

# walks 1, 2 and 3

Each of these walks starts at Carnon Downs Village Hall

## Carnon Downs

Valleys and views with water galore

Views to die for

Great estate houses

compiled by Phil Allen

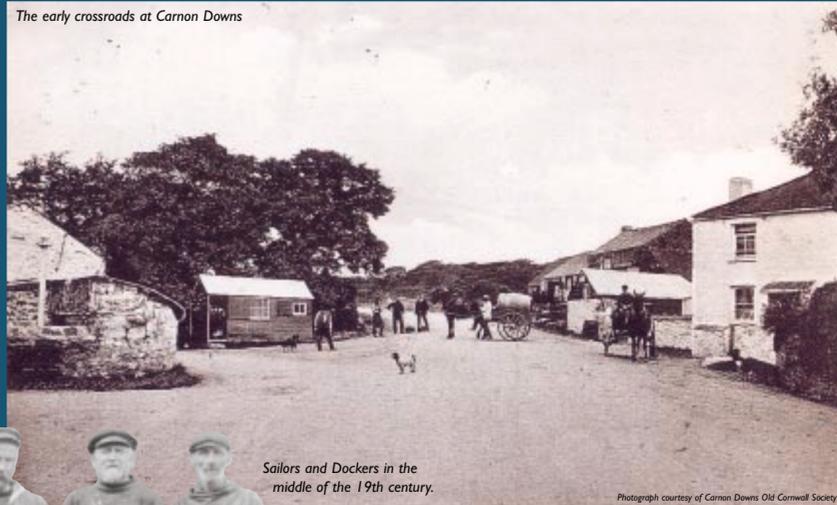


## ...at the Crossroads.

Before the housing developments of the 20th century, the downs above the Carnon were home to just a sparse collection of small-holder's cottages, but in the 19th century a centre developed at the broad crossroads on which was conveniently situated: the Chapel, built in 1825; the Smithy; and the Kiddleywinks store which also provided the Post Office and water delivery service.

If you stand under the ash tree at Kiddleywinks, the different roads reflect the lives and occupations of working people living in Carnon Downs in the mid 1800s. Almost one in three workers were miners and the roads, across the way to Wheal Jane and Bissoe, led to the main mining areas. One in seven workers were servants and the roads running up the hill led to the country estates of Killaganoon and Tregye.

The early crossroads at Carnon Downs

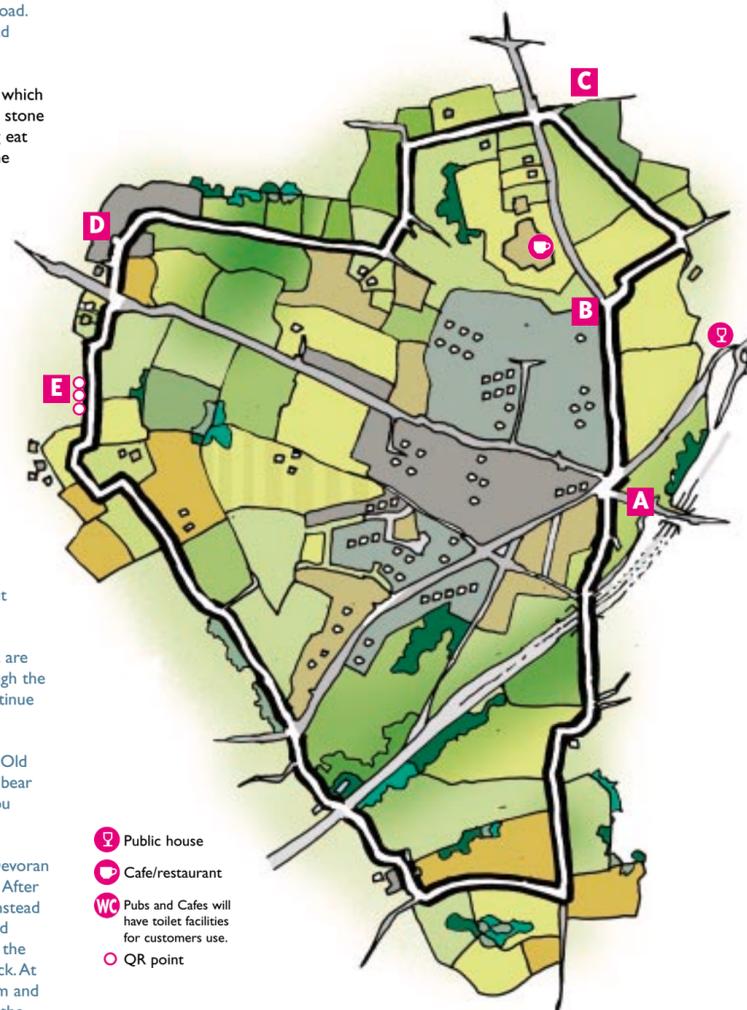


Sailors and Dockers in the middle of the 19th century.



'Packet' route, linking Falmouth with London throughout its service from 1688 to 1850.

The Falmouth Packet service was commissioned by the Postmaster General to carry mail and embassy correspondence between Great Britain and its empire. Possibly the most famous journey was that of Lieutenant Lapenotiere of HMS Pickle who made the trip, in 37 hours via a series of mail coaches and horses, on November 4th 1805 to deliver the news from Trafalgar of Nelson's glorious victory and tragic death.



**Route for walk 1:** Carnon Downs Village Hall, Chyreen, Quenchwell, Ringwell, Carnon Crease, Wellington Place, Middle Devoran, Higher Devoran, Village Centre.

The walk is relatively level with a good surface although sections may be muddy after heavy rain. There are some good wide lanes and also some field paths with numerous stiles. Approximate walk time 1.5 to 2 hours.

The route starts at the entrance of the Village Hall **A**, then crosses the main road taking the road signposted to Wheal Jane. Follow the footway along the roadside on the left and past Algarnick house seen on your right. Follow the road down the hill and at the bend cross the road to take Chyreen Lane **B**.

Up the lane, where you see two stables, take the path on the left indicated by a footpath post. Follow this broad path eventually passing the Quenchwell spring **C** which issues ahead of you within a little wooden doored structure.

Prior to the installation of mains water all properties in the area were served by either private or public wells and the Quenchwell spring was an important supply for the surrounding cottages. Typical of the best, most consistent sources, it was fed into the now overgrown pool beside the track, then issuing over a granite chute at the main road. The first mains supply for Feock Parish was developed by the Truro Rural District Council in 1953, however, the more remote areas of the parish were only connected when the Stithians Reservoir was commissioned in 1967. Today our supply derives from the River Fowey, at Lostwithiel and is fed to us via the Cornwall Spine Main.

Cross the main Quenchwell road and take the path opposite. Carry straight on down the hill, leaving the driveway as it turns to the right, to take the path down amongst the ash trees and broad leaved, water loving, gunnera plants. Over the concrete stile at the bottom of the path turn left to take the track which leads through a delightful valley crossed by little streams.

As the track climbs, take the first right, ignoring the private drive and following the footpath ahead. Carry on ahead over the stiles on the path which leads to Ringwell.

The original holiday park at Ringwell has now been developed into a country cottage retreat called 'The Valley' **D**.

On reaching 'The Valley' development, follow the path upward keeping left onto the tarmac road. Continue on this estate road up the hill into the main part of 'The Valley'. When the road turns off to the right, leave it and carry on straight ahead up the path which exits onto Bissoe Road via the stile on the gate.

Turn left up the hill and take the first right on the opposite side of the road. You are now on a brideway leading to Carnon Crease and will see broad ranging views **E** over the Carnon Valley and hills beyond.



In the Carnon Valley you can see the modern railway viaduct which was built in the 1930s to replace Brunel's original timber and stone structure. Cornwall's railway saga was an epic struggle of dog eat dog, competing vested interests and political machinations. The directors of the London to Bristol railway were installed in

1833 and looked forward to providing new strategic links down to the West Country. In 1844, however, a prospectus for a local Cornwall Railway Company was issued which, by incorporating elements of track already established like the Hayle to Redruth section, would have linked the ports of Hayle and Falmouth, a sufficient goal for some. Railway mania was at its height and one hundred and five railway bills were presented to the parliamentary session of 1855 alone. These included the Cornwall Railway, a West Cornwall Railway, and the Great Western Railway; the latter eventually won out, with Brunel as chief engineer.



The Carnon Valley contains the richest of mining and mineral legacies. Tin and gold have been produced since the Bronze age and both copper and arsenic were important in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Follow the broad lane, bearing right at the cottage ahead to pass through the new gate. Bear round to the left and take the route to the left of the telegraph pole keeping beside the field boundary on your right and over the stile at the far hedge.

Over the stile turn left, again following the field boundary. On your right are terrific views of the valley and beyond. Take the gate ahead leading through the farm yard and, passing the old farm buildings which are on your left, continue through the concrete gateposts ahead.

At the next fork take the right hand track. This broad track takes you to Old Carnon Hill which you cross to take the byway beyond. At the next fork bear left downhill. This lane brings you down to the A39 bypass road, which you cross with care using the central reservation.

Having crossed the dual carriageway, take the road uphill towards Mid Devoran Farm. Go around the cattle grid and follow the route through the farm. After passing a large yard on your right, the lane leads up sharply to the left, instead turn right through the gate into the rough yard. Immediately turn left and follow the route uphill which runs along the left hand field hedge. Cross the hedge/stile at the top of the field and continue upwards on the farm track. At the next bend, carry on left up the main track past Higher Devoran Farm and up to the bridge over the bypass road. At the far end of the bridge take the footpath on the right and follow this back to the Village Hall.

Also one in seven were seamen, dock workers or railwaymen, taking the road down to Devoran for their work. Those in agriculture constituted the largest remaining group, one in six of all workers.

The main road was once the old turnpike leading down Old Carnon Hill, over the Carnon Bridge and through Perranwell. Turnpike Trusts had been set up by acts of parliament since the 17th century and allowed the trustees to build and maintain roads and levy tolls. The Truro turnpike, constructed in 1754, was the first and largest in Cornwall. At Carnon Downs it was part of the

A new turnpike road was constructed in 1828, taking the current route over the new Devoran causeway and following the creek edge past the Norway Inn. The building of the new turnpike was overseen by William McAdam, under instruction from his father the famous roads engineer John Loudon McAdam.

In 1798, when in his early forties, John moved to Falmouth where, under government appointment he developed his ideas for improving road construction. He revolutionised road building during his lifetime and later became the Surveyor General of Metropolitan Roads for the whole of Great Britain.



Railway workers at Devoran



Dick Bryant with his traps



The Falmouth to Truro Express

From 1781 to 1800 James Watt, the father of modern power engineering, lived nearby in Cusgarne. Also close by in the valley lie the remains of the original railway viaduct which was designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and built in 1863.

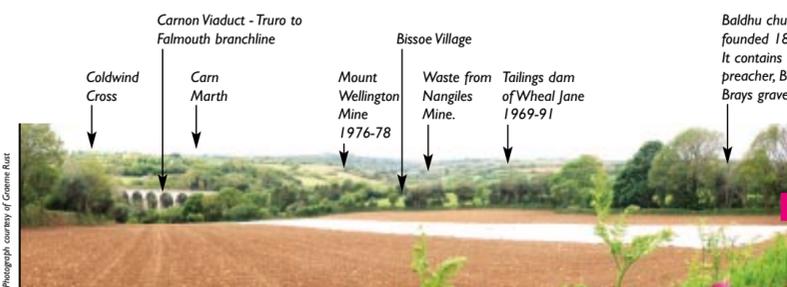
It is interesting to muse that, such was the importance of Cornwall in the days of the Industrial Revolution, three of our country's most famous engineers would have been seen about the byways of Carnon Downs in the course of their work.



Mineral workers in the Carnon Valley



Falmouth Consolidated Mine, Bissoe



Carnon Viaduct - Truro to Falmouth branchline  
Coldwind Cross  
Carn Marth  
Mount Wellington Mine 1976-78  
Waste from Nangiles Mine.  
Tailings dam of Wheal Jane 1969-91  
Baldhu church, founded 1847. It contains preacher, Billy Brays grave.



The old timber viaduct

**Route for walk 2:** Carnon Downs Village Hall, Tresithick, Tregoose, Higher Devoran, Village Centre. An undulating walk with open field sections and some stiles. Short sections can be muddy after heavy rain, however the walk provides some of the best long views of Restronguet Creek and the Carrick Roads. Approximate walk time 1.5 to 2 hours.

The route starts at the entrance of the Village Hall **A** and then takes the Tregye road to pass over the bypass bridge. Just over the bridge turn right along a tarmac foot-way, and through the pedestrian gate.

Keep the hedge on your left, and as the path passes the old stables you may appreciate that this was once the broadest road on the Feock Parish tithe map. It linked Carnon Downs with the important routes at Tresithick and was used as a mule track taking goods for the mines at Gwennap and Kea to and from the quays at Point and Penpol.



Train of mules carrying copper ore

At the gateway, cross the main Point Road and take the footpath opposite and adjacent to the Cats Protection League property. Continue along this track and, when joining the main Tresithick Lane, turn right and follow it round a number of bends to then proceed down the hill.

At the gateway by the tree-house you get the first of many far reaching views of the Carrick Roads and further on to the St Anthony lighthouse in the distance.

The path continues down through the cottages of Tresithick. This was an important junction of tracks and paths linking Tregye, Penpol, Tregoose and Carnon Downs. Bear right to pass in front of the overgrown barn seen on your right and, immediately past this, turn right into the field. Take the path at the right-hand field edge and continue into the trees.

Cross over the stile into the open field beyond, passing between fenced paddocks and on towards a further hedge/stile situated at the brow of the hill.



From this stile **B** you will see one of the finest views of Restronguet Creek and the Carrick Roads. Picture the scene of a November day in 1860 when two hundred vessels were in the harbour sheltering from a south westerly storm and it is easy to imagine why Restronguet was a centre for shipbuilding at the time, producing large sea-going trading craft such as the Rhoda Mary and some of the finest oyster dredging boats of the era.



The Rhoda Mary passing St Anthony light

Again follow the right hand boundary of the field and join the Point Road at Tregoose. Turn right on Point Road and pass in front of thatched Tregoose Farmhouse. Take the next road on the left which leads down towards Chychoose Farm.

A little way down the hill take the track to the right at the sign to 'Silent Waters', once again catching magnificent views of Restronguet Creek.

As you view this tranquil scene, overlooking the creek **C**, it is hard to imagine the creek as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries. There was a hive of industrial activity involving busy docks, mines and smelters as depicted in this painting by T May.

Follow along the track to the end and cross over the stile at the right of the gate. Shortly after the gate, bear left, to take the footpath diagonally across the field to enter the woods at a stile between the two pairs of electricity poles.



The tin mine at Point by T May 1874

Follow the path down through the wood making gently towards the stream. At the bottom, take a narrow uneven path above the stream, leaving the field hedge to your right and, as you reach a gate in the hedge, turn left over the stream crossing the hedge/stile on the opposite bank.

Continue up the field and, after going through the gate at the top, turn right. Keeping the hedge to your right, pass through a further gate onto the tarmac road beyond. Carry straight on and continue past Higher Devoran Farm to cross the bridge over Carnon Downs Bypass.

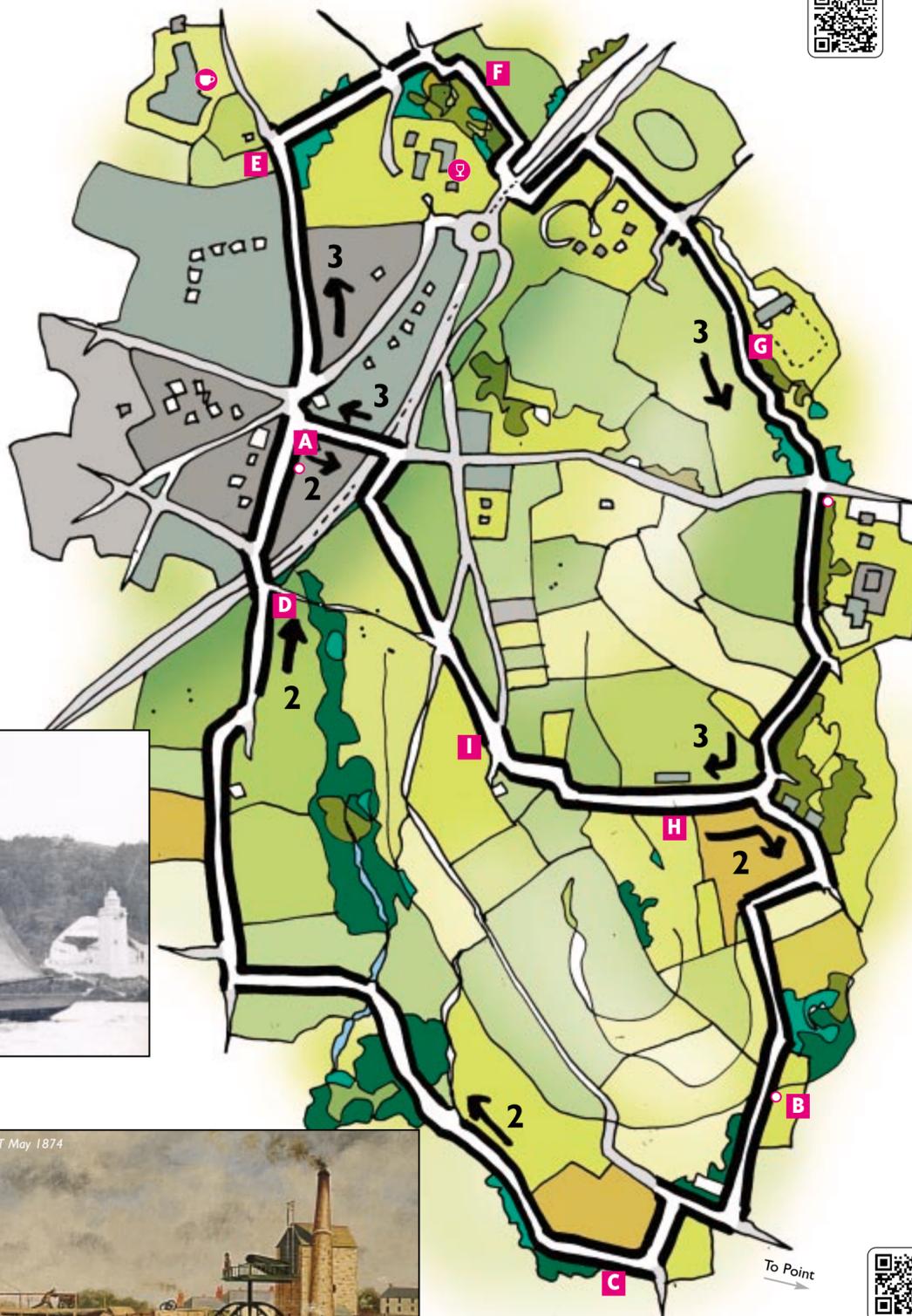
The footpath on the right just before the bridge **D** was called 'Deadman's Lane', apparently recalling the murder of a traveller by a brutal highwayman in the 18th century. It was said that there was a rock at the side of the path forever stained red by the man's blood.

At the far end of the bridge take the footpath on the right and, following this main path, you'll soon be back to the starting point at the Village centre.

**Route for walk 3:** Carnon Downs Village Hall, Chyreen, Killaganoon, Tregye, Tresithick, Village Centre. The route is generally flat with good surface however some field sections may be muddy after heavy rain. There is one stile. Approximate walk time 1 to 1.5 hours

The walk starts at the entrance of the Village Hall **A**.

Across the road, a little way from the bus shelter you will see the entrance to Carnon Downs Methodist Chapel. The Feock Methodist Society, established in 1784, was one of the first in west Cornwall. Early groups met in homes or converted houses, but in 1818 the first purpose built chapel was constructed at Goonpiper. In 1824 Edward Budd, the first editor of the West Briton, conducted a service in the open air approximately on the site where the current Carnon Downs Chapel now stands. It was attended by a congregation drawn from villages between Perranwell to Calenick. The chapel was built the following year, funded by donations, subscriptions and borrowed money. It was extremely successful and in 1842 was extended to accommodate over five hundred people, a considerable number at a time when Carnon Downs boasted only forty homes.



- Public house
- Cafe/restaurant
- Pubs and Cafes will have toilet facilities for customers use.
- QR point

Cross the main road taking the road signposted to Wheal Jane. Follow the footway along the roadside on the left and past Algarnick House seen on your right. Follow the road down the hill and at the bend, cross the road to take Chyreen Lane **E**.

Continue up Chyreen Lane, ignoring the footpath sign on your left. Just before the concrete track turns left to Chyreen Fruit Farm, take the field gate on your right into Jubilee Wood and turn immediately left to follow the hedge uphill, and continue around the top of the wood towards the far top corner. This wood was planted by the Lobb family of Carnon Downs who own and maintain it for the enjoyment of the community **F**.

Exit the wood onto the bus lane beside the A39 and head right in order to cross the A39 near the roundabout.

After crossing the A39, head left towards Truro beside the busy road for a short distance until you reach the round concrete tank belonging to South West Water. Take the broad lane on your right towards Killaganoon Farmhouse.

On either side is the Carnon Downs Caravan Park, voted South West Campsite of the year in 2013. Continue straight on to the junction and cross over the stone stile at the end of the lane to follow the path at the left of the field.

The route passes alongside the main Killaganoon estate house which is seen through trees on the left **G**. The name may be translated as 'grove on the down' and dates from at least 1298. The current estate house was built in 1750 by Richard Hussey, who under the patronage of the great Admiral Boscawen became Attorney General to the Queen. It was extensively refurbished in 1873 following a serious fire. At the 1871 census over 100 people lived on the estate in 24 households. The atmosphere of this time is well depicted by the photo of Tregye tea treat seen below.

Photograph courtesy of the Old Cornwall Society



Tregye Tea Treat

Continue to follow the left field boundary. Pass through the field gate and immediately turn right to follow the right hand hedge. As the path exits at Tregye Road, cross the road and take the Tregye Lane opposite through the right hand granite gate posts.

The current mansion house at Tregye was first built in 1809 by William Penrose. William was a founding partner in the Penpoll Lead Smelting Works. His wife, Juliana, took over his interests after his untimely death and was prominent in local activities, including hosting the annual Chapel Tea-Treat at Tregye until her death in 1850. In the 20th century Tregye became the home of the Hon John de Clare Boscawen whose antecedents have had a long association with Feock. Many alterations and improvements were made at this time, including the enrichment of the gardens with exotic plants including the "Happy Valley" water gardens below at Tresithick. In later years the house was converted to a country club, creating some local controversy when it hosted a rock concert in 1971.



On the bill was the rock group Queen, whose first show presenting their classic line-up was only a month before.



Poster advertising a Rock Concert at Tregye

Follow the path through the various Tregye properties and after Tregye Farm you see a field gate on your right, pass through this gate following the hedge on the right.

This walk takes you through some delightful countryside with occasional glimpses of the Carrick Roads which are hopefully glistening in sunshine. The network of hedgerows are sometimes called the 'corridors of wildlife' as they provide invaluable protection for insects, small animals and birds and opportunities to make their homes. They also link our scattered woodlands to provide a great diversity of habitat. The hedgerows are particularly colourful in spring and early summer with a succession of flowers such as primroses, bluebells, campion and cow parsley. During March to May you will see a wide range of birds - blackbirds, thrushes, dunnocks, various tits and finches. Birds are seen and heard throughout the year but during the nesting season they are most active.



Photograph courtesy of Jane Moran

A great spotted woodpecker photographed in woods locally.

As the path dips into a marshy hollow, follow the path through the gate and up the hill, passing a number of farm buildings to meet the main Tresithick track. Turn right on the track, following it up hill to Carnon Downs. At the gateway by the tree-house you have a view of the Carrick Roads and onwards to the St Anthony lighthouse in the distance.

This picturesque granite tower was built in 1835 to signal the dangerous Manacle Rocks **I**. This hazard for ships rounding the Lizard and making for

Falmouth, lies in the red sector of the light's beam.

After the dog-leg in the road and as the lane becomes tarmac take the little track on your left through the trees. Take a quick look through the field gate **J** on the left for magnificent views of the Carnon Valley and the hills beyond. If on Thursday January 30th 1862 you had been one of the excited party walking down this path to Penpol Chapel to celebrate its opening, you would have seen the smoke of over twenty mine engines swathing the skies across these valleys. The final years of the great Cornish copper boom were at hand, prior to the crash of 1866 which would lead to the pitiful waves of Cornish emigration in subsequent years. The engine house of Penance Mines remains visible on the skyline below Carn Marth at the top of Lanner village.

This path exits at the Point Road, with the Cat Protection home on your left. Cross the road and pass through the gate on the other side. Where the path narrows go straight on, and, at the boundary with the new bypass, pass through the small gate making your way up to Tregye Road.

At the top turn left over the bypass bridge to reach the centre of the village again.

This walk leaflet was produced by Feock Parish Council with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Design and illustration by graeme@graemerust.com

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