



South Devon Place Names

Anthony Poulton-Smith

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Ever wondered why our towns and villages are so named? Were they a deliberate creation by our ancestors or did they evolve naturally over time? Which river was named from the blackberries which grow there? Why would a rock be called the Pig's Nose? What links beer and cathedrals? Why is Mincing Lake not a lake but a river? And just who were Peter and Mary Tavy? In these pages we examine the origins of the names with which we are otherwise so familiar. Towns, villages, districts, hills, streams, woods, farms, fields, streets and even pubs are examined and explained. The definitions are supported by anecdotal evidence, bringing to life the individuals and events which have influenced the places and the way these names have developed. This is not just a dictionary, but a history too, and will prove invaluable not only for those who live and work in the county but also to visitors and tourists, historians and former inhabitants, indeed anyone with an interest in South Devon.

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