians and experts dispute both date and reason. A former curator of Allhallows Museum (the late John Yallop) confirmed that an 1870s picture of the ceremony exists, but there is no written record of Hot Pennies from Medieval or Tudor times.

A more commonplace explanation is that rich merchants in the Angel Hotel and other inns used to heat pennies deliberately at the fire and to throw them from windows for their amusement. Anyone who has attempted to collect Honiton's Hot Pennies without thick gloves or a piece of sacking will know how painful it would have been for poor children to pick them up. Scrambling for coins, cakes and apples is a documented part of Devon's past however, used on many ceremonial occasions and Honiton Fair may merely have adapted this. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries the custom almost fell into disuse, but was 'rescued' by a Mr Gillard, who made a generous contribution of newly-minted money, allowing it to continue. Further ceremonies associated with Honiton Fair are mentioned during the 1930s. A press report states that a schoolboy was 'ducked' in The Leat, in Honiton's main street, by the Town Crier: 'in accordance with custom.' Ducking in a pool of water

outside the Angel Hotel while penny scrambling took place is also reported at several 1930s fairs. In 1938 the Town Crier was locked up for debt in Market Hall at 11.55am on opening day, as part of ceremonial. Many local debtors believed that when the fair had been proclaimed and the glove posted they could safely leave their houses without fear of arrest. This was probably an enactment of this idea. He was duly released at noon, to play his vital part on crying and proclaiming the fair. In 1828 there was a wife sale at Honiton Fair. Mrs Broom was sold by her husband. She was only 25 years of age, and had been married for a mere three years. Her sale was announced by the Town Crier and conducted by her husband. Bidding was brisk: starting at 2/6 (12 p) offered by a painter. It rose to 7/6 when a carpenter entered the auction, and the town's barber, hearing of the sale, abandoned his customers to raise the price by a full 8/0 in one go! Mrs Broom changed hands for £1.

The streets of Honiton must have buzzed on fair days. In past centuries troupes of dancing girls, roundabouts, boxing booths: even cages of lions were on hand for entertainment. One year a private from Honiton Militia camp challenged Jim Driscoll: later to become Feather-weight Champion of Britain, in the boxing ring. There were plenty of other fights. Once the words 'no man shall be arrested' had been proclaimed, old scores were paid off between local men. This despite the fact that the words referred only to debt. Farmers and their wives were everywhere, paying bills and enjoying hospitality provided by local tradesmen. It is said that a couple might breakfast, dine and have supper at their suppliers without parting with a penny (except to pay their bills).

In 1904, when trade was described as dwindling, the pleasure fair had become enormous. The High Street is reported full of shows and rides. So many roundabouts had booked spaces that Messrs. Hancock's Steam Horses could not find accommodation. 1928's pleasure fair took place in Streamer's Meadow, where it is reported two years later as being in decline - though business at the fair was good. A field to the South of town was used in the 1950s.

The handbell had to be dispensed with during World War II, due to wartime regulations, but Honiton Fair continued to be proclaimed, and Hot Pennies were still thrown - as they were on a very hot Fair Day in 1980. By now, Honiton's Hot Pennies ceremony had become a tourist and holiday attraction. Instead of allowing small children to scramble for pennies, others joined in. Punches and kicks were thrown, many faces were slapped, and police had to intervene in the ensuing chaos. Coins continue to be thrown from several public houses in Honiton as part of the fair's opening ceremony. In 1997 they were dispensed from six, including the New Dolphin Inn, where the glove was hoisted by its landlord.

A revival of Town Criers in many parts of the South West has been reflected at recent fairs. Town Crier Day occupied the third day of fair. In 1997 the first ever children's competition took place. Visiting Criers from many towns in the area try out their vocal cords in the streets of Honiton: an appropriate reminder for an old charter fair of days when the populace could not read, and relied on Criers to keep them informed of important events.

How sad to see this historic occasion billed for the last few years merely as Hot Pennies Day!