

# GRAVE OF THE MONTH

**Henry Froom Beck, died aged 70 in 1872**

Beck was born in Reading and came to Newbury in the 1820s to work as a baker. He then became a constable of the borough and for 33 years was also the bill poster and town crier; indeed, his obituary stated that he was 'the best town crier in England'.

He would stick printed posters up to advertise events and walk the streets crying out items of news or events coming up soon, ringing his bell to attract attention. The last lot of bills he distributed was

for the Christy Minstrels, and an announcement for the coal club was his last public act as town crier.

The town crier role died out as motor cars made too much noise!



The photograph above is ex-policeman Dave Stubbs when he played Henry Froom Beck in 2011, in "In The Beginning...", which was put on several times in the Town Hall. He'll be doing it again this month, 22-25<sup>th</sup> January, exactly 177 years after the Preliminary Inquiry for the Newbury Cemetery Bill.

To the left is what he really looked like! (courtesy of West Berkshire Museum)

There's much more information about Beck at

<http://www.fnrcnewbury.org.uk/persondetails.asp?PersonID=3016>