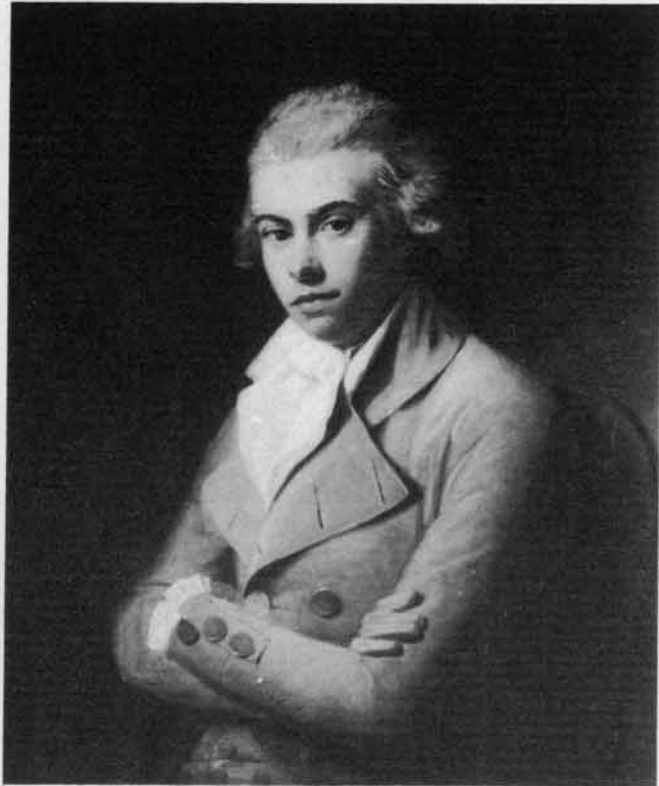


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William Wilberforce aged-21-22

Signed 'J.W. pinx'

initials of Joseph Wright of Derby

JOURNEY
TO THE LAKE DISTRICT
FROM CAMBRIDGE
1779

A diary written by

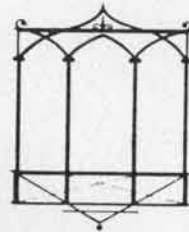
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

Undergraduate of St. John's College, Cambridge

Edited by his great-great-grandson

C. E. WRANGHAM

with a foreword by
The Earl of Birkenhead



ORIEL PRESS
STOCKSFIELD

BOSTON HENLEY-ON-THAMES LONDON

Portingscale & by Crossthaite Church.

Went in the Evening after dinner in the Boat to Swinside from whence is a fine View of the Vales of Newlands & Keswick. They looked like a Carpet under one, divided in all shapes & by all colors. The Hedge Rows (not a stone Wall in sight) are all mix'd with Trees in them.

Bassenthwaite, for we saw it from one End to the other in a straight Line, looked like a ditch. But the Afternoon was a very indifferent one & none of its wooded sides are thence visible. Under Swinside a curious Hill, a sandy color tufted with green Tufts, looked just like a great piece of spotted Cloth thrown over the Hill. To the best of my Recollection it is in Foe Park;³¹ Foe Park is under Swinside.

Thursday September 9th

Set out between 7 & 8 with Gisborne & Tom Hutton, to Buttermere. Passed thro' Portingscale & through the delightful Vale of Newlands. The Vale becomes less smiling as you proceed, till you come to where it appears to close up, the Hills on each Side & those in front very high. In your way to this place you have a very fine View of Catbells, Lady's Bower³² etc., viewing them on the Side contrary to that which you see from the Lake. The Passage through the Mountains where it appears to be clos'd up is called Newlands Hawse. On the Left is a Waterfall & a little Bason in the Rock from whence it is fed. In front a very great Waterfall. Go through the Hawse & you have a most striking Scene of Wildness & Desolation. A new collection of Mountains surrounds you. This road has been improv'd since West's Account. Before you reach Buttermere you see a very great Waterfall pouring down from one of the Hills which is near the Lake. When we got to the Ale House we went to the left by the Side of Buttermere, dismounted & walk'd close to the Water. The Lake is a small one & the Mountains rise directly from the Lake as Perpendicular as a Wall, & of an immense height opposite to them are very high Rocks not close to the Water. The Road to the left proceeds into Borrodale by Honistar Crag and the Wadd mine.

Return'd & went through the village of Buttermere.



Buttermere
After Thomas Allom



Crummock Water
After Thomas Allom

(Goose Gate³³ is a Right of putting & fattening two geese on the common, Whittle Gate is a right of dining with his parishioners by turns every Sunday, Harden Sark such as the Carters use & clog & two strong Shoes annually.) The lake of Buttermere one of the most savage ones I saw. It has Char in it & fine Trout. To Crummock water, took a Boat across the Head of the Lake & proceeded on foot by the side of it a little way; went about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile up on the Left just before we came to Mellbreack to see a Waterfall. There is a Stone Wall which will carry a stranger to it. It is in a Cleft of the Rock about 2 or 3 or 4 yds. over, & it falls perpendicular about 30 yards as I imagine, the Country People say much more. After it has fallen it proceeds in the Cleft about 20 or 30 yds. where it falls for 10 or 12 feet into the open Valley. To see it properly climb up beyond the first fall. Whilst we were there it grew so thick that we could scarce see across the Lake & a drizzly rain fell so that we could just discern Grassmire a vast red Hill standing opposite Mellbreak. They look like guards on each side of the Lake. Went to Scale Hill, got some Eggs & Bacon & rode home. The Vales of Lorton and Brackenthwaite were seen to a sad disadvantage. Came into the Whinlater Road at the 6th Mile Stone. Saw Bassenthwaite below us on the left.

Friday September 10th

Got up betwixt 5 & 6 & attempted to scale Skiddaw whose Top was quite clear when we (Mr. Hutton & myself) set off. Rode to the Bottom of the Hill & there left our Horses. After having ascended about as high as Latrigg, the steepest part of the Climb, the day overcast & clouds entirely covered over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Mountain. We staid, in hopes of the day mending, an hour, when we came down giving up all Expectation of a fine day. On a sudden it brighten'd up & we set forward a 2nd time, & were again turn'd back, so that we determined to be fool'd no longer & to give up the Scheme. Our Labor however upon the whole was well rewarded, as from the Side of the Hill we saw the most Beautiful Scenes. When we began to ascend the 1st Time the Sun shone upon the Lake which was as blue as the Sky

& as unruffled as a Looking Glass. The Vale of Keswick look'd beautiful beyond description, the peaceful retreat of some favor'd Mortals undisturb'd by the Cares & Concerns of the World. There was but just wind sufficient to agitate the light vapor which sometimes dropped upon the Ground, & then was gently rais'd up again. The Village dogs bark'd, the Partridge call'd & all was rural Peace & pastoral Enjoyment. Presently the vapor thicken'd and spread by degrees from the opening into Borrodale, till it entirely surrounded us so thick that we could not see even to the Bottom of the Mountain. On a sudden in 4 or 5 minutes at the most it was below quite clear again (Nature's Curtain drew up & discover'd a most wonderful scene) & it look'd like the darkness of Chaos rolling off & bringing to light a New Creation. Such a scene my Eyes never beheld. Dr. Brownrigg's³⁴ House a pleasing object. The inclination of the Mountain (foreshortening it) made the Cornfields & Meadows at its Bottom appear close to me & serve as a fore ground to the Rest of the Prospect. The opening into Newlands Vale was very fine and induc'd one to think that there were other such retreats concealed amongst the other Mountains which we saw towering as far as the Eye could see.

Went upon the Lake about 12 o'clock with Cookson & Farrington.³⁵ It was perfectly calm & the Mountains, Rocks & Trees etc. were reflected so perfectly on the Water that one could have discern'd in the Reflection the smallest object & in the Glass (which answer'd delightfully) it was difficult to say which was the Shadow and which the Reality. The Ecchoes were vastly fine & repeated like Thunder after one had imagined them lost. Went to Lowdore which was not so full as before, so that there was not that breasting of the Water. From thence walk'd through Grange to Castle Hill, which we ascended without much difficulty. The best way of going up is by the Way which they bring the Slate, to which anyone at Grange will direct you, a very good walking way. The View from it was the most striking I saw at Keswick. An immense Rock on your Left, another near as high on your Right look like Giants to support Castle Hill the Champion of Borrodale. From it you see under you a beautiful little Vale, water'd

the mine, & sometimes from it where there is a difficult place. The Wheels of the Waggons are made like a Groove, but are as if one side of the Groove was taken away, that on the outside of the Wheel. Sir James Lowther's Place⁴⁶ at the flats has cost him an immense sum of money & there are many entertaining stories relative to it which are told in the neighborhood. Return'd to Cockermouth at night.

Friday September 17th

After raining all the night before it still continu'd to rain & was a dreadful day. Played a game at Billiards in the morning. Cookson din'd out, supp'd with me & Mr. Lothian. Confin'd to the House all day by the Rain. Walk'd out to the Castle which looks very well from the Bridge. It is entirely in Ruins & has been a strong one; it is surrounded on one side by the Cocker & on the other by the Derwent, which join almost under its Walls. There is a kind of Vault below where is an immense weight of Building all resting upon a single Arch. Skiddaw & all the Mountains veil'd in Clouds. A pretty Village to the North a mile off, seen through an old Window.

Saturday September 18th

Thought of setting out in the Morning, when there came on a most violent storm of Wind & Rain with thunder & lightning. (A man was once shot dead from the Castle at a place which must be near $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile off.) Cookson & I in the afternoon took a Ride as far as the end of Crummock Water & walk'd up (according to West's direction) above Mr. Bertie's Woods. The View is of a very fine valley water'd by the Cocker which appear'd to great advantage from having overflow'd its Banks & made new swells & bends. West's description of the View is very exact & good. Grasmire frowns awfully behind on the Left & Mellbreak on the Right. A pretty View of that side of Crummock & the valley between it & Loweswater, part of which is visible. While we were out were 2 Violent Storms of Rain & Hail but we luckily took Shelter in Scale Inn. We had not time to go to the House West speaks of by the Gate leading



Ennerdale
After Thomas Allom



Loweswater
After Thomas Allom

to Ennerdale. It was dark before we reached Cockermouth & the wind cold and uncomfortable. The Ride about 15 miles.

Sunday September 19th

The morning as usual rainy & cold. Towards 12 o'Clock it brighten'd up & weary of being so long confin'd to an Inn I set off about 2 to go by Ennerdale to Holm Rook. I took a Guide with me to Ennerdale Bridge. It rain'd soon after I set out until I got there. The country for some miles near Cockermouth very bad, an extended moor with high mountains at some distance to close the Scene. About six miles off there are marks of cultivation all the way to Ennerdale Bridge, but the country poor. You pass a small tarn, Ullock Tarn, in which are many Trout, & leave Mockerkin on a Hill on the left. Went from the Public House at Ennerdale Bridge to How Hill, 1 mile & $\frac{1}{2}$, to have a View of the Water. It is surrounded 3 ways by high Mountains, its sides are some of them interspers'd with self-planted Wood. You see a great Mountain before you call'd Pillar. How Hall the country people said was a very old Place, in the time of the Romans they thought, & many Images etc. had been found in it. As one stands on the Hill the shape of the Lake is not much unlike that of England. It is said to be 4 miles long & 1 over — I should not think it so much. A Rock or two on the North West come close to the Water Edge, & there is a little Rocky something, an Island, peeping out of the Water. There are Char in it, which about Michaelmas come into the River which runs out of the Lake, & lie in Shoals upon the Sand or Gravel. They are never caught in the Summer except one by Chance. I saw the Lake, 'tis true, to a disadvantage but in my Opinion it is not worth going far out of one's way to see. The Whitehaven people (it is 7 or 8 miles off) often come to fish there. The Vale is a large one & is said to be very healthy; my Guide pointed me out a House where liv'd a Man ag'd 100. They had several in the Parish nearly of a like age, and said that his ancestors for some generations had not died younger.

From Ennerdale Bridge to Calder Bridge 6 miles over a

Hill call'd Cold Fell. One has from it a fine View of the Sea & the Isle of Man. I saw something in my Glass, I fancy it must have been the Hills on the far side of the Isle of Man, which I took at first for Ireland. There was a most Heavenly Sun setting, something of the same kind with what I saw in my descent from Skiddaw, except that below the dark blue Clouds a piece of red sky came in & redden'd the Sea at the End of the Horizon & went in one Part as they paint Rain. I stay'd long looking at it & did not reach Calder Bridge till after Sunset, where hearing Mr. Lutwidge was not at Home I took up my quarters all Night & had a tolerable Bed.

Monday September 20th

Walk'd in the morning to see the Ruins of Calder Abbey. There is nothing very striking in them. The Building seems to have been a large one from the four large arches which seem to have been the Middle or entrance to three sides behind each of which there must have been as much as there is now behind one of them. That which remains is in general low yet venerable from being cover'd with Ivy. Between it and the River stands a white House, Mr Senhouse, opposite to which on a steep hill on the other side of the River is a great Quantity of Wood. It would mend the View much if the Abbey were amongst the Trees on the other side, or the Hill not so steep & the House upon its declivity, the Trees on it being remov'd toward where the Abbey stands at present.

Went by Santon Bridge over the Irt which comes out of Wast Water & falls into the sea at Ravenglass. Into Wastdale. You have on the Way a good view of the Sea & Isle of Man & the Elbow'd Harbor of Ravenglass which was once a great Place but now though it has a market consists of a very few Houses. Before you reach Santon Bridge you see a high Hill with a kind of crack in it. This is Sca Fell said by the People thereabouts to be higher than Skiddaw. As you enter Wastdale the Appearance is very striking. You are in a great Valley almost completely skirted and ringed by Rocks of an immense Height & at the End you see one in the Styhead like the sharpest part of a

in Clouds & out of them down one of his seams rush'd an immense Torrent of Water quite to the Bottom of the Mountain, on which the Sun shone. The Rocks look'd wonderfully fine to-day & Lowdore at a distance particularly grand, the Water plainly alive 2 miles off, of a creamy brown, the Rocks purple, very deep, & in a recess.

Went up Borrodale thro' Rosthwaite to Sealtor⁵¹ on the way up to the Waddmine which is on the Left when you are nearly at the Top of it. A Gush of Water the whole Way. It is very pretty looking back from the Ascent on the fertile fields of Borrodale. The Descent into Garharth⁵² dale is very grand. Sublime mighty Rocks inclose the Place, that on the Right Yew Crag, that on the Left (by much the finest) Honister Crag. The Latter looks as if Waves of Rock had been violently agitated & had not yet utterly subsided. From the Top is said to be a good Prospect; when I was in the Valley the Clouds were upon it.

In Yew Crag (& some in Honister rented by the same people) vast quantities of Slate are got which is said to be of a very good Quality. The Road on the Garharth Side very bad, but not equal to the Sty. The Sledge Men come down the steepest place with Slate (at the least 40 stone in a Sledge) without prods to their Shoes, as indeed a Man told me none of them had at any time. The Noise of the Men getting Slate is said to sound like thunder. They were not at Work when I went by.

From a Gate beyond the Houses at Garharth (In the Descent you see Buttermere, the country man's Garharth Water) is a very curious View of wild Rocks & Hills: looking back the Edge of Honister Green juts out & looks like the Cone in a Crater form'd by Hay Stacks on the Right and Yew Crag on the Left, or like an Acorn in its Cup. Hay Rick & those Rocks more black & rugged than any I have seen tho' not so high as some, jagg'd & broken at the Points. The 4 Mountains that skirt the opposite Side of the Lake rise immediately from it, black, conical & immensely high & wilder than any others I have seen. Steel Pike, High Crag, Red Pike &c. Down their Sides are some wonderfully fine Waterfalls which rush at once into the Lake. Between the Hay Ricks & Steel Pikes in a Chasm in the Rock an Eagle's Nest, a remarkably fine one taken out

of it this year.

This Lake about 2 miles long, very little Wood near it, & no Char in it. On the East Side close to the Water Edge some huge Hills of Rock which may perhaps have been precipitated from those on the other Side of the Road. Went to a small House, got some Honey & Bread & Butter & the afternoon being bad hasten'd home to Keswick. Took a Guide a very little way who would not take anything. Bleaberry Tarn is in the Rock or Mountain like a Crater at the North end of Garharth Water. The Mountains as one looks back at them in the Way to Keswick look dreadfully black but you soon lose sight of them & wind up the Side of the Hills that divide Buttermere from Newlands Hawse. On the Left are some Mountains like Quarter Globes green to the Top & Sheep feeding up to the Top. They look beautiful after the Barrenness of Garharth, but you see the End of one that is withdrawn from the View as black or red and grim as Grasmire. When you enter Newlands the change is wonderful. You see the Mountains on the Right as far as they be discoverable black as Night & grim as possible with many Waterfalls down them. In all the little Tarns in the very Bosoms of the Rocks are Great Quantities of Fish chiefly Trout. You go on till you come into a more cultivated country. Maiden's Bower dark & dreadful shews its back to the Right, its front is near Grange. In a low red Hill nearest you on the Right before you leave the Inclosures, Goldscop, were formerly Copper Mines but they have not been work'd for some time. About a Mile before you reach Swinside is a good view of Bassenthwaite. Got home & went to Farrington's. The Ride of the Day about 21 or 22 miles.

Thursday September 23rd

The day unpromising. Went to my Guide at Rosthwaite, who gave me an Account of the Wadd mine. He had often seen the Eagle's nest taken. He was a shepherd. The sheep will stay about the ground & Hills to which they have been us'd, & they go to fold them once or twice a week. It was very misty & uncomfortable. Went to the Left through Stonethwaite & Rosthwaite Chapel where was the