



PENRITH
The Heart of Cumbria

BEACON



BEACON WALK

- allow minimum 30 minutes, plus 40 minutes to climb to Beacon and return to Beacon Edge

- 1 Sandgate, largest open space in Penrith, was an enclosure for people and livestock during border raids. Few older houses survive and access is more open. Until early 19th C barbaric bull-baiting, by a breed of Penrith bulldogs, the bull tethered to an iron ring set in a large flat stone in the ground, gave 'bull beef' for the butcher's shambles.
- 2 Sandgate and Great Dockray had twice-yearly hiring fairs for farm workers, the transaction sealed by a token coin as binding as a legal contract. Most workers 'lived in' and a good 'meat shop' was as important as a good wage.

A story, told and retold in broad Cumbrian dialect with infinite variations in the names of those involved, is about a farmer who made a tentative bargain with a farm hand. They arranged to meet in an hour after he had inquired of the man's previous employer. When they met again the farmer had got the man's 'character' and he could not start next Monday, to which the man replied that he had got the farmer's 'character' and would not be coming!

- 3 With the coming of motor transport the square became the bus terminus until the bus station was built, leaving the central area with planting, car park and taxi rank.
- 4 Sandgate Hall, 1646, was Hutton-in-the-Forest Fletcher family town house and now three dwellings with modernised windows, otherwise as over 300 years ago. The Fletcher coat of arms is on the ceiling of the corner cottage.



- 5  1815 chapel, originally Wesleyan Methodists before moving to Wordsworth Street in 1873, then used by Primitive Methodists until 1967. From 1978 occupied by The Zion Pentecostal Fellowship but now vacant.

- 6 Crozier Lodge, named after Ann Crozier and built 1826 by husband, a local gunsmith. By the 1850s tenanted by Reverend William Brewis, whose two daughters had part as girls'school until 1859. Now two residencies.

- 7 Laurel Bank was St Andrews Church vicarage. Brentfield Way leads to Scaws Estate, post-war housing planned by then Penrith Urban District Council architect Frank Blanc and largely built by well-known character Bob Reay. 1950s houses high above the Fell Lane and 1970s Sandcroft opposite. 

- 8 1930s Beacon Square.

- 9 Pinfold, through small wooden gate, was a pound for stray animals on the edge of Beacon Fell common land. Pounds were run by the manor's officer known as a Pinder who extracted fines from animal's owners.

- 10  Potter's Lodge is simple and homely Georgian vernacular architecture.

- 11 Sandath Gardens began in 1988 in the gardens of 1870 Sandath House, later a children's nursery and home closed in 1985 and converted into apartments.

- 12 Double-fronted white-painted house, until 1999 The Beacon Inn.

- 13 Caroline Cottage, 1818, of Gothic design as Lowther Castle and named after youngest daughter of the first Earl of Lonsdale. Visitors to the Beacon in former years signed the visitor's book in the porch. The permissive footpath is now further along Beacon Edge. 

- 14 Beacon Hill was first planted late 18th C. Before enclosure of common land, extending to Pinfold, Beacon was a dreary barren waste full of sandholes and quarries.

- 15 Path to Beacon Pike, 937 ft (286 m). Summit has views of Eden Valley, Pennines (Cross Fell 2930 ft), Lake District fells peak after peak, and Saddleback. To north, mountains of Scotland can be seen across the Solway Firth. Present monument was built in 1719 of sandstone taken from hill, replacing an earlier structure and restored in 1780. First beacons were piles of wood and branches replaced by pitch- boxes. 

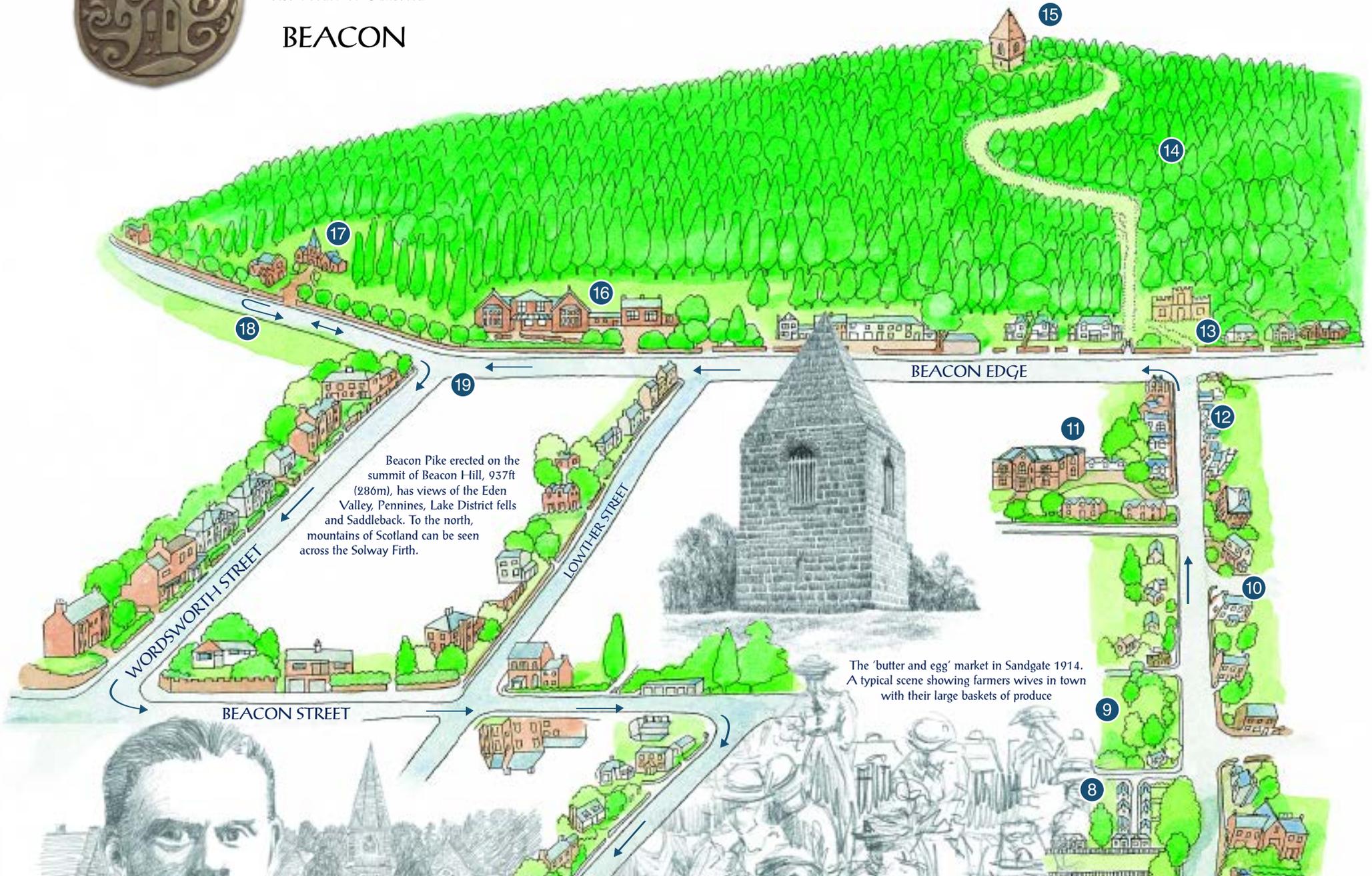
Beacon here from 1296 and a building for more than 500 years. It is listed in 1468, communicating with one at Dale Raughton, on



PENRITH

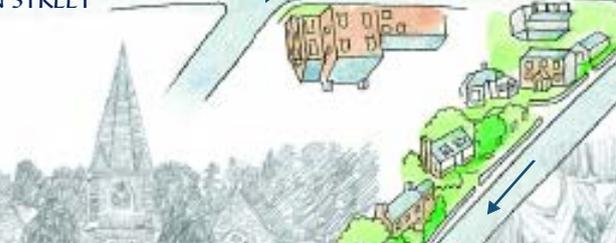
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Beacon Pike erected on the summit of Beacon Hill, 937ft (286m), has views of the Eden Valley, Pennines, Lake District fells and Saddleback. To the north, mountains of Scotland can be seen across the Solway Firth.

The 'butter and egg' market in Sandgate 1914. A typical scene showing farmers wives in town with their large baskets of produce





Percy Toplis the 'Monocled Mutineer', the most extravagant anti-hero of the First World War who led thousands of British troops into mutiny on the eve of Passchendaele.

Toplis was eventually hunted down and shot in a police ambush close to Penrith in 1920.

- 1 Shopmobility
- 2 Sandgate
- 3 Bus Station
- 4 Sandgate Hall
- 5 1815 Chapel
- 6 Crozier Lodge
- 7 Laurel Bank
- 8 Beacon Square
- 9 Pinfold
- 10 Potters Lodge
- 11 Sandath Gardens
- 12 Former Beacon Inn
- 13 Caroline Cottage
- 14 Beacon Hill
- 15 Beacon Pike
- 16 Jubilee Lodge
- 17 Penrith Cemetery
- 18 Panoramic View Finder
- 19 Wordsworth Street
- 20 Friends Meeting House
- 21 Former National Infants School
- 22 Sandgate Court

Advertisement in Morris, Harrison, & Co's Commercial Directory and Gazetteer of the County of Cumberland - 1861

Terms of the Misses Brewis's establishment for the Board & Education of Young Ladies, Crozier Lodge, Penrith

For board and instruction in the English Language, Geography, with the use of Globes, History, Writing, and Arithmetic, Plain and Fancy Needlework 25 Guineas per Annum

Weekly Boarder	20 Guineas per Annum
Dinner Boarders	12 Guineas per Annum
Music	£1. 1s. 0d. per Quarter
Drawing	£1. 1s. 0d. per Quarter
French	£1. 1s. 0d. per Quarter
Use of Pinaforte	£0. 3s. 0d. per Quarter
Lanudress	3 Guineas per Annum

A Quarter's Notice is expected previously to the removal of a Pupil.

high ground above farmhouse at Old Parks at Kirkoswald. Penrith could link with the Carlisle Castle high tower beacon, and south to the beacon on Orton Scar.

A 1572 survey of 'Peareth' said the beacon or watch-house was in need of repair. The beacon forewarned of numerous Scottish raids over the centuries, Penrith being laid waste in the reigns of Edward III (1327-1377) and Richard III (1483-1485), finally checked in 1603. The Beacon again featured during 1745 uprising, when Prince Charles Edward attempted to regain the Crown of House of Stuart, and during the Napoleonic Wars.

More recently there has been an illuminated cross at Easter, but stopped by vandalism and fire risk. In 1980 inter-city electric locomotive 86255 was named 'Penrith Beacon', recognising the watch kept over a town with a long railway history.

- 16 Jubilee Lodge, now nine apartments, was the former Jubilee Cottage Hospital erected by public subscription in 1898 and later enlarged. Mr James Scott, Chairman of Penrith Urban Council, proposed the hospital in 1897. In two weeks £1151 was promised, doctors guaranteed their services free, and the Earl of Lonsdale donated the site. The foundation stone was laid by the Chairman of the Hospital Committee, Mr R Heywood-Thompson of Great Salkeld, in July 1897.

The opening, all the work, furnishings, and surgical instruments having amounted to £2000, was a grand affair on 9 November 1899, the birthday of Edward, son and heir to Queen Victoria. Lady Brougham and Vaux opened the hospital with a gold key which had a baron's coronet and the Brougham arms. Management passed from Penrith to the NHS in 1948 and the hospital finally closed in 1985, with patients moved to the new purpose-built hospital on Bridge Lane where there is a Jubilee Ward.

- 17 Penrith Cemetery was created in 1872 from 11 acres of a field known as the Intack and part of Beacon wood. Gothic Anglican and non-conformist chapels are united by central bell tower and spire. St Andrews Churchyard was closed for burials in 1850 and Christ Church in 1873 except for the vaults. The first interment was Major Franklin, Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry Cavalry. Another more notorious 'resident' is Percy Toplis, the so-called 'Monacled Mutineer' whose story was written in 1978 by William Allison and John Fairley and subsequently dramatised for the BBC.



- 18 In the top of the wall opposite the Cemetery gates is an engraved panoramic view finder showing the mountains, the gift of Mr J G Holliday, a former Urban Council Chairman, to

mark his period of office in Coronation Year 1953. Over this wall are buried the majority of the 2260 people who died in the 16th C plague. The plague was brought by a visitor, Andrew Hodgson, who lodged at a house in King Street where now Lloyds TSB Bank and Penrith Building Society stand.

- 19 Wordsworth Street, Lowther Street, and Arthur Street are the so-called 'New Streets' developed in the 1850s and 1860s. At the bottom of Arthur Street is an 1857 red sandstone chapel for the Primitive Methodists, who moved in 1873 to the former Methodist Chapel at Sandgate Head. The Arthur Street chapel became a Temperance Hall and is now used for storage.



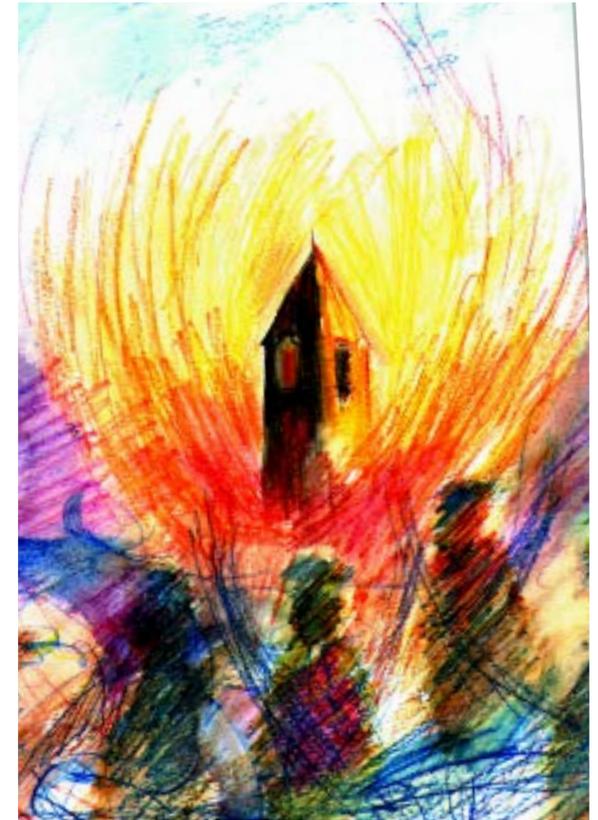
- 20 Friends Meeting House in Meeting House Lane, known as Sandy Lane in late 17th C. This farm building, Layne House, was bought by the Religious Society of Friends for £80 in 1699. For the years until 1730, when a loft was built at the north end which is one of the galleries of today, it was a dwelling where meetings were held. The need for more accommodation involved major structural work in 1803 to change the plan from a simple rectangle to a T-shape.

The stable loft, with its external staircase, was converted to complement the north gallery. At the same time the internal staircase to the north gallery was replaced by external stairs, matching those of the new south gallery. As with many Meeting Houses of the time, flexibility was achieved by openable sliding partitions. An additional room, to blend in with the style of the building, was added in 1992 to provide a modern kitchen, facilities for children and the disabled, and a car park provided on former allotments.

During the second World War, when Newcastle Royal Grammar School was evacuated to Penrith and sharing accommodation with Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, the Meeting House was used as a classroom. In 1992 hospitality was given at the Meeting House for daily use by Bosnian refugees.

- 21 House with unusual window and door heads and 1833 former National Infants School, closed in 1979 with pupils transferred to new Beaconside School on the Scaws Estate. The building now houses a pre-school play group.

- 22 Sandgate Court, a 1992 housing development on the site of former Hartness bus station and workshops and Grisenthwaite Yard. The bus station had been built on the site of the former Wesleyan mixed and infants school, built in 1844 and closed in the 1920s. These premises burned down in the 1940s.



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