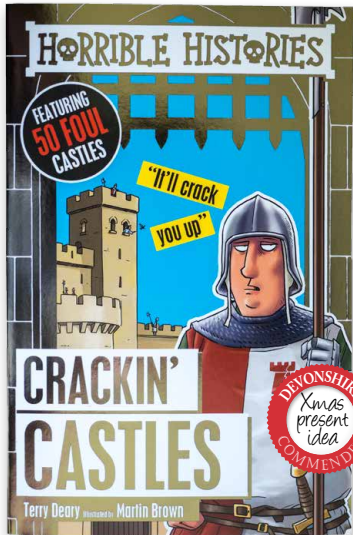


BookWorm

Crackin' Castles by Terry Deary illustration by Martin Brown

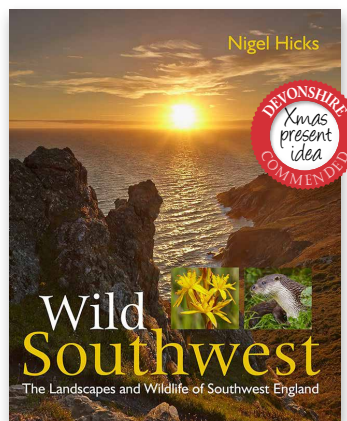
Today, the worry with children is they spend so long bent over a digital device, preening their social media presence, that their ability to learn is undoubtedly in serious decline. Crackin' Castles is a cleverly devised and illustrated paperback that's both interesting and witty - I say that as an adult, but we're all children at heart I suppose. The Horrible Histories series by Scholastic is the world's bestselling children's history series, and with good reason. It's tackles the subject of castles - our greatest historic landmarks, in an engaging way that should appeal to a wide age range. Great if you're into history yourself, as it'll help when you do actually visit castles with your children. I noticed online that there are also Horrible Histories Cracking Castle puzzles available, a jigsaw based on the paperback. I'd say it's a good stocking filler for children/grandchildren. This paperback's £6.99 well spent!



ISBN 9781407166339

Wild Southwest by Nigel Hicks

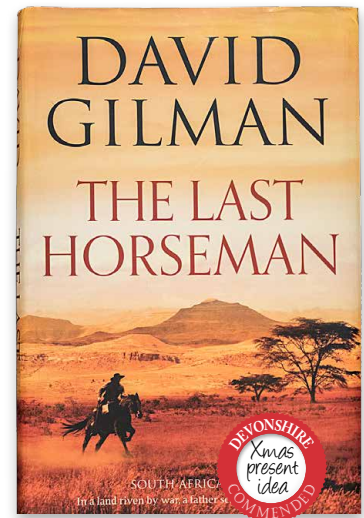
It's not hard to understand what this book is about, it's all in the title. The book is a photographic journey across our beautiful South Western landscape, from heaths and moors, to dunes, grasslands, coastlines, etc. The book provides the reader with a visual cornucopia that I haven't seen anywhere else in relation to covering the South West region as a whole. What's also useful is the listing of suggested places to visit within each area covered. The book also comprehensively covers the region's flora and fauna, again all in glorious colour, with many, many high fidelity photos, as well as providing written information on each subject covered. I have to comment that the quality of photography is first rate, which is as it should be - Nigel's a Fellow of the British Institute of Professional Photography. This would make an excellent gift for those that are really interested in our countryside and wildlife. Published by www.aquaterrapublishing.co.uk, it costs £14.95



ISBN 9780992797010

The Last Horseman by David Gilman

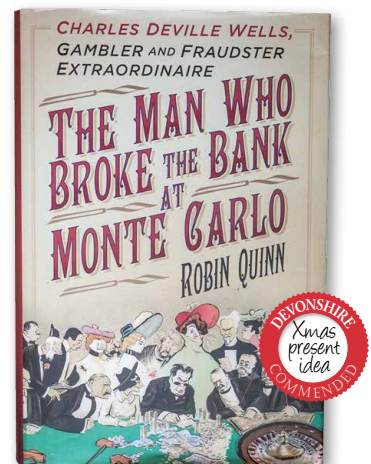
The title seemed a bit over-played, but all the same it's an engaging read from David Gilman. Along the way you pick up information on the Boer war and the British Army's role in this conflict that the book intimates is about British capitalist control of gold, diamonds and other resources as well as conflicting racial issues. The story is based around a family conflict where the disenfranchised son decides to follow the army to South Africa, into the Boer conflict. The father, previously having been involved with the American Civil War, and practicing as a lawyer in Dublin, follows behind to rescue his son from potential harm. It's well written, not too contrived and a worthy read. Written by David Gilman, an English television writer and novelist, David was previously a fire-fighter, photographer and a soldier in the parachute regiment. David's other books of note are 'Gate of the Dead' and 'Master of War'. A recommended read by this Devonshire based author.



ISBN 9781784974541

The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo by Robin Quinn

You couldn't really make up this story, it's actual real life stuff that's both unbelievable, extraordinary and true. It's an epic story regarding the battle man faces to pay the bills (silver spoons excluded here). Charles Deville Wells takes this battle to extraordinary levels in terms of perseverance, innovation and also trickery and fraud. Initially an engineer, Wells takes to developing products which he patents and then seeks investors to reap the harvest, of which there's usually none. Later Wells indeed does break the bank at Monte Carlo, making unheard of amounts of money, then loses it on incredible projects and continues to elude the law and investors. At one point, he bases his operation in Plymouth, so great local references also. The best book I've read all year, the level of research that's gone into this excellent book by Robin Quinn is staggering. A thoroughly entertaining, interesting read that's highly recommended.



ISBN 9780750961776