

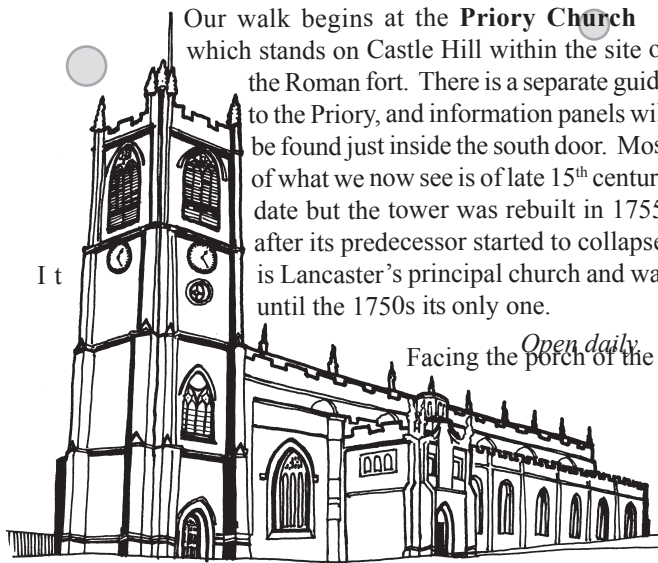
Guided Walk to Lancaster

Hello and welcome to Lancaster - county town, former port, university city and Roman settlement! This is one of several guided walks which include a **Roman Walk** and a **Maritime Walk**; for these see separate guides.

Our walk begins at the **Priory Church** 1 which stands on Castle Hill within the site of the Roman fort. There is a separate guide to the Priory, and information panels will be found just inside the south door. Most of what we now see is of late 15th century date but the tower was rebuilt in 1755, after its predecessor started to collapse. is Lancaster's principal church and was until the 1750s its only one.

Open daily
Facing the porch of the

It

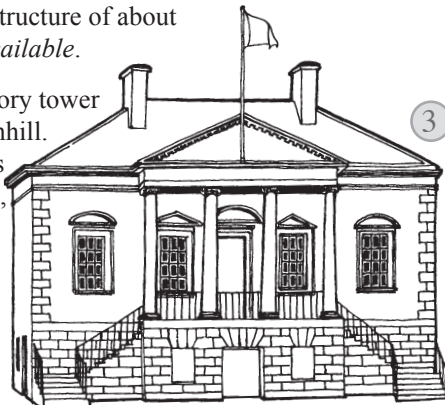


Priory is the **Castle** 2 We are looking at the north side, which mostly consists of prison accommodation built in the late 18th century; However, the large tower inside is the Lungess Tower or Keep, the oldest surviving part, dating from the mid-12th century. To the right can be seen the Shire Hall, a Gothick structure of about 1790. *Guided tours available.*

Turn right, past the Priory tower and follow a lane downhill.

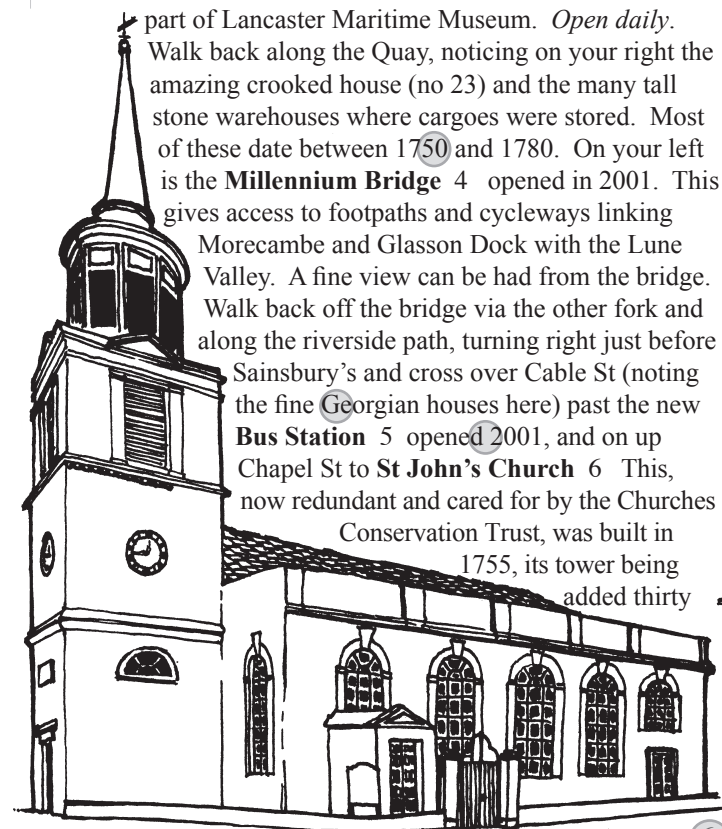
In a field on the right is the Roman Bath-house, part of a courtyard building excavated in 1973-6. This field and that on the left are called Vicarage Fields and have been open spaces since at least 1094.

Carry on down the lane to **St George's Quay** and turn left towards the attractive **Custom House** 3 of 1764, now



3

part of Lancaster Maritime Museum. *Open daily.* Walk back along the Quay, noticing on your right the amazing crooked house (no 23) and the many tall stone warehouses where cargoes were stored. Most of these date between 1750 and 1780. On your left is the **Millennium Bridge** 4 opened in 2001. This gives access to footpaths and cycleways linking Morecambe and Glasson Dock with the Lune Valley. A fine view can be had from the bridge. Walk back off the bridge via the other fork and along the riverside path, turning right just before Sainsbury's and cross over Cable St (noting the fine Georgian houses here) past the new **Bus Station** 5 opened 2001, and on up Chapel St to **St John's Church** 6 This, now redundant and cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust, was built in 1755, its tower being added thirty

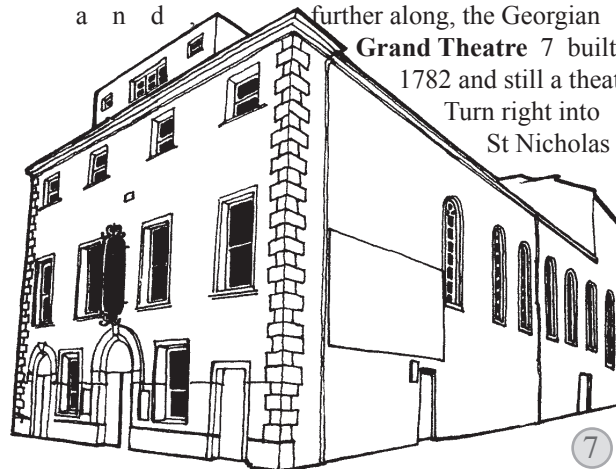


years later by Thomas Harrison.

Keep to the right-hand side up Rosemary Lane (once 'Stinking Lane') and Stonewell. St Leonardgate branches off on the left and contains several fine Georgian houses and further along, the Georgian

Grand Theatre 7 built in 1782 and still a theatre.

Turn right into St Nicholas



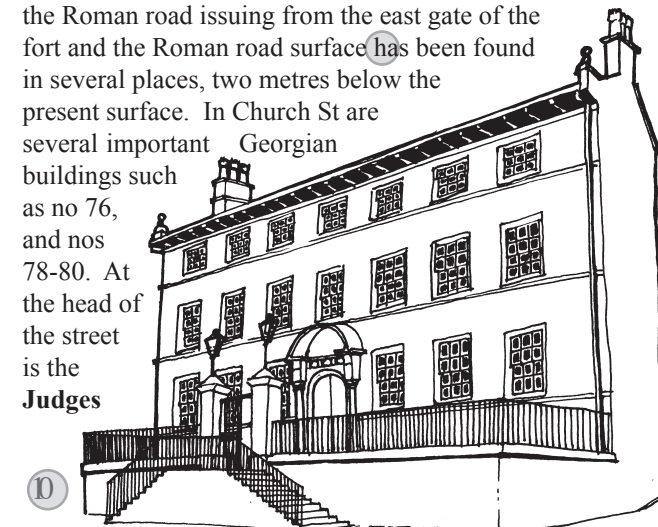
7

Arcades, a shopping centre of 1970, recently modernised, and walk through to **Cheapside**. Where Cheapside meets Penny St and Market St is **Horseshoe Corner** 8 A horseshoe mounted into the pavement is claimed to mark the place where John O' Gaunt's horse cast its shoe. More probably it marks the site of a horse fair. Carry on up **Market St**, which may be a 12th century addition to the townscape, dating from after the first market charters of 1193 and 1199. It leads to **Market Square**, still after eight centuries the



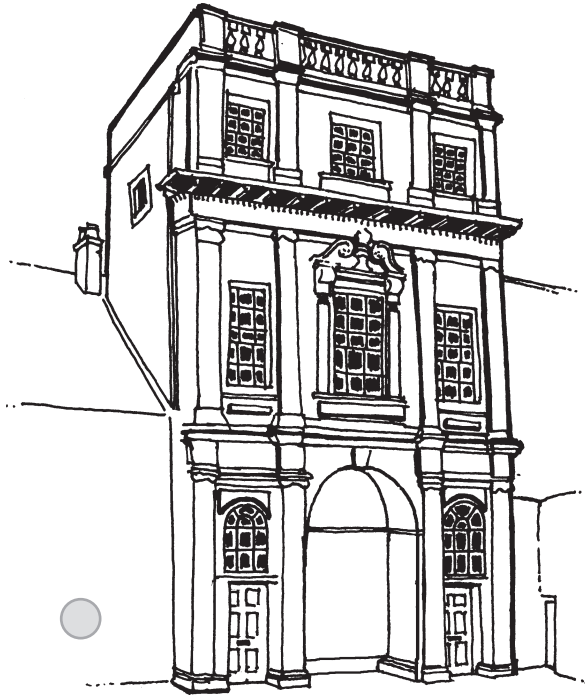
centre of social life in the city. It is overlooked by the impressive **Old Town Hall** 9 now the **City Museum**, built in 1783. *Open Monday - Saturday.*

Behind the City Museum is **New St**, 'new' in 1747 and cutting through between Market St and Church St. **New St Square** is however a lot older and was originally a part of the market place into which the Old Town Hall projected. Walk along New St to **Church St**, one of the oldest elements of the townscape. Its line follows that of the Roman road issuing from the east gate of the fort and the Roman road surface has been found in several places, two metres below the present surface. In Church St are several important Georgian buildings such as no 76, and nos 78-80. At the head of the street is the **Judges**



10

Lodging 10 now a museum featuring the famous Gillow furniture made in Lancaster. *Open seasonally.*
It was built in the 1630s as the house of Thomas Covell, Governor of the Castle. 11

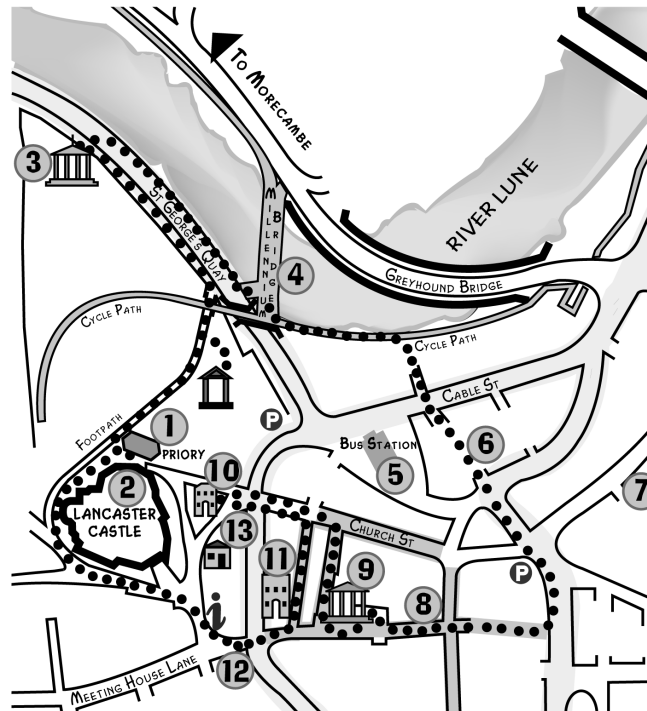


On your left is the **Kings Arms** 12 a hotel visited by many famous people including Charles Dickens. Turn up right towards the **Castle gateway** 2 known as the 'John O'Gaunt Gate'. This actually dates from the early 15th century, after John O'Gaunt's death, and is meant to overawe by its size and strength.

On your right is **Castle Hill**, with many attractive buildings including the former **Dispensary** of 1785 (no 19) and the **Cottage Museum** 13 of 1739 (no 15). *Open daily in summer.* A tower on the walls of the Castle on this side has older stonework than the rest of the wall. This is the **Well Tower**, sometimes known as the 'Witches' Tower', because of a tradition that the famous Pendle Witches were held

Now walk back down Church St to the Sun Inn, and turn right down **Sun St**, a street created in the 1780s and 1790s on what had been gardens. Near the end is Sun St Square, and on the right is the **Music Room** a little gem of a summerhouse dating from about 1739, filled with superb plasterwork.

Open by arrangement. Exit through a passage into Market St, turn right and cross the main road at the lights.



Further reading:

J Champness, **Lancaster Castle; a Brief History**, 1993

D Shotter & A White, **Roman Fort and Town of Lancaster**, 1990

A White, **The Buildings of Georgian Lancaster**, 2000

See also others in this leaflet series e.g. **John O'Gaunt, Music Room, Lancaster Town Hall, Skerton Bridge**

Text by Dr A J White. Drawings by I Frontani

25p

Guided Walk to Lancaster



Lancaster
City
museums