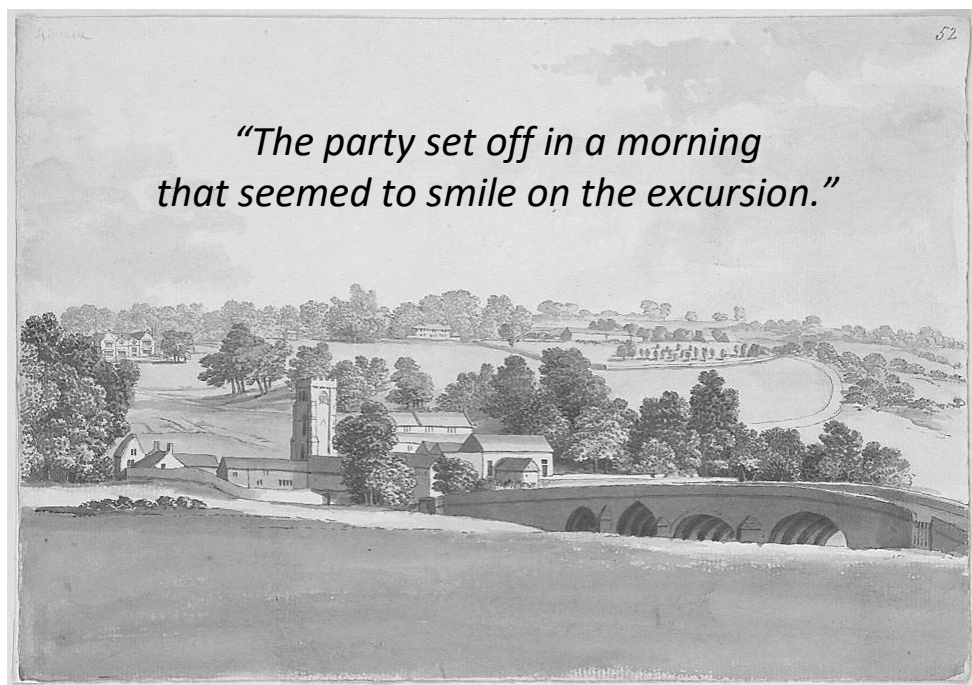


Journal of a Tour
to the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland
in June 1808

by Rev^d John Pering (1765-1843)
Vicar of Skipton and Kildwick

Journal of a Tour from Kildwick in Craven, Yorkshire
to the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland
20th June to 1st July 1808
by Rev^d John Pering, Vicar of Skipton and Kildwick



transcription and research
by David G Turner, Skipton 2019

(manuscript in the Archives of the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jeff Cowton and the team at The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere for their assistance, and permission to transcribe and print Revd Pering's Journal

John Fryer-Spedding of Mirehouse, Bassenthwaite for a discussion on the Spedding family and Archdeacon Robert Hurrell Froude

Stanley Oldfield and Jill Powell of Harberton & Harbertonford History Society

Graham Taylor of Farnhill and Kildwick Local History Group

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Portrait of Revd Robert Hurrell Froude

Portrait of Richard Pering junior dated 1829

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

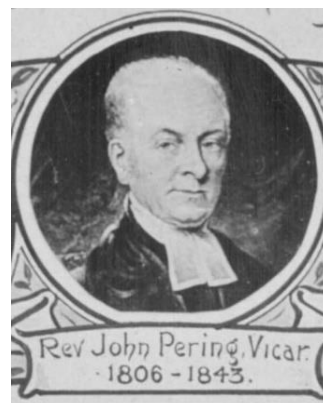
Cover Photograph of Buttermere Valley by Andrew Locking

(www.andrewswalks.co.uk)

other photographs by David G Turner

INTRODUCTION

John Pering was born at Harbertonford, Devon in 1765. He studied for the priesthood at Christ Church, Oxford and subsequently held posts as Curate in two Devon parishes. In 1806 he was appointed as Vicar of Kildwick and Skipton in Yorkshire, a post he held until his death in 1843. Two years after his move to Yorkshire he went on a two week tour of the English Lake District which he wrote about in this Journal.



Portrait of Revd Pering

Revd Pering's Travelling Companions

Reverend Pering had four travelling companions on his tour of the Lakes in 1808. He records them as 'Mrs Wise', 'Miss Froude', 'Mr Wise', and 'my Sister'. Like John Pering, all four were born in Devon. Apart from his sister Lucy Pering, the other three were the sisters and nephew of his friend Revd Robert Hurrell Froude, Vicar of Dartington, who would later become Archdeacon of Totnes.

Mrs Wise – formerly Elizabeth Froude born 1767. She had married John Wise, a banker of Totnes, in 1783.

Miss Froude – Margaret Froude born 1769.

Elizabeth and Margaret were sisters of Revd Robert Hurrell Froude, whose wife Margaret (née Spedding) had given a letter of introduction for Revd Pering to allow him to call on her friend Dorothy Wordsworth, sister of the poet, in Grasmere.

'Mr Wise' – Mrs Wise was a widow, her husband had died 1807. 'Mr Wise' was Ayshford Wise born at Totnes in 1786, the elder of her three sons. He had been at Brasenose College, Oxford from 1804 to 1808, and was later Member of Parliament for Totnes from 1812-18.

'My sister' – Lucy Pering born 1769, the elder of his two sisters, who lived with him at Kildwick Vicarage.

Their ages in June 1808 were: Revd John Pering 43, Mrs Wise, 41, Miss Froude 39, Miss Pering 39, and the young Mr Wise 22.

The Chaise

It is apparent that the party travelled in Revd Pering's own two horse chaise, as a later vicar of Kildwick records that Revd Pering '*drove a carriage and pair*'.¹ The stables and coach house still survive behind the former Vicarage.

Also, on Page 11 of his Journal Revd Pering wrote that he needed to '*change horses for the chaise*' before leaving Settle and Giggleswick to climb Buck Haw Brow.

On the same page he remarks: '*I immediately stepped out of the open carriage, committing the reins to my friend*', which shows that Revd Pering was driving the chaise and presumably had young Mr Wise as a companion at the front, with the three ladies inside.

The chaise was enclosed behind as he writes on Page 57 that he got out to walk as they ascended Whinlatter Pass to enjoy the panoramic view of Skiddaw but that the '*closed vehicle*' meant that the ladies were '*deprived ... of the view behind*'.



A Georgian chaise



former coach house and stable
behind Kildwick Vicarage

¹ 'A History of the Ancient and Historic Church of St Andrew, Kildwick in Craven' by Revd E W Brereton - published in 1909

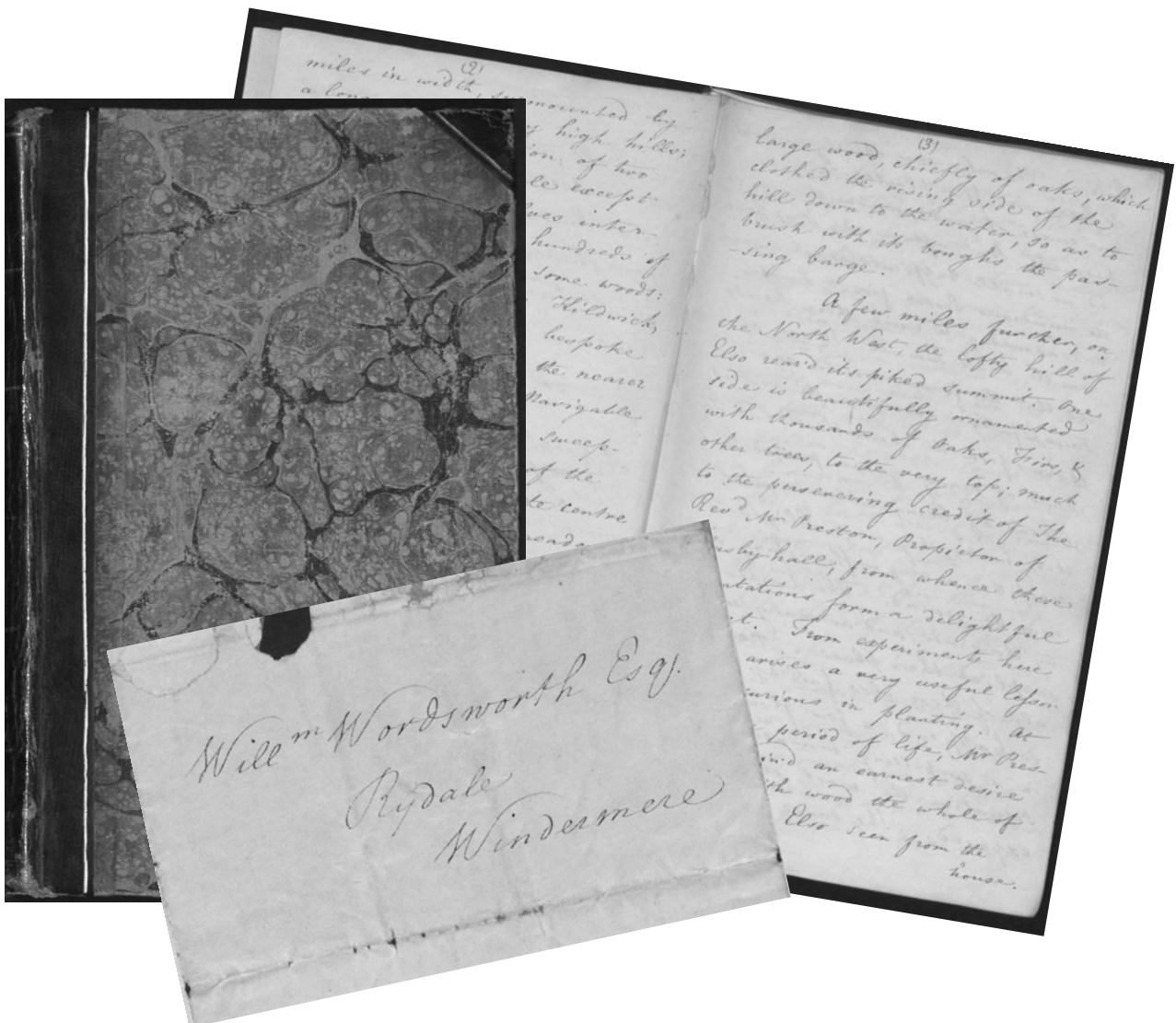
DESCRIPTION OF THE JOURNAL

A single leather-bound, marble papered journal in the archives of the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere

Ref: WLMS/A/Pering, John, Rev/1

Plus two letters from Revd Pering to William Wordsworth dated 27th June 1818 and 5th July 1821

Ref: WLMS/A/Pering, John, Rev/2 - 3



TRANSCRIPTION OF REVD PERING'S 1808 JOURNAL

(1)²

A Journal, in great measure retrospective, of a Tour from Kildwick in Craven, Yorkshire, to the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland.

(The Rev^d J Pering)

June 20th 1808.

The Party, consisting of M^{rs} Wise, Miss Froude, M^r Wise my sister & myself, set off, in a morning that seemed to smile on the excursion.

From the lofty brow of Kildwick-hill, our pleasurable sensations were heightened by the Prospect which suddenly expanded itself.³ Behold a fertile vale, nearly two

(2)

miles in width, surmounted by a long range of very high hills; with the termination of two other Vales;⁴ the whole except the heights themselves interspersed with many hundreds of trees in hedgerows, & some woods: three Villages besides Kildwick, and farms & cottages, bespoke no small population:⁵ the nearer part enlivened by the Navigable canal, winding, with a sweeping curve, on the side of the hill;⁶ whilst, through the centre of the Vale, and its rich meadows well stocked with cattle, the river Ayr made its placid & meandering course.

Having crossed the Canal, we proceeded, on a most excellent road,⁷ fringed with a profusion of wild roses, under a

(3)

large wood, chiefly of oaks, which clothes the rising side of the hill down to the water, so as to brush with its boughs the passing barge.⁸

A few miles further, on the North West, the lofty hill of Elso rear'd its piked summit.⁹ One side is beautifully ornamented with thousands of Oaks, Firs, & other trees, to the very top; much to the persevering credit of

² Pages numbered by Revd Pering

³ Kildwick Vicarage was a quarter of a mile north and 150 feet higher in altitude than the Church.

⁴ Kildwick is in the valley of the River Aire.

⁵ These would probably be the villages of Farnhill, Sutton and Crosshills which in 1808 were in the early stages of industrialisation and population growth.

⁶ The Leeds – Liverpool Canal. The section through Kildwick from Bingley to Skipton was opened in 1773.

⁷ This section of the Keighley to Kendal Turnpike Road was opened in 1787.

⁸ Farnhill Wood

⁹ 'Sharp Haw' - anciently called 'Elso'. See T D Whitaker's 'History of Craven', published 1805.

The Rev^d Mr Preston, Proprietor of Flasby-hall,¹⁰ from whence these Plantations form a delightful object. From experiments here made arises a very useful lesson to the curious in planting. At an early period of life, Mr Preston entertain'd an earnest desire to cover with wood the whole of that part of Elso seen from the



the 'piked summit' of Elso
(now Sharp Haw)
from the Kildwick to Skipton
road

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house. The oaks that chiefly conceal its base were first planted; and, in due course of years, made the desir'd progress. But, afterwards, it appeared, no small difficulties obstructed the numerous Scotch-firs & Larches endeavouring to raise their heads near the bleak summit. It was expected that the former would most successfully encounter the violent storms from the North West; but the result of many years proved that, instead of being able to erect their heads, they were obliged to creep, & in a very unflourishing state, near the ground. The Larches died by thousands; and as many more supplied their places. Nearly all of these also failed; but it so happen'd, a few flourished in a surprising manner, in a situation the most elevated & exposed. The cause of this was

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at length discover'd. These larches were planted in a sort of turbarry,¹¹ (as it is called in Craven) in which they cannot grow, in so high a spot; whilst the stratum next below, being, at some few places, partially turned up, proved most grateful. In consequence, deep trenches were made in the desirable soil; and, after the third Plantation, no trees could thrive more luxuriantly. They were planted in rows, which is found most convenient both for keeping them clean, & for thinning. From the side of the hill flows a fountain of most excellent water, which the Proprietor, at great expense, has conveyed in

¹⁰ Revd John Preston of Flasby Hall (1757-1821), vicar of Linton in Craven 1780-1821

¹¹ peat

trunks & leaden pipes, across two vales, & under the bed of a brook, to his Mansion, into various apartments

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of which it is conveyed in the most commodious manner.

We passed through Skipton. The Castle seems to overlook the Town with a commanding aspect, and affords a very good specimen of an ancient Baronial residence in feudal Times. It was defended, on one side, by a gateway of massive thickness, & now in perfect preservation; and, on the opposite, by a vast precipice, at the bottom of which runs a stream of some size. By its side is a small canal, to convey, in boats, only from the Castle, vast quantities of blue limestone brought hither in small carts, moving upon a foundation of iron, on an inclined plane, from a quarry about a mile distant.

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Skipton-castle was built by Robert de Romilley, in the Time of William the Conqueror. It was afterwards in possession of the Earls of Albemarle. Then, forfeited to the Crown; and Edward 2^d gave it, in exchange, to Robert de Clifford, ancestor of the Earls of Cumberland. It is now in the Possession of The Earl of Thanet & has long been in his Family. It would be easy to add a long description relating to this place, venerable from its Antiquity; but I beg leave to refer to D^r Whitaker's History of Craven.¹²

About 4 miles from Skipton, we passed through Gargrave; one of the most pleasing villages of Craven. The grounds are interspersed with hundreds of trees, chiefly ashes & elms.

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On one side is the canal; and the River Ayr, whose general characteristic is extreme slowness, flows through with an agreeable alacrity.

Some way on, the immense Lancashire hill of Pendle, riding with its lofty, wide, & long summit, formed the termination of the prospect on the West. Not long after, on the North appeared the mountainous heights of Pennighent; and, within a few miles more, the still more elevated Eminence of Ingleborough.

Of these everlasting hills, or rather mountains, the following inelegant lines are commonly reported.

*Pendle-Hill, & Pennighent, & also Ingleborough,
you'll scarcely find out three such hills, if you search all England thorough.*

¹² The Wordsworth's also had a copy of Dr Thomas Dunham Whitaker's 'History of Craven' which is referred to by Dorothy Wordsworth in letters of this period. See 'The Letters of William & Dorothy Wordsworth – the Middle Years 1806 to 1811'.

"Greatness of dimension, says Mr Burke,¹³ is a powerful cause of the Sublime. Extension is either in length height, or depth. Of these the length strikes least: an hundred yards of even ground will never work such an effect

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as a Tower an hundred yards high, or a rock or mountain of that altitude"

On the Sublime & Beautiful page 127. The same well-informed Writer gives the following reasons why Unity is requisite to Vastness.

"The Mind, in reality, hardly ever can attend diligently to more than one thing at a time. If this thing be little the effect is little, & a number of other little objects cannot engage the attention: the mind is bound by the bounds of the object; and what is not attended to, and what does not exist, are much the same in effect: but the eye, or the mind, (for in this case there is no difference) in great uniform objects does not readily arrive at their bounds; it has no rest, whilst it contemplates them; the image is much the same every where. So that every thing great by its quantity must necessarily be one, simple, & entire." – p. 262.

Before our arrival at the town of Settle we passed a pedestrian Gentleman whose appearance highly excited curiosity; which, however, we did not consider fairly

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within the bounds of good manners to gratify by interrogation. He had on a pair of green spectacles,¹⁴ and carried, slung over the shoulder, & inclosed in a neat case, what bore somewhat of the appearance of a long spy glass.¹⁵ He seemed about thirty years of age, very active, & his complexion indicated that he was a foreigner.¹⁶

Settle is a decent town, situated under hills containing an inexhaustible supply of blue limestone; which, I have reason to suppose, continues for many miles across the country, even to that vast, abrupt, lofty, & perpendicular terminating mass of Kilnsey-Crag.¹⁷

As we left this place, we crossed the River Ribble whose violent course is obstructed by many a rock in its channel. Some miles lower, this

¹³ Edmund Burke 'A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful' 1757

¹⁴ Developed in mid 18th century Venice, these were early sun-glasses to protect from the glare the sea, and were later used by mountaineers to reduce glare and the risk of snow blindness.

¹⁵ Actually a barometer for measuring the heights of hills - see journal page 13

¹⁶ This same intriguing foreign 'Pedestrian' is seen again on the way out of Settle, where they converse – journal pages 11 to 13, and more significantly again in Buttermere a week later – journal pages 64 to 67.

¹⁷ Kilnsey Crag in Wharfedale

stream forms a charming object near Lord Ribblesdale's Mansion, which from an eminence, looks down, upon the water, over a wood.¹⁸

Very near, we passed through the picturesque village of Giggleswick. The tedium attending the long ascent from hence¹⁹ is alleviated by the appearance of the lofty & almost

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perpendicular continuance of blue Lime-rock, from the fissures of which grow stunted Yewtrees, Oaks, & bushments; which, at the turn of the hill, become pleasingly increased to a small wood, under the craggy Eminence.

But, it so happened, the tedium was quite relieved by another circumstance. The Pedestrian, who had overtaken us by means of delay, to change horses for the chaise, made his appearance a considerable way up the hill. I immediately stepped out of the open carriage, committing the reins to my friend,²⁰ & determined to endeavour to overtake him; and, if fair opportunity presented itself, to enter into conversation. As he was so far before, & walked fast, it was feared I should not accomplish the object; but perceiving him, after having surmounted the Summit, endeavouring, with his umbrella, to reach something in a watery ditch, I then felt confident of success; & when I got up, he was still busy, & standing a little in the water.

"Some curious plant, Sir, I presume," said I.

"Not curious; the *Ranunculus aquaticus*."²¹

I then said, "May I ask the name of that other plant, in flower?"

"It is the *Callitrica*."²²

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"I presume, so called, said I, because it resembles beautiful hair."

"Yes, but not very much. Botanists find no small difficulty in assigning appropriate names."

I then observed, as we walked on;

"The reason why the *Ranunculus* was so called, is curious." Here he seem'd at a loss.

"Because, said I, its root is like the splay'd feet of a frog in the water. A few days ago, being in the woods of Bolton,²³ after a considerable search I found the herb Paris."

"Ah, said he, *quadrifolium*."

¹⁸ Gisburne Park, Gisburn. Thomas Lister (1752-1826) was created 1st Baron Ribblesdale in 1797.

¹⁹ Buck Haw Brow

²⁰ The young Mr Wise

²¹ Common water-crowfoot

²² Water-starwort

²³ Bolton Abbey – 8 miles north of Kildwick

"Yes." – "This country, continued I, (for I was delighted to conclude from his manner that he considered botany quite a secondary attainment) is in some parts beautiful, tho' here about chiefly remarkable for certain very elevated & immense hills, as Pendle-hill, which just now appeared, at a distance, on the left."

"Pendle, he observed, is high, but not equal in that respect, to the mountain to which I am now going. A few miles on, near Ingleton, is Ingleborough, said to be the highest spot, from the level of

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the sea, in England:²⁴ but, I believe, Snowden, in Wales, exceeds it. Before I go to bed, my object is to take the elevation of Ingleborough; for which purpose, I have, in this long case, a Barometer."

By this time the carriage was come up, & as the rest of our Party preceded by a few miles, we could not well delay any longer, to obtain information from this ingenious traveller, who, by his accent, I had concluded, was a Frenchman.²⁵

The Botanical remarks made in our Conversation caused me to endeavour to recollect having passed any plants worthy of notice; which, never having paid much attention to this branch of knowledge, I omitted. I remembered a very fine specimen of the Geranium Pratense²⁶ or Sylvaticum²⁷, near a bridge, over the Canal, about a mile before we arrived in Skipton. This blue species of flower appeared to me the largest I had ever seen. A small species of geranium, with a red flower, was perpetually making

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its appearance: indeed, it is so common in most parts of England as not to merit particular description.

We had also frequently passed the full-blown Digitalis or fox-glove: also the campanula, & the major campanula not quite blown. I forget at what part of the road Pennighent first made its appearance, before us, at a distance, on the right. Its loftiness & dark blue aspect was pleasing. Before we reach'd Ingleton, the most commanding of the three mountains rear'd his elevated head, and we beheld it not without expressing pity for the Natural Philosopher, lest thirst for knowledge should induce him, after a very long walk, to wind up the steep sides without sufficient previous rest.

²⁴ In the late 18th century the height of Ingleborough was reported to be between 3,987 and 5,280 feet (from *Climbing In The British Isles, Part 1 – England*, by WP Haskett Smith (published in 1894).

²⁵ Who was this intriguing 'French' Pedestrian, Surveyor and Geologist?

²⁶ meadow cranesbill

²⁷ wood cranesbill

The Country near Kirkby Lonsdale is beautiful; and a shower, which, we perceiv'd, had some time before fallen left us nothing to desire which weather could contribute to the Enjoyment of the scenery.

Just before entering

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the town is a very lofty bridge over the Loyne.²⁸ The central Arch is among the highest I ever saw. The numerous large rocks, in the channel, both by their colour, & obstruction to the rapid stream, pleasingly diversify the Scene.

Some miles back, & not far from the spot at which commences the County of Westmoreland, I was much-pleas'd with the sudden & unexpected sight of the Irish Sea, not having beheld that Element for upwards of twelve months past, which had been continually familiar from the time of childhood.

If I may be allowed to compare small things with great, this circumstance brought to my remembrance a remarkable passage in the Anabasis.²⁹

After the defeat of Cyrus, slain in the memorable battle against his elder brother Artaxerxes King of Persia, the remainder of the ten thousand Greek Mercenaries accomplished their famous retreat under Xenophon, not in the direct way home, but by crossing the Continent, towards the Euxine Sea. After despair experienced

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by many, & great difficulties by all, their eyes were blessed with the distant & long-wished for Prospect of the Sea, from the summit of one of the mountains of Armenia, and which, from this so material an event the Author denominates sacred. The joy excited was excessive, & from that instant prevail'd a universal confidence & gratitude towards their intrepid and Philosophic Leader. Moreover, in commemoration, he gave orders to the whole army to raise a large barrow of stones, & on the top to throw numerous broken shields, being part of the spoils taken from their enemies.

I will endeavor to translate, & will insert, not only the passage alluded to, but about a page preceding. I never saw the Anabasis, so far as I recollect, either in Latin or English. The only Edition I have, & which I read at Westminster School, in the Oxford Edition. If it be proper to apologize for so long a quotation, I would say, a reason is, that my journal will surely contain one good thing: & should it be the means of inducing one reader to study any of the writings of so charming an author, a

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²⁸ Devil's Bridge over the River Lune.

²⁹ 'The March of the Ten Thousand' by the Ancient Greek writer Xenophon composed c.370 BCE

sufficient end would be answered. As to his Cyropedia, Cicero says, "It is a Work which I have worn out with reading". If digressions be objected, it may be asked, who more frequently, & to a greater length, has recourse to them than that masterly Historian, whose nine books so much delighted the Age on which he lived, as to be denominated from the names of the nine Muses?

A Translation of a part of the Anabasis of Xenophon.

Book 4th p.175 Edit. Oxf^d 8^{vo}

"From thence the Grecians arrived at the river Harpasus, in breadth four hundred feet. They then march'd, through the territories of the Scythiani, about eighty miles, in a plain country, and arrived at a village; in which they halted three days, & foraged. Having advanced about eighty miles further, they marched into a large and flourishing city, called Gymnias. The Governor of this Country despatches

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to the Grecians a Guide, to conduct them through such regions as they knew disposed to act with hostility against themselves. Being arrived, he declares, that, within five days, he would lead them to a place from whence they would behold the Sea; but, if not, he would forfeit his life. As he proceeded at the head of the Army, & entered a region at enmity with his own people, he gave every encouragement to burn & destroy the country: which act evinced this to be the very motive of his mission, and not benevolence to the Grecians."

"They arrive at the sacred Mountain on the fifth day; and the name of the Mountain was Theka. But as soon as the advanced guard had ascended, & saw the Sea, a great shouting arose. When Xenophon & the rear-guard heard it, they conjectured that some other body of

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the Enemy was attacking them in front: for there were followers, in the Rear, from the fired Country; some of whom the rear-guard, by stratagem, either slew, or took prisoners: and they seiz'd about twenty Persian shields made of interwoven willows & rough untann'd ox-hides."

"But when the shouting increased, & was nearer; and those, continually coming up, ran tumultuously to join the body who were incessantly vociferating, & the noise became much more & more; in proportion to the numbers advanced, it appeared to Xenophon that the occasion was a matter of great consequence. And mounting his horse, & taking with him Lycias and the Cavalry, he joined in the acclamation: as they drew near, shouting, 'The Sea, the Sea'. To the same spot they all ran, and the rear-guard; & the beasts of

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burthen, & the horses, were also driven forward. But when all were arrived at the summit, there indeed they embraced each other, and the generals & captains, with tears. And immediately, as each individual advances, the soldiers bring stones, and raise a large heap."

"Then they threw on no small quantity of shields taken in war, made of rough oxhides, and staves: and the General himself not only cut the shields into two parts, but gave orders to others.

"Afterwards, the Grecians dismissed the guide, making presents from the common stock, a horse, a silver cup, Persian apparel, & ten daricks. But what he chiefly requested was rings, and the soldiers gave him a plenty. And, having shown them a village, where they might encamp, & the road by which they might advance into the Macronian territories,

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when it became very late in the evening, and the night began to set in, he departed."

We dined & slept at The Rose & Crown, where a very civil host & hostess supplied us with every accommodation wanted, tho' not united with elegance: and the charges were so low as to excite apprehension that our creditors had not done themselves justice.³⁰

From the window of the dining room appeared, in a good garden, the opposite side of the Street a large &, externally, neat Summer-house, belonging to Mr North, a gentleman of large property in this neighbourhood, and so built as to have the effect, from certain distant points, of a Church-tower. The view was terminated by Ingleborough, whose head was partially & pleasingly enveloped in a cloud.

The Churchyard, well surrounded with trees, commands a

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prospect that cannot fail to raise delight. From an excessive elevation, it nearly overhangs a widely expanded part of the transparent river; which appears, for about a mile winding near a fine meadow: higher up are steep red cliffs: In the mid-distance of the view, with a well-wooded country appears a gentlemans seat: beyond, an extensive & elevated line of uncultivated hill. Downwards, the water becomes diversified by a swift & audible descent over its pebbly bed. Some houses of the town appear: the extreme distance, on the right, is a line of hill country meeting the much nearer one already mentioned. At the point of intersection the line is varied by a full tho' distant view of that hill already mention'd as probably the highest spot of elevation, from the Sea, in England.³¹

³⁰ They had travelled 38 miles from Kildwick to Kirkby Lonsdale with a change of horses at Settle

³¹ The prevalent view that Ingleborough was the highest mountain in England

Tuesday, June 21st – The next
(23)

morning, towards Kendal, although, at first, a considerable part of the Country, not well cultivated, & dreary, excited unpleasing sensations, they were not unmixed with contrary ones, the road-hedges being not unlike those in our native County:³² and, at one spot appeared a tolerable orchard, & we all agreed in a similarity in the conformation of the grounds.

The Summer-approach to the neat Town of Kendal is not unpleasant; but, in winter the high & stony grounds immediately behind must add to the scenery before too dreary. On a neighbouring hill are the conspicuous ruins of a castle of feudal times; & the river Kent is an ornament both to the Town & fertile meadows.

As I do not note down things observable, as they occur to the sight, and, from want of leisure afterwards, they are not committed to paper for a considerable time, many particulars escape the memory. Thus, our chief object being the Lakes, the very first appearance

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of the Mountains inclosing those waters, (& moreover, since they are in themselves very striking) ought to be noticed. I forget, however, at what part of the road they began to open on the sight. Their character was, in some respects, different from what I had any where seen.

With lines extremely diversified, & so extensive as to reach from the Northern to the Western point; with numerous immense & distinct elevations, the nearer ones being partially enveloped in clouds, & of a light blue colour, whilst the most distant possessed a softness almost blending with the sky; the whole formed to the view of very striking termination.

At length we reach'd the elevated ground from whence the eye looks down upon the Lake of Windermere.

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When pleasure is the chief object of pursuit, often does it happen, that the accomplishment equals not the promise of imagination. For otherwise was it in the present instance: for, never having perused any Tourist's description of these scenes, which often o'ersteps the modesty of Nature, (altho' a book of this kind was among the Party³³) I was delighted with the objects exceeding expectation.

In the centre appear'd some miles of the length of the Water, & the whole of its width, being about a mile & half; & with a few boats. Between these objects & the eye was a long gradual & wooded declivity, with

³² Devon

³³ A Guide to the Lakes, by Thomas West, published several times between 1778 to 1821.

some houses, one of which is Calgarth Park, the seat of Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff.³⁴ On the other side, & near the Lake, on the left, were hanging Plantations. Full in front, fields with numerous trees, & a few good houses. Behind at various distances, & extending three fourths of the whole view,

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presented themselves numerous Mountains, of such magnitude, diversity, & abruptness as to raise those sensations of delight, mixed with surprise, which are often the effect of objects of grandeur & sublimity.

No small portion of the pleasure experienced, arose from the circumstance that the distant mountains appear'd to be without End; & the imagination becomes lost in the vast continuance of such gigantic productions of Nature.

“Another source of the Sublime, says Mr Burke, is Infinity. It has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horror which is the most genuine effect, & truest test of the Sublime. – Page 129. S. 8th.

Not long after, & in the early part of the evening, we reach'd Low-wood, a very tolerable Inn,³⁵ separated from the Lake only by

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the road & garden.³⁶

After dinner, a cannon was fired from the bowling-green, to produce a thundering & reiterated Echo, along the shores and among the Mountains.

Wednesday, June 22^d

After breakfast we set off, in a boat, to see some of the beauties of Windermere.

Having crossed over, we row under the extensive, hanging Plantations of Mr Curwen, a Gentleman of large fortune & a great Agriculturalist.³⁷ For a considerable length, & almost close to the shore, the ground ascends extremely steep, & not without rocks, to the height of some hundreds of feet, so that the perseverance with which the whole has been carefully planted deserves much commendation.

Some Islands, covered with wood, had a very pleasing effect.

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In the centre of one of them, narrow in proportion to its length, (which was

³⁴ Richard Watson (1737-1816). Subject of WW's republican 'Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff' dated 1793

³⁵ Low Wood – an Inn on the shore of Windermere, two miles south of Ambleside

³⁶ They had travelled 24 miles that day from Kirkby Lonsdale to Low Wood – arriving early evening.

³⁷ John Christian Curwen, Esq. (1756-1828) – High Sheriff of Cumberland & MP for Carlisle (1786-1828)

about two miles) is a handsome circular house of Mr Curwen's. Except the upper story, it is nearly concealed from the Lake, by handsome trees & shrubs.

There were, at anchor, some neat pleasure boats, of various descriptions.

From this charming summer residence for the family, there is an easy communication across the water with the mainland, where, on a projecting & well-wooded piece of ground stands, nearly concealed by trees, a handsome Inn.³⁸ At the shore are ferry-boats to convey passengers across the Lake.

The inhabitant of a neat cottage (the front of which is decked with numerous flowers) will open an iron gate leading

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up to hanging gardens made amidst rocks & woody precipices. A wider & well-made walk winds up, about a hundred yards to the Station, a spot level'd upon jutting rocks. Here the Proprietor of the Island has built the handsomest summer house I ever saw. Below, is a good Parlour, & apartments for servants. Above, is a large room, ornamented with drawings & prints of the Lakes, & scenery among the mountains of Wales, and with lofty windows looking in front of the Water, and also upwards, & downwards.

Two smaller windows possess a remarkable, & amusing property. They consist of blue, purple and yellow glass. Through the panes of the two first of these colours every object is represented

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as during a winter-scene, with frost & snow. The trees, shrubs, & road are white: the atmosphere is obscured with dark clouds, and the Lake appears cold & dreary. On the contrary, the yellow presents every thing as if in a sultry summer's day.

The prospect from hence I will not attempt fully to describe, partly as it was beheld nearly a week ago,³⁹ & partly as it would require too much time, & perhaps be too prolix.

In front, with a South-eastern Aspect, you look down upon a well-wooded Isthmus: beyond, a wide Lake, the surface agitated by the gentle wind, numerous Islands covered with trees. Beyond the opposite shore,

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a woody country interspersed with a few Gentlemens seats, cots, and a village; the ground gently rising about two miles in elevation, & continued, from right to left, for some miles in extent. The long line of termination is

³⁸ The Ferry Hotel, Claife

³⁹ reveals that he is writing this part of the Journal towards the end of his tour.

continued, on the North-East, by a more distant & broken one of grand Mountains. Close to the shore, & near the Spectator, up the Lake, rise the very lofty, hanging Plantations, agreeably ending with a rocky & wooded projection into the water, & forming an imperfect bay.

On the South-West of very lofty & steep grounds, the most distant being protruded into the Lake, & the whole clothed with apparently native wood.

Thursday, June 23^d

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We set off for Coniston Lake.

About this time, & precision is not material, I accosted a very old and decrepid woman, on the road, with the following question, (and I might be induced in some measure, to use the expression from having so frequently heard the word bound used among the common people of Craven, who being asked, what they think of the weather will say, "tis bound to rain")

"Well, my good woman, & where are you bound for?"

"Lord, Sir, I believe I is bound for death."

For the first mile, on a well-shaded road, as if thro' a wood, Windermere was on the left; & then we passed by the town of Ambleside close on the right. Its situation is very romantic, being near the base of stupendous, rocky mountains, rising almost perpendicularly. Across a woody vale, with a bridge over the river flowing into the Lake, rise other mountains, forming, with those just now mention'd, the resemblance of about half an amphitheatre.

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In crossing this Valley, with the head of Windermere not far on the left, we pass over part of the spot once a Roman Station, being a point of communication with various Towns of the North.

We soon ascend the long side of a mountain, affording a near view of others. As, with some Men of eminence, whose station & parade are striking, at a distance, but whose characters, tho' still possessing a few virtues, by no means improve upon acquaintance, (for Titles, it hath been observed, are too often but visible signs of invisible merits) so, these vast Masses, forming a curious & delightful termination, in a distant view, now began to discover their defects; & rocky, moorish ground, on which appear'd little but barrenness, produced sensations far less pleasurable than before.

A few miles on opened, to the left, a prospect, between the hills, of the small Lake of Esthwaite, and near it, the town of Hawkshead.

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At last, from the summit of as long & steep a hill as I ever saw,⁴⁰ we are gratified with the sight, at some considerable distance, of Coniston Water. It is many miles in length, oblong in form, & surrounded with mountains, most of which rise, by a gradual ascent, with much wood near the shore; but at the nearer extremity those masses are almost precipitous, and of such eminence & vastness as to excite in the mind the effects of the true Sublime. Between two of these, & more than halfway up from the base, is a small lake, with trouts,⁴¹ the overflowing of which, by a precipitous fall, produces a lively effect from Coniston Water.

Here is a very clean Inn, with accommodation fully sufficient for Parties whose wants are bounded by moderation.

We took a boat, & about two miles down the Water, saw the Ruins of a house, once perhaps of consequence, but now covered with

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Ivy,⁴² & I have heard an account of its Inhabitant, denominated the Lady of the Lake; but I forget it, & there is no book at hand for information.

Having brought a rod, I fished, and caught a few Perch. The beauties of this Piece of Water are very considerable, &, for my own part, I was much pleas'd: but there was not time to see perhaps half of them; and much was lost by approaching from the Northern extremity; by which means we saw not the grand effect of the mountains as a distant termination to the Prospect.

The Char of this Lake are said to be most superior in quality.

Friday, June 24th

Having set off from Lowwood, for Keswick, we stopped, a little beyond Ambleside, at Rydal Hall, the seat of Sir Daniel Flemming, at the foot of some Mountains, from whence is a charming view of Windermere.

In a Wall, forming a part of a fence by the road, grows an oak deserving of notice, the trunk being to the height of at least twenty feet of very unusual bulk.

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By the side of the path, leading thro' a field, towards the wood from whence a capital Cascade is seen, I measured an oak, though not with accuracy, which, at a small distance from the ground, was upwards of seventeen feet in girth.

⁴⁰ Hawkshead Hill

⁴¹ Levers Water

⁴² Coniston Hall – partially ruined 16th century farm now owned by the National Trust

The principal Waterfall is a very fine one, but its beauty loses at least half its effect, being so enveloped in wood as not to be seen at a distance.

The other, intirely over hung with trees, is seen through an old summer house, to which it is nearly contiguous. Considering the inferiority of scale and the nearness whence it is view'd, it is full of such excellencies as painters are emulous to imitate.



Summer House & Waterfall at Rydal Hall ⁴³



Over well-wooded Rocks rushes the river Rothay towards the extensive & recipient Lake.

We proceed, on our road, through a winding Vale; who sides are chiefly formed by such precipitous & rocky mountains as I never passed between.

In the midst is Rydal Water, a small Lake about two miles round,
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with a few small woody islands. This is a spot where Nature has produced much & Art nothing; and which, when the water is of a due height, Painters, I presume, would not fail to admire. The outlet is into the River Rothay.

From hence, as we mounted Grasmere hill, we met one of the nuisances to Travellers, & what seems to reflect shame on the Police of the Country, four carts heavily laden, with but one driver.⁴⁴

Upon the turn of the summit opened to the eye a curious view, such as will be seldom equaled in a combination of rural Simplicity & Sublimity. Here seems to be the chosen habitation of retired Peace, which dwells in the breast of the pious peasant or contemplative student.⁴⁵

⁴³ The 'Grott' or 'Grotto-House' built by Sir Daniel Fleming in 1682 stills exists with a window from which to view the 'picturesque' falls. It was described by William Wordsworth in 'An Evening Walk', and has been painted by many artists, and drawn by John Constable in 1806.

⁴⁴ which no doubt prevented Revd Pering from overtaking.

⁴⁵ Going down into Grasmere he would have passed Dove Cottage which the Wordsworth's had recently left.

It is rather remarkable that I am now writing at Grasmere, on my return,⁴⁶ after having visited the Lakes of Cumberland. This some may consider as a proof of lazy neglect, but it really is

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extremely difficult, at least with any kind of comfort, to seize sufficient time during constant attendance on a Party, who, every day, & nearly every hour are busy in visiting places & things possessed of the attractive power of Novelty.

Were not the heat so oppressive, between these mountains I would ascend the hill, on the other side of the Vale merely to describe the View; but I must beg leave not to pay so dearly for such superior means of accuracy.

In the centre appeared a Lake, about a mile long, and half a mile broad; with a green insular hill, about a quarter of a mile in extent, with a boat near the shore. Into this piece of water flows a small river through meadows of a very gentle declivity. Beyond, & half-concealed by trees, is a church, & a few houses. On the higher ground are such cottages,

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and with such appendages, as in the Landscape are admired by the lovers of Nature. There rises a mountain rocky, steep, & lofty.⁴⁷ On the left, this wild mass is separated from another by a very deep Vale,⁴⁸ which other is continued on till its upper line is joined by the height of more mountains.

On the right of the centre, the upper line of eminence is continued for three or four miles. Throughout this whole extent, the steep sides of the mountains slope down to the stream just now mention'd; near which, as the ground rises in correspondence with its opposite, is our road out of Westmoreland into Cumberland.⁴⁹ The steep declivity of the side continues to such an elevation, and so widely, as to form a mass of matter stupendous. From which point to the spot where this view is supposed to be taken,⁵⁰ is another vast & long mountain, the

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lower part of whose side is, in great measure clothed with plantations of firs, coppices, & single trees, among which are cottages & other houses. Below, are meadows & cornlands; & then two sweet mounds, one of which is

⁴⁶ He was writing 5 days later - on Wednesday 29th June 1808

⁴⁷ probably referring to Helm Crag

⁴⁸ Easedale

⁴⁹ over Dunmail Raise

⁵⁰ 'taken' has replaced a word scratched out ending in '...ed'. This must have been one of the recommended viewpoints for tourists.

adorned with a green fallow between small woods, & the other with trees and rocks.

As the traveller advances into Cumberland, the same wild & sublime succession of mountains presents itself on each side of the wide vale.

He will soon after arrive at a Lake, considerably long but not broad, of a dark hue, caused by the superimpending mountains, called Lethe's Water.⁵¹ Possibly this name may be intended to convey the notion of oblivion. It may indeed safely

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be asserted that the few inhabitants of the secluded shores, would, without some intercourse with Society be lost to the World; and without some mental exertion their memories would become impaired.⁵²

I might have noticed, a little way back, a hill of stones, called Dunmail-raise, which separates the two counties: and further, on the right of the mountain Helvellyn. It is worthy of notice, as being higher, from its base, than any of its numerous neighbours within its ken, by upwards of twenty feet, not excepting Skiddaw itself: but the height is lost to the traveller from the road into Cumberland, because he passes too near the side.

Persons well acquainted with the Country thro' which we passed, & with the books of Tourists & Historians of Counties, may be surprised, that, altho' I seem to

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admire many a mountain, not one has been called by its proper name previous to Helvellyn. In truth, admiration is the cause of this omission. I feel emotions bordering on indignation, that such striking productions of Nature should, in general, bear low, puerile, & vulgar appellations.⁵³ To prove this, not a single example shall be specified; for, however inconsiderable this journal be, it shall not be rendered less worthy of attention by such an insertion.⁵⁴ The ear is not offended by the sound of Olympus, Etna, Caucasus⁵⁵, Chimboraco⁵⁶, Montserrat, Vesuvius, Teneriffe, nor Helvellyn; but many of their rivals for distinction, in

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Cumberland & Westmoreland, seem to have been originally denominated by the Natives, as unpolished and wild as the Mountains themselves.

⁵¹ The Lake was named after a local family, the Laithe's. It was also called Wyburn or Thirlmere.

⁵² In Greek mythology the River Lethe was the river of forgetfulness or oblivion.

⁵³ Thomas Gray in his Journal of a Tour of the Lakes in 1769 called them 'barbarous names'

⁵⁴ clearly Revd Pering expected his journal to be read

⁵⁵ Mount Elbrus – 18,510 feet and highest summit in the Caucasus mountain range

⁵⁶ Chimborazo – 20,548 feet, a dormant volcano in the Andes (Ecuador)

Before the contemplative traveller quits this wonderful Vale he cannot but notice the remaining effects of the violence of occasional mountain torrents.

Solid masses of matter so immense must necessarily possess a strong power of attraction. Also, their elevation into the cold parts of the atmosphere gives them, in a great degree, the quality of condensation. Accordingly, at certain times, when the state of the Air favours the Event, the labouring clouds, impregnated with rain, become dissolved in torrents. Persons always habituated to a low country, altho' occasionally witnessing the destructive efforts of a flood, in washing away high banks, & in drowning cattle; and tho' they have read elegant descriptions of storms in mountainous situations, yet (partly from inattention) they perhaps have seldom just notions of these latter devastations, till they either actually behold the fact, or the subsequent effects. To surprising

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consequences, upon a similar occasion, I can bear testimony myself: and, to avoid unnecessary prolixity, only one of many circumstances shall be specified.

Near the Vicarage house, on the side of a high hill, where I live, in Craven, is a small brook, which, about a year & half ago, was, suddenly, so amazingly increased by a deluge of rain, that an effect, for nearly an hour was very similar to continued thunder. By some it really was mistaken for thunder, & especially as that sound did, at intervals take place. But as I stood by a certain part of the Torrent, with mixed emotions, at the ideas of the true Sublime operated through the eye & ear, the cause of this Solemn noise became apparent. Numerous stones, with which the channel was full, & some more than a foot in diameter, were, without intermission, rolled downwards by the extreme rapidity of the stream, and which occasionally appeared above the water, as they hastened over its steep & rocky bed.

Now the principal effect of such torrents, as remaining visible in the

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vale, on the right hand of the road, some miles beyond Helvellyn, is the devastation made in some once perhaps well cultivated meadows or cornlands. At the upper part, it appears, the violence of the stream threw down the walled fence, & made its irruption, forcing downwards in its course vast quantities of sand, pebbles, rolling stones, & rocky fragments; which, at length, spread so as extensively to ruin the industrious labors of the husbandman.

To impress true notions of this, I beg leave to quote a Simile or two from Virgil.

In describing the horrors of that fatal night in which Troy was sacked & fired, he says;

Diverso interea miscentur moenia luctu:

Et magis atque magis, quanquam secreta parentis

Anchisae domus, arboribusque oblecta recessit,

Clarescunt sonitus; armorumque ingruit horror.

Excitior somno, et summi fastigia tecti

Ascensu supero, atque arrectis auribus asto.

In segetem veluti cum flamma furentibus Austris

Incidit, aut rapidus montano flumine torrens

Sternit agros, sternit sata laeta boumque labores;

Praecipitesque trahit silvas: stupet inscius alto

*Accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice pastor.*⁵⁷

Aen. 2. v. 298.

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A Translation from Dryden.

Now peels of shouts come thundering from afar,

Cries, threats, & loud laments, & mingled War.

The noise approaches, though our Palace stood
Aloof from streets, encompass'd with a Wood.

Louder, & yet more loud, I hear the Alarms

Of human cries distinct, & clashing Arms.

Fear broke my slumbers; I no longer stay,

But mount the terrass, thence the town survey,

And hearken what the fruitful sounds convey.

Thus when a flood of fire by Wind is born,

Crackling it rowls, & mows the standing Corn:

Or Deluges, descending on the plains,

Sweep o'er the yellow year, destroy the pains

Of labouring oxen, & the peasant's gains:

Unroot the forest-oaks, and bear away

Flocks, folds, & trees, an undistinguish'd prey.

The shepherd climbs the cliff, & sees from far,

The wasteful ravage of the watery war.

Aen. b. 2^d l. 397.

Also Aen: 10th l. 362.

At parte ex alia, qua saxa rotantia latè

⁵⁷ from Book 2 of Virgil's 'Aeneid' – lines 298 to 308

*Impulerat torrens, arbustaque diruta ripis,
Arcadas, insuetos acies inferre pedestres &c*

A Translation

But in another part, the Arcadian Horse,
With ill success engage the Latin force.

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For where the impetuous torrent rushing down,
Huge craggy stones, & rooted trees had thrown;
They left their courses &c - - - - -

Line 503.

It is observable, that, in the translation of a single line, of those to our present purpose, Dryden has lost the two most descriptive & forcible ideas in it. The epithet rotantia signifies the violent rolling motion of the large stones impelled by that torrent; and the adverb latè shows to what an extent they were impelled, & the width of the stream.

Thus, from some of the best of English Poets, half the beauties of an Author vanish in the Translation. This I would not suppose, in such persons as Dryden, to be owing to want of discernment of the beauties of the original, but from want of due labour. To do but tolerable justice to such a Writer as Virgil, a long long time is absolutely requisite for even the most able hands; & it may fairly be conjectured, indigence was the cause of failure in this great Man.⁵⁸

The road, thro' the Vale already imperfectly described, continues
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even more & more romantic. At length you ascend the rising ground from whence appear Keswick and its Environs.

Full in view is a very wide & fruitful Vale. At the distance of about four miles is the upper extremity of Bassenthwaite Lake: beyond, mountainous grounds. On the left, Derwent Water, a Lake with woody Islands: on the further side of the water, a clustered succession of piked & craggy mountains, very interesting to persons little accustomed to such wild & secluded scenery. On the right rises a Mountain commanding attention both from immensity & height, and which, from previous description tho' very imperfect, I had no hesitation to call Skiddaw.

⁵⁸ Revd Pering's criticism of Dryden's translation of Virgil



Keswick, Derwentwater and Skiddaw
with Bassenthwaite in the distance

I am writing upwards of three weeks after these last particulars occurred; so that many will necessarily be omitted. The cause of this delay has been already specified.

From Lowwood to
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Keswick is about seventeen miles.

We drove to the Queens Head, kept by M^r Wood.⁵⁹ The first object that presented itself rather discomposed me, especially as it seem'd to threaten a permanent evil to the Party: for the countenance & voice of mine host indicated an intemperate character. He began to profer his civilities with an awkward attempt at the manners of sobriety.

There are two conditions, which, it is said, Nature tho' so often desirous, cannot successfully disguise; that of being deeply in Love, or intoxicated.

Officious attention carried this Publican and Sinner so far as to attend us during the whole of dinner time. For my own part, a clever waiter would have been preferable, but this was a desideratum which the house could not supply. In this respect, we were not only compelled, for many days, to take willingness for ability, but also to pay for it.

In the evening we walked
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to the Lake of Keswick, or Derwent-water. The view we enjoyed of this beautiful & extensive piece of Water, with its surrounding objects I am not able adequately to describe at this distance of time.

As you approach the side of the Lake, pleasure-boats present themselves. At the left a small wood, hanging over the Water, & hiding the

⁵⁹ where Thomas Gray stayed in 1769

upper part. Some way off, a well-planted Island with a handsome house, partly conceal'd by trees, & the walls nearly cover'd with creeping plants.⁶⁰ At a distance, in front, & rising very near the shore, a vast assemblage of mountains, with spiry and lofty summits. To the right a deep vale: further, mountains above mountains. Still more to y^e right, a long range of mountainous heights. Nearer, is the well-wooded shore, and an opening down the Vale of Keswick. At a distance, on the left the eye is pleased with gray, craggy eminences, many hundred feet high, interspersed with numerous trees, & having their steep and rough sides well clothed with wood, which continues down even to the margin of the Lake.

Between these Heights and the

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numerous mountains first mentioned, appears a very wide, rocky, & romantic chasm, with a shaggy, conic hill in the midst, thro' which chasm hastens the river Derwent.⁶¹

We walked through, to the upper end of the wood just now noticed as hanging over the water.⁶²

From hence appeared two more Islands, one called from S^t Herbert,⁶³ who, the venerable Bede says, once resided there as a hermit. It is also related, that a most intimate friendship subsisted between him and S^t Cuthbert; who, according to his earnest prayer, departed this life on the same day with his friend. The year of their decease, according to Bede, was in 687. Some time after, the Bishop of Carlisle sent an injunction to the Vicar of Crosthwaite, to enjoin his parishioners yearly to repair to the sacred Island to perform Devotions, in honour of the Saint.

We landed on the chief Island, & went into the well-furnished house, in the absence of the family, whose name I forget.⁶⁴

From thence we row'd to another island, almost covered with wood; concealed within which is a low, &, for if I rightly recollect, a thatched house, with a few rooms

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for the occasional resort of the Proprietor in some part of the summer.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Derwent Island

⁶¹ Castle Crag in the middle of the 'chasm' of Borrowdale

⁶² Friar's Crag

⁶³ the other being Lord's Island

⁶⁴ Derwent Island. The house was built in 1778 by Joseph Pocklington (1736-1817) - now owned by the National Trust.

⁶⁵ possibly Rampsholme Island

Towards the upper end of the Lake is a neat house & lawn, under the high & rocky cliffs with well clothed sides.⁶⁶ Higher up appears a chasm, between two eminent rocky & woody projections, through which the famous Waterfall of Lowdore (now in a low state) precipitates down a vast declivity, fill'd with rocks & skirted with trees.

On returning, more than half of the back ground of the view was occupied by vast Skiddaw, whose summit, bifid like Parnassus, reaches into the Atmosphere higher than three thousand feet.

The water of this Lake is pellucid; and, where not too deep, eels were occasionally perceivable, in meandering motion, at the bottom.

Not far from the shore, the water-lily, having ascended just above the surface, pleasingly expands to the sun its white & floating head.

In the evening, M^r Spedding & son⁶⁷ with M^r & Miss Matthews call'd,⁶⁸ and favoured us with their company

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some hours. Our Party were invited to spend the following day at Mirehouse.

Sunday June 26th

Being arrived, in the morning, at M^r Spedding's, about four miles from Keswick, we unexpectedly found a medical gentlemen attending on M^{rs} Spedding, in expectation of an increase to her little family. In vain did we endeavor to persuade M^r Spedding to permit us to make but a short stay, for his wife, he said, insisted on our not going till the evening.

The situation of this seat is delightful. In front, a lawn, fields, numerous trees, the Parish Church on a level: beyond, gently rising ground, well-wooded, and commanding an expansive opening of Bassenthwaite Lake. Further, on the left, & continued down by the side of the Water, mountainous grounds extremely well clothed with Wood. Behind the

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house, & very near, rise the very steep sides of two mountains, one of which is Ullock, with his conic form,⁶⁹ & both subordinate to their contiguous & gigantic overlooking Lord.⁷⁰

After dinner, without any perceptible alarm, our worthy host was

⁶⁶ Barrow House – built in 1787 by Joseph Pocklington (1736-1817)

⁶⁷ John Spedding of Mire House, Bassenthwaite & his eldest son Thomas Storey Spedding born 1800. His 2nd son John was less than 2 years old.

⁶⁸ unable to identify

⁶⁹ Ullock Pike

⁷⁰ Skiddaw

presented with an addition to his family:⁷¹ and, the same evening, his duty to the Country, as a Volunteer, call'd him off to join the Corps at Penrith.

Monday June 27th

Soon after breakfast, M^r and Miss Matthews joined our Party, & we all set out for Buttermere, as the chief object.

Having crossed the Vale of Keswick, we ascend

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a hill not less than a mile long.⁷² Tho' the weather was sultry, I walked up more than half the way. The inconvenience and languor caused by the heat were more than compensated by the rural scenery. Pleasing was the wide & cultivated Valley, with the river Derwent, the upper extremity of Bassenthwaite-Lake, and other objects, but more so than all, to myself at least, was the lordly Skiddaw. On the approach to the town, when I first beheld this mass, so huge among Nature's works, it was not presented in a favourable point of view. From Derwent-Water it seem'd to have increased both in height and immensity: but from the declivity of this hill I was still more sensibly struck with its leading Character.



the 'wide base' of Skiddaw from Whinlatter Pass

⁷¹ James son of John & Sarah Spedding born 26th June 1808. Died March 9. 1881 - Gravestone at St Bega's Churchyard, Bassenthwaite. Editor of works of Francis Bacon, and close friend of Tennyson.

⁷² Road from Braithwaite to Whinlatter Pass from where he would have viewed Skiddaw

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His very wide base, extending so many miles; two inferior mountains, grown, as it were, out of his side, and elevating themselves with vain emulation; his now more than bifid head awfully raised to the clouds, and by comparison convincing the beholder of the diminutiveness of every other object, all conspired to impress the mind with true Sublimity.

Whilst I was enjoying this accession of ideas on so grand a subject, it so happened, that one of the ladies, from the chaise behind, (tho' possessing an understanding & taste always capable not only of admiring but imitating whatever is most worthy of observation in

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Nature) sent to me a jeu d'esprit just written with a pencil, & caused by my appearance, for some time, with my hat off. I cannot recollect every word, though it was a very short; and, to insert inaccurately a matter so elegant would be injustice to the composer. The original scrap of paper I unfortunately lost; and, on the application for a copy, or a repetition, the modest fair declined. The closed vehicle in which she travelled deprived her of the view behind: for which I ought fairly to have made allowance, mine being an open one.⁷³ On the contrary, whilst full of the extraordinary Landscape in view, I contrived to write, tho' in progressive motion,

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the following lines, in answer.

*With wide & beauteous Vale outstretch'd beneath,
And Lake reflective of its fringed banks;
Whilst, in back-ground, from all his ample base,
Gigantic Skiddaw lifts his awful head:
At such a time, to jest on trifling things,
Argues a mind devoid of pleasing Taste.
Give me a friend, whose heart can freely glow,
Whilst from an endless store, with liberal hand,
Her striking Beauties Nature flings around.*

Having surmounted the long hill some time, the road wound with a declivity, between two mountains,⁷⁴ whose ample & steep sides supported neither a tree, shrub, nor rock: however, they did afford pasturage for sheep. This is a character which would

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⁷³ The Chaise was enclosed behind so the passengers were only able see forward

⁷⁴ Between Grisedale Pike and Whinlatter Crag

not generally please, & soon tire; but the eye accustomed for the preceding week to the appendages of wood, crags, & precipices, now received a temporary satisfaction by the contrast. So fond is the human mind of novelty, that sometimes a change from excellence to inferiority will relieve.

In one respect, however, these mountains commanded attention; for, as it hath been already remarked from M^r Burke, "greatness of dimension is a powerful cause of the Sublime."

A few miles on, at a village,⁷⁵ & very near the road, appeared the most widely spreading yew tree I ever saw. The space of ground it is reported to cover I am not sorry to forget, lest that



remains of the celebrated Yew Tree at Lorton

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might be inserted which is not fairly entitled to credibility.⁷⁶

On enquiry at an Inn,⁷⁷ not far from Crummock Water, whether we could be supplied with a boat, it appear'd, that the only one had just before been engaged by a party of pleasure. We therefore made a retrograde motion, and, turning to the right, proceeded up what I think is a part of the Vale of Newlands.⁷⁸ The scenery was gratifying merely by its wildness. Very near, arose rocky mountains, lofty, precipitous, and apparently barren, with a brook running at their base. Some were separated by frightful chasms

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nearly perpendicular for many hundred feet, & which wound inwards without visible termination; whilst cataracts, from more than half way up their sides, rush out from excavations formerly caused, some by mining, & some possibly by volcanic eruptions.

A book which we carried with us⁷⁹ says; "*In Newlands vale is an arrangement of mountains entirely new, in form and colouring: large hollow craters scoop'd in their bosoms, once the seeming seats of raging liquid fire.*"

⁷⁵ The village of Lorton is on the west side of Whinlatter Pass

⁷⁶ William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge visited Lorton on their walking tour of 1799 and Coleridge wrote of a striking yew tree. Wordsworth later began his poem Yew-Trees: "There is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale...". Much reduced, the yew tree still stands today on the bank of the Whit Beck, behind Lorton Village Hall.

⁷⁷ The Fish at Buttermere

⁷⁸ The road from Buttermere village to Newlands Hause rises 600 feet in a mile.

⁷⁹ A Guide to the Lakes, by Thomas West, published several times between 1778 to 1821

Having attained the extent of our ride, through a road much better adapted for travelling on horseback than in carriages, I was gratified by a short conversation with Mary of Buttermere.⁸⁰

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Altho' the pleasing colours in which Nature adorns her favourites were faded, her person was still, in some measure, engaging; & more so her manners, being civil & becoming.⁸¹ Her words were few, dear bought experience of a deceitful world, from intercourse with an unworthy object of affection, having clothed her with penitential reserve.

Through meadows we walked to the water-side. This charming Lake, almost embosom'd among the sublime mountains I do not feel inclined to describe at length; but will quote a sentence or two from our book of Information.

"Here we see Honister-Crag

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rise to an immense height. A hundred mountain-torrents, from never failing Cataracts, that thunder & foam down the centre of the rock, & form the Lake below."

While the rest walk'd partly round the shore, till the appointed time for dinner, I repaired to the outlet of the Lake, flowing down to Crummock Water, in order to fish. As the interesting object was so near, I would remark that, from the steep mountain, rising close on the other side, ran from the elevation of some hundreds of feet a large stream, which by its rapidity, & sound, & partial obstructions in the course, entertained both the ear & the eye.⁸² The weather, thro' fervant

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sunshine was unfavourable for my sport, and the number of trouts caught was only two.

At dinner the welcome information arose, that the Pedestrian Philosopher, with whom I conversed near the mountain Ingleborough, was taking refreshment in the house; and that he had slept at our Inn at Keswick. As soon as I had dined, I went out, in hopes of enjoying his company; but unfortunately time call'd on him to depart. I met him outside the house with a small hammer in his hand: and, after a few words of salutation, & expressive of the long way he had walked since I had the

⁸⁰ Mary Robinson born in 1778 at the Fish Inn Buttermere, was a famous beauty. She married John Hatfield an imposter and bigamist in 1802. After a notorious trial he was hanged in 1803 at Carlisle. The trial was attended by both Wordsworth and Coleridge. Mary subsequently married Richard Harrison, a farmer of Caldbeck on 1807, the year before Revd Pering's visit.

⁸¹ She was 30 in 1808

⁸² Sour Milk Gill, which descends from Bleaberry Tarn to meet the outlet from Buttermere Lake.

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pleasure of meeting him, & having in vain endeavour'd to prevail on him to walk in & take a glass;

"This hammer, I presume is for the purpose of Mineralogy & Geology."

"Yes, but we often want what is more substantial than this:" and immediately stepped to a basket, that stood on a wall just by, and took out a much larger hammer. The basket appeared full of specimens of rocks & minerals, each loosely wrapped in paper, & marked. By it stood a stout guide, hired at Keswick, not only to conduct over, & among the Mountains, almost impassable, but also to carry the heaviest

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burthen. I found, the stranger was in the habit of sending off, from each town, his specimens, for London. As we stood very near some rocky and almost impending eminences;

"Curious spots these, said I, for collecting specimens."

"Ah, said he, pointing upwards, that be very inviting mountain indeed."⁸³

I observed, "As you have slept at Keswick I presume you have ascended Skiddaw."

"Oh, yes."

"You observed, when we met about a week ago, that the top of Ingleborough was, in your opinion, the highest spot in England above the level of the sea. Having since measured both, was your opinion erroneous?"

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"Yes, it was; Skiddaw is the higher: but I have also made my observations on the top of Helvellyn, & that is the highest of all. Having a long way to walk, I am sorry I must wish you a good night."

I then said, "As we sleep at the same Inn, I hope to have some further conversation."

"I fear it will not be in my power, being pressed for time: I must hasten on to Scotland, and then to Ireland before I return home; so I must wish you good night."

Having sent off the carriages, to wait at the Inn beyond the lower end of Crummock-Water,⁸⁴ we went down in a boat, rowed by Mary's husband, a civil & and decent man.⁸⁵

⁸³ presumably imitating the pedestrian's imperfect English

⁸⁴ Scale Hill, a coaching Inn in 1808

⁸⁵ Richard Harrison, the husband of Mary (Robinson). The old boathouse still survives on the shore of Crummock Water – and a short woodland walk from Scale Hill.



The Old Boathouse below Lanthwaite Wood
at the north end of Crummock Water

The Char of this Lake are said to be the most superior. There are also Trout, Pike, & Perch; & the piece of water is much larger

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than Buttermere. On the left arose mountains rocky & almost perpendicular.⁸⁶ Near the lower end, we landed at a young & handsome plantation, rising on the side of the hill, & forming a material beauty to the Lake. Through this was a commodious walk which brought us to the Carriages.⁸⁷

Tuesday June 28th

From the time of arrival at the town,⁸⁸ I looked forward with eagerness to the opportunity of ascending to the Summit of Skiddaw. But not till this time did we meet a morning tolerably free from haziness; & now the result appeared very doubtful.

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The horses were order'd overnight, & it pleased me not a little to find Miss Froude and my Sister determined on the adventure. At four in the morning I was awake by some person storming at the door of the Inn: & the noise was increas'd by a responsive watch-dog. The violent intruder proved to be Master Stephen our guide; who, having for some time exerted his strength in vain, procured a ladder & climbed over the Premises into the yard, & roused mine Ostler, to saddle the galloways.⁸⁹ Not long after five we were ready; and Master Stephen mounted with a bundle

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of switches in his hand, to insense the Galloways, & a spyglass, in a leather case, slung over his shoulder.

⁸⁶ Mellbreak – only 1,680 feet but would seem much higher when viewed from Crummock Water

⁸⁷ Lanthwaite Wood – now owned by the National Trust

⁸⁸ Keswick

⁸⁹ small sturdy ponies

Soon after we began to ascend, the beauties of the Vale opened by degrees; and we wound round, by a narrow path (but not dangerous on steady horses) with a very steep declivity on the side. Soon after, it was not perfectly safe at one spot, the ground being rather loose & shelving. A grain of public Spirit would remedy the evil, as probably no more than two days work for a man, would be required. The steepness so much increased that we proceeded in a zigzag direction; and (whilst

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stopping, to afford our panting supporters a little freedom of respiration) enjoyed the prospect.

A very wide and pleasant Valley, with the river Greta hastening to join the Derwent. A little on the left, as the ground gently ascended, stands the town. Beyond, the whole of the Lake, with all its well wooded islands. Irregular & piked summits of mountains, clustered together, extend even to the horizon. At the upper extremity of the water, the rocky & wide gorge of Borrowdale, grey cliffs with woody sides.

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Behind, mountains; and, among them, the supereminent Helvellyn. To the right, a very distant valley between ranges of mountains, whose elevated line continues nearer, so as, with very steep ground, to form the opposite side of the Vale of Keswick.

From recollection of objects beheld more than three weeks ago, I am well aware this short account of the view is very imperfect.

Having ascended some way higher, the country on the North-East side of Skiddaw appears.

At length we perceive the most elevated point of the mountain,

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which is concealed from the Vale of Keswick.

Not far from the summit, the ground is nearly covered by bluish slate, on which the lichen geographicus contrives to find nourishment.⁹⁰

On the ground appeared a species of plover, called the dotterel, not quite so large as the lapwing, & of rather a light colour. It looked full at us; & previous to taking its whistling flight, tamely permitted an approach within twenty yards, as if pleas'd to behold any animated objects on a spot so wild & desolate.

We met two gentlemen and

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⁹⁰ Revd Pering describes this correctly and yet had probably never seen it before, likewise his identification of the Dotterel, a summer mountain bird - perhaps both were from subsequent study.

a guide descending; and they appeared much affected by the cold. So completely separated is the top of Skiddaw from the walks of human beings, excepting the occasional visits from strangers & some inhabitants of the regions beneath, that sentiments arose in my mind in some degree resembling those of a person who happens to meet his own species on a far distant island, or country almost uninhabited. Hence induced, without apology I took the liberty of accosting:

"I hope, gentlemen, your curiosity has been well gratified."

"Yes; but the air is very chill, for which we were not provided."

The highest ridge is totally covered with loose blue slate, washed & beat by the storms of

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thousands of years. By man's assistance, at one spot, a heap of these stones is accumulated; and part of them form a sort of wall, affording some small shelter in the piercing blast. Some way lower down the mountain, the heat had begun to be oppressive, tho' at so early an hour, & accompanied with a gentle breeze; but now, we experienced a wonderful change of climate. Altho' not a cloud obscured the sun, the air was so piercing, & with a strong current, that one of my fingers was benumbed, & assumed a livid blackness.

With respect to Prospect, unfortunately, the sun had exhaled so much vapour as to thicken the distant atmosphere: nevertheless, it afforded considerable pleasure, for the nearer objects were sufficiently

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distinct. One advantage, however, attending this circumstance is, that it saves me the trouble of attempting to do justice, by description, to so expansive a view.

The Sea was not perceivable; but Master Stephen, being determined to show strangers more than they can see, endeavour'd to persuade me that the hedges, in the low grounds on the left of Carlisle were waves of the Ocean. Far beyond, some of the high hills of Scotland reared their heads above the mist.⁹¹

Near the mountain's base, you look down upon the whole of Bassenthwaite-Lake, with all its surrounding objects

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extremely diminished.

Whilst I endeavour'd in vain, on the West, to discover the sea, Master Stephen was silent, altho' he looked as if he could easily make it out: however, he contrived to excite an agreeable surprise; for, he suddenly

⁹¹ from the top of Skiddaw it is possible to see the prominent summit of Criffel across the Solway Firth

produced some biscuits provided for a place so likely to create a hunger previous to breakfast.

On the South, the lake of Keswick became a pool, & the islands patches of reeds. Of the numberless mountains beyond, many seem'd such as the giants of old might have credibly hurled, in defiance, against the vault of heaven. By this I would not be understood to depreciate

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the assertion of

*imponere Pelion Osse;*⁹²

for the invention of charming Poetry is allowably licentious. In what author this is to be found I forget, but, concerning the assault against the throne of Jove, Ovid, rapt in poetic flight declares,⁹³

*Affectasse ferunt regnum celeste Gigantes:
Altaque congestos struxisse ad sidera montes.
Tum Pater omnipotens misso perfregit Olympum
Fulmine, et excussit subjecto Pelio Ossam.*

Metam. b. 1st l. 152

I am sorry I have by me no translation.⁹⁴

The Metamorphoses, however incredible, whilst they delightfully allure by Novelty, fail not to instruct, by good moral deduction, those readers whose aim is more than merely to beguile Time.

The objects of the East,

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at first obscured by the density of vapor, have not left an impression sufficiently distinct in my recollection for insertion. But the haziness was no impediment to my contemplating the extension of the mountain itself. Its amplitude of base, considered in all directions, is immense. The area contained within the extremities I never heard computed, & would not hazard a conjecture.

Skiddaw's perpendicular height from the level of the sea is⁹⁵

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⁹² Virgil: 'Heaping Pelion on Ossa' – in Greek myth the giants waged war on the gods by piling one mountain (Pelion) on another (Ossa), to destroy the home of the gods on Mount Olympus.

⁹³ Ovid's Metamorphoses book 1 line 152.

⁹⁴ "... they say the giants attempted to take the Celestial kingdom, piling mountains up to the distant stars. Then the all-powerful father of the gods hurled his bolt of lightning, fractured Olympus and threw Mount Pelion down from Ossa below." Translation by A. S. Kline, 2000

⁹⁵ With the exceptions of Pendle, Penyghent and Ingleborough, the heights are remarkably accurate.

	feet	[Modern Height]
said to be not far from --	3,300	3,054 feet
His neighbour, & rival Helvellyn	3,324	3,120 feet
Snowden - - - - -	3,550	3,560 feet
Pendle - - - - -	3,420	1,827 feet
Pennighent - - - - -	3,930	2,277 feet
Ingleborough - - - - -	3,987	2,377 feet
Mount Blanc - - - - -	15,243	15,777 feet
Etna - - - - -	12,000	10,912 feet
Teneriffe - - - - -	13,197	12,198 feet
Cotopaxi, in Province of Quito	19,929	19,347 feet

I have seen a design upon a large scale, in which almost all the principal Mountains of the world, & certain elevated places, were delineated as if in one

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scene of nature, & disposed one above the other according to the comparative height of each above the level of the Sea. Supposing the whole elevation to be divided into twenty one equal parts, the following would be the respective proportions.

Chimboraco - - - - -	21
Mountains of Chinese Tartary - -	16
Peak of Teneriffe - - - - -	12
Etna - - - - -	11
Peak-blanc, in Parmesan - - - -	10
City of Quito - - - - -	9½
Source of the Rhine - - - - -	6½
Olympus - - - - -	6½

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Mountains of Sennaar - - - - -	5½
Parnassus - - - - -	4
Vesuvius - - - - -	4
Snowdon - - - - -	3½
Helvellyn }	
Monserrat }	from 3 to 3½
Athos }	
Skiddaw }	
Cheviot hills - - - - -	2½

For the very imperfect account presented of so famous & prominent a feature of Nature as Skiddaw I shall make no apology; and some readers may suspect the density of the atmosphere to have been not greater than that of my memory. However this may be, I took leave of Skiddaw as of a

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new friend, who so far pleased as to excite desire of a more intimate acquaintance.

As we descended, the palfrey⁹⁶ of one of the ladies errant became very uneasy; and the cause was at first attributed to the flies. Ere long, the gall'd animal, being resolved to get rid of his burden with as little offence as possible, gently knelt down; whilst the heroine dismounted in a fearless & graceful manner.

The declivity soon became so great, that, by the injunction of Master Stephen, we all alighted; and, in about half an hour, mounted again, & returned in safety, after an agreeable adventure achiev'd before breakfast.

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We went to see M^r Crosthwaite's Museum.⁹⁷ It consists of most of the things generally found in such repositories except birds & beasts. There are numerous Roman Antiquities, things from Botany bay, & Islands in the Pacific ocean, coins, fossils, Antediluvian specimens. Also a Chinese Gong, superior perhaps to any in England. Its form is nearly similar to a Tambourine; and consists of a mixture of metals, the two chief seem to be brass & copper; the diameter, I think, upwards of two feet.

The reader is intreated to observe, that I now write, from recollection, at the distance in time of upwards of a year; being on the fourteenth of August 1809, whilst our Tour was commenced

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June 20th 1808.

The Gong, it is said, is used in the East, chiefly as a bell, for the notice of Assembly, & sometimes as a war-like instrument. As soon as I heard its loud, harsh, & stunning din, the character of Alecto, in the Eneid^{sic} occurred, when that Fury roused the surrounding country to arms.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ a docile horse

⁹⁷ Peter Crosthwaite opened a Museum in Keswick in 1781. However, Revd Pering can't have seen him as he died on Thursday 9th June 1808 – 10 days before his visit. His grandson John Fisher Crosthwaite was one of the founders of the present Museum in 1873.

⁹⁸ Alecto - a fury, or goddess of discord, in Book 7 of the Aeneid

*Haec ubi dicta dedit, terras horrenda petivit,
Luctificam Alecto dirarum ab sede sororum
Infernisque ciet tenebris: cui tristia bella.
Iraeque, insidiaeque, et crimina noxia cordi.
Odit et ipse pater Pluton, odere sorores
Tartareae, monstrum, tot sese vertit in ora,
Tam saevae facies, tot pullulat atra colubris.
Aen. 7. 323.*

*Thus having said, she sinks beneath the ground.
With furious haste, & shoots the Stygian sound;
To rouse Alecto from the infernal seat
Of her dire Sisters, & their dark retreat.
This Fury, fit for her intent, she chose,
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*One who delights in wars, & human woes.
Ev'n Pluto hates his own mishapen race:
Her sister furies fly her hideous face;
So frightful are the forms the monster takes;
So fierce the hissings of her speckled snakes.
Aen. b.y. l. 449. – ⁹⁹*

M^r Crosthwaite had a set of musical stones, agreeing, in number, with the notes of the gamut, and collected in the neighbourhood of Keswick.¹⁰⁰

He makes & sells Aeolian harps, on a simple but approved construction, & on very reasonable terms, being three half crowns apiece.¹⁰¹ There is another Museum in the town, which we did not visit.¹⁰²

We went to purchase some pencils, on account of the famous black-lead mine in Borrowdale, near Derwent-Water.¹⁰³ I was not
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gratified with a sight of this Mine, so many things call'd for notice in a short space of time. Indeed, it could not, (if I mistake not) be seen in perfection, not being then worked.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ This is John Dryden's translation of Virgil's Aeneid (1697)

¹⁰⁰ A complete set of musical notes. Crosthwaite's musical stones are on display in Keswick Museum

¹⁰¹ Revd Pering bought an Aeolian Harp from the Museum which he refers to on journal page 91

¹⁰² Thomas Hutton's Museum. He and Peter Crosthwaite were intense rivals.

¹⁰³ Plumbago or Graphite mines

¹⁰⁴ Keswick is famous for its pencils, and Pencil Museum.

I think it was in the middle of this day that we rowed upon the Lake, the weather being very sultry. The only circumstance deserving notice, that I recollect, is the following; & this perhaps will be read with indifference by most, except persons fond of Natural History.

About the middle of the Water, on a rock, that had jutted up its head, smooth'd by the washings of perhaps a thousand years, some Cormorants were delighted to bask; for they all had turned their heads fully towards the Sun; and, by permitting us to approach nearly, seem'd to quit their parch'd station with reluctance. The amusement

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experienced from observation of the manners of these birds was heightened by recollecting that Virgil, a most accurate observer of Nature, in all her branches, from Man to the insect, attributes to the Cormorant the epithet of Sunny.

*Est procul in pelago saxum spumantia contra
Litora, quod tumidis submersum tunditur olim
Fluctibus, hiberni condunt ubi sidera cori:
Tranquillo silet, immotaque attollitur unda
Campus, et apricis statio gratissima mergis.*

Aen. 5. 124¹⁰⁶

*Far in the Sea, against the foaming shore,
There stands a rock; the raging billows roar
Above his head in storms; but, when tis clear,
Uncurl'd their ridgy backs, & at his foot appear.
In peace below, the gentle waters run;
The cormorants, above, lie basking in the sun.*

Dryden.

In the evening of this day,

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or the next morning, M^r Wise¹⁰⁷ & myself took a ride to Borrowdale.

The immense height of the well-wooded rocks upon our left, with numerous massy fragments, torn off by the hand of Time, & dispersed near the road, and the Lake & scenery beyond, proved very gratifying. We went up

¹⁰⁵ Revd Pering missed out page 88, numbering this page 89, and continued with that sequence

¹⁰⁶ Aeneid book 5 – lines 124-128

¹⁰⁷ Ayshford Wise aged 22 in 1808. He became M.P. for Totnes in 1812.

the wide gorge so far as the Bowtherstone,¹⁰⁸ said to be the largest piece of a rock in England; and so very striking were some of the features of rude Nature, that I felt much inclined to note them down on the spot, when the impression rests most vivid on the mind; but, not being alone, leisurable opportunity was not so easily seiz'd. Soon after visiting some of the mountainous & picturesque scenes of Cumberland I felt myself more inclined, & I fancy, the rather enabled to attempt any thing like an adequate description,

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whilst in silent retirement, & accompanied by the Aeolian harp, sounding with gentle tho' wild vibrations. On account of the Party, & residence at noisy Inns ill-suited with accommodations, I found myself unable to arrest such favourable occasions. And at this very time, altho' I endeavor to sharpen my ideas by the same music, both this & memory are in vain.



The Bowtherstone
in Borrowdale

Whilst with wonder we were looking at the Bowtherstone, (torn by some convulsive effort of Nature from its parent rock, at some distance above,) a woman approached, who by conversation seem'd rather deficient in understanding; but, from her pocket,

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she presented a written paper with the following information.

	Bowtherstone
	feet
Length - - - - -	62
Perpendicular height -	36
Circumference - - - - -	89
Contents - - - - -	23090 Solid
Weight	1771 tons and 13 ^c - 109

¹⁰⁸ Now known as 'The Bowderstone'

¹⁰⁹ Thomas West's guide book (1778) records: 'This loose stone is of prodigious bulk. It lies like a ship on its keel. Its length is 62 feet; its circumference 184. Its solidity is about 23090 feet, and its weight about 1771 tons. With a length of 62 feet, Revd Pering's note that the circumference was 89 is clearly an error.'

It was afterwards told me that the inhabitants of this rocky and mountainous Vale are, in general, of rather weak intellect. This, it struck me, from the talk of the woman, might be partly occasion'd by the almost total seclusion of the natives from the surrounding world. For she informed me, it was a very rare thing for her or her neighbours, to go from home so far as Keswick. As to the rest of the causes, whether from density, or want of due circulation,

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in the atmosphere, or others, I would not decide.¹¹⁰

On returning, an old farmer met us, who, from a few answers to questions, was intelligent beyond our expectation. He said he once had the honour of showing the entrance of Borrowdale to the Poet Gray;¹¹¹ but that fear of the impending rocks prevented his further advance, although with a curiosity highly excited: that he had a servant with him, and appeared to labour under a nervous affection.

He also said, there was, oftentimes, an eagle's nest in the side of one of the lofty rocks, call'd Eagle's cliff: and that, last year only, his boy (I think an apprentice) was let down by a rope to the shelf of the rock on which the Aiery was built, of twigs twisted

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together, & more than a yard in diameter. In the mean-while great numbers of people both from above & below shouted and hallooed, to frighten the old birds; & some shot at them, whilst screaming around, but not daring to attack.¹¹² The courageous boy brought off the Eaglet (for rarely is more than one found) and an Egg. Upon such occasions, (as I have read,) the whole dale is up in arms, for the eagles not only destroy many hares & partridges, but also lambs. They often take either eggs or young, & sometimes shoot one of the old birds, but the survivor contrives to find a mate & they build at the same place.

With some effort, the old man contrived to reach one of the flowers of the white-lily

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¹¹⁰ Revd Pering doesn't seem to consider a lack of education to have been a factor.

¹¹¹ Thomas Gray visited Borrowdale on 3rd October 1769 and recorded in his Journal: 'Met a civil young farmer .. and his mother' who gave him food and showed him around. The young farmer told him that he had 'last year plundered the Eagle's eirie'.

¹¹² William Wilberforce visited ten years later in 1779 and met the same young farmer who he named as Caleb Fisher. This was clearly the same 'old farmer' who Revd Pering met 30 years later in 1808. Caleb Fisher was born in 1744 and married Ann Youdal in 1770. He died in 1820 (Crosthwaite Parish Registers)

floating, & at the same time growing on the side of the lake, but in the water; which we carried home for the ladies.

Wednesday June 29th

After an early dinner, my Sister & I set off, on our return; leaving the rest to proceed towards Ullswater, & the County of Durham; in which they had an object in view independent of a scheme of pleasure.

I did not tarry another night in Keswick, being inclined to spend the whole day & two nights at Grasmere, a beautiful spot, & rendered much more interesting from the residence of the Poet Wordsworth.

When, in the Spring of the year 1806, on leaving Devonshire,
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to look at the Livings of Skipton and Kildwick, thinking it probable they finally would not be eligible, I obtained letters to certain persons further North, in order to visit the Lakes, Edinburgh, & other places. For one of these letters I consider myself obliged to the politeness of M^{rs} Froude, of Dartington, near Totness{sic}. It was addressed to the sister of the Poet, a lady of cultivated understanding, & who lives with her brother.¹¹³

A little while after our arrival at the Inn, in Grasmere, I walked up to present my letter.¹¹⁴ M^r & Miss Wordsworth had walked out, and I left my introduction with M^{rs} Wordsworth, who received me with much kindness, & who had two if not three children.¹¹⁵



Allan Bank, Grasmere
where the Wordsworth's
had moved in May 1808

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The next morning, which promised a very sultry day, after breakfast, I call'd again.

The house is so situated as to look down upon almost the whole

¹¹³ Dorothy Wordsworth

¹¹⁴ In May 1808 the Wordsworth family had moved from Town End (Dove Cottage) to Allan Bank

¹¹⁵ By June 1808 the Wordsworth's had three children: John born 1803; Dora born 1804; Thomas born 1806. But Mrs Wordsworth would also have been pregnant with their 4th child Catherine who was born about two months later on 6th September 1808.

of the Lake, & at no great distance; also, on the church & village. Very nearly all around are steep mountains. The edifice itself is almost new, and handsome, and the rooms far superior to the lot of most Poets.¹¹⁶

With M^r Wordsworth & his sister I was much pleased. She made inquiries, with much regard, after her friend, thro' whose kindness I received an introduction. His conversation evinced strength of understanding, & much thought, and a correct & fluent elocution. I was, almost immediately, gratified with observing a similarity

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between him & M^r Locke;¹¹⁷ in all features of the face except the eye; the Philosopher's being the larger, and more grave; the Poets more lively. I remember, I was afterwards inclined to set down, at some length, the subjects of discourse, but did not, upon supposition they would not be forgotten: but, at this distance of time, altho' some of the general ones are still known, most of the particulars have escaped the memory.

It was chiefly on Politics, tho' not on the usual topics of that Science; the comparative excellence of Ministry & the Opposition, on the News of the day, but on the chief duties of a great Statesman; and to what most essential points he ought to direct the exertion of distinguished Talents.

A particular discussed was

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whether, at any period, either in Peace or War, a minister be justifiable if he raise money by Lotteries.

This subject excited his indignation; and the principal of such expedients was utterly reprobated, in as much as it directly tempted thousands, especially among the middle and lower class of people, to a ruinous mode of gambling. Few will calculate, or believe, or seriously consider, the many hundreds of chances to one, but nothing like a fortune can be made by this delusive method. True it is, there are very few blanks to a prize; but what signifies one of twenty pounds? – it is almost

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always expended to purchase another hazard, & the final loss of that sum to many is more than that of a thousand pounds to others. And, in many cases, nothing more probably leads to the commission of crimes. Thus servants, especially in the Metropolis (as hath been proved by witnesses before committees of the House of Commons) having risked & lost their savings,

¹¹⁶ And much more prestigious than the Vicarage at Kildwick. I wonder what he would have thought if they had still lived at Dove Cottage.

¹¹⁷ John Locke, Philosopher (1632-1704) – paintings of Locke seem to confirm Revd Pering's comparison

become thieves, to make another venture: and persons, not in service, become swindlers & highway-robbers.

It was gratifying to observe, that M^r Wordsworth repeatedly, with much deference, referred to his Sister, for an opinion, on various occasions; which she expressed with readiness, generally decisive, with a good sense, and

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always unassuming.

When I said I would wish them a good morning; M^r Wordsworth was so polite as to say; "We are sorry, Sir, to be so circumstanced as not to be able, with convenience, to request the pleasure of yours, and your Sister's company the whole of the day. We have in the house some friends on a visit: and as to moving out, the heat is so intense between these mountains, as to destroy any gratification to be derived from novelty of the objects around."¹¹⁸ Very lately, when we attempted a very long walk, & hilly, the rays of the sun proved so oppressive that

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most of us went to bed in the middle of the day. If, however, you should feel bold enough, which I may venture to say, Miss Pering will not, to ascend one of our lesser hills, I will point out one with good views, & not without shade.¹¹⁹ Excuse my freedom, & if you will favour us with your company at an early time of Tea, my Sister and I would gladly endeavour to show you some pleasant walk."

I thank'd him for his friendly attention, & added, he had most desirably eased my mind from the apprehension, that, by some means or other, I might be troublesome.

He attended me to the lawn, where my Sister appear'd

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walking up, as I had rather exceeded the expected time of absence. When she said, she begg'd to be excused from walking into the house, M^r Wordsworth requested permission to attend us so far as the woody mount.¹²⁰

On the sight of this hill, at a short distance, I ventured to remark, that the steep sides, well-clothed with trees, reminded me of the luxuriant sides, within which, & above, was placed the garden of Paradise. He assented

¹¹⁸ Their visitors were two of Mary Wordsworth's sisters Sarah & Joanna Hutchinson, plus their cousin Mary Monkhouse – all of whom had differing illnesses. See letter from DW to Catherine Clarkson dated 3rd July 1808 (Letters of William & Dorothy Wordsworth 1806-1811)

¹¹⁹ possibly Silver How via the track adjacent to Allan Bank

¹²⁰ the woody crag above Allan Bank

that in a few particulars only, the similarity would hold, and then repeated a few lines of the following description.

*“So on he fares, & to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,*

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*Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque & wild,
Access denied; and overhead upgrew
Insurmountable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, & pine, & fir, & branching palm;
A Sylvan scene; & as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise upsprung;
Which to our general Sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.”*

Paradise Lost. ¹²¹

M^r Wordsworth having half ascended the well wooded hill, and pointed out to us what paths to take, returned home.

Altho' the shade of the oaks proved some alleviation to the intense heat, my Sister very soon left me, & went to

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the Inn, to sit still; probably to read, and very possibly, in so relaxing a state of the Atmosphere, insensibly to yield to the seducing solicitation of Morpheus. ¹²²

On the higher part of the hill were some rocks half-concealed by oaks; under which, according to an expression recollected from Horace, I passed, without regret, a twelfth part of the solid day.

The whole passage is this.

*Est qui nec veteris pocula Massici,
Nec partem solido demere de die
Spernit, nunc viridi membra sub arbuto
Stratus, nunc ad aquae lene caput sacrae.*

Ode 1st b.1st – ¹²³

¹²¹ John Milton 'Paradise Lost' – Book 4, lines 131-144

¹²² the kind of overly elaborate language that Wordsworth the poet was against

¹²³ from Horace's Odes 1.1. lines 19-22

I have no translation of this Author but that of D^r Francis.¹²⁴

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On consulting him, with a design to transcribe his lines on account of readers unacquainted with the original, I felt dissatisfied with it, and attempted a translation of my own. This also afforded so little satisfaction that I tore it up, & for a while resolved to insert neither the passage nor the thought. Just after, in a whim, I became inclined to make a second attempt; & only for a few minutes. Altho' some deficiency may perhaps appear to the classical reader, they shall be ventured.

The lines of Francis will be inserted first.

*No mean delights possess his soul,
With good old wine who crowns his bowl,*

(107)

*Whose early revels are begun,
Ere half the course of day be run,
Now, by some sacred fountain laid,
Now, stretch'd beneath some bowring shade.*

The word "revels" is objectionable, as implying noisy mirth, & attended with intemperance.

"Ere half the course of day be run".

This seems erroneous, as any full hour before six o'clock would answer the Poets assertion. "Bowring" implies art. He has lost the idea of a complete portion of the solid day. Also, Taste looks out in vain for the green Arbutus, beautiful either with its pendant blossoms, or, afterwards, the fruit. The fountain appears, but its placid character is not expressed. It must be allowed,

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tis by no means to be expected that a translator should express, upon all locations, every idea of the original, but where many are wanting, in a very small compass, such lines ought not to be given to the world.

*With temperance, may the lot be mine,
To sip, an hour, the good old wine,
Under a strawberry-tree, or laid
Near sacred fountain's placid head.*¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Philip Francis (1708-1773), clergyman and translator of Horace

¹²⁵ presumably Revd Pering's own translation

In the evening we saw M^{rs} Wordsworth, & a fine boy,¹²⁶ and two of her friends.¹²⁷ She appear'd very kind, affable, & good humoured. When I expressed my admiration of the situation, so rare & sweetly rural. "Yes, said M^r Wordsworth, the scenery is curious, & almost every object

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(except my modern & too much exposed habitation,) adapted to please the eye of the admirers of Nature rustic, simple, & grand."

I observed, "When I first mounted Grasmere-hill, & obtained a view of the surrounding scene, altho' the Lake and valley afforded much pleasure, the predominant notions impressed were those of Sublimity; & therefore it rather surprised me that M^r Gray,¹²⁸ in his description, has not done it justice, except his single expression of The Sublime, "embosom'd in Mountains", he thought sufficient. Besides, he has omitted the green island in the Lake."

"Your observations,

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replied M^r Wordsworth, are for the most part very just, but some allowance should be made. When you first looked down upon Grasmere, you had not seen half the beauties that our Lakes of Westmorland and Cumberland afford, whilst the Poet was returning from having view'd almost all; and consequently his imagination had been so familiarized with mountainous prospects, that the impressions had become less vivid: moreover, the view he describes is from a point opposite to your own, & perhaps not quite so striking; and the Island could not there be clearly distinguished."

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After Tea, M^r and Miss Wordsworth, my sister, & I took a walk. Remarkable scenery continually presented itself; but our attention was chiefly call'd to two distinct Views, each, to my apprehension, perfect, of their kind. Having no notes of them, I would not presume to attempt a detail'd account at this distance of time, and only observe, they chiefly consisted of Water, wood, cottages, a village & mountains. One of them seem'd adapted to the taste of Salvator, and the other that of Claude.¹²⁹

"It may appear strange, said the Poet, (as we were sitting under some spreading trees, through whose arch'd branches we

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¹²⁶ Most likely John Wordsworth born 18 June 1803 who would have been just 5. Their 2nd son Thomas was born 15 June 1806 and therefore only just 2 years old

¹²⁷ probably her sisters Sarah and Joanna Hutchinson - see note 118 above

¹²⁸ The poet Thomas Gray on his Tour of the Lake District in October 1769

¹²⁹ Salvator Rosa (1615-1673) – Italian painter and poet (proto-Romantic); and Claude Lorrain (c.1600-1682) – early landscape painter.

enjoyed one of these charming landscapes) that altho' so many Tourists & topographical writers have given accounts of the Lakes and Mountains, not one has noticed either of these scenes: I suppose they never saw them."

In sight, a little under us, murmured a brook. He pointed at a certain spot, saying, "The action of the stream obstructed by that accidentally interposing obstacle exemplifies the instance I just now quoted from Horace."

Our previous conversation had turn'd chiefly upon Poetry; and my Antagonist was so bold as to assert, that even the best Poets of the Augustan Age, possess'd, in some degree, a vitiated Taste.¹³⁰ "Deviating, he observed,

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from the simplicity of Nature, they endeavor to describe by expressions forced, & not founded in Truth: and this I chiefly attribute to their too familiar intercourse with the world and the Court at Rome."

In course of talk, one instance fixed on as a proof, was this, from the Georgics – *caeduntque securibus humida vina*.¹³¹ Which, literally translated, is this, "And they cut with axes the moist Wine." The epithet *humida* was said to be affected, whilst it appear'd to me exactly appropriate. Virgil is describing the very intense cold of the extreme regions of the North; and he specifies, as a fact, that the

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Wine becomes sometimes so frozen, that, the casks being taken to pieces, the humid mass is cleft with axes. I will not trouble the reader, nor myself, with any further observations, but leave him to draw his own conclusion.

The other passage insisted on was this.

*Seu maestus omni tempore vixeris,
Seu te in remoto gramine per dies
Festos reclinatum bearis
Interiore nota Falerni;*

*Qua pinus ingens, albaque populus
Umbram hospitem consociare amant
Ramis, et obliquo laborat
Lympha fugax trepidare rivo.*

Hor. Ode 3^d b.2^d – ¹³²

¹³⁰ Clearly Revd Pering did not agree with Wordsworth's view of Classical poetry.

¹³¹ Virgil's Georgics, Book 3, page 364

¹³² Horace Odes – Book 2 Carmen 3

Whether your life in sorrows pass,
And sadly joyless glide away;

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Whether, reclining on the grass,
You bless with choicer wine the festival day;
Whether the pale poplar, & the pine,
Expel the Sun's intemperate beam;
In hospitable shades there branches twine,
And winds with toil, tho' swift, the tremulous stream.

Francis.

The only objectionable part was said to be this,

————— *oblique laborat*
Lympha fugax trepidare rivo.

But so much is quoted, since it was rather remarkable, that not only the brook served our purpose by way of elucidation, but the friendly shade of the trees under which we sat well agreed with the expression, "*umbram hospitem consociare amant ramis.*" It may be asked,

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by what means can it fairly be said of a swift stream, "*laborat trepidare*", it labours to tremble? It surely seems to labour, (which is enough for poetry,) and in a tremulous manner, when the descent of the channel is considerable, and when, by means of opposing banks & other obstacles, the water is obliged to proceed in an oblique course. Moreover, in the use of both the words "*lympha & rivo*", "the water & river", in the same clause of the sentence, there is a redundance.

Without discussion, I will allow that Poetic license is requisite to make the passage palatable; and so charming

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are the Muses, that I would readily allow them this indulgence. But Mr Wordsworth loves them also, and by what means shall our feelings appear reconcilable? I believe he requires, in these Nymphs a chastity pure as the driven snow: he would allow of no sportive recreations whatever, lest their untainted purity should be blown upon. Accordingly, in his own Poetry appears perhaps too rigid an adherence to plainness.¹³³ One of the chief qualifications of a great Poet is Invention, and this implies license, tho' of a different kind from an unusual liberty taken in the use of

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¹³³ Revd Pering's opinion typifies the difference between the Classical Age and the Romantic Age

words & expressions. The very Etymology{sic} of the word poet signifies a mental fabrication, & inventive composition: according to which it was justly observed,

*The Poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth dart from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as Imagination bodies forth
The form of things unknown, the Poet's pen
Turns them to shape; & gives to airy nothing
A local habitation & a name.*¹³⁴

No part of the evening's conversation was more interesting than a most pathetic story related by Miss Wordsworth, concerning the deaths of a poor man and his wife, endeavouring to make their way across the neighbouring

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Mountains, during the preceding winter, in the Snow; & of the very great distress of their large family, who live at Grasmere, even to the number of twelve, of whom five were totally unprovided for. Every circumstance, even the most minute, of this woeful tale, I thought would never escape my memory, and I resolved to insert the whole in my journal.

Whether it was during this evening's conversation, or one of the preceding, I cannot determine, but M^r Wordsworth imparted a piece of information very interesting to myself, tho' not to persons unacquainted with the spot to which it refers.

He said he had begun for some years, a Poem, which he intended to publish, when

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sufficiently corrected; in which a remarkable circumstance was introduced relating to a Deer, formerly belonging to the Park at Bolton-Abbey, near Skipton, in Craven.¹³⁵ Having but a confused notion of the story, I would not add another idea. Sufficient it is to notice its reference to so charming a place as Bolton, about seven miles from Kildwick, and ornamented with superlative attractions of grand Gothic Ruins, almost washed by a wide and rapid River; a Park; Waterfalls; extensive Woods, & Mountains.

Very early the next morning, being Friday, July 1st, my Sister and I proceeded homewards; and, were not the writing of this Journal so long deferred, & some of it even to the last,

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¹³⁴ from Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' – Act 5 Sc 1.

¹³⁵ 'The White Doe of Rylstone' – not published until 1815.

(one regretted consequence of which is haste) at least a few circumstances might be added: but I shall only observe, we slept at a very comfortable Inn, the Rose & Crown at Kirkby-Lonsdale; and the next day arrived at our journey's end, (after not quite a fortnight's absence) with safety, and pleasure, tho' not unmixed with contrary feelings, at the loss of our agreeable companions.

Here, it should seem, my journal ought to end; but, strange to say, a very interesting part remains. Such is the nature of Man, that he is not only fond, but greedy of novelty. From this principle, nothing is more eagerly
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read than the Marvellous; and even incredible things, asserted as true, are read with delight. Now, what can be more wonderful than that a Journal of a tour, can, with propriety, be continued, after the time of being returned home?

In the month of September, tho' not a thought was committed to paper, I was convinced, from consideration, that I could not relate, nearly so well as it was first imparted, the pathetic event of death, & lamentation, just now alluded to. It therefore occurred, with no small satisfaction, that upon the grounds of my promise to present, with a
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Journal, a Lady of literary attainments & quickness of intellect, I might be excused in writing to the Poet for a detailed account of the melancholy story: also for the Inscription, which I have reason to hope he had prepared, to be inserted on the Gravestone near which the husband & wife were buried together. Accordingly I wrote, and had the conscience to hint, that, if he could, without much trouble add any account, tho' short, either Philosophical or otherwise, relating to his very engaging neighbours the Mountains, it would be the means of rendering my pages so much more acceptable. I also expressed a wish, (if he should
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state no objection, in his answer,) to insert his letter in my Journal. As, in this valuable communication, not a word is said against my making the desired use of it, I may safely venture to copy it.

"Dear Sir

Your letter reach'd me the day I was setting off on a Tour, from which I have just returned.

In regard to the unfortunate pair who perished last Spring upon our Mountains, I do not see how I can make your request better than by

sending you the enclosed Paper which my Sister and I drew up, to be circulated in the Country, and among our

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private friends, for the benefit of the orphans. The Gentry of the Neighbourhood took up the cause with great zeal; and the result of all our efforts has been a subscription to the amount of £500, by means of which the children, we hope, will be well-educated, and put in the way of earning a comfortable livelihood. We have not yet given any orders about the Tombstone, or prepared the inscription after which you inquire, because we thought that necessary things should be first completely settled, before any thing were introduced into the concern which to common place minds might

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appear like a fancy or a luxury.

I am pleased to find that this beautiful country has made such an impression upon you as to induce you to record your feelings: but what shall I say about your request that I should communicate to you some description of the same objects? Alas! you have but a faint notion how disagreeable writing, of all sorts, is to me, except from the impulse of the moment. I must be my own Taskmaster, or I can do nothing at all. Last Autumn I made a little Tour with my wife, and she was very anxious that I should preserve

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the memory of it by a written account. I tried to comply with her entreaty, but an insuperable dullness came over me, & I could make no progress.

This simple & true statement I am sure you will deem a sufficient apology for not venturing upon a theme so boundless as this sublime & beautiful region.

Besides, you can easily conceive that objects may be too familiar to a Man, to leave him the power of describing them. This is the case with me in regard to these Lakes & mountains, which are my native Country, and among which I have passed the

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greatest part of my life: and really I should be utterly at a loss were I about to set myself to a formal delineation of them, or of any part of them, where to begin, & where to end.

I remain, my dear Sir, with best Compliments from M^{rs} Wordsworth & my Sister to Yourself & Miss Pering
yours

with a great truth

W. Wordsworth."

Grasmere October 2^d 1808

I conclude with the enclosed Narrative alluded to; and forcibly marked with that love of Simplicity so apparent in all the compositions of the Poet.¹³⁶

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“George Green and Sarah, his wife, inhabitants of the Vale of Grasmere, having gone to Langdale on the morning of Saturday the 19th of March 1808, set off to return to their own house on the same evening, intending to cross over the mountain. They had left a daughter at home, eleven years of age, with the care of the five of the children younger than herself; the youngest being an infant at the breast. On Monday afternoon one of the little boys went to a neighbour's house to borrow a cloak for her{sic} sister, who, he said, was going to Langdale to seek

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their father & mother, who had not returned, as they had expected them, on Saturday. Immediately the alarm was spread, & continual search was made, as long as daylight lasted, on that day, & the day following, till Wednesday afternoon, when the bodies of the unfortunate persons were found. It is supposed they had been bewildered by the snow & mist; and they perished by falling over the rocks. They were buried in one grave, on the Friday afternoon.

The unhappy fate of this pair, and the forlorn condition in which the children are left, have excited much compassion; which has been more deeply felt in their

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own neighbourhood, because the deceased were much respected for their good morals & decent manners, for their frugality & industry, & for the constant chearfulness{sic} & independence of mind, with which, without any help from the parish, they supported their family under the burthen of extreme Poverty. This compassion has naturally been accompanied with a general desire that more than ordinary exertions should be made to befriend & protect the orphan children. It is, therefore, thought proper to draw up a brief statement of the condition of the family, for the information of such persons as may be

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disposed to promote this benevolent design.

George Green had been twice married, & has left one Son and three daughters by his first wife, who do not stand in need of assistance. By her who died with him, he has left four sons & four daughters; the eldest of these, a girl of fifteen years of age, is at present in service; the second, a girl

¹³⁶ reveals Revd Pering's appreciation of the virtue of Wordsworth's simplicity of language

likewise, is with a family who will take care of her & fit her out, when she also is fit for service. One of the boys will be maintained by his father's eldest Son, who will breed him up to his own business: so that there remain five children to be provided for.

The father has left a small estate which is deeply
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mortgaged, and it is probable that, after it is sold, little or nothing will remain for his children. The Parish have therefore agreed to allow two shillings per week to each of these five children, till they are fit to go to service, or to be apprenticed. The object then, of those persons who interest themselves on this occasion, is to raise a sum to make an addition to the weekly allowance of the parish, by means of which the children may be placed in a respectable family or families: it is also intended to send them to school, & what money remains is to be employed

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in setting them forward as apprentices or servants.

It is conceived that it will be grateful to benevolent persons to promote a subscription for the above purpose: first, as a natural tribute of human sympathy upon so melancholy an occasion; secondly, as a testimony of respect for the honesty, industry, patient, & even chearful, endurance of extreme poverty, by which the deceased were distinguished; and lastly, and above all, that there may be a better hope that the children may go forward in that course of innocence

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and virtue, in which their parents have thus far conducted them."

END OF JOURNAL

Letter from Revd John Pering to William Wordsworth
dated 27th June 1818

[written on two sheets of folded quarto paper]

[Addressed to]

Will^m Wordsworth Esq.
Rydale
Windermere

[with red seal]

[Page 1 – written on reverse of address]

Kildwick (in Craven, Yorkshire)

Sir /

June 27, 1818

Mr Chippindale,¹³⁷ being about to set off for Westmoreland, to vote at the Election, said, "I shall probably see the Poet of Windermere; have you any commands?" – "I said, My respects, and, if chance or inclination should lead him to the Vicarage of Kildwick, I should be happy if he would favour me with a visit; and we might make excursions to Bolton,¹³⁸ Gordale¹³⁹ &c." – After, I resolved to take the liberty to write, & send one of many short compositions of mine in verse, on which your strictures would be very desirable. It was written in a cold time, and therefore my humble Muse becomes more excusable. You may remember, I was introduced to you, by a letter, from Mrs Robert Froude¹⁴⁰ to your Sister,¹⁴¹ many years ago, at your house,¹⁴² looking down on [hole from seal] of Grassmere;¹⁴³ when I was much pleased [hole] by your conversation; tho' much surprised you sa[id] - [hole]

¹³⁷ Robinson Chippindale, Banker of Skipton. Married 1st wife Margaret Baxter at Kendal Parish Church in 1794. She died in Skipton in 1817. Electoral Register for Kendal Ward 1818 shows: Chippindale, Robinson, Skipton, Yorks, qualifying property in Lambrigg, voting for the two Tory candidates for Westmorland. Voting dates were 30th June, 1st & 2nd July 1818 – 3 to 5 days after letter.

¹³⁸ Bolton Abbey – where the White Doe sat on Emily Norton's grave in 'The White Doe of Rylstone'

¹³⁹ Gordale Scar, near Malham – subject of one of Wordsworth's Sonnets

¹⁴⁰ The former Margaret Spedding – see Letter dated 5th July 1821

¹⁴¹ Dorothy Wordsworth

¹⁴² June 1808

¹⁴³ The Wordsworth family moved from Dove Cottage to Allan Bank, Grasmere in May 1808

you a lyric Poet, had never read the prince in that line. I late[ly] read thro' your friend Mr Colridge's Literary Life &c ¹⁴⁴ in which yourself form no small feature[.] Various parts were very gratifying, but the least so, the Metaphysical Mystics.¹⁴⁵ I admire your description of the White Doe, whose scenery I lately viewed, in a fine day, with delight. But you pourtray{sic} her "*beauteous as the silver Moon, When out of sight the clouds are driven, And she is left alone in heaven!*" -----

Allow me to ask, by what poetic licence

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the Moon can fairly be described as alone, tho' surrounded by hundreds of Stars? – Horace well says,

----- *micat inter omnes
Julium sidus, velut inter ignes
Luna minores.*¹⁴⁶

As Painting is said to be a Sister Art to Poetry, allow me to observe, that, a few weeks since, arrived here, the 3^d Engraving, by Holloway, of the Cartoons, being the Death of

*Will^m Wordsworth Esq.
Rydale
Windermere*
[with remains of a red seal]

Ananias.¹⁴⁷ the 2^d was the Charge to Peter, "Feed my Sheep": the 1st – St Paul preaching at Athens, – When I first subscribed to these wonderful productions the price was fix'd at 21 guineas, or 3 for each. Now, each, to New subscribers is 10 guin^s — I live in a grand Dale, 2 miles wide & 30 long, with the river Aire, canal, meadows, woods, rocks, bridges, barges, &c Come; behold; enjoy – My respects to Mrs Wordsworth & your Sister. I remain your humble Serv
John Pering.

¹⁴⁴ 1817 Coleridge published 'Biographia Literaria' or 'Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life ...'

¹⁴⁵ This reflects the 18th century view of the metaphysical poets.

¹⁴⁶ Horace Ode 1. xii. 46 – 'And yet more bright Shines out the Julian star,
As moon outglows each lesser light.'

¹⁴⁷ Thomas Holloway (1748-1827) Portrait painter. Made seven engravings of cartoons by Raphael.

[Page 3]

[Revd Pering's Poem – with his notes below]

On Pendle Hill, as seen from Halton-Place, in Craven, West Riding of Yorkshire,
the seat of John Yorke Esq. Sheriff. - - - - - Jan^y 20. 1818

* Thou lofty, everlasting Hill,
 With pleasing thoughts my mind dost fill.
| | Thy side immense I fain would climb,
 Fair instance of the true Sublime!
 Most picturesque, when mist & cloud,
 But without rain thy brow do shroud.
P Not Hermes' self, tho' mov'd by Jove,
 In weather change could surer prove.
 When, with her pencil, Yorke would trace
 The various lines in Nature's face;
+ In foreground, Ribble's rippling stream,
 (while Sol bestows a charming gleam,)
 And, as he makes his winding way,
 The nibbling flocks on meads do stray.
 Onward, the young plantations vie,
 Each year, to shoot their heads on high.
 The distance next, I leave untold,
 My memory is not so bold;
 For only once I saw the view,
 And things were dress'd in Winter's hue:
 But the background, with line so grand,
 The hill of hills must still command.

[Page 4]

Not Pennighent, nor Inglebro'
Nor, if you search this island thro'
Can any hill with Pendle vie;
Tho' Snowden may be full so high,
From ample base; but still if we
Commence our measure from the sea,
Then the glorious Pendle-hill
The highest space of air will fill.

[Revd Pering's notes on his poem]

- * "Unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills."
Gen. 49, 26.

- || "Vastness. – Greatness of dimension is a powerful cause of the Sublime."
– Burke, on the Sublime & Beautiful, Part 2. Sec. 7

- P Hermes, or Mercury, was the messenger of Jove; and Mercury is a name for quicksilver, which is elevated or depress'd by the gravity or lightness of the atmosphere. – The reason why the name of Mercury was transferred to the metal I conjecture to be on acct of its subtilty, or extreme fineness of its parts, able to insinuate itself into the most minute pores: but one sense of subtilty is artfulness, in which Mercury most excelled.

- + Whence the Ribble's name I never heard: but might it not be from rippling, its most characteristic feature? – The change of p into b is no great effort for old Time: & it was usual to denominate rivers from their qualities. Thus, in the next vale, or nearly so, the Aire, from Arar, British, slow: Aar, Hebrew, it was slow. – The river Tigris is very rapid; & Herodotus says, Tigris is, in Persian, a dart.

Letter from Revd John Pering to William Wordsworth
dated 5th July 1821 ¹⁴⁸

Dear Sir

The first & last letter you ever did me the honour of writing being dated in Oct^r 1808, I may be almost forgotten: still from the experience had of your goodness, I hesitate not to comply with the request of a friend desirous of a little intercourse in passing on to enjoy the almost enchanting scenery of Nature. A few days since, being at The Rev. A. Lister's, at Gargrave,¹⁴⁹ (the most beautiful village in Craven) where were, on a visit, M^r Yorke¹⁵⁰ and his wife Lady Mary,¹⁵¹ the conversation turned on the Lakes, which she has never been gratified in beholding; but, from her Taste & good sense, she will be enraptured. Probably you are already aware she is sister to the Earl of Harewood. Much as she was pleased with some things I communicated, it seemed the chief interest enjoyed was relating to

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the fortunate interview I had with the Poet of Grasmere; (now of Windermere: but perhaps he would prefer some other denomination, altho' the bard of Italy was well known as the Mantuan:¹⁵²) and, among other circumstances, with the hints given of two Views, thus noticed in my Journal, & which she express'd a determination to find out. (By the way, at first I did not think of writing so much.)

“Our attention was chiefly called to two distinct Views, each, to my apprehension, perfect in its kind.¹⁵³ Having no notes of them, I would not presume to attempt a detailed account at this distance of time, & only observe, they chiefly consisted of water, wood, cottages, a village & mountains. One seemed adapted to the taste of Salvator,¹⁵⁴ and the other, of Claude.¹⁵⁵ “It may appear strange, said the Poet, (as we all were sitting under some spreading trees, thro' whose arched branches we enjoyed these

¹⁴⁸ written on three sheets of folded quarto paper

¹⁴⁹ Revd Anthony Charles Lister A.M., (1778-1852) vicar of Gargrave 1806 to 1852. Married Mary daughter of William York at Kirk Deighton Church, near Wetherby 16th November 1807.

¹⁵⁰ Richard York of St Peter's Parish, Leeds married The Hon. Mary Ann Lascelles at St George, Hanover Square, Westminster in 20 April 1801. Revd Pering misspells the surname 'Yorke'.

¹⁵¹ Lady Mary Ann Lascelles (died 1831), daughter of Edward Lascelles, 1st Earl of Harewood.

¹⁵² Roman poet Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro) born near Mantua 70 BCE.

¹⁵³ This section is copied from Page 111 of his 1808 Journal

¹⁵⁴ Salvator Rosa (1615-1673) – Italian painter and poet (proto-Romantic)

¹⁵⁵ Claude Lorrain (c.1600-1682) – early landscape painter

charming landscapes,) that altho' so many Tourists & topographical writers have given accounts of the Lakes & Mountains, not one has noticed either of these scenes: I suppose they never saw them". In sight, a little under us murmured a brook. He pointed to a certain spot, saying, "The action of the stream, obstructed by that accidentally interposing obstacle,

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exemplifies the instance I just now quoted from Horace:" &c —

The liberty taken in addressing to you this letter, is less than one I am about to presume to ask; but I wish it not to be complied with except you think the ground of the sentiment fairly imagined. It occur'd not long ago, and having by no means done justice to it, you are humbly requested to express it, briefly if you please, in your own Poetry. I will inclose the slight comparison.

You did give me some hopes, that, when you visited the Abbey where the White Doe used to make her appearance,¹⁵⁶ you would honour me with a visit also. It is hoped, the proverb is not applicable, "Honores mutant mores."¹⁵⁷ —

My respects to M^{rs} Wordsworth and your Sister. The good lady, who favoured me with a letter of introduction to the latter, you have no doubt heard, has paid the last debt to Nature: M^{rs} Froud's mind was angelic, and her loss is highly regretted.¹⁵⁸ You need not be informed, M^r F — is Archdeacon of Totnes,¹⁵⁹ (By the by once again. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the world add another s, but I, many years ago, was so bold as

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to omit it; and have told some gentlemen & ladies of the town, I will add it again, if they can give me reason stronger than my own. I had heard that one s only was used in some old Deeds; but, in the Castle at Skipton, of Feudal antiquity & celebrity, there are some hundreds of Autographs of men of eminence,

such as *O Cromwell --- Totnes*

¹⁵⁶ Bolton Abbey

¹⁵⁷ The honours change the customs

¹⁵⁸ Margaret Spedding, daughter of John & Margaret Spedding of Armathwaite Hall was baptised 19th March 1774 at St Bega's Church, Bassenthwaite, Cumberland. Her elder brother John Spedding was a former school friend of William Wordsworth at Hawkshead. Margaret married Revd Robert Hurrell Froude on 10th June 1802 at Bassenthwaite Church, and died at Dartington Rectory, Devon 26th February 1821, a few months before this letter.

¹⁵⁹ Revd Robert Hurrell Froude (1771-1859), Rector of Dartington (1799-1859), and Archdeacon of Totnes (1820-1859). His eldest son Richard Hurrell Froude (1803-1836) was born at Dartington Rectory and educated at Ottery St Mary where he lived in the house of George, elder brother of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The last is that of Carew Earl of Totnes.

I remain
your humble Serv^t
John Pering

Kildwick
July 5th 1821.

Will^m Wordsworth Esq.

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On the blindness of Homer & Milton and the lameness of Scott and Byron.¹⁶⁰

*Lest Genius should raise the pride
Too high of Poets vain.
While they with mortals here abide,
And pleasing visions feign;

Mysterious Heaven will sometimes cause
Corporeal good to cease;
Lest also any mental flaws
Disturb the inward peace.

Thus, of their mortal sight bereft,
Homer, and Milton too,
Immortal works left behind have left,
Which endless time will shew.

Thus Scott, & Byron are oppress'd
With lameness halt & dire,
While inwardly they both are bless'd
With mental light and fire.

*Lest I should be exalted above

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measure, thro' the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a
thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. —

2 Cor. 12.7 —

¹⁶⁰ Both Walter Scott and Lord Byron suffered lameness from childhood.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON REVEREND JOHN PERING Vicar of Kildwick and Skipton 1806-1843

Family Background

John Pering was born on 31st May 1765 at Rockford House, Harbertonford, Devon, three miles south west of Totnes. He was the eldest child of Richard and Catherine Pering and was baptised at St Andrew's Church, Harberton on 16th July 1765.

His parents had married at Exeter Cathedral on 26th January 1764 where 'Richard Pering, Esquire of Blackawton, Devon' married 'Catherine Gayer of The Close, Exeter'. Richard Pering was an official at the Plymouth Naval Dockyard and later in life became Lieutenant-Colonel of the South Devon Militia. Catherine Gayer's family were merchants in Plymouth.

John Pering had three younger siblings, all born at Harbertonford:

Richard Pering born 1767 became 'Clerk of the Cheque' at Sheerness and Plymouth Dockyards, and amongst other naval improvements, invented the modern anchor. He was also a Magistrate for the county of Devon. Like his brother John, he never married.

Lucy Pering was born in 1769 and never married. She lived part of her adult life with her brother at Kildwick Vicarage in Yorkshire and accompanied him on his tour of the Lake District in 1808.

Susanna Pering was born in 1770 and married Samuel Noake Esquire, a Draper of Bridgewater, Somerset in 1798. However, Samuel Noake died just 18 months later. Their only child Lucy Noake, who had been born in August 1799, subsequently married Richard Cornish, Esquire of Berry Pomeroy, at St Mary's, Totnes. Their three children were the only descendants of the Pering's of Harbertonford. Susanna never remarried and in later life lived at Bideford. She died in 1844 aged 74 and was buried at Harberton on 28th December 1844.

Education

John Pering was most likely initially educated locally. However, his father's prosperity allowed him to be sent to Westminster School, in the precincts of Westminster Abbey. From there, at 19, he entered Christ Church, Oxford where he studied Theology and the Classics and gained a B.A. in 1788, and M.A. in 1791. On 26th January 1789 following his B.A. he began writing a volume of "Lectures on Divinity" which he continued into his years at Kildwick. The manuscript volume which also contains some recipes, and household

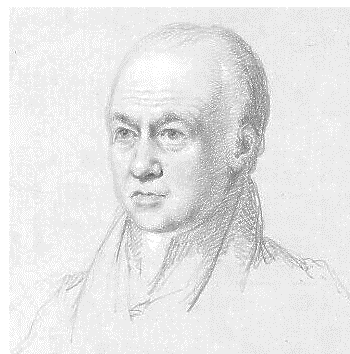
hints and tips(!) was part of the Kildwick Parish Library but is now in the Rare Books Collection at York University.

Clerical Appointments

After receiving his B.A. he was ordained Deacon to Edward Smallwell, Bishop of Oxford on 7th June 1789. The following year he was ordained priest at the Bishop's Palace, Exeter on 13th June 1790 and the day after was officially appointed curate of St Mary's Church, North Huish, within the archdeaconry of Totnes, and just four miles west of Harbertonford. He received a stipend of £40 a year.

During his curacy at North Huish his father died aged 71 on Saturday 17th May 1794 whilst visiting the Dockyards at Sheerness in Kent. He was buried in the Chancel of Minster Abbey on the Isle of Sheppey on 20th May with 'such military honours as were due his rank in life'. In his Will he left £1,000 to each of his three younger children - a substantial sum in 1794. John Pering, as eldest son inherited the residue of his father's estate. His mother Catherine, who had the right to live at Rockford House until her death, died the following year and was buried at Harberton on 26th October 1795.

Also in 1795, his friend Revd Robert Hurrell Froude was appointed curate for Staverton, Devon. Four years later, in 1799, he was appointed Vicar of Dartington, and to a senior post as 'Preacher throughout the Diocese of Exeter'. Possibly on his recommendation, John Pering was appointed as his replacement on 17th January 1800 as curate of St Paul de Leon Church, Staverton, within the Diocese of Exeter, and still only four miles from Harbertonford.



Revd Robert Hurrell Froude

John Pering's stipend was the same £40 a year 'plus surplice fees'. He continued to hold the post until he became vicar of Skipton and Kildwick in Yorkshire in 1806.

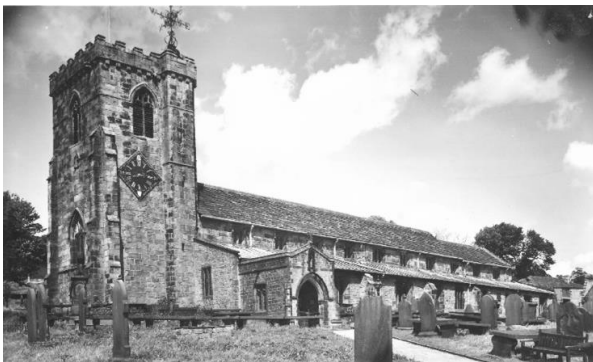
In January 1806 Revd Thomas Marsden, the previous vicar of Skipton and Kildwick died suddenly aged 47. His last Marriage Service was only days before his death. He was buried at Kildwick on 22nd January. As the position was in the patronage of Christ Church, Oxford the vacancy must have come to the attention of Revd John Pering as he recorded in his 1808 Journal that he decided to make a trip north to look at Skipton and Kildwick. However, from the entry in his Journal he seems to have been doubtful that he would be eligible for the post. He was now aged 40 and with 15 years as a Curate, must have felt overdue for an appointment.

On pages 95-96 of his 1808 Journal he wrote:

“When, in the Spring of the year 1806, on leaving Devonshire, to look at the Livings of Skipton and Kildwick, thinking it probable they finally would not be eligible, I obtained letters to certain persons further North, in order to visit the Lakes, Edinburgh, & other places. For one of these letters I consider myself obliged to the politeness of Mrs Froude, of Dartington, near Totnes. It was addressed to the sister of the Poet, a lady of cultivated understanding, & who lives with her brother.”

These were Letters of Introduction to people of social standing he hoped to visit. The above letter was from the wife of his friend Revd Robert Hurrell Froude, formerly Margaret Spedding, and addressed to her friend Dorothy Wordsworth. Margaret Spedding's brother, John Spedding, had been a school friend of William Wordsworth at Hawkshead.

However, he did not visit the Wordsworth's until June 1808, and may not have travelled far on his trip north in 'Spring 1806' as he was appointed to Kildwick in April 1806. Perhaps the unexpected confirmation of his appointment came faster than he imagined.



St Andrew's Church, Kildwick



former Kildwick Vicarage where Revd Pering lived

He was instituted Vicar of Kildwick on 26th April 1806 and Skipton on 12th May 1806. Like Revd Thomas Marsden he chose to live in the rural seclusion of Kildwick Vicarage and continue with a curate at Skipton, Johnson Atkinson Busfield. Skipton Vicarage was on the bustling High Street of a market town going through the early stages of industrialisation.

John Pering initially let Rockford House in 1806 and later sold it to Revd George Martin, Vicar of Harberton. However, he continued to own the land that formed the Rockford Estate and other areas of land around Harberton, including the 200 acre Collaton Farm. Rockford House was demolished and rebuilt as a Georgian style residence for curates. In 1859 St Peter's Church was built in Harbertonford and the house became the vicarage. It is now known as 'The Old Parsonage'.

Life at Kildwick

Revd Pering brought with him from Devon his 30 year old servant Richard Pearce. John Crosley, the existing Parish Clerk, continued in that post and was also schoolmaster.

In Revd E W Brereton's History of St Andrew's, Kildwick dated 1909, he wrote that Revd Pering 'lived at the Vicarage with his sister Miss Pering and a niece also sometimes stayed with him'. This was his sister Lucy who never married and who accompanied him on his Tour of the Lake District in 1808. He only had one niece, also called Lucy, the daughter of his sister Susanna and Samuel Noake. In 1821 Lucy Noake married Richard Cornish, esquire and it is probable that their children also visited Kildwick as their daughter Laura later married Henry Roundell who had family connections with the Skipton area. Even though she married eight years after the death of Revd Pering, her husband was the son of Revd Henry Dawson Roundell, who was born at Gledstone Hall, East Marton, near Skipton.

From his 1808 Journal it is apparent that John Pering was a keen angler, he wrote of catching perch and trout in Coniston Water and Buttermere. On Page 35 of his Journal he wrote: 'Having brought a rod, I fished, and caught a few Perch'. He was also a poet writing what he described as 'many short compositions'. A few lines of his poetry are contained in his 1808 Journal and in two subsequent letters to William Wordsworth dated 1818 and 1821.

The Parishes of Kildwick and Skipton

Even though Skipton and Kildwick were separate parishes five miles apart, each, especially Skipton, with sizeable population, the income from each was such that they were only able to attract a 'pluralist' vicar who could combine the income from both parishes. The question of remuneration became an important issue for Revd Pering.

Revd Brereton writing in 1909 tells us that in '1814 Mr. Pering found cause to be dissatisfied with the composition of the tithes, viz., £100 per an'. He went on to write that when offered £150 Revd Pering declined the offer, and on legal advice proposed to the tithe payers of his parish to take £250 for the next seven years, and £300 for the remainder of his life. Lengthy meetings were held at The White Lion, adjacent to the church, between Revd Pering and his parishioners, and it was finally settled in Revd Pering's favour.

In defence of Revd Pering, despite his personal wealth, he had been paid £40 a year for each of his two curacies in Devon, in villages with populations of barely 300. When he came to Skipton and Kildwick the population of the two parishes was nearly 10,000. This had been the reason why Christ Church,

Oxford found it difficult to attract separate vicars for the geographically large parishes of Skipton and Kildwick.

On 13th February 1815 Revd Pering was appointed Curate for Carleton in Craven, a parish adjacent to both Skipton and Kildwick parishes, which gave him an additional income of £75 a year, plus surplice fees and the use of a house, which, like Skipton Vicarage, he would be able to rent out.

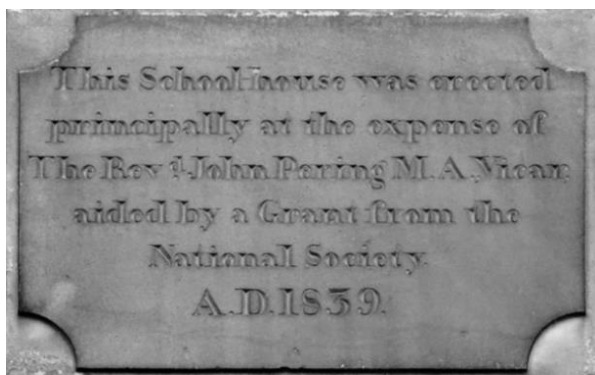
A Need for New Churches and Schools

From the 1820's discussions had taken place with Christ Church, Oxford about creating a new Parish of Lothersdale out of parts of the Parishes of Carleton and Kildwick, and the building of a separate Church in Lothersdale. An agreement dated 23rd June 1837 was made to build the church and seek donations. The Earl of Burlington gave the land and the Revd Walter Levett, Vicar of Carleton gave £1,000. Although there is no record of any payment made by Revd Pering, he was the chief signatory of the agreement as Vicar of Kildwick, along with J A Busfield, Curate of Carleton, Henry Alcock (a solicitor of Skipton), and John Benson Sidgwick of Stone Gappe (a wealthy cotton manufacturer). The church was finally consecrated on 22nd October 1838 as Christ Church, Lothersdale.

Likewise, a new church was built in Skipton to provide for the growing population and the foundation stone of Christ Church, Skipton was laid on 21st June 1837. The Leeds Intelligencer dated 24th June 1837 reported that the Revd John Pering, Vicar of Skipton read appropriate sentences from Haggai and Exodus, 'he then read the collect for the 12th Sunday after Trinity, the Lord's Prayer, and other prayers.' The foundation stone bears a lengthy inscription which includes 'The funds for building this Church are raised by a subscription, headed by the Reverend John Pering, M.A., vicar of Skipton. An endowment of £1,000 in land and buildings was given by Christ Church College, Patrons of the Living.' The Church was consecrated two years later, on 25th September 1839, by the Bishop of Ripon and his chaplains, plus 'Revd J Pering, vicar of Skipton'.

W H Dawson in his 1882 'History of Skipton' also records that Skipton's 'first National School for boys was built in 1812, while the Revd J. Pering was vicar', but to what extent it was his project is not known.

However, in 1839 Revd Pering personally financed the building of a School House at Kildwick, adjacent to the Church, aided with a grant from the National Society. He also had a paved path laid to cover the quarter of a mile uphill from the church to the Vicarage. This public path is still known as 'Parson's Walk'.



The plaque on the wall of the former School House, Kildwick

Final Years

In June 1838 his brother Richard Pering died aged 71 whilst on naval business in London. He was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery which had opened 5 years earlier. His home was in Exmouth, in what is now known as Beacon Hill House, where there is a blue plaque commemorating his achievements. Like John he was a bachelor. Administration of his estate was given to 'Revd John Pering Clerk natural and lawful Brother'. This sketch of Richard Pering dated 10th May 1829 is in the National Portrait Gallery.



Richard Pering junior

By the census of 1841 Lucy Pering had left Kildwick and was living at Exmouth in the house that had belonged to her brother Richard.

The 1841 Census for Kildwick shows that Revd Pering had three servants living with him at the Vicarage: Richard Pearce aged 63, Anne Mitchell aged 49, and Hannah Wade, aged 30. According to Revd Brereton, Richard Pearce had come from Devonshire with Revd Pering in 1806. When he married Mary Laycock on 20th August 1819 at Leeds Parish Church he was described as a Gardener. He died at Kildwick in 1845 aged 67.

Revd Pering died on 30th April 1843 aged almost 78, and his death was reported in various Regional Newspapers, plus the Gentlemen's Magazine:

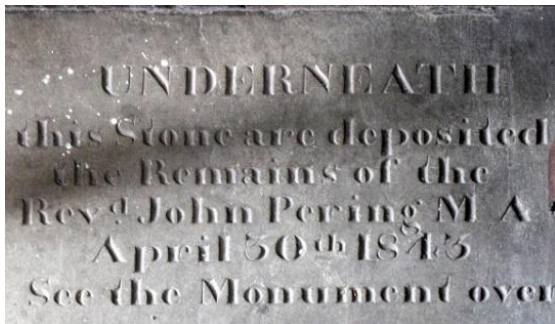
Death – 'April 30. At Kildwick, Yorkshire, aged 80, the Rev John Pering, M.A. Vicar of Kildwick and Skipton. He was formerly a student of Christ Church, Oxford, when he graduated, M.A. 1791, and was presented to the churches above mentioned in 1806 by that society.'

His last burial service was on 25th April only five days before his own death. He was buried on 9th May on the south side of the altar in a service by Revd William Cartman, headmaster of Skipton Grammar School who also acted as Curate for Skipton. The delay of nine days between his death and burial was

perhaps to allow for arrangements for his interment, and also for his sisters and family members to come up from Devon.

A marble tablet above the centre arch on the north side has this inscription: "Sacred to the memory of the Revd. John Pering, M.A., late student of Christ Church, Oxford, Vicar of Kildwick and Skipton, died April 30th, 1843. In his estimable character all those qualities were combined which distinguish a man and elevate a Christian, in whom learning was adorned by humility, benevolence by modesty and piety, by a life of self-devotion to his God. For 37 years he faithfully discharged the arduous duties of this extensive parish, and in the 78th year of his age he calmly resigned his life to Him who gave it. His two sisters, deeply sensible of their irreparable loss, have caused this tablet to be erected to his memory as a memorial of his worth and their affection.

'Well done, thou good and faithful servant'."



Revd Pering's Gravestone and Marble Tablet in Kildwick Church

Both his sisters survived him, and his heir at his death was his great nephew, Revd Richard Pering Cornish of Devon, one of the grandchildren of his sister Susanna Noake. Lucy Pering, the last of the Pering's of Harbertonford, survived her brother John by 10 years, dying in Exeter in January 1853 aged 83.

Perhaps as a result of Revd Pering's dispute about Tithes, he was the last 'pluralist' vicar to hold both Skipton and Kildwick. The two posts were separated, probably helped by The Tithe Commutation Act of 1838 which replaced the system of tithes and formalized a national method for calculating monetary payments. His successor at Kildwick was Revd John Turner Colman Fawcett, and at Skipton, Revd Philip Chabert Kidd.

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The Lorton Yew Tree



The Old Boathouse, Crummock Water



Derwentwater from Crow Park, Keswick