



Strip fields based on a medieval pattern Blindcrake

An aerial photograph of a valley. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains under a blue sky with light clouds. A large, calm lake is situated in the middle ground, surrounded by green fields and some buildings. The foreground shows a mix of green fields, some with trees, and a small cluster of houses.

SECTION 2.c

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Valley Descriptions and History

2.c INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRTEEN VALLEYS OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

This section briefly sets out the key characteristics, history, associations and qualities of the principal valleys which together make up the English Lake District. 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 and 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 that 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.

Section 2.c is intended to summarise the key elements for each valley: description and development, and attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District. It provides an illustrative 'pen portrait' for ease of reference, and is supported by detailed information for each valley set down in Volume 2 of this Nomination.

FIGURE 2.c.1 The 13 English Lake District valleys, based on William Wordsworth's description in his 'Guide to the Lakes' (1835)



□ Nominated Property boundary

□ Valley boundary

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. A selection of thumbnail pictures of the attributes is attached to each map;
- b. A short text describing the valley and its development, then its qualities, focusing on the attributes which contribute to Outstanding Universal Value.
- c. Table of presence/absence of attributes which contribute to Outstanding Universal Value identified in Figure 3.12 in Section 3;
- d. 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.
- 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. Those relating to individual valleys have been listed under valley subheadings in the Bibliography.



FIGURE 2.c.2 Crummock Water, Buttermere



FIGURE 2. c. 3 Dated lintel over front door of 17th century cottage, near Hesket Newmarket