Nomination of
THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

For inscription on the World Heritage List
Front Cover: A farmer moving Herdwick sheep and lambs at Yew Tree Farm, Coniston (owned by the National Trust)
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Wasdale Head and Wast Water from the slopes of Great Gable
0. INTRODUCTION
This volume is intended to complement and amplify the brief descriptions of the 13 English Lake District Valleys set out in Volume 1, Section 2.c of the Nomination. It provides the detailed supporting information considered to be appropriate to demonstrate how each valley contributes to the whole Lake District’s Outstanding Universal Value. The detailed descriptions have been compiled as a separate volume to allow additional useful material to be presented, and to allow the evidence and argument in Volume 1 to flow between sections more easily. In essence, Volume 1 draws a brief but comprehensive preparatory sketch; Volume 2 paints the picture of each valley.

The order of valley descriptions follows that of Volume 1, and continues to be based on Wordsworth’s imaginary spokes of a wheel. William Wordsworth identified 12 major valleys which could be seen from his vantage points of Great Gable/Scafell and the ridge of Helvellyn. In clockwise order these are, on the western side, Langdale-Windermere, Coniston, Duddon, Eskdale, Wasdale, Ennerdale, Buttermere-Crummock-Lorton and Borrowdale. Also in clockwise order, on the eastern side, Wordsworth lists the valleys of Wytheburn-St John’s Vale (Thirlmere), Ullswater, Haweswater, and lastly the Vale of Grasmere-Rydal-Ambleside. The coast serves as the rim of Wordsworth’s imaginary wheel on both the southern and western edges of the Lake District, while the lowlands of the Solway Plain and the river valleys of the Eden and Lune perform the same function on the northern and eastern sides.

In this description of the valleys, Wordsworth’s subdivision of the Lake District landscape has been broadly followed, except that Langdale has been treated separately from Windermere. This helps to distinguish clearly between the valleys which meet at the head of Windermere, while Langdale, a major and distinctive valley, has a very different character from the main Windermere valley. Therefore 13 principal valleys are identified and described here, beginning with Langdale.

Each valley has its own distinctive character and features which contribute to the three intertwined themes which together combine to make the case for the English Lake District’s proposed Outstanding Universal Value:

1. A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro-pastoral traditions which give it special character;

2. A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscapes that have had global influence and left their physical mark

3. A landscape which has been the catalyst for key developments in the national and international protection of landscapes.

These three inseparable themes flow through the descriptive text presented below.

Volume 2 of the Nomination Document provides supporting information for the ‘pen portraits’ of the thirteen valleys of the English Lake District in Section 2.c of Volume 1. This includes more extensive descriptions of the valleys, their chronological
FIGURE 0.1 Satellite image of the English Lake District
FIGURE 0.2 The 13 valleys of the English Lake District, based on William Wordsworth’s description in his ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)
development and the attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District.

The structure used for each valley is the same:

a. Location map of the valley showing topography, main settlement pattern, and key attributes of Outstanding Universal Value related to each of three intertwining themes listed above;

b. Cultural Landscape Map(s) showing the principal present (and some historical) land uses. The Cultural Landscape Maps incorporate data from the Lake District Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project and other information collected from historic mapping. Some of the HLC categories have been amalgamated to reflect the rich cultural landscape of the English Lake District, including the functioning agro-pastoral system and areas of designed landscape.

c. Table of presence/absence of attributes which contribute to Outstanding Universal Value identified in Figure 3.12 in Section 3 of Volume 1;

d. Text describing the valley and its development, then its qualities, focusing on the attributes which contribute to Outstanding Universal Value;

e. Map showing the registered common land, the location of different shepherds’ flocks, whether they use the fell for grazing, and the breed of sheep. Where a farm has flocks registered with more than one Sheep Breeders’ Association, it is depicted on the relevant map as ‘Multiple Breeds’. Figures in the text relate to total numbers of flocks registered with the Herdwick Sheep Breeders Association (2014), the Rough Fell Sheep Breeders’ Association (2013) and the Swaledale Sheep Breeders’ Association (2013). Note that a small number of farms have more than one flock registered with the same Sheep Breeders’ Association. These are depicted on the maps as a single dot, as are instances where two farms are very close to each other. The figures for fell-going flocks are for individual farms listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005), although some of these have more than one fell-going flock.

Note on references: References have generally not been included in the text but are listed in the Bibliography in Volume 1. Those relating to individual valleys have been listed under valley subheadings in the Bibliography.
Inbye and intake fields at Pye How, Great Langdale
1. LANGDALE

Description, History and Development
1. THE LANGDALE VALLEY

“...the loveliest rock scenery, chased with silver waterfalls, that I ever set foot or heart upon... the sweet heather and ferns and star mosses nestled in close to the dashing of the narrow streams...no creature except a lamb or two, to mix any ruder sound or voice with the splash of the innumerable streamlets!”

John Ruskin (1867)

1.1 DESCRIPTION

Langdale, ‘Long Valley’ in Old Norse, is centrally located at the heart of the English Lake District and epitomises many of the attributes and qualities which underpin the case for the Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District. It is a classic glacial valley; it has a long and well-documented history of agro-pastoral use, it attracted writers and artists and it played a key role in the development of the conservation movement. See Figure 1.2 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figure 1.3 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Langdale Valley.

1.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

It was William Wordsworth who first compared the pattern of ridges and valleys of the Lake District to the spokes of a wheel where the hard, erosion-resistant igneous rocks of the Borrowdale Volcanics Group form the high central hub from which the glaciated valleys radiate outwards in every direction. Langdale runs west to east from these high
Figure 1.2 Langdale Valley
Illustrative Map

1. Pike of Stickle
2. Intakes above Pye Howe
   (owned by National Trust)
3. Fell Foot Farm
   (owned by National Trust)
4. Wathwaite
5. The Bield
   (owned by National Trust)
6. Robinson Place
   (owned by National Trust)
7. Elterwater slate quarry
8. Blea Tarn
   (owned by National Trust)
9. Eltermere Hotel
10. High Close
    (owned by National Trust)
11. Stool End and Wall End
    (owned by National Trust)
12. Busk Farm
    (owned by National Trust)

© Lake District National Park Authority, 2015. This is an illustrative map only. Reproduction in whole or part by any means is prohibited without the prior written permission of the Lake District National Park Authority.
FIGURE 1.4 The contribution of the Langdale Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
<td>🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Common land</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
<td>🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodland industries</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water-powered industry</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market towns</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Villas</td>
<td>🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designed landscape</td>
<td>🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
<td>🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
<td>🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>🍃🍃🍃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>🍃</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 1.4 The contribution of the Langdale Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified.
central fells with Bowfell and Crinkle Crags at its head before meeting with the adjoining Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside valley at the head of Windermere. It is a stunning example of a U-shaped glaciated valley with the typical features of headwalls, corries, glacial tarns, hanging valleys and truncated spurs all well represented. The distinctive skyline of the Langdale Pikes dominates the valley and can be seen for many miles from the south and east. Unusually for a Lake District valley of its size, Langdale does not contain a major lake.

The steep valley sides provide a powerful sense of enclosure and the rough texture of the crags, screes and rock outcrops together with the rough grazing, heather, remnant juniper and extensive bracken beds contrast markedly with the flat, smooth-textured, lush green and strongly patterned valley floor. The managed appearance of the valley is created by the typical features associated with traditional hill farming practice such as the patchwork of irregularly shaped pasture fields enclosed by stone walls, veteran trees and pollards. Riverside trees snaking their way along the meandering Great Langdale Beck, now contained within banks of excavated gravel, further contribute to this effect. The River Brathay flows out of Little Langdale Tarn, into Elter Water and from there to Windermere.

Despite being one of the busier valleys Langdale has a strong sense of tranquillity as a result of the dramatic landform and the perceived naturalness of the high, open, fells. The valley has long-held historic and cultural associations with rock climbing with routes on the steep crags on the north side of the valley being climbed as early as the beginning of the 19th century, routes which are still popular today. The valley is also busy with walkers following paths such as the Langdale Pikes, Bowfell/Crinkle Crags and a route to Scafell Pike amongst many others.

The numbers of people, the three hotels and the campsites in the west part of the valley together with the more numerous accommodation providers in the east do nothing to detract from the abundant natural beauty and sense of remoteness, tranquillity and history which make Langdale such an iconic location.

1.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

Settlement in the upper part of the valley is of scattered farms nestling at the foot of the south-facing fells. These are generally small farms of white, rendered and limewashed, vernacular farmhouses with collections of stone shippons (cattle sheds) and barns attached to, or tightly grouped around them. Combined with the characteristic inbye pasture contained within a defined ring garth wall and the prevalence of the distinctive Herdwick sheep this creates a compelling image of Lake District upland farming.

Further east and closer to the town of Ambleside the valley is more densely settled as a result of past industries. Elterwater’s former gunpowder workers houses, Chapel Stiles’...
distinctive, green slate quarrying community terraces and church and Little Langdale’s housing loosely grouped around extensive slate quarries convey a strong sense of history. Of the three, only Elterwater gunpowder works has ceased to operate and the slate quarries, whilst smaller in scale, provide a high quality product for domestic and international markets and demonstrate the strong link between the Lake Districts’ past, present and future.

1.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The Langdales are one of the key areas in the Lake District for Herdwick sheep farming and many of the historic farms in both Great and Little Langdale have substantial Herdwick flocks. These include Fell Foot and High Birk Howe in Little Langdale and Middlefell, Stool End, Wall End, Baysbrown, Millbeck, Robinson Place and Harry Place. The majority of these farms are now owned by the National Trust which has ensured the survival of Herdwick farming in this key area.

The Langdales are particularly rich in examples of vernacular farmhouses which were rebuilt in the relatively affluent period of the late 16th and 17th centuries. These include Fell Foot in Little Langdale, Blea Tarn farmhouse, set in grand isolation with a rugged mountain backdrop, and the majority of the farmhouses in Great Langdale.

FIGURE 1.6 Herdwicks at Middle Fell Farm in Langdale

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Eight farms have fell-going flocks in the Langdale Valley. There are five registered Herdwick flocks and no registered Swaledale or Rough Fell flocks. There are nine National Trust Landlord flocks (‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ 2005).

There are about 2,476 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Langdale Valley, around 59 per cent of the total area. The main areas of common land are Great Langdale Common, Little Langdale Common, Baysbrown Common and small parts of Loughrigg Common and Grasmere Common (Figure 1.7).
FIGURE 1.7 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Langdale Valley
# Farmsteads

**Table 1.1 Key Farmhouses in the Langdale Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmhouse</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wallthwaite, Chapel Stile</td>
<td>17th century farmhouse, former cottage and barn with many original and 18th century interior and exterior features and details.</td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>332389 50569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw Head, Great Langdale</td>
<td>Whitewashed 17th century farmhouse with double decker bee boles.</td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>332408 506724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blea Tarn House</td>
<td>17th century whitewashed farmhouse and attached barn.</td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>329492 504822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bield, Little Langdale</td>
<td>17th century farmhouse with some original interior features and adjoining 18th century barn.</td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331402 503655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Birk Howe, Little Langdale</td>
<td>17th century farm house and cottage with circa 1600 core, 17th or 18th century threshing barn and 19th century outbuilding complex.</td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331402 503284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FELL FOOT FARM, LITTLE LANGDALE
Set at the foot of Wrynose Pass, substantial early 17th century farmhouse, cruck cottage and barn, owned in the 18th century by Fletcher Fleming of Rydal and was an inn in the 19th century.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 329892 503198

WALL END FARM, GREAT LANGDALE
There are records of four holdings at Wall End in 1717. The one surviving house is a 17th century house with barns to the north. To the south east a probable 16th century cruck barn.

DATE 16th – 17th century and 18th – 20th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 328304 505534

1.1.4 INDUSTRY

Neolithic stone axe production on the Langdale Pikes is the earliest example of a large-scale use of natural resources for manufacturing tools in North West England. The stone for the axes was quarried for around 1,000 years until 2000 BC, but the presence of axe-quarries and production sites is difficult to discern to the untrained eye.

The industries which have left the greatest mark on the landscape of Langdale are slate quarrying and mining. Some of the largest slate quarries in the Lake District operated in Great Langdale at Elterwater, on either side of the valley at Chapel Stile and on the slopes of Lingmoor Fell. These exploited volcanic slate for roofing and so their products contribute towards the local distinctiveness of the area. The extensive workings and tips of Thrang Quarry dominate the northern backdrop of Chapel Stile. North of the River Brathay at Skelwith Bridge was the works of the Kirkstone Green Slate Company. Elterwater and Spout Cragg Quarry have been working more or less continually using modern methods and are both currently operated by Burlington Slate Limited. The slate quarries still provide a high quality product for domestic and international markets and demonstrate the strong link between past, present and future of the Lake District.

The Elterwater complex of quarries covers a considerable area of the south side of Great Langdale to the west of Elterwater village. The named quarries include Robinsons, Lord’s, Owletnest, Peppers, Banks, Colt Howe and Spout Crag along with many other small quarries, levels and trials.

Other industry in the valley has left more discrete evidence in the landscape. Low Wood Mill near Elterwater, is the site of a fulling mill, for beating and cleaning woollen cloth. The remains include a stone-lined head race, a mill pond, wheel pit and platform, and a tail race. Stickle Ghyll Mill is near Millbeck Farm in Great Langdale. The walls of the original mill building have been incorporated into a later stone
sheepfold. Other surviving features include a partially rock-cut head race that led water from Stickle Ghyll to the water wheel, divert channel and tail race.

Iron ore was mined in the 17th and 18th centuries, leaving covered shafts and spoil heaps at Red Tarn, below Pike of Blisco. Mines were also dug at Bowfell, Ore Gap, and Browney Gill. A well-preserved leat and pond, possibly the remains of the forge building in what is now Forge Cottage, and a group of ruined outbuildings nearby, that may well have been part of the forge buildings, are evidence of iron working at Hacket Forge. Copper was also worked at Greenburn and well preserved remains can still be seen at the head of Little Langdale. There is also evidence of charcoal burning and potash kilns in the woodland around Elterwater and there are five or six charcoal pitsteads (platforms) in the intakes between Millbeck and Robinson Place in Great Langdale. The gunpowder works at Elterwater was a significant industry in the valley and its remains are extensive. The works have since been redeveloped as a timeshare holiday complex.

Evidence of peat cutting can be found on Martcrag Moor in the form of straight lines and depressions cut into the peat. The peat was moved on wooden sledges and sledways are still traceable around Troughton Beck, below Martcrag Moor, and above Raw Head to the east of Scale Gill. There are also many derelict peat huts on the north side of the valley. There is a group on Broad Crag, near Scale Gill, two below nearby Raw Pike, and one on Wormal Crag.

1.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

Settlement in the upper part of the valley is of scattered farms nestling at the foot of the south-facing fells. Combined with the characteristic inbye pasture contained within a defined ring garth wall and the prevalence of the distinctive Herdwick sheep, this creates a compelling image of Lake District upland farming. Further east in contrast to the agricultural basis of some of the hamlets, the two largest settlements in Langdale developed as a result of both industry and tourism. Chapel Stile and Elterwater are close together, on the approach to Great Langdale. Both share a Church and School. Chapel Stile has some early farmsteads, such as Wallthwaite, with good vernacular features. It became a slate quarrying village in the 19th century, hence the quarry workers stone terraces and the Langdale and Neighbourhood Industrial Co-operative Society shop which was established by the slate quarrying industry and gunpowder industry in 1884. The row of houses at the Langdale end of the village, just elevated from the valley road, is perhaps the most unaltered 19th century terrace in the Lake District. Holy Trinity Church dates from the mid-19th century, is built from local green slate and occupies a very dominant position. Elterwater was originally a bridging point over the fast flowing and fast rising Langdale Beck, with a few 17th and 18th century farms near the bridge. Elterwater became an industrial community with the opening of the large gunpowder works in 1824 and from 1883 it was also the
home of the Langdale Linen Industry, supported by John Ruskin. Now this former works is a high-quality, award-winning holiday complex. The original blast-screen woodland forms an important feature on the approach to the Langdale Valley. There are fine listed examples of two stone terraces of houses for gunpowder workers near Maple Tree corner shop. The main entrance to the Elterwater Slate Quarry is near the bridge. Elterwater Hall was the residence of the original owner of gunpowder works. Today, Elterwater is a popular tourist village, yet still within a sheep farming area.

1.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

There are no significant examples of Picturesque buildings and landscaping in the Langdale valley area.

1.1.7 VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

There are no early villas in the main valleys of Great Langdale and Little Langdale but there a number of residences of note beyond the main valley.

**TABLE 1.2** Key villas in the Langdale Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villa</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELTERMERE HOTEL</td>
<td>16th – 18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>332750 504468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is now the Eltermere Hotel was built as Elterwater Hall in 1756 for William Robinson who remodelled an existing 16-17th century property into a more refined country residence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH CLOSE</td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>333840 505271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A sprawling Victorian mansion dating from 1857, built for Edward Wheatley-Balme of Mirfield, based around an existing 17th century farmhouse. The garden has views towards Windermere and a three tier arboretum.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRATHAY HOW, LOUGHRIGG</td>
<td>20th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>335863 503707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A large house of around 1913. Pevsner has suggested that it reflects the designs of Voysey and could be by Mawson.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

1.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Pollen analysis at Blea Tarn, between Great and Little Langdale, has provided evidence for clearance of woodland in the Neolithic period from around 3000 BC. This sequence of forest disturbance is partly contemporary with the production of stone axes in Great Langdale as demonstrated by radiocarbon dates from recent excavations which indicate a long period of production between at least 4000 BC and 2000 BC (Bradley and Edmonds, 1993). The rock that was used for axe production was a band of fine-grained tuff which forms part of the Borrowdale Volcanic Series and is perfect for the manufacture of axes because of its very hard, yet easily workable nature.

The Neolithic axe production sites are most numerous in the Great Langdale Valley, particularly in the area of Pike of Stickle and extensive remains survive. Axes produced in the central Lake District were traded or distributed widely throughout the British Isles, with examples found as far afield as Northern Ireland, Scotland and southern England and the axe factories comprise one of the most important prehistoric sites in Britain. It is unlikely that there existed any permanent settlement in the Langdale Valley at this time. Occupation is likely to have been sporadic and part of some form of summer transhumance, with people travelling in from the surrounding lowlands and coastal areas to quarry stone to make ‘rough-outs’ that were then taken away for finishing and polishing.

Other important prehistoric remains in Great Langdale include two panels of Neolithic rock art at Copt Howe, near Chapel Stile, located on a pair of large boulders standing on the natural route way into the valley. The decoration consists of a series of concentric circles, along with other abstract designs including parallel lines, arcs, and lozenges. These designs are similar to contemporary rock art in Scotland and Ireland.

The earliest permanent settlement in the valley may have appeared in the Bronze-Age (2000 – 800 BC), a period that saw a wave of colonisation throughout the central Lake District fells. It is possible that the low stone boundaries and earthworks recorded in Mickleden may be the remains of house platforms and field systems established at this time. The climatic deterioration after the Middle Bronze-Age (c. 1200 BC) resulted in many settlements in marginal areas being abandoned and returning to woodland. Other prehistoric sites include a group of stone-built ring cairns at Stickle Tarn dating from the Bronze Age.
The Romans constructed a fort south of Ambleside at Water Head, at the top of the lake of Windermere. This fort was surrounded by a large civilian settlement. The remains of a Roman road linking this with the fort at Hardknott can be traced through Little Langdale and over Wrynose and Hardknott Passes.

1.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

There is no further evidence of early settlement or other activity until the 10th century with the arrival of Norse settlers from Ireland. Evidence for their presence in Great Langdale can be seen in the local place-names. The name Baysbrown, a farm at the eastern end of Great Langdale, may be a compound of two Norse words: ‘bass’ (noun for cowshed) and ‘Bruni’ (personal name) i.e. Bruni’s cowshed. This name could therefore indicate not just settlement but also pastoral agriculture in the form of cattle farming. Rossett, at the head of Great Langdale is a modern derivation of ‘saetr’, meaning shieling, indicating that a Norse seasonal pastoral settlement here may have become permanent in the medieval period. The undated possible huts and enclosure east of Stickle Tarn could be early medieval. Still further east, by Scale Gill, there are two shieling sites which probably date from the medieval period. The place-name ‘Side Gates’ connecting Fell Foot in Little Langdale with the ancient enclosures around Blea Tarn is further indication of this transhumant relationship between upland and lowland pasture. This road appears in the 1216 manor of the Baysbrown document (below Section 1.2.3) which records the manor boundary as following ‘the road to Little Langden’.

Possible archaeological evidence for the 10th century Norse settlers can be found at Fell Foot Farm in Little Langdale where a rectilinear, terraced mound may be the remains of a Norse ‘thing’ mound, used for community meetings. Many Great Langdale place-names contain some Norse derivatives: Langdale (the long valley); Kirk How (the meeting place on the hill); and Thrang (narrow road). Many place-names derive from a combination of Old Norse and Old English, such as Oxendale (valley of the ox). The place-name Mickleden (great head of the valley) has been taken to derive from an Old English compound of ‘muckel’ and ‘dene’, although Mickle has a wider heritage and is found widely in place-names across Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland. Walthwaite contains the common Old Norse suffix for a clearing, ‘-thwaite’; the prefix ‘wall’ is most likely to be Old English and suggests the possibility of settlement here. However, the valley area falls outside the geographic scope of the Domesday Book and so it is not possible to identify any potential pre-Norman settlements.

1.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

A fuller discussion of the development of the farming landscape in Great Langdale can be found in the case study in Section 2.b of Volume 1.
11TH TO 15TH CENTURIES

The first documentary evidence for land use in Great Langdale dates from 1216 when William de Lancaster, Baron of Kendal, granted to Conishead Priory the ‘land of Basebrun’, which then became a separate manor from the Manor of Great Langdale. The course of the boundary wall of the new manor was described in detail in the grant document and can still be identified on the ground today. The grant of 1216 also included a reference to the “inclosed land of Great Langden”, which indicated the existence of a wall built to enclose the valley floor which was known as the ring garth. The ring garth separated the tenanted farmland on the valley floor, which was cultivated in strips as an open field, from the manorial waste on the fell sides. It served as both a legal boundary and a physical boundary to prevent stock trampling the crops growing in the valley bottom. There is evidence that the ring garth was still fulfilling its function in 1738 when rental was collected from “… the several persons who put cattle on the common on the outside of the Ring Garth...”. It is likely that in some form at least, the ring garth pre-dated the manor boundary of Baysbrown. Its course can still be traced in the present pattern of stone walls in the valley, but subsequent reorganisation of the field system means that there is little evidence on the ground of the strip fields which would indicate the presence of the town field. Towards the end of the medieval period a small number of intakes were constructed on the outer edge of the ring garth, but intaking was minimal until the end of the 15th century when a rising population increased demands on land.

In addition to Baysbrown and Rossett farms, which may have had their origins in early medieval times, the place-name and field system evidence indicates the establishment of four additional farmsteads in the valley during the medieval period, possibly as early as the 12th or 13th centuries. These comprise Middle Fell Place, Robinson Place, Harry Place, and Johnson Place. It is thought that farms whose names end in the word ‘Place’ were established as encroachments or assarts into areas of ‘forest’ legalised in the Barony of Kendal in 1190. These farms may therefore have been established shortly afterwards, although Middle Fell Place is implied by the appearance of a ‘Charles de Mithelfell’ in later documents of 1332.

The same 1216 grant to Conishead Priory of the manor of Basebrun records a hay meadow between Wall End Farm and Great Langdale Beck, hedges, and corralling of cattle on farmland. A meadow would have required clearance of stone for cultivation, and this must have occurred no later than 1216. Although the Priory of Conishead took possession of the manor of Baysbrowne there is little physical evidence of their influence on the ground today. The single large enclosure around Blea Tarn may perhaps comprise a small monastic stock enclosure.

In addition to the 1216 reference to the “inclosed land of Great Langden”, later documents refer to individual ownership of waste amongst the tenants, and to failed tenancies. For example, in 1283 Ralph de Berburn held 40 acres of waste, which presumably was marked or otherwise enclosed at some point. In the same year a post-mortem inquest showed that in addition to 15 tenants holding 136 acres between them (presumably within the old ring garth around the inbye), there were another six tenants who held 28½ acres of waste land. The same document refers to two cotters who previously rendered eight pence yearly but whose tenements “are now waste and
yield nothing”. The two tenements which had returned to waste in 1283 may be the same as the pair which are recorded as defaulting on payments and having gone to waste in another post-mortem inquest of 1324.

In 1375 a rental made at Staveley recorded the tenants at will in Langden and their tenements. The account includes references to three ‘intacks’; two worth one penny and one worth two pence annually, in addition to a pasture called ‘Whelpestrothe’ worth five shillings. A second rental of 1390-94 records ‘half a garden’ worth a penny and a half, an intake worth two pence, and ‘Quelpstrothe’ worth five shillings again. By itself this might suggest that at the close of the 14th century the area extended by manorial enclosure was generally modest, or that it took in poor-quality land, bar the enigmatic Whelpestrothe.

16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

A survey of the land conducted by the Earl of Cumberland in 1573 recorded ten farms in the valley, which is probably a very good reflection of the situation at the close of the medieval period. These ten were Wall End, Side House, Ash Busk, Rossett, Whitegill, Thompson, Bowderston, Pye Howe, Robinson’s [Place] and Thrang. Ash Busk, Whitegill and Bowderston now survive only as archaeological features visible amongst stone walls. Outgangs (walled trackways) were left between some intakes to provide access on to the communally-grazed fell. Substantial intakes of the Elizabethan period (16th century) can still be seen on the slopes around Mickleden. The place-name Wall End probably preserves the extent of the Baysbrowne manor boundary, although it could refer to an upper limit to the land within the ring garth. Stool End and Wall End at the western end of Langdale may represent a roughly-contemporary extension of settlement westward to the then-limits of enclosed inbye land. Both of these seem to post-date the Middlefell ‘colony’, thought to date from the late 12th or 13th century.

The common field within the ring garth, which had been farmed in strips since the medieval period, was gradually enclosed from the late 16th to the 18th century, and during this time the ten farms recorded in 1573 gradually reduced in number as tenements were reorganised to create larger farms. Many buildings were left empty and eventually ruinous, a phenomenon seen as early as the 14th century. This period also saw the majority of building stock replaced in the local stone which gives the Lake District vernacular architecture its distinctive character. In Great Langdale, those farms not recorded by 1573/74 (Stool End, Middle Fell Place, Millbeck and Harry Place) all appeared subsequently in documents dating to the 17th century. The occupied farmhouses in National Trust ownership in Great Langdale (as well as Hellsgarth, Sidehouse and Robin Ghyll) were built in or incorporate stonework of the 17th century. Only Robinson Place can be dated more specifically to c. 1692. Vernacular farmhouses which were rebuilt on earlier sites during the late 16th and 17th centuries include Fell Foot in Little Langdale and Blea Tarn Farmhouse. Many farms in use during this period survive today, including buildings at Wall End dated to 1613-1616. Further structures of the 16th and 17th centuries which have survived include a series of small, single-span packhorse bridges, including the well-known example of Slater’s Bridge in Little Langdale.

From the late 16th century, the period of the ‘Statesmen’, further substantial stone walled intakes were added to the outer edge of the ring garth. For example, the Robinson Place intakes can all be dated to before 1691 from a document of that year. This lists the intake
At the top of the group, Wormald Crag, which must post-date the others further down the slope. This group of intakes therefore demonstrates development of the field system in Great Langdale from the medieval period to the late 17th century. There are also examples of considerable intake enclosure extending across the lower slopes of Lingmoor Fell, Loughrigg Fell and Side Pike. The Lingmoor Fell intakes seem to have become managed woodland, perhaps from an early date, possibly associated with the forges and supplying other woodland industries. This connection may have been inherited from the monastic management of the Baysbrowne manor in the medieval period.

Enclosure of common pasture on the lower slopes seemed to concentrate on geographically-defined open fell areas to which farms had acquired traditional rights. These rights had developed out of medieval grazing rights on the common manorial wastes. Tradition had come to accept that farmers grazed their cattle on specific areas close to the farmhouse instead of on the common generally, similar to the ‘heafing’ of sheep. While there is no documentary evidence for the enclosure of cow pastures in Great Langdale there are some intakes which are typical of this pattern: Oxendale Intakes at Stool End; the four intakes west of Middle Fell Place, intakes between Middle Fell Place and Millbeck, and some of the intakes at Robinson Place, closer to the farms.

Iron working in the area is most clearly evidenced at Hacket Forge. William Wright converted two fulling mills on the River Brathay to a bloomery forge sometime between 1623 and 1630. An indication of the importance of water at the time was that Joseph Pennington, the Lord of the Manor, stipulated in the lease for water rights to William Wright that the forge should not be detrimental to other industries that used the river. The lease mentioned these other interests to include a corn mill, other mills and fishing. Documentary evidence and the building of Forge Cottage as a dwelling suggest that it ceased to be an iron forge in the mid-18th century.

18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

By the first half of the 18th century, tenements had been amalgamated and reorganised as larger units. Wall End, Robinson Place and Robin Ghyll were extended during the 18th century when most of the ‘Statesman’ outbuildings were constructed. Edward Benson of Millbeck’s acquisition of Whitegill in 1734 led to the farmstead there being abandoned and ruinous by the late 18th century when a hoghouse, standing today, was built on the site. Another abandoned farmstead at Borderstone only survived until 1726 at the latest – the remains of the farmstead comprise two building platforms and three sides of a barn fossilised in a field wall. At Stool End the four 17th century tenements had become two by 1760, one of which acquired the neighbouring Ash Busk which survives only as archaeological features visible amongst stone walls.

The Lord of the Manor tried to trace the line of the ring garth at the turn of the 18th century to distinguish inbye from intake so as to claim the correct rents. This task was difficult even then as the inhabitants were not entirely sure where it was.

Great Langdale contains two episodes of planned recent enclosure, and an Act of Parliament of 1836 eventually saw the last few areas of the common field enclosed with the ruler-straight stone walls characteristic of this period. There are a few examples of these in the valley bottom in Great Langdale.
1.2.4  DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

Langdale’s introduction to tourism was relatively late and from the start focussed on the attractions of rock climbing. It was one of the few places not to feature in Thomas West’s ‘Guide to the Lakes’. Farmers’ families acted as mountain guides for visitors from at least the late 18th century, when Paul Postlethwaite, aged 15, of Middlefell Place guided the writer Captain Budworth up the Langdale Pikes. Many of the old mountain passes started to be used as tourist trails, for example W. Green in his 1819 ‘New Tourist Guide’ advised readers to walk up Stake Pass first if heading to Angle Tarn. He also referred to Fell Foot Farm in Little Langdale having once been an Inn “of great accommodation to men, horses and gangs of horses”. It would have been the last or first stopping place either before travelling over Wrynose and Hardknott Passes or arriving after travelling over them. Old Dungeon Ghyll and New Dungeon Ghyll were farmhouses converted into hotels during the mid-19th century. Similarly, a 17th century farmhouse was converted into The Britannia Inn at Elterwater in the 19th century.

1.2.5  ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The valley did inspire the poems and writings of a number of Romantic poets. Blea Tarn, separating Great and Little Langdales was the setting for Books II and III of Wordsworth’s poem ‘The Excursion’ (1814). It represented an ultimate unity between man and nature contrasting with the wilderness of Lingmoor Fell above which the narrator of poem travelled through:

FIGURE 1.10  The Langdale Pikes photographed from the shore of Blea Tarn
“A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,  
A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,  
And one bare Dwelling; one Abode, no more!”

William Wordsworth, ‘The Excursion’ (1814)

In Great Langdale, Dungeon Ghyll Force was the location for Wordsworth’s pastoral poem, ‘The Idle-Shepherd Boys’. It was to Great Langdale that George and Sarah Green walked from Far Easedale in 1808, dying in the vicinity of Eagle Crag and Millbeck, and leaving eight orphaned children. Dorothy Wordsworth’s ‘Narrative Concerning George and Sarah Green’ is a sensitive but stark revelation of the way in which the poverty of subsistence farmers in the Lake District was masked by their apparent independence as land-owners.

In his text for the Reverend Joseph Wilkinson’s ‘Select Views’ (1810), Wordsworth identified Great Langdale as a “must visit” valley:

“Next comes Great Langdale, a Vale which should on no account be missed by him who has a true enjoyment of grand separate Forms composing a sublime Unity, austere but reconciled and rendered attractive to the affections by the deep serenity that is spread over every thing.”

William Wordsworth, ‘Prose II’ (1810)

Loughrigg Tarn was a favourite place of Wordsworth’s, who described it in his little-known ‘Epistle to Sir George Howland Beaumont’ (1811):

“Thus gladdened from our own dear Vale we pass  
And soon approach Diana’s Looking-glass!  
To Loughrigg-tarn, round, clear and bright as heaven,  
Such name Italian fancy would have given...  
The encircling region vividly exprest  
Within the mirror’s depth, a world at rest –  
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy bield,  
And the smooth green of many a pedant field,  
And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,  
A little daring would-be waterfall,  
One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,  
Associate all in the calm pool beneath,  
With here and there a faint imperfect gleam  
Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam.”

Langdale was also the location for a linen industry, supported and encouraged by John Ruskin. When Albert Fleming, a solicitor from Hertfordshire, moved to Neaum Crag in Langdale in 1880, he and Ruskin became friends. Fleming’s anti-industrial and philanthropic values led him to learn and then teach and promote the uptake of spinning of flax for the production of linen in the Langdale valley. He identified the potential due
to the relative decline of the agricultural economy and as a way to give work, skills and income to the female population of the valley while retaining spinning as a rural craft skill to counter the urbanising effect of industrialisation. He started this enterprise in 1883 with the support of Ruskin who was also concerned for the sustainability of the traditional way of life of the farming communities. The cottage, called St Martin’s, at Elterwater became the headquarters of the ‘industry’ where spinning was taught. Linen thread was spun by many women and then woven into linen and embroidered into fashionable household items for the growing Victorian middle classes. Fleming worked on this enterprise with Marion Twelves, who he had employed as his housekeeper at Neaum Crag. She complemented Fleming with the practical arrangements of the enterprise. In 1899 Marion Twelves moved up to Keswick to promote the spinning industry to that area. Elizabeth Pepper was also instrumental in the management and success of the linen industry in Langdale in the 1890s. She became the manager of the enterprise. In its heyday 80 female spinners were employed and several male weavers. The industry came to an end in the early 1920s, largely due to its abandonment during the First World War. Other work, including farming, took priority for the women with most of the men at war.

Elterwater quarries continued working from the 18th century and is still the largest slate working complex in what was the old county of Westmorland. From 1894 to 1904 the Elterwater quarries produced about 2,000 tonnes of slate each year.

Literary and cultural associations continued into the 20th century when the artist Kurt Schwitters, established the Merz Barn, his workshop and fourth and last Merzbau project, in Cylinders Wood, Elterwater. After Schwitters’ death the contents were taken to the Hatton Gallery in Newcastle.

The first poem ever written by W. H. Auden was about Blea Tarn in 1922. Sadly the manuscript was lost but it ended

“...and in the quiet
Oblivion of the water let them stay.”

The valley continued to attract people who enjoyed the great outdoors and rock climbers in particular. The Reverend Thomas Arthur Leonard (1864-1948) founded the Co-operative Holiday Association (CHA) in 1893 and the Holiday Fellowship in 1913. He wanted to offer outdoor holidays to the workers of the large industrial cities of the Midlands and the North of England. He was described following his death in 1948 as the Father of the open air holiday movement. The Holiday Fellowship established a mountain centre at Wall End Farm, Great Langdale in 1926. Wall End Farm epitomised Leonard’s vision of simple and strenuous accommodation and his philosophy of communal and collective responsibility.
Catering to the growing rock climbing and fell walking market, the Elterwater Hostel first opened as a youth hostel in 1939. The Achille Ratti Climbing Club was founded by Bishop T. B. Pearson in 1940 and named after Monsignor Achille Ratti, a parish priest in Northern Italy who was an accomplished climber. The headquarters and the largest climbing hut of the club is at Bishop’s Scale, a converted large Bank Barn, near Raw Head Farm in Great Langdale; the club chapel, another barn conversion stands nearby.

1.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

Langdale has not been threatened by many of the large infrastructure projects which were proposed for other valleys, but its special qualities were still recognised and inspired moves to protect it. In the first half of the 20th century a movement began amongst wealthy individuals with a concern for the maintenance of the Lake District’s cultural landscape and traditions, to purchase key farms in order to conserve them and their tenants’ way of life. This development was particularly effective in Langdale and eventually formed the basis for the National Trust’s substantial land ownership in this area.

The prime mover in this was Dr G. M. Trevelyan (1876-1962), Regius Professor of Modern History and Master of Trinity College Cambridge. Trevelyan had a strong personal affection for the area and fully signed up to Wordsworth’s vision of the Lake District as ‘a sort of national property’. Trevelyan bought Robin Ghyll in Great Langdale as a family holiday home before the First World War and continued to spend holidays in Great Langdale in the inter-war period. In 1929 Trevelyan purchased Stool End and Wall End farms and the Dungeon Ghyll Hotel (and farm) in Great Langdale in order to donate them to the National Trust. Trevelyan’s purchase of these farms was in part prompted by...
the Holiday Fellowship’s proposal to build a hut encampment in the uninhabited valley of Mickleden at the head of Great Langdale. In 1944 he passed on to the National Trust New Dungeon Ghyll, Harry Place and Millbeck Farms. Between 1928 and 1949 Trevelyan was chairman of the National Trust Estates Committee and he encouraged others to follow his example. The National Trust itself bought Middle Fell in 1938, High Birk Howe in 1948 and Fell Foot in 1957. Side House Farm was given to the National Trust in memory of Trevelyan in 1963 and Robinson Place was bought by the National Trust in 1974. It was largely due to Trevelyan’s influence that the majority of both Great and Little Langdale ended up in National Trust ownership.

Trevelyan became the first President of the Youth Hostel Association in 1930, a position he held until 1950; he is buried at Holy Trinity Church in Chapel Stile.

The most famous personality involved in the purchase and protection of farms which were later donated to the National Trust was Beatrix Potter. Farms and property in the area bought by Potter and her husband William Heelis and donated, after her death, in the Heelis Bequest to the National Trust, in 1944 included Busk Farm in Little Langdale, Dale Head Farm between Little Langdale and Elterwater and Fletcher Wood, Elterwater. As a result of the Heelis and Trevelyan bequests and other donations and purchases, the National Trust farm holdings in the Langdale area are very substantial and form the core of the Trust’s Lake District Estate. The National Trust also took on the management of Great Langdale Common, Little Langdale Common and Loughrigg Common in 1961 under a lease at the request of the 7th Earl of Lonsdale. The Trust had staff on the ground who could help resolve some of the major issues of the time such as fly camping and parking on the Commons. The Lowther Estate Trust took the Commons back in hand in 2011. Now the National Trust own 961 hectares of land in the valley, of which 955 hectares is inalienable. They do not have any leased land but do have an additional 92 hectares of covenanted land.

1.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The Langdale Valley lies at the heart of the English Lake District and epitomises many of the qualities and attributes which underpin the case for Outstanding Universal Value. The distribution of attributes of the first theme, agro-pastoral farming, is highly significant. The narrowness of the valley, the result of glacial movement, has resulted in a particularly distinctive pattern of inbye fields in the valley bottom, subdivided from an original open, medieval field, and surrounded by a ring garth wall dating back to 1216. Small walled intakes on the steep valley sides developed organically over several centuries. The valley contains a number of early farms, many of whose buildings date from the 17th century. It is an important valley for Herdwick flocks and over half of the area of the valley is high fell grazing which is also Common Land. It also has important evidence of early settlement, including Neolithic axe factories, and of later industrialisation.
Although the Langdale Valley lies just to the west of Windermere and Grasmere, its lack of a lake to contrast with and reflect the surrounding fells restricted the interest of early visitors seeking Picturesque views. There is consequently very little villa development in the valley. The landscape of the valley did, however, interest writers and artists including William Wordsworth who used the setting of Blea Tarn, between Great and Little Langdale, as the setting for part of ‘The Excursion’.

Langdale has played a key role in the development of the conservation movement in the Lake District from the early 20th century. Many of the farms in the valley were purchased by benefactors including Beatrix Potter and G. M. Trevelyan in order to preserve the traditional agro-pastoral way of life and these were subsequently passed on to the National Trust. The result of these early conservation initiatives has been that the National Trust owns and manages extensive areas of the valley bottom in Langdale and over the years has also had considerable influence on management of the Common Land in the valley.

Agro-pastoral agriculture and the early conservation movement are the strongest themes of Outstanding Universal Value in the Langdale Valley but it has also provided aesthetic inspiration, especially for Romantic writing.

**Figure 1.13** View of the farms, inbye and intake fields in Little Langdale. Little Langdale Tarn is visible to the left.
The central part of Windermere with Belle Isle and the towns of Bowness and Windermere
2. WINDERMERE

Description, History and Development
2. THE WINDERMERE VALLEY

“"The wind blew away the clouds and the stars shone out high over Swallow and her sleeping crew. The deep blue of the sky began to pale over the eastern hills. The islands clustered about Rio Bay became dark masses on a background no longer as dark as themselves. The colour of the water changed. It had been as black as the hills and the sky, and as these paled so did the lake. The dark islands were dull green and grey, and the rippled water was the colour of a pewter teapot.”

Arthur Ransome, ‘Swallows and Amazons’ (1930)

2.1 DESCRIPTION

The long stretch of Windermere defined as the first spoke of Wordsworth’s imaginary wheel, in the south east of the English Lake District, is a vast landscape leading all the way from the central mountain core to the sea. It includes a great range of landscape features and provides a sample of almost all the key elements characteristic of the Lake District. The main Windermere Valley provides a natural route of communication from the shores of Morecambe Bay into the very heart of the central Lake District.

Windermere is, and has been for 200 years, a popular tourist destination and a popular place for summer retreats to appreciate the diversity and beauty of the landscape. The Valley is strong in showing evidence for the evolution and continuity of the agro-pastoral tradition and is particularly significant for the aesthetic appreciation of the Picturesque and Romantic traditions. The third intertwining theme of Outstanding Universal Value – the development of the early conservation movement – is also clearly demonstrated here; Windermere could well be described as the ‘cradle’ of the conservation movement. See Figures 2.1 and 2.2 for illustrative maps of the valley. Also see Figures 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Windermere valley.

2.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Windermere is the longest and largest natural lake in England and was formed in a glacial trough running north-south after the retreat of the ice some 12,000 years ago.
Figure 2.1 Windermere Valley North
Illustrative Map

1. Lamb Pasture Remains
   - British farmstead
2. Bryant’s Gill early medieval shieling
3. Kentmere Hall
4. Colgarth Hall
5. Troutbeck village
6. Townend, Troutbeck
   - (owned by National Trust)
7. Low Soghill
8. Halehird house and gardens
   - (owned by Halehird Trust)
9. Brockhole
   - (owned by National Park Authority)
10. Dave Nest
11. Jenkin Crag viewpoint
    - (owned by National Trust)
12. Troutbeck Park
    - (owned by National Trust)
Figure 2.3 Windermere Valley North East Cultural Landscape Map
Figure 2.4 Windermere Valley North West Cultural Landscape Map
Figure 2.5 Windermere Valley South Cultural Landscape Map
FIGURE 2.6 The contribution of the Windermere Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

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<th>THEME</th>
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</table>
FIGURE 2.7 The enclosed inbye fields in the valley bottom at the head of the Kentmere Valley

FIGURE 2.8 View of Windermere, looking north towards the Langdale Fells from Orrest Head
2. WINDERMERE

It measures some 18 kilometres from north to south. Its name is thought to derive from a combination of the Norse name ‘Vinandr’ and the Old English term ‘mere’ meaning lake. The lake contains 18 islands, most heavily wooded. Its outflow, the River Leven, passes through the narrow course of the Leven Valley, over many weirs built for the plentiful water powered industries past and present, to reach the wide sands of Morecambe Bay at Greenodd. The wider Windermere area encompasses other smaller valleys such as Troutbeck to the north of the area, Winster and Lyth to the south and the Kentmere, Longsleddale, Bannisdale, Borrowdale and Crookdale valleys in the east.

The Valley’s scenery and character are hugely diverse, for a variety of reasons, both natural and cultural. The generally more rugged, unenclosed fell grazing in the north of the area changes at a lower altitude to a more settled, wooded, enclosed and intimate landscape south of the A591/Kendal-Windermere railway corridor. The lake and its landscape setting have two distinct basins, north and south, which differ in character owing to a change in the underlying geology from the hard and erosion resistant volcanic rocks and associated high fells in the north to softer shales with lower rolling fells in the south. There is also a distinct change in landscape character between the more settled east shore and the densely wooded, less accessible west.

2.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The Windermere Valley is a landscape of great diversity and contrast. It includes the busiest location in the Lake District in the tourist hotspot of Bowness Bay, but also the quietest in the valleys and hills of the Shap Fells in the east. There are high, open, wild landscapes where hill farming is the only sign of human activity; intimate patchworks of enclosed pasture fields nesting between small woodlands; and also grand and ornate buildings, gardens and estates created by the influx of enormous wealth from Victorian industrialists seeking to modify their environment to suit their taste and status. It contains the excesses of modern tourism alongside a farming system that has changed little in the last few centuries, with modern industries often located in buildings adapted from redundant former uses. The landscape today would still be wholly familiar to the 17th century yeoman farmer or the Victorian tourist and retains a reputation today, as it has done since the 18th century, of being one of the most scenically beautiful areas of the world.

The English Lake District, and in particular the east shore of Windermere, has been one of the country’s most popular destinations for holidays and summer homes since the early 19th century, with rapid expansion following the opening of the railway branch line to Braithwaite, (soon after re-named Windermere) in 1847. The result is an attractive mix of agricultural land with parkland and designed landscape associated with Victorian villas constructed by the new industrialists. The landscape of the smaller valleys and the higher land between them varies significantly but the general trend is for more rugged, unenclosed fell grazing in the north of the area and more settled, wooded, enclosed and intimate landscape south of the A591/Kendal-Windermere railway corridor.

The northern Windermere Valley is dominated by the wide expanse of Lake Windermere, often referred to using the title to distinguish it from the village of Windermere.
(Strictly speaking, all lakes in the Lake District are referred to as ‘Water’ – Coniston Water, etc. or a ‘mere’ – Thirlmere for example, with the one exception being Bassenthwaite Lake.) The impressive backdrop of Wansfell, the Fairfield Horseshoe, Loughrigg, and further away the distinctive skyline of the Langdale Pikes, together with the expanse of water create a dramatic landscape with a strong ‘upland’ character. Influenced by weather and light conditions the developed and busy nature of the tourist hubs at Bowness and Waterhead, the residential development along the east shore, and the arterial route the A591, somewhat surprisingly, do little to detract from a sense of remoteness and wildness.

Further south the shorelines of the lake have a softer, more wooded and parkland character with the west shore being almost continually cloaked in mainly deciduous woodland on the lower slopes and mixed or coniferous woodland higher up. The valley has extensive areas of former coppiced woodland, particularly in the south, and this makes a huge contribution to landscape character. Although the surrounding fells are much lower and less rugged this creates a sense of enclosure and intimacy, particularly as the lake narrows further south. The eastern shore is speckled with large houses, including a significant number of Arts and Crafts houses including Broad Leys (by Voysey) and Blackwell (Baillie Scott), often facing the lake and with extensive gardens and parkland planting running down to the lakeshore. Many have a distinctive style of boathouse and a jetty. Ornamental planting, including a diverse range of exotic tree species introduced by the Victorian plant collectors, makes a bold statement and adds variety, interest and a defining character to the landscape.

2.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

Hill sheep farming is the dominant land use in the upland valleys running north to south (Troutbeck, Kentmere, Longsleddale, Bannisdale), producing a typical landscape of single farms, occasional hamlets, inbye, intakes and open fell grazing. Troutbeck is one of the classic farming landscapes in the Lake District. The village incorporates a number of farms, including many buildings dating from the 17th century. The field system around the village has fossilised the pattern of former open town fields, where the farms of Town Head and Town End delineate the extent of the open field.

The area between Kendal and Lake Windermere has its own farming character: more woodland and less open fell grazing and extensive planned enclosure fields and straight-walled boundaries.
FIGURE 2.10 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Windermere Valley
There is a further change in the farming landscape in the south of the Windermere valley area, towards the Lyth Valley where there is more planned enclosure and emphasis on cattle rather than sheep. The nature of the field boundaries also varies, with rugged stone walls of volcanic rock in the valleys of Troutbeck, Upper Kentmere and Longsløddale and a mixture of stone walls, and hedges in the low fells to the east of Lake Windermere and limestone walls on the southern and eastern edges.

**WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS**

The Windermere Valley area is outside the Herdwick breed’s historical stronghold in the central and western Lake District, but it still has a tradition of Herdwick sheep farming and two farms in particular stand out: Kentmere Hall and Troutbeck Park. The incidence of Herdwick flocks generally decreases on the eastern side of the Lake District. Instead, Swaledale and Rough Fell breeds tend to predominate. There are 32 farms with fell-going flocks in the Windermere Valley area. There are three Herdwick flocks, 16 Rough Fell flocks and nine Swaledale flocks, registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There is one National Trust Landlord flock in the Windermere Valley area at Troutbeck Park Farm (‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ 2005).

There are about 823 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Windermere Valley area, only 2 per cent of the total area. The main area of Common Land is Kentmere Dale Head Common with small areas on Moss Allotment, and a small part of Grasmere and Rydal Common.

**CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS**

The Troutbeck Shepherds’ Meet convenes on the Thursday nearest 20th November at the Queen’s Head Hotel, Troutbeck. The Cartmel Agricultural Society Show on the first Wednesday of August each year, just to the south of the valley boundary, serves the southern part of the Windermere Valley area. It has show classes for Herdwick and Rough Fell sheep. The annual show and sale for Rough Fell sheep is the ‘Rough Diamonds’ show and sale held each year at the end of January at the Junction 36 Auction Mart (just off the main M6 motorway), near Kendal, immediately outside the valley boundary.

**FARMSTEADS**

The valley has a number of fine Statesmen farmhouses dating from the 16th to the 17th centuries. The finest example in the area and probably the entire Lake District, is Townend at Troutbeck, one of the jewels of the National Trust’s Lake District estate. Townend was passed down through 12 generations of the Browne family until 1948, when it was acquired by the National Trust.
### Table 2.1 Key Farmhouses in the Windermere Valley

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<th>Farmhouse Name</th>
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<th>Protection</th>
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<td>National Trust</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LOW SADGILL, LONGSLEDDALE</strong></td>
<td>16th – 17th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>348236 505651</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. WINDERMERE

**POOL BANK FARM, CROSTHWAITE**
A complex of houses and barns. Main farmhouse has 1693 datestone. Later alterations. Small wooden gallery in yard. Two other late 17th or early 18th century houses.

- **DATE** 17th century
- **OWNERSHIP** Private
- **PROTECTION** Listed
- **GRID REFERENCE** 343009 487817

**TOWN FOOT FARMHOUSE, TROUTBECK**
Built on rising ground with its gable end to the road. 1694 on the spice cupboard.

- **DATE** 17th century
- **OWNERSHIP** Private
- **PROTECTION** Listed
- **GRID REFERENCE** 340687 502009

**FUSETHWAITE YEAT, TROUTBECK BRIDGE**
Late 17th century house. Interior cupboard has 1683 date. Slate stepped gables and large round chimney.

- **DATE** 17th century
- **OWNERSHIP** Private
- **PROTECTION** Listed
- **GRID REFERENCE** 341189 501321

**TOWNEND**
The house at Townend dates from 1626 and belonged to the Browne family. It is a typical house of a well-to-do Lake District Statesmen family, of stone and slate construction with wood-mullioned windows and characteristic tall, round chimneys. The house contains a wealth of internal detail including carved furniture and fittings and forms part of an important group of buildings which includes a fine 17th century bank barn.

- **DATE** 17th century
- **OWNERSHIP** National Trust
- **PROTECTION** Listed
- **GRID REFERENCE** 340711 502277

**PLUMGARTHS COTTAGES**
House, now divided into two. 1611 date over door. Two massive chimneys with circular shafts.

- **DATE** 17th century
- **OWNERSHIP** Private
- **PROTECTION** Listed
- **GRID REFERENCE** 349573 494618
Since the medieval period the natural resources of Windermere have been harnessed for industrial production. Corn, fulling and bobbin mills were constructed on many of the rivers and becks in the area. It was the bobbin mills that transformed Staveley into an industrial village. The most significant evidence for that industrial past consists of the large four-storey former woollen mill at Barley Bridge (now the premises of the Kentmere Paper and Packaging Company), which dates in part from 1789, and Chadwick Mill, the very large former woodturning factory at the southern end of the village, now the focal point of a growing light-industrial and retail centre.

Good evidence of charcoal production can still be seen. For example there are extensive areas of former coppiced woodland (also used for iron-smelting), particularly in the south part of the valley. In addition, there are high numbers of charcoal burning pitsteads (platforms) in the woodlands of on the western shore of Windermere, in the woodlands around the north and eastern side of Windermere, along the western side of the Troutbeck valley and in Kentmere.

Numerous medieval bloomeries (iron smelting sites) are scattered throughout the valley. Good examples are at Ghyll Head on the east side of Windermere, and in Witherslack Woods. The impact of the iron-smelting industry on the local landscape was not limited to the coppiced woodlands. Many of the local peatland ‘mosses’ in the south of the area and just outside the boundary were drained and cut for fuel for the iron industry.

The two main slate quarries in Longsleddale were Wrengill and Stockdalebank. Wrengill is at the head of Longsleddale and the remains include the quarries themselves, but there are also trackways and buildings. Stockdalebank now consists of some small excavations, tracks and a few building remains. In Kentmere, there were several large slate quarries at the head of the valley to the south and east of the reservoir. The last known quarrying activity was in the mid-1960s; remains include quarries, tips, tracks and buildings. The slate quarries in Troutbeck are mainly to the north and east of Troutbeck village where there are quarries, tips, tracks and buildings. The local architecture reflects the use of local stone extensively.

The settlement pattern over the large area of Windermere is very varied and ranges from small farming hamlets in the narrow valleys and low fells to the large (in Lake District terms) conjoined towns of Bowness and Windermere with their tourist facilities. The earliest surviving domestic structures are the remains of defended pele towers of the 14th century which are generally located on the periphery of the Lake District and may have been built in response to Scottish raids. Examples include Yewbarrow Hall in Longsleddale and Kentmere Hall in Kentmere.

The significant settlements around the lake are Waterhead at its northern end, Bowness-on-Windermere roughly at the midpoint of the east shore, Windermere, set back from the lake behind Bowness, and the smaller Lakeside and Newby Bridge at the south
end. East of the lake, settlement north of the A591 route from Kendal to Windermere is limited to small agricultural communities of vernacular buildings including Troutbeck with its numerous listed buildings, Kentmere Village with its prominent church and fine, fortified Kentmere Hall and Sadgill in Longsleddale. The A591 road links a number of communities including the busy working village of Staveley, prosperous since medieval times as a result of water powered industries such as bobbin manufacture and textiles, and with impressive mill buildings and 19th century stone terraced houses. South of the A591 the Winster and Lyth valleys and the low fell farmland between them are densely settled with scattered farms, small villages and hamlets including Crook, Winster, Underbarrow and Croglin with Witherslack, Lindale and High Newton further south in the locality of the busy A590 trunk road.

The four main settlements are Troutbeck, Staveley, Bowness and Windermere.

**TROUTBECK**

Troutbeck is the finest example in the valley of a small farming hamlet with its origins in the medieval period, but with substantial rebuilding in the 17th and 18th centuries. There were an unusual number of wealthy, influential Yeoman farmers and the village was at the very forefront of the great rebuilding in stone in the 1620s. The village has some of the best surviving examples of groups of farm buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries. It is a linear settlement following a spring line along the west side of the Troutbeck Valley from Town End to Town Head. Troutbeck’s small, linked settlements, sometimes referred to as ‘bye-hamlets’, reflect past family ownerships and are still readily identifiable as dispersed groups of farmhouses and barns separated by tracts of open countryside. The buildings display a wealth of external vernacular details including graded slate roofs, cylindrical chimney stacks, crow steps, wrestler slate ridges and spinning galleries. There are also notable examples of different types of ‘bank barns’, a peculiarly regional style of barn construction of the upland Lake District in which a two-level building is built on sloping land and has direct access from the ground to both levels. The quality of the architecture is reflected in 26 of the buildings in the village being listed. The buildings almost exclusively use local stone. Jesus Church in the valley bottom has oak roof trusses dated to 1562, a tower built in 1736 and an exceptionally fine east window of the 1870s by William Morris and Edward Burne Jones. There are only a few Victorian buildings, mainly post-railway and mostly related to slate quarrying prosperity further up the valley.

![Figure 2.12 Statesman period farm at Low Fold, Troutbeck, displaying cylindrical chimney stacks, wooden window mullions and graded slate roof](image1)

![Figure 2.13 Bank Barn, Town End, Troutbeck](image2)
STAVELEY

The large village of Staveley at the foot of the Kentmere Valley has developed on the basis of industrial production. The centre consists of mainly 19th century cottages, shops and pubs that line the Main Street, behind which lie some very substantial 19th century mill buildings, built for wool processing, wood turning and corn milling, but now successfully adapted to other purposes. Fields, farms and fells and long views to surrounding crags and scars provide an attractive rural backdrop. Many buildings are of architectural and historical interest, including the tower of the medieval Church of St Margaret; the 19th century Church of St James with its Morris & Company stained glass; the former Abbey Hotel; the former bank buildings, chapels and pubs. There is also a fine historic farm group at Staveley Park and Far Park, and a superb Victorian terrace of Danes Row with its attractive front gardens and trees. Brow Lane and the meadow below it form a substantial and important area of green space within the village.

BOWNESS AND WINDERMERE

Bowness and Windermere are bustling Victorian creations developed following the arrival of the railway, with imposing and ornate hotels, guest houses and shops with all the trappings of ‘High Victorian’ design. Hectic boating activity at the lakeshore, including the large lake steamers, yachts, cruisers and rowing boats, adds its own character to the lake. Although there are no longer any medieval buildings surrounding St. Martin’s Church and what might have been a medieval market place, subsequent rebuilding in situ in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries has crystallised an early pattern of intimate building groups and interlinking spaces. The former Rectory, on the south side of Glebe Road, outside of the main village of Bowness, denotes the importance of the position of Rector of St Martin’s. It is a large vernacular house, originating possibly in the 16th century, but with 17th, 18th and 19th century additions and alterations. Most of Windermere was built in a 50 year period in the second half of the 19th century. The village includes good examples of typical provincial commercial and residential architecture in the town centre, suburban developments off Lake Road, well-preserved out-of-town post-railway 19th century villas, public open spaces and gardens, and period street furniture. Lake Road in Bowness shows a range of post-railway development including a Non-Conformist chapel, the former police station, suburban villas, semi-detached houses, guest houses and terraces of houses. Bowness and Windermere continued to expand towards each other and merged in the mid-20th century with the building of large estates and residential infill of large grounds. Today both towns have a separate and distinctive identity but continue to share a role as hosts to Lake District visitors.

CROSTHWAI TE

Crosthwaite is a sprawling village with farms and cottages, in an undulating pastoral landscape along the old turnpike road (built 1763) between Kendal and Furness. The Lyth Valley is well known for its damsons. There are some good 18th century houses and villas, such as Crosthwaite House on the approach from Kendal. One of the largest and best-preserved corn mills (now a management study centre) sits beside the River Gilpin and there are a number of other mills which are now dwellings. There are well-preserved limekilns in the area, where Carboniferous
Limestone outcrops. The Church of 1878 is a very prominent feature. Nearby, Cowmire Hall is a particularly fine three-storey house, with a pele tower to the rear, and 17th century frontage. At Pool Bank, there is a cluster of good 17th century farmhouses.

**WINSTER**

Winster, named after the River Winster, the former county boundary between Westmorland and Lancashire, is a small village of mainly whitewashed houses along the Lyth Valley road to Bowness. There is a small number of historical buildings, such as the 17th century Old Post Office, an inn, a tiny school and a small church. Nearby is Birket House, a fine vernacular revival mansion of 1908 designed by Dan Gibson with gardens by Thomas Mawson. Winster House is a fine villa of 1827 by Websters of Kendal.

**WITHERSLACK**

Witherslack is a quiet rural village on the western side of Whitbarrow, based on farming. Witherslack Hall is a very dominant building; the Old Hall dates from the 17th and 18th centuries, and the New Hall is late 19th century in date. It was the seat of the Stanley family (the Earls of Derby). St Paul’s Church is a very fine 17th century church (1669), built with money from John Barwick, a local lad who became chaplain to King Charles II and Dean of St Paul’s Cathedral, London. Nether Hall has a very fine late medieval timber roof structure.

**NEWBY BRIDGE**

Newby Bridge is a vital crossing point where Lake Windermere runs into the River Leven. It has a fine late medieval bridge with a series of low arches, surrounded by a few houses. The Swan Hotel is an 18th century coaching inn on the 1763 turnpike road from Kendal to Ulverston. There is a good terrace of Furness Railway workers’ houses near the Lakeside road and an old corn mill, part of the variety of the Leven Valley industries. The Furness Railway branch line originally terminated here in 1868, but was then extended to Lakeside in 1869 to connect with the steamer service on the lake. Nearby, Stott Park Bobbin Mill was built in 1835 and it is now a nationally important working museum dedicated to the Lake District’s famous bobbin industry.

**LINDALE**

Lindale is just off the A590 road on the old road to Ulverston, at the foot of a notoriously steep hill. Near to Grange-over-Sands, Lindale developed when marshland around Morecambe Bay was drained and new roads were built. It is a mixture of old and new, with some 18th and 19th century houses, barns and a mill, but with much 20th century infill and new small estates. There are strong historic links with John Wilkinson at Wilson House Farm, and his large Georgian house at Castlehead. His father, Isaac, was the Iron Master at Backbarrow Ironworks and there is an important cast iron monument to John Wilkinson on Grange Road. Eller How at the top of Lindale Hill was home to the Websters, famous early 19th century architects who owned the marble works in Kendal.
2.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

Many picturesque woodlands were established on the Windermere shoreline throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The landscape impact of these plantations was unrivalled in the Lake District. As a result, the shores of Windermere have been described as “probably the most exciting piece of artificial picturesque planting in existence” (Robinson, 1991). The valley is also rich in designed landscapes and gardens, mostly 19th century in date (Hampsfield House, Borwick’s Aynsome Farm gardens, Broughton Lodge grounds, Lowbridge House, Selside, The Howe, Troutbeck and Calgarth Hall grounds) but with a few earlier ones (Belle Isle, Haws Wood and possibly Thorns Villa) and a few from the early 20th century (Meathop Grange, Gilpin Lodge Hotel grounds and Brockhole House and Gardens).

Thomas West identified five viewing stations around the lake in his ‘Guide to the Lakes’ of 1778 and the majority of these can still be visited. Two of West’s listed stations actually had two alternative viewing locations, so there were in effect seven stations. Also from this period, wealthy outsiders were moved to purchase lake shore land and build grand properties and grounds to assist their enjoyment and appreciation of the landscape.

The first of West’s Stations was located on the west shore of Windermere in Scar Wood, opposite Bowness and at about the midpoint of the lake. In 1799 the land here was bought by the Reverend William Braithwaite c. 1794 – 99, who had a building known as ‘The Station’ or ‘Belle Vue’ constructed to a Gothic design by the architect John Carr (1723-1807), for visitors to enjoy the prospect (this is now known as Claife Viewing Station – see Volume 1, Section 2.b.3 text box). Following Braithwaite’s death in 1800, the station and associated land was sold to John Christian Curwen as an extension of his estate. Curwen enlarged the Station in 1801, changing the architecture to a Gothic revival style. The building had a drawing room on the first floor with stunning views across the lake. Robert Southey was one of the many visitors and in 1802 described the windows with coloured glass that could be used to give an impression of the landscape in different seasons.

By the end of the 19th century Claife Viewing Station had fallen out of fashion. When John Curwen’s ancestor E. A. Curwen died, the Station and surrounding land passed to the National Trust in 1962. The building remains a rare example of a purpose-built viewing station and is one of the earliest monuments to Lake District tourism. The National Trust has recently conserved and opened up the remains of the Station so that visitors can once again use it to appreciate the landscape before them.
The second viewing location listed under Station I is at Harrow Slack, north of Ferry House. West’s four other Stations were located at the southern and northern ends of Belle Isle, at Rawlinson’s Nab near Cunsey, on the western shore and on Brant Fell, a low hill above Bowness, with an additional (seventh) station referred to at Rayrigg.

2.1.7  VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

In addition to the woodland planting schemes inspired by the Picturesque aesthetic, the shores of Windermere were also the focus for a rash of mansion and villa building by wealthy incomers which continued well into the 19th century. As a result Windermere has a greater concentration of nationally-important buildings than any other of the Lake District valleys. The earliest house, built in 1774 on Belle Isle, has iconic status as both the first house in the Lake District to be built for Picturesque reasons and as the first cylindrical building of the Picturesque in England. The designs of the houses and villas which followed the construction of Belle Isle were more conventional in terms of contemporary design but also had a significant impact on the landscape around the lake.

FIGURE 2.15  Belle Isle, Windermere. Side view of the cylindrical villa built c. 1774 for Thomas English.
The Arts and Crafts style at the end of the 19th and start of the 20th centuries was significant in this part of the Lake District. Properties cluster on estates such as the Storrs Hall Estate where landowners and designers collaborated to develop three of the most significant Arts and Crafts houses: Broad Leys, Moor Crag and Blackwell. Moor Crag and Broad Leys are said to be two of the finest houses of their date in Europe.

Dan Gibson, the architect, commented at the time that in these Arts and Crafts houses “the principal rooms are arranged to comprise fine lake and mountain views rather than aspect, and everything in the garden is made subservient to them”. Other significant villas include Cragwood (1910), designed by Frank Brookhouse Dunkerley (1868-1951), occupying a prominent position above the lake with extensive gardens designed by Thomas Mawson.

**TABLE 2.2** Key villas in the Windermere Valley

### BELLE ISLE

Built for Thomas English in c. 1774 to a design by John Plaw. Wordsworth said that this was the first house built in the Lake District because of the beauty of the area. The house comprises a cylindrical Pantheon style with a dome, lantern and front portico of four Ionic columns. Bought in 1781 by the Curwen family and owned by them until 1991. The Curwens developed the wooded parkland around the house, revetted the shore of the island and constructed a drive around the perimeter. The house was damaged by fire in 1994 and skilfully restored. It remains an almost perfect example of a Picturesque Arcadian scene.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed

### ELLERAY BANK, WINDERMERE

Villa built from 1856-61 by Alfred Waterhouse for G. S. Cunningham.

**DATE** 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 341063 499265

### CLEEVE HOWE, WINDERMERE

Designed by J. S. Crowther in 1853 in the Gothic style with later Mawson gardens.

**DATE** 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 341019 499162
BROCKHOLE

Built in 1900 for the Gaddum family, is now the Lake District National Park Visitor Centre. The house and grounds were designed as one by the partnership of Dan Gibson, a notable local architect, and the famous landscape gardener Thomas Mawson. Other notable Gibson designs include the imposing villa of White Crags, Clappersgate, which is a good example of the vernacular revival at the end of the 19th century. Other examples of Mawson gardens around Windermere include those at Graswytra Hall, Langdale Chase, and Holehird. The property of Holehird perhaps epitomizes the Gothic style that became typical for the Windermere area in the late 19th century.

DATE 20th century
OWNERSHIP Lake District National Park Authority
PROTECTION Registered Historic Park and Garden
GRID REFERENCE 338947 500999

BLACKWELL

Built in 1900 to a design by M. H. Baillie Scott for the Manchester brewer, philanthropist and Lord Mayor, Sir Edward Holt. The subsequent uses as a school and offices did little damage to the still outstanding interior. A restoration project in 1997 by the Lakeland Arts Trust brought it back to its former glory and it is now managed as visitor attraction by the Lakeland Arts Trust. According to the listing description ‘Blackwell is considered to be Baillie Scott’s finest surviving work in England, and its significance is enhanced by the survival of so many elements of the outstandingly important interior, despite its recent usage as a school and then as offices.’

DATE 20th century
OWNERSHIP Lakeland Arts Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 340061 494558

WANSFELL HOLME, WATERHEAD

Villa of 1836. Stone rubble construction, two storeys, and three centre bays on the ground floor covered by an ornamented iron and glass sun room. Tall octagonal chimneys and interior has an early hydraulic lift.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 338020 502694

BELSFIELD HOTEL IN BOWNESS

Originally built as a villa in 1838 in Italianate style by George Webster for Baroness de Sternberg. This is perhaps the best example of a pre-railway age mansion on the east side of the lake and was later owned by the Barrow ironmaster Sir Henry Schneider, whose daily commute has become legendary: breakfast on his steam launch to a special train service from Lakeside to Barrow.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 340242 496647
BIRKET HOUSES, NEAR WINSTER

Designed by Dan Gibson and built in 1907-8. It is described by Nikolaus Pevsner as ‘the last, finest and best-preserved work of his too short life’. It is not a lakeside villa, but more a country house for the landed family, the Birkets. The garden is designed by Thomas Mawson.

DATE 20th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 341217 493016

BROADLEYS

Designed by C. F. A Voysey and built by Pattinsons in 1898-99, including electric lighting, for Henry Currer-Briggs, a colliery owner from Leeds. According to the listing ‘One of Voysey’s finest houses and one of the most important of its date in Europe’.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Windermere Motorboat Racing Club
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 339315 493324

BROUGHTON LODGE, FIELD BROUGHTON

Built in 1770-80 for Josiah Birch of Failsworth, Manchester, either for the Directors of Backbarrow Cotton Mill, or as a holiday house, which would be a very early example. Now flats.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 339157 480816

CRAGWOOD

Cragwood, next door to Brockhole, was built in 1910 and designed by Frank Dunkerley, a relation of the Gaddums of Brockhole. The garden was designed by Thomas Mawson. It is now a hotel.

DATE 20th century
OWNERSHIP Lake District Country Hotels/Impact International
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 339050 500658

DOVE NEST

Built in 1780 above the eastern shore of the lake in a more romantic style. Mrs Hemans, a poet and close friend of Wordsworth, stayed here for the summer of 1830 and wrote there was “a glorious view of Windermere from an old-fashioned alcove” in the garden. The alcove is also now a listed building. Now a hotel.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 338391 502551
WINDERMERE

LANGDALE CHASE
Built between 1889 and 1894 by Pattinsons for Mrs Howarth of Manchester. Victorian Jacobean in a Picturesque style in a magnificent lakeside setting. It is now a hotel.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 338667 501680

MOOR CRAG
Designed by Voysey, built in 1899-1900, for J. W. Buckley of Altrincham, near Manchester. According to the listing 'Moor Crag is one of Voysey's finest houses and one of the most important of its date in Europe.'

DATE 19th – 20th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 339170 492481

OAKLAND, WINDERMERE
Designed by J. S. Crowther in 1855 in the Gothic style with later Mawson gardens.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 340967 499091

WYNLASS BECK, WINDERMERE
A distinctive and little- altered detached villa of 1854 for Mr Peter Kennedy by the architect J. S. Crowther of Manchester, part of an important group of Gothic revival style buildings which helped create the distinctive architectural character of Windermere village in the decades following the completion of the Kendal and Windermere railway in 1847.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 340713 499319
2.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

2.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

The earliest evidence of human activity in Windermere is the finding of Mesolithic flints (c. 8000 – 4000 BC) beneath Ambleside Roman fort at the northern end of Windermere. There are also probable Bronze Age (2,000 – 800 BC) burial cairns on the Tongue (Troutbeck) and on Cunswick and Scout Scars.

The Romans constructed a fort at the head of Windermere which was surrounded by a civilian settlement (vicus) and the remains of a Roman road linking this with the fort at Hardknott can be traced through Little Langdale and over Wrynose and Hardknott Passes. There are a small number of Romano-British settlements of this period with
a concentration in Kentmere (Tongue House Barn, Millriggs, Kentmere Hall Plantation), High Borrans, Cunswick Scar, Cunswick Hall, and Lamb Pasture (Bannisdale). Roman artefacts have been found at these sites.

### 2.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

It is clear that the Windermere Valley was settled before the Norman Conquest of 1066/1092 in Cumbria, although the nature and extent of this occupation is not yet understood. In 685, Earl Ecgfrith of Northumberland granted to St Cuthbert the lands of Cartmel and Carlisle ‘et omnes Britannos cum eo’ (and all Britons with it). This suggests that the population in the Cartmel/Carlisle area was considered to be native British, not Anglo-Saxon. The place-name evidence includes Norse influences such as upland sheiling sites (High Skelghyll, Banniside and Sadgill), or natural features which became place-names such as Troutbeck, referring to the spawning of trout in the adjacent beck. However, such names with Old Norse roots could be much later in origin. By the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, the valley area appears to have been owned by Gillemichael, as the manor of Strickland. Around the fringes some land may have been owned by members of the Anglo Saxo nobility: by Torfin as the manor of Austwick, Yorkshire; by Earl Tostig as the manor of Whittington, Lancashire; and by Earl Tostig as the manor of Beetham. By 1086 the land had been transferred to King William I except Beetham, which had been granted to Roger de Poitou (a Norman), with Ernuin the Priest as his subordinate.

Evidence for sites known to be early medieval in date are thin on the ground. There is a possible early farmstead site at Cunswick Fell and Bryant’s Gill, Kentmere is a supposed early medieval longhouse site. Just outside the Windermere Valley area there are Anglian Crosses at Kendal and Heversham.

### 2.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

After the Norman Conquest of England, Westmorland was still border country and Cumberland was not made part of Norman England until 1092. All of the Barony of Kendale (the area centred on the valley of the river Kent) was granted to Ivo de Tallebois by William II (reigned 1087 to 1100), probably in connection with his efforts in the Conquest of the North. Much of the land appears to have been held under the jurisdiction of local lords, although during the majority of King Stephen of England’s reign (1135-1154), Cumberland and ‘Westmarieland’ were held by King David of Scotland. Much of Windermere appears to have been administered as ‘forest’ with no freeholds except the Fleming estate in Rydal and Loughrigg, monastic land such as the Conishead Priory estate at Baisbrown, a small freehold estate in Little Langdale, and a freehold at Lickbarrow. Windermere Water was a fishery of the lords of Kendale.

The town of Bowness-on-Windermere probably has its origins as an early 10th century Norse fishing and trading settlement on the east shore of Windermere. It is first mentioned as ‘Bulebas’ in 1190, becoming ‘Bulness’ in 1282. By this time Bowness was
already well established as a settlement, primarily a fishing village (centred on catching the char found in Windermere), grouped around St Martin’s Church. The town lay almost directly on the ancient packhorse route from Hawkshead to Kendal which crossed the lake at the old ferry point at Low Miller Ground. St Martin’s Church, the parish church of Windermere, was first recorded in 1203. This church burnt down in 1480 and only its font and the base of the tower remain. St Martin’s was rebuilt and re-consecrated in 1483. It was restored, enlarged and the tower heightened in 1870. The large east window contains medieval glass probably from Cartmel Priory, dated 1276 (in England only Canterbury Cathedral has earlier glass, from 1275) and the rest of the window is 14th/15th century.

Many of the settlements in the Barony of Kendale appear to have open field origins. Occasionally, settlements at either end of the open fields may reflect the development of one as a separate lord’s holding. Evidence of former open field systems survive in a number of the more fertile low lying areas, including Longsleddale.

LONGSLEDDALE

There is documentary and archaeological evidence for medieval occupation and farming practices at Sadgill and Stockdale at the north end of Longsleddale, with open field strips on both sides of the road, bounded on the west by the River Sprint. Sadgill is referred to in historical source material from 1238 onwards and there are specific references to farming. For example in 1282 Margaret de Ros owned 600 acres of pasture across Sadgill and Strickland Ketel. In 1246 William de Lancastre III gave Robert de Layburn a shieling in Sleddale at Sadgill along with meadow and pasture land in return for a rent. The same William gave Roland, son of Ellis de Revegill, further meadow and pasture land also for a yearly rent. By 1283, the shieling at Sadgill was still referred to as such (perhaps also in 1360) which suggests that it was still recognised as seasonal upland pasture.

Pasture in Longsleddale seems to have been shared amongst a variety of landowners, including the monasteries, as shown by a 1263 agreement between local landowners and the Abbot of Shap. The ruins of the ‘convent’s mill of Revegill’ described in these documents are thought to survive on the hillside overlooking the River Sprint opposite Yewbarrow Hall and the church. Longsleddale also has the earliest mention of a slate quarry anywhere in the Lake District, said to be worked in 1287, although its location is unknown and may have been destroyed by later workings.

Sleddale appears in the Patent Rolls of 1229, although a manor in the dale of Sleddale is not referred to until 1306. The 1332 Subsidy refers to nine individuals, perhaps each the head of a household and liable for various rentals.

A tenement west of the River Spryt is referred to in 1364 as held by Thomas son of Benedict. Perhaps this is Tom’s Howe – Henry Holme of Tomhowe was ‘burried Sleddale Chappel’, 19 December 1713, the first to be buried at the chapel after it was licenced for burial that same year. The farms at Stockdale and Tom’s Howe, and the shieling at Sadgill, seem to be relics of a deserted village of Longsleddale, previously thought to have been abandoned in the medieval period. However, Machell, in the 1690s, mentioned two hamlets at the head of Sleddale in the middle of which was a chapel and a court, and stated that 39 families lived there. There are also 14th century references to it in the
Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1332 and of 1334/36. A further reference dating to 1336 records an enclosure being broken into and timber and other goods stolen. Tom’s Howe sits apart from the Sleddale open fields, and may well represent the farm of a feudal steward. The documents show that the village was deserted only after the 1690s.

TROUTBECK

Evidence for medieval settlement and farming at Troutbeck is a little less straightforward. Troutbeck as a settlement may be referred to obliquely in a 1272 Inquisition Post Mortem to Troutbeck Park, in which reference is made to the pannage of Troutbeck in Troutbeck Forest. Pannage is a right to feed pigs in a forest, which suggests a local farming community who could exercise that right. By 1324 there was a hamlet in Troutbeck which was referred to in the Inquisition Post Mortem of Ingram de Gynes. It records that he held at his death:

“the hamlet of Troutbek, parcel of the said manor of Wynandremar, in which there are 11 tenants at will, who render £11 8s. 2¾d. yearly, six tenements there were in the lord’s hands and ought to render £5 11s. 2¾d. yearly and now nothing”.

The date of this document suggests that the Scots laid the village waste; perhaps also that Ingram himself was a victim of this episode. Further source material suggests that a medieval chapel was rebuilt 1562, again testifying to an earlier established settlement.

STAVELEY

Staveley was not mentioned in the Domesday Book and may therefore be a post Conquest settlement, although this cannot be certain as the Domesday Book was incomplete for this area. There is evidence of open fields over much of the area north of Staveley and land improvements are first referred to in a grant of 1189-1200 when William Godmund was given permission to ‘make improvements between the highway and Kent to the bounds of Bolteston and common of pasture’. If the highway at that time skirted Spy Crag then this may be associated with Staveley Park Farm, preserving in its place-name a lord’s holding. Alternatively if the highway was the old Kendal Road, then the park boundary may have been much further south and included land either side of the Kent, up to the common on Spy Crag. The manor of Staveley is first named in a grant dated 1281 to William de Twenge for a market on Fridays at his manor of Staveley in Kendale and for a three-day annual fair. The hamlet seems to have been prosperous from an early period and was awarded a market charter in 1329. In 1341, 10 years after the establishment of woollen mills at Kendal, there was a fulling mill at Staveley. The first reference to a park at Staveley was in an Inquisition Post Mortem of 1323, although by 1344 another Inquisition Post Mortem recorded that it had been split into two pieces, of one third and two thirds. This may record the customary right of a widow of a copyholder to only one third of an acre. The park was referred to again in 1396, but then there is a gap until 1525 when five messuages were recorded within the park’s boundaries. This gap plus the later subdivision of the park suggest that the hunt had become unfashionable and more income was to be made from letting out the park for farming.
There are clear examples of open fields at Cunswick. This settlement first appears in historical documents between 1186-1200, along with part of the vill of Tranthwaite. In 1220–46 the vill of Tranthwaite appears again, with references to Bracanrigg (probably indicating rigg and furrow or open field cultivation), a High Assart and Adam’s Assart (both indicating recent clearance and therefore likely agricultural activity).

**CROSTHWAITHE**

At Crosthwaite there is a small area of former arable land to the south of Crosthwaite Green, possibly originally part of the hamlet. Crosthwaite first appeared in historical sources in 1187-1200. In 1301 there was reference to a mill here, but the account does not say if it is a corn mill of a fulling mill. But a 1374 rental referred to a ‘tenter’ at Mirks Howe (Mirkhouse?). Tenter normally refers to cloth making, and a fulling mill is referred to in other documents such as the 1390–91 rental of the lands of Philippa, the wife of the late Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, and John de Hothome in the lordship of Kendale when John de Hall held the fulling mill as did Adam Pacocke who held one referred to as Holleclowck. In 1421 “John de Lumley held at his death, as appurtenant to an eighth part of the manor of Kirkeby in Kendale, lands and messuages in Crossethewayte, and 120 a. land, 60 a. meadow, 140 a. wood and a watermill in Crossethewayte, worth 14 marks yearly clear; and four messuages, 60 a. land and 40 a. meadow in Lithe, worth 100s. yearly clear”. Robert Philipson held a water-corn-mill in 1390 confirming arable farming at Crosthwaite.

In a 1454 rental one intake is recorded as ‘newly enclosed’ by William Belle (‘for which he does not answer because he occupied the said intake without lease or licence of the steward’). Generally, the surviving rentals for Crosthwaite contain numerous references in 1374 and 1390 to free farms, cottages, tenements, tofts, closes (enclosures) and messuages with appurtences held by tenants at will and so clearly it consisted of an agricultural community. Interestingly, John Hurd held a ‘new approvement’ and Elias Mantill held an intake in 1390-1, showing that active enclosure and improvements were being made at this time.

**THORPHINSTY**

Thorphinsty has a classic Hall at one end of former open fields. It appears first in historical sources in 1275–6 as:

> “a messuage and a plough-land in a suit against the Prior of Cartmel, alleging that the prior had no right except by one Alexander de Thorphinsty, who had made a grant there to the injury of the plaintiff’s grandfather, Thomas le Fitz Kelly or son of Ketel. The prior raised a technical objection — that Thorphinsty was neither town nor borough — and plaintiff could not gainsay.”

Other evidence of early agriculture occurs in the valley in the form of strip lynchets. These can be difficult to date, but generally a relative chronology can be established where they are associated with other features. These undated features occur on the steep hillside of Holbeck Ghyll, and there is a possible deserted medieval
village to the west behind the Lowwood Hotel, with ridge and furrow agriculture extending upslope. Some of this is clearly broad ridge and furrow suggesting a medieval date. The enclosure of the land between Waterhead House and Thief Fold Wood seems (from the historical mapping alone) to indicate similar improvement of land for agriculture as lynchets. The drive towards arable improvement in the 12th and 13th centuries was interrupted permanently in the 14th century probably because of the plague and subsequent population decline.

The uplands provide additional information on later colonisation of farmland and seasonal transhumant practices. There are examples of probable colony farms set apart from the open field settlements, which represent 12th-13th century settlement expansion at Wasdale Head near the packhorse route to Shap. Hause Foot in Crookdale; Borrowdale Head; and Bannisdale Head are further examples. The latter first documented in 1357 under Strickland Ketel (an inquisition post mortem).

**MEDIEVAL MONASTIC HOLDINGS**

In terms of monastic landholdings, Shap Abbey had a sheep farming interest and a mill at Longsleddale in 1263. A document of 1525 refers to enclosed improvements and intakes in Skelmsergh, Cunswick, Bradleyfield and Tranthwaite. The abbot and convent of St Mary’s Abbey, York, granted and let to farm to:

> “James Layburne, esquier, all the tethe cornez of the hamelett of Skelmyssergh with all the approwmentes at the making herof enclosed within the seid hamelett in the pishinge of Kirkeby in Kendall, excepte the tethe cornez with the approwmentes of the tenementes of Gilthwatrige, Ladyforde, the tenemente of John Redemayn and of a tenimmente late in the handez of Willm. Gilpyne; also thei have latten to ferme to the seid James Layburn all the tethe cornez of Bradeleyfeld and Tranthwate wth Connyswik, Bulmerstrandes and Bradesl[ak] [eaten away] with ther intakes and approwmentes which Thomas Layburn father to the seid James occupied afortyme...”

The hamlets of Addyfield, Hartbarrow, Birket Houses, Ludderburn, Rosthwaite and Gill Head and the northern end of Cartmel Fell were held for the most part by customary tenants of the Prior and Canons of Cartmel Abbey. Most was common land although by 1577, after the authority of Cartmel Abbey was removed, there were disputed encroachments onto the fell. The only manor in this area was Burblethwaite.

**DEER PARKS**

Deer parks were also located in the Windermere Valley and in some instances their outlines can still be discerned in present day field boundaries. Troutbeck Park was documented in 1272 (see above), but there are a number of possibilities for its boundaries apparent in the landscape today. Calgarth Park is referred to in 1365, but its boundaries are unknown. Similarly other parks are referred to in medieval documents,
but their location is unknown, as Routheworth Park cited in 1255–72 (in Underbarrow, Bradley Field and Cunswick), and Le Cole Park documented in 1437 (in Ambleside and Troutbeck). A number of other deer parks are referred to in 16th century documents, a period when hunting was re-established as a fashionable pursuit.

THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

The period of reorganisation and expansion in the 16th and 17th centuries is relatively well-documented in Windermere compared with the other Lake District valleys. Nonetheless, even with documented evidence for new intakes of land, the picture presented is of small episodes of piecemeal enclosure over long periods. In the south of the valley, intakes occur at the edges of inbye, occupying easily accessible slopes on former common land adjacent to existing holdings, as around Staveley-in-Kendal, for example.

While documentary evidence points to a considerable amount of piecemeal enclosure, not all of this has been identified on the ground. For example, a 1574 Richmond Fee Survey covering Crosthwaite and Lyth referred to land which had belonged to Miles Briggs being improved and an associated Memorandum stated that ‘the said tenants claim to have annexed and adjoined to each tenement of the rent of 6s. 8d., 7 acres of arable and meadow land by divers grants of divers lords’.

A 1579 Articles of Agreement for Crosthwaite and Lyth outlined the process of piecemeal enclosure where it was agreed that tenants could cut down and grub out any old dead wood within their farm holdings in any place where they can make arable ground or meadow. A later 1618 Lumley Fee Rental included 38 entries recording the rents of new improvements.

A 1669 Demise document for Longsleddale referred to sheep heafs, as in formerly common pasture now attached to specific farms by custom. The tenants were liable for repair and maintenance to the fences and walls, presumably a codification of historic local custom.

That tenants were liable for the maintenance and repairs to their enclosures can be seen from a 1560 court of Henry, Earl of Cumberland, covering Ambleside and Troutbeck which referred to a long list of land stewardship misdemeanours including unrepaired fences, broken gates and gaps in enclosures.

The lists of farms mentioned in a number of 16th century sources, were also present in the Hearth Taxes of 1669/72 and are still recognisable today. By implication, there has been little change in areas such as Longsleddale for at least the last 500 years. Troutbeck parish was divided into Hundreds and was originally divided into 72 tenements called five cattle tenements (each had five cattle ‘gaits’ onto the fells and the common pasture). As early as Henry VIII (reigned 1509-1547), some tenants had doubled their holdings by acquisition into ten cattle tenements, so it is difficult to identify the original tenements. This process may have been set out in the 1574 Richmond Fee Survey in which most (of 56) tenants were calculated as 6s. 8d. Only eight tenants have precisely double this, at 13s. 4d. Some smaller rental units mean that it is difficult to account for the 72 original tenements but they are likely still present within this pattern. At this stage the old Troutbeck deer park appeared to be divided amongst the tenants and the rent fixed at 6s. 8d. By 1675 there were 48 tenants, 16 fewer than in 1574.
suggesting a process of rationalisation of land holdings amongst fewer tenants. Of these only 22 had the 6s. 8d intact; others held larger tenements or parts thereof.

A similar process is documented at Kentmere Park where George Gilpin’s Inquisition Post Mortem referred to his earlier marriage settlement of 1595. This was referred to as ‘my feeding land called le Parke’. Kentmere Hall was established in the 14th century, so it is possible that the Park was earlier. The same document suggested that George Gilpin had owned several farms to the south west of the Hall including houses and buildings at the ‘Park Yeate’ (gate) and enclosures adjacent. He appeared to buy out his humbler neighbours in order to create his own personal pasture land (or park?) and this became known as ‘Hall Quarter’. Later, in 1698, Sir Daniel Fleming bought 89 heafed sheep at Kentmere Hall at the same time as acquiring the farm – an early example of establishing a landlord’s flock.

This process of shifting tenurial rights and consolidation of land holdings was not necessarily a popular one. At Staveley, a plaque at the chapel commemorates the meeting that took place at there in 1620 when the Lake District Yeomen (‘statesmen’) met to protest against the King’s (James I) attempt to overturn the rights of customary tenure that had existed in the northern counties of England for centuries. The men were brought before the Star Chamber in London and their case was so strong that for once the court decided in their favour.

As with other valleys, the Dissolution of the Monasteries (1536-41) also created opportunities for land acquisition. Mabel Benson claimed Thorphinsty unsuccessfully in 1577. In 1587 Thomas Allen claimed the tenement under a lease from the Crown for 21 years at a rent of £3 2s. 8d. which was the rent formerly paid to the priory. Thomas Hutton said that he and his ancestors had held the same as customary lands of the manor of Cartmel.

Witherslack Hall first appears in historical sources in 1542, suggesting that it too was the result of monastic land being made available for private development. It was described along with its parkland in 1653-4:

“capital messuage or mansion house commonly called Wither Slacke situate in Witherslack Park and one barn, an oxhouse, a stable and a malt kiln, a courtyard, an orchard, a garden and greens, containing in the whole by estimation 2 acres 1 rood; and also all that Park or demesne lands called Witherslack Park consisting of several parcels of land, namely, 33 acres arable, 37 acres meadow, 620 acres of rockey and woody pasture bounded on the south-east with a certain parcel of land called the “Deare Garthes,” on the north with Whitbury common and a place called Howredding, on the west with certain lands called Poobancke and on the south with certain lands called the Customary Lands and with a certain common called Witherslack Common; and also all that “stocke and game of deare” in the said Park and all and every or any other part of the premises... whatsoever to the said
capital messuage park and premises belonging. All which now are or late were in tenure of the said John Leyburne or his assigns; and all other the lands tenements and hereditaments in Witherslack, etc., and containing in the whole by estimation 694 acres, 3 roods”.

The deer park boundary can possibly be identified today on the east side of Witherslack Hall.

THE ‘GREAT REBUILDING’

The 16th and 17th centuries also marked a period of rebuilding resulting from the new prosperity and some of the best surviving examples of groups of farm buildings from that period survive in the Windermere Valley. The histories of houses at Townend, The Crag, Longmire Yeat, High Green, and Town Head show that Troutbeck at one time contained up to 50 statesmen families rather than being dominated by two or three squires as was typical in other parts of England. The rights accrued through customary tenure enabled successive generations of some families to live in Troutbeck and thereby to accumulate wealth and become very influential in the area. For example, the Birketts and the Brownes lived in Troutbeck from the 14th century to the 19th century, and from the 16th century to the 20th century respectively. Most of the surviving rural building stock in Troutbeck dates from the 17th century, with only six buildings dating to the 18th century. Glenside has heavy wall-posts which may indicate an earlier timber cruck-frame, although the present building is dated 1634.

Indeed the majority of vernacular architecture in the Windermere Valley area dates from the 17th century. A small number of buildings are known to contain original (probably 16th century) or re-used (medieval) crucks; the actual number may possibly be higher. In Staveley in Kendal there are some notable 17th century survivals at Barley Bridge, Staveley Park Farm, High Scroggs, Low Scroggs and Low Fold. Most of the surviving rural building stock in Underbarrow and Bradleyfield dates from the 17th century, with only eight notable buildings from the 18th century. In Undermillock there are ten notable 18th century buildings. The remainder are 17th century and the church, rebuilt in 1875, contains 17th century fittings. In Windermere, most (17) of the surviving rural buildings date from the 17th century, with 11 notable buildings from the 18th century. Orrest Head Farm and Far Orrest both incorporate the remains of cruck-trusses, and Low Longmire is said to have a cruck-roof.

Other notable buildings in the valley which display evidence of 16-17th century building include Cunswick Hall which also retains some early 16th century rubble walling; and the Gatehouse is 15th or early 16th century. Although Calgarth Hall is 14th century in date it also contains fabric from the 15th-17th centuries. Cowmire Hall originated as a 16th century pele tower and is now the west wing of the present house. Meathop Hall was built late in the 17th or early in the 18th century.

The pele tower at Yewbarrow Hall appears to be first mentioned in 1531, when William Vaux and Joan his wife passed by fine to Anne and Thomas Haryngton, tenements in Langsleydayll (probably including Yewbarrow Hall). It is referred to as a dower in 1573, but probably developed from a ‘capital messuage’, perhaps in its own land.
Collectively, the building stock in the valley suggests considerable prosperity leading to new building and rebuilding of old houses, farms and outbuildings.

THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

The construction of the railway to Windermere (see below) included a station at Staveley but this had little impact on the historic core of the village as a new, separate suburb was built to the south-west of the medieval village. This building coincided with the construction of the former Abbey Hotel, a handsome and imposing building erected in 1844 on a prominent site in the centre of the village to profit from the tourism boom that resulted from the railway. Passengers alighting here could use Staveley as a base for exploring the Lake District on horseback or by carriage: the large stable block at the rear of the hotel were described by contemporary trade directories as “second to none in this part of England”. In 1856 the growing community of Staveley became a parish in its own right. A new church of St James was dedicated in 1865 and the old chapel of St Margaret, said to be founded in 1388, was all demolished, except for the late 14th/early 15th century tower. As well as the new church, built in the neo-Gothic style by J. S. Crowther and adorned with Arts and Crafts furnishings (including three fine stained glass windows by Morris and Company, designed by Burne-Jones in 1874), the school and vicarage were also built at this time.

While the settlements of Bowness, Staveley and Troutbeck were being transformed, there were significant changes being made to the wider farming landscape in the 19th century, driven by agricultural improvement rather than the Picturesque appreciation of the landscape. Numerous Parliamentary Enclosure Awards took place after 1815 with the enclosure of Heversham of 1868 and the enclosure of Sadgill or High Fell. Key to the improvement of former moorland was the availability of lime, hence many lime kilns were constructed near Dawson Fold, Crosthwaite, near Witherslack, near Hampsfield Fell, and near Low Newton. The band of Coniston Limestone through Kentmere and Longsleddale even led to lime kilns in the high valleys at Stockdale, Longsleddale and at Kentmere Hall. Smaller enclosures probably took place by private agreement or else represented improved and drained mosses in the south of the area, with the exception of the Cartmel Fell uplands. Cartmel Fell was enclosed between 1796 and 1809 and this included land at Staveley, Lower Holker and Lower Allithwaite.

The 18th century was also a period of rebuilding and as such a number of medieval buildings were probably replaced at this time (which also created a market for lime). Crook Hall was built probably early in the 18th century; inside the building, however, is a re-used early 16th century moulded beam. Crosthwaite corn mill, mentioned in 13th century documents, appears to have been replaced by the present day one, with later additions and alterations. The Mill Dam with weir, sluice gate and mill race also survive and are probably mainly 19th century in date, but incorporate earlier features. Barley Bridge Mill was established as a cotton mill in the 18th century and a bobbin-turning shop was added by 1800. However, at Staveley, the weir just upstream of Barley Bridge provided water to power a 17th century corn mill on the east bank, which operated until the 1950s. It was the bobbin mills that transformed Staveley into an industrial village. The area had the key elements of coppice woodland and water-power. The big expansion in the bobbin industry came after 1819 when the
Kendal to Lancaster Canal opened. By 1829 there were seven bobbin mills working in Staveley and Hugill. It was given further impetus with the opening of the Kendal to Windermere Railway in 1847. By 1851, 193 people in the area worked in the bobbin industry and more local families earned their living from the bobbin industry than by farming. The nature of the Kent catchment, compounded by agricultural land drainage in the 19th century, led a consortium of mill owners to build Kentmere Reservoir in 1846-48 to provide a steady water supply. Other important examples of Staveley bobbin mills include Gatefoot Mill and Rawes Mill, and at Witherslack, there is the good example of a bobbin and corn mill both operating in the mid-19th century.

Other industrial processes were transformed by new technology and the arrival of the railway. In the late 17th and early 18th century water power was introduced into the iron smelting process to create a more efficient smelt. Lindale-in-Cartmel at Wilson House Farm is thought to be the site of the smelting experiments by John Wilkinson and his father Isaac Wilkinson. John “Iron-Mad” Wilkinson (1728–1808) was born and brought up in Cumberland and Westmorland and pioneered the manufacture of cast iron and the use of cast-iron goods during the Industrial Revolution. He was the inventor of a precision boring machine that could bore cast iron cylinders, such as those used in steam engines of James Watt. His boring machine has been called the first machine tool. He also developed a blowing device for blast furnaces that allowed higher temperatures, increasing their efficiency. On the corner of the road to Grange is a monument to John Wilkinson.

Shap Pink granite quarry was able to move to a more commercial scale in 1868 because of the availability of the railway. Shap Pink was used extensively in Euston Railway Station, Waterloo Bridge and the Albert Memorial, all in London.

The two main slate quarries in Longsleddale were Wrengill and Stockdalebank and they were exploited throughout the 18th and 19th centuries (and possibly earlier). In Kentmere, there were several large slate quarries at the head of the valley to the south and east of the reservoir. Documentary evidence goes back to the 18th century and the last known quarrying activity was in the mid-1960s. The slate quarries in Troutbeck are mainly to the north and east of Troutbeck village. The documentary evidence shows the quarries working from the early 18th century to the early 20th century. A significant change to the appearance of the village occurred after the slate quarrying brought relative prosperity into the area in the mid-18th century. It provided, in quarry waste, building materials for many of the houses and barns. A further change in the appearance to the village arose after the opening of the railway to Windermere in 1847. Additional houses and The Institute were built (or rebuilt) causing Troutbeck to acquire the combination of vernacular and Victorian buildings which can be seen today. Along with the alterations and extensions to the properties came the widening and levelling of some of the roads.

While Windermere was changing through the influences of tourism and industry, sheep farming remained a serious business. From 1868 to 1875 the Troutbeck Herdwick and Other Sheep Association played a significant role in improving the standard of Herdwick sheep. Its annual show had 14 classes for Herdwick sheep, including four for white-faced tups for breeding cross-bred lambs from older ewes. In 1850 William Dickinson, the West Cumberland farmer and agricultural writer, had noted that cross-bred lambs sold for 50 per cent more than true mountain stock.
At Kentmere Hall, one of Christopher Wilson’s Herdwick tups was runner-up at the Royal Show in 1873 and was pictured in an engraving in ‘The Field’ magazine in an article about Herdwicks that year. In the 1890s there was an account of a 1,500-2,000 strong heaf-going flock at Kentmere Hall of either Herdwicks or black-faced sheep. Troutbeck Park appeared in the first Herdwick Sheep Breeders Association flock book in 1920: Mrs Leck had a 500 strong flock.

2.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The ease of access to Windermere by coach from the south, combined with its undoubted grandeur as England’s largest lake with a stunning mountain backdrop, led to an early interest from visitors seeking Picturesque landscapes. The earliest description of Windermere in Picturesque style appears to be an anonymous piece in the ‘Gentleman’s Magazine’ of 1748:

“We came upon a high promontory that gave us at once a full view of the bright lake; which, spreading itself under us, in the midst of the mountains, presented one of the most glorious appearances that ever struck the eye of a traveller with transport... In some places the crags appear through the trees hanging over the water, in other places little valleys are seen opening between the hills, through which small torrents empty themselves into the lake; and, in all places, the border quite round shows itself delicate and beautiful.”

The increasing popularity of the valley in the 19th century resulted in change arising from the ever multiplying facilities and accommodation provided for the tourists, and there were concerns that this change had to be managed. In the late 18th century the English Lake District Association was formed; it aimed to promote and develop tourism and improve communications, while at the same time safeguarding the scenery on which that tourism depended. It drew much of its membership from the hoteliers of Bowness and Windermere.

Contemporary descriptions illustrate the popularity of the area. William Green’s 1819 ‘Guide to the Lakes’ already described Bowness as: ‘Good place for enjoyment, boats being kept by Mr Ullock for accommodation of tourists. The Inn at Bowness is extensive and excellently well provided’. Parson and Wight’s 1829 directory described Bowness as:

“...a small but neat market town. It is the chief port on the lake and has a few fishing vessels, a number of pleasure boats and a trade in charcoal and slate. From its admirable situation it is much frequented by tourists and has excellent
accommodation for them in two good inns... as well as lodgings.”

John Bolton, the owner of Storrs Hall, held an extravagant regatta, (in the style of Joseph Pocklington’s Derwent Water Regattas of the late 18th century) on Windermere in August 1825, organised by John Wilson of Elleray in honour of Walter Scott’s 54th birthday. Bowness’s status was further boosted by a visit by the Dowager Queen Adelaide in 1840. At this time Bowness boasted two large hotels, The White Lion (renamed The Royal in honour of Queen Adelaide’s visit) and The Crown. A plaque still marks the spot where Queen Adelaide alighted at Rayrigg Bank with the Reverend Fletcher and Mrs Fleming.

The first steam boats with paddle wheels appeared on Windermere in 1845 to much opposition. They were coal-fired, smoky and noisy, with brass bands. After 1847 the railway brought parties of day trippers from the industrial towns in Lancashire. Punch magazine published a mock Wordsworthian protest poem:

“What incubus, my goodness! have we here Cumbering the bosom of our lovely lake? A steamboat, as I live! – without mistake!- Puffing and splashing over Windermere What inharmonious shouts assail mine ear? Shocking poor Echo, that perforce replies - “Ease her!” and “Stop her!” – frightful and horrid cries, Mingling with frequent pop of ginger beer...”

In its first year the railway, now terminating at Birthwaite, carried over 100,000 passengers. When the railway arrived, Birthwaite was little more than a dispersed settlement of cottages and farmsteads. The station terminus stood in a completely rural location close to the main Kendal to Ambleside road and not far from its junction with a by-road to Bowness-on-Windermere. Within months of the opening of the railway, buildings began to appear around the terminus to accommodate and serve the needs of the incoming tourists.

Such had been the confidence in the success of the railway that the London and North Western Railway Company together with Richard Rigg, a local entrepreneur, had already financed the building of a large hotel just beside the station. It opened a month after completion of the railway, first known as Rigg’s Hotel and, later, the Windermere Hotel. The hotel’s proprietor, Richard Rigg, soon established a successful coaching business to carry passengers further into the Lake District. By 1855 Harriet Martineau could write:

“Now there is a Windermere railway station and a Windermere post office and hotel – a thriving village of Windermere and a populous locality”.

Other large hotels were built. Harriet Martineau wrote about the Crown in 1854 noting its “ten private sitting rooms and ...ninety beds. Nothing can well exceed the beauty of the view from its garden seats.”
The arrival of the railway at Birthwaite in 1847 changed the social class of visitors. Relatively low fares and cheap day excursions enabled less prosperous sectors of the middle classes to visit and, for the first time, working-class visitors. This in turn led to a need for simple guest-houses and boarding-houses as opposed to the more up-market hotel accommodation already being offered in, for example, The Crown or The Royal in Bowness or The White Lion in Ambleside.

As the settlement at Windermere developed, traders and businessmen in the 1850s who wanted to popularise the connection between the station and the lake succeeded in changing the station’s (and the settlement’s) name from Birthwaite to Windermere. The bulk of Windermere was built in a 50-year period in the second half of the 19th century, almost exclusively by three local builders and almost entirely using local stone. As a new Victorian village in the Lake District, Windermere attracted much comment. For example, Eliza Lynn Linton wrote in 1864:

“Here everything is modern, wealthy, and well-adapted. Natural advantages are made the most of, and natural beauties are respected; becoming sites are chosen for mansions fitted for people of deep purses and liberal education.”

Excursion trains from the mill towns of Lancashire poured into Windermere and Lakeside – and on to Bowness. By the end of the 19th century over 100 lodging houses had been built and a further three large hotels created to take advantage of views over Windermere – The Belsfield, The Hydro and The Old England. Between 1851 and 1891 the combined population of Bowness and Windermere rose from 2,085 to 4,613. The lake frontage at Bowness changed from a collection of fishing boat jetties to a more formal arrangement of landing stages, pleasure boat facilities and promenade. The Royal Windermere Yacht Club received its Royal Warrant in 1887. The oldest vessel in Windermere Lake Cruises fleet, the MV Tern, dates back to this Victorian era, being built in 1891 as a steam powered yacht.

PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

Thomas West identified five viewing stations around the lake in his ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1778), including the viewing station at Claife (Figure 2.14) and these were later mapped and published by Peter Crosthwaite in 1783. In 1778 West wrote of the Inn at Low Wood on the northeast shore of Windermere which provided a taste of the tourist attractions to come:

“No other inn in (this) route has so fine a view of a lake... A small cannon is kept here to gratify the curious with those remarkable reverberations of sound, which follow the report of a gun &c. in these singular vales.”

Peter Crosthwaite, the late 18th century Keswick-based tourist entrepreneur, included Windermere as one of the lakes he mapped, selling the maps as tourist guides. At a scale of three inches to one mile, he marked them with information he thought useful to tourists including roads, hotels, prominent houses, landmarks, natural features, currents and depths of lakes and West’s viewing stations.
Modification of the landscape around Windermere resulting from Picturesque interest began with the creation of new woodland. The Reverend Braithwaite is reported to have planted over 40,000 different plants or trees in Station Scar Wood in 1797. It is likely that many of these were non-native species, although a number of oaks were also planted. When Curwen bought The Station he had also begun to acquire land on the west side of the lake for his Belle Isle Estate, purchasing a number of properties between Pinstones Wood in the north and Cunsey in the south in the period 1783 to 1805. He undertook planting on Belle Isle in the early 1780s but his largest scheme was at Heald Wood where according to Curwen’s annotated map of his estate “[in] 1798 by the desire of my respected friend Dr Watson Bishop of Llandaff I planted here 30,000 Larches”. The Belle Isle Estate woodlands were not planted and managed solely for Picturesque reasons. They were also intensively managed for charcoal from oak coppice and timber from larch plantations on the higher ground.

A great many other Picturesque woodlands were established on the Windermere shoreline throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Plantations of pine, spruce, larch and poplar were established in 1783 by the Browne family of Townend in Troutbeck on Beech Hill and in Pull Woods. Richard Watson, the absentee Bishop of Llandaff (Cardiff) whose residence was at Calgarth Park, established larch plantations over Birk Fell, Gummer’s How (now one of the most popular viewpoints in the Lake District) and in Bishops Wood, abutting the Curwen estate just north of Cunsey. The landscape impact of these plantations was unrivalled in the Lake District.

In addition to the woodland planting schemes inspired by the Picturesque aesthetic, the shores of Windermere were also the focus for a rash of mansion and villa building by wealthy incomers which continued well into the 19th century.

ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The increasing popularity of Windermere ensured that it would feature in many of the poems and other writings of the Lake Poets, but few took up residence here, unlike Grasmere, Rydal and Keswick.

“I am always glad to see Staveley... it is a place I dearly love to think of – the first mountain village that I came to with
2. WINDERMERE

Wm when we first began our pilgrimage together”.

Dorothy Wordsworth (referring to their walking holiday of 1794)

William Wordsworth’s ‘Michael’ tells the story of a native of Ings, Robert Bateman. St Anne’s Church in Ings was rebuilt by Bateman in 1743 and he is commemorated in a tablet over the door. According to Wordsworth he was a poor ‘parish boy’ who went to London and became a merchant and

“grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and moneys to the poor,
And at his birth-place built a chapel floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands”.

In later years Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy visited many of the major residences around Windermere including, in William’s case, a visit to Bishop Watson at Calgarth Hall. As a young man, and ardent republican, he had fallen out with the Bishop over political developments in France (prompting his ‘Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff’ in 1793). Coleridge and De Quincey were also entertained at Calgarth. Lowwood on Windermere was the place where Dorothy recorded in her famous ‘Grasmere Journal’ her sorrowful parting from her brothers, William and John, when they set off on a tour of Yorkshire in 1800. In 1802 she wrote a critical account of the house and landscaped gardens on Belle Isle and visited the owners, the Curwens, in 1831.

In ‘The Prelude’, Wordsworth recounted his time as a schoolboy in Hawkshead, adventuring on and around Windermere with his friend. Like many who have since enjoyed the lake and its surroundings, Wordsworth and his school friends made many summer visits to The White Lion, now the Royal Hotel in Bowness: “nor did we want/ Refreshment, strawberries and mellow cream.” (‘The Prelude’).

Among Wordsworth’s friends at Hawkshead were Fletcher Raincock and John Tyson. Both these friends were brought together in memorable poetry associated with Windermere:

“There was a Boy: ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander!- many a time
At evening when the stars had just begun
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone
Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake,
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him; and they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again
Responsive to his call…”

‘The Prelude’
As a student returning home from Cambridge, Wordsworth would cross the bridge at Banner Rigg, as car-born visitors do today, see Windermere and know he was almost home:

“A pleasant sight it was when, having clomb
The Heights of Kendal, and that dreary moor
Was crossed, at length, as from a rampart’s edge,
I overlooked the bed of Windermere.
I bounded down the hill, shouting amain
A lusty summons to the farther shore
For the old Ferryman...”

‘The Prelude’

The picturesque beauty of Windermere also inspired artists, many of whom used West’s original viewing stations. Thomas Girtin produced a watercolour of Lake Windermere and Belle Isle, c. 1793-4 and Joseph Farington depicted a view down Windermere from Rayrigg which was subsequently engraved and published in 1789. J. M. W. Turner sketched at Kentmere Hall on his northern tour on 5 August 1816 and painted ‘Winandermere, Westmorland’ which was subsequently engraved by James Tibbitts Willmore in order to produce a print for Harriet Martineau’s ‘A Complete Guide to the English Lakes’, 1st Edition, 1855. The slate quarries at Kentmere Head were painted by T. Allom in 1834 in a dramatic Picturesque style.

The valley was to provide many other literary associations. Longsleddale is ‘Long Whindale’ in Mrs Humphry Ward’s great Victorian novel, ‘Robert Elsmere’ (1888). W. G. Collingwood, John Ruskin’s secretary lived at the Cottage, next to what is now Ghyll Head Outdoor Education Centre, until 1889 when he moved to Lanehead, Coniston, to be nearer to Ruskin at Brantwood. Beatrix Potter stayed at Holehird with her parents for the summers of 1889 and 1895 and she spent many days hunting for fossils and fungi in the surrounding area. The novelists Charlotte Bronte and Elizabeth Gaskell met for the first time at Briery Close, near Troutbeck, in August 1850 and became friends. Gaskell went on to write the first life of Charlotte Bronte in 1857.

THE 20TH CENTURY

In the 20th century, the valley continued to attract a variety of literary and cultural associations. Arthur Ransome attended Preparatory School at The Old College in Windermere, which he hated and so he escaped to his Great Aunt Susan, who lived at The Terrace in Windermere. Ransome sailed on Windermere in the 1920s and 30s, mainly in his 14-foot dinghy called ‘Swallow’. Arthur Ransome and his wife had lodgings at Great Hartbarrow whilst waiting to move into nearby Low Ludderburn, where he lived from 1925 to 1935. Of the many houses he lived in, in the Lake District, this was the one he stayed in the longest and thought of as home. It was here that he wrote ‘Swallows and Amazons’ (1930), ‘Swallowdale’ (1931), ‘Winter Holiday’ (1933), ‘Coot Club’ (1936), and most of ‘Pigeon Post’ (1936). The view from the popular nearby viewpoint over Windermere Lake of Gummers How has an uncanny resemblance to the endpaper map of ‘Swallows and Amazons’. Blake Holme, a small island close to the east shore
of Windermere was described by Ransome himself as the island most used as Wildcat Island in ‘Swallows and Amazons’. The tiny island of Silverholme is ‘Cormorant Island’, Belle Isle is ‘Long Island’ and Bowness is ‘Rio’:

“The little town is known by another name, but the crew of the Swallow had long ago given it the name of Rio Grande”.

In 1930 Alfred Wainwright at the age of 23 came for the first time to the Lake District on a walking holiday. He arrived at Windermere and climbed nearby Orrest Head, where Wainwright saw his first view of the Lake District Fells. This moment marked the start of what Wainwright himself later described as his love affair with the English Lake District leading to his iconic seven-volume ‘Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells’ published between 1955 and 1966, consisting entirely of reproductions of his manuscript.

More recently, Longsleddale is the inspiration for the fictional valley of Greendale in the 1980s children’s books ‘Postman Pat’ by John Cunliffe, a Kendal schoolteacher. The books were made into a television series which has had global success. They tell the story of late 20th century rural life in a fictional Lakeland valley.

2.2.5 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

Windermere is the cradle of the conservation movement. It was here that the first environmental protest took place against proposed railway development. Here also in the late 19th century met the key figures, (including Beatrix Potter, John Ruskin and Canon Rawnsley) whose activities would lead to the founding of the National Trust. There have been numerous proposals over the years which have brought development, tourism and industry into conflict with the conservation movement and today, the lack of a reservoir, the lack of an airplane factory and limited access by train, are all a result of battles won or partially won by the conservation movement. As a result of the Heelis and Trevelyan bequests and other donations and purchases, the National Trust holdings in the Windermere area are very substantial and formed the core of the National Trust’s early landholding estate in the Lake District.

The opening of the Kendal to Windermere railway line in 1847 was the catalyst for an expansion of the town and a huge increase in resident and visiting population (see above). The Kendal and Windermere Railway Company had originally intended to construct the line between Kendal to Lowwood on the lake shore. Engineering and financial constraints and vociferous opposition to the scheme caused the railway company to amend its plans.
and terminate the line at Birthwaite, a mile and a half from the lake. William Wordsworth, then resident at Rydal Mount was utterly opposed to the railway and the potential changes that it would bring to his beloved Lake District. His campaign against the railway began in 1844 with his letters to newspapers and the publication of two sonnets, the first of which, ‘On the Projected Kendal and Windermere Railway’, began:

“Is there no nook of English ground secure
From rash assault?”

His further worry was that the proposed railway line would be later extended to run through Rydal Park, behind his residence at Rydal Mount and on to Grasmere. Wordsworth was soon joined in his protest by local landowners, including the owners of the mansions at Dove Nest and Holehird, who like him were concerned over the potential effects to their peaceful abode not just of the railway but of the passengers that the railway would bring. Despite criticism of their stance by the Railway Commissioners, who could see the benefits of easier access to the Lake District by the urban working class, they succeeded in halting the advance of the railway at Birthwaite (now Windermere).

The proposal for the extension of the Windermere line to Ambleside was resurrected in 1876 and again attracted a famous opponent in the form of John Ruskin. Like Wordsworth, Ruskin’s objections appear now to be not entirely altruistic and one of his letters on the subject included the memorable assertion concerning the populace that “I don’t want to let them see Helvellyn while they are drunk”. The proposal was again defeated by the opposition of landowners and a lack of investment.

In the first half of the 20th century a movement began amongst wealthy individuals with a concern for the maintenance of the Lake District’s cultural landscape and traditions, to purchase key farms in order to conserve them and their tenants’ way of life. This development was particularly effective in Windermere and eventually formed the basis for the National Trust’s substantial land ownership in this area.

Similar activity was undertaken by the Reverend H. H. Symonds in other parts of the Lake District and in 1937, together with R. S. T. Chorley, he established the Lake District Farms Estates Limited to further pursue the purchase and protection of farms. One of these was Stockdale Farm in Longsleddale, which was placed under National Trust restrictive covenant in 1944.

However, the most famous personality involved in the purchase and protection of farms which were later donated to the National Trust was Beatrix Potter, better known in the Herdwick world as Mrs Heelis. By the early 1920s she had developed a concern for the loss of fell farms and of the traditional Herdwick sheep systems. In the early 1920s she acquired Troutbeck Park which at that time was one of the largest fell and Herdwick farms in the Lake District. The flock had been neglected and the farm was run down when she acquired it, but she worked with her shepherds to improve the quantity and quality of Herdwicks and soon between 700 to 800 draft ewes were sold from the farm each year. When she was considering the terms on which she would leave the farm to the National Trust she wanted to leave a large landlord’s flock of 1,100 heafed pure bred Herdwicks to protect the unfenced heaf and the farm’s economic sustainability. Consequently in the 1940s, in the Heelis bequest, she stipulated that on her fell farms that she left to the
Beatrix Potter was also active in protests against developments that she felt would damage the special qualities of the Lake District. These included a campaign against the construction of a seaplane factory at Cockshott Point on Windermere in 1911 which she fought with the assistance of Canon Rawnsley. Potter first met Rawnsley at Wray Castle in 1882 when she spent a summer there when she was sixteen. This meeting was to lead to a life-long friendship and the founding of the National Trust. The public inquiry was held as a result of petitions and letters to newspapers and the factory was closed in 1912. In World War II another seaplane factory was established on Windermere, at Calgarth Park, to construct Short Sunderland planes for the war effort. The Friends of the Lake District opposed this development from the start, and although a substantial factory and workers village was built and operated through the war years, the Friends obtained an agreement from the Government that the factory would be removed after the war. This factory was subsequently removed by the end of 1949.

As a result of the Heelis and Trevelyan bequests and other donations and purchases, the National Trust’s substantial holdings in the Windermere area formed the core of the National Trust’s early landholding estate in the Lake District. An early purchase was the site of the Roman fort at Ambleside, acquired through public subscription in 1913. In 1913 Queen Adelaide’s Hill, a viewpoint overlooking the lake shore just north of Bowness, was also purchased through public subscription. This property included the 17th century house at Low Millerground. Rectory Farm and Cockshott Point, on the eastern shore of Windermere opposite Belle Isle, were purchased in 1927. Ladyholme, one of the islands in Windermere was gifted to the Trust in 1938 having previously been purchased for preservation by the Groves family in 1908.

The Wray Castle Estate was given to the Trust by the Barclay family in 1929, and the later acquisition of Claife Woods in 1962 (in lieu of death duties from the Curwen Estate) made it possible for the National Trust to protect almost all the shore from the ferry north to Wray Castle and to open it to the public. The Claife property included the Picturesque Station which has been conserved by the National Trust and made accessible to visitors. The National Trust currently owns 2,286 hectares of land in the valley, of which 2,193 hectares is inalienable. It also has an additional two hectares of leased land and 387 hectares of covenanted land.

In the early 1960s water supply became a source of contention between those wishing to protect this cultural landscape and those wishing to harvest its plentiful rainfall. In 1961 the Manchester Corporation promoted a Bill in Parliament to build a reservoir in Bannisdale east of Longsleddale and turn Ullswater into a reservoir. The campaign to
save Ullswater and Bannisdale was notable for the vehemence and the magnitude of the support it commanded. The Board lodged a petition in opposition and retained counsel and the water clauses in the Bill were eventually defeated by the eloquence of Lord Birkett in a debate in the House of Lords in February 1962 two days before he died.

After the rejection of those proposals, a meeting of all parties was convened to consider the way forward. The Corporation engaged consultants who, in February 1964, recommended abstracting 20 million gallons daily from Ullswater and pumping it into Haweswater, abstracting the same amount from Windermere and pumping it to the Thirlmere aqueduct and constructing a huge new reservoir in the Winster valley. The reservoir would have been about twice the size of Haweswater and would have inundated the village of Bowland Bridge. The Board objected strongly to the proposed reservoir in the Winster valley and the abstraction at Ullswater, but indicated that it was willing to discuss the proposed abstraction from Windermere. The Corporation did not proceed with the Winster reservoir but responded by publishing a draft Water Order in 1965 providing for abstraction from both Windermere and Ullswater. A new element in the Order was the proposal to drive a second tunnel from Haweswater to emerge at the head of the Longsleddale valley. The Board lodged objections to the Order because of the adverse effects of draw-down of the lakes and the damage which the new aqueduct would cause to an unspoiled valley. A public inquiry was held in June of 1965. Michael Jopling, the Member of Parliament for Westmorland at the time, spoke at the Parliamentary debate against the Winster reservoir proposal. The Minister’s decision in May 1966 approved the proposals for abstraction from both Windermere and Ullswater, subject to tight controls over the infrastructure and a limit on draw down was imposed for the latter. The proposed aqueduct to Longsleddale was refused. Subsequently, in 1971 the Corporation came back with a proposal for a second aqueduct, this time to be routed via Shap. As the Minister had refused a second aqueduct in 1966, the Board felt that it was for the Corporation to justify the need for the additional capacity. In any event, it considered the proposed capacity of the new aqueduct (55 million gallons daily) to be excessive. The Board voiced its reservations to a public inquiry in December 1973. The Minister’s decision in 1974 acknowledged that the proposed aqueduct would have spare capacity but considered that this was prudent in view of the age of the Corporation’s other supply lines. The new aqueduct was constructed.

Car parking has also been a source of conflict. The Lake District Special Planning Board used its planning powers to stop the temporary use of fields in Troutbeck for up to 700 cars at peak periods because of the environmental impact on the landscape. The car park operator appealed against this control, but the Minister dismissed the appeal applying the Sandford Principle, which provided that in the event of irreconcilable conflict between the two national park purposes, the first, conservation of the environment, should prevail over the promotion of recreation.

Similar conflicts between National Park purposes have had to be resolved by the Board where the recreational use of tracks over the fells by motorised four-by-four vehicles has damaged the route and the landscape and had an impact on other users. An example of the management measures taken is at Gatescarth Pass running from the head of Longsleddale over to Haweswater where locked gates have been placed at both ends and a permit system now operates to control the level of use.
Similarly, the regulation of the recreational use of Windermere lake has been a long-running issue too. The Lake District Special Planning Board brought in byelaws in 1978 to make registration of power driven vessels compulsory. With increasing numbers of powered craft over the following decade, leading to growing conflict between different lake and lakeshore users, noise and shore erosion from boat wash were becoming issues. The Board were mindful of the second national park purpose aimed at quiet enjoyment. The Board decided to promote a 10 miles per hour speed limit (now 10 nautical miles per hour) on the lake which would bring it into line with the other three large lakes. Fast motor boating and water skiing interests objected to the proposed byelaw. After a long public inquiry in 1994/5, ministerial decisions, and High Court rulings, eventually in 2000 the speed limit on Windermere was confirmed, but with a five year transitional period to allow businesses and recreational interests to adjust. The byelaw came into effect in 2005 underpinning the principle of quiet enjoyment in the Lake District National Park.

An unusual extraction industry operated in Kentmere in the 20th century; that of diatomite extraction. Microscopic organisms thrived in the clear water of Kentmere Tarn at the end of the last ice age. The fossilised remains filled the bed of the tarn with the diatomite, a whitish clay. Twice in the 19th century local landowners attempted to drain the tarn, but both attempts failed. In the 20th century the diatomite under the tarn became a valuable resource used for filtration and insulation. The diatomite was scooped from the former bed of the tarn and processed in the local works. The operation ceased in 1985, but the diatomite extraction had left a newly-shaped Kentmere Tarn.

In 1966, the Lake District Special Planning Board acquired Brockhole in order to establish the first National Park Centre in the United Kingdom, as recommended by the Hobhouse Committee. It hosts hundreds of thousands of visitors a year and hundreds of school and youth groups. It is now implementing a significant redevelopment masterplan.
2.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The Windermere Valley is one of the largest in the English Lake District and it is therefore not surprising that it includes many attributes related to the three identified themes of Outstanding Universal Value.

The characteristic Lake District field pattern of inbye fields surrounded by intakes on the lower fells is particularly evident in the long narrow valleys of Troutbeck, Kentmere and Longsleddale and there are a high number of farm houses dating from the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Examples of ancient field systems include the former common field by Kentmere Hall, at the Head of Kentmere, while the area of low, wooded fells to the south of the A591 road from Kendal to Windermere displays a more widespread pattern of small, irregular fields. These are complemented by many examples of larger planned enclosures on the fells, laid out in the late 18th and 19th centuries, including part of the Troutbeck Hundreds. Many of the settlements in the Windermere Valley reflect the importance of its agro-pastoral agriculture including the classic farming hamlet of Troutbeck with its string of important Statesmen’s farms.

This is the principal area for Rough Fell sheep in the Lake District and there are 16 flocks in the valley alongside Swaledale flocks and rather fewer Herdways than in the central and western valleys. However, there are two important Herdwick farms at Troutbeck Park and Kentmere Hall.

The evidence for early land use in Windermere is extensive and includes early prehistoric stone circles and burial monuments, well-preserved examples of Romano-British enclosed settlements, and medieval shielings. There are good examples of medieval pele towers at Kentmere Hall and Yewbarrow Hall in Longsleddale and former deer parks at Troutbeck and Kentmere. Past industries include slate quarrying and lead mining, although on a smaller scale than in other areas of the Lake District, but in the 19th century water powered processes including bobbin manufacture became important for example in the large village of Staveley.

Windermere, with its spectacular Picturesque views at the head of the lake, framed against a backdrop of high mountains, and its relatively easy access by coach from the south, was one of the principal attractions in the Lake District for early visitors in the 18th century. The lakeside town of Bowness developed to provide facilities for this and the adjacent town of Windermere developed directly as a result of the arrival of the railway in 1847. The early development of villas and designed landscapes around the lake and on its islands has produced one of the most important Picturesque landscapes in Europe. Key buildings include the cylindrical house on Belle Isle, Storrs Hall and the Station at Claife, constructed on one of the viewing stations identified by Thomas West. The western shore of Windermere, around Claife, was the location of the some of the earliest Picturesque tree planting in the Lake District. The tradition of villa construction continued into the early 20th century with the building of a small group of houses which are considered to be some of the best examples of the Arts and Crafts style.
Although none of the Romantic poets and writers lived in the Windermere Valley, they were frequent visitors to its villas and mansions and the area was featured in many of Wordsworth’s works including ‘The Prelude’ and ‘Michael’. It was perhaps more inspirational for the visual arts and many important artists including P. J. de Loutherbourg, Joseph Farington and J. M. W. Turner sketched and painted scenes in the valley.

Windermere was the setting for one of the earliest and best known environmental campaigns in the Lake District, against the construction of the railway from Kendal to Windermere (and, it was feared, beyond). William Wordsworth was one of the most vocal critics of this scheme, and although he was unsuccessful, and the railway was constructed to Windermere, this set an important precedent for later campaigners including Ruskin and Rawnsley. Other campaigns in Windermere included a successful battle by Rawnsley, Beatrix Potter and others to prevent the construction of a seaplane factory on the lake. Windermere also has examples of farms and land that were purchased by private individuals in order to preserve the traditional agro-pastoral way of life. The most famous of these was the purchase and management of Troutbeck Park Farm by Beatrix Potter, which was later gifted to the National Trust. The Lake District Farms Estates Limited also purchased farming land in Longsleddale which was covenanted to the National Trust. The National Trust’s property in the Windermere Valley is substantial and includes early purchases such as Ambleside Roman Fort and significant gifts including Wray Castle. The Trust also owns the classic Statesman’s farm at Townend, Troutbeck, which is one of the best-known farm houses in the Lake District.

Battles to preserve the scenic beauty of Windermere continued into the later 20th and early 21st centuries and have included successful actions to prevent the construction of a reservoir in the Winster Valley and a tunnel from the Haweswater reservoir to carry water through Longsleddale. The latest significant conservation initiative was the introduction by the National Park Authority of a 10 miles per hour speed limit for boats on Windermere (now 10 nautical miles per hour).

The Windermere Valley clearly demonstrates important attributes for all the three identified and intertwined themes of Outstanding Universal Value in the Lake District. The evidence for the long development and persistence of agro-pastoral farming is strong. The valley is also particularly important for aesthetic inspiration and it is of fundamental significance for the development of the early conservation movement.
FIGURE 2.21 Windermere and the Langdale Pikes at sunset
3. CONISTON

Description, History and Development
3. **THE CONISTON VALLEY**

“...we shall next fix our eyes upon the vale of Coniston, running likewise from the sea, but not (as all the other valleys do) to the nave of the wheel, and therefore it may be not inaptly represented as a broken spoke sticking in the rim”.

*William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)*

### 3.1 DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Coniston Valley sits in the centre of the south part of the English Lake District. It runs south from its northern boundary with the valleys of Langdale and Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside with the Duddon Valley to its west and Windermere to the east. The character of the valley is dominated by high, rugged fells including Coniston Old Man and Wetherlam in the west, the linear, glacial lake which is Coniston Water running north to south for the greater part of the length of the valley, and the extensive woodlands and forestry plantations on the low fells east of the lake.

The underlying geology of the north western part of Coniston Valley is the Borrowdale Volcanic Group which, following glacial carving, has produced the high and rugged fells. A sharp break in the geology of the area is indicated by the line of Coniston Limestone which runs from south-west to north-east, passing over Torver High Common and through the Yewdale Valley. South and east of this line the geology comprises softer slates and shales of the Silurian Era, which have weathered to create a lower, rolling landscape contrasting strongly with the volcanic landscape in the northern part of the valley.

The legacy of extensive mining and quarrying on the fellsides (including a number of quarries still producing slate today), pastoral farming on lower ground, extensive woodlands supporting traditional woodland industries, intensive silviculture centred on Grizedale, and the large, bustling Victorian village of Coniston, combine to create a strong sense of a working landscape. The rugged, wild and remote natural beauty of the high fells is not diminished by past industries and the combination of a richly patterned agricultural landscape, the large lake, the patchwork of deciduous woodlands and forests and occasional parkland and designed landscape creates stunning scenery. See Figure 3.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figures 3.2 and 3.3 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Coniston Valley.
Figure 3.1 Coniston Valley
Illustrative Map

1. Braughton Tower
2. Yew Tree Farm (owned by National Trust)
3. Coniston Hall (owned by National Trust)
4. Hawkshead Old Hall and Courthouse (owned by National Trust)
5. Coniston Copper Mines
6. Low Wood Gunpowder Works
7. Monk Coniston and Tarn Haws (owned by National Trust)
8. Wray Castle (owned by National Trust)
9. Claife Station (owned by National Trust)
10. Belmount (owned by National Trust)
11. Brantwood (owned by The Brantwood Trust)
12. Beatrix Potter’s house at Hill Top (owned by National Trust)
Figure 3.3 Coniston Valley South Cultural Landscape Map
### FIGURE 3.4 The contribution of the Coniston Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

#### CONISTON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
<td>🏘️</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
<td>🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Common land</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodland industries</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water-powered industry</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market towns</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery and appreciation of a rich cultural landscape</td>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Villas</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designed landscape</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
<td>🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
<td>🏘️</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
<td>🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
<td>🏘️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of a model for protecting cultural landscape</td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>🏘️ 🏘️ 🏘️</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 3.5 View of Hawkshead and the church of St Michael and All Saints. The view includes a fine example of a shard fence constructed from interlocking vertical slates.

FIGURE 3.6 The Coniston Fells in winter, with Lowick in the foreground
3. CONISTON

THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The Coniston Valley is very different to the northern and western Lake District valleys in its composition and in how its landscape and scenery change as the rivers make their journey to the sea. Typically a Lakeland river valley begins in the wild and remote high fells before more gentle topography and increasing human influence combine to produce a ‘softer’, more managed landscape. Here in Coniston the valley runs north-south but the most obvious differences in landscape character are a west-east split with high, rugged fells including the Coniston Old Man and Wetherlam on the west side of the valley and heavily forested low fell to the east extending across to the west shore of Windermere for almost its entire length. Human influence is readily apparent throughout the valley. Outside the high fell and forests the valley is relatively densely settled.

Recreation contributes much to the character of the valley with the Coniston fells being popular with walkers and climbers. Grizedale Forest is a recreation hub for cycling, all kinds of family activities and the arts, and there is a range of water-based activities on Coniston Water, the third largest lake in the Lake District. There are many centres for outdoor activities in the Coniston Valley area including the Youth Hostel Association’s three hostels in the Coniston Valley area at Hawkshead (Esthwaite Lodge), Coniston Holly How, and Coniston Copper Mines. There are Holiday Fellowship holiday centre at Monk Coniston Hall; Water Park Lakeland Adventure Centre; Low Bank Ground run by the Brathay Trust for Wigan Council; Thurston Outdoor Education Centre, owned and operated by South Tyneside Council; The University of Birmingham’s Raymond Priestley Centre; and the Kepplewray Centre, at Broughton-in-Furness.

Despite, or perhaps even because of, former mine and quarry workings, the Coniston fells have all the attributes of wild, remote high fell. Mine and quarry waste add to the rugged character of the natural crags, outcrops and screes to create a coarse-textured, ‘rough’ appearance to the landscape. The clutter of spoil tips, adits, shafts and decaying mining machinery give parts of the landscape a haunting feeling of abandonment.

To the east of Coniston Water the extensive woodlands and forestry plantations comprise some of the most densely wooded areas of England and can only really be appreciated from elevated viewpoints. The forest on the low fells hides an uneven
3. CONISTON

In the more gentle terrain to the south of the main forest the rural road network negotiating this undulating topography and servicing the scattered farms and small settlements is a challenge to all but the very local. To the west of Coniston Water and the River Crake, south of the Coniston Fells, the landscape is similar low fell topography and altitude (generally <300 metres) to the east but has historically been clear of woodland and forestation; it is mostly common grazing with extensive patches of bracken and gorse and rocky outcrops, with a distinctive character.

Even though Coniston is a working landscape, it retains a natural beauty as intense as any part of the English Lake District. There is designed landscape in parts but not on the same scale as some other parts of the region, and the slightly untamed nature of the landscape is always apparent.

3.1.2 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The medieval origins of the agricultural landscape in the Coniston Valley can be seen in the survival of single ancient farms with their small irregular fields at the head of the lake, around the village of Coniston, and along the adjoining Woodland Valley to the south-west. Unlike the valleys that lie deeper in the heart of the Lake District fells, Coniston does not appear to have had a stone-walled ring garth in the medieval period, separating a common field in the valley bottom land from the grazed fellsides. However, the remains of a former common or town field can be identified on the lake shore in the area between Coniston and Coniston Hall, which performed the same function as commonly-farmed, arable fields. The town field was probably established by the end of the 13th century, together with a deer park around Coniston Hall, the course of which can still be traced on the ground.

Areas of intake can be seen on the slopes approaching Torver High Common in the west while more extensive areas of former intake, around the ancient farms of Lawson Park and Low Parkamoor, on the east side of the valley, are now obscured by conifer plantation. The higher ground on the flanks of Coniston Old Man comprises open fell grazing and this extends down to the lake shore at Torver Back Common.

FIGURE 3.8 Conifer plantations alongside stands of native woodland in Grizedale Forest, on the eastern side of Coniston Water

topography with frequent rocky outcrops. The forest has the capacity to absorb high numbers of visitors on the dense network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks used as mountain bike trails emanating from the visitor centre at Grizedale. To the south of the coniferous forestry the low fells are a patchwork of pasture and deciduous woodland which creates a sense of enclosure and intimacy except on the higher ridges where fine panoramic views can be had.
FIGURE 3.9 Shepherds' flocks and native sheep breeds in the Coniston Valley
WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS
The long tradition of sheep farming continues today. There are 77 farms with fell-going flocks in the Coniston Valley area. There are 14 Herdwick flocks, four Rough Fell flocks and five Swaledale flocks, registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are four National Trust landlord flocks in the Coniston Valley: Tilberthwaite, High Yewdale, Coniston Hall and Hoathwaite (‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ 2005).

There are about 4,150 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Coniston Valley, around five per cent of its total area, and most of the open fell. The main areas of Common Land are west of Coniston Water, including the eastern part of Duddon, Seathwaite, Torver and Coniston Common, Blawith Common, Woodland Fell, Torver Low Common, Torver Back Common, and part of Lowick High Common. Bethecar Moor is the only Common Land to the east of Coniston Water.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS
The Walna Scar Shepherds’ Meets are in July and November. The summer Meet is on the Friday nearest 21 July alternately at the Blacksmiths Arms, Broughton Mills, Newfield Hotel, Seathwaite and Church House Torver. The Shepherds’ Meet and Show are at the same place in July and on the first Saturday in November. These Meets are for the District of Seathwaite, Torver, Dunnerdale, Broughton, Woodland and Coniston. The Whitehaven News reported that the Centenary Celebration of Walna Scar Shepherds’ Meet was held at The Church House Inn, Torver in November 2008, which included the showing of Herdwick and Swaledale Sheep, followed by an evening singing competition in a packed Church House Inn. It was noted how similar the event remains to the first show 100 years ago.

The Lakeland Country Fair takes place every year at Torver in August and the Coniston Country Fair is held at Coniston Hall every July. These are both typical Lake District shows with Herdwick sheep-showing classes, shows for terriers, beagles, foxhounds and lurchers, Cumberland & Westmorland Wrestling, Fell Races, traditional Cumbrian walking stick show, and local crafts and food.

The Hawkshead Show is also held in August and includes a large variety of sheep classes, including Herdwick and Rough Fell, horse showing, horse carriage and horse jumping classes, arts and crafts and a hound trail.

Broughton-in-Furness at the south west of the Coniston Valley area, on the Duddon Estuary, is one of the two locations for the main Herdwick sales of ewes and rams in September and October each year. The other is Cockermouth, just outside the north west boundary of the National Park.

FARMSTEADS
The farm buildings and walls in the Coniston Valley present the solid stone character familiar from other valleys, making use of the local Silurian slate and green slate for roofing material. Shard fences are common in this area, for example around Broughton Mills.
On the northern edge of the valley is a group of good examples of typical 17th and early 18th century farm buildings belonging to the National Trust. Their farms in Yewdale, north of Coniston, are one of the best surviving groups of early vernacular farm buildings.

**TABLE 3.1 Key Farmhouses in the Coniston Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmhouse</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONISTON HALL</strong></td>
<td>One of the best surviving examples of manor house in the Lake District. Built in the 16th century, the domestic wing was added c. 1580. The hall became ruinous by 1770 due to the relocation of the Fleming family to Rydal. The NE wing was demolished and part of the hall was converted to a large bank barn. The hall displays a fine series of rounded chimneys in Lake District style, tapering and on square bases. The Coniston Hall Estate was acquired by the National Trust in 1971.</td>
<td>16th – 18th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>330447 496347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YEW TREE FARM</strong></td>
<td>The rear part of the house is cruck-framed dating from the mid to late 17th century. The front part of the house was added in 1743 by George and Agnes Walker. The front parlour was furnished in 1934 by Beatrix Potter as a tea room. The range of late 17th and early 18th century barns and cow house has one of the finest examples of a 'spinning gallery' in Cumbria.</td>
<td>17th – 20th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331939 499838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW HALL GARTH</strong></td>
<td>Low Hall Garth is an L-shape series of buildings comprising a house, barn and two cottages. Built in the late 17th/early 18th centuries.</td>
<td>17th – 18th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>330956 502880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABBOT PARK FARMHOUSE</strong></td>
<td>Late 17th/early 18th century house. Roughcast stone with slate roof.</td>
<td>17th – 18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331286 488094</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONISTON

HIGH YEWDALE
High Yewdale is a cluster of two houses, various barns and other farm buildings. The farmhouse has 17th century origins with late 18th century additions.

DATE 17th – 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 331489 499740

LOW YEWDALE
Low Yewdale consists of two farmhouses, two barns and a cottage. The former farmhouse is of 17th or early 18th century origins.

DATE 17th – 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 331172 499115

LOW TILBERTHAITE
Low Tilberthwaite Cottage, near Coniston is a small 17th century farmhouse with an 18th century in-line outbuilding with a well-known ‘spinning gallery’.

DATE 17th – 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 330868 501098

BRIDGE END
Bridge End is a classic small Lake District late 17th/early 18th century design of house and barn under one long roof.

DATE 17th – 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 330109 502921

PARKAMOOR FARM
Parkamoor Farm in 1570 consisted of "one old mansion house, and one olde barne covered with brackens, wherin Christopher Jackson, the third, ther now dwelleth". This presumably was replaced soon after, in the 17/18th century by the current building. This is almost certainly the site of a medieval farm. Archaeological survey has identified remains of a longhouse at the adjacent High Parkamoor farm and other building platforms survive at Low Parkamoor.

DATE 16th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 330700 492638
3. CONISTON

**HIGH ARNSIDE**

High Arnside farmhouse is a remarkably intact traditional Cumbria dwelling built in 1697 to a typical of the area around Coniston and Hawkshead. Contains spice cupboard with inscription “HER 1697”.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 333233 501704

**HOATHWAITE FARM**

Hoathwaite Farm is an extremely grand two and a half storey, 17th century farmhouse of importance for its unusual and distinctive form and wealth of woodwork and other dateable features.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 329596 494922

**LOW ARNSIDE**

Low Arnside is good example of early 18th century date farmstead with house and barn. Gifted to the National Trust by Beatrix Potter.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 333359 501904

**HIGH GROUND FARM, HOATHWAITE**

While the majority of buildings at High Ground farm date from the 19th century, the farmhouse and cruck barn appear to date from an earlier period, probably the 18th century.

**DATE** 18th – 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 329163 495261

**HAWES FARM**

Farmhouse and outbuildings, mid to late 18th century in roughcast stone with slate roof. Interior has 18th century fireplace with corbelled lintel and cast iron range.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 321361 490671
LUMBHOLME
Lumbholme at Broughton Mills, late 17th or 18th century farmstead with later alterations and additions.

DATE 17th – 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 321889 490355

TOWN END FARMHOUSE AND OUTBUILDINGS
Ruined house and outbuilding. Probably 17th century with later outbuilding. This presumably marked the limit of either Torver township to the NE or perhaps Troughton to the SW.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 333748 492263

HIGH BETHECAR
Farmhouse with attached barn and outbuilding. Fireplace key stone inscribed: “JCA/1756”.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 330347 489780

BANK END, TORVER
House and barn of early 18th century date. Its position adjacent to Town End and Lords Wood suggest an earlier foundation date than its 18th century appearance.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 326512 492832

TROUGHTON HALL
Troughton Hall is mentioned in documents from the mid-16th century. The core of the surviving buildings are probably 17th century while the present farmhouse building may represent 19th century remodelling.

DATE 16th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 325633 491918
3. CONISTON

3.1.3 INDUSTRY

The Coniston area has been a hive of industrial production from at least the medieval period. Woodland industries, water-powered industries, copper mining, iron and copper smelting, and quarrying have all left their mark on the landscape or are demonstrated by surviving buildings. Slate quarrying continues to the present day.

The Coniston Valley has probably the highest concentration of evidence for charcoal burning, potash production, bark peeling and other woodland industries in the Lake District. This is particularly so in the Rusland Valley and on the east side of Coniston Water, Roudsea Wood, and Graythwaite woods. Such industries were strongly dependent on woodland management techniques (timber production, coppicing and standards) and their associated charcoal burning, leading to woodlands becoming a significant feature across large areas of the central and western low fells.

The River Leven which flows out of Windermere had a number of significant water-powered industries along its course, including Backbarrow ironworks and Low Wood gunpowder works. The ‘Dolly Blue’ mill, manufacturing the blue pigment ultramarine, used in the textile industry was also powered by the River Leven at Backbarrow. It occupied what is now the Whitewater Hotel.

Bobbin manufacture was another water powered local speciality. There is evidence that the Lakeland mills alone produced about half of the requirements of the textile mills of Great Britain in the mid-19th century. Stott Park Bobbin Mill is the best surviving example of the bobbin manufacturing industry in the United Kingdom. It is a well preserved working mill, which now operates as a museum and visitor attraction. Other examples include Penny Bridge which was one of the largest in the area along with Stott Park and many others on the River Crake and on the watercourses in the Rusland and Hawkshead areas, such as Nibthwaite Mill.

The Coniston Valley area has a very high concentration of remains of medieval bloomeries (iron smelting sites) which can be found dotted around the shores of Coniston Water, and in the area between Coniston Water and Windermere. Recent archaeological investigation has included the excavation of a water powered bloomery at Blelham Tarn. The later iron industry has also left its mark: some of the workers’ housing that survives is amongst the earliest in the country. Substantial remains, either ruinous or converted in whole or part, exist at Backbarrow and Nibthwaite, Cunsey, Low Wood and Penny Bridge. Backbarrow Furnace is the most extensive site and had the longest working use.
The Borrowdale Volcanic Series includes important mineralisations that have led to the significant mining and quarrying activity in the Coniston Valley area. Extensive mining for copper took place in the Coniston Fells from the 16th century or earlier, and very significant archaeological remains can be seen at Coniston Copper Mines and around Wetherlam. The mine and remains of processing buildings at Penny Rigg are particularly impressive.

The other significant areas of copper mining were at Red Dell Head, Dry Cove Bottom, Tilberthwaite, and Greenburn. The Tilberthwaite and Greenburn copper mines remain a relatively well-preserved, extensive and impressive mining landscape containing the remains of a wide range of upstanding and buried mining features dating from the 17th to the 20th centuries. These include levels, shafts, trials, water management systems for powering machinery, ore transport systems, processing buildings, and spoil heaps.

The slate industry was also very important and huge slate quarries, including underground ‘closeheads’ can be seen. The principal quarries are found at Tilberthwaite and Hodge Close in Little Langdale (Cathedral Quarry) with other significant workings at Penny Rigg, in the Coniston Copper mines valley, at Brandy Crag, at Bursting Stone on the flanks of Coniston Old Man, and at Broughton Moor. The last three quarries are still working.

A narrow band of Coniston Limestone runs from the south west to the north east through the Coniston area, along which is a series of late 18th century limekilns. Lime was an important ingredient, not just to improve recently enclosed land for farming but also to construct or maintain the building stock of the valley which was generally being renewed at this time. Examples are at Broughton Mills, High Pike Haw, and a well preserved example at Yewdale.

The gunpowder works of the Coniston Valley area contributed to Furness and Westmoreland’s supply of the greater part of the United Kingdom’s needs for gunpowder from the late 18th to the early 20th century. Low Wood is the best preserved 19th century gunpowder works in northern England.

In 1869, the Lakeside and Haverthwaite railway was designed to carry coal to the Windermere steamers, iron ore to Backbarrow and sulphur and saltpetre for the Black Beck and Low Wood gunpowder works. Today it is a popular tourist train journey.

### 3.1.4 SETTLEMENTS

The Coniston Valley area contains a number of historical settlements rich in architectural buildings in addition to the vernacular farm built heritage. The key settlements are Coniston, Hawkshead and Broughton-in-Furness along with Near and Far Sawrey. The main hamlets are Torver with others along the course of the river Crake, including High Nibthwaite, Blawith, Water Yeat, Spark Bridge, Lowick, Greenodd and Penny Bridge.
Many of these settlements include stone-built cottages, often in terraces, built to house local industrial workers.

**CONISTON**

Coniston, still very much a working village, grew simultaneously to serve the farming, copper mining and slate quarrying communities. It then expanded as a tourist destination in the Victorian era thanks in part to the opening of a branch of the Furness Railway in 1859. This is reflected in the mix of building styles from vernacular to ‘High Victorian’. The fells, the village and the lake are inextricably linked visually, historically, and economically through past industries and present-day tourism. The village sits comfortably in the landscape and, viewed from the east shore of Coniston Water around Brantwood, the combination of lake, village and fell scenery is magnificent.

Coniston Hall is one of the few substantial manor houses in the central Lake District and the only one owned by the National Trust. It was the seat of the Le Fleming family from 1250, but the present building dates from around 1580 and is built on the site of an earlier hall. It is one of the most noted buildings in the Lake District, with its distinctive tall, rounded chimneys. The bank barn to the north west of the Hall, dating from 1688, is one of the earliest examples in the Lake District and there is another classic bank barn of 19th century date south west of the hall.

**TORVER**

A small village some three miles from Coniston, at the junction of roads from Coniston, Lowick and Broughton. Torver contains some traditional farmsteads, but the main character of the village dates from the arrival of the railway in 1859, which led to the development of local slate quarries and various woodland crafts and industries. A railway station and goods yard became the centre of village near the road junction along with a terrace of houses. St Luke’s church of 1884 was designed by the famous Lancaster architects, Paley and Austin.

**HAWKSHEAD**

Hawkshead is a small town of outstanding historic character, with an historic core that is largely untouched by 20th century development. It has a tangle of narrow streets, squares, yards and alleys (ginnels) that thread between a closely packed jumble of houses, inns, shops, outhouses and civic buildings. Many buildings are of exceptional historic and/or architectural character; 42 are nationally important Listed Buildings, ranging in date from medieval to late 19th century, including the 12th century church, the Grammar School (founded 1588) and the Town Hall (1790).
Hawkshead’s origins are as the administrative centre for the northern estates of Furness Abbey. Hawkshead Courthouse, north of the town, dates from the 13th century and is one of the oldest secular buildings in the Lake District. Hawkshead’s major industry from the 16th century was the woollen industry and this would have provided the motivation to convert surrounding arable land to pasture and additional grazing of the fells. The town’s architectural interest owes much to the Sandys family in the 16th century who made significant investment in the town’s public buildings including the rebuilding of St Michael and All Saints Church. This very large parish church sits in a commanding position on a small hill overlooking the town and the Esthwaite Valley. Sandys also founded Hawkshead Grammar School in 1588, later attended by the young William Wordsworth. Many of the buildings in the town centre today were built from the late 17th to late 18th century as the market grew in importance; one notable example is the fine town hall built in 1790.

FIGURE 3.12 Hawkshead Grammar School, attended by the young William Wordsworth

NEAR AND FAR SAWREY

Near Sawrey and Far Sawrey are two small, separate villages on the historical route between Hawkshead and Kendal, between Esthwaite Water and Windermere. Both have many buildings of architectural quality. The buildings predominantly date from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and include good examples of the vernacular tradition, together with buildings in the Arts and Crafts and the Vernacular Revival styles. Some large Victorian and Edwardian buildings show the spread of tourism from Bowness. Near Sawrey is closely associated with Beatrix Potter who lived at Hill Top and the village provided the settings for a number of her illustrated stories. The early hamlets comprised a number of scattered farmsteads. The arrival of the railway to Windermere
in 1847 led to the development of many large houses and villas. Much of Near Sawrey village and surrounding farmland is owned by the National Trust.

**Broughton-in-Furness**

Broughton-in-Furness on the south-western edge of the Coniston Valley area, close to the Duddon estuary, is a prime example of a planned Georgian town square built in the 1760s at the behest of John Gilpin Sawrey, then Lord of the Manor and resident of Broughton Tower. The town contains many good examples of 18th century provincial dwellings, notably Broughton House and houses around The Square and many Victorian residential and commercial buildings from the post-railway era. St Mary’s Church and churchyard, located almost out of sight of the town, has Norman origins and possibly some Saxon fabric. Broughton Tower up above the town to the north east was originally a 14th century pele tower which the Gilpin Sawreys rebuilt in 1744. It was further altered in the Gothic style in the late 18th century and is now set within fine landscaped grounds with ha-ha, and designed historic parkland.

**Broughton Mills**

A small hamlet set within quiet, hidden countryside at the bridging point over the River Lickle. In the past Broughton Mills was important for water-powered industries and including corn mills, a saw mill, a limekiln and potash kilns. The village inn, the Blacksmith’s Arms, is a focal point in this small village and the centre of social activity during the annual Walna Scar Shepherds’ Meet. Other significant buildings include Lumbholme, a fine example of three-storey 17th century former farmhouse.

**Spark Bridge**

Spark Bridge is named after the early 17th century iron smelting works which was located here. The settlement grew up near the bridge over the River Crake. In 1848 the ironworks was converted into an important bobbin mill, producing a wide variety of woodturning products. A terrace of workers’ housing is located nearby. Spark Bridge also had a woollen mill.

**Haverthwaite**

Originally a farming community with a group of 18th century buildings along the road to Holker and Cartmel, Haverthwaite is located at an important bridging point over the River Leven. At Low Wood, on the south side of the river, opposite Haverthwaite, Isaac Wilkinson and his son John had an iron smelting furnace from 1748 until 1782. In 1799 this was converted into a gunpowder works, and its clock tower erected in 1849 is an icon of the Lake District’s gunpowder industry. Low Wood also includes a unique, small industrial settlement of 18th century workers’ houses including some converted from buildings of the former iron works.

**Backbarrow**

Backbarrow is an industrial settlement with its origins in the medieval period, and is a key bridging point over River Leven which drains from the southern end of Windermere.
The river provided ample water power for corn, fulling and paper mills in Backbarrow. The short section of river here had the greatest concentration of water-powered industries in the southern Lake District. The famous Backbarrow iron works operated from 1711 until 1966. The iron master Isaac Wilkinson lived in the village at Bare Syke (1740) with his more well-known son, John. Backbarrow cotton mill later became the Ultramarine Works, producing chemical for laundry use from 1890 until 1981. This has now been converted to tourist accommodation.

There are good examples of cotton spinners' terraced housing at Low and High Row. The Ulverston to Lakeside Railway formed the vital transport link for the industries and helped to develop tourism in the area by connecting with the Lake Windermere Steamers. Today, the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway is one of the main tourist attractions in the southern Lakes.

Elsewhere in the Coniston Valley the following buildings are important 16th and 17th century houses. Lowick Hall, dating from the Elizabethan period with a later wing of 1746, is a key higher status building in the south of the area. Ashlack Hall’s south and west wings are 16th century in date, and its north and east wings are 17th century. Waterside House, near Newby Bridge was probably built between 1650-60 with an extension dated 1675. Graythwaite Old Hall is 16th or 17th century with an east wing dating to around 1710.

Typical 17th or 18th century houses include The Cragg at Colthouse which was built by William Satterthwaite in 1695, a notable local Quaker. A Friends’ burial ground is nearby. Bull Close, Bull Close Cottage and Barn End at Skelwith, are three houses originating in the late 17th century. Roger Ground House, Hawkshead is probably 18th century in date, with a 17th century wing to the rear.

### 3.1.5 Picturesque Buildings and Landscape

Coniston was not one of the most important destinations for early visitors in search of the Picturesque due to the lack of easy access in the 18th century. But it was visited by the guidebook writer Thomas West, who identified a series of viewing stations around Coniston Water. These still exist, are mostly publicly-accessible, and the views from them largely survive. The Station at Claife, the only viewing station on which a major structure was erected, is just within the eastern boundary of the Valley, on the shore of Windermere. For convenience, it has been described in chapter 2, 2.1.6.

### 3.1.6 Villas and Ornamental Landscaping

The Coniston landscape was the subject of major modifications designed to increase its Picturesque beauty. One of the most popular visitor destinations today is Tarn Hows, just to the north of Coniston Water, a spectacularly beautiful lake created by damming three smaller natural tarns, and surrounded by ornamental tree planting. Several villas, including Brantwood, later the home of John Ruskin, were constructed or developed around Coniston Water and on the Western shore of Windermere.
MONK CONISTON AND TARN HOWS

The Monk Coniston Estate is an important late 18th and 19th century designed landscape which has retained many of its original elements of design and natural beauty. It was developed from the late 18th century onwards during the ownership of two wealthy and influential families.

The first of these was the Knott family, who made their fortune from iron smelting in the Lake District and Scotland. During their ownership (1769 – 1835), there were major extensions to the hall building, extensive tree planting and development of the pleasure grounds around the hall.

In 1835 the Estate was sold to James Garth Marshall. The Marshall family wealth came from the flax spinning industry in Leeds. Marshall bought more land to extend the Estate and was responsible for the creation of Tarn Hows; a celebrated combination of artificial lakes surrounded by broadleaf and conifer woodlands. He undertook further tree planting, particularly of exotic conifers, around the hall and across the Estate.

In 1926 when the Marshall family fortunes declined, the house and gardens were sold to John Perry Bradshaw. The rest of the Estate, including all farmland and Tarn Hows, was purchased by Beatrix Potter in 1930. She immediately sold half at cost price to the National Trust, who bought the land with a generous donation by Sir Samuel Scott of Windermere. The remainder was passed on to the National Trust after Beatrix Potter’s death in 1943. In 1945 the National Trust purchased the hall and gardens, re-uniting the Estate once more.

Since 1945, Monk Coniston Hall has been leased by the National Trust to the Holiday Fellowship (now HF Holidays), and the hall and grounds have been closed to the general public. The hall itself remains in private tenancy, although since September 2007 a new public access route through part of the grounds and gardens is open, reconnecting Tarn Hows with the home of its creator.

Tarn Hows is a designed landscape, influenced by the Picturesque tradition, and is one of the most celebrated and visited areas in the Lake District. Centred on a single tarn created from three smaller, natural tarns, its character is defined by ornamental planting of non-native conifers including larch.

BRANTWOOD

Perhaps the most famous resident of Coniston during the 19th century was the poet, artist and philosopher John Ruskin. He bought the Brantwood Estate on the eastern shore of Coniston in 1871 and set about improving the property in line with his views on aesthetics and husbandry of the land. The appearance of the Brantwood property, now maintained by the Brantwood Trust, is much as it was during Ruskin’s time there. Ruskin is buried in St Andrews churchyard in Coniston along with members of the Collingwood family. Ruskin’s grave is a Celtic-style cross designed by W. G. Collingwood and carved by a local craftsman from Tilberthwaite Stone set on a rock from Elterwater. The Brantwood Estate faces spectacular views of Coniston Old Man. The views, which are substantially unaltered from Ruskin’s day, were one of the primary reasons for his choice of Brantwood as a home. Numerous drawings on view to the public in the house reveal how little of this scene has changed.
The Brantwood Estate today comprises 101 hectares, rising from the lakeshore to open fell-top. The Estate is divided into roughly 36 hectares of ancient semi-natural woodland; 32 hectares of moorland; 20 hectares of pasture; and 5 hectares of gardens enclosing the buildings. This land use and the traditional management of each of the areas are consistent with those practised on the estate in Ruskin’s own day. The Estate is, in all relevant senses, a continuing survival of the environment which Ruskin knew, shaped, drew and wrote about.

Ruskin made many significant interventions in the Estate which can still be seen and understood. They can be broadly divided into three categories: 1) practical landscaping or land-management projects which are nonetheless unique; 2) experimental interventions with a philosophical or demonstrative purpose; 3) garden design and layout with an allegorical meaning.

1) PRACTICAL LANDSCAPING AND LAND-MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

The most significant and historically interesting of these projects was the development of a system of terraces and reservoirs to control the rapid flows of water on the steep estate and restrict the loss of nutrients in the soil. The purpose was to demonstrate a method to create areas suitable for growing crops, herbs, fruit and flowers in a mountain environment. Most of the principal areas of terracing and cultivation still survive, or have been restored to active management. The largest and most important of these is the Moorland Garden. Three reservoirs, one of considerable aesthetic and design complexity, retain their functionality in the water course engineered by Ruskin, which connects the terraced areas. It also embodies a feature that allows a cascade to be run to order outside the front door of the house. The system still furnishes Brantwood with its drinking water.

2) EXPERIMENTAL INTERVENTIONS

Ruskin used Brantwood as a place to explore and demonstrate ways in which projects could be carried out which would better the lives of ordinary working people in mountainous rural areas. Using the skills of local quarrymen and miners, he tunnelled into the hillside to create a community ice-house. Ice was harvested from the lake in winter and made available to households in the area throughout the year. In the Professor’s Garden, a plot was created which was indicative of the average small-holding of a working family. In this area a series of planting experiments was undertaken to prove and demonstrate optimum planting regimes for the successful balanced cultivation of health-giving produce for nutrition and recreation.
3. CONISTON

3) GARDEN DESIGN

As an artist and writer, Ruskin sought, in the shaping of his gardens, to develop a physical statement of underlying belief. The broad concept of the Brantwood Estate was that it represented a paradise garden where man and nature were in harmony. His Secretary, W. G. Collingwood, referred to it as his ‘paradise of terraces’. Although this utopian dream was never fully realised, the extensive landscaping which Ruskin did carry out can all be read as part of the same coherent scheme. One feature in particular represents a dramatic and substantial artistic work in the land – the allegorical ‘Zig Zaggy’ garden. This feature represents the terraces of the Purgatorial Mount in Dante’s ‘Divine Comedy’ and was designed as the main entrance to the estate.

Ruskin's way of writing was to use the direct experience of his physical works and the local environment to illuminate his ideas. Almost all the things Ruskin carried out on the Brantwood Estate and a great deal of its natural features made their way into his writings. In addition, Ruskin's later life was documented in detail by those around him. It is a unique facet of Brantwood that so many surviving aspects of Ruskin's life there can be encountered by visitors who have previously read, or go on to read, about them in his own writings or the writings of others about Ruskin, and in the ideas which his lifestyle and philosophy generated.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the house itself. Brantwood is an 18th century cottage which Ruskin purchased in 1872. The house was enlarged in a series of works until 1905, since when no changes have been made. All of the additions to Brantwood made by Ruskin and his cousin, Joan Severn, retained the earlier features of the building, so that the changes and their purposes can be read. Ruskin's most iconic and significant features were the famous turret, the dining room with its seven-arched window (the seven lanterns of which conform to the seven lamps which he believed guided the creative spirit), the lodge house, and the coach house.

WRAY CASTLE

The Wray Castle Estate is predominantly the work of one man, James Dawson, over a 40-year period during the mid-19th century. Subsequent changes have been few, and for the most part there has been little impact on his original vision. For this reason the estate is a rare and fascinating document of fashion and taste in the mid-19th century. The striking design and scale of execution of Wray Castle, using exposed local slate, together with its bold siting in the heart of one of Victorian Lakeland’s classic views, makes it truly significant.

The Dawson vision for the Estate includes many of the typical features of a Victorian Estate, including a walled garden, fern house, estate church, exotic plantings, boathouses and estate farms. But of particular note is the fine example of a model farm at Low Wray which includes the particularly impressive stable block.

Wray Castle also has important literary and artistic links, the most significant being with William Wordsworth. The design of the house and gardens appear to have been greatly influenced by Wordsworthian ideals and as such, it is a fascinating snapshot of taste and fashion in the 1840s.
### TABLE 3.2 Key villas in the Coniston Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villa</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BELMOUNT</strong></td>
<td>A large Georgian house, built in 1774 for the Reverend Reginald Braithwaite, vicar of Hawkshead for 38 years. Beatrix Potter bought the house and estate in 1937 and it was given to the National Trust in 1944 by William Heelis. It now offers accommodation.</td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>335200 499302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRATHAY HALL</strong></td>
<td>Georgian country house built by George Law, the son of an Attorney who was involved in Backbarrow ironworks. On Law’s death, in the West Indies in 1802, the house passed to his son Henry and in 1804 he in turn rented it to John Harden, a gentleman with connections in Edinburgh and Dublin. It has a fine prospect down Windermere, framed by trees and parkland to the water’s edge. The place-names Brathay Garth and Pull Garth Wood suggest that it occupied land enclosed far earlier.</td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Brathay Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>336657 503108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRANTWOOD</strong></td>
<td>The Brantwood Estate, its gardens, buildings and contents represent a significant and well-preserved survival of the Lakeland home of John Ruskin. Situated on the quiet eastern shore of Coniston Water, with spectacular views of Coniston Old Man which were one of the primary reasons for Ruskin’s choice of Brantwood as a home. Numerous drawings in the collection, and on view to the public in the house, reveal how little of this scene has changed. Also later home to William Linton, wood engraver and revolutionary socialist and his wife, the novelist Eliza Lynn; the poet Gerald Massey; and the watercolourist Arthur Severn and his family.</td>
<td>18th – 19th century</td>
<td>The Brantwood Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331258 495854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONK CONISTON</strong></td>
<td>18th century house with 19th century additions along with pinetum and grounds. Owned by the Marshall family in the 19th century, bought by Beatrix Potter and later acquired by the National Trust.</td>
<td>18th – 19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331829 498320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BROUGHTON TOWER AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPE

The tower was extensively altered and enlarged into a country house, particularly during the 18th and 19th century. Its extensive grounds and parkland were landscaped as described in the Broughton Conservation Area plan. Plantation Woodland and parts of the designed landscape are shown on 1st Edn of 1851.

**DATE** 14th century pele tower, extended to south mid to late 18th century, wings added 1882-3, 20th century additions

**OWNERSHIP** Private

**PROTECTION** Listed

**GRID REFERENCE** 321397 487917

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ESTHWAITE LODGE

Located south of Hawkshead on the west side of Esthwaite Water, and built in 1819-21 for Thomas Alcock Beck, author of 'Annales Furnesienses' (1844), by the architect George Webster. The grounds were especially laid out with easy gradients for Beck’s invalid chair which he was confined to for much of his life, due to a spinal complaint.

**DATE** 19th century

**OWNERSHIP** YHA

**PROTECTION** Listed

**GRID REFERENCE** 335444 496702

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FINSTHWAITE HOUSE

A late 17th century or early 18th century with alterations and front range around 1790. Along with the house are a walled pleasure garden, a kitchen garden and stables. Pennington Lodge Tower on nearby Water Side Knott was built in 1799 by James King of Finsthwaite House to honour the English naval victories over France, Spain and Holland.

**DATE** 17th – 18th century

**OWNERSHIP** Private

**PROTECTION** Listed

**GRID REFERENCE** 336384 487164

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GRAYTHWAITE NEW HALL

16th or 17th century house with later alterations; rear wings of c. 1810 and c. 1920; extension to south, 1890, probably by R. Knill Freeman. Major re-facing in 1840 gave the hall the appearance of a Victorian Gothic-style manor house. It has been in the Sandys family for 500 years, whose family members include Edwyn Sandys who was Archbishop of York from 1576-88. The grounds consist of five hectares of gardens laid out by Thomas Mawson from 1889-99, his first major commission. The Dutch garden, rose garden, yew hedges and terraces show the Arts and Crafts style of the time. An arboretum contains some fine trees. Dan Gibson, Mawson’s architect, designed the sundials and wrought iron gates. The Graythwaite woods were a favourite walking spot for Wordsworth and were the setting for Beatrix Potter’s, ‘The Fairy Caravan’.

**DATE** 16th – 19th century

**OWNERSHIP** Private

**PROTECTION** Listed

**GRID REFERENCE** 337052 491264
3. CONISTON

RUSLAND HALL

A late 17th or early 18th century house with additions of 1850. It was built by the Rawlinson family who also owned nearby Graythwaite Old Hall. The landscaped gardens have vistas down the Rusland valley with many specimen trees and shrubs.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 333951 488807

WRAY CASTLE

Wray Castle is a Victorian castellated mansion built for Dr James Dawson, a surgeon of Liverpool in 1840–47; the architect was J. J. Lightfoot. Dawson was a relative of Hardwicke Rawnsley, who became vicar of Wray Church. Beatrix Potter spent a summer holiday at Wray Castle when she was sixteen in 1882 and met Rawnsley, which was to lead to a life-long friendship. Was for a time a college of marine electronics but has now been taken back in hand by the National Trust.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 337497 501014

BIGLAND HALL

Bigland Hall is a late 16th and 17th century house, remodelled and extended in 1809.

DATE 16th – 17th and 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 335466 483146

3.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Extensive remains of prehistoric activity can be seen on the low fells around Coniston Water. Burial cairns and small stone circles are scattered across the Torver Commons, below Coniston Old Man, and the Blawith Fells, together with small burnt mounds dating from the Bronze Age at Torver Low Common. The Bronze Age clearance cairns and field systems on Blawith and Torver Low Commons are some of the earliest remains associated with farming in the valley.

In the early 20th century there was speculation that some of the iron bloomeries and mining at Coniston Copper mines may go back to the Roman period but in fact there is no evidence at all for Roman activity in the Coniston Valley.
3.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Evidence for early medieval settlement comes from the place-names in the area, many of which have origins in the Norse settlement of the late 10th century. Coniston Water itself was referred to as ‘Turstiniwatra’ in a document of 1160 then ‘Thorstanewater’ in 1196 and ‘Thurston’s Water’ in the 13th century. The personal name ‘Thorstaine’ is Norse in origin. It was known as ‘Thurstonmere’ until as recently as 1800 when it took its name from the nearby settlement of Coniston. ‘Coningeston’ (Coniston) first appears in a document of 1160 and translates as ‘the King’s tun’. This may indicate that the area once formed an important part of a pre-Conquest Estate (pre-11th century).

The landscape is likely to have been predominately wooded at the time of the arrival of Norse settlers on the west coast of Cumbria from the 10th century. A handful of settlements, such as Hoathwaite Farm, was probably established in clearances on the valley bottom. The place-name element ‘thwaite’ is Norse for a clearing in a wood and can be found at Esthwaite (‘clearing in the ash trees’), Loanthwaite and Cowperthwaite. However, not all examples are directly representative of Norse activity as the use of the ‘thwaite’ suffix continued until at least the 13th century.

Other local place-names that derive from Norse include Wray meaning ‘nook’, Claife meaning ‘cliff’, and Latterbarrow meaning ‘hill where the animals lie’ (Ekwall, E. 1922). Other place-names appear to combine Norse toponyms with personal names. These include Harrowslack meaning ‘the slopes belonging to Harrald’; Tock How – hill or ‘how’ belonging to ‘Toki’ or ‘Tocca’, and Hawkshead or ‘Hawkesete’ combining the Norse for farm with the name ‘Houkr’.

A series of small enclosed field systems and associated outgangs can be identified in the pattern of farms and fields between High Wray and Tock How. These enclosures, of between 10 and 12 acres, appear to have been separate at one time and utilised the well-drained land on the gentle slopes south of Blelham Tarn. The existence of these fields at the heart of a swathe of enclosed fields suggests that they are likely to have been among the first areas to be enclosed. Similar early enclosures may also exist at Low Wray, Hawkshead Fields, High Loanthwaite and to the east of High Wray, among others. It is possible that these field systems were created during the period of Norse colonisation before the foundation of Furness Abbey in 1127.

A Norse ‘Thing’ in the form of a rectilinear terraced mound at Fell Foot in Little Langdale probably indicates an early settlement and a society with likely Scandinavian heritage. Although the mound itself is in the Langdale Valley area much of the associated settlement lies inside the Coniston Valley.

3.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

The majority of the agricultural landscape in the Coniston Valley has its origins in the medieval period and is characterised by single ancient farms with their small irregular fields around the head of the lake, around the village of Coniston and along the adjoining
Woodland Valley to the south west. There is no documentary evidence for a stone-walled ring garth in Coniston in the medieval period, dividing a common field in the valley bottom from the grazed fellsides. However, the remains of a former common or town field can be identified on the lake shore, in the area between Coniston and Coniston Hall, which performed the same function, as commonly farmed, arable fields. The town field was probably established by the end of the 13th century, together with a deer park around Coniston Hall.

Early settlement in this valley area included monastic use of the Furness Fells, between Coniston and Windermere and along the Crake Valley, from the 12th century. The abbots of Furness Abbey were granted almost all of the land in High and Low Furness in 1127, and by 1196 were undisputed landholders in the area. The monks had numerous interests including hunting and pasturage for cattle and sheep. Their iron mining interests in Furness were documented by at least 1292. The process of smelting their raw mined ore required a ready source of charcoal fuel and, in 1339, they were granted entitlement to empark and enclose woodland in High and Low Furness. The earliest examples of this process were the three parks created on the eastern side of Coniston Water, at Water Park, Parkamoor and Lawson Park. It was here that bloomeries were established, probably one in each park, and the surrounding enclosed, managed coppice woodland would have provided their fuel. The rest of the enclosure would be farmed as a ‘herdwick’ or sheep pasture. The remains of bloomer slag heaps can still be found in these Parks. The use of charcoal, however, meant that the extent of surrounding woodland was severely reduced, especially as the tenants of the abbot had the right to take timber for house building and wood sufficient for their daily needs. As a consequence, deforestation was likely to have been significant east of Coniston Water by 1300, but the monks were able to capitalise on their holdings by using the enclosed parks as pasture for cattle and sheep once the woodland was exhausted. In order to extend the useful life of the woodland, the monks also employed the traditional practice of coppicing, but the first mention of this form of forest management in this area only dates to 1512.

The medieval landscape west of Coniston was quite different. The Abbey utilised the previously uncultivated uplands by establishing a number of remote farms to develop sheep farming and from it a trade in wool. It also set up a number of granges the closest of which was in Hawkshead. As with the majority of parish churches in Cumbria, the church in Coniston appears to have been established by the 11th century, serving the Church Coniston parish west of Coniston. There also appear to have been a small number of lay manors – Broughton, Torver and Coniston itself – with origins in the 12th century or perhaps earlier. Earl Tostig held ‘Borch’ as part of his lordship of Hougun in 1066 at the time of the Conquest which was assessed as six plough-lands and it is possible that Broughton preserves this name. The later manor of Broughton seems to have been in the Fells, held by the Lancaster family as a member (part) of their barony of Ulverston. Broughton probably became attached to the Lancaster family after the partition of Furness Fells about 1160, with William de Lancaster choosing the western moiety, which would include Broughton and Dunnerdale. Much of the inbye land west of Coniston, between Broughton and Torver, seems to have been the result of manorial enclosure in the 12th and 13th century: with isolated farmsteads and small hamlets planted within recently cleared woodland.
In the uplands on both sides of Coniston Water there are numerous place-names including the ‘scale’ element, such as The Scale, Scale Head and Scale Ivy Intake. The appearance of these Norse-derived ‘shieling’ place-names may suggest that the areas of good upland pasture had been regularly exploited to provide summer grazing for the lowland cattle perhaps as early as the 12th century.

Manorial enclosure seems to be reflected around Blelham Tarn, outside the monastic lands at the north end of Coniston on the western shore of Windermere. However, there are no documentary references to a common field in this area, nor is it suggested by the pattern of existing boundaries or by place-name evidence. It is possible that the farms within the broad swathe of lowland pastureland may have relied upon their surrounding fields for their arable and meadowland.

At each of the settlements and townships, the surviving field pattern reflects different evolutionary patterns. Heathwaite appears to be an isolated colony farm in the uplands using ground arranged on terraces alongside the lane through the farm – as opposed to an open-field village settlement. This probably dates from the late 12th or 13th century.

The name Lowick Green and Garth Row suggest an early origin with a ring garth. The name first appears as ‘Lofwick’, in 1202. It is divided into two main portions, Upper and Lower, with Lowick Common in the centre. This would be a good candidate for manorial settlement in the 12th century, given that Lowick Hall is located on the west of this layout. It seems to have been granted to Conishead Priory before 1517.

Subberthwaite was a hamlet of Ulverston in 1349, appearing first as ‘Sulbithwayt’ in 1346. Other hamlets in the area included “Tottlebank in the upper valley and High and Low Stennerley and Gawthwaite in the lower part”. The family name of Stannerley derives from a local settlement, appearing as ‘Staynerlith’ in 1246 and later in the 13th and 14th centuries. The family and estate disappeared from records after the 14th century, perhaps merged into Subberthwaite.

The majority of available land on the valley bottom is likely to have been enclosed by tenant farmers prior to the surrender of Furness Abbey at the Dissolution in 1537, with the majority of better land enclosed by the 14th or early 15th century. The disasters of the 14th century had left a reduced population who were able to expand outwards to create larger holdings on the enclosed land. The 15th century saw a growth in the rural population and a revival of the agricultural economy. Any new enclosure during the late 15th and early 16th centuries is likely to have been piecemeal and small scale.

Furness Abbey appears to have attempted further to restrict the growth in illegal enclosure in the early years of the 16th century. This is suggested by two agreements made between Furness Abbey and their tenants regarding new enclosure, the first in 1509 and the second in 1532. These agreements allowed an additional 1½ acres of land (for use as arable) to be enclosed from the pasture for every 6s. 8d, of yearly rent paid on existing holdings. Clearly this was an attempt to control further intaking by existing tenants, rather than a restriction on new farms. The preamble to the agreement refers to the fact that the tenants in the Furness Fells had “enclosed common of pasture more largely than they ought to do”. 
The enclosure of the upland fells by the monks for their new granges seems to have been responsible for the growth of settlements in and around Rusland, Sawrey and more generally between Coniston Water and Windermere, and east of the Crake. The 12th and 13th centuries appear to have been a period of sustained population growth throughout High Furness. It is likely that many of the farms and hamlets that are scattered throughout the Hawkshead and Claife estate were established at this time. Farms that predated the foundation of the Abbey may have become monastic tenants, retaining their holdings and paying rent or a levy to the Abbot. It has been suggested that the numerous ‘ground’ farm names that surround Hawkshead were created under patronage of the Abbey as early as the 13th century, even if their modern names were coined in later centuries. It is unlikely that many farms were established after 1509 as a result of the restrictions on new enclosure on monastic land imposed by the Abbey.

Hawkshead itself probably originated as a grange settlement belonging to Furness Abbey. A chapel at Hawkshead was included in an agreement between Furness and Conishead c. 1200 so the settlement certainly predates this; but the church of St Michael is no earlier than the end of the 15th century. ‘Hawkesete’ combining the Norse ‘saetr’ (shieling) with the personal name ‘Houkr’, suggests an early seasonal settlement was developed as a permanent grange by the monks. It is unclear when the common field at Hawkshead was established, although it may have had an association with the arrival of lay brothers from Furness Abbey and the establishment of the grange. The only documentary reference to the common field appears in a lease of 1513 between the Abbey and one Thomas Doweling, for a ‘parcel’ or one tenth of the common field. The common field system at Hawkshead appears to have spread from Fieldhead to the north of Hawkshead village, and south to Esthwaite Lodge. Within this area a number of fossilised boundaries can be seen marking the edges of the long narrow strips running from east to west, marked either by hedgerows or shards fences. Shard fences are common to the south of Hawkshead village and may have been set up during the later subdivision of the common field.

Furness Abbey administered the grange through bailiwicks, later sometimes called manors. The former parsonage (now Glebe House) behind St Michaels Church is in the centre of a separate holding, presumably separate glebe lands. Although monastic granges were maintained by lay brothers this perhaps gave a superior position to the abbey’s bailiff.

A group of strip fields from medieval farming practices survive at Lowick Bridge. Conishead Priory certainly had mills and land in Lowick, and this is a reminder that the picture of manorial enclosure to the west of the Crake and monastic enclosure to the east probably oversimplifies historical reality. It is known from contemporary sources that Peter de Lowick gave the Priory canons a rent from lands at Lowick, and William de Towers gave land by Stainton Beck, extending from the Crake as far as the road to Routand Beck. John Penny in 1517 paid the canons £2 6s. 8d. as a fine on taking over the tenement in Lowick previously rented by his father. The Conishead rental of 1536 shows that Rowland Pennington had a mill on the Crake at a rent of 36s. 8d., and William Holme a fulling mill, etc., at 10s. rent. Conishead Priory also owned Hoathwaite farm and settlement here was first documented in the early 13th century. Other secular ownerships are recorded at ‘Cuningeston’ which was referred to in a 13th century document recording a grant of land.
from Gilbert Reinfrid to Gilbert Bernulf in return for military service and obligations. The document outlined the ownership as an area bounded clockwise by Torver, Little Arrow, Goat’s Water, Leverswater, Yewdale Beck and Coniston Water, which included land on the valley bottom as well as parts of Coniston Old Man and the Coniston Fells. This land at Coniston, along with other lands in Urswick, Claughton and Carnforth were granted soon after by John, son of Adam of Urswick (a likely descendant of Gilbert) to Richard le Fleming on his marriage to his sister, Elizabeth.

Parkamoor may have been a grange farm in the enclosed monastic woodland between Coniston and Windermere. At Low Parkamoor there are building platforms south of the main farm group and at High Parkamoor there are the foundations of a range of farm buildings upslope from the main farm. The latter range of buildings is a longhouse sub-divided into domestic and agricultural buildings and has a well-defined hood wall for drainage on the east end. This may reflect the original form for most of these smaller satellite grange settlements.

Other abbey hamlets and farms include Finsthwaite, Haverthwaite, Rolesland (Rusland), Bouth and Neburthwayt (Nibthwaite) which are first referred to in a document of 1336. Nibthwaite was probably founded as a grange with arable within it. Colton was first referred to in 1202. The parish was originally part of the chapelry of Hawkshead, and was probably being settled by the abbey of Furness around 1200.

The majority of pastureland between the villages of Near Sawrey and Far Sawrey is also likely to have been enclosed before the 14th century. At the time of the Abbey’s surrender in 1537, 21 tenants were recorded at Near Sawrey, with an additional 12 at Far Sawrey. A monastic survey recorded that the average size of the tenant holdings in Sawrey was seven acres and that the farm belonging to John Braithwaite of Briers was only six acres. The existence of an area of good arable land between the villages of Near Sawrey and Far Sawrey may suggest that this area was held in common, with a number of farms clustered on the edge. Access to parts of this block of enclosed fields was clearly important, with Cuckoo Brow Lane and Stones Lane running along the edge of the fields, while the present road between the villages passes along the southern edge.

The farm at Hawkshead Field, just north of Esthwaite Water, is set apart west of Esthwaite Water among the pattern of ‘ground’ farms and ‘intake’ enclosures. The pattern of landholding around this farm is also likely to have developed in the 13th century at the time of so called ‘pioneering enclosure’. Land belonging to Hawkshead Field Farm abuts the edge of the common field that utilised the arable lands surrounding Esthwaite water. This may suggest that the foundation of Hawkshead Field Farm preceded the creation of a communal system of agriculture for Hawkshead. The first documentary reference to the farm appears in 1601 and a cruck framed building of either late 16th or early 17th century still stands. It is a rare surviving example for the Lake District and its separation from the common field may reflect a superior status such as held by a bailiff.
Part of Coniston Valley was also used for deer parks, both by Furness Abbey and by private landlords. This tradition extended from medieval times to the 17th century, although the nature of hunting and the animals stocked went through a number of changes in that time. Low Dale Park is a relatively late creation apparently enclosed for deer about 1516 by Abbot Banke of Furness. The outline of the park is mostly preserved in field walls and the alignment of footpaths.

Coniston Hall Deer Park was already established when John le Fleming, son of Richard, acquired the "right of forest, chase, park ...and of their beasts and fowls" over John de Lancaster's land in Coniston. The undated grant refers to both "deer and great deer" which suggests it was stocked with both red and fallow deer. The date when it was initially stocked with deer is unknown, but it must have been before the grant which was made sometime between 1297 and 1307. It was still stocked with deer as late as 1690 and let to a tenant farmer. It is not known when the road running through the deer park divided the woodland into two parts, but during the 19th century the woodlands were subdivided and managed as coppice woods, and continued to be worked until about 1950. The boundary wall for the medieval deer park is quite distinctive and can be followed along the southern and western edges of the park. The northern boundary has been lost due to the development of settlement and communications in this area.

There are scant references to Broughton Park in historical sources, but in 1552 the Earl of Derby complained that various persons had been hunting in Broughton Park near Hangman's Oak and had killed three deer; therefore it is clear that the park was already in existence. The deer park was probably not created out of former monastic land given Broughton's antiquity and the 14th century date for the adjacent tower. Its original extent seems to have been larger than Broughton East Park now; the eastern half seems to have been split into intakes subsequently.

The 16th and 17th centuries were a period of considerable change in agricultural practices and building investment brought about by changing tenurial relationships. In 1537, a survey of the east Coniston area was carried out by the King's Commissioners, which recorded the uses of the monastic lands and their values. This found the value of 'sheepcotes' and 'herdwicks' (sheep pastures) in Waterside Park, Lawson Park and Parkamoor to be 46s. and 8d. each. The certificate of revenues also listed some of the other woodland industries carried out at the time, including the manufacture of various wooden goods, such as cartwheels and kegs, and the manufacture of charcoal. The abbots were found to be "accustomed to have a smythey and sometime two or three for the making of yron to thuse of their monastery". The scale of this exploitation was such that, within the three parks, the Commissioners found little timber of any value, although there were still sufficient small oaks and other species. Indeed in 1565, a royal edict suppressed the bloomeries at the request of the High Furness tenants, illustrating the concern over woodland use. What remained was annexed to the Duchy of Lancaster, and let by the Commissioners to William Sandys and John Sawrey to maintain their three iron smithies. The men speculated by renting the woods and parks together with others in High Furness for £20 in order to provide raw materials for the local iron industry.

A later survey was undertaken of the three Coniston parks on 12th August 1570, by John Braddill Esquire, surveyor of the woods of the Duchy of Lancaster Special Commissions.
It described the state of the woodland in each park, and in particular it mentioned that in ‘Parkeamore’ William Sandys, the late Receiver of Furness, 18 years previously (1552) had cut down 50 acres of woodland and made it into charcoal for “certain yrne smithies”. Parkamoor Farm at the time consisted of “one old mansion house, and one olde barne covered with brackens, wherein Christopher Jackson, the hird, ther now dwelleth”.

There were farms at Parkamoor that were separate from the herdwick (sheep pastures) and it was those that were disposed of in 1613 by property speculators on behalf of James I, who subsequently sold them on to the sitting tenants when the speculators disposed of Furness Abbey’s land in High Furness. In 1614 there were two sub-divided tenements at Parkamoor held by the sons of Christopher Satterthwaite, the original tenant, and one of the houses was newly erected at this time at Cocket How (probably High Parkamoor). Previous to 1614, several Satterthwaite families had been living at Parkamoor, but these holdings were parts of the High and Low Parkamoor farmsteads. It seems that post-Dissolution (1536-42) the Parkamoor landholdings were eventually sub-divided into Low and High farms, with the extant farmhouses having elements of surviving 17th and 18th century architectural design.

Division of the former monastic parkland as intakes associated with isolated farms and hamlets is most marked at Claife Heights. There is a large group of intakes which are centred on Rusland Cross; the group includes High Dale Park, the land between Satterthwaite and Graythwaite, extending south to Rusland Heights, taking in Hulleter Little Pastures and parts of Bethcar Moor. Some enclosure of woodland compartments along the eastern edge of Claife Heights took place prior to enclosure during the late-16th and 17th centuries. A number of enclosed woodlands are depicted on the pre-enclosure map of 1795. The majority of these compartments cluster around the farms at Belle Grange (Sandbeds) and Harrowslack and are likely to have been annexed to enclose an area of woodland for the exclusive use of the local farm.

It is unknown when the first land was enclosed on what came to be known as Claife Commons. Furness Abbey had been granted royal licence from Edward III in 1338 to create new parks in Claife although no references to actual parks in Claife appear in the monastic records. Most of the enclosures on the common have ‘intake’ place-names, including Waterson Intake, Moss Intake and Old Intake. The earliest documentary reference to a possible intake on the commons appears in the Royal Grant of High Wray that details the forfeiture of the estate and later execution of Thomas Lancaster in 1674. The list of property includes the 12 arable acres around the farm and peat cuttings, but also lists the “arandest rigge” and “two other acres” that may have referred to the enclosed land set apart from the farm situated on the commons. More useful is a conveyance from 1733 that lists Katy Plain (now Katy Intake Plantation) and Moss Intake among the holdings of High Wray Farm. These areas are again listed in a deed of 1771 that also notes that Wilson’s Knott had been acquired from Fold Farm in Near Sawrey. Moss Intake and Wilson’s Knott continue to descend with High Wray and are listed on the 1841 conveyance deed to James Dawson.

North west of Torver there seems to have been a rapid extension of fell enclosure onto Torver High Common, at Matthew Tranearth and Fleming Tranearth, with names like New Intake. The Tranearth place-name seems to indicate a division extending up the fell in a line from individual farms on the valley floor, perhaps fossilising earlier customary
stints. In 1639 two tenants from Little Arrow Farm in Torver were fined for setting up new hedges on the common at Little Moss without permission. Records for judgements made at Hawkshead Courthouse to settle disputes regarding the commons exist from the 16th century. These include a person brought before the court for keeping swine on the commons beyond the ‘stint’, which is likely to refer to a particular parcel of the common. Such was the enthusiasm for intaking at this time, that the intake land north of Blelham Tarn represented a doubling in size of the enclosed land.

A new term was being used to describe parcels of land from the 1660s. ‘Scrow’ parcels were distinguished from the open fell, and their location beyond and abutting the pattern of intake fields, indicates that they certainly post-date the development of the intakes that were enclosed to bring large areas of marginal land on the edge of the commons into private ownership. These large rectangular compartments retained their ‘scrow’ names into the 19th century. They were sometimes referred to as ‘cow grasses’ suggesting that they were predominantly used as private pasturing for stock, although others have links with peat mosses and may have also have functioned as enclosed areas of private peat extracting ground.

From the late 18th century onwards the pattern of land holding in the Hawkshead and Claife area fundamentally changed. This period saw the pattern of small lowland farms that had existed being reworked resulting in fewer larger farms. Increased prosperity in farming (particularly cattle rearing) and the southern Lakeland industries (spinning and weaving) was initially evident in houses and farmhouses in the area, and then in the development (from the mid-18th century onwards) of overwintering buildings for cattle and the building of multifunctional barns that are characteristic of the area. The amalgamation of farm holdings quickened after 1800, partly as a response to the enclosure of Claife Commons and the struggle for farms to remain economical, but also as a result of the declining rural population.

In the early 18th century, there appeared to be one, and possibly two, further farmhouses/tenements in occupation at Parkamoor, which were additional to the main farms. In the 18th century the two main farms at Parkamoor were held by the Bayliffe and Coupland families and there is evidence that both Low and High Parkamoor farms were still in use as separate entities in 1829. There is, however, no evidence that High Parkamoor farmhouse was occupied after 1842.

The parliamentary enclosures in the Coniston Valley area cover a wide date range, from the enclosure of Finsthwaite Height and Colton in 1771 to the latest enclosure of Satterthwaite High and Low Commons and Penington Heights in 1894. Limekilns were constructed along the band of Coniston Limestone in order to exploit the lime to reduce the acidity of the recently enclosed fields.

The growth of prosperity in agriculture and industry were captured by Thomas West in his 1778 ‘Guide to the Lakes’. On Broughton-in-Furness, he noted that “This place is so much improved by the late lord and the inhabitants that it has the appearance of a new town”. He continued “The principal commodities are woollen yarn spun by the country people and brought to the market... the annual return on this article is upwards of £4,000 per annum. Blue slate is another important article, of which 2,000 ton is exported per annum. Sheep, short wool, and black cattle of the longhorned kind are the produce of this district”.

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In 1818 the ‘Greenwood Map’ depicted the eastern shore of Coniston as almost entirely wooded apart from west of the lakeside road and two discrete pastures west of Dales Wood and Rigg Wood. Woodlands had recovered from their pitiful state in the late 16th century and were back in active commercial production. Woodland coppicing and the iron industry go hand-in-hand and the coppice woodlands of the Coniston Valley area probably reached their peak in the 18th and 19th centuries when the iron furnaces were at full blast. Thomas Pennant in 1770 wrote about the Crake valley, saying about the woods that:

“...thick coppices, or brush woods of various sorts of trees, many of them planted expressly for the use of the furnaces and bloomeries... the owners cut them down in equal portions, in the rotation of sixteen years, and raise regular revenues out of them; and often superior to the rent of their land... The furnaces for these last 60 years have brought a great deal of wealth into the country”.

By 1803 the Gentleman’s Magazine reported that the proprietors of Colton in High Furness had “…ceased to breed sheep”; the cultivation of coppices proving more profitable.

Holly was valued for sheep fodder in High Furness and was so cultivated that Thomas West commented that “large tracts of land are so covered with holly trees as to have the appearance of a forest”. Soon after West wrote the Gentleman’s Magazine reported in 1803 that the holly had been cut down for local bird-lime manufacture or for pattern-cutting for calico manufacture in Carlisle.

Other woodland products included 40 tons of hazelnuts from Broughton-in-Furness in one year in the early 19th century. Alder was in great demand for the quality of its charcoal, used in the manufacture of blasting powder. It may be that the abundance of these trees was one of the reasons for the location of Low Wood gunpowder works. In the mid-19th century bundles of coppiced wood were sent from Sunny Bank Mill at Torver for use as fenders in the Liverpool docks. Broughton-in-Furness also became the centre of the swill (oak basket) making industry.

By 1850 there were 21 tanneries in the High Furness area including the Rusland tannery, next to Rusland Hall, creating a high demand for peeled oak bark. The author Arthur Ransome was later to describe an ‘igloo’ – a bark peeler’s hut – in his ‘Winter Holiday’ of 1933. The original model for this can still be seen in Rigg Wood on the east side of Coniston.

The 19th century also saw an escalation of traditional milling industries into a larger industrialised process. Bobbin manufacture was a water-powered local speciality and there is evidence that the Lake District mills alone produced about half of the requirements of the textile mills of Great Britain in the mid-19th century. Stott Park and Penny Bridge were the largest in the area, but there were many others on the River Crake and others on the watercourses in the Rusland and Hawkshead areas, such as Nibthwaite Mill, converted from the previous iron forge in 1840, Thurs Gill, near Hawkshead, converted from a Flax Mill and Cunsey Mill, now a saw mill. In 1857, Spark Bridge Bobbin Mill had 60 hands producing 1,800 gross (a gross = 144; therefore 259,200) of thread bobbins weekly. It continued to operate until the 1970s.
The Coniston Valley area is also very important for the later iron industry. The first blast furnaces in the area were at Backbarrow, near Newby Bridge and Cunsey, on the shore of Windermere in 1711/12. The blast furnace at Nibthwaite on the River Crake was established in 1735. Some of the workers’ housing that survives is amongst the earliest in the country. Other blast furnaces were established at Low Wood in 1747 and Penny Bridge in 1748. Cunsey furnace closed in 1750, Nibthwaite in about 1755, although a forge ran until 1840, Penny Bridge in 1780 and Low Wood in 1785. All these blast furnaces were located to enable the essential use of water-power for the blast bellows and other purposes. Substantial remains, either ruinous or converted in whole or part, exist at Backbarrow and Nibthwaite, and of storage buildings only at Cunsey, Lowwood and Penny Bridge. Backbarrow Furnace is the most extensive site and had the longest life. Backbarrow Furnace operated until 1966, switching from charcoal to coke as late as 1920. This led to a decline in coppice management of the adjacent woodlands.

With the growth of heavy industry after the middle of the 19th century the area suffered depopulation, as did other similar rural areas, with a drift to the developing towns of Millom and Barrow, boom towns of the 1860s. Between 1861 and 1870 Broughton Parish lost almost a third of its population (400 people out of 1,300). As large iron works developed in Millom and Barrow, the small out-dated Duddon Furnace ceased operating in 1867. Broughton continued to evolve slowly with Victorian houses, villas, pubs and banks. St Mary’s Church was enlarged in 1874 and a new tower was added in 1900. A Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1875. The school which had been rebuilt in 1864 was enlarged in 1886 and 1894. In the 1880s, it was the secondary products of the Furness coppice woodlands – hoops, baskets, brush handles and wooden shafts for farm tools – which formed the chief trade of Broughton. Indeed, Broughton became a centre for making swill baskets (strong durable baskets traditionally made in the southern Lake District by weaving thin strips of coppiced oak wood around a hazel rim).

Copper mining had been active around Coniston since at least the 16th century with smelting at Penny Rigg, and mining continued into the early 20th century. The total labour force in and around the mines at its peak was at least 600. Water power was fundamental to the operation and as many as 13 waterwheels were used in and around the site around 1850. Before 1859 when the Coniston Railway opened, the ore was carted to the lake at Coniston Hall, shipped to Nibthwaite Quay and then carted again to Greenodd and Kirkby quay to be transported by train or ship. In 1860 a railway extension opened to Copper House for the mines.

The slate industry at Torver High Common and Eddy Scale Quarry amongst others, peaked in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1778 Thomas West commented “The most considerable slate quarries in the Kingdom are in the Coniston Fells”. In the early 19th
century quarry men could earn between three and five shillings a day which was remarkably high compared with an agricultural wage. In the 1830s the total output for the whole of Furness and Coniston was probably in excess of 20,000 tons per year and over 100 men were employed in the Coniston area alone. Slate was carried by pack-horse to Waterhead from where it was shipped by barges to the foot of the lake.

In 1859 the railway arrived at Coniston and provided a boost for the mining and quarrying industries. The Rigge and Atkinson families dominated the Coniston quarries in the 18th century, but the Mandall Slate Company Limited and The Coniston Slate Company were both formed in the 1840s and the Mandalls continued until the 1960s.

Quarrying and mining created a demand for gunpowder and the gunpowder works of the Coniston Valley area contributed to Furness and Westmoreland’s supply of the greater part of the United Kingdom’s needs for gunpowder from the late 18th to the early 20th century. A key constituent of gunpowder was charcoal, which was in plentiful supply from the area’s coppice woodlands. Juniper in particular was used at the Low Wood gunpowder works which was established in 1799. The nearby Black Beck works, near Bouth, started in 1860. Water power was essential and Low Wood was on the east bank of the River Leven. Production ended shortly after the First World War and Low Wood is the best preserved 19th century gunpowder works in northern England.

The Coniston Railway linked Coniston to Broughton-in-Furness from 1859 to 1962. Originally built for transport of copper ore and slate, it also became a transport route for tourists. The Lakeside and Haverthwaite railway was opened in 1869 to carry coal to the Windermere steamers, iron ore to Backbarrow and sulphur and saltpetre for the Black Beck and Low Wood gunpowder works. The freight from the area included pig iron, gunpowder, pit props, ultramarine ‘blue’ powder, wooden bobbins and livestock.

3.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The Coniston Railway was opened in 1859 and quickly led to an influx of tourists. From the outset the railway company was aware of its potential for tourism and in an attempt to attract more tourists to use the line, the railway company commissioned the building of the Steam Yacht Gondola to provide trips on the lake. It was launched on 30th November 1859 and began to run a regular service the following June. Gondola was 84 feet (26 metres) long and was registered to carry 200 passengers. The Illustrated London News of 7 July 1860 reported after her maiden voyage that the first class saloon was “beautifully finished in walnut wood and cushioned and decorated after the style of the royal carriages of our railways”. It continued:

“The vessel... is a perfected combination of the Venetian gondola and the English steam yacht – having the elegance, comfort and speed of the latter, and the graceful lightness and quiet gliding motion of the former. It may be said to
be the most elegant little steam vessel yet designed, and is especially suitable for pleasure excursions on lake or river”.

In time Gondola formed part of what came to be known as the Great Circle itinerary, introduced to boost flagging revenues by Sir Alfred Aslet, Ramsden’s successor at the Furness Railway. The nickname presumably intended to echo the Grand Tour, which still only the wealthiest could possibly afford. Lancashire’s increasingly prosperous middle classes could take a paddle steamer from Fleetwood to Barrow and thence by rail to Lakeside on Windermere. A steam vessel up the length of Windermere provided the link to Waterhead, from where a coach and four horses brought travellers to the delights of Coniston Water. Gondola would return them in fitting style to the southern end of the lake, before continuing by road and rail to Barrow and so by paddle steamer back to Fleetwood. All this was at a cost of ten shillings and sixpence first class, seven shillings and sixpence second class – considerable sums at the time. This gives a good indication of just how much the better-off Victorians now valued their leisure. Gondola was decommissioned in 1936; its engine was removed and sold in 1944, and she was then used as a houseboat before being sunk in 1963–64. She was re-floated and acquired by the National Trust in 1978 and was restored and re-launched in 1980. The Gondola plies the lake once again, owned and operated by the National Trust.

3.2.5 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

While Coniston had become a favourite destination for tourists from the second half of the 19th century, it had been made popular amongst a select group of wealthier artists, poets and authors from the 18th century. Thomas West described the views of the lake from a series of four viewing stations around the lake and one description on the lake: Station I – Water Park, High Nibthwaite; Station II – High Peel Near (Peel Ness); Station III – Beck Leven Foot; Station IV – mid-lake, east of Coniston Hall/Lands Point; Station V – High Guards, Coniston; Station VI (Crosthwaite’s) – South of Hollin Bank Farm, Coniston. He described the view from a boat positioned in the lake, opposite Coniston Hall (Station IV) as follows:

**FIGURE 3.16** Peter Crosthwaite’s map of Coniston Water, published in 1788
“Looking towards the mountains, the lake spreads itself into a noble expanse of transparent water and bursts into a bay on each side, bordered with verdant meadows and inclosed with a variety of grounds, rising in an exceedingly bold manner. The objects are beautifully diversified amongst themselves, and contrasted by the finest exhibition of rural elegance (cultivation and pasturage, waving woods and sloping inclosures, adorned by nature and improved by art) under the bold sides of stupendous mountains, whose airy summits the elevated eye cannot now reach, and which almost deny access to human kind”.

Thomas West, ‘A Guide to the Lakes’ (1778)

Pursuit of the Picturesque aesthetic also extended to landscape design, with extensive modifications to the Monk Coniston estate from the mid-18th century. The estate was owned by the Knott family from 1769 to 1835, whose wealth was based on iron smelting in the Lake District and Scotland. During this period a major programme of tree planting took place along with development of the pleasure grounds around Monk Coniston Hall, including a walled garden and gazebo. The Waterhead Estate, as it was then known as, was sold to James Garth Marshall, son of John Marshall of Hallsteads, Ullswater, in 1835. As with most other Marshall family property acquisitions, Wordsworth advised the Marshalls on the purchase. Over the following decade James Garth Marshall acquired further land and property in the area, including the Yewdale valley, Tarn Hows, Tilberthwaite, Oxen Fell and Stang End. After an Enclosure Act of 1862, James Garth gained full possession of the land around what is now Tarn Hows. He embarked on a series of landscape improvements expanding the conifer plantations around what were then Low, Middle and High Tarns and constructing a dam at Low Tarn that created the larger lake that is there today. Tarn Hows has since become one of the most popular attractions in the Lake District. James Garth also undertook further tree planting, including exotic conifers, on the Waterhead Estate, which he renamed to Monk Coniston. One intriguing small feature is the “eye catcher”, north east of Shepherd Bridge, Coniston. The structure is built of stone with the datestone ‘JGM 1855’ and includes small turrets with arrow slits and a central arch.

Other designed landscapes to reflect the Picturesque aesthetic were laid out around villas, country houses and extended historic buildings such as Coniston Hall, Broughton East Park and Esthwaite Lodge. Grizedale Old Hall was replaced by Grizedale New Hall, designed to appreciate fine views of the Grizedale valley. Neither the Old nor the New Hall are extant and a third hall, built 1905, was demolished 1957. Some elements remain; the walls and stairs of the massive garden terrace and the close with its gates can still be seen today. The grounds around Wray Castle were designed to appreciate spectacular views across Windermere and include a number of specimen trees. William Wordsworth planted a mulberry tree there in 1845 and it remains. Watbarrow Wood is the wooded bank between the Castle and the lake, and has several pleasant paths leading through it to the water’s edge.
3.2.6 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Coniston was visited by many of the Romantic poets and artists and there is a wealth of poetic description of buildings and features that survive in the landscape today.

Coleridge visited during his walking tour of 1802 and was captivated by the lake – “an admirable junction of awful and pleasing Simplicity” – and Coniston Hall with its “four Round Chimneys, two cloathed so warmly cap a pie with ivy”. He stayed at the Black Bull Inn in Coniston, which was also frequented by Thomas De Quincey in 1805 and 1806. It was here that De Quincey wrote his essay on ‘The Constituents of Happiness’.

Wordsworth attended Hawkshead Grammar School from 1779 to 1787. He lodged at Ann Tyson’s Cottage in the village from 1779-1783. In 1783 he moved with the Tysons to Colthouse, probably Greenend Cottage or a house nearby which no longer stands. He attended St Michaels Church on most Sundays. Wordsworth wrote his first poems whilst a pupil at the school, including ‘The Vale of Esthwaite’ (1787), ‘a long poem running upon my own adventures and the scenery of the country in which I was brought up’ and thus a forerunner of ‘The Prelude’.

Wordsworth wrote of a picnic in 1783 with his school friends. He floated in a boat under

"...the shade of a magnificent row of sycamores, which then extended their branches from the shore of the promontory upon which stands the ancient, and at that time, the more picturesque Hall of Coniston."

A year later in the summer of 1784, when Wordsworth was fourteen, he was walking along the road near Outgate on his way between Hawkshead and Ambleside he was struck by the beauty of an oak tree. As he said in old age:

“The moment was important in my poetical history; for I date from it my consciousness of the infinite variety of natural appearances which had been unnoticed by poets of any age or country, so far as I was acquainted with them: and I made a resolution to supply in some degree the deficiency”.

North of the Coniston Water, in Yewdale, is Raven Crag, a probable location for Wordsworth’s boyhood escapade, vividly recounted in Book I of ‘The Prelude’, when he attempts to steal ravens’ eggs and becomes ‘crag-fast’:

“While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ear! The sky seemed not a sky
Of earth – and with what motion moved the clouds!”

Other aspects of the Coniston Valley feature in many of Wordsworth’s poems. In ‘The Waggoner’ he describes the local slate quarries under Coniston Old Man:
“I love to mark the quarry’s moving trains,  
Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and numerous wains:  
How busy all the enormous hive within,  
While Echo dallies with its various din!”

In Book VIII of “The Prelude” Wordsworth recalls fondly the shores of the lake, with their

“...gentle airs,  
Birds, running streams, and hills so beautiful  
On golden evenings, while the charcoal pile  
Breathed up its smoke”.

**OTHER ARTISTS AND NOTABLE RESIDENTS**

The poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson and his bride stayed at Tent Lodge on the north east shore of Coniston on their honeymoon in 1850 where he composed “The Princess” during his stay. Visitors included Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle and Edward Lear. The Tennysons returned in 1857 and on this occasion, Charles Dodgson (“Lewis Carrol”, the author of “Alice in Wonderland” and other novels) was amongst the visitors.

One of the most famous residents of Coniston during the 19th century was the poet, artist and philosopher John Ruskin. Ruskin bought the Brantwood Estate on the eastern shore of Coniston in 1871 and set about improving the 18th century property in line with his views on aesthetics and husbandry of the land.

John Ruskin died on 20 January 1900. Ruskin’s friend, confidant, and first biographer, W. G. Collingwood, organised an influential Ruskin Memorial Exhibition, held in the main Assembly Room in Coniston Mechanics’ Institute over the summer of 1900; it was visited by over 10,000 people. The proceeds paid for the construction of a new museum – The Ruskin Museum – dedicated to his memory and celebrating the local cultural and literary heritage. This was opened on 31 August 1901 by Canon H. D. Rawnsley.

The museum has extensive displays on the history of Coniston, the geology, archaeology, mining of the area and local crafts. It also presents Ruskin’s life and activities. There are displays of his personal belongings, including his paintbox, his set of musical stones and billhooks used for coppicing. A selection of his sketchbooks and paintings is displayed along with some of his collection of minerals, as well as examples of the local craft of ‘Ruskin lace’ he encouraged.

Because Ruskin’s possessions were left to his cousin, most of them remained at his home at Brantwood until a series of dispersal sales in 1931. The largest part was purchased at that time by John Howard Whitehouse, who also purchased Brantwood. Accordingly, a great many items have had a continuous presence within the house. Since 1996 all the collection, with the exception of the manuscripts and works on paper, has been united in the building where it is displayed as openly as possible, in its original location. Brantwood offers visitors a detailed and authentic encounter with the environment and possessions of one of the world’s great writers and thinkers.

Lanehead, on the west side of the lake and now an outdoor pursuits centre, is built on the site of the Halfpenny Alehouse where J. M. W. Turner is said to have stayed in
1797, sketching in preparation for his first Royal Academy exhibit, ‘Morning Among the Coniston Fells’, now one of the best known paintings of the Lake District (see Volume 1, Figure 2.a.8). Lanehead was also home to the Collingwood family.

Later literary associations with Coniston also include the series of famous children’s books by Arthur Ransome (1884 – 1967) beginning with ‘Swallows and Amazons’ (published in 1929). Ransome’s family regularly holidayed at Laurel House, High Nibthwaite, then a farm, from his early childhood until 1897. Ransome was carried up to the top of Coniston Old Man as a baby by his father and his early education was in Windermere. Ransome became a close friend with W. G. Collingwood, Ruskin’s Secretary, and between 1903 and 1913 he was a frequent visitor to their house, Lanehead, on the east shore of Coniston Water, just north of Brantwood. This is where Ransome took up sailing. The ‘Swallows and Amazons’ series was inspired by Ransome’s experiences in the Coniston Valley and many characters and places around Coniston Water, Yewdale, Tilberthwaite and the Coniston Fells feature in the series. Perhaps best known is Peel Island on Coniston Water, ‘Wildcat Island’ in ‘Swallows and Amazons’. The Gondola was the inspiration for Captain Flint’s houseboat in ‘Swallows and Amazons’. As a small child Ransome was allowed by the captain to steer the vessel. In Coniston’s Ruskin Museum there is a black and white post card of Gondola that Ransome sent to his illustrator, with changes to the outline in ink to show how he wanted the houseboat to look. Ransome’s home from 1940-45 was The Heald, a mile south of Brantwood and from 1948-50 Lowick Hall. He is buried in the churchyard at Rusland.

The Near Sawrey and Hawkshead area is the area most associated with the author, artist and conservationist Beatrix Potter (Heelis). Many of the settings for her books are recognisably in these settlements and the surrounding countryside. In Near Sawrey, the large Victorian house, Ees Wyke, is where Beatrix Potter stayed with her parents,
who rented the house in the summer of 1896, 1900 and 1902. The key site is Hill Top, Near Sawrey. She bought the 17th century farmhouse and land in 1905 with royalties from her books supplemented by a legacy. It was never her permanent home, but she spent long stays there, writing most of her books there from 'The Tale of Mr Jeremy Fisher' (1906) onwards. It is the key setting for books such as ‘The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck’ (1908) and ‘The Tale of Samuel Whiskers’ (1908). Many of the familiar Coniston landscapes and landmarks feature in her books such as the Hilltop bee boles and Moss Eccles Tarn. She also captured images of dying industries such as the painting of a charcoal burners’ hut in ‘The Tale of Jemima Puddleduck’. Potter continued to return to Hill Top to write after she had moved to Castle Cottage in 1913. She continued to live at Castle Cottage until she died in 1943. The Beatrix Potter Gallery in Hawkshead occupies the former offices of William Heelis, Beatrix Potter’s solicitor husband.

The Coniston Valley area continues to inspire artistic activity, one of the most well-known being the Grizedale Arts organisation based at Lawson Park Farm, in Grizedale Forest, established in the late 1970s.

MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING

The Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District, often shortened to ‘The Fell & Rock’ or FRCC, is the premier rock-climbing and mountaineering club in the Lake District. The idea of founding a climbing club was first proposed by John Wilson Robinson about 1887, when the sport of rock climbing was being pioneered in England. Robinson climbed with Walter Parry Haskett Smith, generally acknowledged as the father of rock climbing in Great Britain. In 1885, Robinson introduced the use of the alpine rope on the Lakeland crags. The FRCC dates from a meeting held at tea-time on 11 November 1906, at the Sun Hotel, Coniston, after a day on Dow Crags, often described as the Opening Meet, though the first formal Meet was held at the Wastwater Hotel on 30 March 1907. The impetus came from Edward Scantlebury; his friends A. Craig and C. Grayson, who had spent the day with him on Dow Crags, and one other, were the founder members of this new climbing club. After some debate, (‘The Coniston Climbers’ was considered too localised, but the ‘Lake District Climbing Club’ excluded fell walkers), they decided that its name would be ‘The Fell and Rock Climbing Club’, as this ‘so well expressed their objects, viz:- the encouragement of Fell Rambling & Rock Climbing & as we intended that the club should be for the Lake District only – we added to the title the words ‘of the English Lake District’’. The Sun Hotel became the venue for the FRCC’s Annual Dinner. The FRCC has published the definitive series of climbing guides to the Lakes since 1922.

Coniston’s tradition for climbing was continued with the formation of the Coniston Tigers in 1931, a group of climbing friends from Barrow and South Cumbria. In 1932 they bought a former garage at Coniston Hall Farm and converted it into a very basic hut, only the second such base in the Lake District at the time.
3.2.7 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

Coniston Valley has a number of heritage assets connected to the early conservation movement. Wray Castle was a key location for the meeting of significant characters in the Lake District’s conservation story. Dr James Dawson, who built it, was a relative of Hardwicke Rawnsley, who became vicar of Wray Church in 1878. Beatrix Potter spent a summer holiday at Wray Castle in 1882 when she was sixteen and met Canon Rawnsley, which was to lead to a life-long friendship and a close association with the National Trust of which Rawnsley was one of the founders.

Many of the farms that Beatrix Potter acquired were ‘lower ground’ farms around Hawkshead, near her first purchase and home of many years at Hill Top, Near Sawrey. These included High and Low Tockhow, High Wray, Castle, Hole House and Hill Top farms. Other properties in the Heelis Bequest to the National Trust (properties left by Beatrix Potter to her husband William Heelis and passed on the National Trust) included Heelis Solicitors in Hawkshead, the Belmont mansion, nine cottages in Near Sawrey and the Tower Bank Estate. More recently the National Trust purchased the Tower Bank Arms at Near Sawrey, adjacent to Hill Top.

The National Trust acquired large extensive holdings in the Coniston Valley. As well as the large estate acquired from Beatrix Potter, the Trust acquired the larger properties of Parkamoor in 1968 and Coniston Hall in 1971, as well as many smaller properties. Today, the National Trust own 3,587 hectares of land of which 3,547 hectares are inalienable. They also have an additional 39 hectares of leased land and 532 hectares of covenanted land.

The Lake District National Park Authority manages large areas of Common Land in the Coniston Valley, namely Torver High, Torver Low and Torver Back Commons (845 hectares) and Blawith Common (654 hectares). The Authority entered into a 99-year lease of the Torver Commons from the Crown Estates in 1966 in order to provide public access and recreation. Blawith Common was purchased in 1970 from Broughton Estates Limited in order to provide a public access area and to control recreational use of the Common.

Coniston has featured in recent conservation battles over access to the fells and recreational use of the lake. In the late 1950s the bed of Coniston Water had been bought by a private individual concerned for the future development of the lake and later conveyed to the Rawdon-Smith Trust. This is now administered by Coniston Parish Council. Clause 3 of the Trust Deeds stated that the purpose of the Trust was to be “to preserve the Trust property in perpetuity under local control for the purpose of affording to the public facilities for recreation.” Whether this recreation was tranquil or noisy has been the focus of many subsequent legal battles. When the lake bed was purchased, Coniston, together with Ullswater and Windermere, had been used for power boat speed record attempts from the early 20th century. Donald Campbell set seven speed records between 1955 and 1964 in his boat Bluebird K7 but was tragically killed on the lake in a further attempt in 1967. The remains of Bluebird K7 have been recovered and are being restored with a view to permanent display in the Ruskin Museum in
Coniston. In 1962 an appeal against planning consent for use of land and buildings at Ruskin Pier for the hire of motor boats was dismissed. The Planning Inspector said “There is however a need to for some lakes to be reserved for those who value solitude, quietness, and a study of nature in unspoilt surroundings and Coniston Water can still in the main provide such conditions”. In 1978 local by-laws were introduced by the Lake District Special Planning Board (now the National Park Authority) in order to control the use of power boats and water skiing on Coniston, but the delicate balance between power based recreation and tranquility ensures that there is still a place for speed. The tradition of power boat record attempts continues on Coniston on an annual basis with the Coniston Power Boat Records Week.

The route from Coniston over to Seathwaite in the Duddon Valley is known as the Walna Scar Road and it too has been, and continues to be, the subject of conservation battles. It was originally used as a stock route and to access local quarries. But in the 20th century it was the subject of disagreement over its recreational use. Walkers, cyclists and horses all use the route. Increasing and unmanaged motorbike and four-wheel drive use has been blamed for erosion of the surface of the route. Opponents pointed out that such routes were not designed for motorised vehicles. Supporters argued that they were just carrying out their legal right according to its highway status. Various measures have been tried and tested, including voluntary restrictions, codes of conduct for users and legal orders restricting motorised traffic, all with mixed results. Since 2006 a legal battle has continued over the status of the route and most recently it has been determined that it is a route for non-motorised traffic.

In 2005 there was a public controversy over the National Trust’s proposal for the future of High Yewdale Farm, which involved splitting the land between neighbouring tenants when its then tenants retired. Many people felt that this was a betrayal of Beatrix Potter’s motive in acquiring the farm. Views ranged around the economic, social and environmental implications of this proposal. The proposed split up of the land went through, but it sharply illustrated the range of approaches as to how Lake District farming should be structured in the future, and the potential impacts of different arrangements on cultural heritage, the cultural landscape, local social structures, economies and the environment.

3.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

QUALITIES

The attributes demonstrating the contribution of this valley to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District as a whole are listed in Figure 3.4.

The landscape beauty of the Coniston Valley is based in large measure on the dominance of the agro-pastoral use of the landscape against the backdrop of relatively extensive
woodland around the lake and a high mountain backdrop to the west. The valley has
good evidence for the development of the agro-pastoral system, with areas of the typical
Lake District field pattern of inbye and intake, but also has areas of more open fields
around Coniston, based on an early ‘town field’, probably dating from the 13th century,
and around the village of Hawkshead. Agro-pastoral farming is very important here,
with a large number of fell-going flocks and a number of important Herdwick farms.
There are many important early farm buildings including the Coniston Hall and Yew Tree
Farm, with its iconic ‘spinning gallery’. The small market town of Broughton-in-Furness is
the location for the most import Herdwick market in the Lake District.

Evidence for early land use is extensive with numerous archaeological remains of
prehistoric settlement, agriculture and ritual monuments. In the past Coniston was
one of the most important valleys in the Lake District for industry, including mining
and quarrying, iron smelting and woodland industries. Coniston Copper Mine, a large
Scheduled Monument, has extensive remains of extraction and processing dating from
the 16th to the early 20th centuries. Slate quarrying was also a major industry and a
small number of slate quarries are still working in the Valley. The River Leven, at the
southern end of the Coniston Valley, provided power for blast furnaces, a gunpowder
works and various other water-powered industries between the 17th and 20th centuries.

In addition to Broughton, other larger settlements in the Coniston Valley include
Hawkshead, which gained a market charter in the 17th century and has a range of
buildings dating from the medieval period to the 19th century. Coniston itself is also
likely to have early origins but its character displays the influence of the local industries
of mining and quarrying.

The Coniston Valley is rich in attributes relating to the theme of aesthetic inspiration.
It was not one of the most important destinations for early visitors in search of the
Picturesque due to the lack of easy access in the 18th century, but it was visited
by the guidebook writer Thomas West, who identified a series of viewing stations
around Coniston Water, while Claife, the only one with a major structure erected,
is just within the eastern boundary of the Valley, but on the shore of Windermere.
However, the Coniston landscape was the subject of major modifications designed
to increase its Picturesque beauty, such as the damming of Tarn Hows, to create
a spectacularly beautiful lake surrounded by ornamental tree planting. A number
of villas were constructed or developed around Coniston Water and on the western
shore of Windermere.

In later periods the Coniston Valley came to have much greater prominence as a
source of artistic inspiration. William Wordsworth was a pupil at the grammar school
in Hawkshead and his recollections of the valley and its residents feature strongly in
important poems including ‘The Prelude’. J. M. W. Turner created one of his key oil
paintings here (‘Morning among the Coniston Fells’) and in the later 19th century John
Ruskin took up residence at Brantwood. Coniston was also the inspiration for much of
the landscape which featured in Beatrix Potter’s books and the famous ‘Swallows and
Amazons’ childrens’ adventure stories of Arthur Ransome.

The Coniston Valley came to have a very high significance for conservation in the early
20th century, because Beatrix Potter, living at Near Sawrey, made extensive purchases
of farms and estates in the area, including Monk Coniston and Tarn Hows, in order to protect them. These were eventually passed to the National Trust which now owns and manages large areas of the northern part of the valley including key farms and farm buildings, villas and designed landscapes. The Coniston Valley thus displays a full repertoire of attributes across the three themes of Outstanding Universal Value.

**Figure 3.19** Modified sheep fold at Tilberthwaite by the landscape artist Andy Goldsworthy
The head of the Duddon Valley
4. DUDDON

Description, History and Development
4. THE DUDDON VALLEY

“Looking forth again, with an inclination to the west, we see immediately at our feet the vale of Duddon, in which is no lake, but a copious stream winding among fields, rocks, and mountains, and terminating its course in the sands of Duddon”.

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

4.1 DESCRIPTION

“Through icy portals radiant as heaven’s bow; I seek the birth-place of a native Stream.— All hail, ye mountains! Hail, thou morning light! Better to breathe at large on this aëry height Than toil in needless sleep from dream to dream; Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free, and bright, For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my theme!”

William Wordsworth, Sonnet I (from a series written between 1804 and 1820)

The Duddon Valley, also known as Dunnerdale, starts in the high, central fells where it meets the valleys of Eskdale to the west and Langdale to the east, their high passes crossing the watersheds and descending to meet in the Duddon Valley before it runs south west to an expansive estuary and the Irish Sea. See Figure 4.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figures 4.2 and 4.3 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Duddon valley.

4.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Enclosed at its head by the rugged, steep, high fells of Harter Fell, Ulpha Fell and Grey Friar the valley of the River Duddon runs south-west to an expansive estuary. Two of the English Lake District’s, and England’s, highest mountain road passes descend the watershed at the heads of the Eskdale and (Little) Langdale valleys and join from opposite directions at Cockley Beck where a minor road then follows the course of the river down the Duddon Valley. All of the Duddon Valley area from the valley head to just west of Duddon Bridge is underpinned by rocks of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group.
Figure 4.1 Duddon Valley Illustrative Map

1. Swinside Stone Circle
2. Stickle House Barn
3. Hall Dunnerdale
4. Loganbeck Farm
5. Stephenson Ground
6. Cockley Beck (owned by National Trust)
7. Duddon Furnace (managed by National Park Authority)
8. Duddon Hall
9. Broadgate
10. The River Duddon
11. Black Hall Farm (owned by National Trust)
12. Hazel Head Farm (owned by National Trust)

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### FIGURE 4.4 The contribution of the Duddon Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</strong></td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
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<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
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<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
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<td>Common land</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
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<td>Woodland industries</td>
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<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Market towns</td>
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<td>Viewing stations</td>
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<td>Villas</td>
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<td>Designed landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
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<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Discovery and appreciation of a rich cultural landscape</strong></td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 4.5 Farms below Black Combe

FIGURE 4.6 A farmer with sheep dogs gathering his Herdwick sheep flock in the Duddon Valley
intake fields, the irregular enclosing walls and the bright green improved pasture are a feature of the valley bottom and lower slopes and contrast with the browns and greys and rougher texture of the open fell. Further south the west side of the valley is densely cloaked with conifers and the sense of a changing valley landscape is engendered by continuing felling operations. As the valley descends the same sense of isolation and tranquillity persists although isolated farms do become more frequent.

The small, historic settlement of Seathwaite marks the start of a widening of the valley and a more extensive pattern of irregularly shaped fields enclosed by stone walls on the valley floor. However, the model evident in other valleys of relatively flat inbye on the valley floor, a relatively constant width enclosed by steep fells with intakes on the lower slopes, is not the case here. This valley has several subtle changes of direction and widens and narrows with a number of pinch-points where open fell continues down to the river banks. There are areas of enclosed pasture at higher altitudes than some valleys, developed by the scattered farms taking advantage of areas of less steep ground and accessed by a network of minor roads not possible elsewhere, where topography dictates a single road along the valley floor. This variation and the strong sense of isolation, wildness and tranquillity north of Duddon Bridge, creates the atmosphere of an upland valley very different to the adjacent broad upland dales. There is scant evidence of designed landscape here and on the west side of the valley, woodland continues to be an enclosing influence although these are smaller more irregularly-shaped deciduous or mixed woods very different to the large conifer plantations of Dunnerdale Forest further north.

South of Duddon Bridge the river enters the flat pasture and tidal landscape of the estuary and leaves the Lake District National Park. Here the geology changes to the older and softer Skiddaw slates, producing a more rounded topography. This includes the significant bulk of Black Combe, a rounded, grassy hulk with some steeper faces and crags on its south east flank, and the Whicham Valley below which the network of pasture fields bounded by hedges is used for dairying. The valley then runs to the coastal plain and the sea under the imposing bulk of the west face of Black Combe with the long sand and shingle beach running north west to the farm settlement of Annaside and then continuing to Ravenglass.

4.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The character of the farming landscape in the Duddon has been influenced by its topography of narrow river valley surrounded by extensive slopes and open fell.
The general scene in the Duddon Valley has not changed greatly since the 18th century when Wordsworth wrote, upon viewing the valley from the Walna Scar road:

“Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man, that are scattered over this peaceful retirement”.

‘Notes to The River Duddon, A Series of Sonnets’ (1820)

In the upper valley from Wrynose to Seathwaite the character of the farming hamlets and irregular shapes of both inbye and intake fields suggests an early origin. There is possible evidence for Norse (or early medieval) shielings that subsequently developed into farmsteads, for example at Gaitscale Close at the northern end of the valley in Wrynose Bottom. The inbye land from Cockley Beck to Dalehead Farm and from Tongue House Farm to Turner Hall Farm may indicate a former medieval common field later surrounded by intakes. Some of the former farming landscape has been obscured by forestry plantations.

In the middle valley from Seathwaite to Duddon Hall there are many farms of possible early origin with inbye land at a higher level, as at Pike Side (which also has evidence for early longhouse structures), Hole House and Bigert Mire. There is a shieling type farmstead at the isolated area of inbye and intake at Woodend Farm on Ulpha Fell, although here the field boundaries are straight. There are large areas of inbye above the main valley on the western side from Crosbythwaite to Hazel Head, Old Hall Farm to Loganbeck. And there are further extensive areas of inbye land in the main valley on both sides of the River Duddon from Seathwaite to Ulpha. From Wallowbarrow to Bowscales, on the high slopes of the western valley side between the inbye and irregular intakes and the open fell there is an extensive area of large straight-walled enclosures. These appear planned and are likely to date from the 18th century or later.

In the lower valley from Duddon Hall to the coast there is extensive inbye at a higher level on Thwaites Fell around Fenwick, along the Whicham Valley and at the foot of Black Combe on the coast. Here the inbye land is bounded directly by open fell grazing.

Extensive ancient woodland is distributed along the length of the Duddon, with an almost unbroken ribbon along much of the western valley floor and side. Rainsbarrow Wood is particularly notable as a haven for Dormice and Red Squirrel and contains much evidence for charcoal production. There are also extensive areas of modern conifer plantation, including the head of the valley (which is currently being converted to native broadleaf woodland) and in Ulpha Park in the lower reaches.

**4.1.3  FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE**

There are many small single farms, often at a relatively high level, created by improving fell land which generally comprise small stone-walled inbye fields, surrounded by open fell grazing. As in surrounding valleys on the western side of the Lake District, many of the field walls here are of massive construction resulting from the need to clear the plentiful stone from the fields. However, there is a particularly wide variety of wall
construction in this valley, which also includes shard fences (vertical slate walls) and the use of a local source of hexagonal basalt for features such as water yeats (stock barriers over becks). Extensive areas of open fell grazing surround the whole of the Duddon Valley on the highest ground.

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Today, there are 46 fell-going flocks in the Duddon Valley area. There are 16 Herdwick flocks and five Swaledale flocks registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Rough Fell flocks. There are nine National Trust landlord flocks listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005). The Hartley family at Turner Hall, Seathwaite and the Troughton family at Thwaite Yeat, are two of only six families in the Lake District listed in the 1920 flock book that are still breeding Herdwick sheep on the same farm. Turner Hall is a large privately-owned farm and flock and has probably the most consistent track record of success in the show and sale ring over the past 40 years. Turner Hall flock bloodlines have been very influential in the breed with the farm registering 15 to 20 tups a year.

There are 8,047 hectares of Registered Common Land in total in the Duddon valley area, around half the total area. The Common Land runs continuously on the open fells, on the west side from south of Harter Fell in the upper valley to Duddon Bridge in the lower valley, and on the east side from Grey Friar in the upper valley to High and Low Whinneray in the lower valley. The following registered Commons fall wholly or partly within the Duddon Valley area: On the west side of the valley, Ulpha Fell (1,439 hectares), Thwaites Fell (669 hectares), Black Combe and White Combe (1,797 hectares); and on the east side of the valley Duddon, Seathwaite, Torver and Coniston (3,892 hectares). Other small areas of Common (250 hectares) include High Tongue, Holling House, Sunny Pike, Longhouse Close, The Cove, Ash Bank, Yew Pike, Arrow Moss.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

The Walna Scar Shepherds’ Meets are in July and November. The summer Meet is on the Friday nearest the 21 July alternately at the Blacksmiths Arms, Broughton Mills, Newfield Hotel, Seathwaite and Church House, Torver. The Shepherds’ Meet and Show are at the same place in July and on the first Saturday in November. These meets are for the District of Seathwaite, Torver, Dunnerdale, Broughton, Woodland and Coniston. The Stoneside Shepherds Meet and Show is on the second Saturday in November, rotating between Waberthwaite, The Green and Ulpha. This meet is for the District of Waberthwaite, Bootle, Whitbeck, Whicham, Thwaites, Ulpha.
FIGURE 4.9 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Duddon Valley
Corney and Birker. Stray sheep are advertised for two weeks in the local paper and kept for one year and one day. If not claimed they are sold for expenses.

Broughton-in-Furness on the Duddon Estuary is one of the two locations for the main Herdwick sales of ewes and rams in September and October each year. The other is Cockermouth.

**FARMSTEADS**

The farm buildings in the Duddon Valley, many of which date from the period of re-building in the 17th century, have a rugged character deriving from the use of the local volcanic rock and slate for walls and roofs. Many are finished in a weatherproof coating of limewash.

Other buildings tell more of the story of the activity of the farming industry in the valley. Whitbeck Mill is probably an 18th century mill with a large narrow wheel of iron and timber in a pit on the north western gable end. There is a pond upstream on Millergill Beck. Thwaites Mills is a 19th century corn mill and later saw mill, close to Black Beck. The wheelhouse contains an iron and timber wheel which was fed by an enclosed concrete channel.

**TABLE 4.1** Key farm buildings in the Duddon Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANGRAH FARMHOUSE</th>
<th>DATE 18th century and later</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP Private</th>
<th>PROTECTION Listed</th>
<th>GRID REFERENCE 311296 485281</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>HESKETH HALL</th>
<th>DATE 16th to 19th century</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP Private</th>
<th>PROTECTION Listed</th>
<th>GRID REFERENCE 322329 490812</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HALL DUNNERDALE FARMHOUSE &amp; BYRES</th>
<th>DATE Mid to late 18th century and 19th century</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP Private</th>
<th>PROTECTION Listed</th>
<th>GRID REFERENCE 321465 495547</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
LOW WHINERAY GROUND FARMHOUSE & BYRE
Farmhouse, byre, earth closet and cart shed.

DATE 17th century or earlier
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 320102 490407

STICKLE HOUSE BARN
Repaired field barn with internal crucks.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 321370 491119

UNDER CRAG
Farmhouse with wooden spice cupboard door dated to 1714, whose roof was raised in the 19th century. It is the birthplace of Reverend Robert Walker, born 1710, for 67 years curate of Seathwaite, made famous by Wordsworth as ‘Wonderful Walker’ in his Duddon Sonnets.

DATE Early 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 323302 496675

BECKSTONES
Range of buildings from 17th century including farmhouse and barn, with 20th century additions. Purchased in the 1930s by the Reverend H. H. Symonds, prime mover behind the formation of the Friends of the Lake District, and donated to the National Trust in 1950.

DATE 17th – 20th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 318307 490315

CHAPPELS FARMHOUSE AND BARN
House and barn. Late 17th century or early 18th with 18th or early 19th century barn.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 316338 484812
HAZEL HEAD
House and barn. Late 17th or early 18th century with 18th or early 19th century barn.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 319597 494150

COCKLEY BECK
Early to mid-19th century farmhouse built on an earlier core, with extension of 1869. Purchased in 1929 and gifted to the National Trust.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 324682 501630

BROWSIDE
An unusual L-shaped farmhouse. Purchased in the 1930s by the Reverend H. H. Symonds, prime mover behind the formation of the Friends of the Lake District, and donated to the National Trust in 1950.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 323686 498701

DALE HEAD
17th century farmhouse with wing added in 18th or 19th century. Purchased in 1929 and gifted to the National Trust.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 324152 500640

STEPHENSON GROUND
Farm building 150 metres east of Stephenson Ground Farmhouse with hexagonal basalt used to create cow stalls. Now a farm out-building, former longhouse type dwelling. Stephenson Ground was granted as wasteland for cultivation by Furness Abbey to the Stephenson family in 1509. It is likely that a farmhouse was built soon afterwards and the present structure may represent this building or its successor. The present farmhouse nearby is late 18th century.

DATE 16th – 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 323577 493131
**LOGANBECK FARMHOUSE**
Farmhouse, possibly 17th century with later additions, including barn, and alterations.

**DATE** 17th century and later  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 318314 490466

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**THRANG**
Small two-bay cottage of the 17th century. Purchased in the 1930s by the Reverend H. H. Symonds, prime mover behind the formation of the Friends of the Lake District, and donated to the National Trust in 1950.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 323550 497593

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**BRIGHOUSE**
Wide 2-bay house of the late 17th or early 18th century, with a dairy added to the side. Purchased in the 1930s by the Reverend H. H. Symonds, prime mover behind the formation of the Friends of the Lake District, and donated to the National Trust in 1950.

**DATE** 17th – 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 319460 494692

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**PIKE SIDE**
17th or early 18th century farmhouse with late 19th/early 20th century additions. Purchased in the 1930s by the Reverend H. H. Symonds, prime mover behind the formation of the Friends of the Lake District, and donated to the National Trust in 1950.

**DATE** 17th – 20th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 318393 493186

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**TROUTAL FARM**
The farmhouse was built as a Temperance Hotel in 1894 on the site of an earlier farmhouse. Using the Goodwin bequest of 1957, the National Trust bought this farm from the Forestry Commission in 1961.

**DATE** 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 323497 498780
4. DUDDON

BLACK HALL FARM
An L-shaped farmhouse with barn, distinctive of this area. Using the Goodwin bequest of 1957, the National Trust bought this farm from the Forestry Commission in 1961.

DATE 17th century and later
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 323892 501217

HIGH WALLOWBARROW
L-shaped 17th century farmhouse. The National Trust bought this farm in 1974, it had originally been purchased by Lake District Farm Estates 1938.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 322062 496345

TONGUE HOUSE
Medium sized 17th century farmhouse, rectilinear in plan, with press cupboard possible of 1691. 19th century extension at rear.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 323627 497465

BASKILL
An isolated farmhouse of the 17th century although Baskill is mentioned in documents dated 1576.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 319297 493845

4.1.4 INDUSTRY

The geological, woodland and water resources of the Duddon Valley provided a basis for industrial activity in the valley over several centuries, including slate quarrying, copper mining, iron smelting, peat extraction, cloth manufacture and related industries such as potash production. Today there is little active industrial activity, but past industries have left their mark on the landscape.

In Rainsbarrow, Wallowbarrow coppice and Lilly Woods there is an abundance of charcoal burning ‘pitsteads’ (platforms) burning coppice wood to use for fuel in other industries, often iron smelting. Over 100 platforms have been recorded on the western side of the valley. There are also many remains associated with bark peeling, where oak
bark was peeled to produce tannin for use in leather production. There are the sites and remains of two bobbin mills in the valley by Duddon Bridge and at Ulpha. The Bobbin Mill at Ulpha, at the southern end of Rainsbarrow Woods, used a water wheel for power and turned bobbins for the Lancashire thread mills until 1910.

There is abundant evidence of the importance of the wool and cloth trade to the valley. At Seathwaite a small carding mill included a workshop employing up to 10 men, working on hand operated carding engines and hand jennies, spinning yarn for handloom weavers. Carding is the process of combing out wool ready for spinning. At Duddon Hall there is the site of another carding mill, dated 1770, which belonged to a William Cooper, and at Beckstones, by Logan Beck Bridge there was a fulling mill. Fulling is the process of beating and cleaning cloth and walking is the process of shrinking cloth after it has been woven and before it is made up into clothes. At Grassguards there was a hamlet of five homesteads all engaged in the wool trade making cloth, rugs and ‘Millom Dyer’ carpets. The fulling process used lye soap made from potash. Farmers produced potash to supplement their income by burning green bracken, high in potassium, in potash kilns. There are good examples of potash kilns in Kiln Ellers Wood at Stonestar and two at Stephenson Ground.

Hemp grown for rope needed to be soaked in ‘retting’ ponds to release the fibres. There are examples of hemp retting ponds at Old Hutton (west of Broughton Mills) and at High Wallowbarrow Farm.

As in other valleys peat was an essential fuel source. There is evidence of peat cutting at Brandy Crag on Harter Fell, the remains of a peat house at Pike Side used to store dried peat, with good examples of peat huts or ‘scales’, used for drying cut peat, in the area of Copt How with further evidence above Devoke Water and at Longhouse Close.

Walna Scar is an extensive area of slate quarrying remains consisting of spoil tips, buildings, tracks, clefts, shafts and caverns. There are many smaller slate workings in the valley, such as those at Stainton Ground and Caw.

There are remains of copper mining at Cockley Beck and at The Pike and Hesk Fell on the west side of the Duddon and the remains of a lime kiln at Boad Hole, near Duddon Bridge.

The small scale iron production of the medieval period at Cinder Hill and Beckfoot was later eclipsed by the construction of a blast furnace near Duddon Bridge in 1737. The Duddon furnace is one of the best-preserved in England and remains include not just the furnace itself but also the massive storage buildings for iron ore and charcoal.
The iron ore was brought from Low Furness to wharves below Duddon Bridge and charcoal was produced in the local woods, which contain many examples of charcoal burning platforms. The furnace was in production until 1867.

4.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

Unlike many of the other valleys in the Lake District, the settlement pattern in the Duddon Valley does not extend to villages. Two small hamlets of a few houses each are located at Seathwaite and Ulpha, while the nearest large settlement is the planned village of Broughton-in-Furness, just to the east of the Duddon estuary. Silecroft, at the entrance to the Whicham Valley is a mixture of some traditional old farmsteads with mainly 18th and 19th century buildings. The coastal railway line, built in 1850 brought a station, which attracted other Victorian properties. It has a popular beach nearby, otherwise this village would be a quiet backwater.

Other notable features include stone, single span bridges of the 17th and 18th centuries such as the Bleabeck Bridge, Cockley Beck, Birks Bridge and Shop Bridge and the larger multi-arch bridges of Seathwaite Bridge, Ulpha Bridge, Rawfold Bridge and Duddon Bridge. The Church of St Mary, Whicham is probably 12th century in origin, with various later additions and an 1858 restoration. The Church of St Mary, Whitbeck is probably medieval in origin with heavy restoration in 1883. The church of St John in Ulpha dates from the 17th century and contains the remains of 17th and 18th century wall paintings uncovered in the early 20th century. The Church of Holy Trinity at Seathwaite dates from 1874.

4.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

There are no significant examples of Picturesque buildings or landscapes in the Duddon Valley.

4.1.7 VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

The Duddon Valley contains no lakes and its winding course is obscured for much of its length by woodland. However, this was Wordsworth’s favourite valley in the Lake District. In the Churchyard at Seathwaite is the gravestone for ‘Wonderful Walker’ (1709-1802) who was Curate there for 67 years. Wordsworth added an extended note
on ‘Wonderful Walker’ to his ‘Duddon Sonnets’, extolling his rural multi-tasking as priest; as a teacher when he “employed himself at the spinning wheel while the children were repeating their lessons by his side”; and as a hard-working shepherd who employed his children in “teazing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty two pounds weight upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter”.

Some individual features which are described in the Duddon Sonnets have now disappeared, such as the yarn-spinning mill below the church at Seathwaite, which Wordsworth described as “a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society – changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes”. But the majority of the landscape which Wordsworth described still survives, even small individual features such as the stepping stones just downstream from Seathwaite footbridge and St John’s church at Ulpha.

The valley attracted no significant villa development except at its southern end, where Duddon Hall was built and outside the valley, Broadgate was designed to overlook the Duddon Estuary.

**TABLE 4.2** Key villas in the Duddon Valley

| **Duddon Hall** | Built in the neo-classical style and with an ornate temple in the grounds, dated 1843. Duddon Hall is surrounded by plantation and coppice woodland. In the mid-19th century it also had an icehouse and fountains. By the end of the 19th century it had a gate lodge on the roadside, a rain gauge occupying its own house, formal gardens, and the ‘temple’. |
| **DATE** | Early 19th century |
| **OWNERSHIP** | Private |
| **PROTECTION** | Listed |
| **GRID REFERENCE** | 319374 489567 |

| **Broadgate** | A conventional classical villa outside the valley proper. Built to overlook the Duddon Estuary before 1820. |
| **DATE** | Early 19th century |
| **OWNERSHIP** | Private |
| **PROTECTION** | Listed |
| **GRID REFERENCE** | 318107 486696 |

| **Holme Cottage** | House, probably early/mid-19th century. |
| **DATE** | Early 19th century |
| **OWNERSHIP** | Private |
| **PROTECTION** | Listed |
| **GRID REFERENCE** | 319097 492580 |
4.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

4.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

The Duddon Valley has been settled from at least the Neolithic period (4000-2000 BC), and the remains of one of the most impressive of the Lake District’s many stone circles can be found at Swinside Farm on the northern side of the Duddon estuary. On the coastal plain, Gutterby stone circle and nearby timber circles with associated flint scatters are also evidence of early occupation. Traces of Bronze Age settlements and fields (2000-800 BC) can be seen on the fells above the valley, as at Crosbythwaite prehistoric settlement and cairnfield, and an important group of ring cairns of this period are located around Seathwaite Tarn. Indeed, 14 out of 20 nationally important designated sites in the Duddon Valley relate to prehistoric settlements and farming. Bronze Age cairns can be found on the summit of Caw, Whitfell and Hesk Fell. Burnt mounds, possible prehistoric cooking sites, are also in evidence at Winds Gate.

A Roman road joining forts at Ambleside and Hardknott crosses the head of the valley at Cockley Beck and is now a nationally important protected monument.

4.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Some of the higher farms may have originated as early medieval or Norse shielings and later developed into farmsteads, indicated by the place-names with ‘thwaite’, meaning clearing, or ‘scale’, meaning shieling, for example Gaitside, Seathwaite and Crosbythwaite. However, they exist in small numbers here because there is simply a smaller amount of settlement in the Duddon Valley. The area contains little in the way of confirmed early medieval archaeology, although the remains of a rectangular stone hut divided into two rooms near Smallthwaite may date to this period. This structure might be the remains of a shieling, or a shieling site colonised and then abandoned. A possible further example occurs close to the boundary with the Coniston Valley on
the east side of the Dunnerdale Fells. The place-name Stephenson Scale, one kilometre from the farm at Stephenson Ground, suggests a survival of this early transhumant pattern. The shift to permanent colonisation and settlement of inland areas seen during the 10th to 12th century does not occur so obviously in the Duddon Valley, perhaps because of unwelcoming topography.

None of the medieval longhouses in the Duddon Valley have been dated, and it is possible that some at least were built by Scandinavian settlers in the early medieval period. This would be consistent with the suggestion that later Norse colonists of the 11th and 12th centuries were forced to occupy upland areas as the coasts were already taken. However, it should be reiterated that no firm archaeological evidence from this period has been recovered from these sites.

4.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

There does not seem to be any obvious medieval settlement centre in the valley, but rather a dispersed pattern of hamlets and farmsteads (Birks, Black Hall and Dale Head, for example). The nearest large medieval settlement is Broughton-in-Furness to the east of the Duddon Estuary in the Coniston Valley area, although Furness Abbey must have been influential in this valley during the medieval period. Monk Foss Farm takes its name from its connection to Furness Abbey; fishponds here were given to the abbey in 1127. There is evidence of charcoal production in Rainsbarrow Wood. The evidence for medieval bloomeries at Cinder Hill near Ulpha and at Beckfoot near Duddon Hall suggests monastic activity from Furness and Calder Abbeys. The Abbeys were influential in developing and controlling the iron industry in the medieval period.

Dunnerdale first appears in the Lancashire Pipe Rolls in 1160. It seems to have been regarded as a hamlet of Kirkby (in Furness), and was certainly so in 1407. In 1497 it was sold and probably at that time passed into the hands of the Earl of Derby. Below ‘Hall Dunnerdale Farm’ the field pattern may perhaps reflect an early division between the tenants and the lord or their agent; whereby the tenants occupied lower ground and the manorial lord or their agent occupied the high ground. The strip fields located immediately south of Hall Dunnerdale Farm may show some rare surviving evidence for medieval open field arable agriculture, having been enclosed from the open fields as shares were consolidated in the 16th and 17th centuries. It is possible that there are some additional examples of open field agriculture preserved in later patterns at Whineray Ground, and between Whinfield Ground and Loganbeck/Beckstones, where strips may have been enclosed from former open fields once shares were consolidated. Further west, along the Irish Sea coast, are two more possible examples of this kind of survival, at Silecroft and Whitbeck. The latter may contain the remains of an arrangement whereby the land allotment for the feudal tenants is separate to that set out for the manorial lord or their agent (as compared to Hall Dunnerdale). It is not possible to make out this arrangement at Silecroft which may be more akin to the classic medieval village.

There are numerous remains of medieval longhouses on the upper slopes of the valley and examples can be seen at Stephenson Ground and Crosbythwaite which has three medieval settlement sites and two sheilings. The Duddon Valley area also contains relict
field systems – ridge and furrow, walls and possible enclosures. Associated with the longhouses are clearance cairns, disused tracks, and low or collapsed low walls. These are probably too small for sheep but may have held cattle if topped by fences or hedges. The absence – from almost all the longhouse sites – of ridge and furrow implies that these longhouse dwellers were pastoralists growing only a small quantity of subsistence crops. Many of the large number of bields on the unenclosed higher ground are probably medieval and thus fit this model.

Many of the longhouses are likely to have been abandoned in the medieval period (for example at some point before 1600) and now survive as earthworks. Other will have survived until the Statesmen period of the late 16th to early 18th centuries when they were replaced with larger stone farmhouses in Lake District vernacular style. Indeed the archaeological and map evidence suggests that settlement contraction since the medieval period (post-1600) appears to have been minimal in most of the Duddon Valley.

The surviving farm at Old Hall Farm includes the ruins of a tower which has been thought to be medieval but may in fact be later in date as its fabric incorporates a lintel stone with an inscription ‘ID 1747’. It was described by Wordsworth as:

“quietly self-buried in earth’s mould,
Is that embattled House, whose massy Keep
Flung from yon cliff a shadow large and cold.”

‘Duddon Sonnet XXVII’ (1820)

Away from the coastal strip, facing the Irish Sea and the marshes overlooking Duddon Sands, the valley area is mostly mountainous and the side valleys are narrow. Aside from the place-names, two shielings and some probable open field arable agriculture, there is little to suggest that the area had been extensively colonised before the medieval period. The absence of villages and paucity of farmsteads suggests that it was not a favoured location for manorial colonisation, although population pressure and the urge to invest eventually pushed settlement further inland where land was suitable. A small enclosure of possible inbye around an abandoned farm at Gaitscale, up on the Roman Road across Wrynose, marks the furthest extent of colonisation inland. This is most likely to be a medieval settlement although it is only documented as being occupied between 1686 and 1771.

Enclosure of waste by ‘assarting’ (encroachment) and the establishment of new settlement further inland was encouraged by the feudal lords as a means to improve revenues from their tenants although it is impossible to trace most specific instances on the ground. Some place-names (For example Smalthwaite, Crosbythwaite, Seathwaite and Grassguards) are likely to indicate clearance. Medieval inbye land which has survived via the patterns ossified in the later walled enclosures certainly appears to be widespread around Ulpha and Seathwaite, and at Cockley Beck. South of Ulpha, the place-names of Ulpha Park with Low Park and Middle Park are possibly suggestive of a medieval deer park. Ulpha Park could have been a possession and stock enclosure of Furness Abbey, possibly originating as a 13th century vaccary similar to other known examples at Brotherilkeld and Lingcove. The free chase of Milom is referred to as the forest of Ulpha in the early 16th century. Nearby Frith Hall was built in the 16th century.
At Seathwaite the early pattern is similar to that around Dale Head. Two separate hamlets of two and three building clusters are surrounded by a series of smaller satellite farms (Wallowbarrow, Tongue House, Under Crag). The pattern below the open fields at Ulpha from the direction of Hall Dunnerdale Farm is generally the same. Larger inbye fields surround isolated farmsteads – Pikeside, Baskell, Crosbythaite, Hazel Head and so on – all the way down the valley to Beckfoot, and perhaps on south and west as far as what is now Thwaites Mill. There are no outgangs or drift roads which, alongside a lack of documentation recording any disputes over resources, seems to confirm the general poverty of the uplands. However, there are instances of place-names with ‘Peat’ as an element (see Low, Middle and High Peat Stock at Cockley Beck) which indicates that turbary rights were probably exercised from the earliest settlement. Kiln Bank suggests that in addition to limited arable agriculture and extensive stock-raising, the inhabitants supported the poor harvest from the hinterland by engaging in industry, perhaps stimulated by their proximity to Furness Abbey.

The pattern of dispersed farms occupying irregular inbye is repeated along the south eastern boundary of the Duddon Valley area, where colonisation of the side valleys spread – from the direction of Broughton – across the north bank of the River Lickle up to Stephenson Ground. Stephenson Scale is an unusually prolific archaeological site. Most relevantly it has produced archaeological evidence from the medieval period for a double walled farmhouse – a boat-shaped ‘longhouse’ building with associated pottery and charcoal dated to the 12-14th centuries. It has also provided firm evidence for Bronze Age settlement (c. 2,000 – 800 BC).

At the shared edge of the Duddon Valley with the Eskdale valley (Whicham to Silecroft, and along the coast towards Holmegate and Barfield) is extensive lowland agriculture which probably mostly originated as inbye land spreading out from early settlements at Silecroft and Whitbeck.

During the 16th and 17th centuries the opportunities arose to address the problems inherent in the feudal system of land tenure. Former open fields, traditionally sub-divided to the point of poverty, began to be reorganised by manor courts and petitions; they became enclosed as strips on a piecemeal basis, with individual farmers or small groups enclosing formerly open areas. The strips might then also be combined into larger parcels as farms were abandoned or amalgamated. Small scale enclosure of this type tends to be undocumented. It seems to have occurred in the Duddon Valley area in the fields around Hall Dunnerdale Farm, Silecroft, Whitbeck, Whineray Ground, and Whinfield Ground.

There are very large areas of intake enclosure on the fells which probably date to this period, around Cockley Beck and the upper valley, as well as around each of the other early settlement centres at Seathwaite, Hazel Head, Crosbythaite and Hall Dunnerdale Farm. These are generally very large parcels, sometimes forming herringbone-like
strips enclosing the lower slopes and incorporating becks as markers and perhaps the walled enclosures evolved from earlier topographical boundaries, as is suggested to have happened in Wasdale Head. There are no intake enclosures along the coastal strip between Silecroft and Waberthwaite as by the end of the medieval period this stretch of land had presumably reached its logical conclusion. As the focus moved inland and upland the enthusiasm for intake enclosure increased dramatically, especially either side of Crosbythwaite and on the lower slopes of Seathwaite Fell. This is probably connected to the area’s sheep farming heritage, as well as proximity to and connections with active textile producing areas. Indeed the only scant historic reference is to an award concerning sheepgates in Seathwaite in 1681. The place-name ‘Close’ appears time and again in the present day landscape: the name Cockley Beck Great Intake perhaps recognises this enthusiasm at the time. Above the River Ickle the enthusiasm for intake enclosures higher up the side valleys is almost opposite to what occurs in the Duddon Valley; this probably reflects the harsher and steeper topography on that side of the Seathwaite Fells.

As part of this reorganisation some farms were abandoned whilst others were combined. Building stock began to be replaced in more durable materials and documents begin to correspond to identifiable places, for example, ‘Barstall’ appeared in source material in 1576 and may relate to today’s Baskell Farm. It was at this time that the foundations were laid of what is now known as the Lake District’s vernacular architecture: stone enclosure walls, stone farmhouses and barns newly built or rebuilt on earlier sites alongside more handsome residences for the wealthy such as Frith Hall, a fortified site and hunting lodge (ruined) of 16th-17th century date. Many farm buildings in the Duddon Valley date from this time, including one at Stephenson Ground which may be from the early 16th century when the Stephenson family was granted wasteland for cultivation by Furness Abbey. The first mention of the Church at Ulpha (St John’s) is 1577 when it was marked on Saxton’s map of Lancashire. The stone bridges of the 17th and 18th centuries – at Duddon Bridge, Ulpha, Cockley Beck Bridge and Birks Bridge – reflect changes to the parish responsibility for highways upkeep and pressure from mercantile interests.

At Walna Scar, quarries started operating in the early 17th century and only ceased in the 1940s. Serving both local and national need, the slate would have been carted via Broughton Mills to the port at Angleton on the Duddon Estuary, until the opening of the Ulverston Canal in 1796.

Despite the range of industrial activity, which remained relatively small scale, the Duddon Valley in the 19th century remained free of the types of development pressure that elsewhere in the Lake District led to mass protest and campaigning. However, the farmland did undergo a series of agricultural improvements through enclosure and drainage. There are four principal groups of planned enclosure in the Duddon Valley area that relate to the 18th and 19th centuries. Those around Silecroft and Monk Foss probably represent improvement of marsh or coastal pasture through improved drainage. The area below Swinside Stone Circle seems to represent infill of unenclosed fell lying between groups of earlier intakes. The area to the south and east of Rainsbarrow Wood appears to be planned enclosure of the lower north-facing slopes of Ulpha Park, within which is the former hunting lodge at Frith Hall.

Farming remained the main activity, with a growing tourism industry and William Green in his ‘The Tourist’s New Guide to the Lakes’ (1819) gave a list of the largest flocks in the
Lake District. He began by stating that he did not think that there was anywhere else in the district where as many sheep were kept in one small area as there were on the adjoining farms of ‘Toes’ (Taw House) and ‘Brotherill Keld’ (Brotherilkeld) in Eskdale and Black Hall in the Duddon Valley. William Tyson of Black Hall had over 2,000 sheep.

4.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The location of the Duddon valley on the less accessible western side of the Lake District, together with its lack of a lake, resulted in little interest from early cultural tourists in the 18th century.

4.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Wordsworth first visited Duddon as a boy while living at Hawkshead and then again in 1788, 1789, the summer of 1794, September 1804, September 1808 and his final recorded visit before he published his ‘Duddon Sonnets’ was in September 1811. In his later years he travelled through the valley as part of his civil service job as ‘Distributor of Stamps for Westmorland and part of Cumberland’.

Wordsworth’s ‘Duddon Sonnets’ received more praise in his lifetime than any other of his publications. The poem sequence was first published along with an early version of his ‘Guide’ in 1820 and was intended to complement the prose work as a detailed poetic guide to this valley.

On his walking tour of 1802 Coleridge dropped down into the Duddon from Devoke Water:

“Passed over a common, wikd & dreary, and descending a hill came down upon Ulpha Kirk with a sweet view up the river... I pass along a furlong or so upon the road, the river winding thro’ the narrow vale, & then turn off to my left athwart a Cove on Donnerdale Fell... O lovely lovely Vale!”

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘Notebook’ (1802)

He also noted at Ulpha “an old man with his Daughter, a sweet Girl, burning bracken — went up to him and talked with him and the lovely Girl in the [midst] of the huge Volumes of Smoke, and found that I had gone two miles wrong...”. The activity described here being the burning of bracken to make potash, one of the ingredients for making soap for cleaning fleeces for the woollen industry.

Whether J. M. W. Turner had read the ‘Duddon Sonnets’ and was consequently inspired to visit and paint Duddon Sands has been the subject of speculation. The final poem charges Wordworth’s journey from source to sea with a universal resonance:
William Wordsworth, ‘Duddon Sonnets’ (1820)

But, both Wordsworth’s poem and Turner’s ‘Duddon Sands’ (watercolour and white chalk c. 1830) revolve around the transitions from one cycle of nature to another.

4.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

While the Duddon Valley was free of the development pressure that elsewhere in the Lake District lead to mass protest and campaigning in the 19th century, the valley was threatened by a number of developments in the first half of the 20th century.

Seathwaite Tarn was developed as a drinking water reservoir for Barrow-in-Furness in 1907 and it is still in use today. In recent years some steps have been taken to remove some infrastructure in the landscape.

Proposed large scale commercial tree planting by the Forestry Commission in the upper Duddon Valley from 1933 did lead to significant protests about the landscape impact of conifer plantations. There was much controversy and campaigning, principally by the newly formed Friends of the Lake District, and in 1936 a landmark agreement was reached under which the Forestry Commission undertook not to pursue commercial forestry within the core of the Lake District. Although commercial forestry was established at the head of the Duddon Valley, continuing pressure from conservationists led to significant compromises, including an agreement in 1958 to exclude Black Hall Farm from planting. Black Hall Farm was eventually bought by the National Trust in 1961.

The land in the upper Duddon Valley (Dunnerdale Forest) that was planted with conifers from the 1930s has, in the last ten years, begun to be replanted with native broadleaf trees with financial support from the Friends of the Lake District.

In the 1940s the Duddon Valley came under what the Friends of the Lake District considered to be a double threat to its natural beauty; firstly, a possible new reservoir, north of Seathwaite Church and; secondly, a proposed major hydro-electric scheme. The proposal included tunnelling to bring water into the upper Duddon Valley from Eskdale, three sets of reservoirs and three power stations all linked by an overground steel water pipe and transmission lines, transformer stations and switchgear buildings. The river flow would be significantly reduced for most of the year. It did not proceed for economic reasons, but it reinforced Friends of the Lake District’s argument that a Lake District National Park with a strong planning framework was urgently needed.

In 1929 the farms at Cockley Beck and Dale Head were purchased and gifted to the National Trust. In the 1930s, the Reverend H. H. Symonds, prime mover behind the formation of the Friends of the Lake District, purchased five farms in the Duddon which he donated to the National Trust in 1950. These comprised Thrang, Browside, Hazel Head, Brighouse, Pike Side and Beckstones. Using the Goodwin bequest of 1957,
the National Trust purchased Troutal Farm in 1958 and Black Hall Farm (from the Ministry of Agriculture) in 1961. The Trust also bought a number of farms originally purchased by Lake District Farm Estates: Low Wallowbarrow Farm in 1958 (bought by LDFE in 1941); Biggert Mire Farm in 1960 (bought by Lake District Farm Estates in 1956/7); High Wallowbarrow in 1974 (bought by Lake District Farm Estates in 1938). The farms at Biggert Mire and Low Wallowbarrow Cottage were subsequently sold on with continued control by the National Trust through restrictive covenants. Baskells Farm was given by the Symonds Memorial Trustees in memory of the Reverend H. H. Symonds in 1963, Tongue House and Long House farms were purchased in 1983 and Fenwick Farm was purchased in 1995. The National Trust owns 2,433 hectares of land, of which 2,384 hectares is inalienable. It also has an additional 668 hectares of leased land and 42 hectares of covenanted land. The National Trust has acquired through donations and purchases 17 farms in the Duddon Valley to protect it from forestry operations.

The purchase of these farms allowed the long tradition of sheep rearing to continue. In the first Herdwick flock book in 1920 Joseph Harrison’s at Black Hall, Ulpha, had a 500 ewe flock and Tyson Hartley of Turner Hall had 500 ewes in two flocks at Turner Hall and Mosshouse.

In the West Cumberland News in 1942 it was reported that the flock belonging to Thomas Bowes at Fenwick, Thwaites, had been handed down from father to son without a break since 1789. Furthermore, Thomas Bowes also took over part of the Broadgate stock of Herdwicks owned by Sir William Lewthwaite which the Lewthwaites had held since 1657.

4.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSEAL VALUE

QUALITIES

The attributes demonstrating the contribution of this valley to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District as a whole are listed in Table 4.4.

The Duddon Valley is similar to its neighbouring valleys on the western side of the Lake District in having a landscape character that is dominated by the attributes of agro-pastoral farming. The long, narrow valley has a very clear pattern, especially in its upper reaches, of inbye land on the valley bottom surrounded by intakes on the surrounding slopes. There are many examples here of early farm buildings – in some cases with medieval origins – and distinctive stone walls, including shard fences. The Valley has a high number of fell-going flocks of which a good proportion are Herdwicks. Some of the most important Herdwick farms in the Lake District, including Turner Hall, are located here.

The evidence for early land use is widespread and includes extensive prehistoric clearance cairnfields and the spectacular Neolithic stone circle at Swinside. The Duddon
FIGURE 4.14 Air photograph of intake fields on the edge of the open fell at Old Hutton, near Broughton Mills. Patches of ridge and furrow cultivation are visible and there is a hemp or flax retting pond (part of the process for manufacturing cloth) adjacent to the ruined building in the upper centre of the photograph.

FIGURE 4.15 Wild daffodils in Rainsbarrow Wood, Duddon. Each spring the landscape beauty of the valley is enhanced by carpets of these distinctive flowers.
Valley is relatively unusual in having a high number of abandoned medieval farm sites on the higher slopes of the valley. Perhaps surprisingly this heavily agricultural valley was also the location for major industries in the past including a blast furnace in the 18th and 19th centuries and copper mines and slate quarries from the same period.

Due to its relative remoteness and lack of a lake, the Duddon Valley was not on the usual itinerary for early seekers of Picturesque beauty in the Lake District and the valley contains no significant villas or designed landscapes. However, it was one of William Wordsworth’s favourite valleys and a source of inspiration for some of his most famous poetry, the ‘Duddon Sonnets’.

The Duddon Valley did not feature in the conservation battles of the 19th century in the Lake District but did become the centre, along with Eskdale, of a major battle in the early 20th century over commercial afforestation. The success of the campaign to save the Herdwick hefts in the upper Duddon Valley and the agreement with the Forestry Commission to exclude the central Lake District from conifer afforestation was a major victory which has helped to preserve the landscape beauty of the Lake District up to the present. This was accompanied by the private purchase of key farms in the Duddon Valley in order to preserve the traditional agro-pastoral way of life. These were eventually gifted or sold to the National Trust which now owns and manages large parts of the Valley.

The Duddon Valley is therefore a strong working agro-pastoral landscape which still retains the beauty which has inspired artists and writers and which has an important part in the history and continuation of the conservation of the English Lake District.

FIGURE 4.16 The agro-pastoral landscape of Long House from the air. Both inbye and intake fields are visible, along with an outgang leading from Long House farm to the open fell.
FIGURE 4.17 An aerial view of the middle section of the Duddon Valley looking north east. Rainsbarrow wood can be seen in the bottom left and the Dunnerdale Fells on the right.
5. ESKDALE

Description, History and Development
5. THE ESKDALE VALLEY

“The fourth vale, next to be observed, viz. that of the Esk, is of the same general character as the last, yet beautifully discriminated from it by peculiar features. Its stream passes under the woody steep upon which stands Muncaster Castle, the ancient seat of the Penningtons, and after forming a short and narrow estuary enters the sea below the small town of Ravenglass”.

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

5.1 DESCRIPTION

5.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Eskdale begins in the highest mountains of the English Lake District in the Scafell massif. This wild, craggy, remote and rugged scenery extends to England’s highest mountain, Scafell Pike at 977 metres above mean sea level. The area forms the hub of Wordsworth’s representative figure of the wheel with the 13 valleys radiating from these hard and most resistant volcanic rocks. From these lofty heights at the centre of the Lake District, Eskdale runs south west to the sea. This is the only location in England where mountains fall almost directly into the sea. Its landscape changes from that of a cascading upland beck to that of a fast flowing river in its mid-section then becomes a coastal plain through which the Esk meanders slowly to the open, tidal landscapes of its estuary. See Figure 5.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figures 5.2 and 5.3 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Eskdale Valley.

5.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

There is a sense of timelessness in the eastern, upland section of the valley where there are few obvious traces of human settlement and the changing effects of light, weather and season have such an effect on the appearance and atmosphere of the landscape. The U-shaped glaciated valley then broadens and softens into a verdant, green landscape with large patches of broadleaved, mixed and coniferous woodland giving it a well-wooded feel. The valley floor is strongly patterned with pink granite stone walls
Figure 5.1 Eskdale Valley
Illustrative Map

1. Earthwork remains of medieval farmstead and field system at Great Grassoms
2. Ravencliff Roman fort and bath house (bath house managed by English Heritage)
3. Hardknott Roman fort (owned by National Trust)
4. Medieval boundary, Great Moss (owned by National Trust)
5. The Eskdale corn mill at Boat (owned by Eskdale Mill and Heritage Trust)
6. Peat huts above Boot, Eskdale
7. Prehistoric stone circles on Eskdale Moor (owned by National Trust)
8. Farm at Brotherilkeld (owned by National Trust)
9. Dalegarth Hall
10. Gatehouse
11. Muncaster Castle and garden
12. Landscape protected from conifer planting through the 1956 agreement with the Forestry Commission (owned by National Trust)

© Lake District National Park Authority, 2022. This is an illustrative map only. Reproduction in whole or part by any means is prohibited without the prior written permission of the Lake District National Park Authority.
### FIGURE 5.4 The contribution of the Eskdale Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
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<td>Common land</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Woodland industries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
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<td>Water-powered industry</td>
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<td>Market towns</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Designed landscape</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery and appreciation of a rich cultural landscape</td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The significance ratings are indicated by 🌟, 🌟🌟, and 🌟🌟🌟.*
FIGURE 5.5 View of Eskdale from above Boot, looking south west towards the coast

FIGURE 5.6 View north across the Great Moss at the head of the River Esk, with Scafell Pike on the left
enclosing bright green inbye fields of improved pasture. In places these walls enclose larger intakes of rougher pasture on the valley sides.

As the valley widens to the south west the gently rolling topography falls away to a more open landscape with extensive views west across the Irish Sea and east up the valley to the imposing high fells. The deeper soils here are suited to more intensive farming including dairy, and walls gradually give way to hedges and hedgerow trees. Still further west the low lying coastal margins become a flat or gently undulating landscape of hummocky dunes, raised beaches and coastal mosses before morphing into the tidal mudflats, shingle beaches, saltmarsh and the big skies of the Mite and Esk estuaries where timelessness returns.

The characteristic land use of the valley is undoubtedly agriculture with rough grazing on the open fell and steep valley sides and the higher quality, improved pasture of the inbye on the valley floor. There are many traces of earlier settlement dating back to the Mesolithic c. 8000 BC. Later prehistoric sites include an important group of Neolithic or Bronze Age stone circles and settlement remains on Boot Bank and around Devoke Water. There are also complex ritual and burial landscapes on Eskdale Moor, Bootle Fell, Stainton, Eller How and Great Grassoms. Evidence of early farming can also be found throughout the valley at Little Grassoms, Birktherwaite, Pike How, Corney Fell, Woodend Bridge and Waberthwaite Fell.

This evidence normally consists of field systems and clearance cairns which form physical evidence of land improvement, often Bronze Age in date. Such remains are often intertwined with funerary and ritual landscapes suggesting a relatively intensive form of ritual and farming land use. There are 69 nationally important (scheduled) monuments in the valley, 53 of them relate to prehistoric farming. There are two well preserved Roman forts, Ravenglass on the coast, and Hardknott near the head of the valley guarding its eponymous pass.

Industry, principally the mining of iron-ore, brought change to the valley and reached its peak in the mid 19th century. Other service industries flourished utilising the natural resources available such as woodland, while a well preserved corn mill at Boot uses the abundant head of water which provided a reliable power source. Other water powered industrial sites included a fulling mill at Gill Bank, and bobbin mills at Longrigg, Miterdale and Broad Oak, Birkby.

The signs of wealth are increasingly conspicuous moving further west down the valley and the small vernacular rough granite buildings rub shoulders with larger, grander houses built in dressed stone. Muncaster Castle with its 14th century fortified tower was extensively and lavishly re-modelled in the 19th century and overlooks the valley from a
high ledge where it has an imposing presence. Its extensive gardens and estate plantings give a notable appearance of designed landscape to western parts of the valley.

Ravenglass, the only coastal settlement in the Lake District and formerly a busy port and market centre dating back to Roman times, is characterised now by 18th and 19th century buildings. It has a unique atmosphere, a strong sense of history and a powerful relationship with the estuary and the sea. Because of the port and the estuary, Eskdale had more external contact than some other valleys.

Eskdale is a landscape of contrasts on its journey from the high fells to the sea which tells the story of the development of this part of the Lake District from prehistory to modern times. It has scenic beauty in abundance from the wild and rugged mountains through intimate farmed landscapes, vernacular buildings and designed landscape. It provides much evidence of past land use and industries which have shaped the landscape and add interest and depth to it. The past is entirely consistent and compatible with current land use which together help to drive another strand of the local economy which is tourism, helping to sustain communities and manage the land to conserve its interest and beauty.

5.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

Agro-pastoral farming is the dominant land use in Eskdale and the present day landscape illustrates the strong continuity of farming from medieval times through its field patterns, farmsteads and buildings. Archaeological evidence for very early agro-pastoral agriculture which can be seen on the ground includes the earthwork remains of medieval shielings and enclosures at Great Grassoms and on the Great Moss, at the head of the River Esk. These sites represent two distinct types of pastoral use in the medieval period: large scale stock farming represented by the large enclosures at Great Grassoms (belonging to the lords of Millom) and the Great Moss (Brotherilkeld farm owned by Furness Abbey), and peasant use of hill grazing, indicated by the shieling sites.

The classic Lake District pattern of inbye, intake and open fell grazing is strongly represented in Eskdale and the stone field walls are constructed from the underlying pink granite. As in the head of Wasdale, many of the field walls in Eskdale are particularly massive in construction, indicating the need to clear huge quantities of stone from the land for cultivation. In Eskdale more than any other valley, the fellsides are scattered with the remains of small drystone huts, known as ‘peat scales’, in which peat was dried and stored. The largest concentration is the cluster of nine huts on Boot Bank. The huts are simple rectangular drystone structures made of local granite rubble having once been roofed, originally with bracken thatch and later with slate.

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

In 1819, William Green in his ‘Tourist’s New Guide to the Lakes’, commented that he did not think that there was anywhere else in the in the district where as many sheep were kept in one small area as there were in the adjoining Eskdale farms of Taw House (Toes House, just under 2,000 sheep), Brotherilkeld (Butterilket, 3,000 sheep) and Black
FIGURE 5.8 Shepherds' flocks and native sheep breeds in the Eskdale Valley
Eskdale hosts the premier annual Herdwick show on the last Saturday in September and the Herdwick Tup show in May. The Eskdale Show has classes for Herdwick sheep, foxhounds and terriers, along with hound trails where trained hounds race following the scent of aniseed over the surrounding fells, local handicrafts, children’s sports events and fell races.

**FARMSTEADS**

The local architecture in the upper valley is typical Lake District vernacular, with numerous examples of stone walled, slate roofed farm houses and barns dating from the 16th century and later. The signs of wealth increase towards the west where the more productive lower lying valley is settled with small vernacular rough granite buildings and larger, grander houses built in dressed stone.

Key examples of farm buildings include:

**TABLE 5.1 Key farm buildings in Eskdale Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalegarth Hall</td>
<td>14th – 18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>317004 500120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DALEGARTH HALL**

Manor house. Site occupied since 14th century but present building 16th century for the Stanleys; the dining-room ceiling was once ornamenteally plastered, featuring the date 1599 and initials E. & A.S., for Edward and Ann Stanley. Later additions and alterations included partial demolition 17th century. Original oak stair now replaced; inglenook fireplace with chamfered firebeam; stop chamfered beams; queen strut roof trusses.
**BUILDING WEST OF CROPPLE HOWE FARMHOUSE**

A good example of a small Lake District farmhouse with accumulated alterations illustrating the development over successive centuries. It contains Cumbria’s only known mid-to late 16th century totally intact wattle and daub smokehood complete with reredos and heck. The current Cropple How farmhouse is mid-18th century with later alterations.

**DATE**  Mid to late 16th century  
**OWNERSHIP**  Private  
**PROTECTION**  Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE**  312854 497743

**BROTHERILKELD**

The farmhouse is of typical vernacular style, of rubble construction with white, lime-washed walls and slate roof. Brotherilkeld or 'Butterilket' was described in 1292 as a 'vaccary' or dairy farm by the monks of Furness Abbey on the site of an existing sheep farm. It later became an important 'Herdwick' farm. The farmhouse was rebuilt in the 17th century.

**DATE**  17th century  
**OWNERSHIP**  National Trust  
**PROTECTION**  Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE**  321290 501410

**YATTUS, ESKDALE GREEN**

A roadside group of farmhouse and Forge House and buildings. Forge House itself is dated 1750. The buildings either side are late 18th or early 19th century.

**DATE**  17th – 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP**  Private  
**PROTECTION**  Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE**  314290 500130

**LONG RIGG FARM**

The best example of a complete planned farmstead in the Lake District, built by Lord Rea of Gatehouse, Eskdale Green, expanding on an existing farmstead, of which the house dates from the early to mid-19th century.

**DATE**  Mid-19th – 20th century  
**OWNERSHIP**  Private  
**PROTECTION**  Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE**  313880 500620

**FIELD HEAD FARM**

Well preserved farmhouse of the late 17th century with parlour and firehouse which retains a fine stone firehood.

**DATE**  17th – 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP**  National Trust  
**PROTECTION**  Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE**  315257 498981
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taw House Farm</td>
<td>Taw House (‘Taythes’) is named in a list holdings drawn up in 1547, when it was held by William Vycars. The farmhouse dates from around 1806 but is on the site of an earlier dwelling with a press cupboard in the kitchen dating from 1723.</td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>321057 501589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gill Bank Farm</td>
<td>Gabled, L-shaped farmhouse of the 17th century with later additions.</td>
<td>17th – 19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>318073 501802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penny Hill Farm</td>
<td>18th century farm gifted to National Trust by Beatrix Potter.</td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>319376 500782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birdhow Cottage</td>
<td>Almost square shepherd’s cottage. This was originally a separate holding which was combined with Taw House in the late 18th century.</td>
<td>17th – 19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>320528 501118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wha House Farm</td>
<td>17th century farmhouse altered in 1820 into a four-square, double-pile house.</td>
<td>17th and 19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>320030 500826</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.4 INDUSTRY

While agriculture is the main land use of this valley, relict industry such as iron ore mining which reached its peak in the later 19th century, has left its mark too. The 19th century mines at Nab Gill at Boot produced evidence of grooves where ore had been extracted by earlier miners. There is a concentration of medieval bloomery sites in Eskdale, including at Scale Bridge in the Upper Esk and near Trough House Bridge, which has been radiocarbon dated to around 1275.

Other service industries flourished and a well preserved corn mill at Boot is testament to the exploitation of the valley’s natural resources from at least 1547, but probably before. Industry has also provided the valley with one of its main tourist attractions – La’l Ratty is a narrow gauge railway built in 1875 to take the iron ore away to the coast at Ravenglass, although it was also used for passengers. In the 20th century it was used for tourism since the 1960s.

5.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

Eskdale only has a few settlements; the principal ones are Ravenglass and Bootle on the coastal plain with small hamlets such as Eskdale Green and Boot further up the valley.

RAVENGLASS

Ravenglass lies at the head of the estuary of the River Esk at the point at which it is joined by the Rivers Irt and Mit. There was a port here in Roman times. From here a road ran up Eskdale and over Hardknott and Wrynose Passes to the head of Lake Windermere. The remains of the Roman fort of Glannaventa and its vicus (civilian settlement),
distinguished by the ruins of its bathhouse, the best preserved Roman building in northwestern England, lie slightly to the south of the modern town which is of medieval origin.

In 1208 Ravenglass was granted a Charter to hold a market in Main Street and a fair each summer on St. James’s Day. There was a cross in the street but that was taken away many years ago. Today there is a plaque to mark the spot where it is thought to have been.

The medieval street pattern which developed after the 13th century is still the basis of the present village layout. The open market place is enclosed by buildings with narrow pinch points at either end to restrain animals (possibly as a legacy of the important Ravenglass cattle fair of the 17th century) or for defensive purposes, with side lanes to ancient field systems and the shore. The present day historic building stock, mostly 18th/19th century in appearance, but often with earlier origins, is still constructed around this street pattern. The medieval village and port grew and flourished for 500 years. The port was used to transport slate, grain, cattle and other products from the Lake District but its importance ended when the other ports nearer to major centres of industry developed in competition and the railway introduced cheaper alternative transport.

The stone built mid/late 19th century railway buildings, notably goods and engine sheds, stations and signal box, are associated with both the Whitehaven and Furness Junction Railway and the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway.

Ravenglass Conservation Area was designated in 1981 and extended in 2001 because of the architectural and historical value of the buildings and townscape. Almost all buildings have architectural and historic interest including two listed buildings (Pennington House and The Bay Horse).

BOOTLE

Bootle is now a small settlement on the road leading to Millom. In the medieval period, it was sufficiently important to be granted a market in 1347. The remains of Seaton Priory are located to the north of the town. Its charter was renewed in 1567. It is said to be the smallest market town in England. The old village straddles the A595, with some sturdy 18th and 19th century buildings. St Michael’s Church is quite large for a village of its size. At Bootle Station there is another separate settlement with mainly Victorian buildings and 20th century Ministry of Defence houses for Eskmeals.

ESKDALE GREEN

Eskdale Green is a small 19th century settlement part-way up the valley whose growth is largely the result of mining, the railway and tourism. It is centred on the late 19th century St. Bega’s Church, but dominated by Gate House villa.
**BOOT**

Boot is a small attractive hamlet at a bridging point over Whillan Beck, at the start of packhorse routes. There are some vernacular buildings, especially the very fine working Corn Mill, dating from the 16th century, adjacent to a stone bridge. Prosperity came when Nab Gill mine opened for haematite extraction in 1875, the reason for the establishment of the Ravenglass and Eskdale railway. Its original terminus was at Boot, at the foot of an inclined tramway, now at Dalegarth Station. The railway is now a major tourist attraction. Nearby, St Catherine’s Church, dates from the 14th century, but was substantially rebuilt in 1881. Dalegarth Hall dates from the medieval to the 17th century and was home of the Stanley family. Doctor Bridge, east of Boot, is a fine single span stone packhorse bridge of the 17th century which was widened in 1774 for a Doctor Tyson to accommodate his horse-drawn trap.

**WABERTHWAITRE**

Waberthwaite is a very small hamlet scattered alongside the A595 main road, with building groups at Broad Oak, Lane End and Hall Waberthwaite. It has a small, simple church near the estuary, with an ancient cross shaft. Prosperity came with granite quarrying at Broad Oak, specialising in granite sets for paving Lancashire town streets.

**5.1.6 VILLAS, DESIGNED LANDSCAPES AND PICTURESQUE**

Eskdale does not have a lake in the valley bottom (only a number of tarns in the surrounding fells) and despite exhibiting pleasant pastoral scenery it attracted much less attention from the Lake Poets and others than some of the other valleys. As a result there is almost no villa development. The principal (and very late) exception is Gatehouse (1896-1901), a ponderous villa, tending towards Arts and Crafts, built for J. H. Rea by A. Huddart of Whitehaven, which is associated with a substantial man made lake. This villa replaced the earlier Esk Villa built by Rea’s father in 1852. The associated garden at Giggle Alley was designed by Thomas Mawson in a Japanese style, including rhododendrons, specimen trees, rockeries and rills around an artificial tarn with boathouse. Lord Rea allegedly aimed to “create a garden to rival Lord Muncaster’s estate”. Gatehouse has been an outward bound school since the 1950s.

*Figure 5.11: Muncaster Castle and gardens*
The most significant house in the valley is Muncaster Castle, seat of the Pennington Family, at the coastal end of Eskdale. The present building incorporates parts of a 14th century pele tower and was substantially altered and extended by the architect Anthony Salvin in 1862-6. Within the castle grounds, the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Muncaster is 16th century with alterations by Salvin in 1874. A 10th century cross stands in the churchyard. Muncaster Castle is also surrounded by spectacular landscaped gardens (Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens), initially dating from the 18th century, which include an internationally important collection of rhododendrons.

**TABLE 5.2 Key villas in Eskdale Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GATEHOUSE</strong></th>
<th>Gatehouse is a large mansion in Arts and Crafts style built for Liverpool ship owner Lord Rea between 1896 and 1901. Associated garden by Thomas Mawson.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>19th – 20th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>Outward Bound Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROTECTION</strong></td>
<td>Listed</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>GRID REFERENCE</strong></td>
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</table>

**5.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**5.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT**

**PREHISTORIC**

Human settlement in Eskdale can be traced back to the remains of temporary settlements of Mesolithic hunters around the estuary of the Esk, dating to c. 8000 BC. Later prehistoric sites include Neolithic or Bronze Age stone circles and settlement remains on Boot Bank and around Devoke Water. There are also complex ritual and burial landscapes at Eskdale Moor, Bootle Fell, Stainton and Great Grassoms. Evidence of early farming can also be found throughout the valley. This evidence normally consists of field systems and clearance cairns which form physical evidence of land improvement often Bronze Age in date. Such remains are often intertwined with funerary and ritual landscapes suggesting a relatively intensive form of ritual and farming land use. There are 53 scheduled prehistoric farming sites in the valley.

**FIGURE 5.12** Small Neolithic stone circle (4000 – 2000 BC) at Low Longrigg on Eskdale Moor
5. Eskdale

Roman

In the Roman period forts were constructed on the coast at Ravenglass and at Hardknott. Adjacent to Ravenglass fort are the remains of a ‘vicus’ (civilian settlement) which has been recently excavated, and a Roman bath house. These remains now form part of the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site. Five hundred cavalry originally from Dalmatia once occupied Hardknott Fort, which was built on a rocky spur where strategic views overlooking the river Esk were an essential part of its role to protect the route out of the valley linking the port of Ravenglass with its garrisons at Ambleside. The main road through Eskdale probably follows the course of a Roman road connecting these two forts and continuing on through the central Lake District to the fort at Ambleside.

5.2.2 The Origins and Development of the Current Settlement Pattern

Scandinavian and Norse place-names are common throughout the valley, such as Brotherilkeld meaning ‘the booth of Ulfkell’ and a number of Norse ‘thwaite’ place-names meaning a clearing. The Waberthwaite and Muncaster sculpted crosses, expertly intertwining Scandinavian and Anglian artistic traditions from the late 9th to early 11th centuries, are physical evidence of this occupation.

5.2.3 The Development of the Farming Landscape

By the 12th century much of Eskdale was part of Copeland Forest, and thus free chase or hunting land. Feudal barons ran their manors directly or through bailiffs, and although technically illegal, the enclosure of waste by assarting and establishment of new settlement was probably encouraged by the lords as a means of improving the revenues from their manors. Although impossible to trace most specific instances on the ground, some place-names recorded in 15th century rental documents refer to now abandoned Eskdale farmsteads which probably originated as a result of peasant colonisation during the period of population growth c. 1150 – 1350. These include Park House (1455), Yoad Park (1470, meaning ‘old park’?) and Hethwaite (1470, meaning perhaps either clearing from the heath or high clearing). It is likely that nearly all current farmsteads running up the sides of the valley have been occupied since at least the 13th century.

Farmsteads consisted of small irregular enclosures and their tenants worked inbye field parcels close to their isolated farms as seen in the existing farms in upper Eskdale and recorded in the Percy Survey of 1578. Deserted examples include Bank End (1493) and Coalpit How (1587) on Muncaster Fell. Stock was put out to pasture on common grazing land on the higher, unenclosed fells. The name ‘Scale Close’ at the head of Eskdale at a cluster of huts probably refers to seasonal shielings (from Old Norse ‘skali’) common to much of the uplands in the 13th and 14th centuries but which were colonised as farms elsewhere in the Lake District. The remains of medieval shielings can also be found at Great Grassoms and Stainton Ling. There are also examples of ‘islands’ of improved fields on the low fell, for example, Birkerthwaite on Birker Fell. These may have earlier medieval origins and could have developed around shieling sites that became permanent. Possible
exceptions to this pattern can be found in Eskdale, nonetheless. Between the hamlet of Boot and the 14th century St Catherine’s Church the flat space may have supported communal arable agriculture, and to the south of the road there are some strips which may have been enclosed from a small open field system. Dalegarth Hall’s appearance at the southern end of this possible open field system may represent a relationship between a lord’s holding and the open fields of tenants; that it too is 14th century seems to support this as a phase of active colonisation. Close to the coast, strip-shaped fields appear frequently around Middleton Place, Langley Park, Bootle and Annaside.

If these do represent relict open field systems then they may reflect denser populations along the coasts, as may the market settlements at Ravenglass and Bootle. Alternatively these fields could simply result from the opportunities afforded by better land, so that large open fields developed, shared between several farms. The clearest example of strip fields in the Eskdale valley has to be at Ravenglass. Here the railway has bisected each of the strips, which would previously have extended to the tenements along Ravenglass’ main street in a classic medieval village pattern. The ‘Grant of a Fair and Market’ to Ravenglass by King John in 1208 affirms its importance as a port and town in medieval Cumbria.

Furness Abbey had established a vaccary at the head of Brotherilkeld before 1292. This reflects well the reservation by the manorial lords of the dale head areas during the 11th-13th centuries. These choicest pastures had hay-meadows on the valley floor for amassing winter fodder and were mostly surrounded by a bowl of fellside summer pasture. The establishment of a vaccary here is one effect of the Hudleston family’s grant of this particular dale head in 1242 to Furness Abbey. Land divisions belonging to the vaccary can still be seen at Great Moss.

The register of the Priory of St Bees, dated 1252, suggests that the land of ‘Gresholmes’ (Grassoms) was of some value and was therefore probably in agricultural use at that time. A second reference comes from the Millom Courtbook within which are details of a rental of 1510. This rental notes a tenement called ‘Gresholmys’ which was owned by the lords of Millom whose ‘shepherd remains on that place and guards the sheep’. Documents of 1284 (the ‘Furness Coucher’) also record that the earthwork boundary on the Great Moss was constructed by the monks of Furness Abbey to prevent their stock straying into neighbouring land used for hunting.

Two emparked areas shown in the First edition Ordnance Survey map of 1860 up on the high fells which are otherwise undocumented are of unknown status – Prior Park on Corney Fell, which may have belonged to Conishead Priory, and a pair of parks at Little and Great Grisson on Bootle Fell, belonging to the lords of Millom.

Another religious establishment which was established in the valley was Seaton nunnery, founded just north of Bootle in the late 12th century. It was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and its nuns followed the Benedictine rule. It was a poor foundation that required assistance from a variety of sources from the 13th to 15th centuries. Today the site survives as ruins in the grounds of the listed Seaton Hall which appears to have been built in the 16th century after the nunnery’s dissolution. There are slight surviving remains of the church and a fragment of the monumental grave slab of a prioress survives in a nearby farmstead. Seaton nunnery was dissolved in 1535.
On the coast the settlement of Ravenglass developed as a harbour and trading port due to its estuarine setting, nestled at the confluence of the Rivers Esk, Mite and Irt. Access to the sea and a safe harbour were essential for trading, transportation and fishing. The first written record of 'R'englas' was a gift of land for a hospital in the 12th century. In 1208 King John gave a charter to Richard de Luci, Lord of Egremont to hold a weekly market and annual fair. To its south on the coastal plain, Bootle also developed as a settlement with a market and fair granted in 1347.

From around the middle of the 14th century, economic decline associated with war, must have taken its toll. This may account for the abandonment of ‘Banggarth’ in Lower Eskdale, first recorded as abandoned in 1570. It was possibly also at this time that the vaccary at Brotherilkeld became a tenanted sheep farm, which it remains to this day.

The manor of Eskdale is notable for containing the highest mountains in England, and until the late 18th and early 19th century these mountainous areas contained an even greater proportion of waste than other Cumbrian townships. This waste was never enclosed as it consisted of land that was too steep and too poor to merit the investment. However, some enclosure did take place around the farmsteads on the lower fellsides. In 1587 a manor court order assigned open sections of the lower fellsides to each farm as a cow pasture, to provide grazing for milking cattle close to the farmstead. Initially the division of the fellsides seems to have required no additional physical enclosures; the community seems to have been happy merely to respect the court order. Whether the 1587 order was defining something new or merely codifying existing and perhaps long-standing practice is impossible to tell. However, by 1701 many intakes were walled.

Beyond the intake walls, the uplands provided vital summer grazing as well as various other resources. The most valued tenants’ rights included the right to pasture on commons, the common right of turbary (peat cutting) and the right to collect wood for fuel, to make implements and to carry out house repairs, and also bracken for thatch and animal bedding – known as common of estovers. Pasture rights were – and remain – an integral part of the local farming system, both for ‘great goods’ (cattle and horses) and for sheep. Common of turbary was of vital importance as peat was the principal...
fuel until the 20th century. Each farm in Eskdale had its own individual peat hut, as did the cornmill at Boot (Eskdale Mill). The peat huts were usually located on unenclosed common land near the marked break of slope between the peat-yielding plateau and the steep drop down to the valley floor. Many have been built close to carefully-graded sledge tracks which zigzag up the slope to the peat. Documentary evidence suggests that some were in existence by the end of the 16th century and oral evidence suggests that the huts ceased to be used for peat storage by the early 20th century. Each of the peat huts on the common land above Boot and Dalegarth Station are still allocated to individual commoners.

Other natural resources exploited included the underlying granite geology which provided rich sources of iron ore which was mined and smelted for hundreds of years. Evidence survives for a number of smaller extractive and service industries from the medieval period. In the medieval period iron ore was probably mined from surface veins and was smelted in local bloomeries using charcoal produced in the local woodland. A bloomery forge (water-powered bloomery) was established at Muncaster Head in 1630.

Mills in Eskdale and at Muncaster probably had medieval origins and their compulsory use was controlled by the lords of the manor. The double wheeled corn mill at Boot (now called Eskdale Mill) dates originally from the medieval period and was held by Robert Vychars in 1547. It is now listed Grade II*. There were both corn and fullings mills at Muncaster by 1455.

**POST-MEDIEVAL ESKDALE**

The distinctive Lake District farmsteads began to take their modern form from the close of the 16th century. While some farms such as Dalegarth Hall are known to have existed in the 14th century, many display signs of having been rebuilt in the very late 16th or 17-18th centuries suggesting a period of major investment at this time. Most of the surviving housing stock in the rural areas dates from the 18th to 19th century at the latest.

The period of the 16th to early 18th centuries in the Lake District was a period when tenements and enclosures were reorganised and consolidated. Some Eskdale farmsteads were clearly abandoned during this period – for whatever reason, perhaps connected with the growth of the Cumbrian iron industry. William Pennington was buying up tenements as they became available between 1619 and 1636. Bank End is last recorded in the first half of the 17th century. Coalpit How was last mentioned in a lease renewal of 1754 whereby all the farms at Muncaster Head were brought together under a single tenant – by 1767 Coalpit How had gone to be replaced by Coalpit Field. A lease of 1723 is the last references to Yoad Park and Park House. The abandonment of these farms and the collation of separate holdings under single tenants are indicators of how energetic individuals were responsible for reorganising the medieval farming landscape into the surviving parcels.

Thomas Donald’s 1774 map is one of the earliest to include Eskdale and it appears to show a series of isolated farmsteads in the upper valley with the densest concentrations of buildings at Yester Field, Eskdale Green and ‘Butter Ilket’ (Brotherilkeld). Notably, Boot was still just a pair of farms along with the Eskdale Mill at Boot. The lowlands supported far greater concentrations at Park Nook, Corney, Stub Place and Muncaster, and the towns of Ravenglass and Bootle were the densest areas of settlement in the valley.
Whilst the lowland areas had already been turned over to agriculture long before 1800, late 18th and 19th century planned enclosure in upper Eskdale appears to be virtually non-existent. The historical reasons for this are unclear but it may be that the costs outweighed the benefits. Parliamentary Enclosure in the Eskdale Valley area is recorded, however, and the Bootle Fell Enclosure Award of 1857 carved up large swathes of the uplands above Bootle. There are some discrete areas which may have been enclosed by private arrangement – on the slopes of Birkby Fell above Knott End facing Muncaster Castle there are regular enclosures above earlier (16th-17th century?) parcels with ‘coppice’ place-names.

The 18th and 19th centuries brought in larger-scale industry which took advantage of new technologies. A narrow gauge railway (known locally as the ‘La’l Ratty’) was built in 1875 to take the iron ore away to the coast at Ravenglass. Passenger services also ran on the line and in the 20th century it was used for transporting granite from Eskdale’s quarries and now operates as a popular tourist attraction. The River Irt locomotive which runs on the line is the oldest working 15” gauge locomotive in the world.

**5.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE**

Because of Eskdale’s relative remoteness on the western side of the central Lake District Fells it did not have the degree of attention given to it by 18th century visitors compared with more accessible parts of the Lake District. J. M. W. Turner sketched Eskdale Mill at Boot in collaboration with Girtin, but neither Girtin nor Turner may have visited the site when it was drawn, but instead based it on an earlier composition by Edward Dayes. However, Eskdale does have literary associations from the early 19th century.

**5.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS**

Coleridge visited Eskdale on his walking tour of the Lake District in August 1802. His notebook reveals an intense blend of a local and particular engagement with the environment:

“I am sitting by Eskdale side/-O for wealth to wood these Tarns – weeping Birches with Mountain Ash & Laburnum/with Hollies for underwood/” with an equally intense emotional narrative:

“A gentle Madman that would wander still over the mountains by the lonely Tairns (Lakes) – the like never seen since the crazy Shepherd, who having lost almost all his sheep in a long hard snow was repulsed or thought himself treated coldly by his Sweet-heart – & so went a wanderer (sic) seeking his Sheep for ever/in storm and snow especially”

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘Notebook’ (1802)
Just before entering the head of Eskdale, Coleridge unintentionally descended Broad Stand, dropping onto a ledge and then found that the distance above him was too high for returning, and so was obliged to take on the risks of further descents onto ledges. This is now recognised as one of the first recorded ‘rock-descents’ in the history of mountaineering. Immediately on completing his perilous descent Coleridge on the recommendation of Mr Tyson at Wasdale Head made for Taw House Farm and stayed the night.

Further down the valley, just beyond Brock Crag, Coleridge “came to the four-foot Stone/on which there are the clear marks of four feet, the first a beast’s foot, so wide, the next a Boy’s shoe...the third a [large] dog’s Foot, the fourth a child’s shoe...” (Coleridge, ‘Notebook’ (1802))

Wordsworth visited the area and it also featured in his ‘Guide through the District of the Lakes’. He reflected on three periods of colonisation of the Lake District when at Hardknott Roman Fort; the ‘druidic’, the Roman, and the Scandinavian, all of which he showed to be elements of a more enduring terrain and natural environment:

“...And into silence hush the timorous flocks,  
That slept so calmly while the nightly dew  
Moisten’d each fleece, beneath the twinkling stars:  
These couch’d mid that lone Camp on Hardknot’s height.”

William Wordsworth, ‘Duddon Sonnets XVII’ (1820)

5.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

The continuity of the romantic tradition for walking in the Lake District and the spiritual refreshment and self-discovery it afforded into the 20th century is exemplified in Eskdale in the extensive areas of open fell around the valley, much of which is Common Land with open access. The growing popularity of walking holidays in the early 20th century led to the expansion of the Youth Hostel Association (YHA). The Eskdale Youth Hostel was purpose built and designed by John Dower, one of the founding fathers of United Kingdom National Parks and Chair of the Dower Committee which reported to the Government in 1945 paving the way for the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Eskdale Youth Hostel opened in 1938, replacing Taw House (1933-38). Gatehouse at Eskdale Green was converted into an outdoor education centre in 1950 and is now run by the Outward Bound Trust.

A number of key assets in the valley have been acquired by conservation bodies. The National Trust now owns and manages a number of farms in upper Eskdale and much of the surrounding fell land, including Eskdale Common and Scafell Pike, which was gifted to the National Trust by Lord Leconfield in 1920 as a war memorial. National Trust farm acquisitions in Eskdale have included Wha House Farm (bought with legacy in 1942); Taw House Farm (bought with legacy in 1942) and, Penny Hill Farm (bought using Heelis bequest). Brotherilkeld was bought with a legacy in 1961; Field Head
was bought in 1974; Gill Bank Farm, Boot was purchased by Lake District Farm Estates in 1955 then gifted to the National Trust in 1976.

The National Trust now own 4,959 hectares of land of which 4,160 hectares is inalienable. They also have an additional 801 hectares of leased land and seven hectares of covenanted land.

The community based Eskdale Mill and Heritage Trust acquired Eskdale Mill at Boot in 2006. Stanley Ghyll and its waterfalls have attracted visitors since at least Victorian times. It was purchased by the Lake District Special Planning Board from the Ponsonby and Dalegarth Estate in 1994, with the object of preserving nature conservation interests and providing access opportunities for the public.

The remoteness of the valley protected it from many of the 20th century development related pressures of the outside world, but even here controversial proposals had to be resisted. The upper valley, around Hardknott, was included along with the upper Duddon valley in the controversial scheme for commercial forestry which was largely prevented through the 1936 Agreement with the Forestry Commission. Notwithstanding the agreement, the two ancient sheep farms of Brotherilkeld Farm in Eskdale and Black Hall, Ulpha were still included within the area to be planted. Further negotiations resulted in the establishment of a ‘Hardknott Forest Park’ (between 1943 and 1959) and as a result of further pressure from conservation bodies, particularly the Friends of the Lake District, in 1943 the Forestry Commission entered into a covenant with the National Trust and agreed not to plant on the land of Brotherilkeld Farm. Brotherilkeld was eventually sold to the National Trust in 1961.

The threat of commercial forestry was one of the catalysts for the formation of the Friends of the Lake District and the campaign in the central fells was their first major campaign.

In the 1940s Eskdale was threatened with a significant proposal for hydro-electricity generation. This would have consisted of two reservoirs in the upper valley, access roads and tunnels connecting to the Duddon valley. It did not proceed for economic reasons, but it reinforced the Friends of the Lake District’s argument that a Lake District National Park with a strong planning framework was urgently needed.

5.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Eskdale is one of the valleys on the western side of the English Lake District which form a distinct group both in their relative geographical isolation and their character determined chiefly by agro-pastoralism set within a rugged mountain landscape. Although it has no valley bottom lake, Eskdale has a section of coastline which contributes to its particular landscape character. Eskdale contains many attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and these are summarized in Figure 5.4.
Traditional agro-pastoral farming is the dominant land use in Eskdale and there is clear evidence of its long persistence and development from the start of the medieval period. The pattern of stone walled enclosures comprises small, irregular inbye fields attached to individual farms along with intakes on some of the lower slopes and extensive areas of open fell grazing, much of which is Common Land. Brotherilkeld Farm, at the head of the valley, was established as a vaccary by Furness Abbey in the 13th century and is now one of the key Herdwick farms in the Lake District. Indeed Eskdale is one of the key valleys for Herdwick farming.

Eskdale contains a large and important group of early farm buildings, dating in one case from the 14th century but generally from the late 16th to the 18th centuries. The valley also has a concentration of peat storage huts, medieval in origin and rebuilt in the 18th century, which attests to communal use of resources on the open fell in addition to grazing of stock. Compared to many Lake District valleys, there is a greater survival of the pre-19th century traditional pastoral landscape in Eskdale. This includes not only farmsteads but also the field pattern, coppiced woodland, and ancillary buildings such as the peat huts. The late arrival of villas and tourist development, combined with the lack of Parliamentary enclosure and the absence of resident gentry in the upper valley seem to have combined to preserve an older landscape. Traditional hill farming has survived particularly strongly and there was continued use of the 1587 rules governing the use of common land (the ‘Twenty-four Book’) right up to the mid-20th century.

Evidence of the pre-medieval use of the landscape is particularly strong in Eskdale with a high number of prehistoric settlement and ritual sites distributed across the surrounding fells. The valley also contains two important Roman forts, at Hardknott and Ravenglass, of which the latter is part of the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site.

Although Eskdale is rich in the harmonious beauty which derives from the relationship of traditional farming with the natural landscape, its relative isolation and lack of major lake rendered it less attractive than other Lake District valleys for the development of villas and landscape gardens. However, it did attract writers and artists including Wordsworth, Coleridge and Turner but, unlike some other valleys, there is little physical change as a result of their undoubted interest.

Eskdale illustrates the success of the conservation movement in the extensive National Trust ownership of the upper valley, the lack of conifer afforestation due to the 1936 agreement with the Forestry Commission, the continuation of large Herdwick farms in the valley and the continuing survival of key features of cultural value including the Eskdale Mill as a working museum managed by a community trust.

The integrity of the landscape attributes is high with very little modern development and a working traditional agro-pastoral system. The authenticity of the attributes relating to farming and to conservation is very high.
FIGURE 5.14 Miterdale from the west, with Burnmoor Tarn and Scafell beyond
The high fells at the head of Wast Water
6. WASDALE

Description, History and Development
“Next, almost due west, look down into, and along the deep valley of Wastdale, with its little chapel and half a dozen neat dwellings scattered upon a plain of meadow and corn-ground intersected with stone walls apparently innumerable, like a large piece of lawless patchwork... Beyond this little fertile plain lies, within a bed of steep mountains, the long, narrow, stern, and desolate lake of Wastdale; and, beyond this, a dusky tract of level ground conducts the eye to the Irish Sea.”

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

6.1 DESCRIPTION

6.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Wasdale is located in the western part of the English Lake District bordered by Eskdale to the south and Ennerdale to the north. It begins in the highest mountains in the central hub of the area and runs south west to the sea at the estuary of the River Irt flowing from the foot of Wast Water through a lowland landscape very different to that containing the large glacial lake and dramatic fells enclosing the U-shaped upper valley.

It is also a valley of contrasts with the imposing bulk and dramatic landform of Great Gable, Scafell, Kirk Fell and Yewbarrow enclosing the head of the valley which then runs south west and abruptly changes to a more gentle, wooded, pastoral landscape including large country houses, gardens and parkland then on to the softer, more open estuarine landscapes of the Irt and Mite.

The underlying geology of Wasdale is predominantly of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, which accounts for the high jagged fells at the head of the valley and the spectacular ruggedness of The Screes. There is a fringe of sandstone at the start of the coastal plain, at the western end of the valley. The effects of glaciation are also evident here where moving glaciers have carved out the bed of England’s deepest lake. See Figure 6.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figures 6.2 and 6.3 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Wasdale Valley.
Figure 6.2 Wasdale Valley North East Cultural Landscape Map
Figure 6.3 Wasdale Valley South West Cultural Landscape Map
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Common land</td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodland industries</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water-powered industry</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market towns</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Villas</td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designed landscape</td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of a model for protecting cultural landscape</td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.4 The contribution of the Wasdale Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified.
FIGURE 6.5 View of the Wasdale Valley from Great Gable showing the ancient field system on the valley floor at Wasdale Head, Wast Water, and the Irish Sea coast on the western edge of the Lake District.

FIGURE 6.6 Wasdale Hall and surrounding parkland from the top of the Screes above Wast Water. Wasdale Hall is owned by the National Trust and is used as a youth Hostel.
6.1.2  THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The eastern part of the valley is amongst the most wild and dramatic scenery in the UK including England’s highest mountain, Scafell Pike, 977 metres high, and deepest lake, Wast Water 79 metres deep. Sheer, grey scree slopes cascading down from the summit ridge of Whin Rigg and Illgill Head dominate the south shores of the lake and emphasise the steepness of the valley sides where they appear to plunge into the depths. This is upland, ice carved scenery at its best, modified but certainly not tamed, by human influence which simply adds further layers of interest to the landscape.

At the foot of the lake is Low Wood, the first of many mixed and coniferous woodlands marking the beginning of a very different landscape. This is a peaceful landscape dominated by pastoral farmland and mixed or deciduous woodland further west and the large conifer plantations of Blengdale and Miterdale in the east. It contains the two river valleys and links the lowland plain to the upland fells set against the backdrop of the lower fell fringe with its crags, rock outcrops and extensive bracken beds. The rolling or undulating farmland continues west with the distinctive field boundary walls, built with rounded, beck bottom stones that appear to defy gravity and inspire awe at the skill of the wallers who built them. These give way to hedges and more frequent woodland cover creating an altogether softer appearance to the landscape. Further west still the land becomes flatter and woodland cover and hedgerow trees become less frequent leading to a more open landscape. West of the A595 the landscape has a distinct coastal feel confirmed by glimpsed views of the extensive Drigg Dunes system west of the confluence of the Irt and Mite.

One of the defining features of Wasdale is the single road in and out of the valley squeezed onto the narrow undulating margin between the lakeshore and the steeply rising fell sides enclosing the valley from the north. There is not even the space for a reasonable footpath on the south shore where The Screes plunge into the lake and negotiating the public right of way can be difficult. This all adds to the drama, and in high season, slow traffic, of the valley.

6.1.3  FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The Wasdale landscape shows a strong continuity of farming from the medieval period to today in its field patterns, farmsteads and buildings. However, the farming landscape of Wasdale has a clear north east, south west split, between the relatively simple and typical fell farming landscape of inbye, intake and open fell from Wast Water north east to the valley head and the more intricate patchwork of old fields, more recent enclosures, plantation and woodland at the south-west end of the valley around Nether Wasdale, Gosforth, Santon and Irton.

Around Wasdale Head, in the upper Wasdale valley, the surviving pattern reflects much earlier arrangements. Irregular enclosures associated with surviving and abandoned farm tenements have been consolidated from open fields, themselves the result of the sub-division of four 14th century vaccary farms between the 14th and 17th centuries.
There is a limited extent of 17th and 18th century intakes encroaching onto the waste which add to this pattern.

Intakes in the Wasdale Valley area seem to have extended the areas of enclosed agriculture in a modest fashion, constrained by unproductive land occupying steeper topography, and poorly-drained mosses and estuarine marsh. However the steeper slopes on the upland fells remain unenclosed. The tightly constrained pattern of stone walled fields at Wasdale Head is one of the most spectacular and iconic sights in the Lake District, especially when seen from a vantage point on the surrounding fells, such as Yewbarrow.

The walls in the field system at Wasdale Head are extremely wide, reflecting the necessity of clearing the huge amounts of water-borne stone that have been deposited on the fields over hundreds of years. The inbye fields have the irregular pattern of medieval or earlier enclosure and are surrounded by later intakes on the valley sides. The stone walled remains of a medieval deer park can still be traced at the north-eastern end of The Screes.

In Nether Wasdale the pattern of the field system is typical of dispersed ancient single farms, particularly in the area to the north of the hamlet of Nether Wasdale. The farms are located on the edge of the inbye fields, just below the fell slope, probably surviving elements of a medieval settlement pattern. There are a few small, early intakes attached to the upslope sides of this system, but the higher land in the lower valley is generally enclosed with the large, straight-walled field of parliamentary or other planned enclosure. This is particularly clear on the south-facing slopes of Bolton Wood. West of Nether Wasdale village the dispersed farms are set within a more recent field system, comprising regular fields with straight boundaries. The frequency of hedges increases towards the coast.

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Wasdale is one of the key Lake District valleys for Herdwick sheep, with several noted farms. In the 1920s Middle Row was ‘a noted ram-breeding flock of long-standing’ and Burnthwaite was ‘one of the oldest pure-bred flocks in the country. Many prize-winners, both male and female, can be traced back to this flock, which has been carefully handled...
FIGURE 6.9 Shepherds' flocks and native sheep breeds in the Wasdale Valley
for at least a hundred years. ‘The importance of these farms has been recognised by the conservation movement and many key farms are now owned and managed by the National Trust.

There are 23 fell-going flocks in the Wasdale valley. There are 13 Herdwick flocks and one Rough Fell flock registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Swaledale flocks. There are seven National Trust landlord flocks listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005) in the Gosforth and Irton with Santon areas.

The two main areas of registered common land in Wasdale are Nether Wasdale Common and part of Eskdale Common (extending onto Wasdale Scree and to the eastern shore of Wast Water and Scafell Pike). There are a number of other small areas including Little Moor (a very small area near Santon Bridge) and Cat How, Berry How, School Green and Mill How (a small area near Nether Wasdale).

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Wasdale Head Show and Shepherds’ Meet takes place on the second Saturday in October every year. There has been a Shepherds’ Meet at Wasdale Head for over 100 years. It is believed that the Shepherds’ Meet started off with farmers from Wasdale meeting the farmers from the adjoining valleys of Ennerdale, Buttermere, Borrowdale, Eskdale and possibly Langdale, who walked their tups (rams) over to Wasdale Head to trade them, swap them or hire them. This is why the show is held so late in the year; Tup Lousing (letting the rams loose with the ewes) in the valleys happens in November so lambs are born in April. In all probability the showing of sheep also started in the early years and possibly also the showing of shepherds’ dogs. Hound Trailing would also have been introduced in these early years. Cumberland and Westmoreland wrestling, the Fell Race and other trade stands and activities have all been added in the second half of the 20th century.
### TABLE 6.1 Key farm buildings in the Wasdale Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmstead</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hall Santon Farmhouse</strong></td>
<td>Farmhouse with nearby cottage, barn, gingang and cart shed showing later farm development in the 19th century.</td>
<td>Mid-late 18th – 19th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>310130 501313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Woodhow Farmhouse</strong></td>
<td>Farmhouse of 1757 with attached byres, area walls and pump.</td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>314002 504214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stangends</strong></td>
<td>Farm with cottage and barn. The barn was remodelled and the house added in 1778.</td>
<td>Early to mid-18th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>311791 503664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Row Head Farm</strong></td>
<td>The core of the building dates from the early to mid-18th century but has been altered with 20th century facades. An 18th century threshing barn and byre is built against the southern wall of the main house. Contains a spice cupboard dating from the mid-18th century.</td>
<td>18th – 20th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>318713 508885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hollins</strong></td>
<td>Hollins is unusual in Nether Wasdale in having a more traditional 17th century ground plan than many of the other farmhouse which are 18th century in date and style. Shippon and hayloft at the south west end.</td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>310807 503125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HARROWHEAD FARM

18th century house with double pile plan which may have developed from an earlier structure. Most of the present fittings date from the third quarter of the 18th century.

DATE Mid/late 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 312577 505505

BURNTHWAITE FARM

Single farm amalgamated from three earlier farms. The present farmhouse was developed from earlier 17th or early 18th century structures.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 310855 509100

HIGH THISTLETON

The original farmhouse was a two storey building of the 18th century with early 19th century improvements.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 309819 504703

CRAG HOUSE

Dairy farm of 18th and 19th century date. The access track crosses a Listed bridge, and the buildings include an 18th century barn and a large threshing barn of c. 1830, a cottage built in two sections (mid-18th century and c. 1830) and a pigsty and wash-house.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 310855 499773

BUCKBARROW BARN AND COTTAGE

Originally an independent unit Buckbarrow was merged in the past with Scale farm and then with Ghyll Farm. The farmhouse, which dates from the early 18th century, is let as a climbing hut.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 313657 505378
KIDBECK FARM
Double pile house of the late 19th century, little altered.

**DATE** 19th century
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust
**PROTECTION** Not listed
**GRID REFERENCE** 311527 504510

BURNT HOUSE
Farmhouse with 17th century core. Extended in 1894.

**DATE** 17th century with 18th and 19th century additions
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust
**PROTECTION** Not listed
**GRID REFERENCE** 311882 503068

MIDDLE ROW
This was a separate farm until it was sold to the National Trust and merged with Row Head. All of the buildings are 18th century to 20th century.

**DATE** 18th – 20th century
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust
**PROTECTION** Not listed
**GRID REFERENCE** 318659 508795

WASDALE HEAD HALL
Farmhouse of typical double-pile construction of the mid to late 18th century.

**DATE** 18th – 20th century
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust
**PROTECTION** Not listed
**GRID REFERENCE** 318036 506828

GATERIGGHOW HOUSE
18th century farm with 19th century stairs. Heavily renovated.

**DATE** 18th – 19th century
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust
**PROTECTION** Not listed
**GRID REFERENCE** 310825 503928
6.1.4 **INDUSTRY**

The remains of industry in the Wasdale Valley are limited to a number of medieval bloomeries in Nether Wasdale and at the southern end of the lake, located to take advantage of charcoal produced in the local woods. There are also the remains of mining activity on Irton Fell.

6.1.5 **SETTLEMENTS**

The topography dictates that settlement is sparse, limited to occasional scattered farms, the hamlets of Nether Wasdale and Wasdale Head, small vernacular dwellings and a surprisingly high number of 18th and 19th century country houses towards the wealthier west end of the valley.

**GOSFORTH**

The village of Gosforth is the principal settlement and local service centre, located outside the valley on the western edge of the National Park. It has a short main street of simple traditional houses, inns and shops, dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. The Parish Church of St Mary, Gosforth, has been an important site since the 8th century. The oldest parts of the existing fabric are 12th century. The early 10th century cross in St Mary’s churchyard is a unique monument standing alone amongst English Viking Age crosses, not only in its size and complete survival, but also in the quality of its carving and its artistic inventiveness. Its decoration includes scenes from Scandinavian mythology unparalleled in surviving contemporary art. The churchyard also contains two rare hogback tombs of 11th century date at the latest. Gosforth Library is in a house dated 1628 which may incorporate the house known as Gosforth Gate mentioned in a 1598 survey. Gosforth Hall is an imposing 3 storey house of 1658 and Steelfield Hall is a prominent early 19th century classical mansion, built for the Senhouse family, who were famous for shipping and trade in west Cumbria.

**WASDALE HEAD**

At the end of the road into the valley lies Wasdale Head, a remote, isolated and historic hamlet of vernacular buildings including the 17th century inn and the diminutive St Olaf’s Church, set in its quadrant of yews. The church is first mentioned c. 1550 but the building is considerably altered. The hamlet is set amidst a unique and culturally important patchwork of ancient walls constructed of rounded stones to create small pastoral fields, enclosed by the steep high fells. Wasdale Head is popular with walkers and climbers seeking challenge on the higher fells and this adds to the atmosphere at the valley head. Other notable features in the valley include Row Bridge, the packhorse bridge north of the Wasdale Head Inn, one of the best examples in the Lake District with its backdrop of high mountains around the valley head. The buildings and walls in Wasdale Head are characterised by use of the local slate for construction.
**ETHER WASDALE**

Nether Wasdale is a scattering of white stonewashed cottages and farms. By the village green is St Michael and All Angels church, with 16th century origins. In front of the church is a large maypole, now a listed structure, erected to celebrate the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria. The buildings are characterised by a greater use of imported materials such as sandstone which distinguishes it from Wasdale Head which relies on local materials.

**6.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE**

Although in contemporary taste Wasdale is considered to be one of the finest landscapes in Britain, it did not feature strongly in Picturesque interest in the English Lake District. This may have been in part due to its remote location on the west side of the region. Wasdale is not included in Thomas West’s ‘Guide to the Lakes’ but the comments of a later commentator, Thomas Wilkinson in 1824, give an indication of the likely reaction to the valley from an 18th century Picturesque perspective:

“When people go forth to see the world they are sometimes in search of beauty. If beauty is the leading object of their search, they need not go to Wast Water. The prominent features round Wast Water are sternness and sterility...”

Thomas Wilkinson, ‘Tours to the British Mountains’, (1824)
6. WASDALE

6.1.7 VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

It is the wealthier and more accessible west end of the valley that contains the fine, large houses built in the late 18th and 19th centuries by wealthy ship owners of the West Cumbrian ports. All have mature gardens and extensive parkland with exotic trees forming notable features in the landscape and metal estate railings replacing walls or hedges.

### TABLE 6.2 Key villas in the Wasdale Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villa</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WASDALE HALL</strong></td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>National Trust (leased to Youth Hostel Association)</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>314467 504508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CARLETON HALL</strong></td>
<td>14th century and 18th – 19th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>308240 498771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GALE SYKE</strong></td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>313312 503926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CARLETON GREEN</strong></td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>308205 498595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOSFORTH HALL
Gosforth Hall dates from 1658. Built for Robert and Isabel Copley and altered and extended in the 1870s.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 307158 503652

GREENLANDS
An 18th century farmhouse extended in 1820 for Thomas Brocklebank.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 308996 501143

IRTON HALL
Irton Hall is an 1874 enlargement of the previous hall, incorporating a 14th century fortified tower house, by G.E. Grayson of Liverpool for Jonas Burns-Lindow.

DATE 14th to 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 310473 500563

LOW WOOD HALL
Low Wood Hall, a modest villa now a hotel, was built c. 1880.

OWNERSHIP Private
GRID REFERENCE 312250 504193

STEELFIELD HALL
Steelfield Hall at Gosforth, built in 1840 for Sir Humphrey Senhouse.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 306561 503774
6.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

6.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

The earliest surviving traces of human activity in the area date to Mesolithic times (c. 8000 BC). These consist of flint finds on the coast at Drigg and evidence for clearance of woodland by fire. Other early remains are found on the fells including Neolithic stone axe production remains on Scafell Pike (c. 4,000 to 2,000 BC). In the valley there are clearance cairnfields, possible roundhouse remains and rudimentary field boundaries from the Bronze Age at Whin Garth (c. 2,000-800 BC). Bronze Age activity in the valley bottom is attested by a number of burnt mounds (possible cooking places). The lower reaches of the valley, abutting the coastal plain, contain the best agricultural land and are likely to have seen continuous use from early times. There are clearance and burial cairns dating to the Bronze Age on the fells surrounding Nether Wasdale.

6.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The area contains early medieval and Norse archaeology including the sculptural crosses at Irton and Gosforth churches, and the hogback stones at Gosforth church. Some limited place-name evidence suggests Norse and Anglo-Saxon influences too. The District of Copeland’s name may derive from Old Norse kaupa-land (‘bought land’). The only surviving ‘Norse’ place-name at Wasdale Head is Burnthwaite which is a combination of Old English ‘burn’ for a stream with ‘thwaite’ which is Old Norse for a clearing.

Some possible candidates for shielings and clearance cairns of this date have been identified through field survey, and a pattern of Scandinavian-style semi-transhumant agriculture seems to have been practised, with permanent lowland settlements supported by shielings in the uplands on summer grazing grounds. It has been suggested that Wasdale Head may have been upland grazing which was later settled permanently. The tightly-constrained pattern of stone walled fields here are likely to have very early, possibly (10th century?) Norse, origins, having developed from one or possibly two early common fields. A shift to permanent colonisation and settlement of inland areas, including the sites of former shielings, during the 10th to 12th century is shown by the occurrence of place-names including ‘saet’ and ‘scale’, both indicating a shieling. The abandoned farm at Scale probably indicates early origins as a shieling which was then permanently occupied.

6.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

The name Wasdall first occurs in 1301, (in connection with the personal name ‘de Matilld de Wasdall’) in the Liberty of Saint Mary, York, Lay Subsidy. The ‘Free Chase of Wastedaleheved’ is recorded in 1338, and the upper valley around Wast Water seems to
have been part of Copeland Forest under direct control of the lord of the manor, whilst the lowland plains were sub-let to tenants. After 1338 the free chase was split between 3 heiresses into 3 wards – Ennerdale, Kinniside and Eskdale (including Eskdale and Wasdale townships).

Enclosure of waste by ‘assarting’ and establishment of new settlement further inland was encouraged by the feudal lords as a means of improving revenues from their tenants. Although it was carried out on a large scale, it is impossible to trace most specific instances on the ground. The establishment of a pele tower at Irton Hall in the 14th century may reflect this pattern; it is surrounded by field names including the word ‘frith’ (indicating a stock park enclosure) and ‘close’. Some place-names further inland (i.e. Marthwaite, Moestarthaite, Bengarth and Guards) also indicate clearance. Medieval inbye land certainly appears to be widespread across the lowlands.

In 1322 and 1334 there were four vaccaries (commercial cattle ranches) recorded at Wasdale Head. These seem to have been established by the lord of the manor and by 1334 they were let to tenants-at-will. This differs from the usual pattern in Cumberland and Westmorland whereby vaccaries were established by monasteries. It shows that the colonisation of inland areas by the manorial lords was beginning to extend into the uplands. The establishment of vaccaries by a lay lord may have released some pressure on lowland settlement; monastic vaccaries are thought to have restricted colonisation elsewhere of the upper valleys (i.e. Brotherilkeld in upper Eskdale).

Available evidence does not allow an interpretation of how these four former vaccary farms evolved during the 14th and 15th centuries, although demesne vaccaries such as those at Wasdale Head were replaced by peasant farms on which sheep were raised. A court book entry of 1547 suggests that the division of 19 tenements into four groups of regular rents at Wasdale Head may represent the survival of four of the original tenurial vaccary units.

By 1547 there were 19 farm holdings recorded in rent records. Other 16th century records indicate the existence of 18 farms including four at Burnthwaite, eight at The Row (Row Head) and six in Down in the Dale. The farms were clustered in small hamlets on the edges of what were formally the common fields. Only eight farms survived by 1808 and four survive today: Burnthwaite, Middle Row, Wasdale Head Hall and Bowdlerdale. Only Burnthwaite has surviving buildings from the 17th century – all the other farm buildings are from the 18th to 20th century.

Tenancy agreements for farmers included the right to cut peat from the fell and there is evidence of this on Green How. A cluster of seven ruinous peat huts (“peat scales”) are present just upslope of the south-east corner of Fence Wood. The huts are drystone built structures which would have been used to store cut and dried peat prior to moving for use in the settlements on the valley floor. There are a range of sizes and forms which indicate various phases of building, similar to those above Boot in Eskdale, only a few miles away. The smaller simpler huts probably ceased to be used by the 19th century and the two larger huts were probably out of use by the end of the 19th century, however Burnthwaite Farm still retains peat cutting rights in the area.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries and into the 17th century opportunities arose to address the problems inherent in the feudal system of land tenure. Former open
fields had traditionally been sub-divided to the point of poverty, and these began to be reorganised by manor courts and petitions.

The former open fields became enclosed as strips on a piecemeal basis, with individual farmers or small groups enclosing formerly open areas. The strips might then also be combined into larger parcels as farms were abandoned or amalgamated. Small-scale enclosure of this type tends to be undocumented and a complex progression based on topography and wall inter-relationships has been proposed for parts of the former open fields at Wasdale Head. In lower Wasdale, although there are some trace elements of medieval organisation surviving as curvilinear boundaries and strip-fields, the surviving landscape is overwhelmingly a product of the 16th and 17th century.

In the 16th century, Copeland Forest was still manorial waste available to the tenants but the manor courts began to set out bye-laws dividing the fells into smaller units for specific purposes. The courts of the manors of Eskdale, Miterdale, and Wasdale Head, for instance, divided the waste into three: steep banks on the lower fell-sides; moors; and the higher fells. Banks and moors were most-suited to cattle pasture; as the areas of bank waste were most highly-valued they had often become enclosed by the end of the 17th century. Higher fells were more suitable for sheep in the summer months. Fells could be divided into ‘heafs’, which would be assigned to a farm or to a group of farms, but located some distance away. As a response ‘driftways’ or ‘outgangs’ developed, paths or tracks along which farmers moved their sheep up onto the fells, and these are often preserved in the landscape.

At Wasdale Head, the Percy Survey of 1578 shows that the tenants had between three and ten acres of arable and meadow in the common field called Wasdale Head field (which might have comprised several discrete spaces). Of the 46 occupants of Nether Wasdale, only six had shared rights in the common field. This has been taken to imply that the settlement of Nether Wasdale is generally later than Wasdale Head.

The field system at Wasdale Head was described in the same 1578 survey as “18 tenants at will each holding a tenement consisting of a small garth adjoining his farmstead and a share of arable and meadow land in Wasdalehead Field”. In 1578 there were no enclosures referred to other than those garths attached to the farmsteads, and the pattern which appears in modern mapping today probably represents the reorganisation of the common Wasdalehead Field (or fields) between 1578 and c. 1850. There was accretion and amalgamation of farm holdings during this period which saw the 18 tenements of 1578 reduced to ten in 1750 and then five by 1850. The earliest reference to ‘infield walls’ at Wasdale Head is 1664, by which time some reorganisation of the open fields had certainly occurred. Along the Lingmell Beck and close to Burnthwaite, it is likely that the parcels formed at least in part from cleared stone, deposited along the steeper edges of palaeo-channels aligned from north north west to south south west on earlier courses of the Lingmell Beck. These formed the basis for field divisions which progressively changed from linear clearance cairns into enclosure walls.

Intakes enclosed only the lowest slopes, and in Wasdale Head there are no outrakes or driftways that connect farms to far-flung heafs or intakes. Field survey has again been able to propose a stratigraphic sequence for these intakes. Dating the sequence of intakes is difficult. There is some range within each phase, and the relationship between
intakes and the enclosure and reorganisation of the valley floor is unclear and so only a relative chronology can be established suggesting that the extent of intake between 1578 and 1795 was modest, extending the enclosed area by only around 20 per cent.

The deer fence shown on a plan of the Fence in 1795 is thought to date from the late 16th century. The 1578 Percy Survey describes it as “a walled enclosure of good ground and underwood preserved for the lord’s deer”. The name ‘Newe Frith’ suggests that in 1578 it was recently enclosed. The farm called Wasdale Head Hall, probably built by one of the 17th or 18th century lessees of the Fence (it was leased in 1618 to Sir Wilfred Lawson), was probably the first farm inside the lord’s deer park. Other such stock parks do occur in the Wasdale Valley area, (Irton Park and Mecklin Park), and the place-name Frithgill occurs on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map as a watercourse at Irton Hall, issuing from Irton Park.

Building stock began to be replaced in more durable materials during this period. This represents the seeding of what is now considered to be the Lake District’s vernacular architecture; stone walls, and farmhouses and barns newly built or rebuilt on earlier sites alongside more handsome residences for the wealthy. Gosforth Hall dates from 1658 and was subsequently altered in 1673. This reorganisation of farm land also resulted in some farm buildings being abandoned.

The end of the 18th century saw the beginnings of planned enclosure in large quantities; land was brought into agriculture to supply rapidly growing populations and their needs in the northern towns. In the lowland parts of the Wasdale Valley area there were three examples of enclosure by Parliamentary Act, each on moorland. Whilst Mecklin Park and Irton Park on Irton Fell both suggest deliberate emparking in medieval times they were progressively enclosed during this period for plantations. The modern Ordnance Survey maps show sub-division of the larger, earlier stock enclosures. The first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps show what is presumably 20th century enclosure still higher uphill. Whereas in the upper Wasdale Valley the surviving pattern reflects earlier arrangements, in the lower Wasdale Valley area the higher slopes on Bleng Fell, Blengdale Forest and Hollow Moor are generally enclosed by very large, straight-walled field of parliamentary and other planned enclosure.

Intakes in the lower Wasdale Valley area appear to be very limited, around Craghouse Wood and Greengate Wood just north of Santon Bridge, at Pughouse Wood and east of Easthwaite at the southern end of Wast Water, a few small parcels to the south of Irton Hall, and some small episodes close to farms on the lower slopes of Nether Wasdale Common.

Early 19th century planned enclosure (or earlier) seems to have improved the cultivation of huge stretches of estuarine marsh and miosslands, around Carleton Hall particularly. Closer to the coast, drainage of the estuarine marshes left a field pattern of geometric shapes. Higher up (i.e. the fields north of Scattering Garth and higher up the River Mite) earlier inbye seems to have been rearranged in a geometric fashion and much intake land was used for woodland (for example at Porterthwaite and Irton Park).
6.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The location of the Wasdale Valley on the less accessible western side of the Lake District, together with its lack of a lake, resulted in little interest from early cultural tourists in the 18th century.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries Wasdale also became a significant early location for the development of the sport of rock climbing, in parallel with similar developments in the Dolomites and Saxony. Important figures included Walter Parry Haskett Smith, who visited Wasdale Head from the 1880s and the Abraham brothers of Keswick. Haskett Smith’s ascent of Napes Needle on Great Gable in 1886 was a key event in the development of climbing and these early pioneers stayed at the Wasdale Head Inn, which is still a thriving centre for walkers and climbers.

William Ritson, friend of de Quincey and Wordsworth, was born at Row Foot in 1808. Visitors to the valley had often stayed at Row Foot, including a young William Wilberforce who “passed the night” here in 1776. Ritson became the first landlord of the newly enlarged ‘Huntsman’s Inn’. It later became the Wast Water Hotel and is now the Wasdale Inn. It became the place to stay for the Victorian gentlemen fell-walkers and pioneer mountaineers, mostly professional men and academics from the cities; indeed it is still marketed as the birthplace of British rock climbing. William Ritson gained a reputation for telling tall tales of country life to his gullible guests. His legacy is ‘The Biggest Liar in the World’ competition, held every November, at the Bridge Inn at nearby Santon Bridge.

Building on the popularity of rock climbing in Wasdale, the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, the premiere climbing club in the Lake District, was established in 1906-7 and the first formal meet was at the Wasdale Head Inn on 30th March 1907. In 1969 Wasdale Hall, owned by the National Trust, was leased to the Youth Hostel Association and became part of the Association’s extensive network in the Lake District.

6.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Famous for the sublimity of its screes descending from Scafell into the depths of Wast Water, Wasdale was celebrated by Wordsworth for the extreme simplicity of its pastoral economy. However the Romantic view of Wast Water, as expressed by Wordsworth, Coleridge and others was very different to the Picturesque perspective. In his Guide Wordsworth described the lake as “long, narrow, stern and desolate”, but also pointed out that it is “well worth the notice of the traveller who is not afraid of fatigue; no part of the country is more distinguished by sublimity”.

In the third edition of his Guide (1822), Wordsworth included ‘Excursion to the Top of Scawfell’, an edited version of a letter by Dorothy Wordsworth written in October 1818, in which she described an ascent of Scawfell with her friend Mary Barker:
“We now beheld the whole mass of Great Gavel from its base, – the Den of Wastdale at our feet – a gulf immeasurable”.

In the summer of 1809 Wordsworth visited the lake on a fishing and camping expedition along with the writer Thomas de Quincey and John Wilson, editor of Blackwood’s Edinburgh magazine and a minor poet. Wilson’s poem ‘The Angler’s Tent’ describes this trip and includes some lines by Wordsworth describing

“The placid lake that rested far below
Softly embosoming another sky”.

When Wordsworth began his first version of the ‘Guide’ in 1810 to accompany Joseph Wilkinson’s set of prints of the region (and published as ‘Select Views in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire’, he drew attention to the screes of Wasdale and their distinctive colour tones:

“This is a very striking feature: for these steeps, or screes (as places of this kind are named), are not more distinguished by their height and extent, than by the beautiful colours with which the pulverized rock, for ever crumbling down their sides, overspreads them. The surface has the apparent softness of the dove’s neck, and... resembles a dove’s neck strongly in its hues, and the manner in which they are intermingled.”

On Thursday morning, August 5 1802 Coleridge wrote in his notebook that “left T. Tyson’s at Wastdale Head where I had been most hospitably entertained”. He and Wordsworth had stayed with Thomas Tyson on their tour of 1799 and now, before he set off for the next dramatic section of his walking tour, he was given valuable information about the Scafells and recommended to stay at an ancient Lake District farm in Eskdale – Taw House – which was farmed by a relative of Tyson.

Having written what is believed to be the first account of ascending Scafell, Coleridge famously and dramatically recorded his descent of Broad Stand in a letter to Sarah Hutchinson:

“it was in truth a Path that in a very hard Rain is, no doubt, the channel of a most splendid Waterfall – So I began to suspect that I ought not to go on / but then unfortunately tho’ I could with ease drop down a smooth Rock 7 feet high, I could not climb it / so go on I must / and on I went / the next 3 drops were not half a Foot, at least not a foot more than my own height / but every Drop increased the Palsy of my Limbs – I shook all over, Heaven knows without the least influence of Fear / and now I had only two more to drop down / to return was impossible – but of these two the first
was tremendous / it was twice my own height, & the Ledge at the bottom was [so] exceedingly narrow, that if I dropt down upon it I must of necessity have fallen backwards & of course killed myself. My Limbs were all in a tremble – I lay upon my Back to rest myself, & was beginning according to my Custom to laugh at myself for a Madman, when the sight of the Craggs above me on each side, & the impetuous Clouds just over them, posting so luridly & so rapidly northward, overawed me”.

Throughout his journey, Coleridge had benefited from the intimate knowledge of shepherds and farmers for his route planning. His notebook interpretations were indebted to these men. The Tysons, in particular, were a widespread and important farming family in the Lake District with many descendents living in the region today. They were already well established in Irtton, Birker, Egremont and in Eskdale by Elizabeth I’s reign, and in 1578 a John Tyson became a tenant at Wasdale Head where they became strongly represented over the next 250 years as they were in Ennerdale, Eskdale, the Duddon and the Langdales.

Thomas Wilkinson, in his ‘Tours to the British Mountains’ of 1824, compared the sublime Wasdale landscape to man-made pyramids: “...We have heard of the pyramids of Egypt, built by the hand of man; but these are the Pyramids of the world, built by the Architect of the Universe”.

The sombre beauty of the deepest lake in England contrasting with Wilkinson’s pyramids of the world was also appreciated by Edward Lear who sketched Wast Water and Yewbarrow during his 1836 sketching tour.

### 6.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

The beauty and intrinsic value of the cultural landscape of Wasdale attracted concern for its preservation from an early period. Early moves to protect the valley and its farms comprised purchase of properties by concerned individuals.

Wasdale is one of the most significant valleys in the National Trust portfolio in the Lake District. The Trust has purchased a number of farms in Wasdale in order to protect the landscape, including Row Head bought at auction in 1963 with funds from a legacy, and Bowderdale more recently. Burnthwaite was bought in 1975, using the National Trust’s Lake District Funds, generated by appeals. The Trust was also gifted farms in the valley from the Lake District Farm Estates when the company was wound up in 1976.
including Harrowhead, Nether Wasdale and Gill, Broadgap and Buckbarrow in Wasdale. Middle Row and Wasdale Head Hall farms were gifted to the Trust in 1959 by the state under the National Land Fund procedures (from the Leconfield Estate in lieu of death duties) for ‘permanent preservation’. The Nether Wasdale Estate, comprising 6 square kilometres, came to the Trust under terms agreed by the personal representatives of Mr J. B. Wrigley and the Commissioners of the Inland Revenue in 1965 and the Leconfield Commons, comprising 123 square kilometres of fell land on the north side of Wasdale was given by the State to the National Trust in 1979. The National Trust now owns 6,677 hectares of land in the valley, of which 6,547 hectares is inalienable. They also have an additional 1 hectare of leased land but no covenanted land.

The Fell and Rock Climbing Club bought 3,000 acres of land over the 1,500 foot contour to safeguard the interests of mountaineers, including the iconic fell of Great Gable, and donated it to the National Trust in the years immediately after World War One in memory of its members that died in that war. The small church at Wasdale Head, dedicated to St Olaf, is furnished with a stained glass window also dedicated by the Fell and Rock Climbing Club in memory of World War 1 victims, with the inscription ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my strength’.

A more recent threat to Wasdale was the attempt by British Nuclear Fuels to raise the level of Wastwater and to increase the abstraction water for the nuclear plant at Sellafield. Wastwater had been used as a water supply for industrial purposes since the Second World War and this continued at the same level with the construction of the nuclear reactor at Calder Hall. In 1979, parallel with the proposals to raise the level of Ennerdale Water, British Nuclear Fuels put forward a proposal to increase abstraction from Wastwater threefold. This would have involved construction of a weir or dam and other engineering works. A strong and vociferous group of objectors including local
farming families in the valley, the National Trust, Friends of the Lake District, the Youth Hostels Association and a large number of amenity groups, mounted a successful campaign against the proposals which were rejected by the Secretary of State for the Environment following a public enquiry.

Valley head electricity supplies were finally delivered in the 1970s by submarine cable along the bed of the lake to avoid landscape impact.

When the Lake District National Park was established in 1951 the iconic view looking north-east from the lower reaches of Wast Water was chosen as the National Park’s logo. The view has Wastwater in the foreground and looks to Great Gable in the centre, Yewbarrow Fell on the left and Lingmell Fell on the right. So for over 60 years this view has been inextricably linked with the designation of the Lake District as a UK National Park. In 2007 this view was voted by the British public as ‘Britain’s Favourite View’.

6.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Wasdale is one of the best known valleys in the English Lake District as a result of its spectacular landscape of lake, screes and surrounding high mountains which are the basis for the design of the official logo of the Lake District National Park. Its landscape character has been shaped by centuries of agro-pastoral farming. The valley floor at Wasdale Head, with its organic pattern of small, thick-walled inbye fields is an iconic feature of the English Lake District.

This is one of the key valleys in the Lake District for Herdwick farming. The Wasdale Show and Shepherds’ Meet is one of the principal events of the Herdwick farmers’ year. Some of the farm houses in the valley date from the 17th century but many others date from the 18th and 19th centuries. Their landscape disposition clearly follows that of the medieval period, and this is especially apparent at Wasdale Head where four former medieval vaccaries were later subdivided into a number of separate tenements.

There is some evidence for early land use, particularly on the fells to north and south of the valley bottom land, including the archaeological remains of prehistoric agricultural and ritual sites and possible early medieval shielings. The evidence for Norse settlement is also strong in local place-names and in the extraordinary carved stone cross and tomb stones at Gosforth. There has been little industrial activity in Wasdale in the past, in contrast with most other Lake District valleys, with activity limited to small scale medieval iron smelting.

It is surprising, given the spectacular juxtaposition of lake and high mountains, that Wasdale did not attract more attention from early visitors seeking Picturesque experiences and views. Difficulty of access was certainly a factor and the starkness and severity of the Wasdale landscape may have been off-putting to 18th century taste. Villa building and landscape improvement was also extremely limited here.
However, the valley was visited and celebrated by Romantic writers and artists including Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Thomas de Quincey. Coleridge undertook and wrote about what is often described as the first rock climb on the crags of Broad Stand, and in the later 19th century Wasdale was one of the first centres for the development of climbing in Europe.

Concern for the protection of Wasdale resulted in early private purchase of land at Wasdale Head which eventually passed to the National Trust. During the later 20th century the National Trust purchased additional farms and now owns and manages almost all of the land in the north eastern half of the Wasdale Valley, including the farms, fell grazing, Wast Water, the famous Screes and the iconic mountains of Great Gable, Scafell and Scafell Pike. The National Trust owns 6,677 hectares of land in the valley, of which 6,547 hectares is inalienable. Proposals in the 1970s to increase the abstraction of water from Wast Water provoked one of the most recent and successful environmental campaigns in the Lake District, thus continuing the tradition of landscape protection which began over 100 years previously.

The Wasdale Valley is therefore particularly significant for attributes of the first theme of Outstanding Universal Value, agro-pastoral farming, and for those of the third, the conservation movement.
Ennerdale looking west to the coast of the Irish Sea
7. ENNERDALE

Description, History and Development
7. THE ENNERDALE VALLEY

“Next comes in view Ennerdale, with its lake of bold and somewhat savage shores”.
William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

7.1 DESCRIPTION

7.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Ennerdale is the most westerly of all the English Lake District valleys orientated east-west from the high central fells to the rolling hills and moorland plateaux of West Cumbria and the coastal plain leading to the Irish Sea. Though much modified by human activity in the form of forestry, water extraction and farming, it is the large scale natural features of the valley that impose themselves and create an overriding sense of isolation, wildness and tranquillity.

The atmosphere and character of Ennerdale is apparent even before entering the valley. From the coastal plain and farmland to the west, the steep fells of Herdus to the north and Crag Fell to the south, appear to guard the entrance and provide a warning that you are about to enter an exceptional and unique landscape. The head of the valley is crossed by one of the major Lakeland mountain routes, approaching from Wasdale over Black Sail Pass and continuing on to Buttermere over Scarth Gap. The land from just east of Ennerdale Bridge eastwards up the valley is almost wholly owned by only three landowners. In 2003 these three landowners, the Forestry Commission, the National Trust, and United Utilities, formed the Wild Ennerdale Partnership to deliver a vision ‘to allow the evolution of Ennerdale as a wild valley for the benefit of people, relying more on natural processes to shape its landscape and ecology’. It remains to be seen where this low intervention management takes the valley but it will surely secure the continued future of Ennerdale as a valley with a unique character.

The sense of isolation in the valley is reinforced by the fact that this is the only major Lake District Valley with no public road along it. East of the foot of the lake beyond the enclosed pasture there are no buildings along the south shoreline and beyond the Forestry Commission car park at Bowness on the north shore, the end of the public road, the private track serves only to access a field studies centre and a youth hostel at
1. Prehistoric settlement on Town Bank (owned by National Trust)
2. Calder Abbey
3. Monks Bridge (owned by National Trust)
4. Gillertswaite – site of medieval vocacy
5. Longmoor Head
6. Pillar Rock (owned by National Trust)
7. Ennerdale forestry plantations
8. Ennerdale Water
### ENNERDALE

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**FIGURE 7.3** The contribution of the Ennerdale Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified.
Low and High Gillerthwaite. Beyond that the only structure is Black Sail Youth Hostel accessible only by 4x4 vehicle, bicycle or on foot.

The geology underlying the valley and surrounding fells comprises volcanic rocks of the Borrowdale Series at the head of the valley, granite in the central portion, and Skiddaw slates in the lower valley. Ennerdale Water, the lake occupying the central and lower parts of Ennerdale, was formed through glacial action and other remnants of this process include a fine series of rounded moraines at the head of the valley, at Black Sail. See Figure 7.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figure 7.2 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Ennerdale valley.

7.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The head of the valley is framed by some of the Lake District’s highest summits including Green Gable, Great Gable, Pillar, Kirk Fell and Steeple, composed of the hard, erosion-resistant Borrowdale Volcanic group of rocks presenting a rocky, craggy face to the valley and providing a strong sense of enclosure. The valley is relatively narrow at its head with rough grazing on the steep open fells where clear of crags, outcrops and screes. Lower down the valley slopes, large scale, mature conifer forests dominate the landscape. Continuing harvesting has created a diversity of dense conifers, areas
of clear-fell, conifer re-planting, natural regeneration and further west some areas of ancient oak woodland. This evokes an ongoing sense of change in the valley, enhanced by the strong visual presence of the mobile, high energy River Liza. Ennerdale Water, known as Broad Water until the late 18th century, is a large glacial lake which has been deepened by a dam at its west end. It is one of the smaller lakes in the Lake District, with a maximum width of 1.5 kilometres and a length of 3.9 kilometres. It is also relatively shallow, but nonetheless has a resident population of Arctic Char. West of the lake the valley suddenly opens out to a landscape of rolling pastoral farmland with a rich network of hedgerows and trees with a much gentler feel and including the village of Ennerdale Bridge. The river from the lake westwards is the River Ehen.

7.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The agricultural field pattern of the valley is a typical Lake District one with inbye, intake and open fell grazing patterns but now obscured largely by conifers. The inbye areas in the valley bottom, by Gillerthwaite, are still intact.

Evidence of medieval open fields can still be found in the wider Ennerdale Valley, often as fossilised strip fields in the landscape. At Croasdale (‘Crossdale’ on Ordnance Survey First and Second Series Maps), a very small amount of arable is shown on historic maps as strips, and some of these survive in modern boundaries. Croasdale is first mentioned in the ‘Assizes of 1279’; its name perhaps references a now-lost sculptural cross, or a reference to its position at a cross-roads. At Calder Bridge and Ponsonby there are open field-systems on the south side of the River Calder. The place-name ‘Scales’ to the north-east of this area (Low Prior Scales and High Prior Scales) may indicate transhumant pastoralism, but the arable may perhaps be part of a larger scheme associated with the Calder Abbey community. Another possible former open field system can be seen at Strudda Bank and at Ennerdale Bridge where there are quite wide strips which might relate to the Ennerdale referred to in c.1135 and which remained in lay hands uneventfully until the 16th century. Ridge-and-furrow survives at Woundell Beck where it post-dates the cairnfield, but it is associated with a bank that forms part of the putative vaccary enclosure and its reverse-S shape form and wide turning circle suggest a medieval date.

On the south-west slopes of Herdus are the relict remains of a field system which was not shown on the Ordnance Survey first edition map (1867), it was evidently abandoned at a much earlier date. This represents an example of the parcelling of the land on the lower slopes, up to the most extreme and unusable terrain, where an horizontal wall was built running along the base of the Herdus crags with walls running down slope creating a series of land parcels along the valley slopes. The tumbled dry stone walls are in places aligned with the boundaries of the adjacent enclosed land to the west, and they appear to represent a now abandoned element of intake associated with the former Hollins Farm. The relationships with the present-day field system indicate that these remains reflect the contraction, and ultimate closure, of Hollins Farm, which exploited the marginal and exposed lands at the foot of Herdus. Because of the relationship with Hollins Farm it is evident that the field system was abandoned in the post-medieval period, but it is entirely possible that it had its origin in the medieval period.
FIGURE 7.6 Shepherds' flocks and native sheep breeds in the Ennerdale Valley
WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Until the sale of the valley to the Forestry Commission, Ennerdale had an important place in the tradition of Herdwick livestock in the Lake District, but 2,000 Herdwick sheep had to be removed from Gillerthwaite and Ennerdale Dale when the valley was forested. Despite this afforestation in the 20th century, there are still 16 farms with fell-going flocks in the Ennerdale Valley area. There are seven Herdwick flocks and two Swaledale flocks registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Rough Fell flocks. There is one National Trust landlord’s flock listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005) for the Ennerdale area.

There are about 3,346 hectares of Registered Common Land in the valley area, around 31 per cent of the total valley area. The areas of Common Land are concentrated on the south side of Ennerdale Valley, the two main blocks being Kinniside Common and Stockdale Moor, along with Cold Fell and Ponsonby Fell. The other small areas of Common are Longmoor near Ennerdale Bridge and Watering Beck, Bowness Knot Parish Quarry, Bowness Quarry and Latter Barrow Parish Quarry either side of Ennerdale Water.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

The annual Ennerdale Show is held in the last week of August at The Leaps, Kirkland, west of Ennerdale Water. It is a traditional Lakeland Show including showing of sheep, horses, dogs and poultry, vintage machinery, hound trailing, children’s sports, fell racing, Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling, industrial and produce marquee and local food and drink. It was started in 1895 by a group of Ennerdale businessmen and farms as a way of supporting the village school. The first year it was a flower show and picnic followed by a summer ball. In 1900 it was expanded to include produce and a Herdwick sheep show, reviving the sheep fairs earlier in the 19th century. Beatrix Potter was President of the Show in 1934.

FARMSTEADS

There are a few farm buildings of 16-17th century date in origin suggesting that this was a period of investment in farms, probably arising from post Dissolution land sales and enhanced rights of tenure.

**TABLE 7.1 Key farm houses in the Ennerdale Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH GILLERTHWAITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong> 16th century and later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong> Youth Hostel Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROTECTION</strong> Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRID REFERENCE</strong> 314238 514100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.1.4 **INDUSTRY**

Apart from limited slate quarrying at Bowness Knot and Latterbarrow, the principal industrial activity in Ennerdale has been the mining and smelting of iron ore from medieval times. Although this resulted in hushing and extensive adits being constructed into the hillsides with large spoil tips, this has left little visible impact on the landscape, largely due to the tree cover. Since 1864 Ennerdale Water has been used as a water supply for West Cumbria, but compared to Thirlmere and Haweswater the impact on the valley of the water industry is relatively minor.

7.1.5 **SETTLEMENTS**

The pattern of settlement and land use in Ennerdale stands in stark contrast to the majority of large valleys in the Lake District, as it has relatively little settlement; Ennerdale Bridge is the only village in the valley area. The blanket of commercial conifer forest which was established by the Forestry Commission from the 1920s has also served to obscure the remains of any earlier settlements, although there was a sizeable medieval community to the east of High Gillerthwaite Farm, comprising 12 medieval longhouses.
7.1.6  PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

There are no buildings, villas or ornamental landscapes associated with the early Picturesque movement in Ennerdale although the mansion at Calder Abbey, built over the south range of the monastery, is of this period. It was added to in the 19th and early 20th centuries and is surrounded by lightly landscaped grounds, now in agricultural use, which incorporate further monastic features along with a ha-ha.

7.2  HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

7.2.1  ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

In parts of Ennerdale forest cover has obscured evidence of prehistoric activity, but where remains are known, they survive well. There is a prehistoric cairnfield on the banks of the River Liza and there is a particular concentration of evidence of settlement, burial and farming on Stockdale Moor and Town Bank, suggesting arable farming, possibly as early as the Bronze Age. Cairns and hut circles can also be found at the junction of River Calder and Whoap Beck; all are protected through scheduling as nationally important monuments. There is also some evidence for Romano-British settlement in Ennerdale with farmsteads at Low Gillerthwaite and at Tongue How, Town Bank. These are also protected as scheduled monuments.

7.2.2  THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Some of the place-names, including the name of the valley itself and the rivers which flow through it have Norse origins and it is likely that Norse immigrants settled here in the later 10th century. There are stone footings of rudimentary structures high up on the southern slopes of Ennerdale, at Great Cove, which may represent the remains of summer shielings of this period, used as part of a system of transhumance.

7.2.3  THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

There is little documentation relating to medieval Ennerdale. However references to ‘Avanderdale’ may equate to Ennerdale in which case a portion of the manor was
granted “in pure and perpetual alms, free from every earthly service” by Ranulph, son of William le Meschin, to the Churches of St Mary of York and St Bees in c. 1135. Nothing more is known of the manor until the early 14th century, apart from confirmations of this grant in the time of Richard I (1189-99) and in 1308 by Edward II. The lack of other papers relating to Ennerdale in the cartulary of the mother house, St Mary of York, may indicate that, to all intents and purposes, it was effectively in lay hands before the 16th century.

It is surprising that monastic interests were so few given the presence of Calder Abbey in the far south-west of the valley. The Savignac Abbey first founded on land granted by Ranulph de Meschines II in 1134, was promptly destroyed by Scots invaders, and re-founded in 1137 by Furness Abbey. It became a Cistercian Abbey in 1147, and the surviving ruins date from this second foundation, with later additions. The Gatehouse to the west is probably 14th century with later additions. Other remains include a monk’s oven and a water leat to the east of the main buildings. The Abbey itself was deliberately made ruinous after the Dissolution by its new lay owner Sir Thomas Leigh.

The monks were not rich or prolific in public life, and at the Dissolution in the 16th century only possessed the rectories of Cleator, Gilcrux, and of St. John and St. Bridgid, Beckermet. A late 13th century suit shows that the monastery owned “3 carucates of land in Gilcrux, a carucate in Dearham, an oxgang in Millom, 10 acres in Irton and 2 oxgangs in Bootle”. Nonetheless their memory is recorded in the name Friar Moor at Kinniside, and at Monks’ Bridge over the River Calder (a scheduled monument).

Said to be medieval, the bridge’s surviving fabric is probably 17th or 18th century. It is a Grade II Listed Building and also a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Described in the scheduling as a “good and relatively rare surviving example of a simple single span packhorse bridge, a type common in the region during the medieval and early post-medieval periods, with the arch high enough above the water level to protect the bridge from rapidly rising flood waters which are a characteristic of rivers draining the Lakeland fells.”
The establishment of new communities, through forest clearance (assarting) and fell enclosure, were at their height in upland Cumbria in the late 13th century. One hundred and sixty acres were enclosed in just six years between 1293-9 around the borough of Cockermouth. One ‘riddings’ field-name (Old English ryding, meaning ‘clearing in woodland’) is recorded on the tithe map between Mireside and Hollins and there are two water riddings names (drained wasteland) west of Mireside. The earliest formal enclosures of land were the two valley bottom enclosures, separated by the Char Dub, which are comparable to the ring garths found in most valleys and typically date from at least the 12th/13th centuries.

The population of Ennerdale appears to have been low prior to the 14th century; in 1322 and 1334 the figures were 26 and 31 respectively. However the population seems to have grown considerably; this is perhaps skewed by the invasions at that earlier time. A muster roll of 1534-5 listed the names of 40 men, from 20 families, of military age in the manor.

The earliest documented settlement in the valley dates from the 14th century, with a record of a vaccary (dairy farm) at Gillerthwaite in 1322, just beyond the head of the lake and another of 1334 possibly at Woundell Beck. These vaccaries belonged to John de Multon, last lord of the whole of the Barony of Egremont. The Inquisition Post Mortem of 1334 gives some insight into the 14th century landscape, although it is probably safe to assume that the forest had been cleared for their creation some time before 1322.

The 1334 document includes the following:

"...and there are at Enerdale (sic), which is within the Free Chase of Coupeland fell 31 tenants at will, who hold various places (loca) and pay per year £6 4/6d at the terms of Michaelmas and Easter equally. And there is a certain render (reditus) called Dalemale [payment for right of pasture, literally ‘valley money’] coming from the said tenants 29/- per year at the Feast of St James for the whole year. And there is a certain place called Braythemire [now Broadmoor plantation] in the hands of the said tenants, and they pay per year for the same 13/4d at the said Feast of St James for the whole year. And there is there a certain place called Head of Ennerdale (Capud de Eynerdale) in the hands of the said tenants at will, and they pay per year £4 at the said Feast of St James for the whole year. And there are two vaccaries (vacarie) where the lord used to have his own stock (staurum suum proprum) and they are worth per year 60/-“

Translation by Professor Angus Winchester, Lancaster University

The archaeological record demonstrates that there was a sizeable medieval community to the east of High Gillerthwaite Farm and significantly beyond the eastern valley bottom enclosure. This comprises a scatter of up to 12 rectangular longhouses, each with an associated stock pound, which extend in a broad band up the northern side of the valley, the lowest being a pair just above the flood plain of the River Liza and extending up to
a group of five at a height of 120 metres above the valley floor. While this would imply a very sizeable community it is possible that the structures were not all contemporary. Their rectangular nature, and their unenclosed character, suggests an early or high medieval date. Some of the longhouses are directly associated with cultivation terraces or plots, whilst some have apparently a pastoral association. One of the best contenders for one of the vaccaries is the very large two-celled stock enclosure, which is an enormous 54 metres x 50 metres in size and has decayed banks that are even now up to 1.1 metres in height and could have accommodated many cattle. Attached to the eastern side of the stock enclosure is a further rectangular longhouse. Although two dairy farms were documented in the early 14th century, this does not necessarily indicate that these were either then or subsequently the sole settlements within the head of the valley. The fact that there is clear evidence of mixed farming practice within this community may suggest that it was either at the outset a community providing meat for the lord of the manor (vaccaries) and for a small local tenanted population or that the range of farmsteads reflects the development of a community practicing both mixed and pastoral farming. Although vaccaries are well known from documentary sources, they are very poorly attested in the archaeological record, and thus the presence of physical remains potentially corresponding to such a medieval cattle farm is of considerable archaeological importance.

While some of the settlements were associated with small cultivation terraces, none of them were associated with any boundaries or fields as such, which clearly distinguishes them from the post-medieval farms of High Gillerthwaite and Gillerthwaite, which were associated with the valley bottom enclosure. The relationship of the medieval settlement to this valley bottom enclosure is significant; the fact that the primary medieval settlement area was wholly outside the principal valley bottom enclosure indicates that this enclosure post-dated the medieval settlement, and that there was no apparent continuity of settlement. While it is possible that there were early settlement remains within the extent of the valley bottom enclosure, that have been subsequently destroyed by land improvement, it is clear that the majority of the earlier settlement remains were substantially distant from the valley bottom enclosure. This could either indicate that they were created independently or that the later intake specifically avoided the land of the early settlement. The layout of the settlement evidence also suggests potentially that there were territorial issues restricting its growth. These territorial restrictions may have been the vaccaries around which peasant farming had to develop.

The medieval landowners, as well as establishing the vaccaries within their holdings, would have also sold summer grazing rights on the fells to the peasant communities. It is this summer grazing pattern of stock movement, or transhumance, which was expanded to allow peasant settlement in the uplands of the forests during the population growth of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries (Winchester 2000), but may have occurred in earlier periods. The high valley sides meant that these areas were still too remote for local pasture and they became used for transhumant pasture through the establishment of shielings at Great Cove and Revelin Crags. That at Great Cove consists of a main group of nine ruined stone buildings of varying size and condition, two partially extant stretches of dry-stone walling, a stone-capped well or spring, and the remains of a substantial, slightly outlying, building to the south-east of the main group. The location and topography of the site, may indicate that these were the shielings
for the medieval settlement at Gillerthwaite. The comparative position of the two sites shows the route down Deep Gill leads directly to Gillerthwaite and its valley bottom enclosure. Such circumstantial evidence may indicate a contemporary relationship.

The upper reaches of Ennerdale, beyond Ennerdale Water, appear to have remained relatively unenclosed throughout the medieval period. An exception to this is The Side, on the southern slopes of the valley, a large stone walled enclosure which functioned as a deer park. Although the Park is likely to pre-date 1568, it was described in a parliamentary survey of 1650 as ‘All that Parke or parcell of Fell ground commonly called or known by the name Ennerdale Parke alias the Fence, fenced partlie with an old wall, and partlie with ye water called ye Broadwater.’

During the medieval period the mineral potential of the valley was realised and resulted in the increasingly intensive extraction of the fell sides. In some places hushing (the deliberate washing away of topsoil to reveal buried mineral veins) was used, notably on the north side of Herdus, but in other places, such as the south side of the valley, extensive adits were excavated into the hill side and spoil heaps proliferated. At Smithy Beck there is evidence of a possible miners’ settlement or a seasonal sheiling. The ceramic evidence from the domestic hearths suggests some degree of occupation from the late 14th century through to the early post-medieval period, but the houses here are spatially and typologically distinct from the other settlements within the valley. Firstly the houses were substantially larger than their counterparts at Gillerthwaite East, but they were also in a very much better condition, suggesting a more recent abandonment date. The houses, for the most part, had a characteristic form, being enclosed or ‘double-walled’ longhouses, and are a type which is relatively rare both within a regional context and nationally. They are protected through scheduling.

Evidence on the ground suggests that at some stage in the later medieval or post-medieval period the agricultural settlement in the valley bottom was rationalised with the establishment of the two valley bottom enclosures and the two surviving Gillerthwaite farms. By this stage the Woundell Beck settlement had already been abandoned, allowing the intake to develop over it, but the Gillerthwaite settlements appear to still have been in use as the new intake was laid out to avoid them. Remarkably, this intake was subject to very little development and expansion in the course of its subsequent life.

The post-medieval period saw, in common with all other upland areas, the increasingly intensive pastoral exploitation of the valley sides. The numbers of stock shelters and bields are testament to the increasing numbers of sheep on the fell, which inevitably had a considerable impact upon the vegetation, preventing the proliferation of heather moors.

These changes in the landscape and farming practices in the 16th to 17th centuries elsewhere appear to have been the result of the confiscation of any monastic-owned land, but there is little evidence of this in the area; the name Friar Moor, next to Side (=’saet’r) at Kinniside, might refer to a post-Dissolution intake on the fellside, or perhaps this is an undocumented vaccary settled post-Dissolution. It is possible that the land around How Hall was originally an unnamed monastic possession, given that How Hall was soon in the hands of a family connected with Dr Swynburn and thus Henry VIII.
A short string of farms curving around the north-west shore of Ennerdale may have been established in the mid-16th century, perhaps on former shieling sites belonging to the manor of Crossdale. Calder Abbey was acquired by Sir Thomas Leigh after the Dissolution and he partially demolished the buildings including removing its roof.

A painting by Matthias Read in Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal, shows the property c. 1730 when it was purchased by John Tiffin; this painting shows the original form of the south range now incorporated in the house. The house was probably then mid-16th century; it is now a Grade I Listed Building. A new frontage to the west end of this range was added in the late 18th century, during which time the property was associated with the notable Senhouse family. The visible remains of the monastic buildings are mainly to be found in the cellar, the rest of the house remodelled to a very high standard in the Arts and Craft style. The buildings are set in a parkland setting.

In the case of Ennerdale, confiscation of the lands of Henry Grey, father of Lady Jane Grey, in 1554 by Mary I, may have had a greater impact. Ennerdale Manor remained in Crown hands until 1822 after this confiscation. A note, undated but – from the handwriting – apparently from the late 16th century, informs the addressee of the inadvisability of purchasing the Manor. It seems therefore that it may have been offered for sale – either publicly or direct to Lord Leconfield, Lord of the Barony of Egremont who owned neighbouring Kinniside – although no other record of this has been found. Shifting tenurial relationships also seem to have been a factor in the reorganisation of the farm land. On 14 November 1560, Elizabeth I appointed commissioners to survey her lands in Ennerdale, with instructions to induce the tenants to accept leases for 40 years, instead of the tenant right system in current use. The tenants, however, refused, claiming that they had never heard the name ‘lease’ before the manor came into Crown hands. Their petition stated that they would be encouraged in their duty of bearing arms at the border if the Court confirmed the former Custom, and at their own cost they would “inclose their grounds severally w’th quickeketts...” A ‘quickset’ was a planted hedge, usually of hawthorn. The Queen upheld the tenant right, but leased the tenements for 21 years to John Senhouse Croftfoot in 1563. However, he defaulted the terms of the lease by selling his title to John Lamplugh, who refused to “stand to the order of the Court touching the tenant right in the said manor” and was committed to Navy service. A fresh survey was ordered on 12 February 1567/8, and on 3 April 1568 the 12 ‘Ancientest and Sagest Tennants’ declared the customs of the manor, among which were entitlement “to great timber for fire houses and barns, to harrowboote and ploughboote” (the right to timber for building, or repairing farm implements), that there were no demesne lands (possibly meaning no arable demesne lands) in the manor, and “that from time out of memory... their ancestors had always had within the forest certain agistments or common of pasture called Dalemale”. The Queen accepted the Customs, and the tenants the conditions, and paid two years’ rent as a gressum (fine) on 10 May 1568.

Many of the forest areas, previously maintained as private hunting grounds, were abandoned. This was largely as a result of clearance and colonisation by peasant farmers and small freeholders, but also as a result of the establishment of fellside pastures (hay meadows) and vaccaries by the feudal lords. As the communities encroached into the lower lands of the forest, so the upper lands were adopted by the same communities as upland pasture. The more remote areas were adopted for seasonal grazing, and saw
the establishment of shielings. Some of these shielings were the upland grazing for the freeholders and leased from the lord of the manor, while others, such as the Lords Seat, near Wythop, meaning Lord’s Saetr (shieling), reflect summer grazing under the direct control of the lord of the manor. The impact of this encroachment was such that by the 16th century, the term ‘forest’ was applied in a restricted sense only to demesne pastures in the uppermost reaches of the valley. Copeland Forest, for example, had almost vanished by 1578, the northern part being by then a ‘free chase’ called the Forest of Gatesgarth, and the former hunting rights being restricted to upper Ennerdale.

There is abundant documentary evidence for post-medieval mineral extraction, particularly on the south side of the valley, which was both extensive and enduring. For example a survey of 1560 for the Crown mentions a small tenement called Sinderhill, and this is the earliest documentary evidence for a bloomery in the manor. Given the extensive physical remains, and the documentary evidence, of extraction and processing from the medieval through to the later post-medieval period, this must be one of the more important aspects of Ennerdale's heritage.

It was not until the 1870s that Ennerdale was enclosed, with the pattern of large, ruler-straight enclosures, bounded with iron posts and wire, which are typical of that late period. Each farm was allocated areas of fell which were fenced against each other and to the parish boundary on the watershed. The enclosure map is dated 1865 (with approval of the Commissioners signed 1871) and shows the parcelling of the fells around Ennerdale Water, and north and south of the River Liza. These enclosures were presumably implemented over the years following 1871, and are certainly shown on the 1899 second edition OS 6": 1 mile maps. For the most part they comprise a series of regular rectangular plots defined by straight walls which extend up the steep sides of the valley to the township boundary. In addition, a more irregular boundary was established on the southern side of the valley, above and to the south of the Side, following the natural ridge line. This was one of the last major acts of enclosure to take place in England.

Changes between the OS first edition (1867) and second edition (1899) map the development of the field system which was concentrated around the two farms, at Gillinthwaite, principally recording the construction of new buildings. At Low Gillerthwaite a new outbuilding was constructed on the southern side of the farmyard, the farm field was further divided, and a walled trackway was constructed along the southern side of the northern valley bottom enclosure wall. At High Gillerthwaite there was little change before the construction of two large buildings to the west of the farmhouse and an associated elongated enclosure wall.

Ennerdale had an important place in the tradition of Herdwick livestock in the Lake District. In the West Cumberland News in 1942 it was written that the flock of the Ponsonby family at White Banks, Kinniside had been in the hands of the present owner and his predecessors since 1773. Ennerdale was a stronghold with about one sixth of all tups (rams) registered from the valley. At the time of enclosure in the 1870s Lord Lonsdale, the lord of the manor, received the dalehead (“Ennerdale Dale”) and established a Herdwick flock there, building a bothy for his shepherds at Black Sail. In the early 20th century Gillerthwaite was one of the three or four most important sources of Herdwick tups for the whole of the Lake District.
Throughout the 19th century, an annual sheep fair was held at Ennerdale Bridge on the second Tuesday in September. In addition, Gillerthwaite farm held its own annual sale of ‘draft sheep from the coves’ which it held by the side of Ennerdale Water, at Bowness.

In 1848 when the West Cumberland Fell Dales Show, organised for hiring and selling tups, was held in Ennerdale, Thomas Rowlandson wrote an account of it in the Journal of the Agricultural Society of England. In it he stated that ‘not less than two hundred specimens of the genuine breed changed hands’. Clipping days were important social and economic events in the annual calendar and the Whitehaven News reported clipping at Gillerthwaite for many years. In the 20 July 1899 issue it was reported that clipping was a three day event involving 24 clippers from Ennerdale, Wasdale and Lorton and another eight men as catchers, fleecers and smitters. It was also reported that 16 women, 11 of them unmarried, provided food and other refreshment. There was singing and dancing in the evenings. On the final day the event ended with a wrestling competition.

The Fell Dales Show held in Eskdale in September required the walking of tups from Ennerdale, in particular Gillerthwaite, already joined by those from Buttermere, over Black Sail Pass into Wasdale Head. There they met up with the Borrowdale and Wasdale tups and stayed for the night. The next day they walked over Burnmoor to the Woolpack Inn, Eskdale where the Fell Dales Show was held to let and hire tups to keep the bloodlines fresh.

7.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The location of the Ennerdale Valley on the less accessible western side of the Lake District, resulted in little interest from early cultural tourists in the 18th century.

It was at Pillar rock in Ennerdale that true rock-climbing began. Jonathan Otley’s 1823 Guide described the Pillar Stone as ‘unclimbable’. A local shepherd, John Atkinson took up the challenge and climbed it in 1824. From then on, an increasing number of visitors climbed the rock. In 1850 the Swiss C. A. Baumgartner established what is known as the ‘Old Wall Route’. The tricky ‘North climb’ was achieved by W. Haskett-Smith in 1890.

7.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ennerdale informs the narrative of Wordsworth’s poem ‘The Brothers’, written in 1800. He used Ennerdale as it was in 1799-1800, before its last phase of enclosure and subsequent afforestation, to demonstrate the time-depth of the pastoral system in Lake District valleys. There are different versions of the origins of the poem but they are all based around the time that Wordsworth and Coleridge were in the valley in 1799 when they were told the story of a John or Jerome Bowman who had died after breaking his leg near Scalehow Force and another story of a man who broke his neck by falling off a
crag whilst sleepwalking at Proud Knot. The Bowmans were a local family from Mireside Farm, Ennerdale and there is a Bowman family grave in the churchyard in Ennerdale. This, and other documents, provides evidence of the family from at least 1757 to 1894. Wordsworth used the Bowman family as his inspiration for the Ewebank family in ‘The Brothers’. The Bowman family of Ennerdale were of particular interest to Wordsworth because of his awareness of, and interest in the challenges facing Lake District’s hill farmers.

In ‘The Brothers’ he famously begins by pointing to the gulf between picturesque-obsessed tourists and the valley farmers:

“Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
Or reap an acre of his neighbour’s corn.”

William Wordsworth, ‘The Brothers’ (1800)

The poem, through the story of a returning local man who, for a while, remains a ‘stranger’ and through a conversation with the Priest of Ennerdale, opens a window into the culture of this family which has been making and maintaining this place for at least five generations, since approximately 1650. This is a community in which the struggles of sustaining life in the valleys and hills had their tragic outcomes:

“-and old Walter,
They left to him the family heart, and land
With other burthens than the crop it bore.
Year after year the old man still kept up
A cheerful mind,- and buffeted with bond,
Interest, and mortgages; at last he sank
And went into his grave before his time”.

After Walter died,

“the estate and house were sold”

“...and all their sheep
‘A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years:-
Well – all was gone, and they were destitute...”

There is also, in this poem, a distinctive reference to The Pillar where, as part of the narrative, a young shepherd died while sleepwalking.

When Coleridge and Wordsworth toured the Lake District in 1799, Coleridge remarked upon Ennerdale and its island and then, later, Wordsworth echoed his friend’s note in his Guide including another echo of Milton’s Paradise Lost XI.835:
"In the bosom of the lakes Ennerdale and Devockwater is a single rock, which, owing to its neighbourhood to the sea, is-

"The haunt of cormorants and sea-mews' clang"

a music well suited to the stern and wild character of the several scenes!"

7.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

That Ennerdale is today without a railway line is a result of opposition to such a proposal which came forward in 1883, for a mineral line to the head of Ennerdale Water to serve iron-ore mining operations. This was opposed strongly by Canon Rawnsley and the Lake District Defence Society, which he had founded partly in response to this threat, and they published an ironic poem entitled 'Poetical Lamentation on the Insufficiency of Steam Locomotion in the Lake District', in the Pall Mall Gazette in 1883:

"Wake, England, wake! 'tis now the hour
To sweep away this black disgrace –
The want of locomotive power
In so enjoyable a place.

Nature has done her part, and why
Is mightier man in his to fail?
I want to hear the porter's cry,
'Change here for Ennerdale!"

In July 1883, responding to concerted opposition from Canon Rawnsley and the Lake District Defence Society, Parliament agreed that a select committee should investigate the impact of the proposed railway on the scenic landscape of Ennerdale. This set an important precedent, following the Thirlmere case, that the general environmental implications of such developments should be taken into account. The railway bill was then withdrawn as the promoters realised it would not pass this test. On 22 July 1883 The Spectator reported on the defeated railway bill that "All lovers of English Lakeland and all believers in the need of keeping the few Dales left to us inviolate for the rest and pleasure of weary England will owe a debt of lasting gratitude to the Select Committee appointed on the motion of Mr. Stafford Howard to inquire and report 'whether the proposed Ennerdale Railway will interfere with the enjoyment of the public who annually visit the Lake District, by injuriously affecting the scenery in the neighbourhood, or otherwise,' for the report against that railway which it adopted. Ennerdale is the most impressive of our Cambrian Valleys for simple and austere grandeur".

This was an important success for the Lake District Defence Society which ultimately became the Friends of the Lake District.
Another major development was the use of Ennerdale Water as a water supply for West Cumbria from 1864. This was to lead to additional infrastructure works throughout the 20th century which would bring the North West Water Authority into conflict with conservationists.

The depression in the 1920s and 30s resulted in many farms being let and stimulated a large amount of movement between farms across the Lake District of families hoping to better themselves. For example, just in the township of Kinniside in the early 1930s one family moved to Borrowdale, whilst other families moved into the township from Corney and Eskdale. Of the 130 farms in the inaugural Herdwick flock book of 1920 only six families are still breeding Herdwicks on the same farms, one of which are the Rawlings of Hollins, Ennerdale.

It was against this harsh economic climate that the Forestry Commission acquired 5,000 acres in the Ennerdale Valley in 1925, including Dale Head, from Lord Lonsdale. Consequently, the next major episode of enclosure occurred as part of the afforestation of the valley. This entailed enclosure of large packets of fellside and valley bottom for forestry, and where possible the parliamentary enclosure boundaries were used. However it also proved necessary to construct extensive lengths of new boundary, particularly at the head of the valley where there had previously been no parliamentary intake.

Planting began in Ennerdale in March 1925 and further land acquisitions and planting continued throughout the 20th century with the final acquisition of land around Clews Gill in 1978. By the end of 1933 the Commission had planted one and a quarter million larch and five million Sitka or Norway spruce in Ennerdale and on the Thornthwaite estate near Keswick. The impact of the afforestation on Ennerdale from the 1920s was used to argue the case against further large-scale afforestation in Eskdale and the Duddon valley because of the adverse effects here on landscape, access, farming and the local economy. Ultimately, the planting here and elsewhere in the Lake District led to the 1936 agreement between the Forestry Commission, the newly formed Friends of the Lake District and the Council for the Protection of Rural England. This included the exclusion of forestry from a small area at the head of Ennerdale, at Black Sail. The Forestry Commission also transferred around 1,400 hectares of non-plantable high land around Ennerdale, including The Pillar, to the National Trust.

Towards the end of the 20th century the Forestry Commission, nationally, started to widen its remit culminating in 1998 with the publication of the England Forestry Strategy. This saw the focus of forest management shift from timber production (linked to falling market prices and competition from Europe) towards rural development, economic regeneration, recreation, access and tourism, conservation and the environment. This approach has been adapted to create the Wild Ennerdale Project, a partnership approach by the three major landowners in Ennerdale – the Forestry Commission, National Trust and United Utilities PLC – with support from Natural England and the National Park Authority. The vision of the partnership is “to allow the evolution of Ennerdale as a wild valley for the benefit of people, relying more on natural processes to shape its landscape and ecology”. 
The Wild Ennerdale management plan aims to:

- Control Sitka spruce to ensure that this species does not dominate the future forest.
- Reduce the impact of mechanised forestry operations in the valley.
- Prioritise the felling of areas viewed to be visually detracting within the landscape.
- Not restock recent clear-fells.
- Plant native broadleaves and Juniper as seed trees in the eastern valley to give natural processes the opportunity to develop woodland away from becoming dominated by spruce.
- Allow natural woodland encroachment beyond the present forest boundary to soften stark contrast between forest and open fell.
- Continue to control sheep grazing on The Side to encourage natural regeneration east and west of the current woodland.
- Introduce cattle into the forest to restore a natural disturbance process.
- As timber operations reduce, identify where sections of the forest track network could be allowed to revert to vegetated tracks under natural processes.
- Look to thin areas of maturing forest to provide more open habitats for future herbivore grazing.
- Allow small scale timber operations to provide for local need e.g. woodfuel for the Youth Hostel Association and Field Centre.

This is a unique example in Lake District cultural landscape management, using low level interventions to enable natural processes greater freedom to function. Ennerdale is also a unique Lake District valley in terms of its preceding 80 years of afforestation that enables this form of management to begin a new chapter in the development of Ennerdale.

**FIGURE 7.10** Aerial view of the conifer plantations on the northern side of the Ennerdale valley
The 20th century also saw the expansion of the provision of water from the valley for the urban areas of Manchester. In 1902 a shallow weir was added to maintain the water levels. After 1945 Lancashire and Cumberland County Council carried out a review of future water demand and supply and a proposal was made to raise the level of Ennerdale Water by five feet to provide for the takeover by Courtaulds of the Royal Ordnance Factory at Sellafield. It was approved at a public inquiry, but the scheme was dropped as Courtaulds never relocated. In 1960 the lake level was raised by 4.5 feet to extract an extra six million gallons a day. In 1978 the North West Water Authority applied for permission to take additional water supplies from Ennerdale for the nuclear industry at Windscale. This would have necessitated a further raising of the lake level. British Nuclear Fuels Limited at the same time had a plan to extract water from Wastwater in Wasdale.

Many amenity groups, representing anglers, walkers, rock-climbers, farmers and conservationists, opposed both proposals. The Inspector after the public inquiry reported to the Secretary of State that both schemes were unacceptable on environmental grounds. The Ennerdale project would have required major re-working of the northern shore “completely out of keeping with such a scene” and at Wastwater the inspector shared the objectors concerns about a draw-down rim. The projects were not even necessary as enough water could be sourced from the River Derwent. The Secretary of State rejected both proposals in December 1981 and by 2022 Ennerdale will no longer be used as a source of water.

The threats to the valley had encouraged the National Trust to acquire extensive estates which they continue to manage. The National Trust owns 4,162 hectares of land, all of which is inalienable. It also has an additional 801 hectares of leased land and 1 hectare of covenanted land. This includes the Dale Head land in the main valley on leasehold from the Forestry Commission and fell and farms around Ennerdale Water. Mireside Farm, bought by Lake District Farm Estates in 1941 to resist proposals to raise the lake levels, was gifted to the National Trust in 1976 when the company ceased operating. The National Trust also owns large areas of common on Kinniside Common and Stockdale Moor.
The sense of wilderness continues to attract visitors. Haystacks between Ennerdale and Buttermere is famous for being Alfred Wainwright’s favourite fell and where his ashes were scattered near the shores of Innominate Tarn. The Youth Hostels at Gillerthwaite and Black Sail are as important as they are famous for being remote ‘wilderness’ hostels. Black Sail is the former bothy of Lord Lonsdale’s Ennerdale Dale shepherd and is only accessible on foot or bike.

7.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The Ennerdale Valley as defined here is predominantly rural, with no major settlements despite its proximity to the busier west coast of Cumbria.

The tradition of agro-pastoral agricultural in the Ennerdale Valley is strong and there are good examples of early farm buildings dating from the 17th century. A large part of the valley comprises upland grazing for the farms with fell-going flocks, of which five are registered Herdwick flocks. The western end of the valley displays a pattern of piecemeal enclosure from former common fields while the valley of the River Liza still retains the valley-bottom inbye land which, before afforestation, was surrounded by stone-walled intakes on the valley slopes. There are also areas of fell that were enclosed by Act of Parliament in the late 19th century. The annual Ennerdale show is one of the important events of the year for Herdwick breeders.

Ennerdale is very rich in evidence for early land use from prehistory until the post medieval period. The land to the south of Ennerdale Water contains some of the best preserved and extensive remains of Bronze and Iron Age settlements and field systems in the English Lake District, and there are also many examples of early and later medieval shielings. The location of the medieval vaccary at Gillerthwaite can be detected in the survival of enclosures and buildings foundations adjacent to the more recent farm buildings and substantial remains of Calder Abbey survive, partly beneath a later 18th century mansion. The Valley was also the location for iron mining and smelting in the medieval and early post-medieval periods, and the remains of bloomeries and huts likely to have been used by miners survive around Ennerdale Water.

Although it possesses a lake with a spectacular mountain backdrop, Ennerdale was not included in the usual itinerary of Picturesque sights in the Lake District in the 18th century. Difficult access to the Valley, which is the furthest west in the English Lake District, was most likely a disincentive to early visitors. No villas were built here to take advantage of the lakeside locations. However, Ennerdale was visited by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge and provided inspiration for Wordsworth’s poem ‘The Brothers’, whose subject matter included the long continuity of agro-pastoral farming in the area.

Ennerdale played an important role in the development of the early conservation movement in the English Lake District. It was the setting for protests in 1883, led by
Canon Rawnsley, against the construction of a railway alongside the River Liza. This incident led Rawnsley to found the Lake District Defence Society. In the early 20th century the afforestation by the Forestry Commission of the fell slopes surrounding the River Liza, and the loss of significant Herdwick hefts belonging to the farms at Gillerthwaite, led directly to the successful campaign by the newly-formed Friends of the Lake District to prevent further afforestation in the central Lake District. A large part of the Valley area is now owned and managed by the National Trust (the National Trust owns 4,162 hectares of land of which 4,160 hectares is inalienable). Ennerdale continues to play an important part in the development of conservation practice in the Lake District through the Wild Ennerdale project.

Ennerdale thus has very strong evidence for the themes of Outstanding Universal Value agro-pastoral agriculture and the early conservation movement.

**FIGURE 7.12** Aerial view of Ennerdale from the west showing the general area of the medieval vaccary at Gillerthwaite. Despite the afforestation of the 1920s the inbye fields still survive.
8. BUTTERMERE

Description, History and Development
8. THE BUTTERMERE VALLEY

“The vale of Buttermere, with the lake and village of that name, and Crummock-water, beyond, next present themselves. We will follow the main stream, the Coker, through the fertile and beautiful vale of Lorton, until it is lost in the Derwent, below the noble ruins of Cockermouth Castle”.

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

8.1 DESCRIPTION

8.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

“Mellbreak and Crummock Water, essential partners in a successful scenery enterprise, depending on each other for effectiveness. Crummock Water’s eastern shore, below Grasmooor, is gay with life and colour – trees, pastures, farms, cattle, traffic, tents and people – but it is the view across the lake, where the water laps the sterile base of Mellbreak far beneath the mountain’s dark escarpment, where loneliness, solitude and silence prevail’ that make the scene unforgettable.”

For those who Love the Hills – Quotations from Wainwright’s ‘Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells’ (Dyer 1994)

Located in the north-west of the English Lake District, Buttermere is a classic U-shaped glacial valley containing the lakes of Buttermere and Crummock Water, once one lake. It runs roughly south east to north west from the central fells to the meandering Derwent Valley and on to the West Cumbria coastal plain and the mouth of the Solway Firth. The River Cocker, draining from the north end of Crummock Water, lends its name to the town at the confluence with the Derwent at Cockermouth.

The geology of the Buttermere valley is almost entirely of the Skiddaw Group, with a small area of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group at the southwestern end at Honister Hause and a patch of granite on the west side of Buttermere itself. This is reflected in the smoother character of the high fells formed from the Skiddaw Group rocks.
Figure 8.1 Buttermere Valley Illustrative Map

1. Prehistoric rock art at Low Park, Crummock
2. Scales Beck medieval settlement (owned by National Trust)
3. High Hollins Farm
4. Low Hollins Farm
5. Gatesgarth Farm
6. Lorton Hall
7. Wythop Mill
8. Monkstone slate quarry
9. Lorton Park
10. The Fish Inn, Buttermere
11. Loweswater (owned by National Trust)
12. High Nook Farm
### BUTTERMERE

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FIGURE 8.5 Aerial view looking north west into the Buttermere valley with Honister Slate mines in the foreground and Buttermere and Crummock Water in the distance.

FIGURE 8.6 View south east from Buttermere towards Fleetwith Pike in winter.
(Grasmoor for example) which contrast with the more jagged appearance of the fells at
the south eastern end of the valley which are formed from Borrowdale Volcanic geology
(e.g. Haystacks and Fleetwith Pike). See Figure 8.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also
see Figures 8.2 and 8.3 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Buttermere valley.

8.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

At the head of the valley, the steep, craggy and scree-covered fells (including Fleetwith
Pike, Dale Head, Robinson and Haystacks) tower above the valley floor and provide a
strong sense of enclosure. The two lakes occupy the whole width of the valley floor
leaving little scope for inbye pasture, apart from a few places – at the south end and east
shore of Buttermere, the isthmus between the two lakes, at Rannerdale on the east shore
of Crummock Water, and at the north end of Crummock Water around Loweswater
village and north into Lorton Vale. Here the gentler, more managed landscape of bright
green pastures with their striking pattern of slate field walls and hedges contrast sharply
with the rough textured greys and browns of the fell. The stunning scenery of the
Buttermere valley is due to the composition of the steep imposing fells, the flat valley
floor, the large lakes and the softening influences of the inbye field pattern, woodlands,
 hedgerow and field trees and attractive vernacular buildings.

The buildings and structures in the valley represent the full range of economic drivers
in the Lake District over the centuries. Gatesgarth Farm dominates the inbye at the
head of the lake and the rough grazing on the surrounding fells. The three farms in tiny
Buttermere village together with two hotels, cafés, a public car park and a campsite
in a very small area create a unique community atmosphere. This is enhanced by the
sense of containment and remoteness created not only by the enclosing fells but also
by the relative difficulty in reaching the upper valley by road. The road network, in part
following the east shore of Crummock Water, is narrow and twisting, often enclosed by
walls or high hedges. Buttermere village is also accessed by road over two mountain
passes, Newlands Hause (from the head of the Newlands valley) and Honister Pass
(from the head of the Borrowdale valley). The challenging access provides an insight
into life and work in an upland landscape and the contrast with life in the valleys.
The working quarries and mines at Honister Hause and the legacy of spoil tips and
talus/scree fans cascading down the steep fellsides are a dramatic reminder of the scale
of past industries in the fells. Further north in Lorton Vale, the Whinlatter Pass connects
the valley to Keswick via the extensive conifer plantations of Whinlatter Forest Park,
an area of timber production, tourism and outdoor activities.

North of Crummock Water the gently meandering course of the River Cocker runs
through Lorton Vale where the valley broadens; more distant fells still provide a strong
sense of containment. The pasture fields, stone walls, hedges, hedgerow trees, networks
of small woodlands and minor roads create an intricate pattern to the landscape which
has a tranquil atmosphere. West and east of Lorton Vale the fells become lower with
the smooth profile of the underlying geology of the softer Skiddaw Slate. The verdant,
intricately patterned, side valley containing the small lake of Loweswater, owned by
the National Trust, has a tranquil feel not dissimilar to Lorton Vale. But the designed
landscape introduced into the village of Lorton, where exotic conifers punctuate the
landscape, provides a very different visual experience. Lorton Vale gradually widens as the enclosing fells diminish in height until the defining characteristic from the flatter, more open farmland becomes the view south back to the dramatic upland edge.

8.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The agricultural landscape from Buttermere to Loweswater is varied and reflects hundreds of years of evolution. Despite modern development, the pastoral character of the Buttermere Valley remains intact, with sheep farming still the principal occupation. Gatesgarth Farm is one of the most important Herdwick farms in the Lake District with a long history of agricultural improvements and Herdwick breeding. It remains the largest farm and one of the larger tup producing farms (the Richardsons produce 15-20 tups a year), still in private hands, but has covenants with the National Trust for land management.

On the flat delta between the lakes of Buttermere and Crummock Water, the existing field system represents the remains of a medieval open field which was subdivided with stone walls in later periods. Farms on the surrounding fellsides developed from 1215 throughout the 13th and early 14th centuries. The small irregular fields and individual groups of farm buildings at Buttermere and Rannerdale comprise a typical Lake District pattern of single, ancient farms, with more extensive areas in the wider part of the valley around Loweswater and into Lorton Vale.

The presence of a ring garth at the southern end of the Buttermere Valley is shown by the place-name Gatesgarth Farm, which is likely to reflect private land use associated with the management of a vaccary. The lines of two former ring garths may also have been preserved within the extent of the post-medieval head-dyke near Bowderbeck and the farms at Wood House, Sorescale Bank, and Spout House. At Rannerdale there is evidence of a small enclosure which may have been used as a stock pound or enclosed hay meadow to protect it from grazing animals.

Evidence apparent today of former medieval open fields can still be seen at High and Low Lorton suggesting that Lorton Hall had its own holding. At Loweswater, there are strips which might represent former arable enclosed as strips.

There are examples of broad ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks distributed throughout the valley, although most of these sites lie to the north of Crummock Water. In several areas within Buttermere field clearance associated with arable agriculture is attested by the presence of clearance cairns, which might be associated with nearby sites of suggested medieval date, although this practice continued into the post-medieval
FIGURE 8.8 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Buttermere Valley
period. Such sites can be found around Highpark, close to areas of broad ridge-and-furrow and within the grounds of documented medieval tenements. There are also clearance cairns adjacent to the deserted medieval settlement north of Dale How and in the environs of a probable medieval farmstead at High Nook Farm.

**WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS**

Today, there are 31 farms with fell-going flocks in the Buttermere Valley. There are six Herdwick flocks, three Swaledale flocks and one Rough Fell flock registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are three National Trust landlord flocks listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005) for the Buttermere Valley area. There are about 2,300 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Buttermere Valley, around 16 per cent of the total area, which is a lower proportion of land than many other Lake District valleys. The main areas of common land are Brackenthwaite Fell, and Brackenthwaite Common, Buttermere Common, and Hobcarton, on the fells to the east of Crummock Water and Buttermere. The only other significant area is Buttermere Dubs on the western fellside at the south end of Crummock Water, along to the foot of Buttermere, including a large area of Burtness Wood.

**CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS**

The Buttermere Shepherd Meet and Show has a relatively recent history (the first meet was held in 1976 at Croft Farm) and is organised by and primarily for shepherds, their sheep and dogs, but is also open to the public. It includes events such as a walking stick competition, showing of terriers, foxhounds and children’s pets, hound trailing, fell races and Cumberland/Westmorland wrestling. It is held at Lanthwaite Green on the fourth Saturday in October.

The annual Loweswater Show is held on the first Sunday in September. There have been 139 shows up to and including 2015. The format is little altered from the original with livestock, agricultural classes, industrial classes, fell races, poultry, horses, vintage vehicles, Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling, sheep dog trials, hound trails; and children’s games.

**FARMSTEADS**

The farm building stock of this valley includes many 17th to 18th century farmhouses and associated agricultural buildings which contribute towards the valley’s 84 nationally important listed buildings. Four farmsteads have been lost at Peel Place, Stockbridge, to the south of Wilknsyke Farm and at Loweswater Pele, which may have included 17th century architecture. The best examples of 17th and 18th century farmhouses or farmsteads include those listed below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TABLE 8.1 Key farm buildings in the Buttermere Valley</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **HUDSON PLACE**  
Hudson Place: a farmhouse with a 1741 date stone with coat of arms.  
**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 311527 522218 |
| **CRAG FARM, BUTTERMERE**  
A relatively unaltered example of a 17th and 18th century farmhouse and farmstead.  
**DATE** 17th – 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 317328 517157 |
| **HIGH NOOK, LOWESWATER**  
17th century farm house core with important, fine 18th century detail. An extremely good example of high quality craftsmanship probably linked with a period of unusual prosperity.  
**DATE** 17th – 20th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 312882 520518 |
| **LORTON BRIDGE HOUSE**  
Farmhouse with a 1722 datestone inscribed over entrance P. & J.T.  
**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 315214 525630 |
| **WATERGATE FARM, LOWESWATER**  
An extremely important former farmhouse, with fine late 18th century and early 19th century fittings.  
**DATE** 18th – 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 312693 521112 |
LOW HOLLINS
Farmhouse dating from the late 17th century with datestone over entrance R. & C.S. 1687 (Robert & Catherine Stubbs). 18th and 20th century alterations and additions. Documents in Cumbria County Record Office, record Robert Stubbs was admitted tenant at a customary rent of 14s. 2d. on the 28 September 1663.

DATE 17th – 20th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 315852 522624

HIGH HOLLINS
Farmhouse from late 16th or early 17th century, probably for the Fisher family.

DATE 16th – 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 315931 522734

WILKINSYKE FARM
17th century farm possibly divided into two units, perhaps as a result of the sub-division of the whole farm holding between siblings, or parents and children.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 317587 516897

LANTHWAITE COTTAGE
A seventeenth century farmhouse.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 315866 520615

8.1.4 INDUSTRY
The presence of haematite on the west side of the valley resulted in limited mining and iron production from the medieval period, and there is evidence for charcoal production in the local woods (which were more extensive in former times). The remains of 14 medieval bloomery sites are located around Crummock Water, in the Loweswater area and east of Buttermere, close to becks and the lakes. However, the principal industry, dominating the head of the valley at Honister Hause, was the mining and processing of slate, and the remains of this industry dominate the landscape today.
8.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

Although the settlement pattern in the valley is based predominantly on single farms, a small village with medieval origins developed at Buttermere, where the route to Newlands joins from the north on the fertile flat delta between Buttermere and Crummock Water. The church of St James in Buttermere is one of the smallest in Cumbria and is a prominent local landmark dating from 1840. There has been little modern development, although it is a busy tourist village.

Other small settlements are Loweswater, Embleton, Wythop Mill, High and Low Lorton, Thackthwaite, Brackenthwaite and part of Lamplugh. Lorton has a good collection of 17th and 18th century houses. It was described by John Wesley in 1752 as “Lorton, a little village lying in a fruitful valley, surrounded by high mountains, the sides of which are covered with grass and woods, and the bottom watered by two rivers”.

Jennings Brewery, which still produces draught beers at Cockermouth, started at Low Lorton in 1828. A yew tree, just behind the village hall, is over 1000 years old and is noted by Wordsworth in his poem ‘Yew Trees’ in 1803. Lorton Hall includes the most significant medieval building in the valley, a 15th century pele tower with 17th and 19th century additions. Lorton Park is a fine Regency Villa in a parkland setting, with its unique cylindrical, castellated smoke house near the main street. The village has an old terrace of workers’ cottages related to the local mills, notably the flax mill. Lorton village has seen few changes in the 20th century.

8.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

In his ‘Guide to the Lakes’ of 1778, Thomas West identified three viewing stations around Loweswater and Crummock Water and Peter Crosthwaite added a further three stations on his map of 1794 at Buttermere Hause, on the east side of Crummock Water, on the road up to Newlands Hause above Buttermere village and at the southern end of Buttermere near Gatesgarth Farm. These viewing stations still exist and can be visited where there is public access.

8.1.7 VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

Buttermere has little villa architecture or designed landscape. Buttermere Lake, long celebrated as a sublime and picturesque destination, attracted only a solitary villa of distinction, Hassness. This was built to a Gothic design shortly before 1800 by George Benson, a Cockermouth attorney, and occupied a prominent site affording views down the length of Buttermere. It was demolished after the First World War and replaced by
the present Hassness, now a hotel, which is worthy of interest as a comparatively rare instance of a substantial inter-war villa in an Art Deco style.

Other extant large houses which might be considered as villas with or without designed landscapes include those below.

**TABLE 8.2 Key villas in the Buttermere Valley**

| **LORTON PARK** | Classic early 19th century villa with a parkland setting, summer house and rare smokehouse for fish and hams. Richard Harbord, the Liverpool shipping magnate, 1803-1878, of Lorton Park is recorded on a memorial in Lorton Church. |
| DATE | 19th century |
| OWNERSHIP | Private |
| PROTECTION | Listed |
| GRID REFERENCE | 315993 525857 |

| **OAK HILL** | Early 19th century house. |
| DATE | 19th century |
| OWNERSHIP | Private |
| PROTECTION | Listed |
| GRID REFERENCE | 315932 526027 |

### 8.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

#### 8.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Early human activity in Buttermere is evidenced by the presence of panels of rock art of Neolithic or Bronze Age date at Mill Beck, Buttermere and at the northwest end of Crummock Water, and also by a number of prehistoric summit cairns including Carling Knott and Grasmoor. Evidence of early farming, possibly Bronze Age, although in fact difficult to date and potentially much later, can be found at Rannerdale and Lanthwaite Green where clearance cairns mark where the land has been cleared of stones to make the ground suitable for arable farming. There is a possible bivallate hillfort at Loweswater Pele, which may be Iron Age in date.

There is no direct evidence for Roman activity, but some early farming settlements may date to the Romano-British period, for example the two enclosed hut circle settlements at Lanthwaite Green and Lambing Knott, Gatesgarth. Early farming settlements tend to cluster on the same limited fertile ground as the present day farms and so give the impression of continual agricultural production, although there is no direct evidence...
that such farming activity was continuous from late prehistory and Roman times to the present day. Possibly green slate from the Honister area was exploited for roofing materials during the Roman period.

8.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

There is some limited evidence of early medieval settlement in the valley. Indirectly, some place-names in the valley are predominantly of Old Norse origin, for example “thwaite” elements as in Lanthwaite, Brackenthwaite, Thackthwaite, Littlethwaite, Thornthwaite, Graythwaite and Gillerthwaite; all refer to the Old Norse term for a clearing. However, the use of this term has a long root origin and was applied to places long after Norse influence in the area.

Place-names which incorporate the element ‘scale’ are also Old Norse in origin and are indicative of seasonal settlements for putting stock out to summer upland pastures. These could therefore indicate early medieval settlement and include ‘Scale Beck,’ ‘Scale Island’ and ‘Scale Hill’. The remains of early medieval settlement can be found at Scale Beck, on the west side of Crummock Water and at Rannerdale on the east side.

‘Kirk’ place-names may also suggest an early medieval origin, as in Kirkgill, Kirkgate, and Kirkhead. Names which cluster west of the church in Loweswater village, as well as ‘Kirk Close’, east of Buttermere lake. A chapel in Loweswater dates from 1154 and 1181, although this may have replaced an earlier example; subtle earthworks near Kirkhead, Loweswater, have been suggested as representing the remains of an earlier chapel.

8.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

The pattern of the agricultural landscape from Buttermere to Loweswater is very complex, reflecting many generations of improvements. The more remote regions of the Lake District seem to have been characterised in the medieval period more by transitional and permanent dispersed settlement than by nucleated villages and this is also true of Buttermere. Sheep pastures were maintained on the fells to the east and north, and arable farming was concentrated at Cockermouth. There is documentary evidence for a ‘vaccary’ (cattle stock farm) which sustained up to 60 cows and their calves at Gatesgarth, at the head of the valley, in the mid-13th century. Recent archaeological excavation discovered the remains of a longhouse adjacent to the modern farm; this may have been one of the vaccary buildings. Large stone walled intakes on either side of the head of the valley are also likely to date from this period. As vaccaries were generally founded on upland waste, it is likely that the area was not settled at this time. It is, however, difficult to establish how much of the valley had been occupied before the Norman Conquest of the region (i.e. before 1092). The meadows at Gatesgarth also provided hay for winter feed for stock. The vaccary included the park or wood of Gaschard, which may relate to the large walled enclosure to the north of Gatesgarth Farm, which includes Kirk Close, Lambing Knott, and Robinson Crag, and corresponds with the Forest of Gatesgarth documented in 1489. The vaccary lands
are also likely to have included the flat meadowland between the lake and Warnscale Bottom and the grazing fells to the north and east of this area.

Following an apparent reduction in the scale of stock rearing throughout the Cockermouth estate in the 1270s, the remaining cattle stocks were divided between the vaccaries at Birkby and Gatesgarth in 1280-1. Records from the 1280s show that the latter vaccary maintained a breeding herd at this time, although the rate of breeding appears to have been slow. Following the death of the estate owner Isabella de Fortibus in 1293, the estate was escheated (reverted/handed over) to the crown (she had taken over responsibility of the estate after the death of her son in 1270 who inherited from her husband William) and demesne farming continued for a short time. By 1310, however, the Gatesgarth pasture had been let and the private management of these lands by the holder of the estate ceased. By the 16th century it had been sub-divided into three holdings, reflecting the continuing trend to create numerous farmsteads from former demesnes.

The lowlands and valleys of upland forests were subject to continued clearance of trees and colonisation during the 12th and 13th centuries. This is evident in Buttermere, where studies of the rate of accumulation and mineral composition of Crummock Water sediments suggest significant increases of local soil erosion between 1150 and 1300. This supports the notion of increased settlement and the intensification of agriculture in Buttermere at this time, and may reflect the introduction of deep ploughing.

Arable production is also attested by historical records of a mill at Buttermere village prior to 1215. It has been suggested that a nucleus of settlement from which Buttermere village developed may have existed on the delta flats between Crummock Water and Buttermere Lake by 1200. Buttermere appears to have grown up where the route to Newlands joins from the north and the arable potential of the flat delta between Buttermere and Crummock Water is greater than in other parts of the valley. A typical Lakeland ring garth may also have been constructed to keep stock away from arable crops.

Loweswater first appears in an ‘Inquisition Post Mortem’ of 1367. Embleton appears first in 1194 (‘Feet of Fines’), and under various names in the 13th to 15th centuries, including in association with St Bees Abbey in 1438. Wythop appears in 1195 in the ‘Feet of Fines’, but appears to be part of Scotland in 1260. Withe Mill first appears in 1578. Both occupy low lying fertile ground and it is therefore not surprising that there are two separate open fields apparent there today. In Lorton Vale there are vestiges of former strips; this was the location of a small manor given to the church in the reign of Richard I by Ralph de Lyndesey. There is also a small arable area at Mosser with Mosser Mains (the capital messuage) at the north end, perhaps within its own larger separate holding. Mosser does not appear as a place-name until 1575 but it is probably an earlier settlement. The township of Mosergh, Mosier, or Mosser, belonged to the Salkelds, who were lords of the manor.

The remains of six deserted settlements that may feature phases of use dating to the medieval period are known within the valley at Scales, Rannerdale, High Nook Farm, Peel Place, Stockbridge and a site east of Low Hollins. Three of these (High Nook Farm, Stockbridge and Peel Place) were deserted during the post-medieval period.
The medieval settlement at Rannerdale appears to have gone out of use in the late medieval period and Scales and the site near Low Hollins may potentially have been deserted in the 14th century. The possibility remains, however, that previously abandoned medieval sites occupying cultivatable land were reused in later periods and that subsequent buildings may have masked the presence of these sites.

Around St Bartholomew’s Church, Loweswater, part of the land was subject to enclosure for the creation of a deer park, which surrounds the current farm of Lowpark. The park was enclosed by Alan de Multon, the Lord of the Manor, between 1230 and 1260. A second park was established by his son, Thomas de Lucy, prior to 1286, although this was removed due to obstructions caused to the passage of the monks of St Bees through the area. The extent of the enclosure in this area is likely to have corresponded with the current enclosed lands to the south of Park Beck and the area to the west of this park, as represented by the post-medieval head dyke, is likely to have been enclosed during the late 13th and early 14th centuries. This would have expanded the areas of lowland enclosure at the northern end of the Buttermere Valley, and hence reduced the limits of the forest of Copeland. By 1300, the extent of enclosure in this area may have corresponded with the line of the post-medieval head dyke. By 1437 the deer park at Loweswater had been sub-divided into tenements, which may be represented by the current hamlets of Highpark and Lowpark.

In the 19th century, Buttermere was a focus for Herdwick breeding. William Green in his The Tourist’s New Guide of the Lakes of 1819 listed Gatesgarth with 1,300 sheep that were rented with the land. This large scale enterprise was taken over by 34 year old Edward (Ned) Nelson (senior) in 1850. Together with his son, also Edward (Ned) Nelson (junior), they both had a huge influence on Herdwick breeding from 1850 to 1934. Nelson senior took over a stock of 1,447 sheep and threw himself into improving the stock and the farm. He employed Irish labourers to drain Warnscale Bottom and straighten becks. He cleared 600 acres of bracken on the fellside, planted trees for shelter and built hard roads using gravel from the lake, a large barn, and wool shed. The farm only had 160 acres of inbye land, but it had 3,000 acres (1,214 hectares) of sheep heafs. There were four separate stocks of sheep: Gatesgarth Side; Birkness; Scale Force; and Fleetwith, comprising a combined flock of 2,500 ewes plus followers.

By the mid-1870s it was reported that 150 tups were available annually for hire from Gatesgarth at premium prices. Through this method, Nelson at Gatesgarth and the other large dale-head farms exerted a strong influence on the breed. ‘Tup Sundays’ were often held in the run-up to the Fell Dales Show at which prospective buyers or hirers could inspect the tups for that winter’s breeding. Ned Nelson senior won the sheep championship at the Royal Show when it was held at Newcastle in 1864. Ned Nelson junior took over Gatesgarth in 1887. In the first Flock Book of Herdwick Sheep, published in 1920, Ned Nelson’s Gatesgarth flock was recorded as numbering 500 ewes and described as “one of the oldest, largest and best-known throughout the Herdwick country”. It was also noted that “it was probably literally true that in every known Herdwick flock there is a strain of Gatesgarth blood”. The 1920 Herdwick flock book also records Thomas Rawling at Lanthwaite Green having a flock of 400 ewes.

In addition to farming, the valley was also exploited for its geological resources. There was limited haematite mining on the west side of Crummock Water, and there...
is evidence for charcoal production in the local woods. There are many iron processing sites in the form of bloomeries. Bloomeries in the Loweswater area and Cocker valley were recorded as early as 1305 and an example exists at Cinderdale Common, east of Crummock Water.

Whereas many Lake District valleys went through a period of redistribution of monastic lands after the Dissolution, Buttermere was less affected as ownership of the land had largely been secular. Nonetheless the landscape evolved in an idiosyncratic fashion. During the 15th and 16th centuries, the ‘open’ (communal grazing) and ‘closed’ (private crop growth) field system met with opposition as individuals attempted to retain enclosed fields during the winter for their private use. Although much of the valley floor between the lakes of Buttermere and Crummock Water remained as an open field called Nether or Lower Field, during the 16th century, with every holding in the village retaining shares, the holdings peripheral to the village consisted of closes with more restricted accessibility. The lakeside enclosure of Hassenesse and Grennesse at the northern shore of Buttermere lake, for example, was held exclusively by Bowderbeck and the tenants at Gatesgarth in 1578.

The enclosure of large areas of fellside by groups of tenants was common and in 1568 part of the fellside to the north east of Buttermere village, known as Blakerigg or Bleak Rigg, was enclosed. The encroachment of individual holdings into the fells and forests was the most common type of enclosure at this time, with the corresponding construction of intake boundaries. The fertile valley bottom, lying between Buttermere Lake and Crummock Water, was enclosed during the 16th century, and was divided into four fields, named Nether or Lower Field, Over Field, Scarr Field, and Drigg Garwick.

In addition to the enclosure of land by groups of local people, attempts were also made by the landed gentry to enclose land in attempts to increase their stock-rearing capacities. By the end of the 16th century, in c. 1578, the pattern of much of the enclosed lands in Buttermere had reached the extent that would later be depicted in the tithe maps of 1844 and the first edition Ordnance Survey mapping of 1861-3.

The earliest records state that Honister Quarries were being worked for slate in 1643. This was to be the principal industry of the valley and would dominate the head of the valley at Honister Hause. There are post-medieval trial mines for copper at Burtness Woods and at Honister Pass. One of the trials at Burtness Wood was apparently in use in 1569-70, in the Elizabethan period. The Company of Mines Royal had copper mining interests in Buttermere from at least 1568, but it was only a relatively small interest compared to the rest of its operation.

Extensive areas of fell land on the west side of Crummock Water were subject to parliamentary enclosure as late as 1865. The fell on the east side of the valley remained largely unenclosed. Smaller enclosures on the fringes of the valley area to the north and west were probably enclosed by private agreement as waterlogged mosses were improved and drained.

The tithe maps of Loweswater from 1839, and Buttermere and Brackenthwaite from 1844, show that most of the agricultural fields that bound the uplands had the same boundary limits as those shown on the first edition mapping of 1861–3 and on current mapping. The large geometric enclosures around Melbreak, Loweswater Fell, and Hen
Comb represent the establishment of topographically oblivious land units that were typical of the late 19th century and were not depicted until the production of the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1900. The establishment of such boundaries often meant the construction of walls on slopes or crags that were difficult to negotiate and some of the enclosures that were established to the west of Crummock Water and Buttermere Lake in 1865 utilised iron fencing, instead of stone walling.

Holme Wood was formerly known as ‘the Holme’ and had been subject to contested attempts at enclosure during the 16th century. By the time of the production of the first edition Ordnance Survey mapping of 1861–3 the area had been enclosed and was wooded. The discovery of a sheepfold and sheep shelter within the woods during a National Trust survey, however, attests to the former nature of the area as pasture, although the dates of the planting of the woodland are not clear.

It was in this period that industrialisation was to increase in productivity and its impact on the landscape. Iron ore was mined in the 19th century at various sites between Floutern Tarn and Crummock Water including at Scale Force. The remains of lead mining at Whiteoak, Mosedale and Loweswater in the 19th century are still visible. The Whiteoak remains are the most extensive. It operated from 1864 to 1891. The Loweswater mine operated between 1819 and 1841 and the Kirkgill Wood mines were worked in 1839 and the 1860s. However, it was the slate mining at Honister that was to create the biggest impact in the valley. The first recorded lease at the mine was recorded as a 21 year lease granted to John Walker in 1728. Some other smaller sites were operating at this time, but did not have Honister’s longevity.

The land on which the mines operated belonged to the Leconfield Estate. From the mid-17th to the mid-18th century the slate was taken out by pack-horse along Moses Trod via the side of Great Gable to Wasdale Head and then to the ports of Ravenglass or Whitehaven, over a 15 mile journey. The increasing rents over the 18th century demonstrate the growing value of the slate industry. The peak production year was in 1851 at 6,316 tons. Up until the late 19th century, men had to hand-sledge slate from the mouths of the levels down the sheer cliff face to the road. The quarrymen lived in little stone huts during the week. Such was the remoteness of Honister that carrier pigeons were used by quarrymen and managers to send messages home and to the company’s head office in Keswick. This practice continued up until 1914.

The Buttermere Green Slate Company took over the quarries in 1879. It installed an external incline tramway to improve efficiency and reduce the danger and hard labour of sledgering. In the early 1880s the slate company approached the Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway Company with a proposal to build a narrow-gauge branch line from Braithwaite station to Honister. Due to opposition, the proposal was dropped in 1882. Another branch line was proposed in Ennerdale in 1883 and again dropped in the face of objections in 1884. The next proposal was for a tunnel from Yew Crag through to the Newlands Valley, where an aerial ropeway would take it to the road and then by road to Braithwaite Station. This was stopped by Mr Marshall who refused permission for the ropeway to cross his land in the Newlands valley. By 1886 the company were employing 77 men which rose to 100 in 1893.
8.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

Buttermere attracted the attention of early guidebook authors including Thomas West, who was most taken with Buttermere and especially the view above Gatesgarth:

“Here the rocky scenes and mountain landscapes are diversified and contrasted with all that aggrandizes the object in most sublime style, and constitutes a picture the most enchanting of any in these parts.”

Thomas West. ‘A Guide to the Lakes’ (1778)

West included descriptions of Buttermere and Crummock Water and three specific views around Loweswater and Crummock Water at Highgap Yeat (Thrushbank), at Flass Wood, and at Dob Ley Head (on Brackenthwaite Hows). On Peter Crosthwaite’s 1794 map of the Buttermere Valley West’s three viewing stations are located at a further three suggested stations, were added, extending further south on Crummock Water and Buttermere, at Buttermere Hause, on the east side of Crummock Water, on the road up to Newlands Hause above Buttermere village and at the southern end of Buttermere near Gatesgarth Farm. Crosthwaite’s map also included other information of use and interest to the early tourists including routes and distances into the valley, roads, houses, details of Scale Force and depths and flow direction of lakes.

Captain Joseph Budworth, writing under the pseudonym of ‘A Rambler’, published the first account of a walking tour in the Lakes in 1792 entitled ‘A Fortnight’s Ramble to the Lakes in Westmorland, Lancashire and Cumberland’. At the Fish Inn, Buttermere, he wrote about what he saw as the natural beauty and guileless innocence of Mary Robinson, the landlord’s teenage daughter, in such a way as to make a visit to the Fish Inn a popular requirement of any Lakes tour from then on. Mary was subsequently seduced in 1802 by a confidence trickster and bigamist named John Hatfield. Hatfield was tried and
hanged at Carlisle but the case attracted the attentions of the Romantic poets de Quincy, Coleridge and Wordsworth. The Fish Inn is still operating as a hostelry in Buttermere and Melvyn Bragg retold the story in his 1987 novel ‘The Maid of Buttermere’.

8.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Wordsworth and Coleridge visited Buttermere and Lorton on their 1799 walking tour. In his ‘Notebook’ Coleridge described:

“a yew prodigious in size & complexity of numberless branches [that] flings itself on one side entirely over the river, the Branches all verging waterward over the field it spreads 17 strides – On its branches names numberless carved”.

This was the same yew tree celebrated in Wordsworth’s poem ‘Yew Trees’.

“There is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale, Which to this day stands single in the midst Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore”

Not long after the poem was written, the tree, which had a 27-feet girth and is estimated to be 1000 years old, was reduced to a mere 13 feet by a storm. The tree is, however, still standing on the bank of Whit Beck, behind the Village Hall, and shows little sign of the storm damage to the trunk. The Cockermouth Mayor’s Chair is made from the wood of the broken half of the tree. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, preached here under the yew tree, on a number of occasions between 1752 and 1761. George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, also preached here to a large crowd that included soldiers from Cromwell’s army.

On the same journey, Coleridge gave a vivid description in his ‘Notebook’ of Grasmoor,

“a most sublime Crag, of a violet colour, patched here & there with islands of Heath plant – & wrinkled & guttered most picturesquely”.

But this is nothing compared with his dramatic account of Scale Force, south of Crummock Water:
“the chasm thro’ which it flows, is stupendous – so wildly wooded that the mosses & wet weeds & perilous Tree increase the Horror of the rocks which ledge only enough to interrupt not stop your fall – & the Tree – O God! to think of a poor Wretch hanging with one arm from it”.

Joseph Mallord William Turner, aged 21 and at the outset of his career, came to the Buttermere Valley in 1797 as part of his northern tour covering over a 1000 miles, over an eight week period. In his experience of the Lake District he was transformed from a painter of architecture to a painter of rugged landscapes and their elements. From his trip to Crummock and Buttermere, Turner produced the spectacular oil painting for exhibition at the Royal Academy the following year, entitled ‘Buttermere Lake, with Part of Cromackwater, Cumberland, a Shower.’ The picture’s rainbow is a Turner addition; the field sketch had only a lightened sky.

8.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

In 1814 John Marshall, the Leeds industrialist, began to purchase properties around Loweswater, Buttermere and Crummock Water. Over the following ten years Marshall became the Lord of the Manor, owner of tenanted estates, owner and occupier of woodland and water and owner of the Scale Hill Inn, which served as accommodation for Marshall and his visitors, Marshall having no residence in the valley. Marshall initially purchased the Loweswater manor and estate in order to help Wordsworth realise his conservation ambitions. Wordsworth would have seen that the former owner, the late Joshua Bragg, had sold areas of oak woodland for felling for timber. In 1815 Marshall bought Gatesgarth, from the Duke of Norfolk. It fitted well with the Loweswater manor and consisted of 473 acres (1,991 hectares) of enclosed land and unenclosed grazing rights on the fellsides. In 1823-4 Marshall purchased a number of farmsteads in Brackenthwaite, Loweswater and Buttermere, giving him control of the land to the east of Buttermere and Crummock Water, much of the delta and woodland between the two lakes and the two lakes themselves.

Marshall’s accumulation of his Loweswater, Crummock and Buttermere estate was aimed at controlling the lakes’ scenery and, in particular, managing and planting woodland, which was reinforced by the direct involvement of Wordsworth. Marshall’s largest plantation was 124 acres (50 hectares) of the Holme. He planted native deciduous trees alongside the lakeshore of Loweswater and larch higher up the fell. Marshall also carried out planting around the head of Buttermere, at Cragg Close, Hassness, Toad Pots...
and Horse Close by the inlet of Warnscale Beck, and at Burtness Wood, a new plantation of 32 hectares, of mainly larch. Marshall and Wordsworth agreed on the aesthetics of choosing and managing estates for conserving natural landscapes and the desirability of tree-planting. But they were not in complete agreement on tree planting. Both preferred native broadleaved species on the lower land. But Marshall preferred larch for productive value on the higher, dryer land. The mutual benefit of their relationship was that Marshall provided the recognition and protection of the landscape that Wordsworth felt so strongly about, but was not in a position to achieve. Marshall could demonstrate and feel vindicated in the beneficial use of the profits of his businesses.

Elsewhere, Marshall gave strict instructions on the management of Lanthwaite Wood for timber and coppicing, including avoiding the appearance of square patches where cut. Marshall made decisions on his woodlands in person based on site visits, with the twin aims of amenity value and timber production. He also attempted but failed to arrange the purchase of customary rights in Scales stinted pasture so that he could fence an area and plant the lakeshore of Crummock Water. Where Marshall could fence to enable tree planting, for example at Burtness Wood, he avoided straight fence-lines and attempted to follow the lie of the land to appear as ancient enclosures. This was a clear aesthetic choice in the interests of landscape. In addition to woodland investment, Marshall invested much of his own money into repairing and restoring the existing farm infrastructure.

The first major conservation issue affecting Buttermere was the proposal in 1881-3 for a railway from Keswick to Buttermere, to serve the slate quarries at Honister. A great campaign of opposition was mounted, led by Canon Rawnsley and the other future founders of the National Trust, Octavia Hill and Robert Hunter. The objectors based their opposition on the likely detrimental effect of a railway on the landscape beauty of the area, which was a difficult position to adopt in an age of railway mania. A parliamentary bill was submitted in 1883, but the protests were successful and a key victory in the protection of the Lake District landscape was achieved.

In the early 20th century the Buttermere Green Slate Company Limited built cottages near Seatoller, Borrowdale, for its workers and built a new toll road from Seatoller to Honister Hause. A new company took over in 1926 and a year later built a hostel for 40 men that has since become the youth hostel and built a new aerial ropeway to bring unfinished slates to new processing sheds at the Hause. In 1934 the road from Seatoller to the Hause was widened and tarmacked by the County Council in the face of strong opposition from the local Borrowdale and Cockermouth councils, the National Trust and a range of other conservation bodies. Further road widening down the valley was prevented by the purchase of Rannerdale farm in 1938 by Lake District Farm Estates. Internal inclined tramways were built in the mines in the 1930s. The mine changed hands a number of times in the rest of the 20th century and technology changed and

![FIGURE 8.14](image-url)
business rose and fell. In 1998 after 12 years of closure the tenancy was taken on by Mark Weir and mining operations re-commenced and since then a tourism operation has run alongside the slate business. The business attracts tens of thousands of visitors a year and provides dozens of local jobs.

In 1934 the Marshall family’s extensive estate in Buttermere came up for sale, and a scheme was agreed between the National Trust, Balliol College (Oxford), G. M. Trevelyan and a number of other private individuals to purchase the land for conservation purposes. Most of the estate was bought by the National Trust, with the remainder purchased by the others who then entered into restrictive covenants with the National Trust in order to control future land use. Between 1935 and 1937 over 1,600 hectares of land, including the key valley head farm of Gatesgarth, were subject to restrictive covenant agreement. High Nook, Loweswater was one of the farms in this sale in the 1930s that was acquired by Lake District Farm Estates in 1970 and was then gifted to the National Trust on the winding up of Lake District Farm Estates in 1977. Nearby Holme Wood was bought by the National Trust in 1935 and Watergate Farm between Holme Wood and High Nook was bought by the National Trust in 1985. Crag House Farm was bought in 1987 and Wilkinsyke Farm in 1990. The National Trust owns 3,170 hectares of land of which 3,167 hectares is inalienable. It also has an additional one hectare of leased land and 2,441 hectares of covenanted land.

The Lake District Special Planning Board (now the Lake District National Park Authority) purchased Hassness and Dalegarth in 1954 with the original aim of improving an important broadleaved woodland. The property covered an area of 9.9 hectares (24.5 acres) and included two houses – Hassness and Dalegarth surrounded by semi-natural woodland of mixed species. The wood is a prominent landscape feature on the lakeshore and the Buttermere Valley.

8.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The attributes demonstrating the contribution of this valley to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District as a whole are listed in Figure 8.4.

The landscape character of the Buttermere Valley reflects the primary importance of agro-pastoral agriculture and there are many attributes which demonstrate this, including clear and extensive patterns of inbye and intake field, numerous early farm buildings and key Herdwick farms. The field system of Gatesgarth at the head of Buttermere still displays its origin as a medieval vaccary and it has one of the largest and most important Herdwick flocks in the Lake District.

Evidence for early land use is demonstrated by the distribution of prehistoric rock art and enclosed settlements and early medieval shielings in the Valley. The traces of past industries are not so apparent here as in other valleys, although the woodland on the west side of Buttermere contains evidence for charcoal burning and there are traces of medieval...
iron production. The one extensive industrial site is the Honister slate quarry at the head of Buttermere, which is still producing high quality roofing slate. The valley contains no major settlements and the pattern is rather one of individual farms and small farming hamlets.

Due to its close proximity to Borrowdale, Buttermere attracted the attention of early visitors in search of Picturesque beauty in the Lake District. The guidebook writer Thomas West identified a number of viewing stations around Loweswater and the Valley also attracted artists including J. M. W. Turner, who painted a magnificent scene of a storm over Crummock Water. Butteremere was visited by Wordsworth and Coleridge on their walking tour of 1799 and the Valley features in some of Wordsworth’s poems, including the ‘Yew Tree’. Unlike other valleys in the central Lake District, Buttermere saw relatively little villa development around the lakes, possibly due to relatively difficult access in the 18th century.

Early conservation interest in the valley included the purchase by John Marshall of extensive landholdings around the lakes of Buttermere, Crummock Water and Loweswater, with the encouragement and involvement of William Wordsworth, and with the primary aim of conserving the landscape beauty of the area. Large parts of the Valley have subsequently been purchased by the National Trust and the whole of the valley head of Buttermere is covered by a restrictive covenant agreed with G. M. Trevelyan in 1937. This has assisted greatly in maintaining the beauty of this predominantly agro-pastoral valley.

The key attributes of Outstanding Universal Value which are evident in Buttermere are demonstrative of the first theme of agro-pastoral farming, with somewhat less evidence for aesthetic inspiration than other valleys but with extensive attributes relating to the early conservation movement.
The farm at Seathwaite, Borrowdale
9. BORROWDALE AND BASSENHWAITE

Description, History and Development
9. THE BORROWDALE AND BASSENTHWAITE VALLEY

“His own home – two rooms of a farmhouse – was in the hamlet of Watendlath, the smoke from whose chimneys he could see now lazily curling beneath him. He had indeed a fine view. On these tops you could walk for miles and scarcely be compelled to descend... The ranges lay all about him in shapes more human than those of his friends, moulded and formed, now sharply with rocks and steeples and slanting cliffs of shining colour, then gently in sheets of flaming bracken lifting to smooth arms and shoulders embossed like shields of metal. Wild profusion, and yet perfect symmetry and order. One colour faded to another, purple cliff above orange sea, deeps of violet under shadow of rose, and a great and perfect stillness everywhere.”

Hugh Walpole, ‘Rogue Herries Part IV’ (1930)

9.1 DESCRIPTION

9.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley is the largest of the 13 valleys in the English Lake District, running from the high fells of Rossett Pike and Esk Hause in the south to the northern edge of the Caldbeck Fells. The Buttermere and Crummock Valley lies to the west and Thirlmere to the east. The hard and resistant volcanic rocks composing the high fells of the central Scafell range enclose the head of the valley before it runs due north to the expansive coastal plain of the Solway Firth. The valley contains the major glacial lakes of Derwent Water and Bassenthwaite. The northern section of the valley is contained by the distinct, rounded, smoother textured hills of softer Skiddaw Slates, the Skiddaw and Blencathra massif to the east and Derwent Fells to the west. Further north still, typical limestone scenery takes over as the valley opens out and the fells are left behind.
Figure 9.1 Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley North Illustrative Map

1. Troutbeck Roman forts
2. Isel Hall
3. Rutenbeck cruck barn
4. Brownrigg Farm
5. Blencroake field system
6. Hesket Hall
7. The Hawk bobbin mill (managed by National Park Authority)
8. Carrock Mine
9. Mirehouse
10. Underscar Manor
11. Armethwaite Hall
12. Bassenthwaite Lake (owned and managed by National Park Authority)
1. Ashness Farm (owned by National Trust)
2. Seathwaite Farm (owned by National Trust)
3. Craft Farm (owned by National Trust)
4. Galdscope Mine (owned by National Trust)
5. Seathwaite Wad Mine (owned by National Trust)
6. Greta Hall
7. Derwent Isle (owned by National Trust)
8. Barrow House
9. Lodore Falls
10. Jaws of Borrowdale
11. Friar’s Crag (owned by National Trust)
12. Watendlath (owned by National Trust)
Figure 9.3 Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley North East Cultural Landscape Map
### Borrowdale and Basenthwaite

#### Components of Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Components of Attributes</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in spectacular mountain landscapes</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>![Significance Icon]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td>![Significance Icon]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
<td>![Significance Icon]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Common land</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
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<td>Woodland industries</td>
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<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
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<td>Water-powered industry</td>
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<td>Market towns</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Villas</td>
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<td>Designed landscape</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
<td>![Significance Icon]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
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<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
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<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
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<td>Conservation movement</td>
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<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>![Significance Icon]</td>
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</table>

![Figure 9.6](https://example.com/figure9.6.png) The contribution of the Borrowdale and Basenthwaite Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified.
FIGURE 9.7 Aerial view of the northern end of Derwent Water with Bassenthwaite in the distance. Skiddaw and the Caldbeck Fells form the backdrop to the town of Keswick to the left of the view. The woodland on the western shore of Derwent Water forms part of an extensive area of parkland that has developed since the mid-18th century.

FIGURE 9.8 The town of Keswick with Derwent Water and the Derwent Fells beyond. Keswick developed as a medieval market town and at its core it still retains the pattern of market place and burgage plots of that period. It is now a thriving centre servicing the farming and tourism industries in the northern Lake District.
The varied underlying geology guarantees diversity in the landscape and this is intensified by human activity. In the fells the scars of once prosperous mineral mines are found, and the alluvial soils of the valley floor produce a lush, green carpet of pastoral fields and boundary walls. Above the valley floor and the semi-improved grazing of the intakes on lower slopes, the fell sides are cloaked in native oak woodland with Borrowdale being one of the most wooded of all the Lake District valleys. The influence of the 18th century Picturesque movement is evident in the landscape as the resulting influx of tourists and wealthy industrialists from outside the area created a fascinating and visually appealing blend of agricultural and designed landscape. At the northern end of Derwent Water the market town of Keswick sits comfortably in the landscape in an amphitheatre of fells. See Figure 9.1 and 9.2 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figures 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite valley.

#### 9.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

On the valley bottom the lush inbye grazing produces a flat green carpet with a strong pattern of rubble stone walls, rising onto the lower sides of the surrounding fells. Nationally-significant rare upland hay meadows are found in the Borrowdale Valley, an important remnant of past land management and local farming heritage. The steep fell sides carry one of the largest oak woodlands in England, containing many species rare in England and restricted to this valley. The woods exhibit dramatic seasonal colour changes and contribute to the natural beauty of the area.

The River Derwent and its many tributaries are a notable influence on the character of the valley. Extensive gravel banks and beds, flanked by riverbank trees, snake along the valley. Distinctive, high-arched ‘pack-horse’ bridges have been designed and built to cross them. In periods of high rainfall numerous spectacular waterfalls cascade down from becks in the hanging valleys.

The underlying geology changes in a well-wooded narrowing of the valley between King How and Castle Crag. This visually separates and effectively divides Borrowdale into two distinct parts. Above (south of) the so-called ‘Jaws of Borrowdale’ the valley is relatively narrow with a strong sense of containment provided by the enclosing steep, rugged fells. Pastoral farming is the overriding influence on land use and landscape character and there is a perceived ‘naturalness’ about the landscape. North of the ‘Jaws’ the valley widens and is dominated by the expanse of Derwent Water with Keswick on its northern shore. The influence of the 18th century Picturesque movement becomes more evident in the landscape as the resulting influx of tourists and wealthy industrialists from outside the area building large villas and country houses created a fascinating and visually appealing blend of agricultural and designed landscape. Parkland and large gardens containing exotic species of trees, along with the significant houses, make visual statements and a highly significant positive contribution to the Lake District landscape.

Beyond the north end of Derwent Water and Keswick the valley becomes still wider while retaining its sense of containment due to the steepness and height of the enclosing fells. The floor of the valley is the wide, flat alluvial plain between Derwent
Water and Bassenthwaite Lake connected by the gently meandering River Derwent. The river here is much less of a visual presence than in the narrower and more dramatic confines of its upper sections in Borrowdale. The flat valley plain provides spectacular views of the surrounding fells particularly to the east where Ullock Pike and Skiddaw tower above the plain.

To the north west of Bassenthwaite, the valley widens and the high fells are left behind. The valley becomes a transitional landscape with intimate pastoral patterns of small fields giving way to rolling hills with long distance views. Then the valley enters the ring of limestone surrounding the Lake District with its rolling topography, pavements and outcrops that typify limestone scenery.

To the north east of Keswick and Bassenthwaite Lake, the massive circular area of high ground to the north of Skiddaw (known locally as ‘Back o’ Skiddaw’) comprises the Caldbeck Fells and forms a physically discrete block of land. The Caldbeck Fells are relatively devoid of trees and are covered in coarse grass and heather. Views from the long escarpment on the northern edge of these fells look out to the Solway Plain and Scotland beyond.

The transition between various types of underlying geology guarantees variety in the landscape of the valley. Add to this the different land uses and industries which this area supports and not least the very important layer of historic development arising from the upsurge of interest in the landscape’s intrinsic beauty, then the diversity of the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley is easily interpreted. But the landscape of this valley is not simply a fascinating record of human relationship with the environment. It is a landscape of great natural beauty which works at all scales from the stunning high fells and wide lakes to the detail of the bryophytes in the oak woods, complemented by the Victorian attention to detail on the streetscape of Keswick.

9.1.3 Farming Today – The Agro-Pastoral Landscape

The modern field pattern in Borrowdale itself reflects 18th and 19th century farming practices and little has changed in the intervening years. It is also noticeable that here there is a tradition of hedge-lined fields rather than the stone used elsewhere in the valley. Although some early field patterns around Bassenthwaite have been obscured by forestry, the present field system surrounding the village there displays the characteristics of an enclosed former town field. There are also traces of single ancient farms and extensive areas of parkland around Mirehouse at the southern end of Bassenthwaite Lake and Armathwaite Hall at the northern end.

Strip fields fossilised from a previous pattern of agriculture can be seen at Rosthwaite, although this could be quite late in date. Between Derwent Water and Bassenthwaite there are large areas of strips also possibly representing much earlier enclosure, especially away from the river at Millbeck and Thornthwaite/Braithwaite, where the name Hallgarth Beck is preserved (the place-name element ‘garth’ possibly denoting early agricultural enclosure). These may have been modified considerably by the construction of the railway line and by the implementation of modern drainage in
the 19th century. On both sides of the River Glenderamackin there appear to be strips enclosed from a former town field.

Traces of former open fields may survive at Mungrisdale and there is a very small area of strips immediately east of Mosedale. There may possibly be some open fields to the south of Haltcliff Hall, near Heskett Newmarket, with Haltcliff Hall perhaps occupying its own separate holding. There are common fields at Blindcrake, close to Redmain. There is a further likely example at Riggs along the Dubwath Beck on the west shore of Bassenthwaite and possibly also at Wythop Hall and Old Scales, although this is a tiny system, perhaps with Wythop Hall being superior and separate to the Old Scales settlement.

There is no documentary evidence in upper Borrowdale to suggest the existence of a ring garth in the valley. The surviving visible field evidence for such a feature is also fractured and insubstantial. Some sections of wall have been identified as potential sections of a valley ring garth, but are just as likely to have been part of enclosing walls for parcels of ancient coppice woodland. In contrast, the remains of two separate ring garths can be traced in the present field system in the side valley of Watendlath. In upper Borrowdale this situation may be in part due to the high incidence of flooding of agricultural land and the subsequent need to rebuild the field walls frequently.

The flat valley floors north of Seathwaite, east of Seatoller, west of Rosthwaite, and north and south of Stonethwaite, were the original focus for farming and enclosure outside of the earlier farmsteads and small enclosures/paddocks, but these areas are also prone to flooding and so enclosure boundaries have consistently been rebuilt on the valley floor thus obliterating any trace of earlier patterns. The pattern today is almost certainly the result of rebuilding at some point in the second half of the 19th century. In addition, east of Seathwaite, is an enclosure incorporating a large curvilinear and banked boundary, extending up the lower valley side and capped at the top by a funnelled boundary leading to a sheepfold. This enclosure could relate to a stock corraling area outside of the village looking out onto the medieval fell grazing. North of Seatoller, there is also an area of old enclosure located to the north of the hamlet where the ruinous remains of substantial dry stone walls sit upon banked boundaries. Again this
FIGURE 9.11 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley
enclosure would appear to relate to stock corralling outside of the hamlet and near to the sheepwalks.

The walls and farm buildings in Borrowdale are constructed from local slate and the valley has numerous fine examples of Lake District vernacular style. Important groups of 17th century vernacular buildings can be seen at Grange, Watendlath and Rosthwaite. Typical packhorse bridges of the 17th and 18th centuries survive at Ashness and Stockley south of Seathwaite, and there is a double-arched bridge at Grange, rebuilt in the early 19th century. The settlement pattern in Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite comprises a range of small villages and hamlets with the market town of Keswick at the northern end of Derwent Water.

**WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS**

Today there are still 103 farms with fell-going flocks in the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley area. There are 21 Herdwick flocks and 23 Swaledale flocks registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Rough Fell flocks. There are a total of nine National Trust landlord flocks listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005), in Borrowdale, Watendlath and Newlands, including very large flocks such as at Yew Tree Farm, Rosthwaite. There are about 14,800 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley; this is around one third of the total area, and includes most of the open fell. The main areas of Common Land are the large area at the southern head of Borrowdale, the fells surrounding the Newlands Valley, and most of the Skiddaw massif.

Borrowdale is a great stronghold of the Herdwick sheep breed and there are many important farms in the valley. These include the great dalehead farm in Seathwaite, with 500 ewes recorded in the first flock book of the Herdwick Sheep Breeders Association in 1920. Seathwaite was one of the farms acquired by Herbert W. Walker of Whitehaven after World War I to prevent afforestation.

**CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS**

Farming families have changed over time, but two families referred to in the 1920 Herdwick flock book still farm today. These are the Edmondsons at Seathwaite and the Grave family at Low Skelgill, Newlands. What is perhaps more astonishing is that the Grave family was farming at Low Skelgill at least as early as 1347.

William (‘Herdwick Billy’) Wilson, the first Secretary of the Herdwick Sheep Breeders Association in 1916 and long term Committee member, farmed large Herdwick flocks in Watendlath, Newlands and Bassenthwaite in the 1920s and 30s. The Wilson family were highly competitive and successful in the show ring and their tups were very influential in the breed for some time. Their flock was recorded as 800 ewes in the 1920 flock book.

The Relph family at Yew Tree Farm, Rosthwaite have won national awards for their Herdwick meat products.

The Keswick Herdwick Tup Fair is held on the Thursday after the third Wednesday in May on Keswick Town Field. It is one of the key meetings of the Herdwick calendar.
Skiddaw Shepherds’ Meet is held alternately at Mungrisdale, Threlkeld, Bassenthwaite, Uldale and Caldbeck on the first Monday in December. The Summer Meet is on the first Monday after the 20th July at the same Inn as the December Meet. This is for the District of Saddleback, Skiddaw, Caldebeck and Bowscale Fells.

Buttermere Shepherds’ Meet is held at The Fish Hotel, Buttermere on the last Saturday in November and with Buttermere Show at Lanthwaite Green, Brackenthwaite on third/fourth Saturday in October. This includes the District of Braithwaite, Newlands, and Borrowdale.

Borrowdale Show is on the third Sunday in September at Yew Tree Farm, Rosthwaite.

Keswick Agricultural Society’s (founded in 1860) Annual Show is traditionally held on August Bank Holiday Monday. There are classes for Herdwick and Swaledale sheep, cattle, pony and horse showing, sheep dogs, terriers and foxhounds, children’s classes as well as traditional Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling, art and craft and trade stands.

FARMSTEADS

| ORTHWAITE HALL |
| Farmhouse and former house now barn. Probably late 16th or early 17th century with new house dated and inscribed on coat-of-arms panel over barn doorway: C.R.1675 (Christopher Richmond, arms Richmond of Highhead impaling Hudleston of Hutton John). |
| DATE 17th century |
| OWNERSHIP Private |
| PROTECTION Listed |
| GRID REFERENCE 325272 534183 |

| HESKET HALL |
| An intriguingly designed 17th century house built, probably as a hunting lodge or villa by Sir William Lawson, whose principal house was Isel Hall. It has a cubic centre and four gabled wings; twelve corners and four-way symmetry, enabling it to act as a sundial. |
| DATE 17th century |
| OWNERSHIP Private |
| PROTECTION Listed |
| GRID REFERENCE 333973 538646 |

| ROUTENBECK |
| Cruck barn is late 17th or early 18th century; significant due to the survival of 4 full cruck trusses; now a garage and store. |
| DATE 17th – 20th century |
| OWNERSHIP Private |
| PROTECTION Listed |
| GRID REFERENCE 319529 530430 |
HEWTHWAITE HALL
Farmhouse, dated and inscribed 1581 over entrance.

DATE 16th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 315238 532836

THWAITE HALL, HUTTON ROOF
Rebuilt in 1555 and ‘modernised’ in 1876.

DATE 16th and 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 337451 534985

TODCROFTS, CALDBECK
The farmhouse is probably late 17th century and the barns are dated 1832.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 331956 539570

SEATOLLER FARM
Seatoller Farm is early 17th century.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 324504 513823

NOOK FARM
Cottage, farm house and barn under one roof. Early 18th century.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 325684 514770

WYTHOP HALL
Farmhouse and adjoining former stables. Probably mid-16th century with extension dated and inscribed F. & V.F. 1678 (Fletcher) with late 19th century alterations. House has 17th century outshut and further 19th century extension to rear. The tower was given a licence to crenellate on 12 July 1318.

DATE 14th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 320291 528404
BORROWDALE AND BASSENTHWAITE

DUNTHWAITE HOUSE AND BARN
Dated 1785 with accompanying late 18th century stables and barns.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 317394 532828

BROWNRIGG FARM, CALDBECK
Dated 1722 with 17th century byres and barn. Probably 17th century.
Interior has 3 pairs of upper crucks.

DATE 17th – 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 330680 540371

OAK COTTAGE, ROSTHWAITE
Cottage and adjoining barn. Interior has 17th century built-in panelled court cupboard and upper-floor 17th century panelling.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 325730 514767

STONETHWAITE FARMHOUSE
Farmhouse. Mid or late 17th century with 19th century alterations.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 326282 513712

CROFT FARM
Cottage and farmhouse. Late 17th century with 19th century alterations.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 326212 513742
9. BORROWDALE AND BASSENTHWAITE

**STEPS END FARM, WATENDLATH**
Farmhouse. Mid-17th century. Includes 17th century studded plank door within 17th century gabled stone porch with side seats.

**DATE** 17th – 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 327583 516388

**FOLD HEAD FARM, WATENDLATH**  
(FNOW JOHN GREENHOUSE FARM)
Fold Head Farm, with its 16th century core. Farmhouse and barns. Late 17th century or early 18th century with late 18th century additions. Mentioned in the Herries series of books by Sir Hugh Walpole.

**DATE** 16th – 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 327591 516261

**ASHNESS FARM**
A good example of an isolated valley side farm, mid-17th century.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 327175 519298

**SEATHWAITE FARMHOUSE**
Seathwaite Farm has a continuous row of barns under one roof facing the farmhouse, mid-17th century and mid-17th and 18th century cottages and 19th century barn. Dated on interior timber 1663; 19th century alterations; barn dated 1851.

**DATE** 17th – 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 323547 512164

**GRANGE FARM**
Long house and former farmhouse and barn. Mid-17th century. Interior has beamed ceiling and inglenook with firebeam. Built-in panelled and carved court cupboard is dated 1669.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 325313 517439
9.1.4 INDUSTRY

Medieval bloomery sites for smelting iron are apparent in the landscape and the charcoal pitsteads (platforms) are still evident in Borrowdale woodlands such as Frith Wood and Johnny’s Wood, near Rosthwaite. In the medieval period it is likely that iron ore was being mined at Ore Gap on the high slopes of Bowfell and taken down to bloomeries in Langstrath for smelting, using charcoal produced in the local woods. One such bloomery site is on Smithymire Island at the confluence of Langstrath Beck and Greenup Gill.

Borrowdale was a key area for the Company of Mines Royal, set up by the English Crown in 1568. The remains of the Mines Royal copper and lead mines can be seen at Goldscope in the Newlands valley, and the copper mines of Long Work, St Thomas’ Work and Dalehead higher up on the fell sides of Dalehead and High Spy, all of which are protected as scheduled monuments. The Calbeck Fells on the north side of the Skiddaw massif represent an extensive mining landscape of about 25 square kilometres, including Potts Gill lead mines, Roughton Gill lead and copper mines and barytes mill buildings, Carrock Fell tungsten, lead, copper and arsenic mines and Charleton Gill, Ramps Gill and Swinburn Gill mines. The area was so rich in minerals that it inspired the saying “Calbeck and the Calbeck Fells are worth all England else”.

The remains of a unique mining operation can be found on the slopes above Seathwaite in Borrowdale where ‘wad’ (pure graphite) was mined from the 16th century. Keswick became the world centre of pencil manufacturing and the first record of a factory making pencils in Keswick is from 1832. The Keswick Pencil Museum now occupies the 1920s factory in Keswick following a new factory being built on a new site in Cumbria in 2008. Graphite was also used for casting cannon balls, glazing pottery, in medicine and in smelting industries. The mines were abandoned in 1891.
The last working mine in the Lake District was Force Crag Mine in the Coledale valley, south-west of the village of Braithwaite. This was mined for lead from 1839 until 1865, and for barytes and zinc intermittently from 1867 until it was finally abandoned in 1991. This site is protected as a scheduled monument and is owned and managed by the National Trust. The monument includes Force Crag mines and barytes mill together with the in situ machinery associated with the mill, and the remains of all associated buildings, earlier mills, water management systems, settling ponds, trackways, tramways, dressing areas and an aerial ropeway.

Slate quarrying in this valley area was centred in the southern part of Borrowdale on the Borrowdale Volcanic Series geology. At Castle Crag the quarries were all mainly worked out by the 1930s, although some workings continued until the 1960s. Dalt Wood Quarry closed in 1973. Rigghead Quarries are high up in Tongue Gill, west of Rosthwaite. They were worked from the 18th century and finally closed in the 1940s.

The woollen industry was also important from the medieval period when the valley was jointly owned by Furness and Fountains abbeys, with mills in Keswick and other parts of the valley. This importance continued into later centuries and a significant group of late 18th century mill buildings can be seen at Millbeck on the slopes of Skiddaw, between Derwent Water and Bassenthwaite Lake. Millbeck Towers was a former carding mill which finished working in 1886 and was converted to a fine house in Art Noveau style in 1903. It was gifted to the National Trust along with a number of other small buildings connected with the mill.

The Howk at Caldbeck is the best surviving example of a bobbin mill in the valley. It was purpose-built for bobbin manufacture in 1857 and operated until closure in 1924. The surviving structures largely date from 1857. It had a 42 feet 5 inches (13.1 metres) diameter water wheel, at the time said to be the second largest in the area. The Howk mill made mainly spinning and threading bobbins for the cotton industry in Lancashire as well as other wood products for local use. The mill employed between 40 and 60 people, including boys as young as 10 years old.

Low Mill, in Caldbeck (formerly known as Priest’s Mill), is a former water-driven cornmill on the Cald Beck dating from 1702. It was operational up until the early 1960s, lastly as a sawmill.
9. BORROWDALE AND BASSENTHWAITE

9.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

KESWICK

Keswick’s present form and character reflects three main periods of growth from medieval market town, with its fossilised burgage plot pattern of parallel yards, to 18th century water-powered industrial town based on minerals mined in the surrounding fells, to railway-induced Victorian tourist resort. The town sits comfortably in the landscape nestling by the lake with its picturesque islands within an amphitheatre of containing, but not overbearing, fells. Small wonder then that there are very strong literary and cultural associations with Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth and Ruskin, who were all influential in attracting the first visitors to the area.

The name Keswick comes from the two Anglian words ‘cese’ and ‘wic’ meaning ‘cheese farm’ and is first documented in a mid-13th century manuscript from Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire. It is possible that there has been a church on the site of the present-day St Kentigern’s at nearby Crosthwaite since the early medieval period as St Kentigern (known as St Mungo in Scotland) was an apostle of the early British kingdom of Strathclyde.

Keswick’s market charter dates from 1276 and it was well established by the end of the 13th century. As is typical of this period of settlement it was (until the mid-19th century) a compact town made up of burgage plots around the market place, a pattern which can still be seen today through the thin and varied buildings fronting the market square with longer yards to the rear.

From the 16th to the 18th century the town’s population increased due to trade, commerce, water-powered industries and mining in surrounding areas, although the town itself remained compact. By the 18th century, Keswick was the principal trading centre of the textile industry in the northern Lake District. The town developed gradually, often through the infilling of the long rear yards of the burgage plots, with small houses and workshops built to the rear of the back plots. This development is still apparent in the surviving street pattern off the market place.

A number of 18th and 19th century developments further influenced the form and character of Keswick to create the town we know today. The town developed as the Lake District’s first tourist centre thanks to the guide books and poems written about the Vale of Keswick in the later 18th century such as those by Dr John Brown (‘Description of the Vale and Lake Of Keswick’, 1767 and Thomas Gray’s ‘Journal of a visit to the Lake District in 1769’ which appeared as an appendix to Thomas West’s ‘Guide to the Lakes’ of 1778). The single most dramatic development of Keswick came in the 1860s with the arrival of the railway. This resulted in rapid growth, with new housing, new styles of architecture and larger cottage industries such as pencil mills, woollens, timber, corn milling and leather tanning along the River Greta. To the north of Keswick town centre, by the bridge over the River Greta, is the Keswick School of Industrial Arts founded by Canon Rawnsley in 1893 and designed in the Arts and Crafts style. It is now a restaurant, but the inscription on the frontage is still visible: ‘The Loving Eye and Patient Hand, Shall Join Together & Bless This Land.’ Greta Hamlet (1910-11), to the north
of the medieval centre, was built as a small self-contained garden suburb of 25 houses surrounding a central court, built in the spirit of the ‘garden city’ movement.

BLINDCRAKE VILLAGE

Blindcraeke village, north-west of Bassenthwaite Lake on a ridge above the north bank of the River Derwent, is a linear settlement with a string of traditional rendered and lime-washed farmhouses and stone barns lining the village street. Stretching back from the individual farms, the fossilised medieval field strip pattern, later enclosed with hedges and a few stone walls, abuts the line of a former Roman road. It is a particularly good example of a surviving medieval open field strip system in the Lake District and the narrow field strips still have the fragmented land ownerships of that period. The village and field system have been designated as a Conservation Area because of their significance. There are several well-preserved examples of 18th century vernacular longhouses with good examples of 19th century dwellings such as Greenbank (1832), Crabtree Cottage (1836), Meadow View (1847), Mountain View (around 1850) and Woodlands (1876).

CALDBECK

Caldbeck is a small historic hamlet set in a sheltered location on the north-east flank of the Skiddaw massif, along the banks of the Cald Beck, with attractive architectural and historic character. Caldbeck has a distinctive air of former prosperity and confidence, reflected in the quality of buildings. Those of the 18th and 19th centuries use the distinctive local pale pink, purple or buff sandstones for walling and door/window surrounds. The village is principally built on the southern bank of the river, where the large St Kentigern’s Church, one of the finest in the Lake District with many periods of building since the 12th century, the rectory and tithe barn are located. A large churchyard contains some notable 18th century headstones, including that of the celebrated huntsman, John Peel. Numerous barns dating from the 17th to 19th centuries testify to the agricultural origins of Caldbeck. An unusually high number of 18th and 19th century water-powered mills remain from Caldbeck’s time as the focus of various industries including corn milling, wool spinning and carding, bobbin making, and stone quarrying and metal mining.

HESKET NEWMARKET

Hesket Newmarket is a small historic farming hamlet with attractive architectural and historic character, two miles south-east of Caldbeck on a terrace above the valley of the River Caldew. It received a market charter in 1751 and was formally laid out as a neat small market centre around village greens, with well-proportioned 18th and 19th century houses in local sandstone and render. It has numerous buildings protected by listing dating mainly from the late 17th to early 19th centuries, including the Market Cross in the centre of the green and the unusual cross-shaped Hesket Hall farmhouse. Several buildings are former public houses and there is a smithy; buildings that testify to the hamlet’s historic role as a market and meeting place for the scattered farms of this part of the Lake District.
MUNGRISDALE

An attractive cluster of 17th and 18th century farmsteads sited where farmland abruptly meets the steep eastern edge of the Caldbeck Fells. The houses have a rugged style of vernacular architecture using cobbles, boulders and Skiddaw slate. St Kentigern’s Church, dating from the 18th century, is small and simple in style, to serve an isolated farming community. Nearby at Mosedale is a fine example of a Friend’s Meeting House of 1702. Beckside Farm is run by Newton Rigg College as a training farm for young farmers.

THRELKELD

Sited at the foot of steep slopes to Blencathra, Threlkeld is essentially a string of cottages and farmsteads on the old Keswick road. The Horse and Farrier (1688) is a good example of a vernacular inn. The Penrith to Keswick Railway encouraged expansion of lead mining and nearby granite quarrying and the village prospered from 1880 to 1900 with mining of lead and zinc. The buildings of Threlkeld are unique in the Lake District, with the local slate-stone walling having a rusty brown stain on all the 19th century buildings. On the main street, the Old Joiner’s shop, next to Church is a rare survivor of the late 16th/early 17th century small house with cruck trusses and large stone firehood.

BASSENTHAITE

The village of Basenthaite is located on the eastern side of Bassenthwaite Lake, some six miles from Keswick, just off the A591 main road to Bothel. It comprises a mixture of buildings of various periods around a village green, with two churches, one Norman (St Bega’s) and one Victorian (St John’s).

BRAINTWAITE

Braithwaite sits at the foot of the Whinlatter Pass to Lorton and the Coledale Valley, on the edge of the Derwent Fells. Historically a compact settlement, with local woollen industry, pencil mill and corn mill, it saw a substantial amount of infill and new development in the 20th century, towards Thornthwaite near the very busy A66 road. Braithwaite is a popular tourist centre with camp site and hotel accommodation.

GRANGE IN BORROWDALE

Originally a farm or grange belonging to Furness Abbey, Grange is located in a narrow section of the Borrowdale Valley and surrounded by inbye fields. The graceful double-arched bridge is the key approach feature in this part of the valley and the village comprises an attractive group of old stone and whitewashed cottages and farmhouses with limited 20th century development.

WATENDLATH

Watendlath sits on the edge of a tarn within a hanging valley high above the main valley of Borrowdale. It is on an ancient packhorse route through the Lake District and forms a very attractive cluster of farms and houses, with a well-known packhorse bridge. Watendlath is one of The Lake District’s most remote hamlets and a very popular
destination for tourists in the Keswick area. Watendlath achieved literary fame through Hugh Walpole’s novels – the heroine of Judith Paris was based on Fold Head Farm.

**ROSTHWAITE**

Although small, Rosthwaite is the main settlement in Borrowdale. It is dominated by steep valley sides to the east and is essentially a cluster of farmsteads, house and a hotel. At Kiln Orchard, a local housing scheme of six dwellings was given the national Rural Housing Award in the Civic Trust Awards in 1995.

**ISEL AND CROSTHWAITE**

There is some fine medieval ecclesiastical and defensive architecture, namely at ISEL, on the Derwent downstream from Bassenthwaite Lake. St Michael’s Church, Isel, dates from the 1130s, although ISEL does not appear as a name in documents until 1195, as Ysala. ISEL Hall is a defended pele tower of the 14th century with later Elizabethan and 17th century additions. St Kentigern’s Church, Crosthwaite, is the earliest true parish church in the Lake District, with evidence of 12th, 14th and 16th centuries, although its predecessor is reputedly 6th century.

In the wider valley, there are also a number of important ‘hall’ farmhouses dating from the 16th or 17th century on the fringes of the Bassenthwaite and the Skiddaw Massif areas and good examples of 17th or early 18th century farmhouses or farm building groups on the northern fringes. In Borrowdale there are a number of small farming hamlets with typical clusters of vernacular farm houses, cottages, barns and byres, many now owned by the National Trust.

**9.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE**

Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley was one of the most important areas of interest for visitors seeking Picturesque views. It also has many connections with the Lake Poets and

![Figure 9.14 Crosthwaite's map of Derwent Water, first published in 1783 and republished in 1794](image)
other major literary and artistic figures of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. There are a number of their residences surviving, and a great number of landscape features which provided inspiration for their work.

Thomas West’s guidebook of 1778 identified a series of viewing stations around Derwent Water and Bassenthwaite from which the picturesque beauty of the landscape could be fully appreciated. West’s tour around Derwent Water started at his first station at Crow Park in Keswick and worked in a clockwise direction to include eight viewing stations. Additional viewing stations were proposed by the 18th century entrepreneur Peter Crosthwaite and are depicted on maps that he produced to sell to visitors. These viewing stations are still accessible and are mostly now in the ownership of the National Trust.

9.1.7 VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

The early Picturesque interest in Derwent Water quickly led to the purchase of land and estates by offcomers wishing both to live in the area and to enhance its undoubted beauty. An early phase of villa building around Derwent Water was undertaken by Joseph Pocklington, the son of a Nottinghamshire banker, who bought Derwent Isle in 1778. Here he built a mansion and various follies including a stone circle. This land and mansion are now owned by the National Trust. He went on to build further villas at Derwent Bank, on the west side of the lake at Portinscale (which later became a popular Holiday Fellowship guesthouse), and at Barrow House – now a youth hostel. Pocklington called this property ‘Cascade House’ and behind the building he had a stream diverted to create a waterfall as a Picturesque feature. This was intended to be a rival to the famous Lodore falls, further down the valley, which was already an established tourist attraction.

From 1781 Lord William Gordon began to purchase land on the west side of Derwent Water and by 1785 had purchased the Waterend estate and then all the land from Fawe Park to Manesty. The farm at Waterend was replaced with Derwent Bay House and another house was built at Silver Hill. In the late 1780s the road from Portinscale to Borrowdale was diverted higher up the valley slopes, away from the estate. The farmland that Gordon purchased had been extensively covered with old coppiced oak woodland, but much of this had been felled just before the purchase. He therefore set about re-planting the former areas of coppice with a variety of tree species including oak, spruce, silver fir, Weymouth pine and larch. The land to the north of Derwent Bay was also laid out with gravelled drives and footpaths. Gordon’s intention was to enhance the natural beauty of the slopes and shore on the west side of Derwent Water in order to create an idealised Picturesque landscape following principles set out William Gilpin for Derwent Water in his ‘Observations of 1776’ (published 1789). The heavily wooded western shore of Derwent Water still bears testimony to Gordon’s landscaping activities.
in the late 18th century and the southern part of his estate – Manesty and Brandlehow Parks – are owned by the National Trust.

**TABLE 9.2 Key villas in the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ARMATHWAITE HALL</strong></th>
<th>At the lower end of Bassenthwaite Lake, a mid-19th century mansion built for the Fletcher-Vane family.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>19th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PROTECTION</strong></td>
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<td>320637 532464</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BARROW HOUSE</strong></th>
<th>Barrow House built by Pocklington. The grounds of the latter were furnished with a picturesque waterfall, created by diverting the course of a beck. This was conceived as a rival to the falls at Lodore, which had become a popular tourist attraction.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>18th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>Private Hostel</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DERWENT BANK, PORTINScale</strong></th>
<th>The villa at Derwent Bank, Portinscale was built by Joseph Pocklington in 1784-5, probably to his own design. Enlarged in the 19th century and now a guesthouse.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>18th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>Private</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DERWENT BAY</strong></th>
<th>Single storey lakeside pavilion built by Lord William Gordon c. 1790.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>18th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
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<td>325085 521520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>UNDERSCAR MANOR</strong></th>
<th>Underscar Manor, an Italianate style mansion on the lower slopes of Skiddaw. Now a hotel. 1856-63, with later extensions, and mid-20th century alterations, refurbished and altered to form hotel 1990. By Charles Reed, (the name later changed to Verelst ) architect, of Liverpool, for William Oxley, merchant, of Liverpool.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>19th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PROTECTION</strong></td>
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<td><strong>GRID REFERENCE</strong></td>
<td>327023 525627</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
9. BORROWDALE AND BASSENTHWAITE

**DERWENT ISLE HOUSE**

**DATE** 18th and 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 326121 522381

**GRETA HALL, KESWICK**
Greta Hall in Keswick, a well-proportioned Georgian mansion of the late 18th century, later occupied by the poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1800 – 1803) and Robert Southey (1803 – 43). Now part of Keswick Grammar School.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 326522 523789

**MIREHOUSE**
Mirehouse, on the eastern shore of Bassenthwaite Lake, dates from the 1666, with wings added in 1790 for Thomas Story and rear extensions of 1830 by Joseph Cantwell for John Spedding. Further extensions in 1851 and 1883. Inherited by the Speddings of Armathwaite Hall in 1802. Still the home of the Spedding family and open to the public. Of particular interest for its associations with Thomas Carlyle, Tennyson and other literary friends of James Spedding (1808-1881), who were frequent visitors to the house. John Spedding attended Hawkshead School with Wordsworth.

**DATE** 16th and 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 323178 528378

**OVERWATER HALL**
House and garden terrace, originally built as Whitefield House c. 1810 and extended in 1840 for Joseph Gillbank from Ireby, who made his fortune in Jamaica. Now a hotel.

**DATE** 18th and 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 324347 534614

**HIGHAM HALL**
The gothic castellated Higham Hall was built in 1827-8 for Thomas Alison Hoskins, of the West Cumbrian industrial family, railway investor and Chairman of the Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway. Now Residential Adult Education Centre.

**DATE** 19th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 318556 531545
9.2  HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

9.2.1  ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite have been settled from at least the Neolithic period (4000 – 2000 BC). Many stone axes of this period have also been found in the area, including a hoard of unfinished implements from Portinscale. There is some evidence that there may have been a stone axe production site on Carrock Fell. Other early monuments from this period include the stone circle at Castlerigg (just to the east of Keswick – see the Thirlmere Valley description); another large stone circle at Elva Plain, east of Bassenthwaite Lake; and causewayed enclosures at Carrock Fell and Green How. Clearance cairnfields have been found at Weasel Hills which could relate to Bronze Age (2000 – 800 BC) farming and the small hillforts at Castle Crag in Borrowdale and Castle How by Bassenthwaite Lake, may date to either the later prehistoric or early medieval periods.

There is a Roman fort at Caermote, north of Bassenthwaite Lake, and another at Troutbeck, on the A66 between Penrith and Keswick, along with a road and camps. A well-preserved group of Roman period native settlements survive at Aughertree Fell and the remains of a Roman marching camp have recently been found at Castlerigg, near the site of the Neolithic stone circle.

9.2.2  THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The place-names in Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite indicate an early British presence (the name ‘Derwent’ has a British meaning ‘abounding in oaks’) but those of Scandinavian origin appear to dominate, suggesting that Scandinavian settlement in the valley was extensive. Particularly common are the names that include the element ‘thwaite’, meaning clearing within woodland. ‘Nordmanthait’ (found in the c. 1160 Cartulary of Fountains Abbey) combines the Old Norse ‘thwaite’ element with the ‘Nord’ element (Old French?) perhaps reflecting the Normans or Northmen responsible for the clearing. Evidence of clearance is also supported by pollen deposits from peat bogs which suggest major wood clearance episodes in the interior valleys during the second half of the first millennium. The place-name Seatoller is derived from the Old Norse ‘seatr’ place-name element for summer pasture, which may suggest a transhumant shieling pasture in the upper remote reaches of the valley bottom before a permanent farm was set up later in the medieval period.

Settlements at Uzzicar, Ormathwaite and Portinscale are documented unusually early. These appear as ‘Huseker’ and ‘Husaker’ (possibly a compound of the Old Norse ‘hus’ and ‘kiar’ meaning marsh house. Alternatively the ‘car’ ending may have derived from the Old English ‘aker’ meaning oak).

Further evidence of early medieval settlement is limited. The Venerable Bede refers in his ‘Ecclesiastical History of the English People’ (c. 731) to St Herbert’s Island in Derwent
9. BORROWDALE AND BASSENTHWAITE

Water as the reputed home of this 7th century hermit and priest. An earlier 6th century saint is commemorated at St Kentigern’s churches at Crosthwaite and Caldbeck.

9.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

Following the Norman invasion of Cumbria in 1092, the Manor of Borrowdale was established. It remained intact until 1195 when Watendlath, Langstrath and part of Stonethwaite were granted to Fountains Abbey by Alice de Rumeli, the granddaughter of the first Norman overlord. Furness Abbey bought the remainder of the Manor in 1209 including all the remaining lands south of Derwent Water and a document defining the boundary between the two holdings was drawn up in 1211.

From the last years of the 12th century onwards the monks drained and cultivated the land, possibly building the first field walls. They also cleared great areas of waste, converting large tracts of fell into pasture. Although the emphasis was on wool, rye, barley and oats were also produced and stored in ‘grangia’, a term which gave the name to the nearby village of Grange (on Furness Abbey land). A 13th century grange, owned by Fountains Abbey, is also known to have existed in Watendlath. Fountains Abbey had a vaccary (a type of demesne cattle ranch) at Stonethwaite by 1309. Much of its boundaries have been lost, but some natural topographic features survive which almost certainly functioned as outer boundaries.

Place-name evidence provides a limited insight into the evolution of settlement in this valley. Borrowdale appears as ‘Borgordale’ c. 1170 in ‘Illustrative Sources’ appended to ‘The Register of the Priory of St Bees’, although by 1209 it appeared in the ‘Furness Coucher Book’. This suggests perhaps that the Derwent Valley originally looked north and west, until the Abbey of Furness flexed its considerable muscle across Cumbria; perhaps the reference refers to Grange rather than anything higher up, or it may refer to the entire valley.

Threlkeld first appears in documents as ‘Trellekell’ in 1197. Watendlath appears first as ‘Wattendlane’, and Stonethwaite as ‘Staynethwayt’ under Richard I (1189-1199). Watendlath and Langstrath appear first in 1195, and Stonethwaite in 1198. Braithwaite appears in the Cartulary of Fountains Abbey during the reign of John (1199-1216). Thornthwaite appears as ‘Thorn(e)thwayt’, ‘Thorn(e)thwyet’, ‘Thorn(e)thwait’ in 1230, in a Calendar of documents relating to Scotland; perhaps these three ‘thwaites’ had been recently cleared.

In the Newlands valley, to the west of Derwent Water, Keskadale appears as ‘Keskeldale’ in 1260, Swinside appears as ‘Swynesheued’ in 1260, Birkrigg appears as ‘Birkeryg’ in 1293 and Gutherscale appears as ‘Goderyscales’ in 1293; these four provide a reasonably good mid-13th century date for the opening up of this side valley.

Furness Abbey had a huge influence on the 13th century economy of Keswick and Borrowdale through the introduction of large flocks of sheep on its land, establishing a trade in wool. Keswick increasingly became the economic centre for the locality, based on wool, leather and farm products. A 1418 survey of Fountains Abbey property gives an insight into the farming economy of Borrowdale. At that time, 41 farmsteads were in existence. Given that Fountains Abbey owned roughly half of Borrowdale,
this provides an indication of a vigorous population in the valley at that time. This may suggest that due to its relative isolation, Borrowdale had been spared the worst of the devastation caused by the Black Death in the 14th century. The valley appears to have survived this difficult period relatively well by comparison with other Lakeland areas.

Key to understanding the farming practices of the medieval period are the surviving field patterns of the area. Apart from monastic enclosures and clearance for pastoral farming, the evidence of shielings, surviving predominantly within Langstrath, potentially relate to transhumant stock management from the central valley farms to the more isolated parts of the valley. Indeed, some of the later permanent farmsteads of subsequent periods (e.g. Seatoller) may have had transhumant origins. Much of Langstrath was still probably wooded and the clearance may have dramatically altered the vegetation and animal communities, resulting in a landscape of enclosed woodlands and open pasture.

The same 1418 survey for Fountains Abbey shows the 41 farms to have each had an average of three acres of enclosed land. However, it is not certain whether this was in the form of small inbyes close to the settlement or strips in an early town field. Archaeological evidence shows that local woodland was being cleared and the brushwood coppiced in Seathwaite around 1300-1450 AD, and enclosed by a boundary wall and fence.

Documentary evidence suggests that the earliest enclosures were of parcels of land associated with individual tenements, later supplemented by the creation of a number of town fields. These certainly existed around the small hamlets of upper Borrowdale by the time of the Dissolution. Field evidence of surviving field systems is described above.

At the chapelry of Mungrisdale, which first appears as ‘Grisedal(e’) in the 1285 Pleas of the Forest and relatively frequently thereafter, there seems to be a former open field. It does not feature in the Fountains or Furness Abbey records and therefore must have been held privately, probably as a part of the parish of Greystoke. Similarly there is a very small area of strips immediately east of Mosedale; this is mentioned in documents from 1285 onwards which shows that this too was in private hands from the medieval period onwards, probably also as a part of Greystoke.

Evidence for medieval deer parks is less clear. Snittlegarth Hall, north of High Ireby, appears to sit inside its own stock enclosure on the edge of a large, undocumented former deer park, but it could equally be another vaccary. At Armathwaite Hall on the north tip of Bassenthwaite there is a deer park, but this did not appear on Ordnance Survey maps until the 1898 edition; perhaps it was a role revived, or perhaps it was new as it does not appear on the 1787 Clarke map and deer may have been important as animating elements within the ornamental parkland. Clarke’s map of 1787 also shows the entire west side of Bassenthwaite as a single piece of woodland belonging to the Manor of Wythop, possibly a former deer park; the south- or east-facing shores of lakes may have been favoured for hunting preserves.

In the medieval period the woodlands in the valley were a major industrial asset. The key product was charcoal from charcoal burning in the woods which required regular rotational coppicing of the woodland. The 16th century was significant for the creation of new farms, the increasing enclosure of common land and investment in new buildings and industry, largely in the second half of the century. However, new farms appeared to have been created before the Dissolution, for example, Rosthwaite first
appears as ‘Rasethuate’ in 1503. Longthwaite was not mentioned until the 16th century in any of the documentary records, when John Fisher was recorded as the tenant to Furness Abbey in 1538. The enclosure there forms a pattern of radiating fields extending out of the settlement core.

Former monastic granges and farms were sold (Armathwaite perhaps), and there may have been some new settlements which grew up in the aftermath of the Dissolution – Stair (‘Stayre’) does not appear until 1565; Ullock (‘Uloke’) in 1564. Snittlegarth is not recorded until it appears as ‘Smyttlegarth’ in 1580, suggesting a late foundation date. This site was built on the edge of a former deer park or a monastic stock enclosure given its date. Seatoller is not documented until it appears as ‘Settaller’ in parish registers of 1563.

The creation of town fields around the small hamlets of upper Borrowdale may not have occurred until the 16th century; indeed they were not specifically mentioned until the relatively late date of 1659.

Most of these areas around Keswick had probably been turned over to agriculture before the 16th century, as it grew into a market town. Almost all the western lakeside of Derwent Water is shown on the 1787 Clarke map as occupied by parks – Fall Park, Brandlehow Park (Branley Park on the map) and Manesty Park. These may have distilled from an earlier deer park, carved out for the inheritors of the Grange estate from the mid-16th century.

Limited documentary information indicates that the valleys to the south of Derwent Water were to have been enclosed in the 16th/17th centuries. There are references respectively in 1539 and 1537 to enclosures resulting from the granting by the crown of seized land to a Richard Greme.

Further, documents from 1678 refer to a number of ‘closes’ at Rosthwaite varying in size between 1 and 5 acres (0.5 to 2 hectares) and again in 1696 there are references to a “close or inclosure of arable land and meadow”. The small acreage of these enclosures suggests they were either the small tenement closes or the start of the enclosure of strips within the town field. Perhaps redistribution of the former Furness Abbey lands around Grange provided the first opportunity for farm holdings to grow on a large scale. Frith (Frith Wood) at the foot of Grange Fell, adjacent to Swanesty Wood, probably indicates a former stock park enclosure, although it is not possible to trace it’s boundary with any confidence.

The process of selling off monastic land continued long after the Dissolution. When James I became king in 1603, he sold the land once held by Furness Abbey to two London entrepreneurs, William Whitmore and Jonas Verdon. They indulged in asset stripping, selling the individual farms in 1614 to 38 people. The next year, while retaining the graphite mines, they sold the ‘Manor of Borrowdale’ to the same 38 in an agreement referred to as the ‘Great Deed of Borrowdale’ which constituted ‘all the woods… wastes, commons, stinted pastures… ways and entries’. The list was headed by “Sir Wilfrid Lawson of Isel, Knight”, followed by the names of people who mostly lived in the farmsteads of upper Borrowdale. Lawson had already obtained the lands around Stonethwaite from the Greames family in 1606, and he then bought more in the valley in 1617. In 1614, just before the ‘Great Deed of Borrowdale’, Lawson bought Seathwaite and Rosthwaite off Verdon and Whitmore.
By 1700 an enclosed field system had been established along most of the valley floor and intaking was starting to spread up the fellsides. Some areas of fellside with coppiced woodland, such as Johnny’s Wood and intakes along Eagle Crag, had probably already been enclosed for some time for their own protection from grazing animals. Around the north-west Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley area there are large stretches of inbye land, with extensive modern enclosures. Intake enclosure is relatively sparse, suggesting that most of the best land had been enclosed enthusiastically before the 16th century.

The 16th century redistribution of ecclesiastical property also led to the construction and investment of new buildings and rebuilding of existing ones. Armthwaite Hall may have been built after the Dissolution on former Benedictine nunnery land. A number of farms in the valley have 16th century buildings at their core, such as Millbeck Hall, Wythop Hall, Thwaite Hall, Hewthwaite Hall and Fold Head Farm.

The 16th century was also important in the growth of industry. The first documentary evidence of mining in the Caldbeck Fells dates to 1537 when the Company of Mines Royal had significant mining interests there. In the mid-16th century, the company constructed a large smelter at Brigham, on the eastern side of Keswick, fuelled by timber from local woodland. The smelter at Brigham and its associated works became the largest in Europe. “The smelting houses were so many that they looked like a little town” wrote Sir Daniel Fleming in 1671. The Moot Hall of 1813, in the centre of the marketplace, was built on the site of a copper store used by of the Company of Mines Royal in the 1570s.

The unique 16th century ‘wad’ (pure graphite) mine on the slopes above Seathwaite in Borrowdale was mentioned by William Camden as ‘the famous mine of wad or black-lead’ after his journey through the North of England in 1582. This extremely valuable material was used locally as a black dye for marking sheep, known as ‘black cawke’, but had many other uses. There is evidence that Flemish traders were supplying the Michelangelo School of Art in Italy with Cumberland graphite by about 1580.
Finally, there were hints of the tourism and the interest in outdoor recreation that was to come in the late 18th to 19th centuries around Keswick, with the first recorded ascents of Skiddaw to take in the view by Bishop Nicholson in 1684.

In many respects, Borrowdale was a landscape of contrasts in the 18th century with high levels of poverty amongst the farming communities, but a growing tourism trade that would change the character of the valley. Hutchinson (in his ‘History of the County of Cumberland’) said in 1794 that “the surface of the ground was very little cultivated” and that even by the late 1760s a “cart or any type of wheeled carriage was totally unknown in Borrowdale”. He continued to describe how hay was not stacked in the field but carried home in bundles by pack horse. He also records that the first recorded chaise in Borrowdale, in 1824, bringing one Jack Cawx, almost overturned on the poor road at Grange Bridge.

The intakes of Borrowdale were set out in the 18th century and at Seathwaite, Rosthwaite and Stonethwaite intaking of the remaining fellside appears to have taken place by the 1750s. The final phase of wall-building, comprising the large, straight walled fields on the higher fellsides resulting from planned enclosure was completed by the mid-19th century. Thus by 1850 the field pattern that we see today in Borrowdale had been established and little has changed in the intervening years.

9.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The landscape that had developed in Borrowdale by the mid-18th century as a result of farming and industry within a spectacular valley and mountain setting was the key attraction in the English Lake District to the visitors who came in search of Picturesque beauty. The influx of visitors and a growing population created tensions: the more people came to admire the valley, the more it had to change to accommodate them. It was considered that all the elements of the Picturesque were brought together around Keswick with a number of different landscape types and this was noted by Dr John Brown in 1753, who listed them as “beauty, horror and immensity”:

“...the full perfection of Keswick, consists of three circumstances, beauty, horror, and immensity united... to give you a complete idea of these three perfections, as they are joined in Keswick, would require the united powers of Claude, Salvator, and Poussin. The first should throw his delicate sunshine over the cultivated vales, the scattered cots, the groves, the lake, and wooded islands. The second should dash out the horror of the rugged cliffs, the steeps, the hanging woods, and foaming waterfalls; while the grand pencil of Poussin should crown the whole, with the majesty of impending mountains”.

Dr John Brown, ‘Description of the Vale and Lake of Keswick’ (1767)
The landscape of Borrowdale reflects these three divisions noted by Dr Brown which translates from “beauty, horror and immensity” to ancient enclosed cultivated landscapes around Keswick, the islands and woods and parkland (beauty), plus Castle Crag and the rocky summits of Borrowdale (horror) and finally the fells of Swinside, Skiddaw and Castle Rigg (immensity).

Thomas Gray, having experienced the Alps, wrote about his discovery of Borrowdale in 1769. He described “the most delicious view” his eyes had ever beheld on the shores of Derwent Water:

“Opposite, are the thick woods of Lord Egremont, and Newland Valley, with green and smiling fields embosomed in the dark cliffs; to the left, the jaws of Borrowdale, with the turbulent chaos of mountain behind mountain, rolled in confusion; beneath you and stretching far away to the right, the shining purity of the lake reflecting rocks, woods, fields, and inverted tops of hills, just ruffled by the breeze, enough to shew it is alive, with the white buildings of Keswick, Crosthwaite church and Skiddaw for a background at a distance”.

However, as Gray ventured further into Borrowdale he found the experience increasingly alarming:

“...soon after we came under Gowder-crag, a hill more formidable to the eye, and the apprehension, than that of Lowdore; the rocks at the top deep-cloven perpendicularly by the rains, hanging loose and nodding forwards, seen just starting from their base in shivers. The whole way down, and the road on both sides is strewed with piles of the fragments strangely thrown across each other and of a dreadful bulk; the place reminds me of those passes in the Alps, where the guides tell you to move on with speed, and say nothing, lest the agitation of the air should loosen the snows above, and bring down a mass that would overwhelm the caravan. I took their counsel here, and hastened on in silence”

Thomas Gray, ‘Journal of a visit to the Lake District’ (1769)
Thomas West’s guidebook of 1778 identified a series of viewing stations around Derwent Water and Bassenthwaite from which the picturesque beauty of the landscape could be fully appreciated. West’s tour around Derwent Water started at Keswick and worked in a clockwise direction to include eight viewing stations. A viewing station at each end of the lake (Stations II and IV) provided all-encompassing views from one end to the other, taking in the islands and the fellsides which formed the amphitheatre around the lake. Station II, in Crow Park on the edge of Keswick looked down the lake into the “rocky jaws of Borrowdale” and Station IV provided views from Borrowdale northwards to the more gentle landscape around Keswick. To the north of Keswick, Station VII was on the heights of Latrigg and provided views of the entire lake, Keswick and Borrowdale, and so covered from one point all the landscape features seen from the other seven stations.

West also identified a series of four viewing stations around Bassenthwaite Lake, at Armathwaite at the lower end, Scar Ness and Broadness promontories on the eastern shore and at Beck Wythop on the western side.

In the late 18th century Keswick began to develop as a tourist centre for the moneyed, leisured and educated visitors who were interested in the contemplation of lake and mountain scenery, and attracted by guide books (such as that written by Thomas West) and poems written about the Vale of Keswick (such as those by John Brown and Thomas Gray). Early tourism in the Keswick area in the 1780s had two important champions in Joseph Pocklington and Peter Crosthwaite. Pocklington built a mansion and various follies including a stone circle on Derwent Isle (the mansion is now owned by the National Trust). He also built a house at Portinscale (now a guesthouse) and Barrow House which is now a youth hostel. The grounds of the latter were furnished with a picturesque waterfall, created by diverting the course of a beck. This was conceived as a rival to the falls at Lodore, which had become a popular tourist attraction.

PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

As well as Pocklington’s adventurous approach to buying land and building and ‘improving’ the landscape, Pocklington and Crosthwaite teamed up to lay on regattas on Derwent Water. These were not the first, as John Spedding at Armathwaite Hall set the precedent in 1779 on Bassenthwaite Lake, but Pocklington and Crosthwaite’s events included mock invasions of Pocklington’s Island (now Derwent Isle), including a fleet of boats with muskets and cannons and musical interludes. The fields between the town and the lake were filled with stalls, sideshows and refreshment tents.

In 1789 Pocklington bought the land where the Bowder Stone, a massive glacial erratic, sat. At over eight metres high and 18 metres long it is the largest free-standing boulder in the Lake District. Pocklington carried out ‘improvement’ works around the stone including building a guide’s hut, so that the early tourists could pay for a
guide. Pocklington had no qualms about adapting nature for the sake of entertainment, which the Romantics found not only tasteless, but immoral.

Peter Crosthwaite was a farmer’s son from Thirlmere. He served with the East India Company and the Customs Service before returning to settle in the Lake District. He was the first local man to see how lucrative the tourist trade could be and to develop attractions specifically for visitors. He was an avid observer and surveyor. He offered his services as a guide and by 1783 he had mapped Derwent Water, Ullswater and Windermere and drawn a plan of Pocklington’s Island. He went on to survey Bassenthwaite Lake, Coniston Water and Buttermere. He made his maps specifically for visitors including features of interest such as Thomas West’s viewing stations. He built a museum on Keswick’s main street, which he opened to the public in 1784 and charged visitors for entry. His museum included curiosities from his time with the East India Company and local artefacts. His family continued to run the museum until 1870.

Other guides set up business in the area including Jonathan Otley and Thomas Hutton, who also opened a museum. Hutton’s museum included a model of a slave ship, donated by William Wilberforce. Wilberforce had become friends with Hutton on his regular visits to the Lake District and employed Hutton as a guide.

Visitor numbers increased from the mid-18th century and by 1802, Coleridge wrote of Keswick that for one-third of the year it swarmed with tourists. They needed places to stay and it has been claimed that the first hotel in the area specifically built to accommodate tourists was at Ouse Bridge at the north end of Bassenthwaite Lake, dating from the same time as the establishment of the local turnpike trusts in the 1760s. It appears to have operated for about 50 years before being converted to another use. In 1787 14 inns and ale houses were listed in Keswick and by 1889 the list had grown to 36 inns and five beer houses. The George is said to be the oldest hostelry in Keswick; the earliest recorded bill dated to 1733. Thomas Gray stayed at the Queens in 1769.

John Peel, the famous huntsman, is probably one of the Lake District’s most well-known local characters, chiefly because of the song written about him. Peel was born at Parkend, near Caldbeck in 1777. He maintained a pack of hounds at his own expense for 55 years. John Peel Cottage at Ruthwaite was his farm and he died there in 1854. John Woodcock Graves, from Wigton, a Caldbeck carding mill owner, lived at Gatehouse, Caldbeck and in 1824 wrote the song “D’ye ken John Peel with his coat so grey?”. Peel’s grave is in St Kentigern’s churchyard, Caldbeck.

9.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley has many connections with the Lake Poets and other major literary and artistic figures of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.
with a number of surviving residences and a great number of landscape features which provided inspiration for their work.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge lived at Greta Hall in Keswick from 1800 to 1803 and the Wordsworths visited on numerous occasions. Robert Southey took up residence at Greta Hall following Coleridge’s departure from the Lake District in 1803 and lived there with both his family and Coleridge’s until his death in 1845. Southey is buried in Crosthwaite churchyard where his memorial is inscribed with verses by Wordsworth. In 1803 Wordsworth was given land at Applethwaite, just north of Keswick, by Sir George Beaumont, who wanted to enable him to live near his friend Coleridge. Although Wordsworth never built here, he wrote the sonnet ‘At Applethwaite, near Keswick’ to commemorate the gift and his descendants later built the slate cottage which now occupies the site.

In addition to Coleridge and Southey, the Wordsworths had other friends in Keswick including William’s benefactor, Raisley Calvert. Calvert lived at Windy Brow (now the Calvert Trust Riding Centre for the Disabled) and William and Dorothy Wordsworth stayed here in April 1794 and in early 1795 when Calvert was terminally ill. Calvert left money to William, which allowed him to live independently at Grasmere and in response to this generosity he wrote the sonnet ‘To the Memory of Raisley Calvert’. The Wordsworths continued to visit the woods at Windy Brow, often with Coleridge, and constructed a seat there for which both poets wrote sonnets.

The poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and his wife lived (briefly) at Shelley Cottage, Keswick, over the winter of 1811/12 and Shelley, like Coleridge, undertook solitary rambles and drew inspiration from the Lake District landscape. He wrote the poems ‘Mother and Son’ and ‘The Devil’s Walk’ while resident in Borrowdale. Local settings feature briefly in Mary Shelley’s ‘Frankenstein’ and ‘The Last Man’.

In his ‘Guide Through the District of the Lakes’ (1835), Wordsworth commented that Derwent Water was:

“distinguished from all other Lakes by being surrounded with sublimity: the fantastic mountains of Borrowdale to the south, the solitary majesty of Skiddaw to the north, the bold steeps of Wallow-crag and Lodore to the east, and to the west the clustering mountains of New-lands.”

Having settled in Keswick, Coleridge’s ‘Notebooks’ are, unsurprisingly, full of references to the surrounding fells, notably Skiddaw and the sometimes dramatic cloud formations that grace its summit:

“As we turned round on our return, we see a moving pillar of clouds, flame & smoke, rising, bending, arching, and in swift motion – from what God’s chimney doth it issue?”

Skiddaw also features in a number of Wordsworth’s poems, notably the sonnet ‘Pelion and Ossa Flourish Side by Side’, in which he compares it favourably with Parnassus and the mountains of Ancient Greece.
The Falls of Lodore were celebrated in poems by Wordsworth (‘An Evening Walk’) and Southey (‘The Cataract of Lodore’). In his ‘Don Espriella’, Southey references Lodore and the nearby Bowder Stone.

In 1833, Wordsworth wrote a number of poems to commemorate a tour of Cumbria, the Isle of Man and Scotland. These included a homage to the River Greta –

“Greta, what fearful listening! When huge stones / Rumble along thy bed, block after block”.

With regard to Borrowdale, Wordsworth’s poem ‘Yew Trees’ celebrates the yew that is ‘Pride of Lorton Vale’, but goes on to observe that:

“worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;
Huge trunks! And each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;
...a natural temple scattered o’er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone”

The yews were damaged in a great storm of 1883 and one yew was lost. This event moved Canon H. D. Rawnsley to compose a melancholy ‘Trilogy of Sonnets on the Yews of Borrowdale’. The three remaining yews are still standing; their age has been estimated at 1500 years.

On his 1799 walking tour, Coleridge stayed at Ouse Bridge hotel at the head of Bassenthwaite. His ‘Notebook’ records:

“From the Inn Window, the whole length of Basenthwaite, a simple majesty of water & mountains – / & in the distance the Bank rising like a wedge – & in the second distance the Crags of Derwent Water / What an effect of the Shadows on the water!”

The area around the huge Skiddaw massif is rich in literary associations. Skiddaw itself is the most written about mountain in Britain. It even features in William Blake’s poem ‘Jerusalem The Emanation of the Giant Albion’ (1804-1820) as a sinister setting where Hand, one of the sons of Albion, is betrayed by his consort Cambel:

“Hand slept on Skiddaw’s top, drawn by the love of the beautiful Cambel, his bright beaming Counterpart, divided from him;
And her delusive light beam’d fierce above the Mountain,
Soft, invisible, drinking his sighs in sweet intoxication.”

Ormathwaite Hall, on Skiddaw’s southern slopes was the home of Joseph Wilkinson, for whose landscape engravings Wordsworth wrote the commentary which became his Guide to the Lakes. Coleridge and the Wordsworths visited the Skiddaw area a number of times.
Coleridge, in 1800, and Dorothy Wordsworth, in 1803, wrote about visiting The Howk and the Fairy Kirk at Caldbeck. Coleridge and Wordsworth stayed at Dickens House, formerly the Queen’s Head Inn at Hesket Newmarket in 1803. Coleridge climbed and wrote about Carrock Fell many times. Skiddaw’s mountain neighbour Blencathra features in Wordsworth’s ‘Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle’ and Coleridge’s ‘A Thought Suggested by a View’. Threlkeld Hall on Blencathra’s southern slopes features in Wordsworth’s ‘Benjamin the Waggoner’.

Many later famous literary figures have been inspired by the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite area. The novelist Hugh Walpole (1884-1941) lived in Borrowdale and set his ‘Herries Chronicles’ novels against local scenery and based on sites throughout Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite. Walpole lived at Brackenburn on the slopes of Cat Bells and is buried in St John’s churchyard in Keswick.

The increase in tourism resulted in a growing population in Borrowdale along with new roads, new buildings and changes in agricultural practices. The population of the valley was 342 in 1801 increasing to 506 in 1891 (Bulmer and Snape c. 1901). The tithe map of 1842 depicted a much altered agricultural landscape with a surprising amount of land given over to the growing of crops rather than the traditional pasture.

To meet the growing demands for accommodation for both visitors and local people, public facilities were expanded and improved in Keswick and a large residential suburb was created east of the town. Between 1871 and 1901 the population of the town rose from 2,782 to 4,451. By the 1890s the town had taken on a distinctive Victorian character with substantial stone-built hotels, banks, library, post office, police station, courts and a museum. Guest houses and residences were built to cater for the influx of rail-borne visitors and affluent incomers. Fitz Park, designated as ‘a pleasure ground and place of recreation’, was formally opened in 1887. The Keswick Hotel, built in 1869 next to the railway station, is probably the best surviving reflection of Keswick’s confidence and status as a tourist attraction in the later 19th century.

The 20th century saw a continuing interest from literary figures in the valley and in the growth of tourism. Many famous literary figures visited Hugh Walpole’s home at Brackenburn, on the west side of Derwent Water, including J. B. Priestley, Arthur Ransome and W. H. Auden. Far Wescoe, near Threlkeld was the holiday home of W. H. Auden’s parents in the 1920s and 1930s and Auden wrote many of his well-known poems on visits there. High Ireby, north of Skiddaw, is the home of novelist and broadcaster, Melvyn Bragg whose novels include ‘The Maid of Buttermere’. Lingholm and Fawe Park on the western shores of Derwent Water were the summer holiday residences of Beatrix Potter and her family between 1885 and 1907. Lingholm inspired ‘Tales of Benjamin Bunny’ and St Herbert’s Island, the island in ‘The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin’ (1903). Fawe Park’s kitchen garden formed the basis for Mr McGregor’s garden in ‘The Tale of Peter Rabbit’ (1902) and ‘The Tale of Mrs Tiggy-Winkle’ (1905) was set around Littletown, Skellgil and Cat Bells, nearby in the Newlands valley.

Tourist accommodation took a number of forms. There is a strong tradition and continued presence of hostels in the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite valley. The Youth Hostel Association (YHA) runs Skiddaw bunkhouse, the highest Youth Hostel in Britain at 470 metres Ordnance Datum, Keswick Youth Hostel and Hawse End bunkhouse.
The Barrow House hostel; in Derwent Water is now run privately. The Reverend Thomas Arthur Leonard (1864-1948) founded the Co-operative Holiday Association (CHA) in 1893 and the Holiday Fellowship in 1913. He wanted to offer outdoor holidays to the workers of the large industrial cities of the Midlands and the North of England. He was described following his death in 1948 as the Father of the open air holiday movement. There is a memorial tablet on the slopes of Cat Bells. Derwent Bank, at the northern tip of Derwent Water is still run by HF Holidays. They ran The Old Mill House, Stair, Newlands, a renovated old graphite mill, from 1914 to 1987, which continues to be run as Newlands Adventure Centre. HF Holidays also ran Hawes End, Derwent Water, from 1927 to 1938, which is still a youth activity centre.

9.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

Borrowdale has a particularly important place in the story of the early conservation movement in the Lake District which continues to the present day. The felling of the Crow Park oaks by Greenwich Hospital in the mid-18th century stimulated a public debate about the aesthetics of economic land management decisions. The land was part of the Derwent Water Estate which belonged to the last Earl of Derwent Water, who supported the Jacobite rebellion in 1715. When the rebellion failed he was executed for treason and his estate was given to the Commissioners of Greenwich hospital. The Commissioners sold the oaks for timber and they were cut down in 1749-51. This and other decisions about management of the Derwent Water woodlands came at a time when landscape aesthetics were of increasing interest in society. The debate that ensued in the years and decades following the felling of the Crow Park oaks is a very early example of land management decisions becoming of more than private interest and into a more public arena with competing agendas of the economic decisions of the landowner and the aesthetic values of an increasing number of interested observers who valued the landscape for other reasons.

Wordsworth’s apparently unlikely friendship with John Marshall (1765-1845) of Leeds, the principal flax spinner in England, was to have a significant impact on the ownership and management of the landscape of the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley (see Volume 1, Section 2.b.5). Wordsworth and Marshall were brought together through Dorothy Wordsworth’s childhood friendship with Marshall’s wife, Jane Pollard. Marshall became interested in tree planting, particularly the use of native and non-native species for aesthetic and economic purposes, at the same time as Wordsworth began advising local landowners, such as Lord Lowther, on his aesthetics of landscape planting. The Greenwich Hospital’s Keswick Estate was acquired for John Marshall Junior in 1832 and in 1844 Henry Cowper Marshall purchased Derwent Island. The Marshall family ownership in the valley, as in the rest of the Lake District, sought to control and manage the water, shore and fell sides at the heads of the lakes and to improve both the prospects of landscape and production by planting, conforming to the aesthetic values established in the 18th century. The Wordsworths were instrumental in advising the Marshalls on both the estate purchases and the landscape improvement and influencing the Marshalls’ aesthetic and cultural values and sensibilities. The case of the Keswick
Estate in 1832 provides an early case of the transfer of a productive but iconic estate into protective rather than exploitative ownership. The Greenwich Hospital was already foregoing some economic benefit to the Hospital for the sake of aesthetic value, and had the estate not been sold, the Hospital would have cut timber in quantity.

Another early environmental battle that was fought and won in Borrowdale was the proposal in 1883 for the Buttermere and Braithwaite Railway from Buttermere to Keswick, primarily to carry slate from the Honister quarries. Canon Rawnsley, who was appointed vicar of Crosthwaite in the same year, was instrumental in organising letters to the national press, petitions and protest meetings and he soon defeated the Parliamentary Bill that had been tabled. The Lake District Defence Society was also established in 1883 and other successful campaigns in the valley included the prevention of a proposed road over Sty Head Pass to link Keswick with Wasdale and the west coast.

In 1885 several landowners around Keswick had closed footpaths which had been used for generations. A Miss Spedding, then owner of Latrigg, closed the only access paths to the fell and planted a number of trees. In protest, The Keswick Footpath Preservation Association called for a mass trespass. On 1 October 1887, 2,000 people gathered in Keswick and marched to one of the footpaths where they found a chained gate and a ‘Private’ sign. Spurred on by Keswick local and protest leader, Henry Irwin Jenkinson, the crowd removed the chains on the gate, took down the sign and walked up the footpath singing ‘Rule Britannia’. Miss Spedding’s gamekeeper reportedly asked them to stop singing as it would disturb the birds. Ignoring this they proceeded to the summit for speeches and a rousing rendition of ‘God Save the Queen’. The trespass appeared in all the national papers with The Manchester Guardian reporting that ‘the Latrigg case will affect the right of ascent to almost every mountain in Britain’. Miss Spedding issued writs for damages to the Footpath Preservation Society and the case was heard at Carlisle the following year. Witnesses described how they had used the paths for many years without hindrance. One of these, son of poet Robert Southey, said that he and friends had regularly used the footpaths as children. After two days a compromise was reached. One footpath, Spooney Green Lane, would be opened to the public while the other would remain private. When a victorious Jenkinson and his supporters returned to Keswick they were escorted into town by a crowd and a brass band. Following the court case other land owners in the Lake District who had closed footpaths opened them to the public again. Henry Irwin Jenkinson also led the fundraising to buy Fitz Park for the people of Keswick and his name appears over the main gate to the park.

Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, the Crosthwaite vicar, was one of the three people behind the formation of the National Trust in 1894 and the Trust’s earliest land acquisitions in the English Lake District were in the valley. The Keswick School of Industrial Arts was founded by Canon Rawnsley and his wife Edith as an evening class in woodwork and répoussé (relief metalwork) at the Crosthwaite Parish Rooms. The enterprise, designed to alleviate unemployment, prospered, and within ten years more than 100 men were attending classes. In 1894 a new building was erected for the school, nearby in Keswick. The school operated for 100 years closing in 1984.

In 1889 Marion Twelves brought her linen industry from Langdale to Keswick and connected it with the Keswick School of Industrial Arts and, with Ruskin’s agreement, named it the ‘Ruskin Linen Industry’. In 1892 the craftspeople of Ruskin’s Linen Industry
were commissioned to produce within three days the pall for Alfred Lord Tennyson’s coffin for his funeral at Westminster Abbey. Eight years later the weavers made the pall for Ruskin’s funeral. Both were designed by Edith Rawnsley. The making of Ruskin Lace is still taught today with a teaching lineage that can be traced back to Marion Twelves who died in 1929 at the age of 86.

Borrowdale is important in the history of the development of the National Trust’s involvement with the Lake District. It was here that the fledgling National Trust grew and today it continues to own and manage much land in the valley. Its actions over the last century have helped to maintain the distinctive character of the valley together with preservation of archaeological and industrial monuments and securing public access. The National Trust owns 10,002 hectares of land of which 9,963 hectares is inalienable. It has no leased land and 292 hectares of covenanted land.

The first act of the National Trust in the Lake District was to collect subscriptions for the erection of a memorial to John Ruskin on Friar’s Crag, Derwent Water in 1900 (the remainder of Friar’s Crag was purchased by the Trust in 1922 as a memorial to Rawnsley). This was followed in 1902 by the purchase of part of the Derwent Water lakeshore at Brandlehow, again following a public appeal. This was purchased for public access as the remainder of the shore was at that time in private hands. Most of the remaining lakeshore was purchased over the next 20 years. The Trust later acquired the western lakebed of Derwent Water and the remaining privately owned islands in the lake in 1958. Further early purchases included Manesty Park in 1908, south of Brandlehow, and in 1909, from the Leconfield Estate, the right to public navigation on Derwent Water. In 1910 the Bowder Stone and Grange Fell were acquired and the Neolithic stone circle at Castlerigg in 1913.

Following the First World War, a number of significant gifts of land in and around Borrowdale were gifted to the National Trust as memorials to the fallen. These included Castle Crag in the ‘Jaws of Borrowdale’ by Sir William and Lady Hamer, and much of the high fell land at the southern end of the valley, including Scafell Pike, Great Gable and Great End. Further significant purchases following a public appeal in 1939 increased the Trust’s holdings in central Borrowdale. During this early period the National Trust, under the strong influence of Canon Rawnsley, also successfully opposed a number of developments that would have damaged the landscape character of the area, including the re-building of the road bridges at Portinscale and Grange.

In addition, Herbert Walker of Whitehaven donated Rampsholme Island in Derwent Water to the National Trust in 1929, along with the nearby properties of Strandshag Bay and Stable Hills. In the same year he facilitated the imposition of a National Trust covenant on land east of Derwent Water. After his death his trustees transferred land at The Ings in Borrowdale to the National trust in 1952, this was followed by Great Wood and other land near Keswick in 1969.
After 1946 the National Trust concentrated on building up a farming estate in Borrowdale. Nook Farm was gifted as a war memorial in 1947 and this was followed in 1950 by Ashness Farm and three further farms at Watendlath in 1960 (Fold Head, Stepps End and Caffle House (1962)) which secured the whole of the hanging valley of Watendlath. Seatoller Farm came to the National Trust through National Land Fund procedures in 1959 and as this included the land at Honister Hause, the Trust was in a position to control road improvement over the pass.

In 1976 the farms of Longthwaite and Yew Tree came to the National Trust from the winding up of Lake District Farms Estates Limited and in 1982 the entire holding of Seathwaite Farm was acquired by the National Trust following the gift of the Kingston Lacy Estate in Dorset, which included land in Seathwaite and the remains of the wad mines.

The majority of the land surrounding Bassenthwaite Lake is either in private hands or owned or leased by the Forestry Commission. Some of the extensive conifer plantations on the western shore, and particularly on the eastern side, on the Dodd, are being felled and converted to native woodland. The lake bed, navigation rights and parts of the lakeshore are owned by the Lake District National Park Authority. These were transferred to the National Park Authority by the Treasury in 1979, following the death of the previous owner, Lord Egremont. Recent conservation activity here has achieved many benefits including improving lake water quality, including for the rare fish, Vendace, increased public access and the return in 2001, after nearly two centuries of absence in England, of breeding Ospreys. This same property transfer also saw the National Park Authority becoming owner of the Caldbeck and Uldale Commons, covering 4,555 hectares of registered Common Land in the Caldbeck and Uldale Fells, on the north side of the Skiddaw massif.

In 1937 the Buttermere Slate Quarry entered into a contract to receive mains electricity supply to its slate quarry on Honister Pass between Borrowdale and Buttermere. The supply would be on poles up the Borrowdale Valley. Friends of the Lake District, the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the National Trust all supported the supply to the quarry and hoped that Borrowdale properties could be included, but they wanted as much of the line as possible to be put underground. The company, local councils and objectors debated and disagreed over costings, routes and what could be undergrounded. Eventually the scheme was dropped. Honister quarry generated its own electricity, but the legacy was that the Borrowdale residents pressed the electricity company and the Government for an underground supply for the valley, successfully arguing the case for modern services, but sensitively delivered in a special landscape. This eventually came to pass in 1955-56.

The improvement of the A66 from Penrith to Cockermouth proved extremely controversial in the 1970s. The two most contentious elements were an engineered embankment along the west shore of Bassenthwaite Lake and the high-level bridge over the River Greta just east of Keswick. A route to the north outside the National Park was a potential alternative. A seven-week public enquiry resulted in the controversial decision in December 1972 by the Secretary of State for the Environment favouring the route through the National Park. The Countryside Commission at the time called it ‘a permanent monument to insensitivity towards superb scenery.’
FIGURE 9.21 View of Bassenthwaite Lake from the north west.
9.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The attributes demonstrating the contribution of this Valley to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District as a whole are listed in Figure 9.6. Attributes for the first theme of agro-pastoral agriculture are strongly represented in the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley with a very clear landscape pattern of inbye and intake in the narrow side valleys of Seathwaite and Stonethwaite, and a field system at Watendlath which developed from two medieval ring garths. The areas of inbye land are more extensive in the more open parts of the valley and intakes less so, at the northwest end of Bassenthwaite and north of the Caldbeck Fells, but all parts of the valley contain early farmhouses dating from the 17th and 19th centuries. Borrowdale contains several major Herdwick farms while the northern part of the valley is a key area for the Swaledale breed.

The evidence for early land use is evident from the important Neolithic sites and finds of polished stone axes in the area and the evidence for Roman occupation includes important forts and marching camps. Place-names indicate extensive early medieval settlement, including in the Norse period. The Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley is one of the most important areas of the Lake District for the landscape evidence of early industry. The Company of Mines Royal established a presence in Keswick in the late 16th century and significant early mines were developed in the Newlands valley and on the Caldbeck Fells, which feature a particularly complex and geologically important mineralisation. The unique graphite (wad) mine is located in Seathwaite and in the 19th century extensive slate quarries operated at the southern end of Borrowdale. The last mine in the Lake District to close – Force Crag – is also located in the valley. The key market town of Keswick was established in the medieval period and its early pattern of market place and burgage plots survives within the modern townscape. Smaller settlements such as Grange and Rosthwaite also have medieval origins while the large village of Caldbeck in the north has a particular character deriving from both agricultural and industrial activities.

The Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley is also one of the key areas for the second theme of aesthetic inspiration. It was one of the primary areas of focus of the early visitors to the Lake District from the mid-18th century and the area around Derwent Water, from Keswick to the ‘Jaws of Borrowdale’, became celebrated nationally as a landscape of great Sublime and Picturesque beauty. Villas and designed landscapes proliferated on the shores and islands of Derwent Water and Bassenthwaite and Keswick developed accommodation and facilities for the increasing numbers of cultural tourists. The Valley was visited by numerous guidebook writers and artists and its landscapes and features were recorded in hundreds of watercolours and prints. The key Romantic poets Southey and Coleridge both took up residence at different times at Greta Hall in Keswick while the poet Shelley also lived briefly in Keswick. The Wordsworths were frequent visitors to Keswick and Borrowdale features in many of William Wordsworth’s poems.
The Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley is also highly important in demonstrating the attributes of the early conservation movement. This was where the very first concerns emerged over the preservation of the scenic qualities and beauty of the English Lake District landscape, occasioned by the felling of mature oak trees on the northern shores of Derwent Water in the mid-18th century. This was followed in the later 18th and early 19th centuries by the purchase of key parts of Borrowdale by John Marshall and others keen to preserve the beauty of the area. Canon Rawnsley, vicar for many years of the Parish of Crosthwaite, led the battle against a proposed railway on the west side of Derwent Water to the Honister slate quarries, and the National Trust, of which Rawnsley was a founder, made its first purchases of land in the English Lake District in this valley. Today the National Trust ownership is extensive and has been responsible for helping to maintain both the important agro-pastoral and picturesque aspects of the landscape.

As a functioning agro-pastoral landscape with extensive surviving evidence of aesthetic inspiration and a key importance for the early conservation movement, the Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite Valley demonstrates strongly the attributes for all three themes of Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District.

**Figure 9.22** View of the inbye land in the Newlands valley, surrounded by the Derwent Fells, from Catbells
Sosgill packhorse bridge, St John’s in the Vale
10. THIRLMERE

Description, History and Development
10. THIRLMERE VALLEY

“…take a flight of not more than four or five miles eastward to the ridge of Helvellyyn and you will look down upon Wytheburn and St. John’s Vale…”

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

“The story of Thirlmere... is, I think a watershed in the History of Conservation. For the advocates of the reservoir it was a pyrrhic victory, since it was very important in embedding the ideas of Conservation in the minds of the late Nineteenth century intelligentsia both in Britain and elsewhere, and that, in turn, is the basis of the Environmental Movement around the Globe”.


10.1 DESCRIPTION

10.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Though relatively small in area compared to other English Lake District valleys Wythburn, (more usually known as Thirlmere) is a large-scale, steep-sided, glaciated upland valley visually dominated by a large reservoir (Thirlmere) and heavily influenced by land management policies designed to protect water quality within the catchment. The valley runs south-north from the watershed, Dunmail Raise, the physical and psychological boundary between the south and north Lake District, before reaching an abrupt end against the bulk of the Skiddaw and Blencathra massif with the town of Keswick at its foot. It has the valleys of Ullswater to the east, Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside to the south and Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite to the west and north. See Figure 10.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figure 10.2 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Thirlmere valley.

The fells on the eastern edge of the valley are particularly impressive, including the bulk of Helvellyyn, the third highest mountain in the Lake District. The underlying geology
Figure 10.1 Thirlmere Valley
Illustrative Map

1. Castlerigg Stone Circle (owned by National Trust)
2. Shoulthwaite Hillfort
3. Remains of shielings north of Cleugh Fold
4. Dalehead Hall
5. Castlerigg Hall
6. Farnside
7. Hallin Root Old House
8. Steel End Farm
9. Sosgill packhorse bridge
10. Helvellyn
11. Thirlmere

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Figure 10.2 Thirlmere Valley Cultural Landscape Map
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THIRLMERE</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common land</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland industries</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water-powered industry</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market towns</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villas</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed landscape</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>🌟🌟🌟</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of the majority of the valley is the Borrowdale Volcanic Series but this changes to the Skiddaw Group of slate from St John’s in the Vale. An igneous intrusion at Threlkeld comprises microgranite which was the focus of a large quarry.

Thirlmere Reservoir is a vast expanse of water framed on its east side by the imposing steep fells, crags and screes of the Helvellyn massif and on the west by the less steep but large-scale and no less imposing Armboth and Castlerigg Fells. The water has a dark and brooding quality with high, steep enclosing fells funnelling the wind to create white-horses and foam-streaks on the surface when other lakes are mirror calm. The sense of enclosure felt on the lower slopes of the valley is emphasised by dense coniferous woodland, though recent tree felling has opened up fine views across the lake from the A591 road which hugs the eastern shore. Despite obvious human intervention this is still very much a wild, upland valley with a sense of tranquillity away from the road, particularly on the western shore and fells where stunning views of the Helvellyn range can be seen to the east. Habitation is sparse south of the lake, limited to occasional hill farms around Steel End. North of the lake the twin valleys of Naddle Beck and St John’s Beck contain extensive improved grazing enclosed by stone walls and more frequent farms. The dam is surprisingly well contained visually by landform and trees, but the Grade II listed, sandstone-built, straining well structure is a distinctive feature on the side of the A591. At Fisher Place and Stannah urban looking houses were built to house the Manchester Corporation workers employed on the construction project.

10.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The Thirlmere Valley’s history tells the story of a heavily politicised landscape preservation movement where the concepts of natural beauty versus national interest were tested perhaps for the first time at this scale. Well organised opposition to the project was represented by the Thirlmere Defence Association formed in 1877 and including visionaries such as Ruskin and Carlyle, and supported by the social reformer Octavia Hill in London and by many newspaper editors. Despite this, the needs of a fast-growing urban population in Manchester were deemed by Parliament to outweigh the modification of a
landscape of recognised great natural beauty. The dam was built and the 96 miles long aqueduct delivered its first water to the city in 1894 as it still does today.

If the damming of the valley and the enlargement of two small lakes to form a large reservoir was landscape change on a large scale, so was the afforestation of nearly 800 hectares of land to prevent erosion, protect water quality and to profit from harvested timber. It is regarded by many as the greater crime. The large blocks of non-indigenous conifers and the scar left by draw-down of the reservoir in dry periods are undoubtedly elements which detract from Thirlmere's natural beauty. However, the valley still has the drama of its soaring fellsides, a large body of water and north of the reservoir the rural charm of St John's in the Vale. It is stunning scenery and its record of the adaption of landscape to meet the needs of a changing society, and the arguments for not doing so, are fascinating and an integral part of the evolution of the Lake District.

10.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The early agricultural landscape of Thirlmere has been largely covered by the reservoir and forestry plantations, but remnants of the field pattern can be seen around the water's edge and in other parts of the valley, for example a possible early fragment of a field system by the car park at Helvellyn Gill. Extensive areas of valley bottom land at the northern end of Thirlmere, in St John's in the Vale and around Naddle to the northwest, are divided into the small, irregular stone-walled fields characteristic of small, ancient farms. This pattern extends southwards along the valley at Legburthwaite and there is a small area at Wythburn, at the southern end. Larger walled intakes can be seen surrounding the inbye land at Legburthwaite, running along the lower slopes below Helvellyn and also at Wythburn. Other areas of former intake have been covered by conifer plantation.

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Although the extent of agricultural land was reduced in the Thirlmere Valley, it is still the location for possibly the largest Herdwick farm in the Lake District. West Head Farm is a tenanted farm owned by United Utilities, successor to the Manchester Corporation who acquired the farm in 1870. West Head is one of the major producers of quality Herdwick tups in the country, in recent years producing in excess of 40 quality tups annually. In the first Herdwick flock book of 1920 Isaac Thompson at West Head Farm had a flock of 1,000 ewes, one of the largest at the time.

There are 22 farms with fell-going flocks in the Thirlmere Valley area. There are four Herdwick flocks and three Swaledale flocks registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Rough Fell flocks and no National Trust landlord flocks in the Thirlmere Valley.

Upland grazing is provided on about 4,534 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Thirlmere Valley, around 56 per cent of the total area, and virtually all of the open fell. The areas of Common Land are Whelpside, Steel End, West Head, Armboth and Bleaberry Fells on the west and the south east sides of the valley, St John’s Common
FIGURE 10.6 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Thirlmere Valley
on the rest of the east side of the valley, and Dodd Common, High Rigg Common and
Threlkeld Common at the northern end of the valley.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

The Dockray and Matterdale Shepherds’ Meet is held alternately at Dockray (Ullswater
valley) and Threlkeld Cricket Club on the first Thursday after the 22 November, every year.

FARMSTEADS

A number of late 17th century farmhouses survive in the Naddle valley, St John’s in the
Vale, and the Glenderamackin Valley. Collectively the farmhouses dates suggest a period
of rebuilding in stone from the 17th century. Many of these are listed buildings, of which
there are 28 in the valley.

**TABLE 10.1** Key farm buildings in the Thirlmere Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASTLERIGG HALL</strong></td>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>328216 522535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good example of an early 17th century farmhouse, known as How Place in the 1640s and the ancestral home of the Wren family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOLLIN ROOT OLD HOUSE</strong></td>
<td>17th – 18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>330844 523894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A late 17th century or early 18th century farmhouse that is now used as a farm outbuilding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STANAH</strong></td>
<td>17th – 20th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>332035 519001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmhouse, now private house. Mid-17th century with 20th century alterations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRAM CRAIG</strong></td>
<td>17th – 20th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>331859 521394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A late 17th century farmhouse with later alterations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. THIRLMERE

**FORNSIDE**
Fornside and its barns date to the late 17th century which – aside from Dalehead Hall and Threlkeld Hall – is the earliest example of rebuilding of medieval farmsteads in stone.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 332092 520635

**THE GREEN, LEGBURTHWAITE**
The Green at Legburthwaite is early 18th century, and reflects the continuing replacement of earlier buildings in stone.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 331854 519663

**STEEL END**
Historic mapping depicts this as a pre-1770 farm.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 332209 512848

**WEST HEAD**
17th century farmstead.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Not listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 331850 513348

**BROTTO**
Brotto (late 17th century) farmhouse, now cottage.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 331841 518466

**6 FISHER PLACE**
House of mid or late 18th century.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 331818 518379
10.1.4  INDUSTRY

The physical aspects of the water industry dominate the main valley, most obviously the reservoir itself. The dam infrastructure is now considered to be of historic value, as it was the first English masonry gravity dam and one of only two arch dams in England (i.e. similar construction to the Hoover Dam). The dam curves across the northern end of the reservoir, 20 metres high and 264 metres long. It impounded 8,900 million gallons (40,000 million litres) of water uniting Leathes Water and Wythburn Water in 1894. The overflow channel takes the water to the discharge chamber and valve houses. On the eastern side of the reservoir, an aqueduct runs from north to south along the foot of the fellside collecting the water from the becks running off the fells before carrying it into the reservoir near Station Coppice. The straining well building on the east shore marks where the head of Wythburn Water once was; it is a mock castle-like tower with three wings and now contributes some picturesque qualities of its own. The well feeds the 96-mile underground aqueduct to Manchester, which heads south from Thirlmere through Dunmail Raise, with an average fall of 20 inches per mile (0.32 metre per kilometre). There are many other water company buildings in the valley, including houses and works buildings.

In addition to water abstraction, industrial activity in Thirlmere has also included mining and quarrying. As a consequence, numerous trials and small workings can be seen scattered throughout the valley. These include a copper mine of the Elizabethan period on the fellside of Brown Crag above Thirlspot, the small but spectacularly located lead mine below the summit of Helvellyn on Whelp Side, near Wythburn, which only
operated between 1839 and 1882, and the former copper mine at Birkside Gill.
There are numerous small quarries dating from the period of dam construction
together with larger examples including the slate quarries at Bell Crag on Armboth
Fell and the extensive microgranite quarries at Bramcrag, Hilltop and Threlkeld on the
east side of St John’s in the Vale.

10.1.5  SETTLEMENTS

Settlement in Thirlmere now consists of dispersed, single farmsteads, with a small
hamlet at Legburthwaite. In the past there were more substantial hamlets at The City
and around Wythburn, both at the southern end of the valley, but these were inundated
by the reservoir. This was also the fate of one of the most substantial houses in the
valley, at Armboth.

Key vernacular buildings that have survived include Dalehead Hall, a late 16th century
house once owned by the Leathes family, partly rebuilt in 1623, with late 17th and 19th
century extensions. A fine packhorse bridge of the 18th century can be seen at Sosgill,
in St John’s in the Vale. Wythburn church, at the southern end of Thirlmere, was built
in 1640 on the site of an earlier chapel.

10.1.6  VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

No buildings or landscapes of Picturesque influence were constructed in Thirlmere.
Indeed the Bishop of Carlisle in his letter to The Times in 1877 stated that ‘Thirlmere
is absolutely free from villas and all that is villainous’. It is an irony that this absence of
villas, due significantly to the resistance of the Leathes family to offers to sell land for
villa building, was one of the factors that favoured Thirlmere as a potential reservoir
over other lakes such as Ullswater.

10.2  HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

10.2.1  ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

The flooding of the most fertile land in the valley bottom has removed evidence of some
of the earliest settlement in the valley. The surviving archaeological sites are therefore
restricted to higher ground and the periphery of the valley area. The famous cairn on the
top of Dunmail Raise is reputed to be the burial place of King Dunmail, the last monarch
of the early medieval kingdom of Cumbria (c. 945 AD). While this is possible, as Dunmail
Raise has formed a political boundary for a very long time (it was at one point the border
between England and Scotland and more recently the boundary between the former
counties of Cumberland and Westmorland) the cairn may be prehistoric in origin. One of
the best known sites in the Lake District is Castlerigg stone circle, probably late Neolithic
in date (about 3000 BC) and set within a dramatic amphitheatre formed by the fells and highest peaks of Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Grasmoor and Blencathra. While it is not direct evidence of settlement in the valley it is likely to have been the focus of contemporary events, temporary settlement or be associated with settlement nearby. There are also good examples of Neolithic rock art at Steel End; such artwork was often located on well-known routes across the landscape. There is a Bronze Age ring cairn on Armboth Fell, looking out to Helvellyn on the other side of the valley suggesting that, like Dunmail Raise, it was designed to be seen from a distance.

Evidence for late prehistoric agriculture survives in the form of clearance cairns and an enclosed settlement at Threlkeld Knotts. Other early remains are not dated and could be prehistoric or early medieval. For example, the hillfort at Shoulthwaite has been radio carbon dated to the early medieval period, but such sites were frequently reused from an earlier period of occupation, often the late Bronze Age (2000 – 800 BC) or Iron Age (800 BC to 100 AD).

The remains of a Roman marching camp have recently been found near Castlerigg stone circle.

### 10.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

There is little certain evidence in the valley of settlement of the early medieval period. The small but heavily defended hillfort at Shoulthwaite has been radiocarbon dated to the late 6th or early 7th centuries AD. Otherwise, survey of the Thirlmere estate has suggested that early medieval exploitation of the area was initially sporadic and potentially transhumant. The earliest settlements are likely to have been seasonal shielings for summer grazing on unenclosed upland pastures. The majority of the nationally-important designated archaeological sites in the valley are shieling sites, but it is not clear whether they are early medieval (400 – 1092 AD) or medieval (1092 – 1600 AD) in date. These are small, usually-single-celled, rectangular huts, but they may alternatively be shepherds huts and distinguishing the two is problematic. Shielings are found on Armboth Fell and north of Clough Fold.

White Side, Birk Side and Whelp Side probably contain the ‘saetr’ place-name element which is Old Norse in origin, but not definitive proof of Norse occupation in the 10th century. Similarly, other place-name evidence tends to represent natural features,
such as the Old Norse names of Brotto (previously Brattah) derived from the Norwegian ‘bratt’ (steep) and ‘-a’ (river); Stanah to the north derives from the Norse ‘stan’ (stony) and ‘-a’ (river).

10.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

Some insight into medieval farming practices can be gained from the surviving field patterns, although at Thirlmere it is more useful to examine historic maps that pre-date the creation of the reservoir and the forestry plantation to obtain a fuller picture. Documentary sources are also helpful in establishing ownership of the different areas, which elsewhere in the English Lake District, tends to result in distinctively different land management practices which survive as different field patterns. For example, the lords’ holdings are often separate to and strategically superior to common field and village. There is some evidence for this at Dale Head but the date of the establishment of the agricultural regime here is not certain, but could be as early as the 12th century.

The best agricultural land, now underwater, would have been colonised first. Armboth is set amongst strips which possibly indicate the location of a common open field around part of the west shore of Thirlmere. At Wythburn, these open field strips are clearer, and straddle the Frere Beck between the church and the southern tip of Thirlmere, where the farm at Water Head was located. The fields here are exclusively on the west side of the road, on flat land similar to the evidence at Armboth. Topography on the east side, on the lower slopes of Helvellyn, probably precluded such extensive arable cultivation. The names Castlerigg, Fieldside and High Fieldside (both latter containing ‘saetr’) perhaps record an early open field although strip fields are not so evident here.

At the north end of the valley, there are examples of open field strip fields on the lower-lying land along the Glenderamackin River. Between Guardhouse and Doddick adjacent to the present day Threlkeld Hall are some strips which appear to represent a former common field. The name Guardhouse contains the ‘garth’ prefix indicating the presence of a ring garth of some kind. This would have been a wall built to separate the tenanted farmland on the valley floor (inbye land) from the manorial forest or waste. The wall had a two-fold purpose: as a legal boundary between the land managed by the tenants and that belonging to the Lord of the Manor, and as a physical boundary it kept stock pastured on the fellside in summer from trampling any crops growing in the valley bottom. Threlkeld was a demesne manor of the Barony of Greystoke and was first referred to as ‘Trellekell’ in the Pipe Rolls of 1197. A chapel at Threlkeld was first documented in 1220 in the Cartulary of Fountains Abbey. The old Threlkeld Hall, now demolished, was not recorded until the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509) and while there was probably a pele tower here ‘there are doubts about its actual site, the very stones having been taken away’. However, collectively the strip field patterns and the confirmation of settlement from 1197 suggests that the field pattern has its origins at least in the 12th century, although the former pele tower may be a little later. To the west, at Townfield (also a good place name indicator) and Burns Farm the common fields of Threlkeld and Wescoe extend into the valley area.

The small settlements of Lowthwaite, Wanthwaite, Legburthwaite and Smaithwaite do not appear to have evolved out of a common field system, but instead they
THIRLMERE seem to have developed as colonies. Indications of clearance are contained in these place-names ('thwaite'), and 'Legburthwaite' first appears in an Inquisition Post Mortem of 1303. These farmsteads on cleared land in St John's in the Vale probably date from a period of population growth and settlement expansion in the 13th century, extending the reach of settlement southwards, with Fornside perhaps marking a limit of permanent settlement. It is possible that Legburthwaite and Smaithwaite developed as a separate colony as settlement crept south from Keswick via Naddle.

The uplands would have been colonised at a later date, but possibly by making permanent, earlier sheiling settlements. Fornside derives its name from 'saetr', first appearing as 'Fornesate' in 1303. This is an example of former seasonal settlements being colonised as farms, in the 13th century at the latest in this case. Naddle first appears in 1292 in the ‘Assize Rolls for Cumberland’, and this may be of similar antiquity. Shoulthwaite first appears in the 1280 ‘Furness Coucher Book’.

At the south end of Thirlmere, Wythburn, first appears in c. 1280 as ‘Withebotine’, in the ‘Furness Coucher Book’ when the owner of the land was Adam de Derwentwater. There is no direct evidence that any of the land belonged to monasteries as in other valleys, but de Derwentwater granted a right of way to Furness Abbey for travelling from Borrowdale via Ashness, Casterigg, Shoulthwaite to Dunmail Raise along with a second route via Watendlath, Harrop and Wythburn. The place-name Frere Beck may be derived from a connection with Friars and could record Wythburn’s origins as a grange or vaccary settlement or some other monastic connection.

A second period of expansion can probably be extended to include the isolated farms down the east side of the valley to Thirlspot – Stanah, Stybeck, Brotto and Fisher Place; that the colonisation seems to run out of steam at Thirlspot suggests that it swept southwards from a centre further north at Threlkeld. In any case, settlement seems to have successively colonised former seasonal sites in a southerly direction from what is now the A66 trunk road. These settlements seem to have had minimal land available on the valley floor for arable, and they probably relied on the common pasture at High Rigg, Low Rigg and St John’s Common to provide a surplus of livestock and animal produce for market in Keswick. The enclosure pattern – especially to the east of Dale Head and Fisher Place, appears to concentrate on the adjacent farm at Stybeck, although this picture is probably distorted by the numerous rivulets across the landscape from Helvellyn to the east.

There is also some tentative evidence for medieval deer parks in this valley. The area south of Armboth was referred to as ‘Deergarth’ and may have belonged to the Dale Head residents. Another area called High Park on the east side, close to Dale Head, may have been a deer park in the medieval period, but it is perhaps more likely that it was a product of 16th century reorganisation, because its name, ‘Laithes Park’ on 18th century maps may hark back to the Laythes family who occupied Dale Head from 1577. The enclosure wall for the Laithes Park/High Park deer park survives in part on the east side of Thirlmere.

There are few historic sources for the 16th-17th centuries in Thirlmere. Dale Head was first occupied by the Laythes family from 1577 perhaps to the existing site. Dalehead Cottage/Dalehead Hall is late 16th century and was partly rebuilt in 1623, with late 17th and early 19th century extensions. It therefore seems to relate to Laythe family
ownership. The manor of Wythburn was held by the Braithwaites of Warcop. When Thomas Braithwaite died in 1640, he held Wythburn, Armeboth, Smarthwaite and Naddle.

Clarke’s map of 1787 may have captured landscape changes originating in the 16-17th centuries. It showed minor extensions to the enclosed land at Wythburn where the inbye land had been extended piecemeal into adjoining areas. Additional enclosure also appears to have taken place around the north-western shore of the lake, between Shoulthwaite and Armboth and in the north at Wanthwaite, Low Rigg and Rakefoot. However on the east side and at the north end of Thirlmere the colony farms seem not to have extended their holdings at all. Overall, intaking appears to have occurred in very small pieces around Fisher Place, and around Wythburn and the crags between Shoulthwaite and Sosgill.

10.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The Thirlmere Valley attracted modest amounts of attention from the guide book authors of the 18th century. Some early descriptions emphasised the wildness of the place, including William Gilpin in 1772:

“No tufted verdure graces its banks, nor hanging woods throw rich reflections its surface: but every form, which it suggests, is savage, and desolate”.

William Gilpin, ‘Observations, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the year 1772’, on several parts of England; particularly the mountains, and lakes of Cumberland, and Westmoreland (1786)

FIGURE 10.10 Helvellyn from the west side of Thirlmere. Inbye and intake fields can be seen on the far side of the reservoir.
Thomas West was not inspired to create a series of viewing stations in Thirlmere, but saw beyond the desolation described by Gilpin, recording that the "most picturesque point is from an eminence behind Dale Head House and that the lake was ... increased by a variety of pastoral torrents that pour their silver streams down the mountains' side and then, warbling, join the lake." (Guide to the Lakes, 1778)

West also noted in his writings other significant features in the valley including the unique, three stages, 'Celtic' Bridge at the narrow neck in the centre of the lake, the wooded Great How at the northern end of the lake and Raven Crag, opposite.

Despite this, there is no obvious record of the Thirlmere Valley being a hugely popular attraction for early tourists. It was, however, a through route for these tourists between the greater attractions in the Grasmere valley, Keswick and Borrowdale. The King's Head Hotel, at Thirlspot, is a late 17th century coaching inn which would have been used by such travellers.

Helvellyn is the third highest mountain in England and the Lake District and access to it is much easier than the higher peaks of Scafell Pike and Scafell. It has many choices of routes from all sides. Because of this, it has been and still is a hugely popular and well visited mountain for fell-walking and climbing. Building on this popularity, the Youth Hostel Association operated a hostel in Thirlmere at Legburthwaite from 1970 to 2001. Since then a new hostel has been built on the site and is operated by a private business.

### 10.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

If the valley failed to attract hordes of tourists, it did capture the imagination of the Romantic poets. The Wordsworths and Coleridge often met in the valley while travelling between their respective homes in Grasmere and Keswick. The point at which they met was commemorated by a rock known as the 'Rock Of Names', upon which were carved the initials of Coleridge, William Wordsworth, his brother John and sister Dorothy, and Mary and Sarah Hutchinson. The original rock was blasted during construction of the reservoir, but pieces of it were rescued by Canon Rawnsley. They are now located outside the Wordsworth Museum in Grasmere. A bronze plaque by the reservoir in Thirlmere commemorates this stone, which was mentioned by Dorothy Wordsworth in her 'Grasmere Journal'.

A number of surviving buildings and features in the valley have direct associations with the poets and their writings. Wythburn Church was described by Wordsworth in the 'The Waggoner' as:

"Wytheburn’s modest House of prayer,  
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling"

The church, built in 1640 and restored in 1872, contains some bronze work by the Keswick School of Industrial Arts. The ruins of the Nag’s Head Inn, also in Wythburn are where Keats slept in June 1818 ('many fleas were in the beds”) and from here that Matthew Arnold set out in 1833 for the walk to Watendlath described in 'Resignation'
and commemorated by a stone erected by Canon Rawnsley. The Inn was mentioned by Wordsworth in his 'Guide to the Lakes' as a good starting point for the ascent of Helvellyn. To the north was the rival Cherry Tree Inn where Joseph Budworth stayed in 1792 and was given a riotous description by Wordsworth in his 'The Waggoner'. Wordsworth apparently stayed here ('spouting his poems grandly') with Scott, Lockhart and Wilson on August 23 1823.

Wordsworth mentioned Great How in 'Rural Architecture' (1800), which tells the tale of three local schoolboys who climbed:

“to the top of Great How...
And there they built up, without mortar or lime,
A man on the peak of the crag.”

Wordsworth was much associated with Helvellyn. One of the great portraits of the poet, by Benjamin Robert Haydon, poses him against a backdrop of the mountain, and was painted to commemorate a sonnet that Wordsworth had written to Haydon while climbing Helvellyn in 1840, at the age of seventy. Forty-one years earlier, on their walking tour of 1799, Wordsworth and Coleridge ascended Helvellyn. In his Notebook, Coleridge recorded the vista of lakes from the summit, including "Grasmere like a sullen tarn", "luminous Cunneston lake" and "the glooming Shadow, Wynandermere with its Island". Helvellyn was relatively near to the Wordsworth’s dwelling in Grasmere and they climbed it many times. Dorothy’s first known ascent was made from Legburthwaite on 25 October 1801 and she recorded:

“glorious, glorious sights. The Sea at Cartmel. The Scotch mountains beyond the sea to the right. Whiteside large, and round, and very soft, and green, behind us. Mists above and below, and close to us, with the sun amongst them. They shot down to the coves.”

Dorothy Wordsworth, ‘Grasmere Journal’ (1801)

In ‘The Prelude’, Wordsworth opened Book VIII, subtitled ‘Love of Nature leading to Love of Mankind’, with this account of Grasmere Fair as seen from the summit:

“What sounds are those, Helvellyn, that are heard
Up to thy summit, through the depth of air
Ascending, as if distance had the power
To make the sounds more audible? What crowd
Covers, or sprinkles o’er, yon village green?
Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,
Though but a little family of men,
Shepherds and tillers of the ground – betimes
Assembled with their children and their wives,
And here and there a stranger interspersed.
They hold a rustic fair”
William Hutchinson’s fanciful account of Castle Rock in his ‘Excursion to the Lakes’ (1774) and Walter Scott’s visits to the area in 1797 and with Wordsworth in 1805 inspired Scott to write the poem ‘The Bridal of Triermain’ (1805). This was a tale of how King Arthur chancing upon a deserted ‘castle’ which came to life, until he departed:

“The monarch, breathless and amazed,  
Back on the fatal castle gazed –  
Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,  
Darkening against the morning sky;  
But, on the spot where once they frown’d,  
The lonely streamlet brawl’ld around  
A tufted knoll, where dimly shone  
Fragments of rocks and rifted stone.”

Perhaps the finest description of Thirlmere was provided by Coleridge in his Notebook entry for 23 October 1803:

“O Thirlmere! – let me some how or other celebrate the world in thy mirror. – Conceive all possible varieties of Form, Fields, & Trees, and naked or ferny Crags – ravines, behaired with Birches – Cottages, smoking chimneys, dazzling wet places of small rock-precipices – dazzling castle windows in the reflection – all these, within a divine outline in a mirror of 3 miles distinct vision!”

**10.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES**

The Thirlmere Valley was transformed in environmental, social and economic terms in the last decade of the 19th century and into the early decades of the 20th century. This started in the 1870s with the Manchester Corporation Water Works’ (MCWW) desire to build a drinking water supply reservoir in the English Lake District to increase the existing supply of clean water to the growing population and industry in Manchester. The Corporation settled on Thirlmere as the preferred valley. A Parliamentary Act was required to construct the reservoir.

“In the mid-1870s frock-coated and silver-bearded strangers were observed picking their way around the rough landscape surrounding Thirlmere in the heart of the Lake District... Word spread that Manchester was involved, that the famous water engineer J. F. Bateman was involved. By mid-1877, the secret was out: Manchester planned to buy Thirlmere and its environs, embank the lake, and pipe its water 100 miles to the growing and thirsty city”

Ritvo (2009)
The flooding of an English Lake District valley was hugely controversial at the time and precipitated the development of an organised landscape conservation movement nationally. The story of Thirlmere is a fascinating record of the recognition of the landscape as a national asset. But eventually the needs of a fast growing urban population were deemed by Parliament to outweigh the major changes to a recognised landscape of great natural beauty. The first water was delivered from the reservoir to the city of Manchester in 1894. Despite the changes, the valley still has the drama of its soaring fellsides, a large body of water, and north of the reservoir the rural charm of St John’s in the Vale. It has stunning scenery and its record of the adaption of landscape to meet the needs of a changing society, and the arguments for not doing so, are fascinating and an integral part of the evolution of the English Lake District landscape.

The opposition to the construction of the reservoir was focussed around the rapidly-formed Thirlmere Defence Association and attracted a national debate and audience in the press. The Parliamentary Act enabling the reservoir’s construction was passed in 1879, and the process was a turning point. Prior to this decision, the aesthetics of landscape had largely been a matter for wealthy private landowners with money to spend on landscape ‘improvements’. The Thirlmere debate made landscape a matter for everyone. People hundreds of miles away from Thirlmere felt that they had a share of the ownership, not of the land itself, but of the views over that land. In parallel to the landscape debate, significant concern developed over the potential threat to continuing public recreational access to the fells and lake in the valley.

This battle is a significant watershed in the history of the conservation movement and for cultural landscape protection in the UK and globally. It provoked, among other things, the formation of the National Trust, the Friends of the Lake District and the eventual designation of UK National Parks. The proposed construction of the Thirlmere reservoir in the late 19th century and the battles about whether it should be built and subsequent forest management, brought to a head the appreciation of the vulnerability of the Lake District landscape, and public access to it.

The changes to the valley started with the acquisition of the land by the Manchester Corporation Water Works and from 1890-94 the construction of the dam, new roads and buildings and the flooding of the valley took place. Before the construction of the reservoir, Thirlmere comprised two small tarns, linked by a narrow neck of water. One of the last people to document the valley before it was flooded was John Barrow who wrote:

“We crossed the remarkable bridges, constructed about midway across the lake. They consist of five or six broad stone piers, with continuous wooden bridges resting upon them, with a handrail on one side, and are only a few feet above water. Without this hand rail I should have been sorry to have ventured across in such a high wind as was blowing. A fine avenue leads to the bridges, which will also disappear, as it is intended to raise the level of the lake by some fifty feet”

John Barrow, Mountain Ascents in Westmorland and Cumberland (1886)
Around the lake’s shores was a narrow band of enclosures with scattered farmsteads. These enclosures had to be reorganised around the new water’s edge, on both shores. The Benn and Castlerigg Fells, for example, were clearly enclosed on a large scale between 1862 and 1898. Some enclosure, notably around Harrop Tarn, is clearly 20th century. Surviving ‘bields’ are also widespread on the historical maps; some of these are later features, either shelters, dens or traps or in the case of Otter Bield, now submerged, a natural feature.

The changes to the valley associated with the construction of the reservoir continued into the 20th century with the afforestation of large areas of the fellsides around the valley. The physical result of this battle and subsequent decisions over the valley’s forestry and land management since then has resulted in the current landscape.

The southern two-thirds of the Thirlmere Valley area, south of St John’s in the Vale and Naddle valleys, is now a narrow steep-sided valley with the reservoir occupying the whole valley floor from side to side, flanked by predominantly coniferous forestry plantations, with no dwellings or settlements. During periods of dry weather the water level drops revealing a wide band of bare exposed rock. This landscape is distinctively different to most of the other valleys in the English Lake District.

The catchment land and reservoir infrastructure is now owned and operated by United Utilities, a private sector business, and the successor to the Manchester Corporation Water Works and North West Water Authority. United Utilities owns 4700 hectares of land in the Thirlmere Valley, the whole of the southern two-thirds of the valley. The reservoir supplies about 11 per cent of the water demand of the North West of England. Over the past ten years most of the non-native tree cover has been removed around the lakeshore opening up wider views of the water and the valley. This has been a result of battles in the late 20th century over the interpretation and implementation of the forestry aspects of the 1879 Act. Also in recent years, large-scale re-structuring of the forestry on the fellsides has been carried out. The forest has become a designated reserve for the threatened native Red Squirrel. Access and Common Land issues have continued to be a source of disagreement between the various interested parties over the past century, including establishment and management of fencing and forestry on Common Land. Again, over recent decades recreational use of the Thirlmere estate has been more actively encouraged by United Utilities, including boating on the reservoir.

Over recent years United Utilities has also been implementing its Sustainable Catchment Management Programme (SCaMP) with its farming tenants, investing in land management changes and farming infrastructure in order to improve the water quality before it enters the reservoir and water treatment system.

The National Trust has only a few small areas of freehold farmland and fell at the north western edge of the Thirlmere Valley area connected to its large Borrowdale estate. In total, the National Trust owns 149 hectares of land in the valley, of which 101 hectares is inalienable. It does not have any leased land or covenanted land in the Thirlmere Valley.

Castlerigg stone circle was one of the first monuments included in the Ancient Monuments Protection Act of 1882; it thus became one of the first scheduled ancient monuments to be created in the country and in the following year the stone circle was ‘taken in to state care’. As one of the first such sites to enter into state care it occupies a small place in the history of archaeological conservation.
10.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The Thirlmere Valley has important attributes for the Outstanding Universal Value themes of agro-pastoral farming and aesthetic inspiration, but it is for the theme of the early conservation movement that the valley stands out.

Although extensive areas of inbye land in the valley were lost beneath the reservoir, Thirlmere is still the location for 22 farms with fell-going flocks including West Head, which is one of the important Herdwick farms in the English Lake District. Almost all of the extensive fell grazing is Common Land and there are a number of important historic farm houses dating from the 17th century.

Significant evidence for early land use includes the Neolithic stone circle of Castlerigg (perhaps the best known archaeological site in the Lake District), along with Romano-British enclosed settlements, the burial mound at Dunmail Rise, a possible early medieval hillfort (at Shoulthwaite) and medieval shielings. The remains of large slate quarries are located at the northern end of the valley along and a disused granite quarry at Threlkeld.

In the 18th century Thirlmere attracted some attention from early visitors, particularly as it was on the route from Grasmere to Keswick. Descriptions of its views were included in Thomas West’s guidebook but its scenery did not attract any major villa buildings or landscaping. However, Thirlmere had a greater significance to Romantic writers and artists and was the location for the ‘rock of names’ which marked a customary meeting point for the Wordsworths and Samuel Taylor Coleridge between their respective homes in Grasmere and Keswick. Thirlmere was also the inspiration for William Wordsworth’s poem ‘The Waggoner’ and Walter Scott’s poem ‘The Bridal of Triermain’.

FIGURE 10.11 Thirlmere from the south
The Thirlmere Valley is one of the key locations of importance for the development of the early conservation movement in the English Lake District. Although the Manchester Corporation was successful in achieving the construction of the dam and reservoir in the valley, the protest that was mounted against this was a seminal event in the history of landscape conservation. It inspired further, successful campaigns in the Lake District against proposals which threatened the beauty of its landscape, and the key protagonists, all followers of Ruskin, were inspired to found the National Trust in order to purchase land for its protection. Although the National Trust owns very little land in the valley, the Thirlmere reservoir itself stands as testament to the fundamental struggles of the emergent conservation movement in the English Lake District.

While Thirlmere displays substantial attributes attesting to the themes of Outstanding Universal Value of agro-pastoral farming and aesthetic inspiration, the most important theme associated with this part of the English Lake District is the development of the early conservation movement.

FIGURE 10.12 Castle Rock, St John’s in the Vale, Thirlmere
11. ULLSWATER

Description, History and Development
11. THE ULLSWATER VALLEY

"...take a flight of not more than four or five miles eastward to the ridge of Helvellyn and you will look down upon... Ullswater, stretching to the east...”

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

“I wandered lonely as a cloud, That floats on high o'er vales and hill, When all at once I saw a crowd, A host of golden daffodils; Beside the lake, beneath the trees, Fluttering and dancing in the breeze”.

William Wordsworth, ‘I wandered lonely as a Cloud...’ (1807)

11.1 DESCRIPTION

11.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Like the other spokes in Wordsworth’s figurative wheel, the Ullswater Valley begins in the high central fells, in this case draining the Helvellyn and High Street massifs. It carves a uniquely curved path running generally north-eastwards. Ullswater is the second largest of the lakes (after Windermere) and has a distinctive dog-leg shape, with three distinct reaches over its 14.5 kilometre length. This pattern is a result of glacial scouring of the valley bottom which now forms the bed of the lake, leaving three discrete basins. The uppermost stretch of Ullswater, around Patterdale, is oriented north-south. The middle section, from Silver Point to Kailpot Crag is oriented east north east to west south west and the lower section of the lake, to its outflow into the River Eamont, is aligned north east to south west.

The lake connects to the River Eden in the broad Eden Valley via the River Eamont which flows from the foot of the lake at Pooley Bridge. Unlike most of the larger valleys the character of the landscape does not change as the valley morphs from its upland beginnings into a more substantial lowland river. But the valley has a different character on its north/west and south/east sides. The latter has a more enclosed, steep-sided, upland feel whereas the north and west side has a more open, lowland character as the containing mountains (in places equally high) are set further back from the lake and
Figure 11.1 Ullswater Valley Illustrative Map

1. Hartsop village
2. Barton Church Farm
3. Glencoyne Farm
4. Hartsop Hall
5. Pele tower at Hutton John
6. Greenside lead mine
7. Daffodils near Glencoyne
8. Ullswater Steamers - Lady of the Lake
9. Air Force
10. Lyth’s Tower
11. Gowbarrow Park
12. Ullswater

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### Ullswater

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<td>😊</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 11.4** The contribution of the Ullswater Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified
FIGURE 11.5 The lower reaches of Ullswater from Hallin Fell. Dunmallard Hill is in the centre of the frame and the Pennine hills can be seen in the far distance.

FIGURE 11.6 View of Hartsop and Deepdale from Place Fell
valley floor with a transitional landscape of lower fells. Most of the settlements within the valley is along the northern shoreline.

The topography of the valley is varied in relation to the underlying geology. The land surrounding the lower lake, from Howtown to Pooley Bridge and along the northern shore from Glencoyne to Watermillock, comprises gentle slopes down to the lake, with good soils which form the basis of the rich lakeside pastures. This reflects the more easily eroded geology of the Eycott Group and contrasts with the harder, jagged mountain scenery of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group surrounding the upper lake, including the high ridges of Helvellyn and High Street and iconic features such as Striding Edge. Here, a series of small glacially formed valleys splays out like fingers to the west (Glencoyne, Glenridding, Grisedale, Deepdale), to the south (Dovedale) and on the east (Boredale, Bannerdale, Ramps Gill and Fusedale). The small and picturesque lake of Brotherswater covers part of lower Dovedale.

The northern end of the valley opens out into more rolling open country which also includes a number of small but prominent and shapely fells such as Dunmallard Hill, Great Mell Fell and Little Mell Fell. The last two are formed from a localised conglomerate geology.

Ullswater is a major access route into the central Lake District from the north, with the road from Penrith (to the north-east) following the lake’s northern shore southwards from Pooley Bridge to Patterdale at the head of the lake. The road then rises over the heights of Kirkstone Pass to Ambleside and on to Troutbeck in Windermere. The main road running due north out of the valley joins the natural east-west route of communication between Penrith and Keswick. There are minor routes out of the northwest of the valley into Dacre Beck and Matterdale areas and a minor route on the eastern shore accesses the small valleys and settlements south of the lake. See Figures 11.2 and 11.3 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figure 11.4 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Ullswater Valley.

11.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The Ullswater Valley is contained to the west by the Helvellyn range which provides panoramic views from an irregular and jagged eastern profile including the arêtes of Striding Edge and Swirral Edge. Along with Red Tarn nestling in the combe below the edges, the landscape is textbook glacial scenery. The substantial side valleys of Grisedale and Glenridding Beck run east from these fells to the south end of Ullswater where the main valley continues up to the fells above Hartsop and further dramatic mountain scenery. To the south-east and east the fells continue to frame the valley visually and
seem to plunge directly into the lake from the ridges. Although the fells become less high, less craggy, more rounded and more wooded at the north end of the lake, there is no significant widening of the valley until it almost leaves the Lake District and passes into the Eden Valley.

The lake dominates the character of the valley. The north/west shore of the lake contains the settlements of Patterdale and the large village of Glenridding. The woodlands gradually peter out towards the northern end of the lake where a gentler, pastoral landscape is punctuated by large Victorian houses (now mostly hotels), with surrounding parkland and gardens containing striking non-native trees. Parkland running down to the lake and substantial boathouses are strong features of the lakeshore landscape. In contrast, the steep slopes to the southern shore preclude easy vehicular access and there are few buildings. The distinctive, conical Dunmallard Hill and the village of Pooley Bridge mark the north end of Ullswater and the rolling, pastoral hills roll out towards the Eden Valley and the limestone countryside fringing the Lake District.

As with many of the Lake District valleys, contrasts abound in Ullswater. The fells to the south of the lake are as quiet and tranquil as any in the Lake District but Helvellyn is probably the busiest summit of them all. The large, dark, brooding expanse of the lake can appear almost menacing on a dark day when the wind is funnelling down the valley, gusting wildly due to the effects of the mountains. But on a sunny day with brightly coloured yacht sails and steamers quietly navigating the lake there is a genteel atmosphere. The rugged, wild fell tops with few signs of human influence contrast with the designed landscape and businesses of the settlements and northern lakeshore, providing diverse experiences on a grand and accessible scale.

FIGURE 11.8 The summit of Helvellyn seen from the air with Red Tarn below, the sharp ridge of Striding Edge and St Sunday Crag to the right
The Ullswater Valley contains most of the landscape ingredients which typify the essential character of the Lake District. It exemplifies the fusion of an ancient farmed landscape with Picturesque landscape improvement, including tree planting, villas and parkland, particularly on the northern western shore of Ullswater, but also on the southern and eastern side. The environment of Lyulph’s Tower, Aira Force and Glencoyne Park is a prime example. The landscape has also been modified by industry in places. In its lower sections, Ullswater has relatively wide vistas but these quickly reduce towards the valley head where high crags surround the lake and the smaller side valleys.

In the upper valley a number of large becks flow down the fell sides via the side valleys to feed Ullswater. The River Eamont exits from the northern end of Ullswater to join the River Eden east of Penrith. Other notable natural features include the waterfall at Aira Force on the north side of the lake and the various small tarns in the corries of the surrounding fells, including Angle Tarn above Hartsop, Grisedale Tarn, Red Tarn below Helvellyn and Hayeswater (dammed to form a small reservoir).

The Ullswater Valley also has extensive areas of native woodland, much of it in former medieval parkland on the northern shore. These include the north facing slopes of Glenamara Park at the head of Ullswater, which provides a spectacular view of the lake, and the ancient parkland around Glencoyne. There is also significant native woodland at Low Wood opposite Hartsop on the western side of Dovedale and on the southern shore below Birk Fell, Hallinhag Wood and in Barton Park. To the north-west of the main valley lies an area of high, but more gently sloping ground, large areas of which are planted with conifers, known as Matterdale Forest. There are also areas of conifer plantation around Pooley Bridge, at Swinburn’s Park and around Patterdale Hall.

11.1.3 Farming Today – The Agro-Pastoral Landscape

The pattern of agriculture in the Ullswater Valley varies according to the potential afforded by the topography and this is reflected in the character of the field systems and enclosures throughout the valley. On a broad scale, the better soils on the gentle slopes on the north shore between Gowbarrow Park and Pooley Bridge supported the development of extensive arable fields in the past which are now under pasture. This contrasts markedly with the opposite lakeshore where the proximity of steep crags for much of its length has always reduced the opportunities for anything other than rough grazing. Exceptions to this are the small areas of flatter land at Sandwick and Howtown where fields have been created.

Evidence for the enclosure of former medieval common fields can be seen in the existing pattern of walls around the villages of Hartsop, Patterdale, Pooley Bridge and around Sandwick on the eastern shore. However, the pattern of medieval intakes on the fellside of the open fields, so common in other Lake District valleys, is restricted here to the smaller side valleys such as Grisedale and Boredale. Later enclosures have developed around single ancient farms on both sides of the lake and within former medieval parkland such as Glenamara, Glencoyne and at the head of Martindale. There are large regular fields resulting from parliamentary enclosure around the lower lake. This is
interspersed with stands of native woodland and ornamental parkland on the lake shore, particularly on the north side at Aira Point and Oldchurch.

In the north of the Ullswater Valley area, around Penruddock and Hutton/Hutton John is what looks like a system of open fields, with strips enclosed from former open arable fields. The name Town Head farm suggests the location of its former extent. The pele tower at nearby Hutton John was possibly built after the Scots invasions to provide some security. Dockray and the strip of inbye north-west of Hutton are clearly also ancient with some tentative evidence of former open fields enclosed as strips. Probable strip fields can be seen in Barton extending well beyond the National Park boundary at Stainton, where the pattern is striking.

At Patterdale possible strip fields lie at the southern end of the inbye and also astride the road at the southern tip of Ullswater. Patterdale Hall occupies a position with clear views north along Ullswater, perhaps originally to warn of invasion from the north. Parts of Low Hartsop are clearly former open fields and research by the National Trust has established a closely-phased sequence of development for this layout running into the late 18th century. There appear to be some strip fields at Sandwick, Bridgend and Hollinbank. Townhead at Sandwick is perhaps the capital messuage, in a medieval lakeshore colony. However, at Martindale there are strip fields which do not appear to be associated with any settlement centre.

The settlement at Dacre seems to have a different character, and there is clearly a separate lord’s holding at the Castle with a moat. It is possible that arable inbye here may have originated as common open field but it does not appear to have been enclosed in strips.

By the late 18th or 19th century Soulby and Sockbridge (just outside the Park Boundary) were rife with strip-fields extant today. At Soulby the strips are larger, and Soulby seems to be a rich agricultural landscape beholden to the Mains House above Pooley Bridge (as the Demesne House on the 1787 map). The Sockbridge complex extends just slightly into the National Park immediately north-east of High Winder. Winder Hall seems to sit in its own system, perhaps as a lord’s holding. From this 1787 map Dalemain seems to be located within its own preserve, perhaps a deer park.

Watermillock and Bennethead occupy a curiously-large circular enclosure. Watermillock may have been at the centre of a medieval open-field settlement subservient to Gowbarrow Hall located at the furthest end of the enclosed area. Bennethead may represent later colonisation of the edge of the ring garth, probably also during the medieval period.

Hay meadows were required to provide fodder for overwintering of cattle and other stock. Therefore the enclosure and management of the valley bottom land would have been a basic requirement for any early farming system. It is clear from field evidence that the valley bottom in Hartsop was enclosed by a single wall or ring garth. However, it is not clear when this enclosure took place.

The best-preserved sections of ring garth are located to the south of Brothers Water where a substantial wall can be seen running from the south-west corner of Brothers Water down into Dovedale and enclosing land on either side of Dovedale Beck. The boundary then runs around the base of High Hartsop Dodd, before moving south
once more to enclose land on either side of Kirkstone Beck. The ring garth then heads north-east, before coming to a halt at a point close to the south-east corner of Brothers Water where it is truncated by the present A592. This section of wall once ran alongside Sower Wood Lane, the original routeway linking Low and High Hartsop. Many sections of the ring garth incorporate large orthostats, presumably gathered together during a phase of early land clearance and improvement. The ring garth reappears after being truncated by the modern A592, and continues on in a north-easterly direction alongside Brothers Water towards Low or Nether Hartsop. There is no evidence for the continuation of the ring garth in the north-west of the village. It is possible that the ring garth has been modified, rebuilt and lost within the pattern of small irregular shaped fields that developed during the medieval and post-medieval periods. There appears to have been no attempt to enclose the valley bottom in a ring garth along the northern edge of the Manor of Hartsop. The existence of Angle Tarn Beck appears to have cancelled out the need for any additional obstacle. Goldrill Beck appears to have served a similar function on the western side of the valley bottom.

Other possible ring garths exist around the inbye at Watermillock and Bennethead, although these have not been confirmed by field survey. There are still others at Sandwick and Howtown, with intake extensions added later along the shoreline north-east of Howtown.

There has been relatively little landscape change here during the 20th century with an unaltered enclosure pattern for the last hundred years. The only new boundaries to be erected are fences alongside collapsed walls and field drains. However, the 20th century has witnessed a continued decline in the number of separate farms. With this has followed a decline in the rural labour force, with fewer farms meaning more work for those who remain. As a consequence there has been less maintenance of walls, buildings and other landscape features that are no longer in agricultural use. However, this situation has been rectified to a great extent in recent years with funding from agri-environment grant schemes for repairs to barns and walls.
FIGURE 11.10 Shepherds’ flocks and native sheep breeds in the Ullswater Valley
WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Herdwick farming features strongly in Ullswater today and the valley contains a number of significant Herdwick farms, including Hartsop Hall and Glencoyne. Traditionally some of these have had the largest flocks in the area. William Green included a list of the largest Lake District Herdwick flocks in his ‘The Tourist’s New Guide’ of 1819 and noted that Patterdale Hall had a flock of 1,700, Glencoyne had 900, and Hartsop Hall had 800. The farm at Glencoyne is one of the largest current Herdwick farms in the Lake District due in part to its large area of enclosed land as well as open fell.

There are 38 fell-going flocks in the Ullswater Valley area. There are 12 Herdwick flocks and 14 Swaledale flocks registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Rough Fell flocks. There are three National Trust landlord flocks listed in the ‘Lakeland Shepherds’ Guide’ (2005).

The sheep graze on 6,917 hectares of Registered Common Land in the Ullswater Valley area, one third of the total valley area. The Common Land is located on the Helvellyn range north of Dovedale on the west and on the fells north of Hartsop on the east side of the valley. The following registered Commons fall wholly or partly within the Ullswater Valley: Barton Fell (693 hectares), Martindale Common (1,635 hectares) and Patterdale Common (388 hectares) on the east; and Deepdale Common (772 hectares), Grisedale Forest (912 hectares), Glenridding Common (1,085 hectares), Watermillock Common (376 hectares) and Matterdale Common (1,056 hectares) on the west. Small additional areas of common include Binks Moss, Mill Moor and parts of Lake Ullswater and its foreshore.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

From the very early 20th century there has been a tradition of agricultural shows in the valley. The Matterdale and St John’s Sheep Show started in 1901 when three local men, Joe Bowman, Joe Wilkinson and J. R. R. Allen, decided to organise Sheep Dog Trials at Patterdale initially called ‘Ullswater Sheep Dog Trials’ and later, ‘Patterdale Dog Day’. In those early days, late August would see a large number of horses and traps carrying farmers’ families, shepherds and dogs, coming over Kirkstone Pass, heading for Patterdale. They would often stop at the Inn on the top to let the horses get their wind, and of course for refreshment for themselves. The takings on the very first day amounted to nineteen pounds three shillings and sixpence (£19.17 in current money) and the committee was so delighted that it bought a bottle of whisky costing three shillings and sixpence (17 pence today) to celebrate. The oldest programme the current committee have found dates back to 1938 and was priced at sixpence (2½ pence). In it Ullswater is described as ‘the English Lucerne’ after its similarity to the lake in Switzerland.

Today a number of these long-running agricultural shows are still held by the Ullswater farming community. The Dockray and Matterdale Shepherds’ meet is held alternately at Dockray and Threlkeld Cricket Club on the first Thursday after the 22 November, every year. Patterdale Dog Day is held at the end of August every year, in the King George V playing field, apparently described by Wordsworth as ‘the prettiest field in England’. The show includes the Matterdale and St John’s Sheep Show which has classes for Herdwick and Swaledale Sheep. The show has stayed faithful to the original format and content and, having resisted commercialisation, is proud to claim to be a genuinely traditional
Lakeland event. As well as the sheep classes the show includes sheep dog trials, a terrier show, a gundog show, a children’s pets class, a show of traditional sticks and crooks, the Ullswater Foxhound show, a fell race, a children’s fell race, hound trails, and a craft tent.

FARMSTEADS

Most of the surviving stone buildings in the Ullswater and its side valleys date from the ‘Statesmen’ period of the 17th and 18th centuries. A few are earlier (Barton Church Farm for example) and some later; the good range of historic dates is reflected in the 165 listed buildings in the valley. Most are likely to have re-occupied sites which were already old in the 17th century, and which may have medieval origins. The historic building stock also includes mills such as the small corn mill between Hartsop village and the junction of Hayeswater Beck and Pasture Beck. The building has a datestone inscribed 1706, although it is not clear whether this is the date of the first construction or a later phase. Two sets of grinding stones were linked to a single pit wheel driven by the waterwheel positioned against the eastern wall. A head race brought water from higher up Hayeswater Gill along an open leat or mill race and to a wooden launder to power the wheel.

**TABLE 11.1** Key farm buildings in Ullswater Valley

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<th>Farmhouse</th>
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<th>Farmhouse</th>
<th>Probably 17th century. Stone rubble, slate roof with stepped gables and two oval chimneys. 2 storeys, with slate dripstone over whole ground floor.</th>
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<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Farmhouse</th>
<th>Typical larger Lakeland farmhouse in magnificent setting. Original 16th century house faced north to Brothers Water, a west wing added 17th century, and a south wing in 18th century. It was originally owned by the Lancaster family then the Lowthers. It is known for its ‘priest holes’ designed to conceal visiting members of the catholic clergy from detection. The Hall is thought to have been converted to use as a farmhouse in the late 17th century and the associated farm buildings date from the 17th century onwards.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>16th – 18th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>National Trust</td>
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<tr>
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<td>339835 512031</td>
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</table>
COTE FARM, MARTINDALE
The house in Martindale adjacent to Cote with a reused cruck shows how earlier sites were re-occupied and buildings replaced and reused opportunistically.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 344634 518834

AIRA FARMHOUSE
Former house and two barns at Dowthwaitehead are probably late 17th century with later additions.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 337034 520788

MAINS FARMHOUSE
Mains farmhouse and barns, near Pooley Bridge includes an early to mid-18th century house with 18th and early 19th century barns and gin gang (wheel-house for horse-powered engine or mill).

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 347590 524599

GLENCYOINE
One of the best farmhouse groups in the valley at Glencoyne; dates from the early 17th century and features typical white-washed walls, slate roof with stepped gables and two massive circular chimneys. It has fine internal wooden fittings and a plaster panel dated 1629.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 338466 518685

BANK END
Date 1627 with three re-set cruck-trusses indicating reuse of an earlier building on the site.

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 340730 513001
11. ULLSWATER

**Howe Green Farm**
A mid-17th century farm on the north side of Hartsop village with many original internal features. It is a virtually unaltered example of the cross-passage and byre plan. Of note is the intact huge fireplace and stone chimney hood, a rarity of its kind. Close by is a 16th or early 17th century corn drying kiln, a small two storey crow stepped building built into the hillside with access to both floors. It has been heavily restored and is a good example of what would have been a common building type that fell out of use across the Lake District in the late-17th century.

**DATE** 16th – 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** National Trust  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 340897 513125

**Hollins Farmhouse and Attached Barn, Dockray**
Farmhouse and barn – court cupboard dated 1736 but house probably earlier.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 339373 521685

**Townhead, including Townhead Cottage and Barn**
Two houses and bank barn – 1720.

**DATE** 18th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 342337 519616

**Barton Church Farm**
West wing late 16th century; north wing dated 1628, porch 1693.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 348524 526433

**Winder Hall, near Barton**
Farmhouse dated 1612, but mostly later 17th century.

**DATE** 17th century  
**OWNERSHIP** Private  
**PROTECTION** Listed  
**GRID REFERENCE** 349167 524521
11. ULLSWATER

11.1.4 INDUSTRY

The principal industries in the Ullswater Valley were lead mining and slate quarrying, and some of the archaeological remains of these are of national significance and have left their mark on the landscape. Important remains survive at Hartsop Hall mine and Myers Head, the latter being a well-preserved example of a late 19th century mine (it was rapidly abandoned due to flooding). However the largest mine was at Greenside, west of Glenridding, which operated from the 1820s until 1961.

The impressive remains of adits, wheelpits, processing floors and spoil tips at Greenside provide testimony to a long period of sustained and innovative lead extraction. Waste from the mine dominates the approaches to Helvellyn from the east up Glenridding Beck.

11.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

PATTERDALE AND GLENRIDDING

The north/west shore of the lake contains the settlements of Patterdale and the large village of Glenridding, expanded in the 19th century by the Greenside Mining Company to house workers from the lead mine. Between the mine and Glenridding are rows of typical miners' cottages, still in residential use. Lower down this valley the strong identity of a mining village contrasts with grander houses and the hotels, guest houses and shops associated with Victorian and present day tourism. Glenridding Pier is a tourist honeypot where traditional launches provide pleasure trips on the lake as they have done since Victorian times – a timeless quality characteristic of the place. Glenridding House is a good example of a Regency villa on the lakeshore and was visited by Charles Darwin in the 19th century. It was empty for many years, but has now been restored. Nearby Glencoyne Farm is one of the finest vernacular farmhouses in the Lake District.

Sited to the south of Ullswater, on the Kirkstone Pass A592 road, and very close to Glenridding, is the settlement of Patterdale. Patterdale Hall was originally built in the 17th century, but it is now mainly a 19th century rebuild. St Patrick’s Church, was built in 1853, designed by the London Architect, Anthony Salvin. The recently-built Mountain Rescue base, in its wooded setting beside the A592, was given a Civic Trust Award in 2001 for its design based on Tudor/Arts and Crafts style in stone and timber.

POOLEY BRIDGE

At the northern end of Ullswater, at a main bridging point over the River Eamont, seven miles from Penrith, is Pooley Bridge. The stone bridge is a fine 16th century construction.
There is a cluster of houses, two hotels and shops. It is a busy little gateway tourist centre on route from the M6 and Penrith to the Ullswater area and the whole Lake District. Opposite the 19th century church is an excellent continuous group of 17th/18th and 19th century dwellings, showing good use of limestone, sandstone, slate and render. Mains Farm is a particularly impressive group of farm buildings, especially the rounded horse engine house.

In addition a number of small hamlets are located at strategic positions around the lake, including Sandwick and Howtown on the eastern shore, Dockray, Watermillock and Dacre on the northern side and Hartsop at the southern end of the Valley.

HARTSOP

The valley is rich in examples of early vernacular architecture, with a particular concentration in the hamlet of Hartsop; this is reflected in its status as a Conservation Area. Wordsworth described Hartsop as "remarkable for its cottage architecture", however Celia Fiennes, travelling through the valley in 1698 describes coming to "villages of sad little huts made up of drye walls, only stones piled together and the roofs of same slat". Hartsop is a fine collection of farmsteads constructed from local slate and positioned along the western end of an ancient route from the Kirkstone-Patterdale road up on to High Street. The hamlet developed as 'Low Hartsop' in the medieval period, with the principal period of settlement growth dating from the late 16th and 17th centuries. Most of the buildings date from the 'Statesmen' period of the 17th and 18th centuries and are classic examples of Lake District vernacular buildings. These are typically constructed from massive stone and slate rubble walls, often white-washed, and roofed in slate with squat chimneys.

At least four buildings originally had 'spinning' galleries, of which two survive today, at Thorn House and Mireside. There is some doubt that these galleries were ever used for spinning – it seems more likely that they were used for drying flax or hemp; or were areas to prepare yarn for the loom; or even simply to give covered access to grain stores. With the exception of a few houses which were added during the 20th century and which are clearly in the style of that period (Cherry Garth, Holt House and Townhead), the settlement still survives much as it was after the 17th century development; although there are seven quite recently-built houses which are difficult to distinguish from the 17th century ones. Otherwise the street pattern and buildings are as shown on the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey Map of 1863. The village lacks any of the large Victorian villas, a reflection of its remote and harsh location.

HOWTOWN

Howtown is only a small cluster of buildings, near the shore of Ullswater, at the foot of the steep road over The Hause to Martindale. In the 19th century it had a large bobbin mill, and worker’s housing, a later tourist hotel and some houses. It is a good place to start or finish fell walks with the steamer service on the Lake linking it to Glenridding and Pooley Bridge.
Dacre is a small attractive village tucked away between Pooley Bridge and the busy A66. It is a quiet area with a very important historic church, St Andrew’s, with its four early medieval stone carved bears, and Dacre Castle. The latter is a 14th century pele tower with projecting corner turrets, originally surrounded by a moat which has now been filled in. The license to crenellate at Dacre was given in 1307; and the structure was substantially modernised in 1675 by Sir Thomas Dacre. It subsequently passed to the Dalemain Estate and was restored from dereliction in the 1960s. The village has several good 18th century houses, with hardly any 20th century development. It receives surprisingly few visitors.

Nearby, is Dalemain mansion, with Elizabethan origins and fine Georgian frontage. At the heart of the mansion are the remains of a medieval building, possibly comprising a hall with towers at each end, dating from the late 15th/early 16th century. A very elegant frontage to the house was added in 1747, constructed in fine ashlar masonry. The mansion is surrounded by parkland and a garden with features from the 17th and 18th centuries including a huge terrace wall of 1688.

Another fine example of a medieval fortified building is the pele tower at Hutton John. A 14th century tower is located at the angle of an L-shaped, three-story building whose wings were built in the 15th and mid-16th centuries. The whole house was given a Georgian makeover in 1730 and was modernised again in the 19th century when the third storey was added. It is surrounded by an important 17th century garden with terrace, large, shaped yew trees and a dovecote.

11.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

Although the Ullswater Valley does not have an extensive array of early villas and Picturesque landscapes, Lyulph’s Tower and Aira Force is one of the best examples of this phenomenon in the Lake District. Constructed c. 1795 as a hunting lodge for the Duke of Norfolk, Lyulph’s Tower was one of the first Lake District houses to be built for the view. It is an early example of Romantic Gothic style, with a castellated screen wall forming three sides of an octagon, and with four towers, one at each of the angles. This makes the most of the views up and down Ullswater, from its positon beneath the slopes of Gowbarrow Park. Lyulph’s Tower was the focus for a Picturesque parkland scheme which incorporated designed approaches connecting the house with the waterfall at Aira Force.

The waterfall at Aira Force had been noted by writers describing the Picturesque qualities of the Ullswater Valley, including William Gilpin and James Clarke. Clarke described the best way for the Picturesque tourist to view the waterfall, including strenuous physical and emotional experiences the journey was likely to evoke:
“The traveller should descend pretty low into the dark vale through which the water flows; but as this requires both courage and agility, many decline the attempt: the oblique rays of an evening sun, and the swelling of the waters by rain, likewise contribute not a little to the terrible beauties of this place. If however, the spectator can summon up resolution to descend, he will see such a scene as will amply repay the terrors of the attempt”.

James Clarke, ‘Survey of the Lakes’ (1787)

Clarke’s map of 1787 also provides the first evidence for the layout of the park which included informal features enclosed by a wall or fence. In the mid-1840s a pinetum was developed along with the earlier designed landscape for the 13th Duke of Norfolk. This project included a complex network of paths, bridges and viewing features together with a collection of exotic conifers. Further planting in the pinetum continued in the 19th century and the upper water fall bridge was re-built in stone c. 1900.

The Aira Force gorge and most of the park, except Lyulph’s Tower and its immediate environs, were acquired by the National Trust in 1906 and have since been altered to accommodate high visitor numbers. Although the setting of this important landscape remains intact, the stimulating Picturesque quality of the valley had become blurred by the late 20th century and important views obscured. In 2007 the National Trust produced a conservation plan for Aira Force with a view to restoring the quality of the landscape. The inherent natural beauty of Aira Force provides its main attraction for visitors but the site has tended to be managed as a countryside property rather than as a pleasure ground. The designed landscape has a strong impact on the experience, and the developments enhance the site and give it a unique character – much in keeping with the Picturesque and Victorian taste for landscape. Current and future management is focusing on informing visitors of this significance and giving due regard to the designed aspects of the site which combine well with the natural elements and add greatly to its quality.

11.1.7 VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

Conventional villas began to be constructed during the 1790s, although a number replaced earlier buildings on the same site, such as Eusemere Hall. Some of the earliest villas developed from modest ‘cottages’ including Goldrill Cottage and Gillside Cottage, both in Patterdale and both occupied in the first decade of the 19th century by friends of the Wordsworths. Designed landscapes often included woodland walks and formal gardens with exotic and newly discovered trees from abroad and can be found around Gowbarrow Hall and Gowbarrow Bay, Waterfoot Hotel, Rampsbeck and the shoreline east of Horrock Wood Farm on the north shore; and Ravensghyll, Sharrow Lodge and Gale Bay on the south shoreline. However, a number of gardens are now dominated by native and invasive species – Portuguese laurel, rhododendron, sycamore, oak and birch. Boathouses began to appear on maps of the lake at Horrock Wood Farm and Pooley Bridge by 1783 and today there are at least 16.
### TABLE 11.2 List of key villas in the Ullswater Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villa</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eusemere Hall</strong></td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>346958 524160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built by the anti-slavery campaigner Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846) on an estate acquired in 1795. Situated close to the lake foot, its elongated main front looks directly up the lake towards the distant mountains.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glenridding</strong></td>
<td>18th – 19th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>338701 517269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built by the Revd Askew, Rector of Greystoke, sometime between 1798 and 1817, and is associated with an attractive lakeside walk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leeming House</strong></td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>344183 521618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeming House is an early to mid-19th century villa with iron veranda and clock tower with bell. Now a hotel.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lyulph’s Tower</strong></td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>340412 520196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyulph’s Tower/Aira Force arboretum. The house was built in the 18th century for the Duke of Norfolk. An early example of the Romantic Gothic castellated style; referred to by Wordsworth, Southey and Scott. Picturesque tree planting Aira Force Arboretum – planted by the Howard family (Lyulph’s Tower) in 1846.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hallsteads</strong></td>
<td>17th – 18th century</td>
<td>Outward Bound Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>343791 521133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charmed by the area, and the proximity to their friends the Wordsworths, in 1815 the Marshalls built Hallsteads as a summer residence, capitalising on a point of land (Skelly Nab) benefiting from views along two of Ullswater’s three reaches.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

11.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

The remains of prehistoric settlement in Ullswater are extensive and span the period from the Neolithic to the Iron Age. The earliest evidence for human activity in the area comprises significant examples of rock art at the head of the valley near Patterdale, which date to the Neolithic or early Bronze Age. Sites of similar date are also found on the high ground of Askham Fell, south east of Pooley Bridge, including stone circles, a stone alignment and burial cairns.
The evidence for later prehistoric activity is even more extensive and includes an important series of enclosed hut circle settlements and two hillforts at Maiden Castle and Dunmallard Hill. The relatively high number of later prehistoric settlements around Ullswater is a higher density of occupation than in other valleys in the Lake District, possibly due to the importance of Ullswater as a route of communication and the good agricultural soils around the lower lake.

Perhaps for the same reason, the Romans sought to control this communications route by constructing marching camps and a fort at Troutbeck, just to the north-west of Ullswater, together with roads to connect these with the forts at Penrith and Ambleside. The Roman road from Ambleside, known as High Street, was probably constructed along the route of an earlier prehistoric trackway and runs along the tops of the fells on the south-eastern side of Ullswater.

An enclosed farmstead at the foot of High Hartsop Dodd is thought to be Romano-British in date, and there is also a Romano-British hut circle settlement at Heck Beck above the head of Upper Bannerdale. Often with several phases of occupation these sites present the possibility that there is perhaps at least some continuity in settlement or population from the prehistoric period into the Roman and subsequent periods.

11.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Place-name evidence suggests a mixture of linguistic influences in the valley. Hartsop probably derives from the Old English ‘valley of the deer’. The name Kirkstone derives from Old Norse ‘kirkja steinn’ meaning ‘church stone’. ‘Ullueswater’ first appears in 1220, deriving either from an Old Norse proper name or perhaps from a Celtic word ‘uille’, meaning elbow, referring to the curve of the lake.

The occurrence of Old English place-names may suggest that the early medieval population was connected more closely to the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria rather than to the Scandinavian settlement along the coastal areas. Archaeological evidence does not seem to support Scandinavian settlement at Hartsop or elsewhere in the Ullswater Valley as a whole. Nor is the effect of shifting land ownership amongst various British and Anglian polities evident using the archaeological data, although the occurrence of place-names with elements of ‘British’ (Penruddock) or Scots heritage (Glencoyne, Glenridding) provide some clues.

The names Sandwick and Borwick are typically Old English (the ‘wick’ element can mean both ‘town’ and ‘bay’) and these perhaps indicate a pre-conquest date; a deserted settlement at Watermillock may indicate a similarly early origin. In some cases, there is archaeological evidence of such early settlements, for example, Cross Dormant, Deepdale, Deepdale Bridge, Glenamara Park, Glencoynedale, Old Kirk Watermillock, and High Hartsop Dodd; although some of these were abandoned long before the Norman conquest. Other similar sites elsewhere have seen long intermittent sequences where sites were occupied, abandoned and then re-occupied long after and this may also be the case at the examples around Ullswater.
In the early medieval period a monastery at Dacre (as Daecor) is mentioned by Venerable Bede writing in the 8th century. Archaeological investigations have found traces of timber buildings – one associated with metalworking – and a covered drain in the present churchyard. Dacre was apparently still a significant location in the early 10th century, as William of Malmesbury recorded that King Constantine of Scotland and King Eugenius of Cumberland paid homage to King Athelstan (first king of all England, reigned 925 to 938) at Dacre in 927, although other writers prefer Eamont Bridge. Although the present Dacre church dates from the 12th century, it contains fragments of carved stone crosses of 8th to 10th century date and the enigmatic ‘Dacre Bears’, an unusual group of carved stone animals.

11.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

There is no written evidence for the Ullswater Valley area during the 11th and 12th centuries, and only a handful of documentation for the 13th and 14th centuries which provides scant information on the appearance of the landscape at that time. Approximate dates for the establishment of churches, and their values in the Crusading Tithes of the late 13th and early 14th century are the best evidence for the early centuries following the conquest. Most of the Ullswater Valley area lay within the barony of Westmorland. The parish of Patterdale was sub-divided from the much larger Barton parish, within the medieval barony of Kendale, which confirmed its boundaries in 1189. The barony of Westmorland was confirmed soon after in 1203 and included the land south of Ullswater, including Hartsop.

In the Manor of Hartsop there is no surviving documentary evidence from the immediate post-conquest period. The earliest documentary references appear in the mid-13th century, by which time the Manor was in the hands of the de Lancaster family. It is not clear if a manor hall existed within the demesne before this time, although it would seem likely, given Hartsop’s status as a manor.

There are a number of land uses referred to in the historical source material and in some cases we can see evidence of this in the landscape today, or extrapolate their existence from 19th century Ordnance Survey maps. The Ullswater shoreline seems to have been a favoured location for medieval and later deer parks. On 19th century maps there are three parks – two straddling Lyulph Tower and Aira Force, and a third called Swinburn’s Park adjacent to Gowbarrow Hall. Clarke’s map of 1787 shows a single enormous deer park belonging to the Earl of Surrey. It may be that the detail provided in the Ordnance Survey maps suggests that originally a deer park (later known as Swinburn’s Park) was attached to Gowbarrow Hall; this may have been accessed via a corridor which is an arrangement seen at Irton Hall. The deer park was then extended twice – once to the natural boundary of the Aira Beck, when Lyulph Tower was perhaps built as a lodge for enjoyment whilst out hunting (the house was built c. 1795 for the Duke of Norfolk), and then the park was extended further to encompass what is now Glencoyne Park. Barton Park was presumably a relatively small park, perhaps for the benefit of the lord of Barton Hall, although this is not certain; and the name William Hassel on the 1787 map is associated with the lordship of the manor of Patterdale. Already the park – especially its western edge – seemed to have been sub-divided and sub-enclosed by that date,
and the deer park turned over to pasture and plantation woodland. The house at Dalemain appears to have had a deer park attached, although when this was enclosed as a deer park is not known. A designed landscape attached to Dacre Castle is called ‘Park’; although this may be a former deer park, it may also indicate that it is part of the lord’s holding.

There is good documentary evidence to suggest that from the 12th century many upland demesnes were farmed as cattle ranches or vaccaries on behalf of the Lord of the Manor. Documentary evidence to support the existence of a vaccary in Dovedale appears in a complaint brought against Gilbert de Lancaster in 1255. He was ordered to prevent his cattle in the Hartsop demesne, and also cattle belonging to his tenants within the Manor, from roaming free in the surrounding forest in the possession of Roger de Lancaster. The valley head in Dovedale with its large areas of wooded fellside and well-watered hay meadow was ideal for farming as a vaccary. The wall that encloses the head of the valley in Dovedale is likely to have been set up in the 12th or 13th century to enclose an area for use as a cattle pasture. This wall abuts the ring garth suggesting that the enclosure of the valley head post-dates the enclosure of the valley bottom. It is not known how the vaccary in Dovedale was organised; it may have been overseen by the Lord of the Manor or placed in the hands of a tenant. The early hall at Hartsop is likely to have been built in the 12th or 13th century and may have functioned as the administrative centre for the vaccary. Source materials suggest that by the 14th century many vaccaries in the Lake District had been let to farming tenants rather than being managed directly by the Lord of the Manor. It is not known if this was the case at Hartsop, but the remains of a medieval longhouse within the demesne may be evidence that the vaccary was placed in the hands of a tenant at some point or that the Lord has some assistance in managing the demesne farm. There is less evidence here of vaccaries managed by the monasteries. The Hospital of St. Nicholas, York, appears to have had an interest in at least two bovates (usually c. 30 acres (12 hectares)) in the early 12th century, and the place-name Brothers Water at High Hartsop could relate to a monastic interest, although there are other explanations. However, there is currently insufficient definitive evidence to support the presence of a monastic-run medieval vaccary at High Hartsop.

Some additional evidence of medieval farming practices can be obtained from the surviving field patterns. Clear strips carved from former open fields or hints of strips, plus place-names like Town Head, and the association of early settlements with capital messuages such as pele towers or halls are abundant and easily recognisable on modern and historic mapping. The road from Pooley Bridge to Penrith quite clearly shows a largely unaltered medieval pattern; these common field settlements probably date from the 11th/12th century, although they may have earlier origins.

The 11th/12th century pattern seen elsewhere in Lake District Valleys of common open field separate and subordinate to a lord’s holding at the head of the valley or similarly ‘superior’ position, is also prevalent in the Ullswater Valley area. For example, the valley bottom in Hartsop is divided into two parts by Brothers Water. West of Kirkstone Beck there is a lord’s holding with Hartsop Hall, presumably occupied by the Lord of the Manor from the 12th or early-13th century given the status of Hartsop as a separate medieval manor. The common fields proper were located on the east side of the beck and to the north of Brother’s Water. This separation meant that two separate
common fields developed in the medieval period, each supporting a small group of farming tenements. A marriage agreement of 1456 mentions a ‘William de Lancaster of Hartsoppe’, suggesting that the Lord of the Manor was still resident in the demesne at that time. The Manor of Hartsop is frequently mentioned in connection to the de Lancaster family in the period between 1300 and 1600, although there is unfortunately little information regarding numbers of tenants or land-use.

The ecclesiastical evidence suggests that settlement in the Ullswater Valley area spread out from the north-east, first occupying Barton and the relatively level areas to the north of Pooley Bridge. This early settlement perhaps extended all the way to Barton Park and Thwaite Hill on the south of Ullswater, and to Gowbarrow Hall and Watermillock on the north side. Martindale was perhaps then settled, and perhaps the other isolated settlements along the south-east side at Sandwick and Howtown.

Archaeologically, there are some abandoned settlements of unknown date, such as Lanty Tarn, Martindale and an obscure medieval site at Cross Dormant. Generally, these suggest a broad picture of linear development, with settlement continually expanding throughout the historic period until the 20th century when agriculture and the rural population began to contract.

Other significant medieval sites include the 14th century ‘pele’, or fortified, towers at Dacre Castle and Hutton John (see above). These pele towers are amongst the earliest surviving examples of domestic architecture in the north-west. The defensible towers are particularly concentrated on the north-eastern fringe of the Lake District from Skiddaw and Ullswater to the Eden Valley. It would be here that the threats of Scottish raids were at their greatest on the route southwards from Carlisle; for example the ‘capital messuage’ of Robert de Swynburn was previously burnt down by Scots raiders shortly before 1326. It was also here that the wealthier landowners could afford to fortify their houses. Other fortified houses or ‘pele’ towers in the Ullswater Valley area include Barton Kirke (late 15th century), Hartsop Hall, 15th century but presumably occupied by the Lord of the Manor from the 12th or early-13th century, and Patterdale Hall (of unknown date).

Late 16/17th century farms are distributed throughout the valley; some grouped in hamlets (e.g. Hartsop and Sandwyck) and others located individually. The location of such farms is generally between the inbye and intakes, on the edge of the former medieval common field. Farming at this time was increasingly dominated by sheep rearing to supply the burgeoning wool trade. The earliest reference to the communal management and ‘stinting’ on the fells appears in 1640, although the system of management is likely to have been long established by this time.

The enclosure and intake of what had been common fellsides for pasture, whether to enclose stints associated with specific farms or to extend the holdings of individual farms is a process which is rarely documented, taking place as private agreements between individuals and agreed in manorial courts. Farms grew and were consolidated whilst less-preferred sites were abandoned. The former common fields were enclosed as strips which were themselves progressively consolidated into larger parcels; early onset of this or perhaps relatively rapid change may be why around Dacre there are no strip fields evident. It may be that the extremely rural mountain parishes of Ullswater were relatively slow to consolidate the open-field strips.
From the 16th to 18th century, we can only see the changing tenurial arrangements in the available maps and field evidence, and this only exists in a limited form for Hartsop in the Ullswater Valley. The earliest surviving rental for the Hartsop tenements is dated 1574 and although in a poor state, suggests that there existed around 30 rent paying tenements at that time. The first private enclosure of land on the valley bottom took place in the late-17th or early-18th century. A number of fences are shown in Brother Field to the north of Brothers Water in the survey of the Manor of Hartsop from 1764. Despite this the majority of land on the valley bottom continued to be managed as common. Some fell walls had also been established prior to 1764. The cow pasture known as ‘Hull and Side’ north of Low Hartsop was enclosed so that it could be stinted separately from the surrounding fell. During the 18th century more intakes appeared on the higher fellsides, often enclosing quite marginal areas that required extensive improvement.

There was some additional enclosure which seems to date to this period, associated with development and consolidation of larger farm units. Enclosure of Matterdale Beck at Matterdale End may be extension of cattle enclosures associated with a single farm. North west of Aira Beck, along Glenridding, at Boredale Head, and at upper Banderdale Beck there are piecemeal enclosures taken from the common to supplement the meagre fields below. Very large parcels above Grisedale on Patterdale Common and around Hartsop and Martindale, as well as smaller extensions between Scrog’s Head and Rowhead near Pooley Bridge, appear to divide up common stints of pasture amongst the landowners and tenants without the need to record it for posterity in any other way than in stone.

The Ullswater Valley area contains large, regular fields resulting from parliamentary enclosure in and around Watermillock and Matterdale. Watermillock, a manor within the Barony of Greystoke, belonged to absentee owners, the Howard family, Dukes of Norfolk. Watermillock (1829) and Matterdale (1879) had Parliamentary Awards for Enclosure. Other instances of planned enclosure without Parliamentary Awards also occur, principally on Souby Fell, Hartsop and Martindale, with some minor episodes south-east of Pooley Bridge, and adjacent to Dalemain.

An 18th century survey of High Hartsop shows the individual tenements clustered around a gap or gate in the medieval ring garth. This area was presumably used to gather stock belonging to the local farms as they were shifted between the valley bottom and the fell. The land on the valley bottom belonging to the tenants of High Hartsop was referred to as High Hartsop Field or the Overdale. It is likely that the majority of land within the Overdale was utilised as meadow. Only in the extreme south are there signs that the ground was ever ploughed and cultivated.

Industry made a larger impact on the landscape from this period. Lead mining in the valley had probably taken place from at least medieval times but the earliest dated feature is a lead smelting site at Hoggett Gill of the late 17th century. Large-scale lead mining began in the late 18th century and reached peaks of production in the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, the largest lead mine in the valley was at Greenside, west of Glenridding, which operated from the 1820s until 1961. The impact of the mine on the valley was significant. The population of Patterdale Parish increased from 261 in 1801 to 686 in 1851. Between the mid-1870s and the end of the 19th century the dam network
was expanded and the water was used to generate electricity for powering winding gear, fans, pumps, lights and eventually electric locos. Greenside was the first metal mine in the UK to adopt electricity for tramping and winding (moving the lead ore in small trucks or sledges) and it adopted the best technology of the time for smelting and silver refining. In the 111 years between 1825 and 1935 the Greenside Company produced over 106,000 tons of lead and the Basinghall Mining Syndicate produced 50,000 tons from 1936 to 1961.

The earliest documented slate working at Caudale Moor appeared in a series of leases between James Lowther and other parties in the mid-18th century. The leases stated that all existing levels should be kept in good order indicating that underground workings had already been established. The slate at that time was taken to a jetty at the head of Ullswater for transportation northwards. Slate mining continued throughout the 19th century and into the 1930s. The mines remained unworked during the Second World War years before they were finally abandoned and all the equipment stripped and sold off in 1945.

11.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

Unlike some of the other major valleys in the Lake District, early tourist interest in Ullswater did not lead to the threat (as then perceived) of a railway link into the valley. However, the vast potential of Ullswater to supply water for the needs of the growing cities of north west England in the 19th century did attract attention. In the second half of the 19th century the City of Manchester began to assess the potential of the various lakes for supplying the needs of its growing population and expanding industries and Ullswater was initially considered as the principal supply. Ullswater was eventually discounted in favour of Thirlmere and the threat receded.

Ullswater was not the subject of any formal stations in West’s ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1778) although he did recommend visiting it via a couple of different routes in order to see:

“The bold winding hills, the intersecting mountains, the pyramidal cliffs, the bulging, broken, rugged rocks, the hanging woods, and the tumbling, roaring cataracts, are parts of the sublimer scenes presented in this surprising vale”.

These dramatic views contrasted with the more cultivated areas “intersected by hedges, decorated with trees”. Finding the correct viewpoints was difficult for West. Too high and the lake lost its ‘dignity’; too low and the winding path of the lake could not be appreciated. Thomas Gray had already visited in 1769 and he approached the lake via “a spongy meadow or two”, and found an elevated point from which he viewed Ullswater “majestic in its calmness, clear and smooth as a blew mirror” but West felt that he had missed some of the lakes most picturesque places by not travelling to the south end of the lake which had more curved bays and rocky islands. At the north
end, West recommended Dunmallard, an ancient monument, as a good viewing point. He then recommended the middle reach of the western shore and Gowbarrow Park which he considered to be the finest part of the lake. Patterdale Hall formed his next recommendation, then Watermillock for the echo of firing canon. Early tourists were also directed to the ancient deer park at Gowbarrow, which extended along nearly half of the north western lake shore and included the celebrated waterfall of Aira Force. Among the houses that attracted attention were the magnificently isolated farmhouses at Glencoyne, and Patterdale Hall, home of the Mounsey family, so-called ‘Kings of Patterdale’.

Promoted by the writings of Gray and West, Ullswater was enjoyed by visitors seeking Picturesque scenery for some decades before the first villas were built along its shores. Peter Crosthwaite’s map of the lake, first published in 1783, showed Lyulph’s Tower, the Gothic hunting lodge of the Earl of Surrey (later Duke of Norfolk) in Gowbarrow Park, as well as boat houses belonging to the Robinsons of Watermillock, the Hasells of Dalemain, the Earls of Surrey and the Dukes of Portland. Although Lyulph’s Tower perpetuated an age-old aristocratic use of the Lake District for hunting grounds (as did some of the boathouses, which were there to assist in conveying hunting parties), its form reflected the new taste for the picturesque: the elevated site and faceted front elevation were calculated to make the most of views up, down and across Ullswater, and the delights of Aira Force were only a stone’s throw away.

Ullswater was one of the Lake District valleys most highly regarded by lovers of picturesque scenery as its winding course gave rise to a theatrical succession of views. This was undoubtedly enhanced for some by the popular mid-18th century pastime of firing a canon on the lake to listen to the echoes. In addition, it was easily accessible to the vast majority of visitors due to its close proximity to Penrith, yet its upper reach penetrated deep into some of the most formidable mountain scenery that the Lake District could afford. From an early date, therefore, it formed an essential ingredient of a Lake District tour.

Early commentators regretted the poor accommodation encountered by travellers to Ullswater. Clarke’s ‘Survey of the Lakes’ (1787) noted that the Sun Inn had boats for hire, but lacked a dining room fit for gentlefolk, while the little inn at Patterdale
was simpler still. The accessibility of Ullswater to outsiders improved with the opening of a station at Penrith on the Lancaster to Carlisle railway in 1846, and the opening of the Kendal and Windermere Railway in 1847. Ullswater, in contrast to the other major lakes (Windermere, Derwent Water, Bassenthwaite Lake, Coniston Water), never acquired a direct rail link but coaches, often operated by hotel proprietors, offered regular services to and from the stations, and from the mid-19th century they were augmented by lake steamers, two of which, now restored, still operate on the lake between Pooley Bridge and Glenridding. The M.Y. Lady of the Lake was built in 1877 and is believed to be the oldest working passenger vessel in the world. Substantial hotels were built at Patterdale and Glenridding, both of which acquired an increasingly resort-like character despite continuing mining activity above Glenridding.

In the 20th century the Ullswater Valley’s easy accessibility has resulted in new activities such as outdoor education and recreation centres. This has created new uses for many of the valley’s historic building stock such as Hallsteads, the Georgian villa, built by John Marshall and now used by The Outward Bound Trust. Patterdale Hall is the residential and adventure learning centre owned and managed by Bolton School. The Hall was acquired, in 1950, by Rowland Lishman, a Tyneside businessman and long serving member of the North Shields (Young Men’s Christian Association). He placed the whole estate in trust of the then Tynemouth YMCA. His aim was to provide holiday accommodation at a reasonable price, with the emphasis on young people from towns and cities, to enable them to experience the unique qualities of the Lake District. In 1988 the management of the trust transferred to the North Shields YMCA, with whom it rests today.

11.2.5  ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

In the summer of 1810 John Marshall, flax-spinner of Leeds, and his wife Jane rented Watermillock House, formerly the seat of the Robinsons, for the first of a number of summer visits. Their stays here were to have significant impacts on the valley and the wider Lake District. Charmed by the area, and the proximity to their friends the Wordsworths, in 1815 they built Hallsteads as a summer residence, capitalising on a point of land (Skelly Nab) benefiting from views along two of Ullswater’s three reaches. The Wordsworths were frequent visitors and a nearby house known as Old Church was also acquired to accommodate the overflow when guests were numerous.

As the century advanced the Marshall family acquired a huge presence in the English Lake District, with all of John Marshall’s surviving sons being settled in properties of their own. The eldest, William, purchased Patterdale Hall from the Mounseys in 1824, and in 1836 financed the building of the local school. On John Marshall’s death in 1845 his youngest son Arthur inherited Hallsteads while William embarked on a lavish rebuilding of Patterdale Hall to Italianate...
designs by Anthony Salvin. The retention of the Mounsey house within the new building may owe something to Salvin’s typically respectful treatment of earlier fabric, but it may also be connected with Wordsworth’s urgings: a number of other houses with which Wordsworth was associated about this date retain a vernacular core. Salvin nevertheless transformed Patterdale Hall into a ‘palazzo’ befitting one of the great industrialists of the age, set in extensive gardens designed by William Andrews Nesfield and commanding the head of the lake. Although Patterdale Hall remained unsurpassed by other villa builders on Ullswater its star faded within a generation; by the 1870s the Leeds flax-spinning business was in difficulties and the family’s ambitions were increasingly circumscribed.

Ullswater has many other associations with the Wordsworths. William and Dorothy made regular excursions to Ullswater to visit their friends the Clarksons at Eusemere Hall, the Marshalls at Hallsteads and the Luffs at Side in Patterdale. In 1806 Wordsworth himself purchased a nearby plot of land at the southern end of the lake with the intention of building a house, but the project was abandoned and it was a subsequent owner who erected the present Broad How in the 1830s, shortly after Wordsworth relinquished the land.

Most famously, Glencoyne Wood at the southern end of the lake was the place where, on 15 April 1802, William and Dorothy Wordsworth saw daffodils by the lakeshore. The encounter is described in detail in a celebrated entry in Dorothy’s ‘Grasmere Journal’:

“I never saw daffodils so beautiful they grew among the mossy stones about & about them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness & the rest tossed & reeled & danced & seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake, they looked so gay ever glancing ever changing.”

This later inspired Wordsworth’s most famous poem, ‘I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud’ (1807):

“Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.”

Ullswater is also the setting for one of the most celebrated passages in Wordsworth’s great autobiographical poem ‘The Prelude’. In Book I, he describes how, as a schoolboy, he stole a boat – “an act of stealth / And troubled pleasure” and rowed it out onto the lake. Although the location of the boat – a willow tree “Within a rocky cave” – no longer exists, it is suggested that Glenridding Dodd is the “huge Cliff”, which, “As if with voluntary power instinct / Upreared its head”, to seemingly admonish the young poet and trouble his dreams.

Coleridge first encountered Ullswater on a walking tour with Wordsworth in November 1799. In his Notebook he recorded his impressions:
“I have come suddenly upon Ullswater, running straight on the opposite Bank, till the Placefell, that noble Promontory runs into it, & gives it the winding of a majestic River, a little below Placefell a large Slice of calm silver.”

Later, in ‘A Guide Through the District of the Lakes’ (1835), Wordsworth recalled, from that same visit, witnessing a natural phenomenon, “deep within the bosom of the lake, a magnificent Castle, with towers and battlements”. This of course was the reflection of Lyulph’s Tower, which, at that moment was “altogether hidden from my view by a body of vapour stretching over it.”

Lyulph’s Tower, and Aira Force, on the western side of the lake, are celebrated in Wordsworth’s poem ‘The Somnambulist’. Aira Force (or more specifically the valley in which it lies) is also the subject of a delightful, late-published poem by Wordsworth, rejoicing in the tranquillity of the valley, where an ash tree makes “A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs”. Coleridge, however, has mixed views of this celebrated waterfall, describing the chasm in his Notebook as “very fine”, but the waterfall as looking like “a long-waisted Lady-Giantess slipping down on her Back”.

At Grisedale Tarn, there is the Brothers’ Parting Stone, which marks the place where, in September 1800, Wordsworth (accompanied by his sister) bid farewell to his brother John. Kidsty Pike was also the scene of the two springs, likened by Wordsworth to two parted brothers in his poem ‘The Brothers’. In her ‘Glasmere Journal’, Dorothy wrote poignantly: “poor fellow my heart was right sad – I could not help thinking we should see him again because he was only going to Penrith”. Sadly, it was indeed the last time that they saw each other, as John drowned off the Dorset coast in 1805. Following his death, Wordsworth wrote ‘Elegiac Verses in Memory of my Brother, John Wordsworth’, which recalled that 1800 leave-taking.

In August 1805, Wordsworth climbed Helvellyn in the company of Walter Scott and Humphry Davy, and told them the story of a local artist, Charles Gough, who fell to his death from Swirral Edge in the spring of that year. His faithful dog, Foxie, remained watching over its master’s body for three months until it was discovered by a shepherd near Red Tarn. Both Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott later wrote poems about the incident, extracts from which appear on a memorial erected near the summit by Canon Rawnsley in 1890.

Wordsworth’s description in ‘Musings Near Aquapedante’, one of the ‘Memorials of a Tour of Italy’ (1837) gives a visionary sketch of the view east from Helvellyn’s summit:

“...—hills multitudinous,
(Not Appenine can boast of fairer) hills
Pride of two nations, wood and lake and plains,
And prospect right below of deep coves shaped
By skeleton arms, that, from the mountain’s trunk
Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual moan
Struggling for liberty, while undismayed
The Shepherd struggles with them. Onward thence
And downward by the skirt of Greenside fell,
And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glencoign,  
Places forsaken now, though loving still  
The Muses, as they loved them in the days  
Of the old minstrels and the border bards.”

In 1802, a walk along Barton Fell in a despondent mood, inspired Wordsworth to write ‘Resolution and Independence’. In his Guide, Wordsworth describes in detail a walk through nearby Martindale in 1805 with Dorothy and his friend Charles Luff. This secluded valley remains little changed from Wordsworth’s day, and buildings, including the church and Dale End farm, still exist.

Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-97) was one of the greatest British painters of the 18th century. He visited the Lake District in the summer of 1793, and again in July 1794. Ullswater is one of a small number of Lakes paintings he completed in the mid-1790s. The scene depicted of the southern reaches of Ullswater is the same setting as that used by Wordsworth for his description in ‘The Prelude’ of the stealing of the boat while staying at Patterdale as a schoolboy.

Ullswater is also the subject of paintings by J. M. W. Turner. In 1797 he produced a watercolour of Ullswater with Patterdale Old Hall which is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. Another watercolour ‘Liber Studiorum’ of between 1807-19 is thought to be of Ullswater viewed from Gowbarrow Park. His sketchbook also contains seven consecutive views of Ullswater, taken along the western shore of the lake and one of Aira Force. A watercolour of Ullswater was derived from these sketches and John Ruskin
enthused about this work, "The blocks of stone which form the foreground of the Ulleswater [sic] are, I believe, the finest example in the world of the finished drawing of rocks which have been subjected to violent aqueous action."

11.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

The 20th century also saw the consolidation of the conservation movement and the Friends of the Lake District. In particular, the Friends achieved the undergrounding of the electricity line along the southern and eastern shoreline of Ullswater between Sandwick Bay and Glenridding, protecting views once appreciated by Wordsworth and Turner. This was carried out by the Westmorland and District Electricity Company following negotiations. The Friends also took a lead from 1938 in the attempt to resolve the problem of the pollution of Ullswater by the effluent from Greenside lead mine. In 1942 The Friends instigated legal action and pollution had been substantially reduced by 1944.

However, the increasing need for water abstraction throughout the 20th century led to renewed pressure on Ullswater. In the 1960s Manchester revived its ambition to abstract water from the lake, but now the environmental movement in the Lake District was organised and able to act. The Friends of the Lake District was prominent in a vocal campaign against the proposals, including petitions and important interventions in the national press. Opposition to Manchester’s Private Bill in the House of Lords was headed by Lord Birkett of Ulverston who pleaded that Ullswater should not suffer the same fate as Thirlmere and Haweswater. As a result the House of Lords rejected various key clauses in the Bill in 1962. Birkett Fell is named after Lord Birkett in memory of his fight to protect Ullswater. There is also a plaque to his memory on Kailpot Crag and he is also honoured by the Lord Birkett Regatta, a sailing event on Lake Ullswater.

In 1965 Manchester returned to the issue and sought a Statutory Order to permit water abstraction at Gale Bay. The proposals were put to a public inquiry in Kendal at which a large number of amenity bodies with a concern for the protection of the Lake District landscape gave evidence, including the National Trust and the Council for the Protection of Rural England. This time consent for water abstraction was given, although the strong opposition managed to modify substantially the proposal in order to prevent construction of a tunnel through Longsleddale and to ensure that the lake would not be drawn down below its natural level. Although water is now abstracted from Ullswater, it is effected in a manner that does not damage the visual amenity of the lake and its surrounding cultural landscape.

The significance of the Ullswater Valley was recognised by the National Trust very soon after its establishment with one of its early and key Lake District acquisitions in 1906 being the purchase of 750 acres (300 hectares) of Gowbarrow Park, following a public appeal, to safeguard it from proposed house building. This property included the scene of daffodils recorded by Dorothy Wordsworth and later by William in his famous poem and also included the picturesque waterfall of Aira Force. The appeal leaflet made the suggestion “Why not nationalise the English Lake District?”. The later planting of
conifers to the east of Gowbarrow Fell by the Forestry Commission was regarded as an unacceptable infringement of the 1936 Agreement.

Another early acquisition by the National Trust was Stybarrow Crag in 1913, but a number of Ullswater farms were purchased from the 1940s including Hartsop Hall, which was the first to be acquired by the Trust from the state under National Land Fund procedures in 1947. This fund was created to secure culturally significant property for the nation as a memorial to the dead of World War II. The major property of Glencoyne was given to the National Trust by the Scott family in 1948. Howe Green Farm, Hartsop, was bought by Lake District Farm Estates in 1956 and came to the Trust when Lake Farm Estates Limited was wound up in 1976. Caudalebeck Farm was purchased by the National Trust in 1965 and amalgamated with Hartsop Hall Farm. Beckstones Farm was purchased in 1986, Grove Farm in 1992 and amalgamated with Howe Green Farm (both in Hartsop) in 2000. The Trust now owns 5,402 hectares of land in the valley, of which 5,345 hectares is inalienable. It does not have any leased land but does have 387 hectares of covenanted land.

The Lake District National Park Authority also purchased land in order to protect it. Glenridding Common was acquired by the Lake District Special Planning Board in April 1977 with the object of preserving nature conservation interests and providing access land. They also acquired Glenridding Common and Ullswater lake bed.

Conservation in the valley is still very active. The Environment Agency, Natural England and the Lake District National Park Authority are working together to decommission the remote Hayeswater Reservoir and return it to its natural state. This reservoir was constructed in 1908 to provide local people with drinking water and it is intended that it will be restored to a tarn, as it was prior to 1908. As a consequence of removing the weir, natural ecological processes – such as eel migration – will return. Steps will be taken to protect wildlife and the environment while work is under way, including Hayeswater’s population of brown trout.

11.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Ullswater is one of several valleys in the English Lake District which exhibits attributes of all three identified themes of Outstanding Universal Value. The predominant activity in the valley is agro-pastoral farming and the typical field pattern of inbye and surrounding intakes on the adjacent fells is present, particularly in the side valleys of Hartsop, Deepdale, Grisedale, Boredale and Martindale. Ullswater is one of the key Herdwick farming areas in the Lake District and there are extensive areas of Common Land on the high fell land. The Valley contains a very large number of early farm buildings, some dating from the 16th century but mostly of 17th to 19th century date. The group of early farms clustered in the village of Hartsop is outstanding, and other settlements in the valley also have an agricultural character.
There is extensive and important evidence for early land use in the Ullswater Valley. Of particular importance are the comparatively high number of enclosed Romano-British settlements in the valley, indicating a very long history of relatively permanent settlement and agriculture. The Valley also includes a Neolithic stone circle, Roman marching camps and a fort, and significant medieval churches and pele towers. Rich lead veins are present in the rocks in the southern part of Ullswater and in the past the valley was an important centre of lead mining with the main workings at Greenside which operated from the 18th century until 1961. The settlement of Glenridding owes its size and character to the need for housing for miners.

Ullswater, with its beautiful sinuous lake, was of major importance as a source of aesthetic inspiration from the very earliest period of the Picturesque interest in the Lake District. Ease of access into the valley from the route between Penrith and Keswick helped to attract the first tourists and the valley features in guidebooks including that of Thomas West, who identified a number of viewing stations around the lake. The beauty of the lake and its mountain backdrop stimulated the construction of a number of villas and designed landscapes including the early and important Lyulph’s Tower and Aira Force.

Romantic interest in Ullswater was also strong and it was the location that inspired some of the best-known poetry of the period – William Wordsworth’s ‘I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud’ and parts of ‘The Prelude’. A number of important artists were also attracted to Ullswater, including J. M. W. Turner and John Glover.
The landscape importance of Ullswater was acknowledged very early in the life of the National Trust with the purchase in 1906 of Gowbarrow Park and in 1913 of Stybarrow Crag, the former through a prominent public appeal and donations. Over the 20th century the National Trust gradually acquired further key properties, including iconic farms such as Glencoyne, and now owns and manages a large portion of the valley. Ullswater was also the scene of a hard-fought and successful battle in the 1960s to prevent the Manchester Corporation from damaging abstraction of water from the lake.

Ullswater is thus rich in attributes for all the three themes of Outstanding Universal Value for the English Lake District.

**FIGURE 11.17** The Ordnance Survey’s triangulation pillar on the summit of Gowbarrow Fell, with plaque recording ownership by the National Trust
The southern end of the Haweswater reservoir showing the former location of the inundated village of Mardale
12. **HAWESWATER**

Description, History and Development
12. THE HAWESWATER VALLEY

“In truth, it is all very primitive and rough... The church is picturesque enough, with its tilt weathercock now so seldom seen, but it is by no means a rustic cathedral; the royal hotel – and the only one – is a wretched wayside public-house, where you can get eggs and bacon and nothing else – except the company of a tipsy parson lying in bed with his gin-bottle by his side.”

Eliza Lynn Linton describing the village of Mardale Green, in her ‘Guide to the Lake Country’ (1864)

12.1 DESCRIPTION

12.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

After Thirlmere, Haweswater was the second major impoundment of water to flood a Lake District valley and the farming communities within it and raised similar objections. The valley was flooded in 1935 and the resulting reservoir is the easternmost of all the lakes, set in the midst of the Shap Fells, remote, often featureless grass-covered hills with a strong sense of tranquillity. The valley lies on the north east edge of the English Lake District.

The geology of the Haweswater valley is mixed. The majority of the area, including the reservoir, comprises the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, but this is flanked by an area of Skiddaw slates to the north east followed by an extensive band of Carboniferous Limestone which forms the basis for the richer farming land around Askham and Lowther. There is also a small intrusion of granite in the south east corner of the valley.

Haweswater is a long, curving body of water running south west to north east. It has a relatively constant width along the majority of its length and occupies the entire valley floor resulting in the steep valley sides plunging almost directly into the water, particularly on the south side. There are no farms or inbye grazing for the entire length of the reservoir which lends a sense of wildness to the upper part of the valley. This contrasts sharply with the limestone scars and outcrops on the eastern edge of the Lowther valley. See Figure 12.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figure 12.2 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Haweswater valley.
**FIGURE 12.3** The contribution of the Haweswater Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haweswater</td>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Woodland industries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mining/Quarrying</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market towns</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Villas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designed landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icon" /> <img src="image" alt="Icon" /></td>
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<td></td>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

The head of the valley is dramatically enclosed by Branstree, Harter Fell, Mardale Ill Bell, High Street and Kidsty Pike, with glacial corries containing the tarns of Blea Water (the deepest mountain tarn in the Lake District at 63 metres) and Small Water. These steep and rocky north-east facing crags receive little sun and can present a forbidding aspect. The expanse of deep, dark water, high, enclosing fells, steep valley sides and a noticeable lack of pasture or settlement to add a humanising influence in the valley, combined with the knowledge of the two lost villages, present an eerie sense of mystery. This is strengthened when ruined buildings are occasionally revealed in a particularly dry summer with low water levels. Naddle Forest on the south east side of the reservoir forms an extensive tract of ancient semi-natural woodland with some small areas of conifer plantation around the west and south of the reservoir.

A number of historic routes lead out of the southern end of Haweswater, crossing the high mountain ridge at Gatesgarth Pass into Longsleddale and at Nan Bield Pass into Kentmere. A further route, the old corpse road, leads eastwards from Haweswater to Swindale.

The small side valley of Riggindale, at the southern end of Haweswater, is currently the only location in England where Golden Eagles nest, attesting to its wild and remote character.

Before the construction of the Haweswater dam, the settlement and walled fields in the Mardale valley formed a small and extremely picturesque example of a typical Lake District valley landscape. The natural lake of Hawes Water was 4 kilometres in length and almost divided into two parts by a delta which had been formed by outwash from the Measand Beck. The two reaches of the lake were known as High Water and Low Water. However, in 1919 the City of Manchester purchased the watersheds of Mardale, Swindale and Wet Sleddale for the purpose of water abstraction.

The dam was completed by Manchester Corporation and the valley flooded in 1935 raising the water level by 29 metres. Before this, the natural lake of Hawes Water was the highest natural lake in the Lake District at 211 metres. The Corporation also built
the single road into the valley, on the south side of the lake, to compensate for the loss of the original road under the reservoir waters, and the Haweswater Hotel to replace the centuries old Dun Bull Inn at Mardale Green. The dam, at the time a technically-innovative and still impressive structure, is surprisingly well-screened from most viewpoints by woodland as is the village of Burnbanks, built to house workers on the project. Originally 66 bungalows, built as a ‘model village’ and no doubt providing accommodation far superior to that to which the imported ‘navvies’ were used, it has now been redeveloped to modern standards.

The adjacent valleys of Swindale and Wet Sleddale to the south have also had their character modified by the need to supply water to Manchester. Amongst the bleak, open and remote moorland known as the Shap Fells, these valleys have a remote feel and are sparsely settled with little of the bright green improved pasture to be found in other Lake District valleys. They contain characteristic concrete structures associated with the development of the water supply industry including roads, bridges and dams. In the case of Wet Sleddale a substantial dam impounds a reservoir completed as late as 1966.

These valleys run out into the broad, gentle, limestone Lowther Valley with the rugged outcrops of Knipe Scar and Burtree Scar contrasting with the smooth, green pasture and striking pattern of irregularly shaped fields bounded by limestone walls. The extensive designed parkland of the Lowther Estate and the ruined Lowther Castle are notable landscape features and the distinct settlements along the valley including
Rosgill, Bampton Grange, Bampton, Helton and Askham are fine examples of historic farming settlements. There are large blocks of mixed and conifer forestry amongst the farmland on the limestone to the east of the Lowther valley.

12.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

The early farming landscape in main valley of Haweswater has been inundated by the reservoir resulting in the loss of the small hamlet of Mardale with its church and Dun Bull Inn. The Inn was famous for its autumnal shepherds’ meet held on the third Saturday in November at which stray sheep were brought from the surrounding fells to be given back to their owners. Up until 1830 the meet had been held at Racecourse Hill, on High Street, where in addition to the claiming of stray sheep there was a horse race and other local sports such as wrestling.

Canon Rawnsley wrote about the Mardale Shepherds’ Meet in 1906. He reported that the shepherds had given up a week to ‘raking’ the fells and bringing about 200 stray sheep to the Dun Bull Inn. In 1927 over 700 people attended the meet, participating in the hunt with the Ullswater Foxhounds, watching the stray sheep being brought down from the fells, taking part in clay pigeon shooting and joining in the festivities of the evening. The last meet at the Dun Bull Inn was held in 1935.

Unusually for the Lake District valleys there are groups of medieval terracing or lynchets, presumably because the shallower gradients allowed this. There are at least 17 instances of lynchets occurring in the Haweswater Valley area at Askham Hall deserted medieval village, Helton deserted medieval village, Hause End (Bampton), Naddle, High Knipe, Lowther deserted medieval village, Hullockhowe (Bampton), Ashleymoor Plantation, Lowther Castle, Newtown, Skellands Strip, Whale Plantation, and at Wet Sleddale. With the possible exception of those in Wet Sleddale, these are undated; some (in particular Hause End) may even relate to pre-Conquest settlement.

There are lynchets north east of Hegdale and north west of Rosgill, covering an area of 25–28 acres. There are also lynchets on Knipe Scar near High and Low Scarside (=‘saetr’ forming a series of terraces in two groups and also a transverse series. Rosgill has a huge number of strip fields; some presumably correspond to a former open common arable field at Rosgill itself. The strips are extensive all around the slopes of Wilson Scar and beyond the National Park boundary, up to Bampton and Bampton Grange, and Butterwick and Knipe in the north; they may be related to terraced agriculture as much as the division of former common land as strips, and it is likely that many of these strips were enclosed from former monastic land after c. 1540.

There are also lynchets ‘south east’ of Rowlandfield Plantation and more south south east of the church comprising three terraces about 0.25 miles long along a slope. There is also a deserted medieval settlement at Lowther. Other areas which have evidence of medieval occupation can still be found above the waterline. Heltondale Beck appears to have an irregular early enclosure dating from the medieval period, although the place-names (Scales, Scalegate) which suggest this were marginal at the start of the medieval period. That the area is relatively unchanged from the 1st edition
FIGURE 12.7 Shepherds' flocks and native sheep breeds in the Haweswater Valley
Ordnance Survey map of the mid-19th century suggests that this particular side valley has always been marginal pasture, with Dalehead and Keldhead originating as manorial settlements in the 14th century.

There is a group of strip fields around Helton Flecket which probably relate to a former open common arable field, enclosed as strips from the medieval period into the 16th century and onwards. The epithet ‘Flecket’ may derive (similar to Flake Howe) from the Old Norse ‘flaki’ meaning ‘hurdle’, suggesting that the inbye land may have originally been enclosed by a timber encircling fence.

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS

Although the extent of agricultural land has been reduced in the Haweswater Valley, the valley area as a whole is still the location for 34 farms with fell-going flocks. There are seven Swaledale flocks and four Rough Fell flocks registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Herdwick flocks or National Trust landlord flocks in the valley area. Two-thirds of the valley area is owned by United Utilities, successor to the Manchester Corporation, including the Haweswater, Swindale and Wet Sleddale valleys and all of the high fells. Many of the fell edge farms are tenanted from United Utilities.

There are about 6,551 hectares of Registered Common Land in the valley, around 45 per cent of the total area, and including all of the open fell. The areas of Common Land are Bampton Common, Helton Fell and Askham Fell to the north and west of Haweswater reservoir, Mardale Common and Rafland Forest and Rosgill Moor to the south and east of Haweswater reservoir, Knipe Moor and Knipescar Common on the east side of the Lowther valley and other small areas of Registered Common Land.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

The Mardale Shepherds’ meet is now held at St Patrick’s Well Hotel, Bampton, on the Saturday nearest the 20th November.

FARMSTEADS

A number of 16th to 17th century farm buildings survive suggesting a period of rebuilding and investment at that time, possibly as a result of post-Dissolution land sales and improved tenurial conditions. Important examples of farm buildings include the following:

TABLE 12.1 Key farm buildings in Haweswater Valley

THORNTHWAITE HALL
A late 16th century hall with a tower and later additions and alterations, including part conversion to a bank barn with the addition of a ramp.

DATE 16th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 351297 516297
ASKHAM GATE FARM, IN ASKHAM VILLAGE
A late 18th century farmhouse incorporating a doorway from an earlier house and barn.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 351309 523631

STANEGARTH FARMHOUSE, NEAR BAMPTON

DATE 17th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 349735 517756

SCHOOL BANK COTTAGE AND BARN, IN ASKHAM
An early 18th century farmhouse and barn with 19th century alterations. The barn has a high arched cart entrance.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 351410 523744

EASTWARD, NEAR BAMPTON
A late 17th or early 18th century farmhouse and attached outbuilding with later additions. Ground floor has spice cupboard to rear wing inscribed: ‘CM 1728’.

DATE 17 – 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 351177 517000

GRANGE FARM, BAMPTON GRANGE
A mid-17th century farmhouse with late 18th century additions and early 19th century alterations with attached outbuildings and a separate late 17th century or early 18th century byre.

DATE 17th – 19th centuries
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 352088 518093
12. HAWESWATER

12.1.4 INDUSTRY

Apart from the 20th century water industry, impacts in the Haweswater Valley from other industrial operations have not been as great as in other valleys. There are a few remains of industry in the valley that pre-date the creation of the reservoir. These include the small, 19th century Birkhouse copper mine on the north side of Haweswater, below Four Stones Hill, between Burnbanks and the Measand Beck, and opposite on the south side of the valley, the remains of charcoal burning platforms in Guerness Wood. There are also remains of a slate quarry at Mosedale. The Shap Blue Andesite quarry sits on the boundary at the south-east corner of the valley area. But it is the water industry that dominates the valleys of Haweswater and Wet Sleddale with their two reservoirs.

12.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

There are no large settlements in the Haweswater Valley. The main settlements are Askham, Lowther, Helton, Bampton, Bampton Grange, Burnbanks and Rosgill.

ASKHAM

Askham has medieval origins and a distinctive linear settlement pattern with near continuous frontages of 17th, 18th and 19th century farmhouses, barns and cottages facing each other across the series of informal, wide grassy greens rising uphill from the River Lowther to the foot of Askham Fell. It is a fine example of a ‘planned’ medieval village built by the Swinburns and Sandfords of Askham Hall. Askham Hall is the earliest structure still in occupation in the village, the pele tower dating from the 14th century with later changes in the late 17th century by the Lowthers. It was the family seat of the Lowthers from leaving Lowther castle in 1935 up to 2006. Askham Hall is Grade I listed and its grounds are listed in the Historic England’s ‘Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest’. St Peter’s Church was designed by Sir Robert Smirke (1781-1867) who also designed nearby Lowther Castle and went on to design the British Museum. The majority of buildings in Askham have architectural and historic interest and are contained within the Conservation Area. The 44 listed buildings and many other unlisted historic buildings make a positive contribution to the area’s special character and appearance. The inter-relationship of the dwellings, farms and barns along the street frontages points to the village’s agricultural heritage. There are many well-preserved examples of local Cumbrian stone-built vernacular architecture, both domestic.
(usually rendered) and agricultural (usually stonework exposed). There is a prevalent use of local limestone and red sandstone as a walling material under greenslate roofs, reflecting the underlying geology of the area. The whole village was controlled by the Lord of the Manor and today much of it is owned by the Lowther family. It is one of the most attractive villages in the Lake District.

**LOWTHER**

Lowther Castle is the historic seat of the Lowthers, the Earls of Lonsdale and the dominant family of Westmorland. It sits within 600 hectares of grounds and deer park laid out by the Lowther family in the 16th and 17th centuries. It has recently been through a nine-year programme of repair and conservation after many years when it was used as a commercial chicken farm and forestry business. The latest repair work to the castle ruins, funded by English Heritage and the Lowther Estate Trust, will open up the ruins and stabilise the important central staircase tower, the key to preserving the grand silhouette of Robert Smirke’s masterpiece, his first, and arguably finest, architectural commission, thus preserving this landmark for the future.

Lowther village is an historic planned model village built in the 1770s for Sir James Lowther. It was inspired by the drawings and designs of Robert Adam (1728-1792), the renowned Georgian architect. Designed as a single entity with a common architectural theme, it creates an exceptional sense of place and is one of the earliest examples of the circus form, best exemplified by John Wood’s ‘Circus in Bath’ (1754). As such it is an incongruous urban design in a remote rural setting. The village has a unity of building materials, such as local limestone and sandstone walls under graduated Lake District slate roofs. All of the historic buildings, including the 18th century pump and trough, are listed Grade II* and it forms a time capsule of the 18th century. Lowther Newtown (sometimes known simply as Newtown) was initiated by Sir John Lowther c.1683 following the demolition of the old village of Lowther in 1682. The old village, consisting of hall, church, parsonage house and 17 cottages, was deliberately pulled down by Sir John Lowther to

![Lowther Castle and parkland](image-url)
open up the prospect of Lowther Hall, the site of the present castle, which he wanted to enlarge. It contains evidence of an earlier phase of activity in the form of three Norse hog-back tomb stones and a cross shaft, dating from around the 10th century.

HELTON

Helton is a small historic hamlet set on the Askham to Bampton road, which developed as a ‘spring line’ settlement, probably during the Anglian period (c. 6th/7th centuries), on the western side of the Lowther Valley, surrounded by open fields to the east and with the fell fringe to the west. It is a tightly-clustered linear settlement of farms and houses arranged around a triangular, sloping village green, with ‘toft’ development (houses with arable land attached), back lanes and driftways. Evidence of strip field farming survives, forming an important part of the landscape setting of the hamlet. Many of the buildings have architectural and historic quality, six of which are Grade II listed buildings, and many others which make a positive contribution to the area’s historic character and appearance. The buildings predominantly date from the 17th and 18th centuries and are good examples of the vernacular tradition. The palette of building materials reflects the underlying geology, Carboniferous Limestone, sandstone, slate-stone and limestone rubble, typically with a render coat, is used for domestic buildings. Farm buildings and boundary walls of exposed limestone, with many examples of structural ‘throughstones’, can be found along with surviving stretches of traditional cobbled street surfaces. The central village green, wide grass verges and fields enhance the relationship between Helton and the surrounding landscape.

BAMPTON AND BAMPTON GRANGE

Bampton lies within the parish of Bampton and the parish church of St Patrick is in the nearby village of Bampton Grange. Bampton lies at the junction of two historical routes between Askham and Shap and to Haweswater, at the crossing of the Howes Beck. It is comprised of domestic and agricultural buildings, with surviving structures including the smithy, corn mill/saw mill, post office and a limekiln. These date predominantly from the 17th and 18th centuries, although the very rare listed dovecote at Bampton Hall (in Bampton), later used as a smokehouse, dates from the 16th century.

Bampton Grange developed as a farming settlement, but also as a centre for the parish and the wider area, containing an important river crossing, a large church and, from 1623, a Grammar School. Church Bridge dates from the late 18th or early 19th century and replaced an older structure; the bridge was declared a public crossing belonging to the County in 1685. The school was founded using money collected in London by the Reverend Thomas Sutton from his parish of St Saviour’s in Southwark and attracted boarders from a wide area, while being free to children of the parish. It was renowned for providing students for the Church of England ministry. During the 19th century, the school house occupied the building immediately to the east of the Church of St Patrick, dated 1726.

However, the 18th century saw the remodelling of the existing landscaped parkland around Lowther Hall/Castle and Askham Hall. Lancelot Brown (1716-83) visited Lowther on two occasions, in 1763 and 1771, but the new naturalistic landscaping to another design was not carried out until the parkland was extended to the north which
happened sometime between 1770 and 1824. J. M. W. Turner painted the castle and the grounds in 1809 and Jan De Wint painted the same scene c. 1835. The landscaped grounds around Askham Hall were extended sometime after 1777.

### 12.1.6 Picturesque Buildings and Landscape

There are no Picturesque buildings or landscapes in the Haweswater Valley. However, the 18th century saw the remodelling of the existing landscaped parkland around Lowther Hall/Castle and Askham Hall. Lancelot Brown (1716-83) visited Lowther on two occasions, in 1763 and 1771, but the new naturalistic landscaping to another design was not carried out until the parkland was extended to the north which happened sometime between 1770 and 1824. J. M. W. Turner painted the castle and the grounds in 1809 and Jan De Wint painted the same scene c. 1835. The landscaped grounds around Askham Hall were extended sometime after 1777.

There are a number of country houses with designed landscapes. At Askham Hall there are formal gardens and terraces possibly with late 17th or 18th century origins approached via the main entrance on the south side with a gateway with stone gate piers (listed Grade II) leading to a drive to the Hall. A second drive leads to the north side of the Hall from the track to Broadgate. At Lowther Castle, the parkland of the 17th to 19th century date with medieval origins, a late 17th/early 18th century avenue and terrace, and an early 19th century terrace and forecourt by Robert Smirke, provide a magnificent setting to the medieval and later building. Both designed landscapes are registered parks and gardens and include nationally important listed buildings.

### 12.1.7 Villas and Designed Landscapes

There are no true villas in the Haweswater Valley.

### 12.2 History and Development

#### 12.2.1 Archaeology and Early Settlement

The flooding of the valley in 1935 submerged much prehistoric evidence, but evidence of human activity survives on higher ground including Bronze Age standing stones and hill-top prehistoric burial cairns. Of the 54 scheduled monuments in the valley, 32 relate to round cairns, barrows or cairnfields. There is a particular prehistoric complex on Moor Divock and Askham Fell consisting of the Cockpit stone circle, prehistoric burial cairns, a standing stone and aligned monuments. A small hillfort with a massive stone bank at Castle Crag is probably Bronze Age or Iron Age in date and may have functioned as a stock enclosure.
12. HAWESWATER

The route of a Roman road runs on High Street to the west, the highest Roman road in England. Farming settlements which date to the Romano-British period can be found at Haweswater and Haweswater Hotel, on land north of High House, Cragside Wood, and at Skirsgill where there is an enclosed stone hut circle settlement which consists of a farmstead and regular aggregate field system. All these remains are nationally important scheduled monuments.

12.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Much of the area – especially the lower-lying and wider valleys – was probably settled before the Norman Conquest, in this area c.1093, but evidence is rare for the period.

There is, however, evidence from pollen samples for large-scale clearance around Littlewater in late 6th/early 7th century, with the introduction of hemp and flax. Both crops are also documented throughout the medieval period in tithe payments.

There are three Norse hog-back coffin lids and a cross shaft at Lowther Church suggesting an earlier predecessor at least as early at the 10th century. The name Carhullen may derive from the ancient British word ‘caer’ meaning a fortress or stronghold and if this is correct, then it would be a rare example in Cumbria of a ‘caer’ being taken into English hands. The nearby earthwork at Towtop Kirk may have enclosed a sanctified Christian area in the 6th to 8th centuries. Butterwick (Old English derivation from ‘Buttyrwick’ meaning ‘farm where butter was made’) suggests a pre-Conquest origin but it does not appear in surviving historic sources until the 16th century.

12.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

There are no useful documents which set out the 11th or early 12th century landscape history for the Haweswater Valley area. Consequently, evidence for early farming practices and the evolution of land use in the valley is reliant on archaeological evidence.
and much later mapping. Much of the valley has been flooded restricting the amount of available evidence visible on the ground to higher areas.

There was some monastic influence in the valley. Shap Abbey was founded about 1191 originally at Preston Patrick, but moving to Shap c.1201. The abbey was granted land immediately around it, and also towards Swindale and Shap village. Pasture at Rayside, Tailbert, Swindale and beyond Thiefshead was specifically for the upkeep of 60 cows, 20 mares and 500 sheep, 5 yoke of oxen and wood for fuel and other necessities.

Further grants were made at the end of the 12th century, and between the 13th and 14th centuries. More land in Tailbert and Shap came from the Curwens; the Viterpont family gave nine acres in Shap and the vill of Reagill, and the Cliffords also granted Shap Abbey land. The presence of the Abbey in the Lowther Valley generated wealth within the area through successful sheep farming and wool production. The monks bred sheep on the surrounding fells and the high quality of wool from Shap is recorded in an Italian wool buyer’s list of 1315. The foundations of medieval shielings have been recorded at Whelter Beck together with the remains of a more extensive medieval settlement at Burnbanks.

An account given by the Bishop of Carlisle soon after the Scots raids of 1322 relates that one of the two armies “burnt nearly all the churches, houses and buildings, driven off their cattle”. That the account puts cattle in its own category separate from other types of moveable wealth, may show just how important cattle were here at this period. It also provides a date by which the medieval building stock had already been established at least for Shap.

Thornthwaite Manor residents were excused payments of dues to Crown at some point after these raids suggesting that neighbouring settlements suffered a similar fate. The Abbey itself is surrounded by dykes that probably enclosed pasture for the Abbey’s stock; these earthworks are now part of the nationally important scheduled monument.

Large parts of Wet Sleddale (Sleddale Hall and Sleddale Grange) were granted to Shap Abbey after 1249. The place-names Littleseat, Seat Robert and Ulset Rigg, all in Wet Sleddale, suggest that this was predominantly seasonal pasture (their names deriving from the Old Norse ‘saetr’, meaning shieling) until colonised by the Shap Abbey monks after 1249. However, the Lord Patrick kept rights in Wet Sleddale for ‘beast of chase’, and a forester with bow to serve him and his heirs (hence a division of this manor between the Hall and Grange perhaps). The limits of the common pasture for the Abbey were set out in the same grant document. Sleddale Grange is near surviving medieval landscape features around Sleddale Hall, including lynchets on a south east slope north east of the Hall. A 1257 confirmation of the 1249 grant describes the enlargement of the meadow land of abbot and convent; this mentions walls and dykes. This two-stage process may possibly be reflected in the 19th century 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, which shows a central group of enclosures with an outer layer around it. Sleddale Hall
perhaps occupies its own particular parcel at the head of the valley adjacent to the hunting grounds. The farms in Wet Sleddale presumably each post-date the Dissolution when the abbey had the farm of the ‘whole township’. Perhaps these lie over the sites of medieval buildings belonging to the monastery; there are no further clues to when the houses were built, although ‘Bowfield’ may pre-date 1562 when a ‘Bowhouse’ is referred to.

The name Bampton Grange implies that it was the location for a monastic farm. By 1535 the vicarage of Bampton paid a tithe of calves which indicates cattle-rearing, but this may have a long heritage extending back to medieval times. Other than by the occurrence of its name, the grange is undocumented and it is difficult to make out obvious candidates for its boundaries in the landscape today or on historic mapping. However, Bampton Bridge has been in existence since the 14th century; in 1362 John de Askeby, the vicar of Bampton bequeathed a legacy for the fabric of the bridge.

Other scant references to medieval occupation can also be found at Bampton. The parish church of St Patrick is located in the nearby village of Bampton Grange. A church on the site is first mentioned in 1170 when it was attached to Shap Abbey. There are two sets of possible former open fields here – at Butterwick and these possibly extend south towards Bampton.

At Swindale Head the earliest farm settlement is represented on historic mapping by a group of radial field enclosures. This potentially dates to the Abbey’s acquisition of pasture in 1191. The Abbey exchanged a tithe of hay from Swindale in 1257, indicating that they were using this at least for meadow. Perhaps Swindale Foot was also originally settled in 1191. Similarly, at Tailbert there is a group of radial field patterns similar to Swindale, and an Abbey farm may have been established here although we have no documentary evidence for this. Tailbert lies to the south of Rayside and its place-name including the ‘seatr’ element for a shieling suggests a probable 11th/12th century date, possibly settled later as a permanent farm on the edge or beyond of permanent settlement.

There is more information for Lowther, but due to a lack of documentary sources, dating evidence from the building stock has to supplement the meagre historical sources. The earliest surviving fabric of the parish church of St. Michael at Lowther dates to c.1170, although there are three Norse hogback tomb stones and a cross shaft possibly suggesting an earlier structure. The church is not mentioned in historic source material until 1280, but a William de Louthere is recorded in the 1184 ‘Pipe Rolls of Westmorland’. Lowther Hall probably originated as a motte and bailey before 1287. About the middle of the 14th century a pele tower was erected; the hall and second tower date from the 15th century. The rectory of the church of Lowther is described in 1535 as a mansion within the glebe lands and with three cottages, probably all at Glebe House.
The manor of Askham was in lay ownership, having been acquired in 1280 by Sir Thomas de Helbeck. Records show that a church dedicated to St Kentigern existed in Askham in 1240. The manor remained in the de Helbeck family until the early 14th century when it passed by marriage to the Swynburn family. An inquisition of 1326 referred to a dwelling on the site being partially burnt by the Scots. Edmund de Sandford and his wife Idonea, co-heiress of Sir Thomas English, came into possession of Askham in 1375, and it remained in the family for c. 350 years. Askham Hall (listed Grade I) originated as a pele tower, probably in the 14th century. It has three irregular wings around a rectangular courtyard. The tower forms the south front and was remodelled 1685-90, although medieval tunnel vaulting survives at ground floor level. The north wing retains some medieval work and the remainder of the building is of 16th and 17th century date with later alterations and additions.

There are two deserted medieval villages at Low and High Knipe, both of which may be connected to the devastation of 1322. Reference in 1562 to ten tofts (over and above the 15 houses and four cottages) suggests a high proportion of abandonment. Shap Abbey had a tenement at Knype and at Rosgill in the 1540s, but their location is uncertain; possibly, based on their names, they are the sites of Abbott House in Rosgill and Grange House on the Bampton/Knipe border. Knipe Hall appears to overlook the strip fields to the north at High and Low Knipe, in the manner of a manorial lord’s holding being separate and superior to the common land. Rosgill does not appear in documentary material until 1343 or soon after, when the de Rosgill family married into the Salkeld family.

Traditionally an oratory was believed to have been founded in the 14th century at Mardale although a chapel is not recorded until 1586, before which the dead had to be taken to Shap Church along a ‘Corpse Road’. The tithe map of 1842 may capture surviving elements of the medieval field system and it shows town fields; the common field was called the Mardale field, on both sides of the river at the head of Haweswater. Riggindale may perhaps have been the separate lord’s or steward’s holding, overlooking the open fields. Bouderthwaite (indicating further clearance to the south/southwest) was apparently the oldest standing farmhouse in Mardale in 1904 – the other farmhouses were 17th/18th century in date (a response perhaps to the wealth which perhaps derived from the rich wool trade of that period).

There appears to have been older inbye around Measandbecke and Hall, extending all around the north side of Haweswater up into Mardale. Although this does not necessarily equate to common fields, perhaps rather reflecting topography, it is possible that there was another small open field represented to the south-west of Colby, with Measandbecke comprising a separate holding for the manorial lord or their agent.
Apart from Mardale Common and Bampton Common, the shores of Haweswater seem to have been exclusively for deer parks, retained by the Curwen family outside of their land grants to Shap Abbey. Although the forests/chase of Thornthwaite included Mardale and Measand, the precise boundaries of the chase are not well-attested on the ground. From the names alone, Naddle Forest and Thornthwaite Park seem to have originated amongst these hunting preserves. Around Thornthwaite Park itself a wall boundary continues to the north east bank of the old Haweswater Lake on historic mapping; this may define the northern boundary of Shap Abbey land in the 16th century, and may have fossilised an earlier boundary.

Lowther Hall/Castle probably had a deer park, but there is no evidence that it was as early as the medieval period in date. Setterah Park also looks like a deer park on later historic mapping, but is undocumented. The moated site within it may have been a former lord’s holding overlooking the settlement to the north at Helton Flecket and raises the possibility that the deer park had medieval origins.

One of Shap Abbey’s boundaries above Sleddale Hall includes Buck Stone or ‘Lestablie’ which suggests a deer trap. This could be the scheduled deer pound to the east of the junction of Tonguerigg Gill and Sleddale Beck. The stone-walled enclosure is 1.3 hectares in size with walls standing to a maximum height of 3.6 metres. A newspaper article of 1851 in the Westmorland Gazette referred to the whole enclosure being rebuilt for renewed interest in large game; deer were last put in the enclosure in the 1860s.

Much of the useful land had already been enclosed in the medieval period, so 16th and 17th century enclosure largely consisted of small intakes and consolidation. At Swindale, there is specific reference to enclosure called “the New Close and Hoghouse Garth”, and also “inclosure called the waistes with one dale of meadow adjoining called the Prye” (1703/4, perhaps echoing a tenement mortgaged in 1697/8).

In Mardale, 13 tenants appear in the earliest documents which is an indenture dating to 1660. Mardale was on a packhorse route between Kendal and Penrith, and had two 17th century bridges at Arnold Bridge and Chapel Bridge, presumably replacing earlier bridges or fords on this important route.

The Hearth Tax for Sleddale Hall in 1670 shows 11 households with one hearth each and five households exempted because of poverty. This is a reasonable match for the 11 isolated farms shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map. Possibly the five exempted households were subordinate units attached to the 11 main farmhouses. The reorganisation of the landscape in the 16th and 17th centuries may have blurred the earlier lines between monastic land and land belonging to the Salkelds, but the number of farms seems to have remained stable until the 20th century.

Deer parks became fashionable again in the 16th century and around Littlewater Tarn a park is referred to in historic sources. The two medieval deer parks at Thornthwaite continued in use (or their use was revived) and they were extended. Thornthwaite Manor House is Elizabethan, and these parks are therefore likely to be 16th/17th century and may represent an enclosure referred to in a Court of Requests petition of the 25th May 1576:

“Thomas Langhorne and others showing that whereas they and their ancestors time out of memory of man have
quietly had and enjoyed possession of certain tenements according to ancient custom, in consideration of their service to be in readiness with horse, harness and other furniture to serve her majesty the Queen at their own cost and charges in defence of the realm against the Scots; but so it is that Sir Henry Curwen, lord of the lordship of Thornthwaite hath expelled twelve tenants and taken their land from them and hath enclosed it into his demesne and hath surrendered over the same lordship to Nicholas Curwen his son and heir."

Curwen, 1932

This may be the first record of Thornthwaite Hall, as Sir Henry provided an estate for his son whereon he could build for himself a home in imitation of a Border Pele. It was at this time that landlords began to improve their manors and estates on aesthetic principles before the end of the 17th century. At Lowther Park, the ancient village of Lowther was pulled down in 1682 in order to enlarge the estate and improve its prospect; the 17 tenements had until then stood just in front of the castle. Lowther Newtown (sometimes known simply as Newtown) was designed to replace the old village and aimed to establish a successful carpet manufacturing centre. It did not succeed and this village was subsequently replaced. Askham Hall was purchased by the Lowther family in 1680 and a number of alterations were made to the hall and grounds including the creation of garden terraces.

By the 18th century there were approximately 80 farms in the parish, predominantly focused on sheep farming. In 1846 the Carlisle to Preston railway line arrived in the area, passing through Shap, and this opened up new markets for import and export.

Parliamentary enclosure had a minimal effect in the parish and took place long after Wordsworth and Coleridge visited. Records detail only one enclosure award of 1846 on Sackwath common field close to the River Lowther’s west bank between Bampton and Butterwick. The only other major group of this type of enclosure is at Whitby Stead, but its date is unknown. There were also some minor episodes of improvement by drainage at Heltondale adjacent to Askham. The 1842 tithe map shows only eight fields in Swindale, but by the publication of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1863 there was considerably more enclosure. This suggests a large amount of late enclosure in Swindale, although it is possible that they were simply missed off the tithe map as not having a tithe due. The settlement at Mosedale Cottage may have added a large enclosure in the early 19th century (seen on Ordnance Survey maps), although it is possible that this relates to the adjacent slate quarry.

12.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Haweswater was not a valley that featured strongly in early tourism or the Picturesque experience of the Lake District, although it was considered to have admirable qualities.
West described it in his ‘Guide to the Lakes’ as a “sweet but unfrequented lake”. The approach to the valley from the east was considered to be picturesque, and the lower part “most pleasantly elegant”.

In contrast, West’s comment on the upper reaches of Haweswater was that “above the chapel, all is hopeless waste and desolate”, with the “precipitated ruins of mouldering mountains and the destruction of perpetual waterfalls”. West described Bampton vale as “a beautifully secreted valley”. However, he devised no viewing stations in Haweswater and his tepid descriptions did not inspire tourists to flock to the area. Consequently the farm at Greenhead – later rebuilt as the Dun Bull Inn – was probably the only packhorse hotel or inn in Keld, Hardendale, Wasdale, Rosgill and Swindale.

**FIGURE 12.13** Crowds outside Mardale Church for Farewell service, 18th August 1935

### 12.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

William and Dorothy Wordsworth’s father, John Wordsworth, was a steward for Sir James Lowther, later to become the first Earl of Lonsdale. On the death of the first Earl, William Lowther, his successor, who became second Earl of Lonsdale, settled all of the first Earl’s debts, including £4,000 owed to Wordsworth’s father in unpaid wages. William Lowther became one of Wordsworth’s principal patrons. Despite this connection, when compared with the other Lake District valleys, Haweswater and its surrounding area attracted far less attention from the Romantic Movement.

Wordsworth and Coleridge stayed at Bampton, the village at the foot of Haweswater, in early November 1799 at the beginning of their walking tour. Haweswater was then known as Mardale, and both men walked along the shore of the old lake and over the passes into Longsleddale and then Kentmere. Mardale is below Kidsty Pike, the mountain which figures in ‘The Brothers’ (1800):

“On that tall pike  
(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)  
There were two springs which bubbled side by side
As if they had been made that they might be
Companions for each other: the huge crag
Was rent with lightning – one hath disappeared;
The other, left behind, is flowing still.” (139-45)

Not far from Haweswater is Barton Fell Moor which Wordsworth used as the setting for
the beginning of his poem ‘Resolution and Independence’ (1802):

“I was a Traveller then upon the moor;
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
The pleasant season did my heart employ:
My old remembrances went from me wholly;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy”.

As Wordsworth said:

“I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of
the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell”.

In 1811 John Marshall, the wealthy Leeds industrialist, purchased Low Whelter at the
head of High Water, Haweswater. Marshall had become a close friend of Wordsworth
through the friendship between his wife Jane and Dorothy Wordsworth. The purchase
of Low Whelter is significant as it was Marshall’s first purchase (of many) in the Lake
District and was a guide to his intentions driving his future purchases of estates in other
valleys. The purchase was not an economic investment and too minor and remote for
a country seat. Instead he acquired Low Whelter for its scenic beauty and to control
the management of the woodland. Haweswater had a particular appeal for Wordsworth;
he wrote in his 1810 Guide:

“From Pooley Bridge, at the foot of the lake (Ullswater),
Haweswater may be conveniently visited. Haweswater is
a lesser Ullswater, with this advantage, that it remains
undefiled by the intrusion of bad taste”.

Low Whelter was sold out of the Marshall family in 1861 and so protection from
inappropriate change as defined by Wordsworth and Marshall was lost.

12.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT
OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

The 1919 Haweswater Act gave the Manchester Corporation powers to acquire the lake
in Mardale and the large surrounding catchment area for a major reservoir and allowed
for similar work in the adjacent small valleys of Swindale and Wet Sleddale. In the event,
only Wet Sleddale was dammed in 1966 and Swindale has remained as it was.
The Mardale residents from the four farms and other houses moved to nearby villages. Although the exact number is not known, the population of Mardale was about 40 in 1916. Most of the buildings were demolished by Royal Engineers, using them as demolition practice. The Old School was dismantled and rebuilt at Walmgate Head at the expense of a private well-wisher. The church was dismantled and the stones and windows were used to build the draw-off tower. About 100 coffins from the church graveyard were exhumed and re-buried at Shap. Most of the contents of the church were moved to what was then the new St Barnabas Church in Carlisle. The Dun Bull Inn was demolished and replaced by the present day Haweswater Hotel in 1937 on the east side of the lake on a new road and on an elevated shelf below Guerness Woods, giving the new building extensive views across the lake to the sweeping hillsides rising to the High Street ridge. In consultation with the Friends of the Lake District, it was built in an Art Deco-style, but also reused many of the dressed stone from demolished buildings and walls.

In the earliest days of the Haweswater scheme extensive afforestation of the catchment area was contemplated, but not carried out. In 1972, following a national study of water resources, a further expansion of the Haweswater reservoir was proposed by raising the height of the dam by a further 35 metres. Additional damage to the valley would also have been caused through the reservoir becoming a ‘regulating reservoir’, with a consequent seasonal variation in level. These proposals were not implemented.

Access to all open and unenclosed land in the valley in the decades after the flooding was in large part due to the efforts of the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society, established in 1865, which managed to have a clause inserted in the Haweswater Act of 1919 by which the public were given full right of access on all the common and unenclosed land purchased by the Manchester Corporation. A footpath was provided on the west shore, now a link in Alfred Wainwright’s famous ‘Coast to Coast’ route. This access long pre-dated the open access provided through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act of 1990.

By the time the dam construction was completed in 1935, the Friends of the Lake District was officially established and it was able to influence the landscaping and other subsequent construction and design details.

Attempts to remove commoners’ rights and create limestone quarries on Knipe Scar in 1941-2 were resisted by parishioners, in collaboration with the Friends of the Lake District. A process of negotiation and pro-active attempts to find alternative locations resulted in the kilns being constructed close to the Shap-Penrith road in order to protect the skyline of Knipe Scar. This outcome was welcomed by protestors because of its aesthetic and legal impacts and also for practical reasons – it was noted that new works would provide local employment after the War at a time when the Manchester Corporation’s Haweswater scheme was ending.

The extent to which recreation should be encouraged and catered for at Haweswater has been much discussed by successive water authorities and companies, the National Park Authority and other statutory and voluntary bodies. In the mid-1970s there were proposals for boating on the lake from a centre near Measand, which would have required a new road along the western shore, buildings and slipways. The scheme
was not pursued being seen at the time as being inconsistent with the quiet and underdeveloped nature of the western shore.

The Haweswater Valley area is the only valley area in the Lake District with no National Trust land ownership. However, United Utilities, the private water company, which has inherited the Manchester Corporation estate, is assisted in its management of the estate by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. In recent years, United Utilities has introduced the Sustainable Catchment Management Programme through which it is working with its farming tenants and investing its funds, alongside national agri-environment scheme funds, into land management changes to improve raw water quality.

12.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Although much of the agro-pastoral landscape around the two original lakes in Mardale has been lost beneath the Haweswater reservoir, the remainder of the present day landscape in the Valley displays very strong agro-pastoral continuity from earlier periods. The extensive areas of open land around the villages of Helton and Askham are overlain by fields which clearly show development from medieval strips and this is complemented by the patterns of inbye and intake fields in the more restricted sub-valleys of Heltondale, Swindale and Wet Sleddale. The arrangements of house plots in Askham and Helton also show strong continuity with the original medieval pattern. There are many examples here of early farm buildings dating from the 16th century, with later 17th to 19th century additions and re-building. Swaledale sheep are the principal breed in the Haweswater Valley and all of the extensive upland grazing here is Common Land.

There is widespread evidence of early land use in this valley, from prehistory to the post medieval period. Askham Fell is the location for an important group of Neolithic and Bronze Age ritual monuments and the western boundary of the valley follows the course of the High Street Roman Road. Early medieval activity is demonstrated by the Norse remains (hog back coffins) at Lowther and the pollen record for extensive agriculture in the late 6th/early 7th centuries. However it is the medieval period which is best represented with the remains of the monastery at Shap, early defended sites at Askham and Lowther and extensive remains of medieval agriculture around Shap.
Abbey and in Wet Sleddale. With the exception of the later water industry, there has been little industrial activity in Haweswater, with limited evidence for mining, quarrying and charcoal burning.

Haweswater’s remoter location to the east of the more popular valleys in the Lake District for early Picturesque tourists left it relatively unvisited and no villas were constructed here to take advantage of the lake views. The valley was visited by Wordsworth and Coleridge, featuring in some of Wordsworth’s poetry, and artists including J. M. W. Turner were occasionally attracted to the area. However Haweswater was not a major inspiration for artists and writers of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The landscape beauty of the valley was recognised by John Marshall in the early 19th century and he purchased land in the Mardale Valley, now submerged beneath Haweswater. However, this early purchase of land for conservation purposes was not followed elsewhere in the valley, and Haweswater is unique amongst the other Lake District valleys in having no National Trust ownership. The construction of the Haweswater and Wet Sleddale reservoirs by the Manchester Corporation did not attract the same level of opposition as Thirlmere, but the loss of scenic and cultural landscape in this valley formed an important backdrop to vociferous and successful campaigns against similar proposals in other parts of the Lake District in the later 20th century.

The Haweswater Valley is very rich in attributes which demonstrate the continuity of agro-pastoral farming, the first theme of Outstanding Universal Value. It is particularly important for the remains of medieval agriculture and settlement and in demonstrating the long development of the farming landscape. It has rather fewer attributes than other valleys which demonstrate the other two themes of aesthetic inspiration and development of the early conservation movement.
FIGURE 12.16 Grange Farm, Bampton Grange
The Vale of Grasmere
13. GRASMERE, RYDAL, AMBLESIDE

Description, History and Development
13. THE GRASMERE, RYDAL, AND AMBLESIDE VALLEY

“...and lastly, the Vale of Grasmere, Rydal, and Ambleside, brings you back to Windermere, thus completing, though on the eastern side in a somewhat irregular manner, the representative figure of the wheel”.

William Wordsworth, ‘Guide to the Lakes’ (1835)

13.1 DESCRIPTION

13.1.1 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley is located at the heart of the English Lake District. The principal settlements are the small town of Ambleside, the village of Grasmere and the hamlets of Town End (near Grasmere) and Rydal which experienced less tourist-driven expansion in the 19th and early 20th centuries facilitated by the opening of the railway to Windermere in 1847.

Due to its central location, this valley has good access to other parts of the Lake District. The principal historic north south route through the Lake District passes through the valley and is now designated as a trunk road, the A591. Other important links include the westwards route to Langdale and Coniston and the southern route along the east side of Windermere, to Newby Bridge. To the north east, a small road leads up to the Kirkstone Pass and over to Ullswater.

This is a classic U-shaped glacial valley. It runs generally north to south from the watershed at the pass of Dunmail Raise, which separates north and south Lakeland. Near Ambleside it meets the Langdale Valley from the west and they join the Windermere Valley which continues south to the Levens Estuary and Morecambe Bay.

The underlying Borrowdale Volcanic Group rocks of this upland valley were shaped by glacial activity in the last ice-age more than 11,000 years ago. Two relatively small lakes (Grasmere and Rydal Water) surrounded by woodland and pasture, are contained within a dramatic low fell backdrop with the tops of the craggy high fells adding occasional further drama. The soils of the valley floor are largely river-washed gravels improved over the centuries and enclosed to create inbye fields of bright green pasture which contrast with the more muted browns, greens and greys of the rougher textured intakes.
Figure 13.1 Grasmere, Rydal, and Ambleside Valley
Illustrative Map

1. Ambleside Roman Fort (owned by National Trust)
2. Town Head Farm (owned by National Trust)
3. Brimmer Head Farm (owned by National Trust)
4. Greenhead Gill Mine
5. 19th century enclosures in Scandale
6. Rydal Park
7. Bridge House, Ambleside (owned by National Trust)
8. Dave Cottage (owned by Wordsworth Trust)
9. Allan Bank and garden (owned by National Trust)
10. Rydal Mount
11. Villas at Clappersgate
12. Stockghyll waterfalls

© Lake District National Park Authority, 2015. This is an illustrative map only. Reproduction in whole or part by any means is prohibited without the prior written permission of the Lake District National Park Authority.
Figure 13.2 Grasmere, Rydal, and Ambleside Valley Cultural Landscape Map
### FIGURE 13.3 The contribution of the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley to the cultural landscape themes identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>COMPONENTS OF ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of traditional agro-pastoralism and local industry in a spectacular mountain landscape</td>
<td>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</td>
<td>😊😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of pre-medieval settlement and agriculture</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinctive early field system</td>
<td>😊😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medieval buildings (e.g. churches, pele towers and early farmhouses)</td>
<td>😊😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16th/17th century farmhouses</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herdwick flocks</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough Fell flocks</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swaledale flocks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Common land</td>
<td>😊😊😊</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shepherds’ meets/shows and traditional sports</td>
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<td>Woodland industries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Water-powered industry</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Market towns</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viewing stations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Villas</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designed landscape</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early tourist infrastructure</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residences and burial places of significant writers and poets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key literary associations with landscape</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key artistic associations with landscape</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key associations with climbing and the outdoor movement</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of a model for protecting cultural landscape</td>
<td>Conservation movement</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust ownership (inalienable land)</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Trust covenanted land</td>
<td>NTG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Protective Trusts and ownership including National Park Authority</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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GRASMERE, RYDAL, AMBLESIDE
on the lower fell sides and open fell above. Extensive, mainly deciduous, woodland cover blurs the boundary between the valley floor and the lower slopes and lends a softness and intimacy to the landscape.

See Figure 13.1 for an illustrative map of the valley. Also see Figures 13.2 for an overview of the cultural landscape of the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley.

### 13.1.2 THE INHERITED LANDSCAPE’S CHARACTER

Perhaps more than any other, this valley illustrates the diversity of landscape which characterises the Lake District. The rugged drama of the imposing high fells contrasts with and complements the richly-patterned and managed appearance of the pastoral landscape blended with the parkland and designed landscape of the Victorian period, which are so well represented in this valley. Large-scale, unenclosed fell is juxtaposed with intimate field systems and parkland; ancient semi-natural woodlands punctuated with exotic species of conifers; simple vernacular farmhouses rub shoulders with ‘high Victorian’ design. All these combine to produce a unique landscape highly-valued for its scenic qualities and sense of history.

The valley has been shaped by humanity over the millennia, with traces of human activity going back to the Neolithic period (4,000 – 2,000 BC). Vestiges of the archaeology and early history survive in the landscape. However, the inherited landscape today is largely the product of medieval and later usage. On the higher slopes and side valleys – away from the nucleated settlement centres – fields are laid out around farmsteads located over earlier, seasonal shieling sites with medieval or earlier origins. On the valley floors closest to the roads and the early villages the surviving fields represent enclosed strips carved from the medieval open fields and possibly the lords’ own tenements, and it is possible to identify a small number of these early boundaries on the ground.

![Figure 13.4](image-url) The Vale of Grasmere from Seat Sandal, looking south. The pattern of inbye and intake fields is clearly visible along with the line of the main road route through the Lake District (the A591). The village of Grasmere and the lake can be seen in the distance.
Irregular stone-walled fields still survive from the 16th and 17th centuries with planned enclosure of the mid-19th century on the higher slopes above the valley floors. Stone farm buildings survive from the 16th century onwards, replacements of earlier wooden structures. Other continuing elements of the farming landscape include pollard ash trees of which there are good examples growing alongside the walls of the inbye land in the fields by Ghyll Foot, under Helm Crag, and on the north side of Rydal Water. The traditions and practices of traditional Lake District farming continue strongly in the Valley.

High Victorian design is prominent in the principal settlements and also throughout the Valley, particularly its southern section, where vernacular farmhouses mix with Victorian villas sited in their extensive and ornate gardens. North of Grasmere the landscape is less influenced by design and Victorian architecture and has a stronger upland agricultural character. Woodland is less important and the high fells more dominant. There is a very clear distinction in the fell grazing above the valley. The open fell grazing land in the western half of the valley is largely common land, comprising the two commons of Grasmere and Loughrigg. The fell land in the eastern half was originally demesne land which has been divided into large, stone walled enclosures.

The contrast between the mountain setting and the intricate detail and softness of the valley landscape, well wooded, much influenced by design and with a strong sense of history on many levels, leads to a richness, variety and scenic beauty which has appealed to the nation for centuries. It has long been celebrated by writers, artists and poets resulting in the cultural associations, most notably with William Wordsworth, which are an integral part of this landscape.

With the exception of roadside accommodation, private villas and designed landscape, the only significant recent (20th and 21st century) development has been around the settlement cores at Grasmere and Ambleside.
13.1.3 FARMING TODAY – THE AGRO-PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

WORKING FARMS AND FLOCKS
There are 11 farms with fell-going sheep flocks in the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley. There are five Herdwick flocks, and one Swaledale flock registered with the relevant Sheep Breeders’ Associations. There are no registered Rough Fell flocks in the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley. The National Trust owns three farms with landlord flocks in Grasmere (Town Head, Brimmer Head and Underhelm along with Tarn Foot Farm which has grazing on Loughrigg Common). Town Head has a Herdwick flock and Brimmer Head has both Herdwick and Swaledale flocks. Brimmer Head is particularly significant as its sheep heafs cover the fells adjoining Langdale, Borrowdale, Grasmere and Thirlmere.

CONTINUING FARMING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Important local traditions linked to hill farming culture in the Valley include Ambleside Sports and Grasmere Sports and Show which are held in July and August each year. Grasmere Sports developed in the mid-19th century from the annual Grasmere Sheep Fair, when sporting activities were an important social activity. The origins of the Ambleside Show may be traced back even earlier to the annual fair which followed the granting of the market charter in 1650. Both events still include the traditional sports of Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling, hound trailing and fell running. The Rydal Sheepdog Trials, dating from 1901, are held in August in Rydal Park.

Another long-standing tradition in both Grasmere and Ambleside, rush bearing, also takes place in July. This is the continuation of the ancient custom of annually replacing the rush floor coverings of the church and is a community event including a procession with decorated bearings and rushes cut from local lakeshores.

FARMSTEADS
As with the stone walls, the traditional farm buildings in Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside are constructed from local stone and many date from between the 17th and 19th centuries. Key examples include:
FIGURE 13.7 Shepherds' flocks and native sheep breeds in the Grasmere, Rydal, and Ambleside Valley
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Grid Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>332452 508483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOWN HEAD FARM</strong></td>
<td>Late 17th century/early 18th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>333308 509860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH SKELGHYLL</strong></td>
<td>Late 17th century/early 18th century and 19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Not listed</td>
<td>339032 502878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW SCORECRAG</strong></td>
<td>Early to mid-17th century, 18th century and 19th century</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>333070 507799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RYDAL HALL BARNES</strong></td>
<td>Late 17th century</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Listed</td>
<td>336632 506402</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. GRASMERE, RYDAL, AMBLESIDE

RYDAL PARK BARN
Earliest dated example of bank barn in the Lake District (1659).

DATE 17th century  
OWNERSHIP Private  
PROTECTION Not listed  
GRID REFERENCE 336627 506373

GOODY BRIDGE HOUSE AND BARN
Whitewashed 17th century farm house with interior staircase of the period. Adjoining barn contains medieval crucks.

DATE 17th century  
OWNERSHIP Private  
PROTECTION Listed  
GRID REFERENCE 333296 508167

13.1.4 INDUSTRY

There are traces of a number of past industries in the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley, including mining and slate or stone quarrying, charcoal production and manufacture of woollen and linen cloth. The remains of a lead mine dating from the 16th century survive in Greenhead Gill. A short-lived boom in the value of iron ore led to the opening of mines at the northern end of Grasmere at Tongue Gill in the 1870s. Disused quarries for roofing slate are located on the northern slopes of Loughrigg Fell and at Baneriggs between Grasmere Lake and Rydal Water.

The abundant power available from the becks in the valley was harnessed from the medieval period until the 19th century for a number of industrial processes including corn grinding, wooden bobbin production, crushing bark for tanning, and manufacturing linen and woollen cloth. The archaeological remains of fulling mills survive at Loughrigg Terrace and at Sourmilk Gill in Easedale and surviving examples of the numerous mills in Ambleside include the wool and linen mill at Low Stock and the fulling and later corn mill just below High Stock Bridge. The remains of potash kilns survive in the valley, for example in Fox Ghyll Wood, and retting ponds, used for the initial retting or soaking of flax prior to further processing into cloth, can be seen in Rydal Park.

The aqueduct carrying water south from Thirlmere was constructed through Grasmere and Rydal and its course can be traced in the present landscape by the distinctive access gates and other minor infrastructure built by the Manchester Corporation at the end of the 19th century.

13.1.5 SETTLEMENTS

The principal settlements in the valley are the town of Ambleside and Grasmere village. Important small hamlets include Town End at Grasmere, and Rydal.
AMBLESIDE

Ambleside lies in the south east of the Valley, and is the main ‘urban’ settlement with a population in the region of 2,500 (in 2011). Ambleside’s complex street pattern originated in the medieval period when the town developed as an industrial centre and market; that street pattern has been partially overlaid and extended in later period periods to include a network of roads, narrow lanes, and ginnels. The 17th century market place still retains its original shape, though not function, and the remains of the octagonal shaft of the market cross also survive in situ. Large-scale tourism in the late 18th and 19th centuries led to development and expansion.

Significant early buildings in Ambleside include How Head in the medieval core of the town, dating from the late 16th or early 17th century. The building incorporates dressed stone recovered from the Roman fort at Ambleside to the south. On the western edge of the medieval centre is a remarkable survival of an early cruck barn, known as Albert Moore’s Barn, dating from the 15th or 16th centuries and now used as an electrician’s workshop. The barn was part of the farm linked to Ambleside Hall which lay on the east side of the Stockghyll beck.

The Bridge House on Rydal Road is one of the most iconic and famous buildings in the Lake District and a popular tourist curiosity. It was built in the late 17th century as a garden house originally to span Stockghyll and to connect the gardens of Ambleside Hall to the orchard that lay on the other side of Stock Ghyll. A significant group of buildings of the late 17th/early 18th centuries is located at the foot of Smithy Brow, including the Golden Rule Hotel, the Old House and a number of cottages. Villas include Lesketh Howe, and are described in Table 13.2.

GRASMERE

Grasmere is set in a valley surrounded by the lower grassy slopes of the Lakeland hills, some 5 kilometres north west of Ambleside. Old cottages, faced with pebbledash, and houses of bluish-green local slate vie for attention along the twisty streets of the village. Victorian villas sit comfortably beside hotels, galleries and shops catering to tourists.

Grasmere today has a population of about 1,000 people, though tourists swell that number extensively. Grasmere’s importance in the later medieval period for the woollen industry can still be seen in the vicinity of the village, where remnants of fulling mills...
(for washing and finishing woven cloth) still survive. Key early buildings in the village include the church (earliest surviving fabric 14th century) dedicated to St Oswald the 7th century king of Northumbria; and the cottage now used as the Gingerbread Shop, which served as the village school from c. 1685 to 1854. Like Ambleside, Grasmere has an annual rush-bearing ceremony which is a festival celebrating the ancient custom of changing the rushes that were placed on the church floor before the installation of a slate floor in the 19th century. The ceremony is first documented in 1680 but is much earlier.

The Rectory dates to the 18th century; and there is a 17th century house with barn at the rear, now owned by the National Trust and home to the Northern Centre for Storytelling. Church Stile, a row of 17th century cottages, is now the home of the National Trust shop, but in a past life was an inn. Further cottages, yards and former barns of the same date are clustered at the rear of the Red Lion Hotel.

**TOWN END**

Before the fame that would come from Wordsworth’s residence, Grasmere’s Town End was a farming hamlet which had developed alongside the packhorse route running down from White Moss Common to Grasmere. This route is also known as a ‘coffin route’ because it was one of the routes by which the deceased were carried in their coffins from Ambleside to the parish church in Grasmere for burial in the churchyard. At the point where the corpse road and the packhorse track meet there is a large ‘coffin stone’ or ‘resting stone’ on which the coffin was set while the bearers rested.

**DOVE COTTAGE**

Dove Cottage, William Wordsworth’s home from 1799 to 1808, is a small, late 17th century building with 18th century additions. The interior has a surviving 17th century wooden staircase and oak panelling.

Inevitably, much of the work of William and Dorothy Wordsworth focuses on their life in Grasmere and gives a vivid picture of life at the time. Dorothy’s ‘Grasmere Journal’ is a wonderfully vivid account of their daily life at Dove Cottage, mingling the prosaically domestic – “Mr Olliff sent the dung and Wm went to work in the garden” – with the intensely poetic:

> “Our favourite Birch tree... the sun shone upon it and it glanced in the wind like a flying sunshiny shower – it was a tree in shape with stem and branches but it was like a Spirit of water”

As the Journal reveals, the garden at Dove Cottage was as important to the Wordsworths as the house itself. Wordsworth often composed out of doors on the terrace, pacing up and down in his “Sweet Garden-orchard, eminently fair, / The loveliest spot that man hath ever found”.

Dove Cottage is now part of the Wordsworth Museum, and an internationally-important heritage site, receiving tens of thousands of visitors every year. The period when
Wordsworth lived here is regarded as his ‘golden decade’ when he wrote most of what is now considered as his greatest poetry.

The Wordsworth Trust, founded in 1891, looks after Dove Cottage and is also the custodian of an archive containing the most important collection of Wordsworth manuscripts anywhere in the world. Nowhere else can so much of a great writer’s work be seen in the very place where it was created.

The collection of the Wordsworth Trust includes Dorothy Wordsworth’s Journal, which in 2012 was included on the UK Memory of the World Register by the UK National Commission for UNESCO as a work of literature of international significance.

OTHER TOWN END BUILDINGS

Aside from Dove Cottage and the garden, a number of buildings in the hamlet of Town End have survived from Wordsworth’s time, and are now in the ownership of the Wordsworth Trust. They include Ashburner’s Cottage, the home of Thomas and Peggy Ashburner. Wordsworth’s poem ‘Repentance’ draws upon the experience of his neighbours, who were forced to sell land that they owned in order to pay off debts, much to their later regret.

Sykeside is another building that formed part of the Town End that Wordsworth would have known. It was the home of the Fisher family, John and Agnes, and John’s sister Molly who was the Wordsworths’ domestic help.

Rose Cottage was for a time the home of the poet Hartley Coleridge (1796-1849), eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, although he was not resident in Town End when the Wordsworths lived there.

Few of the buildings in Town End are less than 150 years old and comprise farmhouses, cottages, a former smithy, byres, barns and sties typical of a traditional agricultural settlement.

RYDAL

The hamlet of Rydal, lying at the east end of Rydal Water not far from Ambleside, comprises a small number of buildings constructed on the west side of the Rydal deer park. These include farmhouses, cottages and barns, collectively a good example of vernacular Lakeland architecture. The key building is Rydal Mount. William Wordsworth lived here from 1813 until his death in 1850; and the house is now open to the public.

Rydal Mount started life as a typical ‘Statesman’ farmhouse of the late 16th century but in c. 1750 the owner, John Knott, re-oriented the house so that the principal rooms gave views to the south west and Lake Windermere. The older parts of the house have typical Lake District vernacular features including construction from colour-washed local slate,
slate roof and round chimney stacks. The eastern block of the house is the earliest, with the west wing added in the 17th century, and further additions and alterations in the early to mid-18th century additions.

Another substantial farmhouse, Cote How, dating from the early 16th and 17th century is located on the south side of the A591. It has thick, buttressed and rendered slate walls, a slate roof with oval chimney stacks, a spinning gallery and a rare survival in the Lake District of exposed timber framing.

Nab Cottage, a two storey house on the northern shore of Rydal Water dating from 1702, was another residence of Hartley Coleridge (eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge) who died there in 1849 and also has associations with Thomas de Quincey's wife.

Rydal has seen remarkably little change in the last 100 years or so and the village and its landscape setting are largely a legacy of the 18th and 19th centuries.

13.1.6 PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

In 1668-9, on the east side of Rydal Old Hall, Daniel le Fleming created the 'Grotto' around a small waterfall on Rydal Beck. There are good views of the Grotto from the contemporary bridge over the beck, including the small summer house which was constructed with a window designed to provide the best frame for a beautiful view of the falls. Sir Daniel’s accounts provide a detailed account of the construction of the grotto in 1668, which he refers to variously as “the Sumer house at the Cawweel”, “the grothouse” and “the grot in the Mill-Orchard”. This summer house is thought to be the earliest known example of a viewing station in England, pre-dating the Picturesque Movement by nearly a century.

FIGURE 3.10 View of the lower falls in Rydal Park, seen through the window of the purpose-built summer house. This is one of the earliest defined Picturesque views in England.
Other Picturesque constructions in the garden include a single-span bridge over the Rydal Beck and a game larder. The wider grounds around the house were planted with a mixture of native and other trees such as Scots Pine and now form mature, open parkland. In 1909 the landscape gardener Thomas Mawson supplemented this Picturesque garden with a series of formal gardens to the south of the mansion. These include a rose garden and double terrace with balustrades, steps and topiary. Around the garden he added formal tree planting of exotic species including American and Japanese pines, and maples, alongside native species.

Below Rydal Water the landscape of the valley opens out to the south. As a result there are long views along Lake Windermere from favoured spots around Ambleside and as far north west as Rydal. Rydal Hall had long capitalised on one such location and its remodelling in the later 18th century was clearly designed to take advantage of this view.

For this reason the earliest villas in the Valley, dating from the late 18th century, cluster in and around Ambleside and similarly make use of elevated sites offering views over Windermere. They form part of a wider Windermere group of villas extending from Clappersgate to the eastern shore of the Lake Windermere, to Bowness and beyond. In the early 20th century this group expanded with the building of a small number of villas in the Arts and Crafts style.

Builders who could not afford a lake prospect chose other sites, including the lane running parallel with the west bank of the Rothay, creating the Under Loughrigg sequence of villas, south of Grasmere.

The hamlet of Rydal began to attract genteel residents from around 1800. Rydal Mount, a prominently sited, south facing vernacular farmhouse of 16th century origin which later became Wordsworth’s home, was occupied by John Knott from about this time, and its accommodation was progressively extended and refined. Knott laid out a garden to the south and west of the house which was later developed by Wordsworth following Picturesque principles advocated by Uvedale Price. The garden is on sloping ground and a series of terraces were constructed on the steepest part of the site. These give way
to further areas of differing levels of formality to achieve a transitional effect from the formal and ornamental grounds around the house to the farmed landscape beyond.

When Wordsworth took Dove Cottage at Town End as his rural retreat at the end of 1799 a small number of villas were already under construction in and around Grasmere. Other early villas or villa conversions occurred along the Red Bank road south of Grasmere, in the narrow entrance to Easedale underneath Helm Crag, and in the village of Grasmere where several modern-day hotels originated as villas.

All villas can be expected to sit within some form of garden or designed landscape. But in the Lake District not all have extensive grounds, since the surrounding landscape is easily appropriated in terms of views and setting. Some villas nevertheless have quite elaborate designed landscapes, incorporating networks of paths, buildings and other structures, prescribed viewpoints and planting of trees. Silverhowe, Grasmere, for example, was extended during the 1820s by Samuel Barber, who also laid out winding paths and built a root house with a mock-chapel, a snail mound and a ‘Swiss bridge’ on the slopes above the house. Wordsworth’s garden at Rydal Mount, where he lived from 1813 until his death in 1850, was developed in accordance with principles he articulated in his Guide and attracted numerous visitors. It is the only registered villa garden in the Grasmere area, though nearby Rydal Hall, a gentry house, also has a registered garden.

Wordsworth also advised friends on garden design, as he did John Gregory Crump, the first owner of Allan Bank in 1807, though the surviving designed landscape there, with its woodland walks and tunnel, is primarily of the 1830 – 1840s. A striking landscape presence belongs to the gardens at Helmside (1850s onwards), at the north end of Grasmere Vale, where richly varied broad-leaved and coniferous tree-planting contrasts with the normally open landscape of meadows and fells.

Not all gardens of note belonged to larger villas. Eller How in Ambleside was built in 1851 and bought in 1863 by Henry Boyle, who spent massively on ponds, ferneries, a summer house and a belvedere tower atop an artificial mound, all within grounds of no more than suburban extent. Among later gardens, White Craggs at Clappersgate deserves mention. Created from 1904 by its owner Simon Hough with the aid of William Purdom, a Kew plant hunter, around a villa designed by the Arts and Crafts architect Dan Gibson, it has the distinction of being the subject of short guidebook by C. H. Hough (A Westmorland Rock Garden, Ambleside, 1929) which went through several printings.

**TABLE 13.2** Key villas in the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villa Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALLAN BANK, GRASMERE</strong></td>
<td>Italianate style villa built for John Gregory Crump, a Liverpool attorney. Extended in 1834. The Wordsworth family lived here from 1808 to 1813. Later owned by Canon Rawnsley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATE</strong></td>
<td>19th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OWNERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>National Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROTECTION</strong></td>
<td>Listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRID REFERENCE</strong></td>
<td>333341 507688</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DALE COTTAGE, GRASMERE
Villa of 1840s. Now Dale Lodge Hotel.
DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 333620 507439

FOREST SIDE, GRASMERE
Villa by Thompson and Webster, 1853.
DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 334254 508072

FOX GHYLL, UNDER LOUGHRIGG
House in Regency style. De Quincey lived here from 1820.
DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336318 505115

FOX HOWE, UNDER LOUGHRIGG
Holiday home of Dr Thomas Arnold of Rugby School and his son Matthew Arnold, poet. Built 1832 to a design influenced by William Wordsworth.
DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336517 504950

GLENTHORNE, EASEDALE
Built in 1837 and extended 1867.
DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 333525 507862

HELMSIDE, TOWN HEAD, GRASMERE
House built in 1858.
DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 333071 509682
HOE FOOT, TOWN END, GRASMERE
House built in 1848. Now a hotel.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 334229 506923

IVEING COTTAGE, AMBLESIDE
Early villa of the 1790s, noted in West's Guide, 1st edition, now a hostel.

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 337736 504007

IVY COTTAGE, RYDAL
Now Glen Rothay Hotel. 17th century inn extended and gentrified in gothic style in the 19th century.

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336334 506175

LANCRIGG, EASEDALE
Villa built c. 1840 and visited by William and Dorothy Wordsworth.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 333048 508486

LESKETH HOW, AMBLESIDE
Built for Dr John Davey 1844-5.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 337243 505010

LOUGHRIGG BROW, LOUGHRIGG FELL
Gothic style villa by Ewan Christian, built 1863.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336916 504432
RYDAL MOUNT, RYDAL

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private but open to the public
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336393 506372

SCALE HOW, AMBLESIDE
3 bay Georgian house built for the Benson Harrisons, who owned ironworks in the Lake District. Built c. 1790 and remodelled 1824-5.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP University of Cumbria
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 337535 504880

SILVERHOWE, GRASMERE

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 333178 506858

MILLER BRIDGE HOUSE, UNDER LOUGHRIGG
Early villa with lake view, 1829.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 337041 504301

NANNY BROW, CLAPPERSGATE
Arts and Crafts style house by Francis Whitwell, 1902.

DATE 20th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 336021 503533

ROTHAY HOLME, AMBLESIDE
Substantial villa built for Elizabeth Head, 1854.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 337370 504125

RYDAL MOUNT, RYDAL

DATE 17th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private but open to the public
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336393 506372

SCALE HOW, AMBLESIDE
3 bay Georgian house built for the Benson Harrisons, who owned ironworks in the Lake District. Built c. 1790 and remodelled 1824-5.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP University of Cumbria
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 337535 504880

SILVERHOWE, GRASMERE

DATE 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 333178 506858
THE HOLLENS, GRASMERE
Three bay cottage villa of the 1790s, built for a Mr Olive and visited by William and Dorothy Wordsworth whilst in his ownership. Converted to hotel in 1849. Now the National Trust’s Lake District Consultancy Hub.

DATE 18th – 19th century
OWNERSHIP National Trust
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 334302 507603

THE KNOLL, AMBLESIDE
Unadorned house of local stone, built for Harriet Martineau, 1845-6.

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 337330 504806

WANLASS HOW, WATERHEAD

DATE 19th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 337506 503400

WHITE CRAIGS, CLAPPERSGATE
Arts and Crafts style house by Dan Gibson c. 1900.

DATE 20th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Not listed
GRID REFERENCE 336491 503556

CROFT LODGE, CLAPPERSGATE
Originally a white villa built for a Miss Pritchard before 1796. Substantially remodelled 1828-30.

DATE Late 18th century
OWNERSHIP Private
PROTECTION Listed
GRID REFERENCE 336817 503637
13.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

13.2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

There are clear indications of prehistoric activity in the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley including Neolithic (4,000 – 2,000 BC) or Early Bronze Age (2,000 – 800 BC) rock art, for example at Allan Bank. The large cairn on the summit of Dunmail Raise, the pass connecting south and north Lake District to Thirlmere, is also probably prehistoric, though it is also traditionally held to be the burial place of Dunmail, the last king of the early medieval kingdom of Cumbria (died AD 945).

However, it is likely that significant settlement and agriculture developed towards the end of the first millennium BC in the late Iron Age. The earliest demonstrable settlement is associated with the Roman fort and vicus settlement at Waterhead, Ambleside but it is not clear if this represents continuity of an earlier pattern or a new development resulting from the Roman advance into the Lake District in (100 AD).

13.2.2 THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The dedication of the church in Grasmere to the 7th century Northumbrian St Oswald hints at the existence of a settlement here at that time, though physical evidence is lacking. The village developed in the later medieval period as a centre of water-powered woollen industry and then from the late 18th century, particularly due to its Wordsworth connection, as a focal point for Lake District tourism.

There was probably a major phase of settlement and agricultural development in the 10th century, evidenced by the high number of place-names containing Old Norse. For example, the name Ambleside is thought to derive from ‘hamala saetr’ (Hamal’s clearing) and Rydal contains the element ‘–dalr’ ('the valley where the rye was grown').

The survival of place-names incorporating the elements ‘scale’ and ‘saetr’ indicate the locations of shieling settlements. These were part of a transhumance system in which permanent settlement and arable agriculture was established in the valley bottoms, and stock was grazed on the fells during the summer months. However, these place-names do not appear in documents until the 13th century or later, and it is likely that some names were introduced after the 10th century. The limited evidence in Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside suggests that the settlement pattern was established between the arrival of Scandinavian settlers in the 10th century and about 1250.

AMBLESIDE

The Norse element in Ambleside’s name suggests a 10th century origin for the settlement. Like Grasmere but to a greater extent, Ambleside developed as a centre
of the water-powered textile industry. From the late 18th century it was an important centre for tourism, as it is today.

As the Lake District wool industry developed from the 14th century, Ambleside grew in size and from the 16th century wool processing became Ambleside’s major industry. In 1650 a Royal Charter established a wool market in the town, recognising the value of its wool trade. The importance of Ambleside for the woollen industry was due to its location on key routes through the Lake District and because of its fast-flowing streams which were harnessed to drive the fulling mills. The first record for any mill in Ambleside is for a corn mill in 1324; with a further record of a fulling mill in 1453 which worked until the early 19th century. Both of these were built high up the Stockghyll Beck, close to the picturesque Stockghyll Force waterfall. By the early 16th century, five mills were supported by the Stockghyll beck, and by the 19th century nine mills were being powered by it.

In the 18th century Ambleside was well known for the production of a cloth called ‘linsey-woolsey’, made up from a mix of linen and wool. Following the award of the market charter in 1650, industrial development extended to the more level ground south of Stockghyll beck, where a combined wool and flax mill was constructed in 1795. This building, which has a reconstructed water wheel, is now used as a restaurant and shop. The boom in textile industries in the north of England created a huge demand for wooden bobbins. Bobbin-making began in Ambleside when a mill known as ‘Stock Force’ was built in 1810 and bobbin making became another mainstay of the economy for the next 70 years.

However, despite the success of the bobbin-making, in 1825 Ambleside’s wool market closed and the remaining fulling mills began to be put to other uses. For example the former fulling mill on the north side of Stockghyll beck was converted from fulling to milling of corn in 1638 and continued in use until 1930.
FIGURE 13.13 'The Old Mill' by J. M. W. Turner (1798): A view of the mills on Stock Ghyll, Ambleside
13.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMING LANDSCAPE

The development of the farming landscape is shown by both the physical evidence and by surviving documents. Grasmere first appears in documents in 1246 as ‘Gresemere’, Rydal in 1274 as ‘Ridale’, and Ambleside in 1324 as ‘Hamelsete’. The parishes of Grasmere, Rydal and Troutbeck are each recorded as ‘forest’ within the parish of Kentdale, comprising demesne land within the Norman feudal pattern of land tenure. This legal re-classification may indicate the relative agricultural poverty of the valley, although it does not imply that tree cover was more extensive or that land under cultivation was reduced. Within the private forests the lord of the manor’s demesne tended to be restricted to the head of a valley and tenants purchased rights to pasture, fishing, and turbarry (gathering fuel notably peat) on the demesne land through their rents. The forest law which prevented local tenants from assarting (clearing forest for agriculture) restricted the spread of enclosure during the 12th and 13th century.

In the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley the surviving documentary evidence implies the existence of a limited amount of arable, inbye land in the medieval period and there are documentary references to a water-powered corn mill in Hamelsate (Ambleside) in 1334. Fifteenth century documents record an arson attack on a stockpile of corn in Rydal in 1439 and the presence of a further corn mill in 1454. The early inbye land in Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside may either have been arranged in small, communal open fields or within enclosures attached to tenant farms or the lord’s holdings. The 1787 Clarke map for Grasmere shows a pattern of long strip-fields, tofts, or closes, perpendicular to the road north of Grasmere which may indicate the strips that were enclosed from open fields before 1787. The extent of the enclosed land as shown on Clarke’s map may well approximate to the extent of medieval inbye land along this stretch of road north of Grasmere.

Documentary sources indicate a pattern of shared and fragmented land ownership in the medieval period. In 1274 Robert de Ros of Werk held at his death ‘the farm of Grasemere’ and a forest in ‘Ridale’. This suggests that he was the steward in control of the farming system for the parish of Grasmere and also responsible for the administration of part of the royal forest. He also held a moiety (part) of the mill at Grasmere which indicates that some parts of the farm and forest were in shared ownership. The fragmentation of ownership is further confirmed by the granting by his widow, Margaret de Brus, of ‘her part of Rydale by bounds, her part of Amelsate and Loghrygg with common of pasture within the bounds of ‘Gressemere’ to Roger de Lancaster the following year. Roger de Lancaster developed part of this holding in the valley of Rydal Water as a deer park.

In 1283 a post-mortem inquisition accounted for 13 acres of land and 4 acres of meadow in Grasmere held by William de Lyndesye ‘in demesne’, in addition to just over 133 acres of land held by his tenants, 11 acres of waste, and a free tenant with an estimated 4 acres of land. This may also reflect the pattern of stewardship where the lord of the manor occupied a larger farming unit which in this case may have comprised the land at Town Head at the head of the valley. Another example of a similar larger land holding, bounded by a sub-circular enclosure, may have existed adjacent to Rydal Old Hall as indicated on the 1787 Clarke map.
Reference to early enclosure of the common waste is included in an agreement of 1277 following a dispute over encroachments of William de Lyndesye’s grazing animals into the deer park owned by Roger de Lancaster. As a result Roger de Lancaster had his manor fenced off along the boundary between Rydal and Scandale and it was further agreed that the boundary should be decided “by juries of respectable men... near the fence at Scandale Beck”. This boundary may have comprised an earthen bank topped with a wooden fence. Its line survives on Nab Scar as an archaeological feature underlying the later parish boundary wall; parts can be dated to 1565 and 1581.

The stone wall which enclosed the head of the valley of the Rydal Water indicates the later use of the disused deer park as demesne grazing. The southern end of the deer park, in the area around the present Rydal Hall, was developed as parkland in the second half of the 17th century and the original medieval hall at Rydal, the foundations of which can still be seen on a rocky knoll adjacent to the A591, may have developed from a hunting lodge for the deer park.

At the onset of the post-medieval period the 1574 ‘Richmond Fee’ and ‘Marquis Fee’ rental and survey documents indicate a process of sub-division of the medieval tenements through the generations, until the size of the remnant parcels were impractically small. Tenants were driven away and many changes of ownership occurred during the century after 1574, followed by a process of the gradual acquisition of small adjoining holdings into one tenement. The 1574 survey documents record that tenants in the “Amylsyde” parish “claim to have annexed and adjoined to each tenement of the rent of 6s. 8d., 7 acres of arable and meadow land by divers grants of divers lords”. This indicates that the enclosed land around Ambleside had been extended considerably prior to 1574. This was accompanied, as elsewhere in the Lake District, by the investment by ‘statesmen farmers’ in stone farm buildings, constructed on the sites of earlier buildings or shieling sites.

The farms and stone walls located in the smaller side valleys in Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside probably represent this wave of expansion and consolidation. The 1787 Clarke map of the valley thus reflects re-organisation of the former medieval fields in the 16th 18th centuries but elements of the pattern of inbye land attached to farms, strips enclosed from former communal open arable fields and perhaps larger lords’ holdings at the heads of the valleys can still be detected.

The wider pattern of the 16th-18th century re-organisation of the farming landscape in Grasmere can be seen more clearly on the 1863 Ordnance Survey map, including the intakes which extended the limits of enclosed land during this period. The intakes from earlier periods are distinguishable by their more irregular outlines (clearly seen around Townhead) and there are examples of stone-walled avenues (outgangs) to connect small-holdings with newly-enclosed allotments in the 16th and 17th centuries. The field pattern in Easedale may derive from piecemeal enclosure dating from the 16th and 17th centuries along with some minor re-organisation of the medieval pattern.

The outer extent of the major upland enclosures above Rydal, Scandale and Stockghyll were built during the tenure of Sir Daniel le Fleming prior to 1700. Dalehead Close was the final phase of the 17th century intaking in this valley, although the outer reaches of Rydal Head and Scandale Head were not enclosed until 1863-1899. Newer parcels are characterised by ruthless pursuit of right angles except at the very outer limits.
of enclosure. The first edition Ordnance Survey clearly shows a pattern of planned enclosure including part of the extensive and regular ‘Troutbeck Hundreds’ which extend into the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside valley area.

The Rydal Estate closer to Rydal Hall was sub-divided and reorganised for orchards, grazing and plantation woodland during the 18th and 19th century. Given the late date of the first edition Ordnance Survey (1863) it is possible that most, if indeed not all, of the planned enclosure in these valleys post-dates the general Enclosure Act of 1840. With no evidence for a ring garth (as seen in Langdale) yet identified in Grasmere, Rydal or Ambleside, future field survey is needed to establish a sequence and interpretation for development of the inbye and intake land, and the planned enclosure which follows.

13.2.4 DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF A RICH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EARLY TOURISM

The Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley was one of the key attractions for the early tourists who were attracted to the Lake District by the publication of the first guide books and later due to the influence of William Wordsworth. Easier access was also afforded by the construction of metalled roads after 1770 and the railway to Windermere in 1847. William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy took up residence in Grasmere in 1799 and it was his poetic descriptions of the area around Grasmere that did much to stimulate the growth of the village as a centre of tourism in the 19th century. When the railway reached Windermere in 1847 it placed Grasmere within reach of the cities of northern England and also stimulated the interest of wealthy industrialists and others to build residences in the area.

In 1770 a turnpike road opened linking Grasmere to Keswick to the north and Ambleside to the south. The regular coach services that now passed along this route stimulated the growth of Grasmere as a place of coaching inns where travellers could spend the night, and horses could be changed, refreshed and shod. One of the earliest surviving coaching inns is The Swan, built in 1650 and mentioned in Wordsworth’s poem ‘The Waggoner’. The Red Lion Hotel (parts dating from the early 18th century) is another key example from this period, and some of the outbuildings that cluster up against this building were probably used as stables and blacksmith’s forges.

Similarly it was tourism rather than industry that was to drive Ambleside’s economy and subsequent expansion through the 19th and 20th centuries. The turnpike road reached Ambleside in 1761 and The Salutation, The White Lion and The Royal Oak were popular coaching houses of this period which are still in use today. The opening of the Kendal to Windermere railway line in 1847 also afforded easier access to working people as well as the wealthy and educated and the subsequent development of Ambleside reflects the need for a wide variety of accommodation, including hotels, guest houses and, in the 20th century, a youth hostel.

Ambleside’s rapid expansion in the mid/late 19th century doubled the size of the town. Many buildings in Market Square were rebuilt in c.1860. The Millans area was
constructed between 1880-1910. St Mary’s Church, built to accommodate the increased number of worshippers, was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and consecrated in 1854. It is the best example in the Lake District of the High Gothic style and encapsulates the era of Victorian prosperity.

PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

Before mass tourism arrived in the Lake District, Grasmere was, in the words of the poet Thomas Gray who visited in 1769, a place of “rusticity and happy poverty”, of scattered whitewashed farmhouses and slate roofed or thatched slate-stone cottages, with no intrusive brick buildings. Gray saw red brick as the symbol of the nouveau riche, and celebrated the fact that Grasmere has “not a single red tile, no gentleman’s flaring house, or garden walls” (‘Journal of a visit to the Lake District in 1769’).

Although neither Rydal Water nor Grasmere warranted the identification of viewing stations in Thomas West’s ‘Guide to the Lakes’ of 1778, he does include a description of Grasmere and approved the earlier description by Gray. Grasmere also provides the only illustration in the edition of 1780. Clearly Grasmere and Rydal were considered in the second half of the 18th century to have picturesque qualities, but this aesthetic had been the concern of Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall almost 100 years earlier.

The manor of Rydal came into the ownership of the le Fleming family in 1409 when Sir Thomas le Fleming married Isobel de Lancaster, who inherited the feudal lordship of the manor. Originally the family lived at Coniston Hall. In 1575 they moved to Rydal Old Hall (already described as ‘old’ at that date) built on a knoll in fields bordering the River Rothay and described as ‘now in ruins’ in 1681.
William le Fleming moved the family from the Old Hall to the site of the present Rydal Hall in the late 16th century. In the mid-17th century, Sir Daniel le Fleming (1633–1701) transformed the estate, developing the landscape as an early Picturesque garden incorporating Rydal Beck and its natural waterfalls. He also extended and gentrified the 16th century house which he inherited, with the addition of the west wing, back staircase and other rooms. Stables and barns were built behind the hall. Further remodelling of the hall took place in the 18th century.

The park and pleasure grounds at Rydal created in the late 17th century were still much admired in the 18th and 19th centuries and were a major attraction for a succession of visiting artists and writers. They were described in Wordsworth’s poem, ‘An Evening Walk’ and feature in paintings by Joseph Wright of Derby and John Constable.

Rydal Hall remained in the ownership of the le Fleming family until 1970, when the Diocese of Carlisle purchased the buildings to create a retreat, conference and youth centre. The gardens, which are open to the public, were restored in the mid-2000s and further restoration is underway.

VILLAS AND ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING

The harmonious beauty of the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley attracted visitors from the earliest period of interest in the sublime and picturesque. This initial interest was soon followed by people of means who wished to live in the area and improve its picturesque qualities through the construction of villas and ornamental landscapes. The favoured locations for villas were those that offered views of lakes, fells and woodland which conformed as far as possible to picturesque principles.

In the 18th century Ambleside provided a weekly market for provisions, a Post Office, and other services such as coaching inns. The town also offered the attractions of picturesque vernacular buildings and one of the better-known local waterfalls, Stockghyll Force.

The hamlet of Rydal began to attract genteel residents from around 1800.

13.2.5 ROMANTIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

GRASMERE AND RYDAL

Grasmere and Rydal are known internationally as the home of the Romantic poet William Wordsworth and his family, his sister Dorothy and a number of other important Romantic poets and personalities of the period who were drawn to live in the area because of Wordsworth. All the houses that Wordsworth lived in still survive along with a vast number of landscape features which appear in his poetry and the poetry of others. The landscape also survives, including the stone walls and vernacular farmhouses and buildings belonging to the local community which underpinned Wordsworth’s deep appreciation of the relationship between humans and the natural world and his development of the concept of the ‘economy of nature’. Most importantly,
the Wordsworth Trust maintains the Wordsworth archive at Dove Cottage which is one of the world’s great literary collections.

Wordsworth’s first residence was the cottage that has come to be known as Dove Cottage, but which had recently ceased functioning as an inn when he took up residence with his sister Dorothy in 1799. He then moved to Allan Bank in 1808 along with Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas de Quincey. De Quincey stayed until 1809, when he moved to Dove Cottage and Coleridge stayed into 1810 when he moved to Keswick. Wordsworth decried Allan Bank as an ugly building and a blot on the landscape that he loved. He was also to quarrel with the landlord over the fact that the house was damp and impossible to heat because the chimneys did not work. But nevertheless he rented the house for his growing household. Allan Bank was subsequently bought by Canon Rawnsley in 1915, who two years later retired there from his living at Crosthwaite, Keswick. The Rawnsley family gifted the property to the National Trust in 1951.

From Allan Bank, Wordsworth moved in 1811 to the Rectory, in Grasmere, opposite St Oswald’s Church. The Rectory was built in 1690 and enlarged in the late 19th century. It was a damp house and the Wordsworths suffered the tragic loss of two of their young children here.

Wordsworth’s final move was to Rydal Mount in 1813 and he lived here until his death in 1850. The house continued to be rented by the family until 1859 when Wordsworth’s widow, Mary, died. Wordsworth extended and altered the house, and landscaped the gardens which survive in the form that he left them. Wordsworth’s other legacies to the village include St Mary’s Church, built by Lady le Fleming in 1824, in whose siting and design he played a part, and the woodland known as Dora’s Field (to the west of the church and to the south of Rydal Mount). This was purchased by Wordsworth as the site for a house that was never built and was planted by the poet himself with wild daffodils in 1847 as a memorial to his daughter Dora. It is now owned by the National Trust. Major works written at Rydal Mount included the ‘Duddon Sonnets’ and ‘Ecclesiastical Sonnets’, the ‘1820 Miscellaneous Poems’ and the revision of ‘The Prelude’, published

**Figure 13.15** Allan Bank villa set within wooded grounds
in 1850 after Wordsworth’s death. Wordsworth entertained many eminent visitors here including the American visitors Ralph Waldo Emerson and the feminist Margaret Fuller. The house is still lived in and is displayed much as it was in Wordsworth’s time. It includes embroidered work by Mary and Dorothy Wordsworth and Sarah Hutchinson and portraits of the family, including the only known portrait of Dorothy. Rydal Mount continues to attract many visitors to the village, and is open to the public.

William Wordsworth is buried with his wife Mary in St Oswald’s churchyard in Grasmere. Adjacent plots include those of his sister Dorothy and his children and grandchildren. Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s son Hartley is also buried here.

Other properties of notable figures linked to Wordsworth include Nab Cottage, occupied by both Thomas de Quincey and Hartley Coleridge, and the group of villas at Under Loughrigg, alongside the River Rothay and overlooking the famous stepping stones. These include Fox How, the holiday home of Dr Thomas Arnold (1795 –1842), headmaster of Rugby School who was encouraged by Wordsworth to buy the land and build the house in 1833. Thomas Arnold was the father of Matthew Arnold, the poet and critic, who inherited the house and spent many holidays there.

Fox Ghyll, further along the Under Loughrigg road, was the home of Thomas de Quincey from 1820 to 1825, during which time he wrote ‘Confessions of an English Opium-Eater’. The next house, Loughrigg Holme, was the residence of Wordsworth’s daughter Dora following her marriage to Edward Quillinan in 1841 and visitors here included Harriet Martineau and Charlotte Bronte in 1850. The house at Stepping Stones belonged to Wordsworth’s son William and then his grandson Gordon, who arranged and edited Wordsworth’s manuscripts there.

**GRASMERE VALE**

Much of Wordsworth’s poetry celebrates the landscape and the people of the Vale of Grasmere, most notably the poem known as ‘Home at Grasmere’. The poem begins with Wordsworth recalling his first visit as a schoolboy, looking down on the vale from Hammerscar:

“And with a sudden influx overcome
At sight of this seclusion, I forgot
My haste – for hasty had my footsteps been,
As boystish my pursuits – (and sighing said),
“What happy fortune were it here to live!”
Later in the poem, having reflected on the achievement of his dream, Wordsworth strives to encapsulate the unique qualities of the place:

“Tis (but I cannot name it), ‘tis the sense
Of majesty and beauty and repose,
A blended holiness of earth and sky,
Something that makes this individual Spot,
This small abiding-place of many men,
A termination and a last retreat,
A Centre, come from wheresoe’er you will,
A Whole without dependence or defect,
Made for itself and happy in itself,
Perfect Contentment, Unity entire.”

While at Dove Cottage, Wordsworth wrote a number of ‘poems on the naming of places’, about locations in Grasmere that held special significance for him and his family. They include John’s Grove (Lady Wood), off Wishing Gate Lane, which overlooks Grasmere Lake. The Grove, named after for Wordsworth’s beloved brother, a sailor, is the subject of Wordsworth’s 1802 poem ‘When, to the attractions of the busy world’. Another example is Stone Arthur, subject of the poem “There is an Eminence”, which is named for the poet (at the suggestion of his sister).

Greenhead Gill, east of Grasmere Village, is central to one of Wordsworth’s greatest poems, ‘Michael’, about a Grasmere shepherd and his relationship with his family, and with his land.

“If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill,
You will suppose that with an upright path
Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent
The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage! For beside that boisterous Brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.”

In a letter to Charles James Fox of January 1801, Wordsworth cites Michael as an example of the ‘statesmen’ farmer, for whom “Their little tract of land serves as a kind of permanent rallying point for their domestic feelings”. He laments that this class of men is rapidly disappearing.

The poem was composed towards the end of 1800, and it is interesting to read Dorothy’s ‘Grasmere Journal’ entry for 11 October 1800, recording a walk with William up Greenhead Gill in search of a sheepfold, which she describes as “built nearly in the form of a heart unequally divided.” At the beginning of ‘Michael’, Wordsworth describes “a straggling heap of unhewn stones”, which can be seen in the same place today (although it is not clear whether they are actually the remains of a sheepfold).
The Swan Inn, located on the main road at the north end of Grasmere village, is mentioned by Wordsworth in 'Benjamin the Waggoner' (‘Who does not know the famous Swan?’) as one of the inns that tempts the protagonist, Benjamin, as he makes his way from Grasmere to Keswick. Also mentioned is “the Dove and Olive-Bough” from which Dove Cottage derives its name (although it was never named thus in Wordsworth’s day).

**FIGURE 13.17 The Swan Hotel (formerly the Swan Inn), Grasmere**

**RYDAL**

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a frequent guest of the Wordsworths at Dove Cottage (and later at Allan Bank). His ‘Notebook’ records many walks around Rydal, and also contains an amusing account of passing by Rydal Hall with Wordsworth in November 1799, and being accosted by ‘Sir Fleming’s servant’ who reproaches them for having passed before the front of the house. As Coleridge acidly observes: “by our Trespass of Feet with the Trespass on the Eye by his damned White washing!”

The Lower Falls at Rydal, much favoured by artists in search of the picturesque, feature in Wordsworth’s 1793 poem ‘An Evening Walk’:

“Sole light admitted here, a small cascade, Illumes with sparkling foam the twilight shade. Beyond, along the visto of the brook, Where antique roots its bustling path o’erlook, The eye reposes on a secret bridge Half grey, half shagg’d with ivy to its ridge”

Wordsworth lived at Rydal Mount for 37 years until his death in 1850. A number of his later poems feature the landscape around the house, for example ‘Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty’.
“No sound is uttered, – but a deep
And solemn harmony pervades
The hollow vale from steep to steep,
And penetrates the glades”.

Wordsworth designed the garden at Rydal Mount, and it features in a number of his poems, including ‘This lawn, a carpet all alive’ and ‘The Contrast’. The latter, addressed to the poet’s daughter Dora, celebrates the summer house between the terraces – “This moss-lined shed, green, soft, and dry”.

OTHER ARTISTS AND NOTABLE RESIDENTS

Wordsworth’s presence in Grasmere and Rydal attracted other poets and admirers to live and work in the area both within his own lifetime and later. These included close friends and colleagues such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, his son Hartley, and Thomas de Quincey along with others such as the headmaster of Rugby School, Dr Thomas Arnold, and his son Matthew, the poet.

Harriet Martineau, often described as the first female sociologist and also a respected novelist and author of ‘A Complete Guide to the English Lakes’ (1855), built a house in Ambleside (the Knoll) and was resident from 1845 until her death in 1876. Wordsworth was a friend and advised on the design of the garden around the Knoll.

Artists continued to be drawn to the valley in the 20th century, including the landscape painter Alfred Heaton Cooper, whose original wooden log studio, imported from Norway, can be seen by the road at the south end of Ambleside. The Heaton Cooper family continue to paint in the Lake District and also run the Heaton Cooper Gallery in Grasmere. The German artist Kurt Schwitters also resided briefly in Ambleside in the 1940s and is buried in Ambleside churchyard.

13.2.6 EARLY CONSERVATION – THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPES

The importance of the early conservation movement in the Lake District for the landscape of the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley lies in what was not built and the resulting preservation of much of the traditional farming character and later formal landscape features.

The earliest and perhaps the most severe threat to the peaceful tranquillity of Grasmere and Rydal were the various proposals in the 19th century to build a railway from Kendal to Grasmere. In 1844 a branch line railway from Kendal to Windermere was proposed and vigorously opposed by William Wordsworth. This included publication of a ‘Sonnet on the projected Kendal and Windermere railway’ which started:

“There then no nook of England ground secure from rash assault?...”
Wordsworth argued that there was no industrial or agricultural requirement for a railway and that the working class, who would be likely to come on holiday to the area in large numbers, would not have the capacity to appreciate the “beauty” and “character of seclusion and retirement” that the Lakes District offered. He concluded with the plea “Let then the beauty be undisfigured and the retirement unviolated.”

Wordsworth’s arguments did not initially find much favour, including with other Lake District residents such as Harriet Martineau, but became more widely influential in the later 19th century when the value of scenic landscape was increasingly appreciated. In the event the Kendal to Windermere railway, completed in 1847, reached only as far as the hamlet of Birthwaite (which subsequently developed into the town of Windermere).

The proposal for the extension of the Kendal – Windermere line to Ambleside (and on to Keswick) was resurrected in 1876 and on this occasion the opposition was led by Robert Somervell (a local manufacturer) with support from the more famous John Ruskin. Ruskin wrote a preface to a campaign pamphlet entitled ‘A protest against the Extension of Railways in the Lake District’ (1876) which consciously followed the arguments of Wordsworth’s earlier sonnets and letters on the same subject. As with Wordsworth, these arguments tended towards an exclusivity of the Lake District landscape for persons of taste and encountered both opposition and support, but in the end the scheme was dropped due for economic reasons. Other proposals were made for an extension of line in 1886 and for an electric tram route to Ambleside in 1899 (by the British Electric Traction Company), on this occasion opposed by Rawnsley, but these were also opposed and not implemented.

This early organised opposition to development in the Lake District that was deemed to be detrimental to the landscape and traditional way of life formed a crucial part of the wider movement that would be galvanised to oppose the Thirlmere reservoir and to form both the Lake District Preservation Society and eventually the National Trust (founded in 1895). It was at the Swan Inn in Grasmere that local landowners gathered in 1877 to form the Thirlmere Defence Association.

Although the Thirlmere Reservoir was built in 1890 and the aqueduct taking water to the City of Manchester was constructed through the vales of Grasmere and Rydal, the impact of the aqueduct on the landscape has been minimal. Its passage through the valley can be traced by access gates and other relatively minor infrastructure which are constructed in a uniform style (of stone and wrought iron).

In the later 19th century intense interest in the literary achievements of William Wordsworth and his importance for the Lake District led to moves to preserve the physical evidence of his legacy in Grasmere. In 1890 the founder of the Wordsworth Trust, the clergyman Stopford Brooke, wrote:

“There is no place, …which has so many thoughts and memories as this belonging to our poetry; none at least in which they are so closely bound up with the poet and the poems… In every part of this little place [Wordsworth] has walked with his sister and wife or talked with Coleridge. And it is almost untouched. Why should we not try and
secure it... for the eternal possession of those who love English poetry all over the world.”

The Wordsworth Trust bought Dove Cottage in 1890 for £650 and it has been open to the public since 1891, currently receiving around 70,000 visitors each year. The Trust subsequently acquired an internationally important collection of manuscripts and works of art relating to Wordsworth and his contemporaries.

The National Trust also took an early interest in Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside, due in part to the association with Wordsworth. Its first acquisition was the Roman fort at Ambleside. In 1911, on a chance visit to Borrans Field, W. F. Rawnsley, educationalist, writer and brother of Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, discovered that a local building company, Pattinsons of Windermere, was preparing to cover the 20 acre Roman site with boarding houses. With his colleague Gordon Wordsworth, Rawnsley managed to stop the digging of foundations and the Ambleside Committee headed by Dr Hugh Redmayne and Gordon Wordsworth was formed to raise funds to purchase the site. Professor W. G. Collingwood, the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, the Manchester Guardian and many local people rallied to the cause, and by the 20th May 1913, £4,000 was raised and the site was given into the care of the National Trust.

Another early acquisition was the iconic Bridge House in Ambleside, bought by local subscribers and given to the Trust in 1928. In 1935 Gordon Wordsworth, the poet’s grandson, gave Dora’s Field, Rydal, to the National Trust and Allan Bank, one of the Wordsworth family’s residences, was bequeathed to the Trust after the death of Canon Rawnsley’s second wife, in 1951.

In the early 20th century the National Trust acquired a series of other small properties in Grasmere and Ambleside, including the Roman fort at Galava and the surrounding Borrans field in 1913; the small open space of Moss Parrock in the middle of the village (given to the Trust in 1934); the low hill of Butharlyp Howe, on the edge of Grasmere (purchased in 1939); and White Moss Intake on the edge of Rydal Water (donated in 1925). The largest of its properties, bought in 1943, was the land behind Dove Cottage, stretching from Grey Crag to Alcock Tarn.

From the mid-20th century the National Trust started to acquire, by lease and purchase, more extensive areas of Grasmere, including an extension to the Alcock Tarn property via a gift in 1975. One of the key developments was the purchase of a series of key farms and protective covenants in the vale, comprising Dale End Farm in 1971 (covenant only); Underhelm, acquired under National Land Fund procedures in 1974; Brimmer Head in 1973; and Townhead at the head of Grasmere vale, purchased in 1981 with bequests and a donation. The National Trust’s Lake District office is now at The Hollens in Grasmere. In 2015 the National Trust purchased the island in Grasmere lake. The National Trust owns 789 hectares of land in the valley, of which 715 hectares are inalienable. It also has an additional seven hectares of covenanted land but no leased land.

The beneficial effects of monitoring and pressure from the Friends of the Lake District from the 1930s and the Lake District National Park Authority from 1951 can also be seen in the preservation of the harmonious beauty of the Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside
valley. This has been achieved despite the huge tourist pressure on this very popular part of the Lake District.

More recent conservation actions which have assisted in preserving the scenic beauty of the valley have included the undergrounding of the electricity supply in Grasmere in the 1920s (championed by the Friends of the Lake District) and the prevention of major road schemes including dualling of the A591 trunk road and a bypass around Ambleside (led by the Lake District National Park Authority and the Friends of the Lake District). The National Park Authority has also achieved a ban on heavy goods vehicles on the A591 from the 1970s and has maintained the tranquility of the valley through the adoption of bylaws banning motor boats on small lakes including Rydal and Grasmere.

13.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT’S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley is at the centre of the English Lake District and contains many attributes of the three key themes of its proposed Outstanding Universal Value. These are summarised in Figure 13.3 and mapped out on Figure 13.1.

There is clear surviving evidence of the continuing traditional agro-pastoral system including field walls, the evidence of successive phases of enclosure, and many surviving farmhouses dating from the 16th century onwards. The farms continue to practice agro-pastoral farming with hefted flocks of Herdwick sheep and continuing use of fell pastures and common land.

There is good evidence of past phases of use, going back to the prehistoric period, within this continuing tradition. Relict elements include evidence of industry based on woodland and stone quarries and the use of water power. The market town of Ambleside and other settlements established in the medieval periods flourish and still serve their surrounding communities as well as adapting to new functions such as tourism.

This valley has extensive evidence of the discovery and appreciation of the Lake District as a rich cultural landscape. There are examples such as Rydal Hall and its landscape demonstrating the adaptation of the landscape to meet picturesque sensibilities. The numerous villas exemplify the attraction of this part of the Lake District to those with an interest in the Lake District’s romantic qualities. Prime among these are the successive homes of William Wordsworth and his writings on his response to this landscape.

The Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley has also inspired numerous landscape painters including J. M. W. Turner, Joseph Wright of Derby, Edward Lear and Francis Towne.

The Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley also has strong evidence of the development of the conservation movement in the Lake District. The absence of any railway from Windermere to Grasmere demonstrates the success of the opposition to its construction in 1846 and again in 1876, 1886 and 1889. The first campaign involved Wordsworth and
the second John Ruskin. The National Trust, a key component of the Lake District model for protecting cultural landscape, has acquired considerable property to preserve it in perpetuity.

The Grasmere, Rydal and Ambleside Valley functions as an authentic agro-pastoral landscape intertwined with surviving villas and designed landscapes, substantial artistic activities and ongoing management by the conservation bodies including the National Trust and Lake District National Park Authority. It contains many examples of all the attributes that have been identified for the Lake District relating to traditional agriculture and industry, settlement, artistic inspiration, villas and designed landscape and the success of the early conservation movement.

FIGURE 13.18 Reflections on Rydal Water
FIGURE 13.19 Aerial view of the vale of Grasmere from the south. Thirlmere is visible in the distance.
Wildflower meadow at High Nook Farm, Loweswater
GLOSSARY
AND CREDITS
GLOSSARY

Adit Horizontal mining tunnel cut into the fellside
Afforestation The establishment of a forest or stand of trees in an area where there was no forest
Agistment Originally referred specifically to the proceeds of pasturage in the king’s forests. To agist is, in English law, to take cattle to graze.
Agrarian Cultivated land or the cultivation of land
Agri-environment schemes An environmental management scheme. A mechanism by which landowners and other individuals and bodies responsible for land management can be incentivised by government to manage their environment.
Agro-pastoral The form of farming that combines rearing livestock including both sheep and cattle, and growing crops including hay, cereals, and wood through pollarding and coppicing
Arboreta An arboretum (plural: arboreta) in a narrow sense is a collection of trees only. More commonly, today, an arboretum is a botanical garden containing living collections of woody plants intended at least partly for scientific study.
Arctic char Arctic char or Arctic charr (Salvelinus alpinus) is a cold-water fish in the family Salmonidae, native to alpine lakes and arctic and subarctic coastal
Arête A sharp mountain ridge or spur
Arts and Craft movement The Arts and Crafts movement was an international movement in the decorative and fine arts that flourished in Europe and North America between 1880 and 1910. It began in Britain around 1880 and quickly spread across America and Europe before emerging finally as the Mingei (Folk Crafts) movement in Japan. It advocated the reform of art at every level and across a broad social spectrum, and it turned the home into a work of art.
Assart An encroachment of forest
Barony The estate of a feudal lord held of the Crown
Bank Barn A multi-purpose, two-storey barn, built on a hillside with entrances at both levels
Belvedere An architectural structure sited to take advantage of a fine or scenic view
Bield Drystone walled shelter to protect sheep during inclement weather on the open fell
Black Death The Black Death is the name given to a deadly plague (often called bubonic plague, but is more likely to be pneumonic plague) which was rampant in 14th century Europe
Blast furnace A smelting furnace in the form of a tower into which a blast of hot compressed air can be introduced from below. Introduced into the Lake District in the 18th century.
Bloomery A bloomery is a type of furnace once widely used for smelting iron from its oxides. The bloomery was the earliest form of smelter capable of smelting iron. Generally of medieval or earlier date.
Bobbin Mills A Bobbin Mill is a mill of Post Medieval date for manufacturing wooden bobbins for the textile industry
Borough Administrative division. In England, during the medieval period, many towns were granted self-governance by the Crown, at which point they became referred to as boroughs.
Bronze Age The Bronze Age is a time period (2000 BC – 800 BC) in British prehistory characterized by the use of bronze for making tools, weapons and ornaments
Burgage A medieval land term used in England and Scotland, well established by the 13th century. A burgage was a town (‘borough’) rental property (to use modern terms), owned by a king or lord. The property (‘burgage tenement’) usually, and distinctly, consisted of a house on a long and narrow plot of land (Scots, toft), with a narrow street frontage.
Burgesses A political official or representative in a borough
Byre A type of barn for keeping cattle
Chasers (tups) Tups which are sent to the fells with the ewes to catch any sheep that return in season
Cistercian A Cistercian is a member of the Cistercian Order, a religious order of monks and nuns
Classical Relating to ancient Greek or Latin literature, art, or culture or the influence of Greek or Roman culture in later periods
Clipping time Sheep shearing
introduced during the colonial period. Common ownership is one form of customary land ownership.

Dipping/Dipped Washing sheep in a special liquid (sheep dip) that kills off harmful insects living in their wool.

Dissolution of the Monasteries The Dissolution of the Monasteries, sometimes referred to as the Suppression of the Monasteries, was the set of administrative and legal processes between 1536 and 1541 by which Henry VIII disbanded Catholic monasteries, priories, convents and friaries in England, Wales and Ireland, appropriated their income, disposed of their assets, and provided for their former members and functions.

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Down house The service area of a farm house.

Drafted (sheep) Sheep that are sold for meat or to other breeders.

Echelons A level or rank in an organization, a profession, or society.

Ecosystem services Humankind benefits in a multitude of ways from ecosystems. Collectively, these benefits are becoming known as ecosystem services. Ecosystem services are regularly involved in the provisioning of clean drinking water and the decomposition of wastes.

Environmentalism A broad philosophy, ideology and social movement regarding concerns for environmental protection and improvement of the health of the environment, particularly as the measure for this health seeks to incorporate the concerns of non-human elements.

Estovers Wood or timber that a tenant is allowed to take.

Ewe A female sheep that has had her first lamb.

Farmstead A farm and its buildings.

Fell A fell (from Old Norse fell, fjall) is a high and barren landscape feature such as a mountain or moor-covered hill.

Feudal The concept of a feudal state or period, in the sense of either a regime or a period dominated by lords who possess financial or social power and prestige, became widely held in the middle of the 18th century.

Fire house The living area of a farm house.

Flax Mill Industry Flax mills are mills concerned with the manufacture of flax. The earliest mills were for spinning yarn for the linen industry.

Flock A group of sheep.

Fodder Feed for livestock, especially coarsely chopped hay or straw.

Folly A building constructed primarily for decoration, but suggesting through its appearance some other purpose, or appearing to be so extravagant that it transcends the range of garden ornaments usually associated with the class of buildings to which it belongs.

Fulling Fulling, also known as tucking or walking, is a step in making woollen cloth which involves the cleansing of cloth (particularly wool) to eliminate oils, dirt, and other impurities, and making it thicker.

Gimcrack Something that is showy but cheap or badly made.

Gimmer A young female sheep, usually before her first lamb.

Gough Map The Gough Map or Bodleian Map is a map of the island of Great Britain, dating between 1355 and 1366, and is the oldest surviving route map of Great Britain.
Granary A storehouse for threshed grain
Grange Monastic sheep farm
Harmonious beauty A view of high scenic quality where the characteristics of the landscape (or other entity) are ‘in harmony’, that is they are consistent with that particular landscape character type
Hay Grass that has been mown and dried for use as fodder
Headwalls A small retaining wall placed at the outlet of a stormwater pipe or culvert
Hefted Or heafed. The instinct in some breeds of sheep to keep to a certain heft or heaf (a small local area) throughout their lives. Allows different farmers in an extensive landscape such as moorland to graze different areas without the need for fences, each ewe remaining on her particular area. Lambs usually learn their heft from their mothers.
Herdwick sheep The Herdwick is an upland breed of sheep native to the Lake District of Cumbria in North West England. The name ‘Herdwick’ is derived from the Old Norse herdvyck, meaning sheep pasture.
Hog-back tombstones Hogback tombstones are stone carved Anglo-Scandinavian sculptures from 10th-12th century England and Scotland. Hogbacks fell out of fashion by the beginning of the 11th century. Their function is generally accepted as grave markers.
Hogg Also known as hogget or hogg. A young sheep of either sex from about 9 to 18 months of age (until it cuts two teeth).
Hogg hole Square holes left in the base of a dry stone wall to allow hogg(s) to pass through
Hogg house Small building for storing fodder and for sheltering sheep in winter
Hundred A division of a shire for judicial purposes – used as the geographical area for assessment between Parish (smaller) and County (larger) before the introduction of Districts in the local Government Act of 1894
Hushing An ancient method of mining using a flood of water to wash off top soil in order to reveal mineral veins
Inbye A small number of enclosed fields in, or close to, the valley bottom and made up of meadows and pastures
Incomers A person who has come to live in an area in which they have not grown up, especially in a close-knit rural community. Also called offcomers in Cumbria.
Intake An enclosed area of land between the inbye and open fell
Iron Age The Iron Age is a time period (800 – 100 BC) in British prehistory characterized by the use of iron for making tools and weapons
Lakeland Alternative name for the English Lake District
Land use Land use involves the management and modification of natural environment or wilderness into built environment such as settlements and semi-natural habitats such as arable fields, pastures, and managed woods
Late or Upper Palaeolithic The Late or Upper Palaeolithic (or Upper Palaeolithic, Late Stone Age) is the third and last subdivision of the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age as it is understood in Europe, Africa and Asia. In the Lake District this dates from c. 12,000 BC to c. 8000 BC.
Lonoming A Cumbrian word for a lane
Lug/ear marks Distinctive cuts to the ears (lug), which along with daubs of colour applied to the fleece (smit marks) are used to identify the owner of the sheep
Lye Alkaline powder produced by burning bracken and brushwood. Mixed with tallow to make soap for cleaning woollen fleeces as part of the fulling process.
Lynchet A ridge or ledge formed along the downhill side of a plot by ploughing in ancient times
Manor Self-sufficient medieval estate under the control of a lord
Manorial court Court appointed by the lord to administer customary law
Massif A compact group of mountains
Medieval The Middle Ages or Medieval period in England lasted from 1066 AD – c. 1600 AD
Merlin A bird of prey
Mesolithic Relating to or denoting the middle part of the Stone Age (c. 8000 BC – c. 4000 BC), between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic
Messuage A dwelling house with outbuildings and land assigned to it
Monastic Relating to monks, nuns, or others living under religious vows, or the buildings in which they live
Montane Mountainous, usually above 600 meters in the Lake District
Mule A type of cross-bred sheep, both hardy and suitable for meat
Neo-classical Any of a number of movements in the fine arts, literature, theatre, music, and architecture beginning in the 17th century
Neolithic Relating to or denoting the later part of the Stone Age – the New Stone Age (c. 4000 BC – c. 2000 BC), when ground or polished stone
wepons and implements prevailed and agriculture was introduced

**Norse** Relating to medieval Norway or Scandinavia

**Ordnance Survey** The national mapping agency for the United Kingdom

**Outcrops** A rock formation that is visible on the surface

**Packhorse Route** Routes over mountainous terrains, previously used to transport goods by packhorse

**Pastoral** Land used for the keeping or grazing of sheep or cattle

**Peat hut or scale** Small stone building on the fell, near the peat cuttings, used for drying and storing peat until it was needed

**Pele Tower** Small fortified keeps or towers added to buildings for protection

**Pinfolds** A high-walled and lockable structure served several purposes; the most common use was to hold stray sheep, pigs and cattle until they were claimed by the owners

**Picturesque landscape** Meant literally, a scene which would make a painting, but it came to be used outside the context of art and painting, having a major influence on garden design, landscape fashions and ornamental walks

**Picturesque Movement** A reaction to the Classical Revival Style of architecture that included irregularly planned landscapes, follies, grottos, and asymmetrical buildings, mostly in the Italianate style

**Pigsty** A pen or enclosure for a pig or pigs

**Pinetum** (Plural: pineta) A plantation of pine trees or other conifers planted for scientific or ornamental purposes

**Pollard** To cut off the top and branches of a tree to encourage new growth at the top

**Post Medieval** The period from c. 1600 AD to the present

**Potash kiln** Potash kilns were lined with drystone walling and used to produce potash prior to the Industrial Revolution. Potash was mixed with tallow to produce a soap to clean the fleeces of sheep as a stage in the production of woolen cloth.

**Pre-classical** Relating to a time before a period regarded as classical, especially in music, literature, or ancient history

**Raddle** Colour marking or harness that is put on a tup (ram) during tupping season. Markings are changed regularly so the ewes can be sorted by lambing date.

**Radiocarbon dating** Radiocarbon dating is one of the most widely used scientific dating methods in archaeology and environmental science. It can be applied to most organic materials and spans dates from a few hundred years ago right back to about 50,000 years ago.

**Ram** An uncastrated adult male sheep. Also known as a tup.

**Regatta** A regatta is a series of boat races. The term typically describes racing events of rowed or sailed water craft, although some powerboat race series are also called regattas.

**Ridge and furrow cultivation** An agricultural pattern of ridges and furrows, surviving as earthworks, resulting from repeated ploughing. Also known as Rig and Furrow in the north of England. Ridge and furrow is typical of open field cultivation and can date from the medieval period to the 18th century.

**Right of turbary** Turbarv is the ancient right to cut turf, or peat, for fuel on a particular area of bog

**Ring cairn** A low, wide, circular ring or bank of stones surrounding an open, roughly circular area which is (or was initially) free of cairn material. The inner and outer faces of the bank may be kerbed. Generally dating to the Bronze Age and possibly used for burial and/or ritual activity.

**Ring garth** Stone wall or fence dividing cultivated valley-bottom fields from open, grazed fell land. Also known as a head dyke in Scotland.

**Ring Ouzel** ‘Ouzel’ (or ‘ousel’) is an old name for common blackbird from Old English osle

**Romano-British** The culture that developed in Britain as a result of the fusion of imported Roman culture with that of the late Iron Age native British population (between the first and 5th centuries AD)

**Romantic Movement** Romanticism (also the Romantic era or the Romantic period) was an artistic, literary, and intellectual movement that originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century and reached its peak in most areas c. 1800 to 1850. It was partly a reaction to the social and political norms of the Age of Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution and the scientific rationalization of nature. Its principal influence was in the visual arts, music, and literature, but it also had a major impact on education and the natural sciences. It also had a major effect on politics and while it was initially associated with liberalism and radicalism it was also associated with the growth of nationalism.

**Rough Fell Sheep** The Rough Fell is an upland breed of sheep, originating in England. Its distribution embraces a large part of southern Cumbria.

**Scale** Building on high fell pasture occupied during the summer months

**Schelly** The schelly (Coregonus stigmaticus) is a designation
for four populations of freshwater whitefish in the
English Lake District, Cumbria

**Sedimentary** Sedimentary rocks are types of rock that are formed by the deposition of material at the Earth's surface and within bodies of water.

**Seine Nets** Is a method of fishing that employs a seine or dragnet. A seine is a fishing net that hangs vertically in the water with its bottom edge held down by weights and its top edge buoyed by floats. Seine nets can be deployed from the shore as a beach seine, or from a boat. Seine nets can be deployed from the shore as a beach seine, or from a boat.

**Shearlings** A yearling sheep before its first shearing. Also known as hogget or old-season lamb.

**Sheepcotes** A pen or enclosure for sheep.

**Sheep shearing** The process by which the woolen fleece of a sheep is cut off.

**Shieling** Fell pasture and small dwelling used during the summer months.

**Shepherds Meet** Traditional gathering of sheep farmers to swap strays, hold competitions for classes of sheep and to socialise.

**Shippons** A cattle shed, also known as a byre.

**Silage** Fermented, high-moisture stored fodder which can be fed to ruminants.

**Smit marks** Daubs of colour applied to the fleece which along with distinctive cuts to the ears (lug marks) are used to identify the owner of the sheep.

**Statesman** Yeoman farmer holding his land by customary tenure from the lord.

**Stock** General terms for farm animals.

**Sublime movement** An aesthetic quality in nature (landscape) distinct from beauty where (perceived) ugliness, in its capacity to instill feelings of intense emotion, (fear and attraction) ultimately creates a pleasurable experience. The literary concept of the sublime became important in the 18th century. It is associated with the 1757 treatise by Edmund Burke, though it has earlier roots. The idea of the sublime was taken up by Immanuel Kant and the Romantic poets, especially William Wordsworth.

**Subsistence Farmer** Subsistence agriculture is self-sufficiency farming in which the farmers focus on growing enough food to feed themselves and their families.

**Swaledale Sheep** The Swaledale is an upland breed of sheep named after the Yorkshire valley of Swaledale in England.

**Swards** An expanse of grass.

**Tanning** The process of treating skins and hides of animals to produce leather, which is more durable and less susceptible to decomposition.

**Tarn** A mountain lake or pool, often formed in a cirque or corrie.

**Tenements** A piece of land held by an owner.

**Thing Mound** A ‘Thing’ (from the Old Norse and Old English ‘þing’) is the site of a Norse assembly for law-giving and settlement of disputes. Sometimes marked by the construction of a terraced mound but often utilizing natural features. Sometimes called a ‘Moot’.

**Threshing** The process of loosening the edible part of cereal grain (or other crop) from the inedible chaff that surrounds it. It is the step in grain preparation after harvesting and before winnowing, which separates the loosened chaff from the grain.

**Through stones** Stones used in drystone wall construction, placed at right angles to the wall faces, spanning both faces of the wall, sometimes projecting, and having the effect of tying the two faces of the wall together.

**Transhumance** Is the seasonal movement of people with their livestock between fixed summer and winter pastures.

**Truncated spur** Is a ridge that descends towards a valley floor or coastline from a higher elevation, that ends in an inverted-V face and was produced by the erosional truncation of the spur by the action of streams, waves, or glaciers. Truncated spurs can be found within mountains, along the walls of river valleys, or along coastlines.

**Tudor period** The rule of the Tudor dynasty in England and Wales between 1485 and 1603.

**Tup** An uncastrated adult male sheep used for breeding. Also known as a ram.

**Tupping** The time of year when the rams (tups) are released with the ewes for mating.

**Turnpike system** A turnpike was a toll road, a public or private road, where a fee is paid for passage.

**Vaccary** A combined dairy and stock farm of the medieval period. Vaccaries typically had a herd of around 40 milk/breeding cows, plus their ‘followers’ (young beasts up to around three years old) and a couple of bulls. They were dairy farms in that the cows were milked and the milk was sold but, since young stock were kept until they matured into either breeding cows or oxen, they were also stock-rearing farms.

**Vendace** An edible whitefish found in lakes in northern Europe. In Britain it is now confined to two lakes in the English Lake District.
Vernacular Architecture concerned with domestic and functional rather than public or monumental buildings

Viewing station A location to ‘view’ the landscape, popular in the second half of the 18th century with tourists seeking Picturesque landscapes. At viewing stations, visitors would turn their backs to the landscape, hold up a mirror known as a Claude Glass and look at the framed and transformed view. The mirror would make the scene easier to draw and record.

Villa A term for a type of house, with varying definitions according to period. In England, in the 18th century, the term generally refers to a large and luxurious country house in its own grounds.

Volcanic tuff A pyroclastic, consolidated rock composed of compacted and cemented volcanic ash, from volcanic eruptions

Westmorland Name of former county which became part of the county of Cumbria in 1974

Water heck A stock-proof barrier across a watercourse where it crosses a field boundary, which allows the water to pass through. Typically a section of rail fencing suspended below a rail, spanning a watercourse between two wall ends. Some older slate rail examples exist.

Wether Male sheep that has been castrated

Winnowing To blow a current of air through grain in order to remove the chaff
CONISTON

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