

Goodleigh

Goodleigh is located within North Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Braunton Hundred. It falls within Shirwell 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 248 in 1801 253 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 92 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

A parish history file is held in Barnstaple 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 Goodleigh 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 13/4
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 13NE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS598341
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS53SE,SS63SW
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 139
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 180
- Geological sheet 293 also covers the area

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

Goodleigh The body of the church (St. Gregory) was rebuilt in 1881-2, but is nevertheless very pleasant, and lit with clear glass. A branch of the Aclands of Acland lived at Combe, now a farmhouse, and there is a small rustic monument in the church to James Acland (1655).

Great Torrington

Great Torrington is located within Torrington local authority area. Historically it formed part of Fremington Hundred. It falls within Torrington 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 2044 in 1801 3241 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In the valuation of 1334 it was assessed at £07/17/02. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £19/10/02. In 1641/2 568 adult males signed the Protestation returns. It is recorded as a borough from 1194 and was incorporated in 1554. It had parliamentary representation from 14 cent.. A turnpike was established in 1759. The community had a grammar school from Yes. A market is recorded from 14c.-1935.

A parish history file is held in Torrington 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

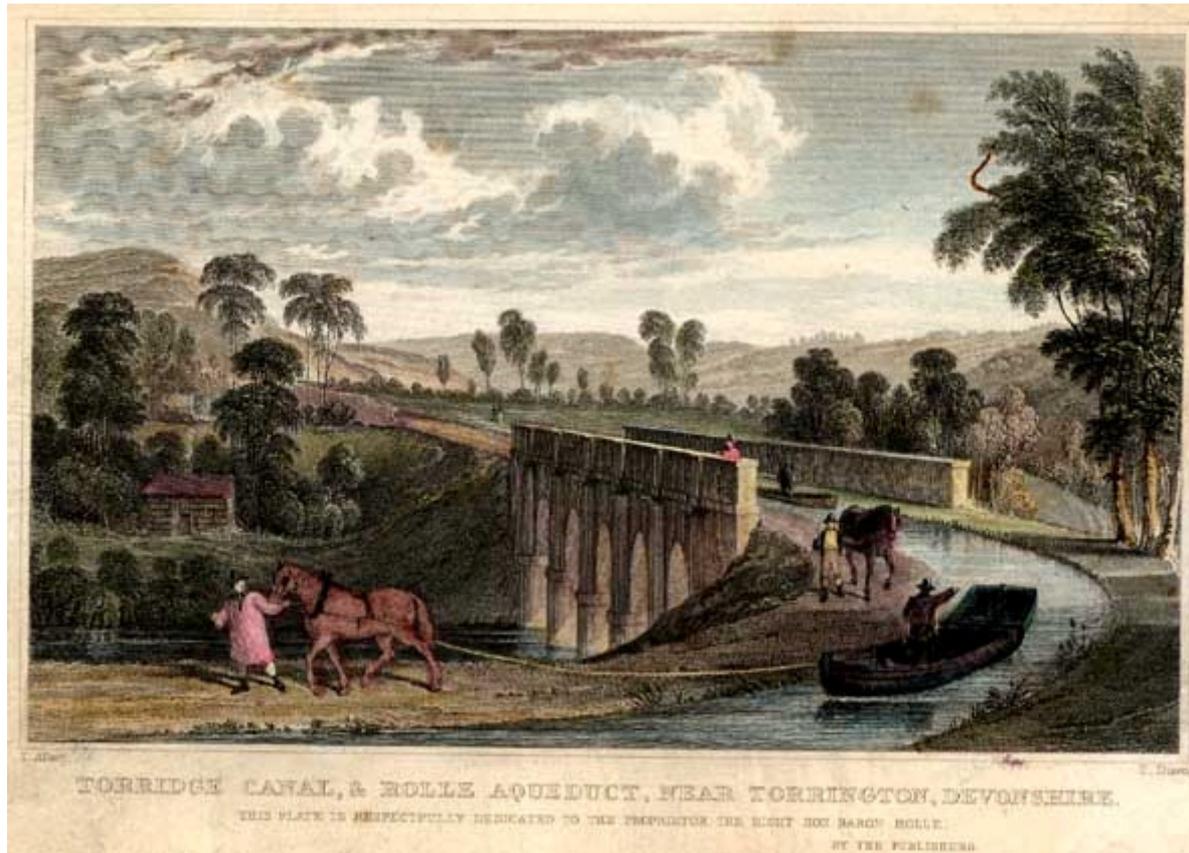
The image below is of the Great Torrington area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 29/8
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 29NE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS495192
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS41NE
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 126
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 180
- Geological sheet 309 also covers the area

Illustrations

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



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:

Torrington, Great is one of the most finely sited towns in Devon, on the top of a cliff rising steeply from the meadows of the Torridge. Indeed, the best things about the town are the distant views of it from the adjacent hills, and the exceedingly beautiful views from it, especially of the deep wooded valleys of the Torridge and its tributaries as seen from the bowling-green where the castle formerly stood. It is in itself a dull town with little architectural merit about it.

Palmer House, in New Street" was built in 1752 by Mr. John Palmer, who married Sir Joshua Reynolds's sister Mary. Sir Joshua occasionally visited her at Torrington, and was accompanied on one visit (1762) by Dr. Johnson, so that two of the greatest men in England once stayed in this stylish house. Mary Palmer's portrait, painted by Sir Joshua, may be seen in the Cottonian Library at Plymouth.

Another sister of Sir Joshua, Elizabeth, married William Johnson of Great Torrington, whose great-nephew was William Johnson (1823-92), better known as William Johnson Cory, the poet.

Another good house is No. 28 South Street, built in 1701. The interior has been much altered, but contains one exceptionally fine ceiling, depicting fiddles and other musical instruments. Fore Street and High Street have a certain degree of Georgian feeling, and the Market Place is Georgian in scale and atmosphere. The Black Horse Inn is 1681 and earlier, much restored, and the Torridge Inn is probably 17th century. The parish church (St. Michael) was blown up in February 1646, while some 200 royalist prisoners lay inside after the defeat of Lord Hopton by Fairfax. It was substantially rebuilt in 1651, but the whole building was drastically restored in 1864 and has lost all its former character. The pulpit is good late 17th century; and there are some early Georgian monuments.

A castle was first built, on a site dominating the narrow valley of the Torridge, early in the 13th century. A bowling-green occupies the E. end of the site to-day.

Torrington as a borough dates from the late 12th century, possibly founded by William, baron of Torrington (c. 1135- 94) who is traditionally said to have given the common pasture of Torrington to the burgesses. These commons still belong to the town. In its early days the town flourished on its markets and fairs, and was reckoned by Hooker to be the best market town in the shire except perhaps Honiton. It was one of the earliest towns in Devon to receive a charter of incorporation, coming fourth after Plymouth, Totnes, and Exeter, in 1554.

Like most towns, Torrington had a number of small industries based on local materials. It had the usual woollen industry, and was also notable for glove making. The town is described in 1801 as rich, populous, and "spirited." None of these adjectives would apply today, least of all the last named. It now has fewer people than it had in the 1820s and is the only town in North Devon to show an actual fall in population over the past 20 years.

Rothern Bridge, over the Torridge, is a 15th century structure. It has been widened on both sides but the original medieval bridge remains. Taddipport Bridge, also over the Torridge, may be late 17th century, widened later. It formerly carried the main road S. out of Torrington, but this is now carried by New Bridge (1843). The Town Mills, beside this bridge, are of the same date, and make an attractive group.

In 1823-4 Lord Rolle constructed a 5 m. canal from Torrington to the navigable part of the Torridge below Wear Giffard. At one point this was carried across the valley by a lofty stone aqueduct (engineer, James Green), which still stands though the canal has since been filled in.