

The Pentrich Revolution Bicentenary Walk 5 of 19

• On 9th June 1817, over 300 men set out for Nottingham from villages on the Derbyshire-Nottinghamshire border.

• They thought they were part of a 'general rising' to bring down an unjust and oppressive government. Motivated by poverty and hunger, all efforts to gain a hearing suppressed, and having no vote, many saw an armed revolt as the only alternative.

• Unbeknown to them, the Government 'agent provocateur', William J Oliver had encouraged the armed revolt. Rebel leaders had already been arrested and only a handful would take up arms in Huddersfield and Nottingham. The Derbyshire men were to be used as an 'example' to others.

• Ambushed by troops, the marchers fled and many were arrested. At their trial in Derby, three - Brandreth, Ludlam and Turner - were sentenced to death. They were to be hanged then beheaded. Fourteen were transported to penal colonies in Australia, others imprisoned. Their families were evicted and homes destroyed.

The other walks in this series

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| 1. Nottingham, England | 10. Heanor, England |
| 2. South Wingfield, England | 11. Langley Mill, England |
| 3. Fritchley, England | 12. Eastwood, England |
| 4. Heage, England | 13. Giltbrook, England |
| 5. Pentrich, England | 14. Sutton in Ashfield, England |
| 6. Alfreton, England | 15. Derby, England |
| 7. Swanwick, England | 16. Sydney, Australia |
| 8. Ripley, England | 17. Parramatta, Australia |
| 9. Codnor, England | 18. Kiama, Australia |
| 19. The full route of the march, England | |

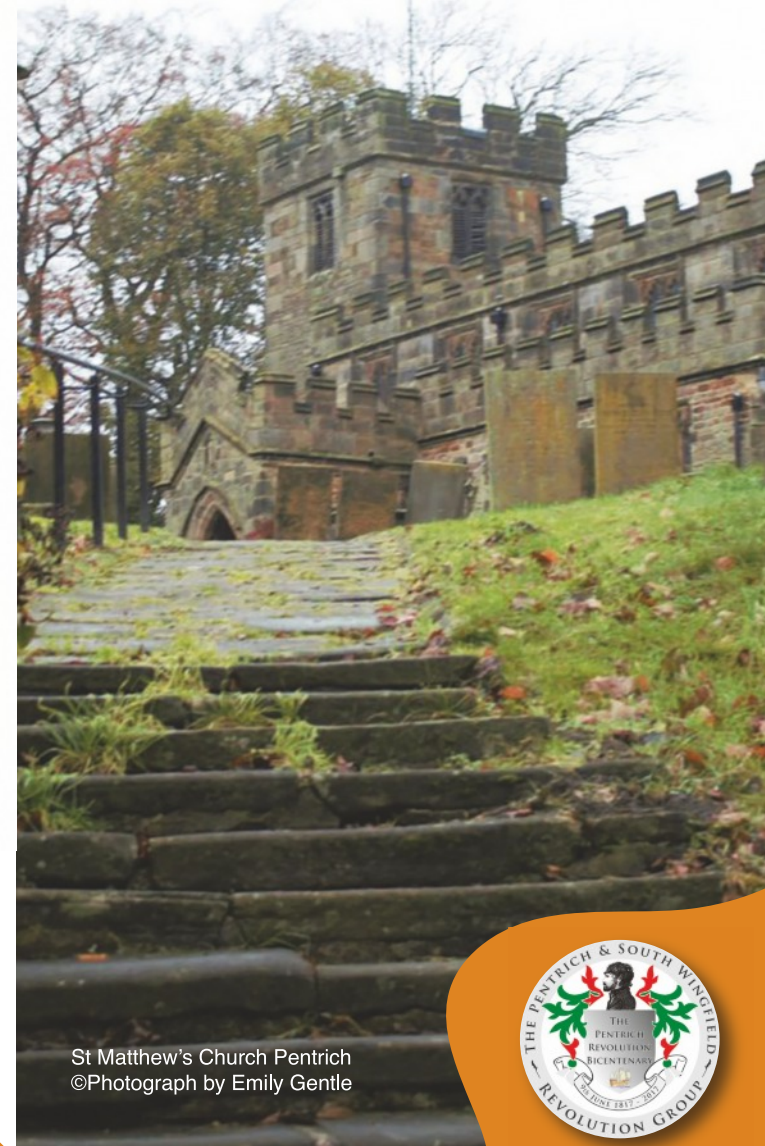
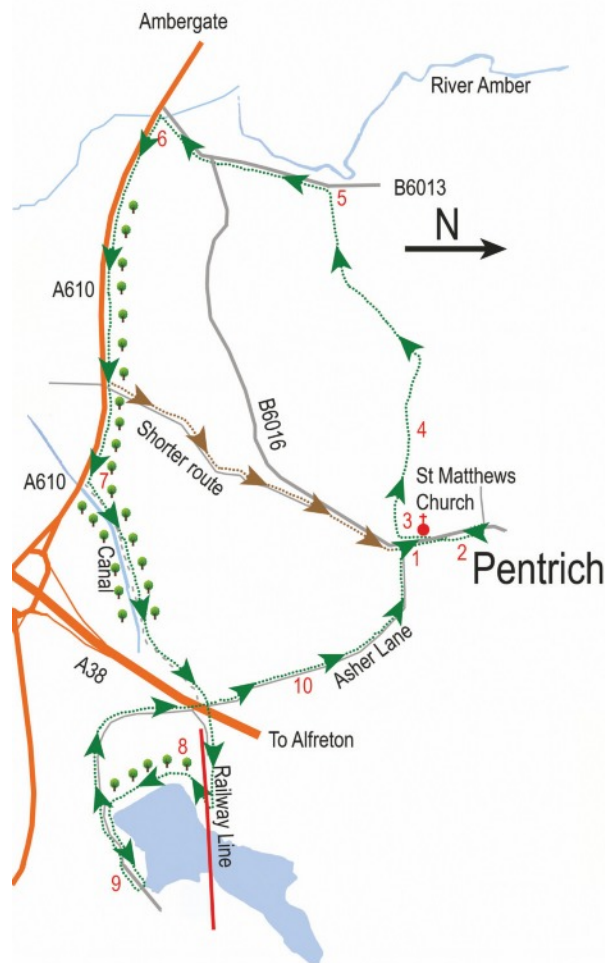


THE PENTRICH
& SOUTH WINGFIELD
REVOLUTION GROUP



The Pentrich & South Wingfield Revolution

Walk 5 of 19
Pentrich, England



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& Sylvia mason
2017



Walk 5

Walk compiled by
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This walk is produced by:-

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Website: www.pentrichrevolution.org
Charity Incorporated Organisation Number 1166940
Printed by George & Gagg, Nottingham, England



St Matthew's Church Pentrich
©Photograph by Emily Gentle

- Distance:** 5 miles (3 mile alternative) Care needed when crossing roads.
- Difficulty:** Undulating, roads, footpaths, awkward stiles, steep steps.
- Park:** The Dog Inn, customers only. You may have to park on Asherfield Lane where the road widens.
- Start:** The Dog Inn, Pentrich. OS ref. Explorer 269-390 525

The largest community in the area in 1817, Pentrich was the centre of planning for the rebellion in Derbyshire. Many from the village joined the march on 9th June. Six Pentrich men were transported to Australia and five imprisoned. The landlord, the Duke of Devonshire evicted families that took part and demolished their homes. En-route see the commemorative plaques (*) placed by the Pentrich Historical Society.

1. From the *Dog Inn turn go up hill past the Church on your left, up to the Village Hall

*The site of Thomas Bacon's house who was a 64-year old stocking frame knitter, previously a fletcher at Butterley Works. An enthusiastic supporter of Tom Paine and guiding light of the rebellion, he founded Pentrich Hampden Club, calling for universal suffrage, and was Derbyshire delegate to a national meeting in London in January 1817 which presented half million signatures calling for reform. He attended meetings in Nottingham and Yorkshire planning a revolt.



- ©Photograph by Emily Gentle

2. Cross the road, return to the Church. On the left opposite the Village Hall was *James Shipman's house, who gave evidence for the prosecution at the Derby trial, then *The White Horse Inn, kept by Nancy Weightman, Bacon's sister, enthusiastic supporter of his views, her sons actively involved. The Pentrich Hampden Club met here, Government spy and agent provocateur 'Oliver' attended meetings and Jeremiah Brandreth stayed on 8th June 1817.

3. Turn right, taking the steps to *St Matthews Church, pass the Church to the gate in the left corner of the graveyard. The curate in 1817, Rev. Hugh Wolstenholme, from a family of Sheffield radicals, spoke of reform, calling the hanging of local men for setting fire to

Colonel Halton's haystacks, in protest over low wages, 'murder'. He hid escaping rebels in the Church, and organised support for prisoners and their families after the rebellion. In 1818 he emigrated to America.

4. Go into the field, walk ahead to the stile. Cross the next field diagonally to your left, into the adjoining field. Hedge to your right. Cross the stile in the corner, turn left, hedge to your left, to a stile. Cross this, continue ahead, hedge to your left. Take the second stile at the bottom, take the path past the house, fence to your right, stop at the road.

Crossing the fields are lovely views of Amber Valley, towards Crich, and the route taken by the rebels on the night of the 9th June 1817, from South Wingfield.



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5. In front is *Pentrich Mill. Turn left, to Pentrich Lane End.

Thomas Bacon hid in a building near the Mill before fleeing, though he was captured and transported for life. The rebels reunited here as they continued to collect weapons and men. At Mr Wheatcroft's farm, Buckland Hollow, they took three men and a gun. George Weightman 'borrowed' a pony from William Booth and rode off to Nottingham, to inform the gathering 'rebel army' of their approach. At Pentrich Lane End, site of *the Devonshire Arms, (This has been removed for development at the time this went to press.) The rebels continued to Pentrich, then Butterley. Opposite see the Mile Marker dating from the 1760's, this marks the arrival of the Turnpike Road.

6. Continue along the B6013 to * the traffic lights. Turn left, walk on alongside the A610. At Mrs Hepworth's house, servant Robert Walters was shot, the only man to die that night.

Shorter walk: Turn left at the third footpath sign, can be hidden by bushes, it is around half a mile from the left turn, follow this footpath to Pentrich Village. Turn right onto the main road through the village. Turn right, back to the Dog Inn.

7. Continue along the A610 to the fourth footpath sign pointing to a flight of steps. Take this down to Cromford Canal. Take care as there is no handrail. Walk along the canal, and under a small pipeline. The path rises from the canal and passes Geeson's Scrap Yard on your left, exiting onto Asher Lane. Completed in 1793 the Cromford canal, built by Benjamin Outram and William Jessop, joined the canal system down the Erewash Valley at Langley Mill, serving Butterley Works. Geeson's scrap yard was formerly the colliery. Known as a comparatively safe pit, its pumping engine was on display at the

Science Museum, London, and was one of the earliest pits to stop using pit ponies. It employed Pentrich men from 1750.



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8. Cross Asher Lane, turn right under the A38, turn left up the road. Join the footpath on the right to the railway line. Cross with care, cross the stile. Take the footpath to Butterley Reservoir. At the reservoir turn right and walk around until you face the roadway. Turn left on the road in front of the Hammersmith Nature Reserve. At the end of this road you will face the former

***Butterley Iron Works across the road. Turn left to the Gatehouse.** Walking up this road you follow the footsteps of the rebels. Butterley Iron Works, founded in 1790 by Benjamin Outram, exploiting local iron, coal and limestone, was the biggest employer in the area. The rebels came to seize arms and men. Refused entry by the manager, Mr Goodwin, who had previously been forewarned of the rising, the rebels failed to gain entry and continued their march towards Nottingham. Bacon had worked at the foundry and knew it as a source for weapons. He hoped to recruit men who worked there. John Cope, who had been in the Hampden Club and worked at Butterley, said the workers were too well paid to be interested.



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9. Retrace your steps to the nature reserve and walk straight ahead along the track to re-join Asher Lane. Turn right; continue on

this road to Pentrich, the Dog Inn on your left at the top, the end of the walk. Halfway up the hill on the right was *Asherfield Barn. Bacon organised a series of night meetings here. On 30th May a large meeting was told that all was ready and the plans for the rising set out on 4th June. On 5th June Bacon brought Jeremiah Brandreth to the meeting. It was also attended by George Crabtree, claiming to be a delegate from Leeds, another spy for the authorities and agent provocateur, who assured the Pentrich men that a rising was ready across the North and Midlands and that they must be 'steady, firm and unanimous'.