

Water Lane, Wheal Butson and Jericho Valley

Start at Trelawney Road car-park, walk back down to Vicarage Road, the main road through the village. Turn to the right passing an Estate Agents and a Butcher's shop. Look across the road to the left and you will see a building **Z** that looks like the lych-gate of a church. Curiously, until fairly recent times this was the village mortuary. The local doctor even did his post-mortems there. **Now cross the road, pass the post-box in the wall and find yourself at the top of a steep hill on the left.**

A note of caution before we return to the walk; from now on all the road parts of this walk have two-way traffic and no pavements. Please take care.

Back to the walk. Proceed down the hill, turn left at the bottom and continue down until you see a Londis Store on your right. (This is the last opportunity to purchase drinks or other goodies to sustain you during this fairly long walk.)





A



B

Turn right immediately after the shop into Water Lane **A**. Its name is soon seen to be very appropriate as a stream burbles by the roadside. To trap unwary motorists it changes sides half way up! Although the lane climbs throughout its length the slope is so gentle and the surroundings so peaceful that the gradient is hardly noticed. **A turn to the right will be seen between the set-back dwellings; ignore it, keep straight on. When the lane-proper takes a turn to the left it is time to leave it, taking the unpaved lane which is straight ahead. Follow this via a couple of stiles to the Promised Land.**

This area, which shelters a few houses and cottages, is idyllic enough to deserve the name. Many stories exist about how it came to be the Promised Land. A member of the family that

coined it a few generations ago assures us that it was because the then head of the family promised that parcel of land to his nephew; hence 'the promised land'. Note that it is so designated on Ordnance Survey maps.

Take the first turning on the left. It looks to be a private lane but a path continues after the houses are passed on the left. This path runs along the top of three or four fields and passes over stiles or through gates depending on livestock before it turns right and passes a row of cottages. A left turn is now made into a lane that leads on into Goonbell. The white building that is now visible at the end of the lane used to be the Goonbell Methodist Chapel but is now a private dwelling.

On reaching this house turn to the right. Soon you will see two garage-type buildings at the other side of the road. Pass the first and turn left just before the second. (This path is used regularly by the horses from the nearby stables. As a result it becomes a quagmire of mud in inclement weather. Should you choose to avoid this stretch, continue to walk up the road, turning to the left at the top of the hill. Keep bearing to the left on the road signposted to Wheal Butson and Silverwell. The muddy path route joins this road in about 400 metres.) If you are now following the path you will soon pass under a bridge that used to carry a railway line that ran to Newquay; it was a victim of the swingeing cuts made to our railway network in 1963. **Continue up the path between high hedges and at the T-junction turn right.** The path soon begins to climb as it passes a selection of dwellings on the right-hand side.

Having reached a road at the top, turn left. From this road the view to the left is out-standing, although it does not appear to be high it gives a panoramic view of the countryside from Wheal Kitty to the north round to the wind-turbines at Carland Cross and the massive "mountains" of pit spoils in the clay country around St Austell to the east. Soon the road starts to descend to a bridge across a stream. It then sweeps right and climbs quite steeply before a branch to the left is seen. **Take this left turn.** (Instead of following the road around this steep corner you can take a short-cut by turning left shortly after the bridge and climbing up and over a steep, rocky hillock. Turn left as you rejoin the road.)

After the short, steep climb at the corner this pleasant road becomes more tree-lined as it makes a gentle descent. **After about 1/4 of a mile, as the road starts to ascend,** we can see on our left an even greater reminder of the dead railway **C**. A magnificent viaduct straddles the valley. **Then a lane to the left, clearly marked Liberty House, is to be found. It looks very private but is the course of a**



C



D

public footpath; turn down this lane. On our way down we pass under a railway bridge **D** that is so close to the viaduct that it almost seems like a sixth arch. **Then, when the lane splits to serve the two adjacent houses, a footpath sign on the right points to a well delineated path that skirts round the guesthouse, Liberty House. Take this path.** Continue by a tree-lined descending path into a thicker wooded stretch. On the way down the path crosses a stream by a small footbridge. Our path now follows that stream on its way to the sea although it is not always visible in the thick woodland. **The path then meets the**

c.1905

E



Perranporth road at Barkla Shop. Cross the road to the path at the other side but take great care as fast cars may roar around the blind corner on the right.

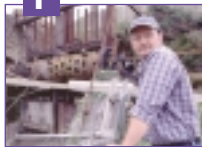
We are now entering Jericho Valley; our path is another pretty woodland walk but it wasn't always like this **E**. This is the beginning of what was a very active tin mining area. Over the years nature has fought back to hide the scars caused by both the dumping of the discarded spoils of the industry and the devastation caused by the surface workings. In the main it is now covered by trees or a mixture of gorse, heather and fern. as it leads down to join a lane. **Follow the path to the junction with a lane, turn right and after a few strides turn right again over a bridge. Now follow the stream by taking the path to the left.**

This part is heavily wooded but leads on to a more open, steeply sided valley. This dreamy path with its tinkling water accompaniment leads to what is the very last tin producing establishment in Cornwall, The Blue Hills Tin Streams. Their buildings are to be seen on the left of the path. **F** This cottage industry is run by a father and son who not only produce the tin but turn it into jewellery and souvenirs. They also give demonstrations

of the many processes necessary to turn ore into the bright, shiny metal. The engine house of the old Blue Hills mine is to be found on the right just as the path joins the road. This point also gives us our first glimpse of the sea in the vee of the valley as it opens into Trevellas Porth. **This junction of the path and the road is where the road and the South West Coastal Path share the same route for about 200 metres. Our route is the west-bound coastal path. Turn left, follow the road for about 70 metres before branching off to the right over a stile adjacent to a wrought iron gate.**



F



G

This gate, with its Motorcycle Club emblem, gives a clue to the use of this very steep and rocky ascent; it is the Blue Hills section of the Lands End rally **G** and each Easter sees a host of motor-cyclists and motorists pitting their skills against the obstacle course that nature has provided. The hill is a challenge to walkers too but the effort needed to climb is amply rewarded by the views that unfold as you ascend; first the stream and some old mine-structures then the view opens out to encompass the entire valley from the road to the sea. The remnants of derelict mining structures show that the workings were widespread in the valley but give little evidence of what it must have been like when the mines were in full work; the floor of the valley was full to the brim with buildings and working equipment, lots of chimneys would have been pouring out black smoke, some areas would be emitting choking dust while others would be splashing in water. A stark contrast to today's tranquillity. As one nears the the top of the hill St Agnes's special rock outcrops are seen hovering out to sea; these are the Bawden Rocks or more popularly, 'Man and his Man'. These rocks sometimes seem to move, some days they appear to be almost within touching distance

c.1900



H

while on others they seem to be miles away. Each summer they provide a challenge to our keen swimmers; a "Round the Rocks" race takes place.

Having reached the cliff top a seascape panorama opens up. The cliffs reach out both to east and west with their breaks sheltering our beaches and coves. **As the path follows the cliff edge it is soon possible to look straight down into Trevaunance Cove. Arresting though this sight is, it is recommended that instead of standing on the edge of a crumbling cliff it is better to continue down the path until a couple of seats are found on the right of the path.** They overlook the Cove and afford a more comfortable viewing position. Like

Trevellas Porth, this cove looked quite different some years ago. The pile of stones at the far side are the remnants of a harbour **I**. When in use it necessitated lifting cargoes from the schooners that

c.1876



J



K

c.1900



L

delivered supplies to the mining industry up the harbour side which is a vertical cliff face. What a task that must have been, no massive cranes then, just man's ingenuity and horse power in the days when horse-power really meant horse-power. Another point of interest is that schooners were also built on this beach almost immediately under the point where you are sitting **I**.

c.1927



M



N

c.1890



Of particular interest is that the figure-head **K** of one of them, the Lady Agnes **L**, has been acquired by the St Agnes Museum after a world wide search.

We now leave the cliff-path. With our backs to the sea, we take the right hand one of the two paths that face inland. This path is known as the Coronation Walk. Wheal Kitty engine-house and other mine workings are to be seen on the left **M**. This area has become a mini-industrial estate with new workshops and offices **N**. It is also the home of Surfers Against Sewage, a local pressure group that has grown into an internationally recognised environmental lobby group.

The view to the right overlooks Quay Road, the connection between the village and the Cove. It looks down on the road and sweeps up to show much of the north side of the village displaying many attractive white-painted houses and a number of "chalet-villages" for holiday makers. The Beacon, the hill that provides our shelter from the westerly gales, is in the background. What can also be seen from this vantage point are a significant number of engine houses that, once again, remind us of the past when St Agnes's population was greater than it is today.

On reaching the end of Coronation Walk turn right into Quay Road and after a few metres turn left into the path that leads to the Glen Cottage. A short, sharp descent, then a long climb that passes this guest-house and then leads past the front of the terrace of cottages known as Stippy Stappy. Although their quaint name is self-explanatory, opinions are divided about their original use, some claim that they were built for mine-captains, others say sea-captains while it is also said that they were for ordinary tin-miners. Today most of them are holiday accommodation.

Then back on to the road to climb the last few metres to the Church on the left and Bakery on the right. The road swings to the left and passes through Churchtown, a busy shopping area before it climbs gently through a more residential part. After such a long walk it is only fair to draw attention to the toilets that are to be found on the right opposite the Post Office.

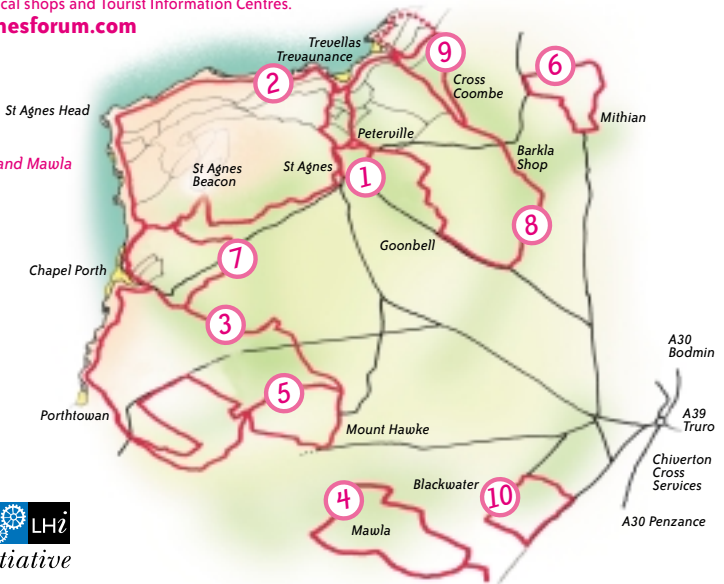
Keep straight up the road, passing the Meadery and the Miners and Mechanics Institute before turning right to the car-park. It is hoped that you have enjoyed your walk.

This map is one of a series available from local shops and Tourist Information Centres.

For further information visit www.stagnesforum.com

- Walk 1 St Agnes Village Trail
- Walk 2 St Agnes Beacon
- Walk 3 Porthowan, Banns Vale, Mount Hawke and Chapel Porth
- Walk 4 Wheal Rose, the Poldice Plateway and Mawla
- Walk 5 Mount Hawke
- Walk 6 Mithian Walk
- Walk 7 Wheal Coates, Chapel Porth and Wheal Lawrence Valley
- Walk 8 Water Lane, Wheal Butson and Jericho Valley
- Walk 9 Jericho Valley and Cross Coombe
- Walk 10 Blackwater

St Agnes 2000
Regeneration Forum
Chairman - John Slater
Parish Rooms
St Agnes
Cornwall




Local Heritage initiative

walk number

8

ST. AGNES HERITAGE TRAIL

Water Lane, Wheal Butson and Jericho Valley
9km or 5½ miles

