

Beatrix Potter.

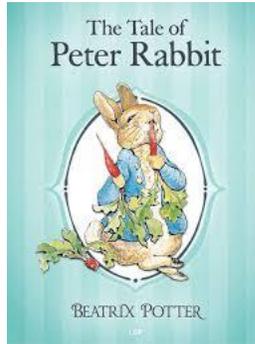
Beatrix Potter was born on 28 July 1866 in South Kensington, London. She lived a lonely life at home, being educated by a **governess** and having little contact with other people.

She had many animals which she kept as pets, studying them and making drawings.

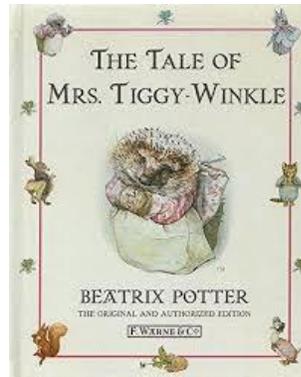
Her parents took her on three month summer holidays to Scotland, but when the house they rented became unavailable, they rented Wray Castle near Ambleside in the Lake District. Beatrix was 16 when they first stayed here. Her parents entertained many **eminent** guests, including Hardwicke Rawnsley vicar of Low Wray Church, who in 1895 was to become one of the **founders** of the **National Trust**.

His views on the need to preserve the natural beauty of Lakeland had a lasting effect on the young Beatrix, who had fallen in love with the **unspoilt** beauty surrounding the holiday home.

For the next 21 years on and off, the Potters holidayed in the Lake District. Beatrix loved Derwentwater, and explored Catbells behind Lingholm. She watched squirrels in the woods, saw rabbits in the vegetable gardens of the big house. She made many **sketches** of the landscape. Rawnsley **encouraged** her drawings, and when back in London Beatrix made greetings cards of her pictures, and started a book. Eventually Frederick Warne **published** 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit' in 1902. Her third book, 'Squirrel Nutkin' had background views based on Derwentwater, Catbells and the Newlands valley.



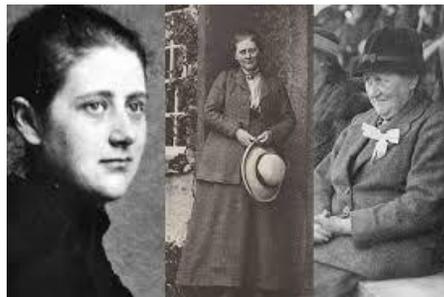
In 1903 Beatrix bought a field in Near Sawrey, near where they had holidayed that year. She now had an income from her books, Peter Rabbit having now sold some 50000 copies. In 1905 she bought Hill Top, a little farm in Sawrey, and for the next 8 years she busied herself writing more books, and visiting her farm. In 1909 she bought another farm opposite Hill Top, Castle Farm, which became her main Lakeland base. Seven of her books are based in or around Hill Top. Tom Kitten and Samuel Whiskers lived there. Hill Top is still as it was then, and is now the most visited literary **shrine** in the Lake District.



Beatrix Potter married William Heelis, a solicitor in Hawkshead, in 1913. Then started the next stage in her life, being a Lakeland farmer, which lasted for 30 years.

In 1923 she bought Troutbeck Park Farm, and became an expert in breeding **Herdwick sheep**, winning many prizes at country shows with them. Beatrix continued to buy property, and in 1930 bought the Monk Coniston Estate – 4000 **acres** from Little Langdale to Coniston.

When she died on 22 December 1943, Beatrix Potter left fourteen farms and 4000 acres of land to the National Trust, together with her flocks of Herdwick sheep. The Trust now owns 91 hill farms, many of which have a mainly Herdwick landlord's flock with a total holding of about 25000 sheep. This was her gift to the nation, her own **beloved** countryside for all to enjoy. Beatrix was the first woman to be **elected president-designate** of the Herdwick Sheepbreeders' Association, which continues to flourish.



Beatrix Potter - vocabulary

governess _____

eminent _____

founders _____

National Trust _____

unspoilt _____

sketches _____

encouraged _____

published _____

shrine _____

Herdwick sheep _____

acres _____

beloved _____

elected _____

President – designate _____

flourish _____



"THERE IS SOMETHING DELICIOUS ABOUT WRITING THE FIRST WORDS OF A STORY. YOU NEVER QUITE KNOW WHERE THEY'LL TAKE YOU." BEATRIX POTTER

What else would I like to know?

(Ambleside, Derwentwater, Catbells, Lingholm, Newlands Valley...)
