

## **Hollington – what's in a name?**

Hollington was one of four manors, which made up the parish of Soulbury. The name 'Hollington' is said to refer to a 'great hollow' found there.

Possibly from Saxon times, Hollington comprised two small settlements either side of the 'great hollow'. During the Middle Ages the one nearer to Soulbury village was officially called 'Hollington Parva' whilst the other, further from Soulbury was called 'Hollington Magna'. Over the years each of these two small settlements had other commonly used names.

Hollington Parva was also variously called Little Hollington, Upper Hollington, Light Hollington and Hollington Green. The narrow Green ran down the centre of the lane through this small cluster of houses.

Hollington Magna was also known as Great Hollington, Lower Hollington, and Dark Hollington. Some folk called it Further Hollington because it was further away from Soulbury.

Evidence from verbatim newspaper reports and Methodist Registers suggest that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Hollington was pronounced 'Ollington'.

Some erroneously say that Hollington Magna was called Upper Hollington. This is because there is a house there called 'Upper Hollington Farmhouse'. In fact this name was made up in order to sell the farm in 1879. Before that it was known as Stone's Farm. Most of Hollington then belonged to the Liscombe Estate, which was losing money so decided to sell off all its land and buildings in Hollington.

In order to market their two farms in Hollington Magna, the Estate bundled one farm there with land in the lower reaches of the Ousel valley, which it called inventively renamed as 'Lower Hollington Farm'. Their other farm in Hollington Magna was bundled together with land on the upper slopes of the Ousel valley. This second farm they gave the name 'Upper Hollington Farm' simply because it farmed the higher land. The name has nothing to do with the part of Hollington which is called 'Upper Hollington' some six hundred metres away

Then there is the part of Hollington, which is a 'lost' settlement. This is near to where Hollington lane crosses the stream that drains the 'great hollow'. What looks like old earth works with gnarled old hawthorn trees can be seen from the lane. Archaeological investigations found remnants of 13<sup>th</sup> Century building 'platforms' there.

Finally a fourth more modern part of Hollington is to be found at the former Old Red Lion and its associated cottages on Stewkley Road. When the row of cottages was built in 1850 it was known as Exhibition Row, only later acquiring the name of Red Lion Cottages. The Old Red Lion predated the building of Exhibition Row.