

(Racing), the Beacon Course, the full length (four miles, one furlong, one hundred and forty-three yards) of the racing track at Newmarket.

Beach cadgers (old), idle vagabonds dressed as sailors, who prowl about the beach at watering-places and obtain money on false pretences from persons frequenting that part.

Beach-comber (nautical), a fellow who loafs about a port to filch small things. One who prowls about the sea-shore to plunder wrecks or pick up waifs and strays of any kind. In the Pacific any kind of sailor adventurer. (Nautical), a river boatman.

Beach-tramper (nautical), coast-guard.

Beadle (freemasons), an officer answering to junior warden in a council of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

Beak, originally thieves' cant (beck), for policeman, magistrate, but now it has only the latter signification.

I suppose you don't know what a *beak* is, my flash com-pan-i-on? . . . My eyes, how green! . . . Why, a *beak's* a mad-g-strate; and when you walk by a *beak's* order, it's not straightfore'd, but always agoing up and niver a coming down agin.
—Charles Dickens: *Oliver Twist*.

The term is used by better men than thieves.

There was an old obstinate *beak*
(Who oftentimes played a queer freak),
Said, "Take her away—
Next time she must pay!"
And would not let her chief witness
speak.

—*Sporting Times*.

Some etymologists derive *beak* from the Saxon *beag*, a gold collar worn by civic magistrates as an emblem of authority. It seems, however, that "beck," a constable, was from a metaphor based on the literal meaning of the word *beak* or *bill*, and the circumstance that a detective is nowadays termed a "nose" comes in support of this supposition. It may also be derived from "to beckon," to intimate a command, the "move on" of the modern constable. To account for the meaning of magistrate, it may be said that the transition was easy from the humble guardian of the law to the more exalted one. Thus French malefactors gave both policeman and magistrate the common appellation of *vache*. A judge is sometimes called the "*beak* of the law."

Beaker hunter or beak hunter (thieves' slang), a thief who devotes his attention to the poultry yard.

Beak gander, judge of the superior court.

Beam ends (general), a nautical metaphor. A person entirely at a loss, who is "all abroad," is