

ART. XVI.—*A visit to Lakeland in 1844*. By J. D. MARSHALL, B.Sc. (Econ.), Ph.D., F.R.Hist.S.

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THE literature of Lakeland tourism is copious but somewhat one-sided. Guide-books, written *for* the consumer, have been published in profusion over nearly two centuries; but commentaries written *by* the visitor (or consumer) are by no means as common, and are often, in a given period of years, confined to the published comments of the occasional traveller, professional or amateur. Sir George Head's remarks on Lakeland road travel (1835) provide a good example from the 1830s.\*

The transcription in the following pages is taken from a diary written in August and September 1844 by a young man, a Cambridge graduate, who was visiting the Lake District for the second time. The comments and observations are fresh and lively. The diarist records what he sees and feels, without subtlety but also without more than conventional artifice. It can easily be seen that the real clichés in this vast literature are almost always those of the guide-books. When our young man visited Ulverston on his way to the Lakes, he found that the place was "large but somewhat dull from the dark colour of the stone of which the houses are built, streets narrow & pavement abominable". Compare this with a description of the same town, published only a few years previously in the Rev. William Ford's *Description of the Scenery in the Lake District* (first edition, 1839), in which

\* Sir George Head (1782-1855), a former commissary-general under Wellington in the Peninsular War, was naturally interested in transport, and wrote a scathing description of the Lakeland variety in his *Home Tour through the Manufacturing Districts of England* (1836), 379-89.

Ulverston was seen as "modern in its appearance . . . Neat and cheerful looking, from the houses being roughcast and whitewashed". Even the most respectable of guides chose to see his subjects on sunny days only.

Our young visitor, then, is an interesting witness. His visit was part of a larger tour which also took him to Wales and other places, and his account of this circuit fills a pocket-book diary entitled "Trip to the English Lakes, North & South Wales, the Wye, & returning by Bristol & G W Railway in the year 1844". The manuscript was given as Item 238 of the sale list of Messrs Christie operative in April 1970, and was purchased, in the interest of the study of local history, by Mr J. H. Sutton of Lancaster, through the good offices of a lady in the south of England. It is through Mr Sutton's kindness that some fifty pages of the notebook are reproduced here. The latter, a neatly written and arranged volume with roan covers  $5\frac{3}{4}$  in. by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in., contains one hundred pages in all, with no pagination, no paragraphing of an identifiable kind, and punctuation which consists of dashes. The style, lively and fairly terse by the standards of the day, was easily made lucid and effective by a little editing. The whole is illustrated with fifteen steel engravings of places visited in Lakeland and Wales, vignettes evidently taken from the headings of bills or hotel notepaper,\* and pasted into the pages.

The compiler may have taken a few of the latter from guide-books. He was well equipped with these aids to sightseeing, and was evidently using the fifth or 1835 edition of Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes*, published by Hudson & Nicholson, and one of the

\* This is suggested by the thinness of the paper. Several of the engravings, in the series by William Banks of Edinburgh, are well known, as is a view of Bowness by Harwood of London (1842), and one of Ulverston from the series by Thomas Allom and Thomas Rose, c. 1833. The Banks engravings were much used by the printer and publisher, Garnett of Windermere.

later and seemingly innumerable editions of West's *Guide*. On the fourth page of the MS. is a reference to "Kohl's *England and Wales*", and the British Museum Catalogue indicates that this was J. G. Kohl's *Ireland, Scotland, England (and Wales)*, translated from the German and published in London in three parts, one in 1843 and two in 1844.

For a reason which will become clearer, the question of the identity of this young tourist is left until the end of the transcription. It will also become clear that he has given us a brief but valuable account of the state of affairs, *vis-à-vis* Lakeland holidays, before the main railway lines and stations were opened in the region. He was, in fact, writing at the very dawn of the railway age. It was possible to travel some 240 miles from London to Fleetwood in one train journey, and then find oneself obliged to enter the Lake District by steamer and coach, in a series of stages taking two or even three days. The railway had reached Fleetwood in July 1840, and the town was in such an unmade state as to carry a manifestly depressing mien even on a summer evening. The journey by steamer to Bardsea, in the "Express" or the "James Dennistoune", was instrumental in bringing considerable tourist traffic to Furness Abbey and to Conishead Priory, and our diarist visited both places and was suitably impressed. Then, after staying at the Sun Inn in Ulverston, he was taken by carriage to Bowness, passing through the Crake-side lanes to Coniston Water, and then going over the hills to the Ferry at Sawrey. Such long and sometimes exciting carriage journeys were the very stuff of a Lakeland holiday in Victoria's reign, and perhaps there have been few better ways of looking at the mountains as one leaned back to the clop of the hooves. The new railway companies learned to work closely with extensive coaching services provided by major hoteliers like Riggs of Windermere.

Bowness, meanwhile, was an established holiday town in 1844, and William Pearson's description of it,\* delivered in a lecture at the commencement of that year, is highly significant:

Bowness, I will just say . . . has so far swelled from a very small village into a town, as to be visited by milk-carts morning and evening; it has shops — I don't know how many — and it has two or three medical men and as many attorneys, either in the village itself or its immediate neighbourhood. Instead of one inn and a small tavern it can now boast of five or six; two of them large as palaces, and dignified with the name of Hotels; one the *Royal Hotel*, since the visit of Queen Adelaide. The plain old English word *Inn* has become almost obsolete among our Lakes.

Ambleside, by contrast, had several old inns, and was a much older-established centre. In Bowness, meanwhile, the young man stayed at the *Royal Hotel*, the original proprietor of which, John Ullock, was still the subject of gossip — as a caustic note in the diary indicates. The Lake and the hotel were evidently fairly crowded, and the local newspaper correspondents of that August seemed to agree that the season of 1844 was a memorable one. As need hardly be said, this background material is important as one reads the diary, and the *Kendal Mercury* of 24 August 1844, only a few days before the diarist's visit, contained the following item:

VISITORS TO ULVERSTON — This town has been full of visitors during the past week; never was there known so many "Lakers" (as strangers visiting the Lakes are locally called). On Wednesday last every inn was full to overflowing and three or four parties had to leave the town for Newby Bridge; where also they had to sustain disappointment, as Mr White's excellent accommodations [*sic*] were all taken up.

Even more significantly, the same tale was taken up in the *Westmorland Gazette* on 31 August, a week later:

\* From *Papers, Letters and Journals of William Pearson, Edited by his Widow* (London, 1863), p. 74.

BOWNESS — The past week has been extremely fine and favourable both for the harvest and for lake visitors. For a month back our beautiful village has been crowded to overflowing, the hotels and lodging houses being filled, and numerous visitors having been obliged to proceed for want of accommodation. During the last week the Lake has been the scene of great gaiety, with pic-nic parties . . .

Yet, it would be quite unhistorical to imagine that the district was "crowded" by the standards of a later age. If our young man saw the cheerful boaters on the lake as "cockneyfied", what would he say about the speedboats of today? More to the point, his account of the unruffled calm of an Ambleside Sunday afternoon in early September is astonishing when seen in the light of the newspaper reports quoted.

It must be stressed once more, therefore, that he is describing, in terms that may yet prove to be unique, Lakeland at the very eve of the modern tourist boom.

The diarist commenced his tour, of nearly three weeks' duration, on Thursday, 26 August 1844, and spent most of the day on the rail journey from London. His three companions were of the opposite sex, and it may now be revealed that he was almost certainly a clergyman, probably a curate. He commented that at Wolverton "there is a very excellent place for refreshments, which we were all very glad to avail ourselves of, cup of coffee, toast". There was an eventful journey along the London and Birmingham line, and the route then lay along the Grand Junction line via Wolverhampton, and Stafford. He was impressed by the fires of the potteries as they illuminated the evening, but added that "the country is flat, and poverty-stricken in appearance". He then treated Preston just as summarily:

Of Preston I can only say that it is a large manufacturing Town, smoky & dirty like the rest of them. From thence to Fleetwood the railroad passes part of the way over Sands which are occasionally covered with the sea. Formerly there

was no communication but by boats, and I should say not much communication by them. At 8 o'clock we reached Fleetwood safe & sound, not much fatigued, though we had journeyed near 240 miles since breakfast. According to recommendation we went to Crown Inn or Commercial Hotel, and though not the grandest in the place, I must do it the justice to say that we had very good accommodation, clean beds & c, and well we had, for a more miserable place either by Moonlight or Daylight I have seldom seen.

It appears to be a very young Town, only seven years old, so we may hope it will improve, but as a modest guide-book says, it is a sudden & unexpected Town — probably come before its time into this bustling world. And like such productions in general, it is rather stunted in its growth. Let's see, what does it contain;\* the grand Hotel, one finished & several unfinished streets. Railway station. Lighthouse, sands sometimes covered with water, a Church modest & retiring, for it is in a back street, and a few vessels, Colliers & such like, in harbour. Happy was I at 9 o'clock on Wednesday morning to get into a steam boat & leave it, and hope never to see it again, at any rate till it has come to man's estate, and can boast of full grown streets, and people in them. At present, Fleetwood, fare thee well, and, if for ever, then for ever fare thee well.

Morecambe Bay, in which we sailed in (the) steamer,<sup>1</sup> was indeed enough to put one in good heart again, for, first, it was a lovely morning, sun shining, birds singing and all that. Far away rolled the great Irish Ocean, and on our near side rose, one behind the other, the mountains of Lancashire, Coniston Old Man in the distance. In two hours we left the steamer and were carried in boats to the landing at Bardsea; and a very pretty place it is, full of verdure or rather houses, new Church not yet finished,<sup>2</sup> and commanding splendid views of the Bay, the Mountains, & at no great distance, of Conishead Priory. Thither we directed our course all jammed together in a two-horse car; precious bone-shaking affairs they are, as I learnt to my great discomfort last Autumn. But what signifies pain when you are out on pleasure? The former must give way, and so it did, and in spite of bumps & thumps we all enjoyed the lovely view of Conishead Priory & gardens.

\* The diarist here attaches a note: "The 'Euston', under the same management as one of the same name at Paddington terminus, but differing in respect to its charges, which I have since learnt are moderate, whereas in London they are most exorbitant."

The hotel was in fact the North Euston Hotel, managed by Zenon Vantini, who also ran the Euston and Victoria Hotels in London; *vide* J. H. Sutton, "Early Fleetwood, 1835-47" (M.Litt. thesis in the University of Lancaster, 1968), 40-41, 222.

To begin with the latter, it would be next to impossible to describe their beauty, laid out\* as they are with most exquisite taste and having great natural advantages; trees of great size in the Parks beyond, also peeps of Morecambe Bay and the mountainous districts; their terraces and flowers of every kind most choice, shrubs growing more luxuriantly than any I remember to have seen before, the variety observable in the laying out of the grounds themselves, altogether make up quite a fairy land and if I had seen nothing else I for one should have been well contented with the circuit I had made — but the Priory itself all of modern erection built by its present owner, a gentleman of the name of Bradyl(l), the architect Wyatt — is indeed of surpassing beauty. It had some very handsome rooms commanding lovely views — and many original pictures of the first masters, Raphael, Titian, Vandyck & c & some few excellent copies. The state bedroom fitted up with beautiful carved work — neither must I omit to mention its lovely Cloisters with stained glass windows casting a dim religious light around — its ancient armour — carved chairs from the Borghese Palace at Rome — and last though not† least its well arranged offices & c the whole forming a lieu well worthy a visit, or to crib a bit out of the guide Book, "It is, says Mr West, a great omission in the curious traveller to be in the neighbourhood and not to see so wonderfully pretty a place as Conishead Priory to which nature has been so profuse in rich gifts, and where not has lent its best assistance under the regulation of an elegant fancy and a refined taste" — Can I add more to that?

From the Priory we proceeded a distance of 7 miles to Furness Abbey through‡ Dalton — a quiet countrified little village — where we refreshed, taking a glass of the home-brewed that cheers but not inebriates — in proof whereof ask the ladies — another mile or two took us to the Abbey, and here had I a hundred tongues, as the old poets say, I could not find words to express my astonishment, admiration and almost veneration at the magnificent remains of the ancient pile. A more perfect ruin I have never seen except Heidelberg — a place never to be effaced from my memory, connected as it is not only with

\* Separate note by the diarist: "I can only compare them to the ground at Lowther Castle; the Priory itself will not bear comparison with L.C., having no such hall, suite of rooms, pictures, or fitting up."

† Separate note: "Waited some time in the housekeeper's room before we could see over the place — the housekeeper quite the lady — most condescendingly making custards or some such delicacy — better to be admitted to her sanctum than to be left kicking our heels in the Courty. and till the other visitors came out as we were at Penrhyn Castle."

‡ Note: "Dalton was anciently the capital of Furness, and has a population of about 800."

recollections of its own grandeur & picturesque appearance, but with those of other scenes which I witnessed during that trip altogether new and not to be met with in this country. But let that pass. Now for a bit of history borrowed from a Tourist of greater pretensions than myself and to save trouble it shall be short.

*(Then follows a double page of description of the Abbey, mainly guide-book material and factual detail. The guide-book is not identified).*

Many Norman arches — and some Gothic — some remains of the burial ground also to be seen with its very curious tomb stones — a stream flows close by, and the mountains all around are well wooded. Having feasted our eyes on this romantic pile we retraced our road towards Ulverston, and put up at the Sun Inn, had a comfortable dinner and then turned out for a stroll. The place is large but somewhat dull from the dark colour of the stone of which the houses are built, streets narrow & pavement abominable. There are three Churches, and a very good market on Thursdays, a sort of omnium gatherum of pigs, poultry, beef, apples and potatoes; the country people wear great wooden shoes, talk in a very broad dialect & don't appear over civil. The women seem to do some of the work of men, reaping the corn with a sickle and driving carts. In this neighbourhood much iron ore is found, and there are many furnaces for smelting. The soil is of a reddish colour, and so are the men who are employed in the iron mines.

The accommodation at the Sun Inn was very good & the charge moderate, in consequence of which I passed a eulogium on the landlord<sup>3</sup> and promised to recommend him.\* On Thursday morning at 11 o'clock (?) we left in same car our good quarters at Ulverston and proceeded over Lowick Bridge by the side of Lake Coniston to Waterhead Inn<sup>4</sup> where we had lunch dinner. The scenery improved as we went along at every turn, and the Scots firs, larches & heather covered the mountains on every side. Coniston Old Man reared his head above all the rest, being 2,577 feet high, and though enveloped in mist,

\* Note: "This was the more necessary as my lord (landlord I mean) was a little huffed at my engaging a strange car instead of taking one from the Sun — & this is the case generally, as if it were not enough to get the in many cases enormous profit they do upon what you eat & drink — but must grasp at everything they can get out of you in any other way. But a greater nuisance than the owner of the car is the driver of ditto, for as he has no wages, and in many cases, I believe, pays something for his situation, his object is to make as much as he possibly can — and do what you will, you generally find him among the non-contents Oh! Glorious railroads! In every respect except that of seeing the country, you are invaluable."



enough might still be distinguished to convince us of his surpassing altitude. Lake Coniston not devoid of beauty but of a quiet character, and one can very well look at it without making many exclamations. By the by, it is a great tax upon travellers to be obliged to say lovely, beautiful, grand, magnificent, so often. I feel inclined to say it once for all, and yet if you are not always exclaiming people set you down for a Goth or Vandal, with no taste for the sublime or beautiful.

The horses in this country, very sure footed & sturdy — well suited to the mountains they have to go up and down. The descent from Hawkshead to the Ferry by the Windermere very precipitous, and with other horses, dangerous, but thanks to a careful driver and good nags we reached the bottom in safety — had time to ascend the station belonging to Mr Curwen and see from it a lovely view of Windermere with its islands, forests of firs and numerous gentlemen's seats — and from thence we crossed over in (the) ferry boat to Bowness. There we were fortunate enough to procure accommodation at the Royal Hotel, within five minutes walk from the Lake. And if after tea all my party decamped to bed instead of taking a romantic moonlight walk by the side of the fairy Lake it must be attributed not to their want of romance but to their want of rest.\* And here as I sit all alone in a large fragment of a room some 17 by 20, separated from the rest by a wooden partition (and) lighted up in a sombre way by tallow candles, I feel that it is a fine opportunity for making great progress in my journal, and so have been busily engaged in tracing out my route from Ulverston to Bowness. Bowness is very prettily situated, houses rising above houses, overlooking the Lake, neat built and clean. It has a plain white Church,† rather large, and is much resorted to (for some reason or other which I cannot yet discover) by great people.‡ The Inn we are in is full, and I can't say much for my bedroom, for it is but small and the house is a large & rambling place, and if I should happen to lose my way in it I don't know when I should find it again. May the fates avert such a calamity! This time last year I was in this very place with C.F. and William and little did I dream that I should even see it again, much less so soon. I

\* Note: "At the same Inn at which we put up we found Mr A. Henniker & family, brother of Sir A.H."

† The diarist here notes separately that Bishop Watson's tomb is in the church.

‡ Separate note: "A handsome school-house looks down from an eminence in the centre of the village, and stands as a monument of the munificence of the late John Bolton of Storrs Hall, who erected the edifice at his own expense (*vide* Wordsworth *Guide*)." .

did not then stay, but looked in on the way to Ambleside, and one look was enough. Now to bed.

Friday (29 August). Lovely morning again. The view from my bedroom window very fine, a terrace walk just before it by which men women & children have been passing and repassing, for the last two hours, for it seems to be the high road from one part of the house to the other. Opposite and in the distance the mountains stare me in the face, and seem to say "get up you lazy fellow & look at us". "Of course I will," say I, "I com<sup>d</sup> a purpose!" But mountains before breakfast are to me but unexciting objects. Young ladies, pray don't look in, for I am not quite draped except you want to take a lesson in shaving — Betty, bring the hot water.

After breakfast, self & some of the party embarked on board Gibson's Ferry boat and went to Ambleside to look for lodgings. Gibson himself<sup>5</sup> quite a character; among his other accomplishments is that of making poetry (see *Appendix*), some of which he repeated, and it was in many parts very superior.<sup>6</sup> He seemed very proud of the encomiums which had been, as he said, *not jokingly* passed upon it by the Poet Laureate. He felt the truth of the maxim "Laudavi a laudato". When not labouring at the one he is most exceedingly happy to serve you with grocery of all kinds in the little shop which he keeps at Ambleside. Curiously enough the lodgings which we fixed upon, situated next the Post Office and near the Salutation Hotel, belong to his sister, and more curiously still have for some time been occupied by Col. Inns & family — they left for Keswick this very morning.

On returning to Bowness to fetch E & J., found the landlord of the Royal Hotel\* not best pleased at our sudden departure which did not diminish the pleasure I felt at exchanging the dull little village of Bowness for the more bustling and amusing village of Ambleside. The approach to the village is very steep, but every turn of the road presents some new object of interest.

The Lake as seen in the accompanying view† is very lovely, its greatest width 1 mile & a quarter. Char is caught in it &

\* Note: "It appears that the real owner of the Royal Hotel, Mr Ullock, has retired with a large fortune, but not with the love and respect of his neighbours, being from all accounts a litigious disagreeable character. An anecdote which I heard will shew this. When he retired he found that his next door neighbour's windows overlooked his grounds — so to prevent this he built up a great high brick wall: and as she (it was a lady) dug a well to get water, Mr U. dug another near it deeper, so drew it all off."

† Pasted into the diary at this point is an engraving, "Head of Winderfrom Lowwood", used in the Hudson and Nicholson *Guide to the Lakes* (Kendal, 1842).

pike — it is covered with boats containing parties of pleasure, which give it somewhat of a cockneyfied appearance. The Lowood Inn (is) situated close to the Lake.

Saturday morning brought most lovely weather with it, and so after breakfast we started off for Langdale Pikes. Passing Skelwith Bridge & Force or Waterfall, Elterwater, Blea Tarn, Little Langdale, we at length arrived at a farmhouse called Milbeck situated in a most romantic valley. The road from Ambleside, very rough and precipitous, winds round the mountains, and is in many places so narrow that it seems a miracle that carriages can travel over it in safety. We drove in some style in a two-horse car, with postilion in a yellow jacket (and) round at hat & c, and after(wards) overtook a gentleman driving his own four-wheel carriage & horses with his wife, his manservant riding the leader. He appeared to run some risk in venturing without a guide, but we had the felicity of seeing him arrive safe at the Inn an hour after us.

The Pikes themselves are very lofty, 2,000 & odd feet, and very barren, and after a very homely lunch of bread and cheese, ale & milk which was furnished us at 6d a head, we toiled up to Dungeon Gill, and found it like the rest of the Cascades, rather in want of water. Curiously enough we fell in with Mrs Holcombe's sister & her husband, and a friend of theirs who was acquainted with HGR. They are returning home by Fleetwood & are staying at the Salutation Hotel. Leaving Langdale we returned by Grasmere & its Lake and Rydal Water, a much better road, abounding in picturesque and well-wooded scenery. Reached Ambleside in time for a late dinner and found some letters from home.

10 o'clock at night; moon shines brightly over opposite mountain into my bedroom. Before I left home fancied it would be very delightful to walk about by the pale moonlight, or take a row upon the Lakes as we did last year, but a hard clamber up mountains and waterfalls takes the romance out of one — and so, my bed, if you have no objection, I will lay myself down upon thee and take my rest, and may my sleep be unbroken by any of those little nameless wanderers that make it their business (and with them, business is a pleasure) to disturb the rest of the weary traveller.

They say that at Grasmere there is a gate called the Wishing Gate (and) that wishes made there generally prosper. I am sorry I did not think of offering up a wish to the above effect as I passed by today, though while I was about it I should doubtless have discovered numberless other little things to wish for. At present the one uppermost in my mind is a good night's rest and fine day tomorrow.

Sunday, September 1. The month begins in a most promising way, with sunshine and a cloudless sky. Went in morning to the Church, a very plain unimposing structure though delightfully situated half-way up a hill.<sup>7</sup> Saw my old friend the waiter at the Salutation officiating as clerk, the service conducted in a very primitive style, no instrumental music but rather too much vocal — chanting, too, which was anything but enchanting. The Curate<sup>8</sup> only in Deacon's orders, was assisted (as it was Sacrament morning) by an elderly man who also preached a very good sermon.

The attendance was good, but we had no difficulty in procuring seats. Even the curate's dog found a seat on the pulpit stairs. Walked afterwards towards Stockgill Force, which I saw last year, a very pretty waterfall about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from our lodgings, and now, the day being very hot, & feeling thereby incommoded, I have staid in while the rest of the party have gone out to Evening service; and as nothing very new or interesting has occurred worth noting down in my journal, I can but look out of my window and take account of all that is to be seen from thence.

This, you must understand, is the market place, and this market place is on a hill. Next door is the Post Office, to which people have been going at all hours of the day, full of hopes and fears as to the contents of that important little letter box. Husbands separated from their wives or wives from husbands, parents from their children, children from their parents, young ladies from their lovers or vice versa — all or some of each kind have doubtless been amongst the enquirers at Mrs Nicholson's.<sup>9</sup> And how much must that venerable old lady rise in their estimation when she has got the very letter they are asking for, and what a messenger of evil tidings she must appear when with a shake of the head she replies to the enquiries of the anxious parent or the tender lover in the negative.

A little lower down on the opposite side is what is intended for a butcher's shop, but for want of windows & other such like commodities it looks more like a shed. Next to it is a livery stall whose by no means fragrant odours are sufficient to contaminate the otherwise pure mountain breezes. Midway are some circular stone steps on which sundry little children are sitting and rolling about raising their little cherub voices in by no means harmonious chorus. An invalid in a four-wheeled donkey carriage has just past [*sic*], and now a man on horseback — who shall say this place is dull? At the top of the street is the Salutation Hotel, which opened its hospitable doors & spread its hospitable board last autumn, for three intimate

friends of mine, whom it is needless to enumerate. But as it is now getting cooler I shall now go out and take a walk.

And a very beautiful walk it has been, to Rydal village, about 1½ from Ambleside by the side of the Brathay, through narrow lanes, well wooded, and presenting at every turn magnificent prospects. Saw the Church and Rydal Hall as well as the house of the Poet Laureate. Last year I went over the grounds & saw the waterfalls. As I returned, the shades of Evening began to gather round, bringing out the Mountains in bold relief — a still quiet scene most enjoyable alone. While speaking of the beauties of scenery in these parts, I must not omit to mention beauties of another kind, and to pay my tribute of admiration to the fair sex both of high & low degree, their bright eyes and sunny smiles have added a charm to these fairy scenes, which somehow or other we did not discover last year.

The dialect of men, women & children is very broad, & amusing to the stranger — wud & shud for would & should, book for back, yon for yonder, nowt for nought &c. The letter h abominably mis-used, but no doubt they think us Southerners wrong. As I was told, we talk so pretty.

Another lovely morning, Monday September 2, so I hope to pay a 2<sup>nd</sup> visit to Patterdale and Ullswater. Started at ten o'clock in a carriage with two horses for Ullswater, and had hardly had time to congratulate ourselves upon the superiority of the vehicle over that we had on Saturday when the postilion [*sic*] horrified us with the intelligence that there was four miles of hill to walk, being too steep for the horses to pull us. The able-bodied and able-breathed, being 3 out of 6, took the hint, and in spite of a broiling Sun succeeded at length in reaching the summit of Kirkstone Pass, partaking of a glass of milk in the highest inhabited house in England. When I say that the view from it is grand, and amply repays one for the labour of walking up, I say but the truth. At the same time, the mountains are wild and barren, very different from those around Windermere & more particularly Derwentwater.

Oh, the pleasure of going down hill after such an ascent — being whirled at an incalculable pace down precipices, round sudden corners, over narrow bridges, into deep and hidden holes, bump, jump, thump, all of a lump, and finding yourself, just when you think it is all over with you, safe & sound at the place of destination. On our left before we reached Patterdale we came in sight of Brothers Water, so called, as tradition goes, from the circumstance of two brothers being drowned in

it when venturing on the ice. It is but a poor little Lake compared with others in the neighbourhood.

At Patterdale, almost a new Inn has sprung up since my visit last year, with very nice gardens and lawns before it. Taking boat, we sunbathed on what I cannot help calling the grandest of the Lakes, the mountains rising, as it were, from the bottom of the waters. Had a *very uninteresting boy to row us*, not *only ill-favoured* but *loutish & stupid*, like very many of these north-country bumpkins. Landed in Gowbarrow Park, and had a capital pic-nic on the banks of the Lake — and no Sir Gregory Grumpy to warn us off for daring to grease his grass.

It is a very astonishing fact, but it is a fact in my own case at least, that mountain scenery looks all the better after a hearty meal seasoned with Attic salt and washed down with a glass of the best home-brewed. So much for the influence of the creature comforts. After picnic we visited Lyulph's tower & Airey Force, a very grand waterfall, and after a pleasant row back to the Inn, returned to Ambleside in time for tea, without meeting any accident or drawback to our enjoyment of a most lovely day & most picturesque scenery. All seem to think they have done a good days work, but what is it compared to the double journey which CF W & self took last year in one day to Langdale & Ullswater — so much for being pressed for time.

I have been listening for some time to some very good glee-singers; in a quiet little place like this nothing is so soothing to the feelings, and to a person inclined to be sentimental now's the time. But sentiment, as Mrs Malaprop would say, don't become a young person, so as there is nothing sentimental in a good sound snooze, I'm off to bed.

Tuesday (September 3rd). Spent an hour or two by the side of Stock Gill Force, reading a book & listening to the waterfall; packed up all my goods & chattels, which by the by all went into a carpet bag, and waited for the Carlisle Mail to Lancaster, but found it crowded inside and out, so contented myself with the thoughts of staying another day at this place, and I don't know any place among the Lakes that I should prefer stopping at, which is a compliment of no mean order considering my erratic propensities & love of change. We all in the afternoon embarked in Gibson's boat — and enjoyed the fresh breezes on the water. EJ, Jane & self got out at Lowood, & the rest of the party went on to the Ferry. An appearance of clouds, the first we have had since we left home, & a whiffing wind;

I hope it does not forbode a change in the weather. The walk from Lowood to Ambleside, well wooded & abounding in peeps of the Lakes. As we returned we fell in with some cows being milked in the middle of the road (and a very well conducted set of cows they were), drank some new milk on the spot, without doubt pure and unadulterated, no time for chalk and water. Missed seeing *such* a pretty woman in the ferry boat, one who was all to melt the heart of a Cantab, which of course is made of very hard materials. But as somebody very wisely observes, "What is beauty but a flower, that blooms & withers in an hour". Therefore, of course, I am quite reconciled to the disappointment. For (if this is literally true), supposing the aforesaid beauty got in at Bowness, at the usual deliberate pace of the Ferry boat it would have been an hour & a half before she got out at Ambleside, and that would have been just half an hour after her beauty had gone — a fact, I assure you.

Wednesday morning at  $\frac{1}{2}$  p 8. Left Ambleside altogether, and gave up the charge of the ladies, leaving them to their own discretion and under the protection of the laws of this country; embarked on board Gibson's Ferry with eight ladies from the sister isle. Though there was no beauty to spare among the whole lot, there was a liveliness, good nature & spirit of repartee, very agreeable, and as it was very rough & tempestuous, more so indeed than was quite safe, the ladies had an opportunity of shewing their courage and endurance, being considerably drenched at times with water; but happily we landed them all safe & sound at Bowness. One of them spoke rapturously of the Lake of Killarney, and strongly recommended me to go and see it.

Had sail for a mile or two, blowing great guns. Then a lull, and had to take to the oars. I steered to Newby Bridge. Then I reached it — my usual luck again — too late, for the Coach. Fortunately there was a return cab there, same driver as the one we had to Coniston, who took me on to Ulverston, and from thence after early dining to Bardsea. Though an hour too soon for the Steamer. The vessel when it did arrive wasted so much time that I & several others did not arrive at Fleetwood until 10 minutes after the Train had started for Preston. And so, wretched man that I am, in this most wretched of all places, I am doomed to pass another night. So much for resolutions to the contrary; but the worst of it is, William will be expecting me this night at Chester. However, that can't be cured and must be endured, so for the second time I must stroll about

& try to find some beauties in Fleetwood. Put up again at the Commercial. I can't help thinking the Innkeeper and Steam Boat Captain are in league together to keep people in this very un-inviting place.

Thus ends my trip to the Lakes, which added to what I saw last year, viz Keswick, Penrith, York & c, makes up a pretty complete tour. This must suffice for many a long day. Indeed I should regret visiting the Lake District again before I had seen the many other beauties of England as well as those of Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

The young man then continued his journey, from Fleetwood to Preston, "chiefly remarkable for smoke, high chimneys and windmills". He stayed for a day or so in Liverpool, where "the low Irish abound, so much as to make the place disagreeable; a great many fellows appear with only one eye, the other being lost in some drunken row by a practice called gouging". He used J. G. Kohl's tourist handbook in a perambulation of Chester, visited Penrhyn Castle and slate quarries, admired the Menai suspension bridge, and found that the lake at Llanberis "very much resembled Ullswater in general features". In Wales he found "the picturesque Scenery certainly more grand & on a more extensive scale than that of the English Lakes". Returning via Monmouth to Bristol, he went over "the Great Britain Steam Ship, the immense iron vessel that is to run to New York if she can be got out of the harbour. We were delighted with her size, elegant proportion and accommodation, looked over every part of her from stem to stern . . . the vessel is to be propelled by the Archimedean Screw". (The topical nature of this reference hardly calls for stress.)

There now comes the matter of his identity. After passing through Oxfordshire and the home counties, near the end of his long tour, he attempted to catch a five o'clock p.m. train in London at the "E(astern) C(ounties) terminus", and then wrote of driving from his local station to the village of Writtle. Writtle is



about four miles west of Chelmsford, and it is fairly clear that he was a clergyman, perhaps a curate, in or near that place. This last stage of his journey took place on a Saturday, and regarding it he noted a fear of "the over fatigue which might unfit me for next days duties". His interest in the conduct of the Ambleside service, "the curate only in Deacon's orders", is thus in some measure explained together with a number of similar references in the diary; e.g., he "saw very few good churches" in Wales.

Our young man was also proud of his "Cantab" education. An investigation carried on by the writer, much assisted by Mr K. C. Newton, Essex County Archivist, and by the Vicar of St Paul, Highwood in Writtle, reveals that all the known clergymen then in Writtle were Oxford-educated men, and that the only young clergyman of the locality who appears broadly to fit into the role of the diarist was the Reverend Charles Alsager Tryon, a Cambridge graduate (b. 1821 at Chester, at St John's College 1839-44). The young Mr Tryon was curate of the neighbouring parishes of Willingale Spain and Willingale Doe between June 1844, just before the holiday described, and January 1847, when his entries in the parish register cease. An examination of the handwriting in the register compared with that in the diary volume reveals certain similarities in individual letters, like the upper-case M and S, but is otherwise inconclusive.

In the absence of more satisfactory evidence, we have to assume that Mr Tryon was our Lakeland visitor.

## References.

- <sup>1</sup> For the steamer services between Fleetwood and Bardsea, *vide* J. Melville & J. L. Hobbs, "Burness travelling and postal arrangements in the 18th and 19th centuries", CW2 xlvii 97-98. When the Furness Railway was opened in 1846, the company made arrangements to alter the services, and a Barrow-Fleetwood service commenced in 1847.
- <sup>2</sup> According to *VCH Lancs.* viii 338, "Trinity Church, Bardsea, was built in 1843". The *Mannex Directory for North Lancashire* (1866) 389, notes that the church was *opened* in 1848. Accordingly our diarist must have seen it in an unfinished state.
- <sup>3</sup> The proprietor of the Sun Inn, Ulverston, who earned this "eulogium", was Thomas Smith, aged 25, who resided there with his wife Margaret, infant son Thomas, and (in the season) nine female servants and two male, suggesting a large trade. *Vide* Census of 1841 (taken in June of that year). HO/107/531/11, Regn. District of Ulverstone, 13-14. The *Mannex Directory* of 1849, 455, shows that he was still at the Sun Inn then.
- <sup>4</sup> According to the third edition of Harriet Martineau's *Guide to the Lakes*, p. 33, the Waterhead Inn was "built under the direction of Mr and Mrs J. G. Marshall". The Marshalls, of the famous Leeds family, lived at Monk Coniston House.
- <sup>5</sup> This would be James Gibson, listed as grocer and lodging-house keeper in Ambleside in the *Mannex 1849 Directory* for Westmorland, and probably the man who helped to operate the White & Gibson boat service, which plied between Newby Bridge and Ambleside twice daily; *vide* advertisement in *Westmorland Gazette*, 11 May 1844.
- <sup>6</sup> A specimen of James Gibson's verse is given in the *Appendix* to this article.
- <sup>7</sup> This is the old Ambleside chapel, rebuilt by subscription in 1812, and (although still afterwards used from time to time) replaced by St Mary's, consecrated on 14 June 1854; cf.: Armitt, "Ambleside town and chapel", CW2 vi 60.
- <sup>8</sup> Thomas Troughton, a Cambridge graduate, was curate of Ambleside at this time. He became incumbent of Haverthwaite in 1846.
- <sup>9</sup> The Census of 1841, HO/107/1160, shows Mrs Agnes Nicholson, the Ambleside postmistress, residing in the Market Place with her three daughters. She was also there in 1851 with her unmarried daughters Hannah and Mary (H/107/2441). Agnes was then a widow of 73, and her daughters were 45 and 32. Mary was a clerk in the post office. Agnes was the widow of Joseph Nicholson, postmaster of Ambleside. Their son Cornelius Nicholson (1804-1889), the author of *The Annals of Kendal*, was a man of many parts, who achieved distinction in several fields. Agnes died 29 March 1862, aged 83. (Window in Ambleside church.)

## APPENDIX.

Lines written and composed by James Gibson, an untaught poet of the Lakes, Ambleside, on Mr Dawson's Castle on the banks of Windermere, corrected only in spelling.

*Midst woods and waters all sublime  
 Midst hills that mock the wreck of time  
 Midst verdant fields and flowery plains  
 Where nature deck'd in beauty reigns  
 Amidst thy splendours Windermere  
 A Castle doth its turrets rear.  
 Its shadow on the Lake it throws  
 Which at its foot in beauty flows —  
 Where with transparent lustre clear  
 As in a glass each object near  
 In sweet reflection there is seen  
 Mountain, wood & valley green —  
 This Castle built in Gothic style  
 Is view'd as some famed ancient pile  
 By strangers who delight to trace  
 The origin of every place.  
 It points the retrospective eye  
 To times and seasons long gone by  
 It seems to speak of deeds of fame  
 Recording many a noble's name  
 Who boldly on by valour led  
 Has near its portals fought & bled  
 Or fetter bound consigned to dwell  
 Amidst the horrors of the cell  
 Thoughts such as these associate  
 With Castles of an ancient date  
 But this fair building now in sight  
 Knows nothing of the armed knight  
 No tales of dungeons deep and cold  
 No blood-stained walls you there behold  
 No mould'ring ashes round it sleep  
 Of those whom tyrants caused to weep  
 No fleeting spectres haunt its towers  
 No sounds disturb its midnight hours  
 No deeds of darkness, black & fell  
 No tales of blood has it to tell.  
 Tho' at a distance it appears  
 As having braved the wreck of years  
 The commonwealth to have defied  
 And mocked the power of Cromwell's pride*

*But if you take a nearer view  
You find the structure wholly new  
And doth it less deserve your praise  
Because it cannot boast of days  
When tyrants gloried in their guilt  
When human blood was reckless spilt  
By base assassin's cruel hand  
And justice slumb' red in the land.  
This Castle rose midst days of peace  
Knowledge had bid oppression cease  
The star of Liberty and Light  
Had chased away the gloomy night  
And Superstition's awe and dread  
Before the light of truth had fled.  
Its boast may be of days more bright  
Of days of peace and gospel light,  
Boast of its owner's name & worth  
That noble mind that gave it birth  
It's Dawson's kindness, friendship, love  
That stately mansion stands to prove  
And may he live and long enjoy  
In health and peace without alloy  
His Castle — may it be a home  
From which he has no wish to roam  
Till to a mansion in the skies  
Prepared his God shall bid him rise.*