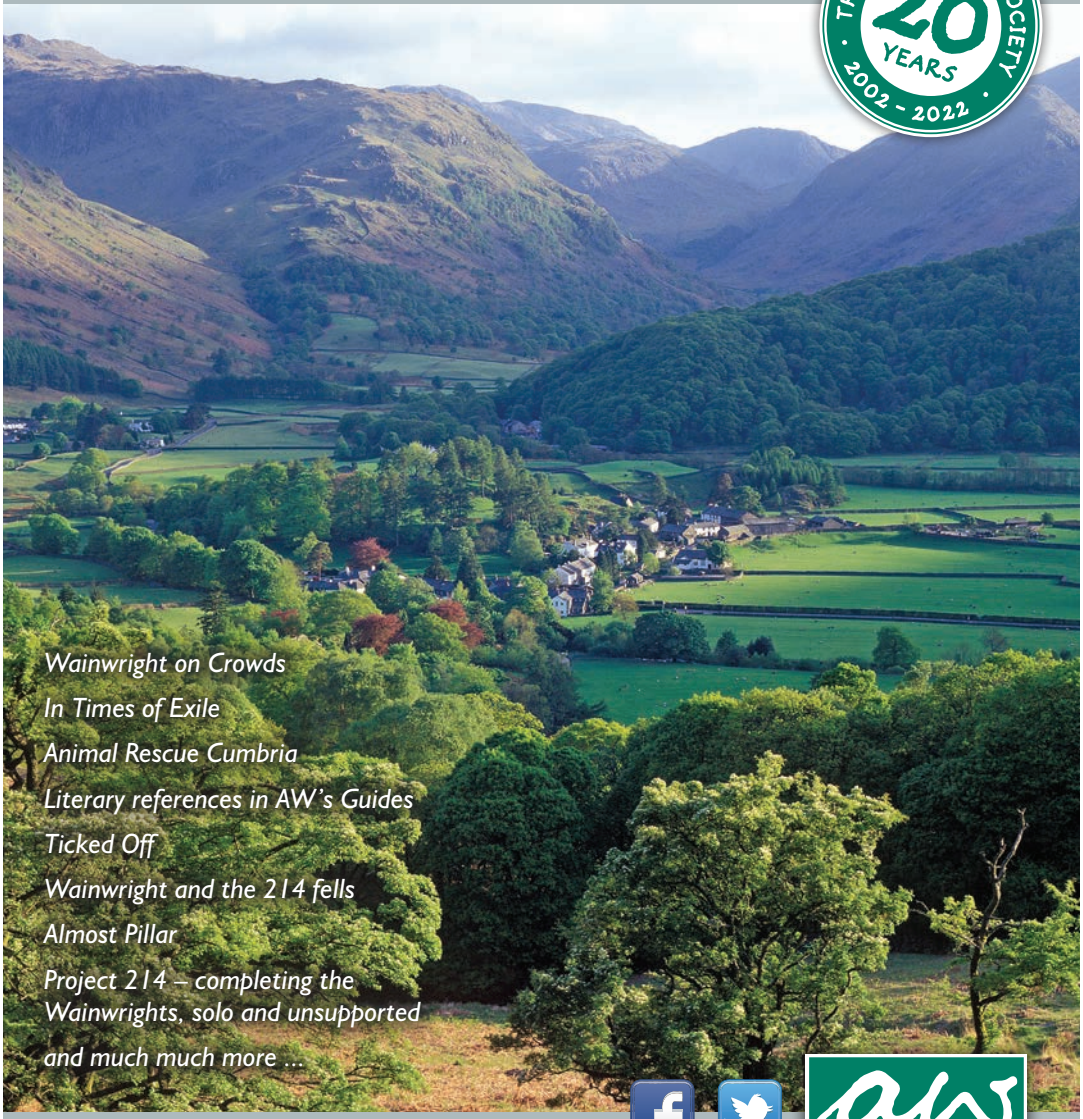
Issue 77 – Spring 2022

Footsteps

THE WAINWRIGHT SOCIETY MAGAZINE

THE WAINWRIGHT SOCIETY 20 YEARS 2002 - 2022



Wainwright on Crowds

In Times of Exile

Animal Rescue Cumbria

Literary references in AW's Guides

Ticked Off

Wainwright and the 214 fells

Almost Pillar

Project 214 – completing the Wainwrights, solo and unsupported

and much much more ...

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Note from the Editorial Team

This issue of *Footsteps* once again includes articles on a wide range of subjects, including two fascinating pieces from regular contributors Alan Thomas and Derek Cockell.

Alan has written his third article in the 'Wainwright on C—' series, this time considering AW's thoughts on crowds. Derek looks at AW's literary references (amongst them William Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott) and also writes about AW's take on completing the 214. An article by Christopher Gaskin describes his own remarkable 214 completion – you will be impressed! Complementing this, and in lighter vein, is a tongue-in-cheek piece by Ian Newton – 'Ticked Off': you will be amused!

Included in the eclectic mix are articles by Andrew Simpson who describes his attempt to climb Pillar, and Philip Clayton who recommends a number of Lakeland books that members might enjoy reading.

You will see that our Walks Leader, Mark Abbott, has been very busy. He has devised and organised this year's Challenge and, as reported in Society News, has been successful in encouraging members to sign up – with all eighty-two Challenge walks already claimed. Also, in addition to arranging a full walks programme, Mark has written an account of walking the Cleveland Way, which is now on my bucket list.

The answer to the *Walks in Limestone Country* Picture Puzzle in the Winter issue was the phrase 'it is a land of surprises' and the winner, whose name was drawn from the hat, was Andrew Middlemiss, pictured above with his chosen prize, a copy of *Scottish Mountain Drawings, The Islands*.

That issue also included a chance to win a signed copy of *English Pastoral* by James Rebanks (winner of the 2021 Wainwright Prize for UK Nature Writing). The answer to the question asking for the name of James Rebanks' autobiographical book published in 2015 was *The Shepherd's Life*. The winners, drawn from the hat from the correct answers, were Elaine and Jim Gibson, pictured above with their prize.



Thank you to all who sent in entries for these two competitions. There is another picture puzzle in this issue, this time relating to *The Northern Fells*, which fits nicely with this year's Challenge. I look forward to receiving yet another large batch of entries.

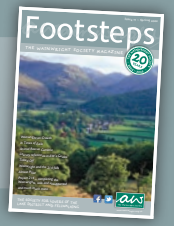
We hope you will find this issue informative and enjoyable.

David Johnson – Editor
Andrew Stainthorpe – Graphic Designer

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Borrowdale with Rosthwaite village by Val Corbett
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Chairman's Notes

You'll see in Society News, on page 30, that our latest publishing venture is to be *Walks on the Howgill Fells*. In this, Wainwright described these fells as 'distinctive … sleek and smooth, looking, from a distance, like velvet curtains in sunlight, like silken drapes at sunset'.



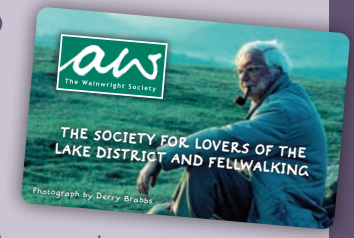
The Howgills, from Fox's Pulpit – photograph by Jenny Dereham

Now, I love the Howgills. They kept me sane through years of flogging up and down the M6 for work – traffic jams eased by memories of the great views that the Howgills offer. There are incomparable wide-angle landscapes of the Lake District and the Pennines and, closer to home, spectacular features such as Cautley Spout, England's highest waterfall or Fox's Pulpit.

I came here with AW and had laid on a helicopter to get us closer to those views. And, yes, you've guessed it, he turned down the chance of a trip in the paraffin budgie. He said he didn't need the experience because he already had those landscapes and features in his mind's eye.

Eric Robson – Chairman

Have you renewed your Society Membership for 2022?



Thank you very much if you have. If you haven't, please do so as soon as you can and remember the new subscription rates (£15 UK, £20 overseas); otherwise this will be the last issue of *Footsteps* you will receive.

If in doubt whether or not you have paid, please check your bank records. If still in doubt, email **membership@wainwright.org.uk** to check.

A reminder to those members who joined after 30 June 2021 – you do not need to renew your membership until late 2022.

Please don't pay twice – many members did that last year and it takes us a lot of time to sort out!

For all the latest Society news, please visit us online at: www.wainwright.org.uk or follow us on Facebook or Twitter

In Times of Exile

Exile is an emotive word – denoting as it does involuntary absence from a place of personal significance and affection. AW was not immune and the thought of it prompted him to write in memorable fashion on a number of occasions.



AW in silent contemplation (*The Eastern Fells*, Clough Head 7) Sketch and quotations © the Estate of A. Wainwright

AW used the word 'exile' four times in his books. At the very start of the first Pictorial Guide, he laid down a marker, acknowledging the bond that can exist between man and place: 'Surely there is no other place in this whole wonderful world quite like Lakeland … no other so exquisitely lovely, no other so charming, no other calls so insistently across a gulf of distance. All who truly love Lakeland are exiles when away from it.' (Introduction, *The Eastern Fells*).

As the following quotation indicates, AW saw the merit of savouring and committing to memory times when confronted with a spectacular view. Writing about the view of the Vale of Grasmere when descending Helm Crag, he said: '… this fair scene is at its best when the shadows of evening are lengthening, with the Langdales silhouetted in rugged outline against the sunset. Tarry long over this exquisite picture of serenity and peace, and memorise it for the long winter of exile!' (*The Central Fells*, Helm Crag 4). Whether this 'winter of exile' was literal or metaphorical is unclear (to me), but both would be equally valid.

In *The Southern Fells*, AW wrote: 'When mist wreathes the summit and clings like smoke in the gullies, when ravens soar above the lonely crags, when snow lies deep and curtains of ice bejewel the gaunt cliffs, then Great End is indeed an impressive sight. Sunshine never mellows this grim scene but only adds harshness. This is the true Lakeland of the fellwalker, the sort of terrain that calls him back time after time, the sort of memory that haunts his long winter exile.' (Great End 2).

The fourth use of the word 'exile' is in *The North Western Fells*, Whinlatter 2: 'The map of Lakeland is the favourite literature of many regular visitors and diligent study of its details is a compensating pastime during their exile from the district.'

Eventually there came a time when AW could no longer walk on his beloved fells – frailty and failing eyesight meant he was truly exiled from them. In a passage written towards the end of his life and laced with pathos and anguish, he wrote: '… memory fills the blanks. The mind's eye has taken over … Days on the fells have always been for me the best days of all. They still are, but now I must be content to relive them in memories; sight is failing but I can visualise past adventures so clearly in the eye of the mind. I can sit in an armchair and go up Great Gable again, or cross Mickledore to Scafell, and the pictures I see with closed eyes are as vivid as they ever were. What a blessing is memory when a happy life is coming to a close.' (*Ex-Fellwanderer*)

Many of us will identify with the concept of such exile. Foot-and-mouth disease, ill health, infirmity, a pandemic and living beyond the range of a day-trip are just some of the reasons why the fells may be out of reach – temporarily or even permanently. We can, however, take a leaf out of AW's book and endeavour to store and value our memories, and be grateful for them.

David Johnson

Animal Rescue Cumbria

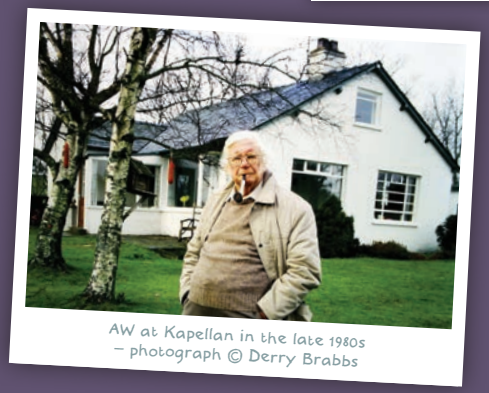
Animal Rescue Cumbria (ARC) is the Society's main charity beneficiary for 2022.

ARC, a registered charity, rescues and re-homes some 300 dogs, cats and kittens each year. It offers a secure and caring environment for animals whose owners, for whatever reason, are unable to look after them any longer, and helps find animals permanent, loving homes.

There is a long and close connection between ARC and the Society. AW was famously fond of animals. It was often said he preferred animals to people. AW dedicated Book 3 of the Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells to the Dogs of Lakeland. But AW's love of animals went beyond words. After he retired, he donated most of the royalties from his books to ARC, and in due course raised a capital sum large enough for ARC to purchase a site at Grayrigg, near Kendal, to re-home cats and dogs. In 1974 Alfred Wainwright became the chairman of the charity, whose official address is The Wainwright Shelter, Kapellan.

This is a special year for both ARC and the Society – the charity's 50th anniversary and the Society's 20th – so it seems entirely fitting that we're working together to raise much-needed funds for a charity so close to AW's heart. Our funds will be generated mainly from sales of the Society's 2023 Calendar but also from other activities, including particularly our annual Challenge which this year is focussed on the Northern Fells. Do take part if you can, and invite family, friends and work colleagues (anyone really!) to sponsor you to raise money for a cause we are confident AW would have wanted the Society to support.

Following AW's lead, we have worked closely with ARC over the years to raise funds for Kapellan. Indeed, David Johnson, our *Footsteps* editor, compiled *Encounters with Wainwright* with the express intention that all profits from sales of the book would go to the charity. These profits and other fund-raising efforts have enabled the Society to contribute over £15,000 to ARC since 2015.



AW at Kapellan in the late 1980s – photograph © Derry Brabbs

ARC continues to need funds to support its work. Whilst the animal accommodation was state-of-the-art when the site at Kapellan was developed in the 1980s, animal care standards have moved on and there is much greater emphasis now on rescue shelters providing an environment as natural and enriching as possible for the animals. The team at ARC have plans to enhance the facilities to meet this need. Some funding towards their £50,000 project has already been secured, but the Society's fund-raising will be put to very good use for the benefit of the shelter's cats.

Marion Yates, General Manager of ARC, said: 'We were founded back in 1972 as a cat rescue organisation, and Alfred and Betty had a particular love of cats. It therefore seems fitting in this anniversary year to do something special for our feline residents. The planned open-air facilities will allow our cats to climb, hide and explore, enjoy fresh air and natural vegetation, and bask in the sun in summer. This will greatly reduce the stress of living in the unnatural environment of a cattery. We have been so generously supported by the Wainwright Society in recent years and cannot thank the membership enough for their continuing support.'

We have made a good start to our fundraising, with all Challenge walks already claimed by members. Please help raise further funds for ARC by purchasing and promoting our 2023 Calendar later in the year.

David Claxton

***Editor's note**: Derek Cockell, past-Secretary of the Society and regular contributor to* Footsteps, *here traces literary references in Wainwright's guides. A second instalment of his article will be in the Summer issue.*

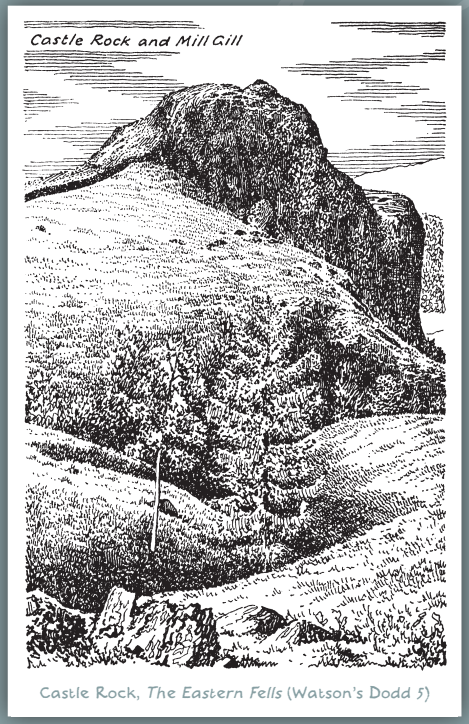
Literary references in AW's Guides

From Wainwright's very first book and throughout his works, he included quotations from many sources. *A Pennine Journey* begins with an apology: that is, one verse from a poem called, simply, *Apology* written by the Yorkshire poet Ammon Wrigley. No doubt AW thought it appropriate to include the verse as this was his first attempt at writing a full-length book.

AW's first published works were the Pictorial Guides, his 'love-letter' to the Lake District fells. In the pages of the Guides can be found references to poems, local legends and tales, folk songs and even a hymn, many being written during the Romantic period, when poets and writers were inspired by the landscape of the Lake District and the natural world.

Castle Rock, St. John's in the Vale (Watson's Dodd p2):

In the chapter about Watson's Dodd in *The Eastern Fells*, Wainwright wrote: 'Castle Rock has a privileged place in literature. Sir Walter Scott selected it as the principal scene for "The Bridal of Triermain".' The poem, published in 1813, is a Gothic tale of the rescue of a beautiful maiden, the illegitimate daughter of King Arthur, from an enchanted castle by a knight. Castle Rock was first described by William Hutchinson in his book, *An Excursion to the Lakes, August 1773*. As he travelled through St. John's in the Vale he wrote: 'In the widest part of the dale you are struck with the appearance of an ancient ruined castle, which seems to stand upon the summit of a little mount, the mountains around forming an amphitheatre. This massive bulwark shows a front of various towers, and makes an awful, rude, and Gothic appearance, with its lofty turrets and ragged battlements. But the "castle" is an illusion, the local inhabitants saying that "the traveller, whose curiosity is aroused, will find it impossible to approach them, as the guardian genii of the place transform the walls and battlements into naked rocks when anyone



Castle Rock, *The Eastern Fells* (Watson's Dodd 5)

draws near".' In Scott's poem, he describes the first sight of the castle by King Arthur:

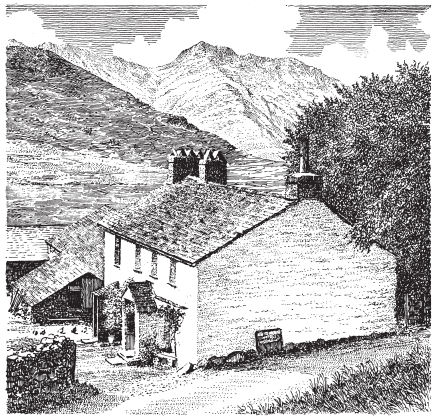
> The narrow dale lay smooth and still,
> And, down its verdant bosom led,
> A winding brooklet found its bed.
> But, midmost of the vale, a mound
> Arose with airy turrets crown'd,
> Buttress, and rampire's circling bound,
> And mighty keep and tower;
> Seem'd some primeval giant's hand,
> The castle's massive walls had plann'd,
> A ponderous bulwark to withstand
> Ambitious Nimrod's power.

Wainwright's full-page sketch of Castle Rock, drawn from the north, gives the Rock an air of impregnability with the ravine of Mill Gill seeming to provide moated protection from this aspect.

Bleatarn House (Lingmell Fell p5):

Sometimes, Wainwright's literary references were almost asides, without additional details, leaving the reader to investigate the story. On Lingmoor Fell 5 (*The Southern Fells*), a building is captioned 'Bleatarn House (*Wordsworth's "solitary abode"*)'. The dwelling features in a poem The Excursion, published in 1814 but written over a period of years from 1795 to 1813. It is set in the Lake District where the author (the poet) meets a Scottish pedlar (the Wanderer) for a pre-arranged walking tour. On the first day, they ascend to a hidden valley where they stay for one night at Bleatarn House, the cottage of the Solitary, a Scottish Presbyterian minister, where he prepares a meal of cheese, oat-cakes, and fruit. The next day he joins the party on their walk and there are long discussions on many subjects ranging from religious belief to the economic and social changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution. Bleatarn House is described in Book 2 of the poem:

> A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,
> A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,
> And one bare dwelling; one abode,
> no more!
> It seemed the home of poverty and toil,
> Though not of want: the little fields,
> made green
> By husbandry of many thrifty years,
> Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.


Bleatarn House, *A Fourth Lakeland Sketchbook* (Sketch 250)


Bowscale Tarn, *The Northern Fells* (Bowscale Fell 6)

Bowscale Tarn (Bowscale Fell p7):

The Northern Fells contains more literary references than any other of the Pictorial Guides. In the chapter on Bowscale Fell, Wainwright describes the visits of Victorian tourists to Bowscale Tarn where it featured in a poem by Wordsworth, with the legend of two immortal fish reputed to live in the lake. The Romantic Poets were fascinated by medieval tales and legends and would often re-tell the stories in their poems. The War of the Roses is the setting for the poem and tells how the son of John Clifford, who was killed at the Battle of Towton in 1461, was spirited away by his mother and sent into hiding with a trustworthy shepherd and brought up as his son. Lord Henry Clifford known as the Shepherd Lord had his estates and titles returned to him by Henry VII after the defeat of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485.

In Wordsworth's poem, *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, which tells the tale of the restoration of Henry Clifford's lands, he is depicted living in the Lake District as a shepherd and attended by the birds and animals.

> Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
> And thankful through a weary time,
> That brought him up to manhood's prime.
> —Again he wanders forth at will,
> And tends a flock from hill to hill:
>
> Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
> Nor yet for higher sympathy.
>
> To his side the fallow-deer
> Came and rested without fear;
> The eagle, lord of land and sea,
> Stooped down to pay him fealty;
> And both the undying fish that swim
> Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;
> The pair were servants of his eye
> In their immortality …

In his chapter on Bowscale Fell, AW wrote: 'Once upon a time it was fashionable to include a visit to Bowscale Tarn in the itineraries of Ladies and Gentlemen making a Grand Tour of the Lakes. The tarn was famous for its two undying fish (an ancient tradition revived in a poem by Wordsworth), and the setting was wild and romantic, and a good path led up to it… The walk is no longer popular. The story of the two immortal fish is almost forgotten, although, if it be true, they must still be there.'

High Pike – in the Northern Fells (High Pike p14):

In each chapter of the guides, Wainwright includes details of the ridge routes that connect separate fells. In the chapter on High Pike, the route to the neighbouring fell of Knott is described as: 'A cross-country trek "o'er moor and fen".' This is a phrase from the hymn, *Lead Kindly Light* (verse 3).

> So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
> Will lead me on,
> O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
> The night is gone;
> And with the morn those angel faces smile
> Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

It was a hymn well known to AW, sung at his childhood church, Furthergate Congregational Church in Blackburn. In his first book, *A Pennine Journey* p78, he recalled this and other favourite hymns:



High Pike, *The Northern Fells* (High Pike 2)

'I continued on my way towards Hexham, very slowly, at what I call hymn-speed. I have not mentioned that I sing as I go along. I always do. Seldom loudly, more often in a murmur. I recognise few limits in my repertoire; I can treat myself to anything. I bellow in opera, warble in ballad. My choice on any particular occasion is governed by my speed, and governs my speed; my feet march in tempo. My favourite uphill song is *Volga Boatman*, which suits my movements admirably: I find I can grind out a note with every step, and each verse earns a pause, a brief halt. For slow travel, or when I am tired, hymns are best; not the noisy modern tunes, but the old ones, the softer melodies: *Breathe on me, breath of God, Jesu, Lover of my Soul, When I survey the Wondrous Cross, Nearer, my God, to Thee, Lead, Kindly Light*, and best of all, *Abide with me*; old familiar tunes which can never lapse and be forgotten; quiet tunes and comforting words learnt in childhood, and later loved.'

To be continued …

Derek Cockell – Bishops Lydeard
Membership No. 13

Four Good Men and True – an Appeal

The Autumn 2021 issue included an article, *Wainwright on two Great Walks*, which contrasted AW's opinions on the merits of the Pennine Way and the Coast to Coast Walk.

It mentioned the invaluable help he received from 'Four Good men and true', Harry Appleyard, Len Chadwick, Cyril Moore and Lawrence W. Smith, whose checking of various sections of the route assisted Wainwright in compiling *A Pennine Way Companion*. The article concluded: 'The story of their contributions, to the extent it can be known, will be the subject of a future article.'

I have all the information I need on Harry Appleyard, but it is patchy on the other three men. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who can give me information about them that is not included in books by or about AW or in the Archive in Kendal. A long-shot perhaps, but I know that sometimes they pay off!

David Johnson

Ticked Off

As a child, there was often a list of chores on the kitchen door which we were expected to help our parents with before we saw sight of any weekly pocket money. Cutting the grass, doing the dishes after meals, having a tidy bedroom, shopping, cleaning out the fireplace or washing the car, and so on. As each chore was completed, we placed a tick against our names.

Later in life, as I progressed in my career, a list of daily and weekly tasks to be done often filled my notebooks to ensure that I completed what was necessary and didn't overlook anything. The list was added to as the week evolved and priorities changed. Upon completing each task, they were duly ticked off as being complete, and I'd sigh with relief when Friday passed and I could forget about such things until Monday morning.

To me, therefore, to have something 'ticked off' is representative of having undertaken a necessary evil, a chore – a task you know you have to do rather than one you enjoy doing.



Cartoon by Roderick Hamm

Why then do I continually hear of folk describing their day in the hills as having 'ticked off' more Wainwrights? Where is the joy and the pleasure in climbing a hill just to place a tick against it? Have they been sent up against their will and told not to come back without a summit selfie, when they would much rather be spending an afternoon in IKEA? Hurrah! Another six ticked off, only fifty-five to go before I can finally put my boots away and move onto the next page of '100 things you must do before you are 50'.



Cartoon by Roderick Hamm

Perhaps these 'tickers' didn't have the benefit of family or friends taking time to introduce them to what the hills have to offer, to point out distant ridges and landmarks, explain geological patterns created by ice-age erosions, wildlife and fauna. Perhaps, in the quest for the summit and that next tick in the book, time isn't taken along the way to stop and appreciate the quietness of the fell, the unchanged constancy of the landscape that has dominated this corner of Britain over thousands of years, to consider those who have worked and travelled these same paths over centuries past. Perhaps the tick is more important, the badge of honour to impress at the office, a weekend chore to be undertaken in exchange for mythical mountaineering status at the drinks dispenser?

Whatever the motivations, please let us find a better, more joyful way to express our collective experiences amongst the hills and mountains. How about 'today we explored/climbed/or even bagged five Wainwright peaks at the weekend' – anything to stop me getting more ticked off than I already am!

Ian Newton – Dunholme, Lincoln
Membership No. 1954

The Cleveland Way

The 109-mile Cleveland Way [CW], which was designated our second National Trail in 1969, links the Yorkshire towns of Helmsley and Filey, following a semi-circular route around the edge of the North York Moors National Park [NYM].

This is a walk to savour, particularly if blessed with fine weather, with moors, wooded sections and spectacular coast scenery to enjoy. Wainwright's Coast to Coast Walk [CtoC] coincides with the CW in two places. First, over the fourteen miles between Mount Grace Priory and Bloworth Crossing and, secondly, for three miles on the approach to Robin Hood's Bay.



Easby Moor and Roseberry Topping, from Battersby Moor

The following is an outline of my CW walk which I did in August 2016. The itinerary included nine days of walking, averaging twelve miles per day, and two-night stays in Staithes and Whitby.

Sunday travel in August required unusual routeing to get me to the start of the walk the following morning: a train over the Pennines to Scarborough, then a 30-mile bus journey to Helmsley, where I was booked in at the Youth Hostel (YH). As we drove through a sunny Thornton-le-Dale, a brass band played in what I took as a fitting welcome.

The next morning, I enjoyed a look round Helmsley's medieval castle before setting off on the walk. After a few miles among lush fields and ancient woodland, I took a well-worth 2-mile diversion from the route to visit the splendid Rievaulx Abbey and Terrace. The setting of this Cistercian Abbey is perhaps rivalled only by Tintern. The Terrace was designed in the 18th century, with some classical architecture, notably the Ionic Temple. Crossing the Hambleton Hills occupied the afternoon, with a final descent to Kilburn and a stay at Church Farm, beautifully sited in the middle of the village.

A hearty breakfast powered me back up the ridge, from which there were intermittent views of the Kilburn White Horse, the most northerly turf-cut hill figure in England. Covering 1½ acres, it was laid out in 1857 by a local schoolmaster and his pupils. The underlying rock requires the Horse to be periodically re-whitened. On top of the ridge is the Yorkshire Gliding Club, an early member of which was the pioneer aviator Amy Johnson. At nearby Sutton Bank, Turner drew several iconic sketches in 1816. After this, there was level walking via Sneck Yate and White Gill Head, before the descent to Osmotherley. The overnight stop there was at Cote Ghyll Mill, part of the YH network, but run privately. This is a busy location, popular with CtoC walkers.

Soon after leaving Osmotherley, there was an opportunity to visit Mount Grace Priory, the most extensive Carthusian remains in England, the monks living in single cells. Above lies Beacon Hill, a site of many aerials at the TV booster station. Here the CtoC and the Lyke Wake Walk [LWW] merge, with fast ridge-walking feasible along the well-used path amidst a profusion of heather, a feature of the NYM. There are extensive views of the landscape below. In Clain Wood lies a memorial to Bill Cowley, founder of the LWW and its first completer, in 1955. Passing over Carlton Bank and beyond Cringle Moor, the route detours half a mile south to Beak Hills Farm in upper Raisdale, where I received a warm welcome and a lovely farm dinner.

The next morning was overcast, with light rain that persisted all day. This was the only wet day I experienced during the walk but, at 23 miles, the longest by far. After the Wain Stones, the



Cattersty Sands and Skinningrove Jetty

route reaches the highest point of the Cleveland Hills, Round Hill (1489ft). At Bloworth Crossing, where the Rosedale Ironstone Railway once crossed, the three walks separate, with the CW heading north on the old drovers' road. Soon passed was the intriguingly named Jenny Bradley stone, an ancient wayside cross. The route continues over Battersby Moor. Just past Juniper Gate is a poignant memorial: in January 1941 an RAF Hudson came down here. All four crew, including the Australian pilot, survived the crash, but tragically died of exposure before they were found two days later.

After Kildale, midway on the day's walk, the route climbs up to Easby Moor and the monument to Captain James Cook, appropriately described on the plaque as 'A Man In Nautical Knowledge Inferior to None'. Soon after this is the conspicuous Roseberry Topping, a 1000-ft stratum of sandstone, shale, jet and ironstone. It provides a great viewpoint, popular with Teesiders. The walk ends with 5 miles over moorland and through Guisborough Woods. The sun had just set as I eventually arrived at my overnight stop, the Fox and Hounds in Slapewath, where I enjoyed a comfortable night.

The next day saw a return of sunshine, welcome after the previous day's dampness. Leaving Slapewath, I passed fields of ripening crops and after a few miles reached the village of Skelton. This also has nautical connections, being the birthplace of Frank Wild, Shackleton's second-in-command on many Polar expeditions. After Skelton, the CW passes under the towering, eleven-arch, brick Riftswood Railway Viaduct, which was completed in 1870. Immediately after this, the North Sea and Saltburn Pier (built a year earlier, and the last remaining on the north-east coast) come into view. It was a lovely morning, with blue skies and a fresh sea breeze, and the start of five days of perfect coastal path walking.

Along the next section of the walk are current and past industrial sites, such as Boulby Mine where a fertiliser, Cleveland Potash, is produced, and Skinningrove where steel production has ceased. There is significant industrial archaeology on the cliff tops, in particular relics from iron mining.

The CW passes close by a derelict Guibal Fanhouse, which provided mine ventilation in the 19th century. Nearby Cattersty Sands now provide an improving beach and dune environment. Boulby Cliffs exceed 600ft and provide superlative views of the coast. The route descends steeply into the picturesque fishing village of Staithes, between cream and white cottages with their orange pantile roofs. I stayed for two nights at Roraima House, in the newer part of the village, a residence that was built in the 1870s for a sea captain. Roraima was the name of one of his ships. Staithes also has an association with Cook. It was here that he was apprenticed in a grocer's shop, before being drawn to a career at sea. By contrast, there is an interesting *trompe l'oeil* art trail round the village, where illusionistic techniques create three-dimensional images of seaside subjects. The artist, Dame Laura Knight, lived here before moving to another idyllic location, Cornwall, to join the Newlyn School.

Staithes is protected from the north by the Jurassic sandstone of Cowbar Nab. Further south is more geological interest: mudstones, fossils and jet in the shale.

The CW passes above the derelict harbour of the village of Port Mulgrave where ironstone was once shipped, and then the delightful village of Runswick, which clings to the cliff, and the extensive beach beyond. On the cliff path are signs for the North Sea Trail, a 3,700-mile project supported by seven littoral nations. The route then follows the track of the dismantled Middlesbrough/Scarborough railway to Sandsend. Blocked off tunnels and station buildings can still be found.



Staithes and Cowbar Nab

Eventually the route enters Whitby on West Cliff, close to the Royal Crescent, near which is John Tweed's formidable Captain James Cook statue overlooking the busy harbour. It was from this viewpoint that Bram Stoker was inspired to write *Dracula*. The way down to the quays is by the iconic raised whale-bone arches and the historically named Khyber Pass. One needs to cross the harbour bridge to reach and climb the well-known 199 steps that take you to the East Cliff and the historic Abbey House that has been the YH since 1934.

Whitby has a wealth of interest and a definite ambiance. The North Yorkshire Moors Railway runs into the town, with frequent steam locomotives. The Abbey (656AD) and St Mary's Parish Church are well worth a visit, as is the Magpie Café on the north side of the harbour, famous for its fish and chips – surely known to AW?

Further south is Saltwick Bay, where the mudstone outcrop of Black Nab is conspicuous and shipwrecks can be seen on the beach, although care is needed as there are dangerous tides. As the tide was coming in, it was necessary to take the cliff path rather than bare-foot it, in time-honoured hostellers' tradition, across the beach to Boggle Hole. This is just south of Robin Hood's Bay, which was awash with holidaymakers. I stayed at Boggle Hole YH, a mill conversion, which has been there since 1937.

The penultimate walk, to the hostel at Scalby Mills, commenced with a 600-ft slog up to Ravenscar. On this section, the National Trust maintains two very contrasting sites: the former Peak Alum Works and the buildings of a WW2 radar station. The small waterfall at Hayburn Wyke is a lovely place to pause.

Crossing the sands of North Bay, Scarborough, was a bracing start to the final day. The route passes the Rotunda Geological Museum and nearby spa complex before climbing up to the esplanade. The coastal scenery all the way to the end of the CW at Filey is stunning. On this last section I enjoyed a lunch of crab and prawns eaten on Cayton Bay sands. The exceptional Newbiggin Cliff and narrow limestone finger of Filey Brigg provided a fitting climax to a fabulous holiday.

The Cleveland Way is a splendid long-distance walk, full of interest, and I commend it to you.

Mark Abbott
Walks Organiser

A Pictorial Guide Puzzle – *The Northern Fells*

Can you find the sketches in *The Northern Fells* which contain these fragments? They are in twenty different chapters. When you have, use one letter (as indicated below) from each fell name to form a three-word phrase in Wainwright's Personal Notes in Conclusion, in this book, that refer to something AW enjoyed hearing.

The letters you need are the 8th letter of picture 1, 2nd of 2, 4th of 3, 4th of 4, 1st of 5, 6th of 6, 16th of 7, 1st of 8, 7th of 9, 4th of 10, 6th of 11, 7th of 12, 2nd of 13, 2nd of 14, 4th of 15, 4th of 16, 8th of 17, 9th of 18, 2nd of 19 and 7th of 20.

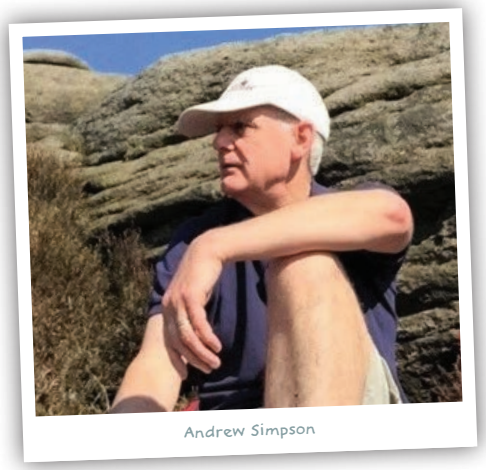
Send that phrase, by 15 April, to footsteps@wainwright.org.uk or by mail to **David Johnson at 18 Pease Way, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9YZ**. A prize will be offered to the member, having given the correct answer, whose name is drawn from the hat.

David Johnson



Almost Pillar

Two years ago, I determined to make my first ascent of Pillar, which AW included in his list of the 'finest half-dozen' fells.



Andrew Simpson

Pillar! How often I had pored over AW's eighteen-page chapter in *The Western Fells* or stared in awe at the forbidding photograph in Clive Hutchby's *Wainwright Companion*, but its remote location always put me off. I had once looked across from Haystacks, but was daunted by Pillar's size and the thought of actually getting up there. However, it was high time I climbed it.

I'll confess that I tend to be a fair-weather walker – a result of having twisted my ankle badly in wet conditions some years ago. As the summer of 2019 wore on, I thought that fate was against me, with repeated days of black clouds and rain. But my luck changed when a period of good weather was forecast for mid-September. I decided to go for it. I stayed in Rosthwaite, a good base for the Borrowdale fells and my main objective. My plan was to drive over Honister and down to Gatesgarth, where the walk would begin. From there the route was over Scarth Gap, down into Ennerdale, across the River Liza via the Memorial Bridge and upwards to Pillar. In all, it entailed 3,500ft of ascent – more than when climbing Scafell Pike! I judged I could just about do it in a day, given an early start.

Tuesday 17 September dawned with the most perfect blue sky lined with high contrails. Thin wispy veils of mist hung over the landscape – it was going to be a brilliant day and I was exhilarated as I drove through Borrowdale and over Honister. I arrived at Gatesgarth at 7am, with only one other car parked there. I set off across the fields and over Peggy's Bridge to take the path which initially goes through a small copse before reaching open ground and ascending steadily up the fellside to Scarth Gap.

The going was good and I didn't experience the brief spell of shortness of breath which I usually do at the start of the first ascent of a week of walking. That path up to Scarth Gap may be relatively easy going, but it is a long haul and progress is slowed when on the steeper rocky part to reach the saddle. At last Buttermere was behind me and I had an excellent view of Ennerdale with its dark green plantations of trees and my path angling diagonally down into them and towards the River Liza.



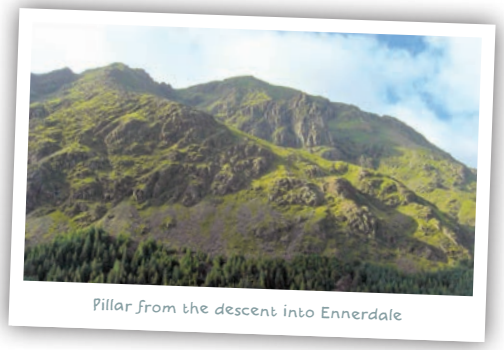
Pillar, seen across the Memorial Bridge

Halfway down, when pausing to enjoy some coffee, a man came past me. 'Aye, I'm heading for Pillar,' he said in a strong Geordie accent. 'I did this yesterday, but got only as far as the cairn, so I'm giving it another try – see you up there.' And off he jogged. Did this yesterday? Giving it another try? What stamina!

Eventually I reached the Memorial Bridge. I had decided to take AW's advice and not continue directly up from the bridge but turn right and take a forest ride that he suggested could be named 'the Pillar Ride', since Pillar Rock was 'directly ahead and perfectly framed in trees all the way up'. I walked along the forest road looking for what I expected to be a clear break in the trees just beyond the fork in the road shown in the guidebook. There wasn't one and I walked back and forth to find it, but without success. I then noticed a white marker post and, thinking (and hoping) this must be the way to go, started thrashing my way upwards through the trees, over rocks and around bushes, all the time wondering whether I was on a path or not. I concluded I wasn't. It was very hard going but, after what seemed an eternity, I reached the broken fence line and continued my ascent across the face of Pillar Cove, glad to be out in the open again. I headed diagonally to the left and ever upwards, relieved when at last I could see Robinson's Cairn ahead of me.

My first action when reaching this planned lunch-stop was to survey the next stage of my walk, Shamrock Traverse, set in dramatic rocky scenery. I felt somewhat intimidated. I couldn't blame the conditions for my unease – it was a superb day and perfectly dry underfoot. From the cairn I trained my binoculars on a path that curved upwards. It looked very steep, too steep for my liking, with a nasty-looking smooth and slippery upward twist near the top. I wondered if I was looking at the wrong path, if indeed it was one, but I could see no other obvious route. As I started my lunch, three younger walkers arrived. They were looking for the Shamrock Traverse and, had I not just stopped, I would have gone with them, but instead just wished them good luck and watched them go out of sight around a rocky corner. I expected to see them come into view eventually on that steep path. They didn't. The worry set in.

I spent a long time looking towards that apparent path on that nasty-looking steep and slippery slope. I thought of walking over to inspect it at close



Pillar from the descent into Ennerdale

quarters, but it was quite some distance away and time was ticking by. With some reluctance, I decided not to risk it, but to take the High Level Route in the opposite direction for a return journey via Black Sail Hut. After fifteen minutes on what was a far more precarious path than I had expected, I met another walker heading for Shamrock Traverse. I could have joined him, but I was well on the way in the opposite direction, the afternoon was advancing and, to be honest, I wasn't that keen on retracing some quite hair-raising steps.

Eventually I arrived at the junction of the High Level Route and the path that leads in one direction down to Ennerdale and the other to the top of Pillar. I started up towards Pillar, but the summit plateau looked a good mile away and, with time getting on, I turned back after a few minutes and headed down towards Ennerdale. Outside Black Sail hut were a couple of Canadians enjoying a beer in the warm late afternoon sun. They greeted me with: 'Sure lucky with the weather.' It was dark when I got back to my car.

I wasn't ashamed at turning back but I was disappointed not to have reached the summit. Subsequently, I spent many hours looking at photographs and YouTube videos of the Shamrock Traverse. It looked easily do-able. I noted that AW wrote of the route from Robinson's Cairn to the summit, on part of the High Level Route, along Shamrock Traverse and then up a stony path: 'There are no difficulties or dangers on this route *provided the path is kept underfoot.' The Western Fells*, Pillar 11

What then, was my problem? I wasn't sure, but what I did know was that I would return. I did and that's a story for a future issue of *Footsteps*.

Andrew Simpson – Sheffield
Membership No. 2341

***Editor's note**: this is the fourth in a series Wainwright on C— , the previous topics being cairns, cameras and cartography.*

Wainwright on Crowds



Alan Thomas, alone on the fells

One day last May, I made my way up to the top of Causey Pike intent on getting some good pictures of the summit. But no sooner had I got there and pulled out my camera than three walkers suddenly emerged from below. They told me they were with a party and, sure enough, a few minutes later we were joined by the other members – *nineteen* people in all. With the group settling down on the summit rocks for a leisurely lunch, leaving the ground underfoot barely visible, my hopes of having the place to myself were dashed. Two's company, and this was most definitely a crowd.

AW would have hated it: the one thing he could not abide when fellwalking was company, and especially parties, groups, crowds. On the fells, AW wanted to be alone.

'The worst experience that befalls a solitary walker is coming face to face with a large party, especially when they are strung out along his path. In a tight place, where this many-headed and many-legged caterpillar cannot be bypassed, it must be confronted. It may be a party of 36. Every one of them ventures a greeting of sorts (the courtesy code of the hills, y'know). If I am in sociable mood, I mumble a response to the first. The rest must share it … Okay, so I do not like large parties on the hills. They spoil the paths. They leave litter. They get under the feet. Half of them always seem to be on the point of dropping dead. Many are obviously not enjoying themselves, and should not be there at all. Leave the hills to those who most appreciate them is my motto.' (*Fellwanderer*)

For AW, the best kind of fellwalking was solitary fellwalking.

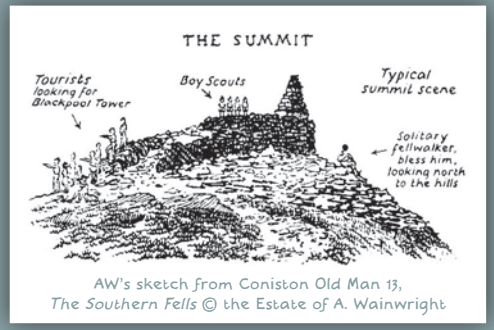
'Solitary fellwalking is often roundly condemned, not by solitary fellwalkers but by non-solitary fellwalkers and non-fellwalkers including coroners. Always walk with others, they say. This is excellent advice for those who lack ordinary gumption, or are plain daft; and such people, if they go on the fells at all, which they shouldn't, can be further advised to get themselves in the middle of a big party and keep themselves hemmed in by the sweating flesh of others. At the end of the day, they won't know where they've been and they won't have seen much, but at any rate won't have been lost or killed themselves: they'll be proud of this, and it is not for us to reason why. It is good advice also for those who are new to the hills until they get the feel of the high places. But to a careful and experienced fellwalker the advice is intolerable. It is the man or woman who walks alone who enjoys the greatest rewards, who sees and feels and senses the mood of the hills and knows them most intimately, and it is no coincidence that they are people of abundant common sense and initiative and imagination. To the man in a conducted party the mountains are prose, to the man travelling alone they are poetry.' (*Fellwanderer*)

AW's preference for walking alone began early, during his schooldays in Blackburn. Along with his red hair, it marked him out in his eyes from his friends.



The party approaching the summit of Causey Pike

'I was different too in my liking for long solitary walks. Someone had given me a map of Lancashire, a tattered sheet on a small scale but it opened a bit more of the world for me, and I was eager to learn … Ill shod and ill clothed, with jam butties in my pocket and no money for tram fares, I often tramped twenty miles in a day's walk, interested in all I saw; I liked looking round corners at fresh scenes. These early excursions out of sight and sound of the towns bred in me a love of lonely uplands that has persisted ever since, and a fascination for maps that has never faded.' (*Ex-Fellwanderer*)



AW's sketch from Coniston Old Man 13, *The Southern Fells* © the Estate of A. Wainwright

But AW did not totally dislike being with other people, whether in small groups or even in large crowds. It depended on what he was doing. At home, he was not an only child for he had a brother and two sisters. Nor did he lack friends in childhood, writing in *Ex-Fellwanderer* that he was 'one of a gang of young ragamuffins who gathered on summer evenings to kick a rag ball about on a cinder track nearby'. His love of football and of Blackburn Rovers led him to co-found the Blackburn Rovers Supporters' Club, a venture that involved him in numerous meetings and regular attendance at matches. He complained that at one game there were only 43,000 spectators (*The Biography* p.87); the crowd was not too large, but too small.

At work, too, at first in Blackburn and later in Kendal, he was no solitary figure. In a letter to his friend Eric Maudsley, written in February 1941 while he was still working in Blackburn, he wrote: 'At present I seem to have more friends than I've ever had … The most profitable evening I ever spent was the night when the Supporters' Club was formed … The committee meetings became a joy to my starved soul: there I found bright talk and laughter and beer, and it suited.' (*The Wainwright Letters* p.22) Later, his role as Borough Treasurer in Kendal brought him into contact with the members of the Town Council – he 'got on well with all of them' (*Ex-Fellwanderer*) – and many local organisations. 'At the time of my retirement I had accumulated the Secretaryship or Treasurership or both of thirteen voluntary organisations in the town.' (*Ex-Fellwanderer*) So, while AW may have become more withdrawn and more critical of humanity in later life, he could hardly be characterised as a lifelong loner and misanthrope.

It was all a matter of context. Other people, even thousands of them, were fine at football matches, but were to be avoided when fellwalking. In AW's view, it is desirable to be alone in the hills because that is the only way in which they, and the experience of freedom they bring, can be fully appreciated. They *deserve* to be fully appreciated and only the solitary walker can do them justice.

'Of course he has nobody to talk to, which is an advantage, and there is nobody to talk to him, which is a bigger advantage; he has nothing to distract his attention and nobody to consult or argue with, he goes where he pleases, makes his own pace, halts when and where he likes … Absolute freedom includes freedom from the presence of others. Some people (in parties) pity the solitary walker, and seem unable to understand that he walks alone by preference. But surely a man doesn't have to be queer to enjoy his own company best, once in a while; away from the hills he has precious few opportunities for quiet meditation. And if a man cannot enjoy his own company, what effect does he think it has on others? Sometimes the reverse is the case: I always consider myself, when alone, a vastly entertaining companion, but when with others am considered unsociable, boorish, not with it. Again, some people (in parties) confuse aloneness with loneliness, but there is all the difference in the world between being alone and being lonely. I am least lonely when I am alone on the hills and free to indulge my imagination; most lonely in a crowd.' (*Fellwanderer*)



Causey Pike summit occupied

During his 1938 walk, the subject of *A Pennine Journey*, AW was tempted on arrival at the village of Stainforth to stop there.

'But on turning the corner, I came across the bicycles. Not a dozen, but hundreds, lining the road on both sides of the tearoom, from which issued bedlam. I can't understand why cyclists are so noisy, but they invariably are. A pity, because there is much to admire in them. They have the right idea, but until they can resist the craving to herd together, I fear they will never experience the greatest enjoyment from the open air. … A discordant note in a quiet place is sacrilege: the hills have a message for the soul, but we shall not hear it if we are one of many. There are times for companionship, times for solitude. It is tragic to be solitary on a dance-floor; equally tragic to be in a crowd on a hilltop.' (*A Pennine Journey* pp. 5-6)

During my encounter with the walkers on Causey Pike, one member of the party of nineteen who were also there asked me, in a slightly accusatory tone, whether I was walking alone. 'Yes,' I said, 'I am.' He gave me a withering look. 'That isn't advised, you know,' he said gravely. It would have taken too long to explain. So I just smiled, made my farewells and went on my way.

Alan Thomas – Warrington
Membership No. 2518



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***Editor's note**: when ex-Special Forces operator Christopher Gaskin completed all 214 Wainwright fells in 11 days, 10 hours and 58 minutes last spring, he became the first person to complete them solo and unsupported. Here he recounts the experience.*

Project 214

– completing the Wainwrights, solo and unsupported

At 05:18 on 29 May 2021, as the sun was rising over the fells, I was sitting on Whiteside having walked through the night, reflecting on the challenges I still had to face. I was attempting to set the record for the first solo and unsupported continuous round of the 214 Wainwright fells – and Whiteside was fell number 195.

The day had been especially difficult. I had managed only two micro sleeps – totalling ten minutes at most – in the previous twenty-five hours, having set off from Moot Hall in Keswick some ten days earlier, complete with a pack weighing 20kg.



Taking a breather

By the time I finished the project, I had lost a total of 11kg in body weight, covered over 570km and climbed the equivalent of Mount Everest four times.

So, who am I and what led me to this point?

I grew up in a small mining village in Yorkshire and, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, I visited the Lake District as part of an Outwood Bound programme. That was my first real trip outside my home area and I loved the feeling of space and freedom. I went on to join the military, travel the world and meet some amazing people, but something always brings me back to the Lake District.

A few years ago, I read Steve Birkinshaw's book *There is No Map in Hell*, which recounts his experiences while setting the record for the fastest supported round of the 214 Wainwrights. Reading his account lit a fuse, a slow-burning fuse but a fuse all the same. Since then, I have visited the Lake District many times to escape the daily routine and to challenge myself. At the time of the project, I was training to undertake the Marathon De Sables under the stewardship of Paul Tierney and Missing Link Coaching. They are no strangers to the Wainwrights and Paul had only recently beaten Steve Birkinshaw's record with an impressive round of 6 days, 6 hours and 5 minutes.

After some research, I noted a record set by James Forrest for the self-supported round. The self-supported round allows for the re-supply of food and other items in secret stash locations along the route. He had managed to get around the 214 fells in an impressive 14 days and 11 hours … that was it then, I had to do it solo and unsupported.

Solo and unsupported simply meant that, from the starting point at Moot Hall, to finishing there, I was not able to benefit from any external help. Unlike the self-supported version, as achieved by James, I was not able to pre-drop food to be picked up *en route*. I could however, collect water from natural sources. This meant I would be out on the fells with everything I needed to complete the 214 round and would have no one with me – something never before achieved. I was breaking new ground.

However, my background in the military and most notably the Special Forces would serve as an advantage here. It gave me all the skills that made this attempt possible; the ability to work alone, to navigate, to carry heavy weights over unforgiving terrain, to survive in these environments for extended periods of time, to use mental resilience when the going gets tough and to focus on the task in front of me. I would need to call on all those attributes to overcome what the Wainwrights had in store for me.

I tried to make my plan as simple as possible. The first challenge was just to get round and the second was to get round faster than James had. I therefore split the distance into daily chunks; 40km per day would get me round in 14 days, but if I could manage 50km per day, that would reduce it to just over 11 days. Of course, the weather would have a bearing on this. If progress any day was slower than expected, I would offset this simply by using some of my planned sleep time to keep moving.

I would be sleeping on the fells, respecting a 'leave no trace' policy and would follow an unshakeable routine of waking up, putting on wet clothes, packing away my tent, covering 50km, then finding a space to pitch a tent, set up camp again, get out of my wet clothes, make a hot meal, grab a few hours of sleep, then repeat – a routine not too dissimilar to Special Forces selection, life in the jungle or on operations. Once again, this played to my military strengths and gave me an advantage over most.



Getting some energy on board ready for the next climb

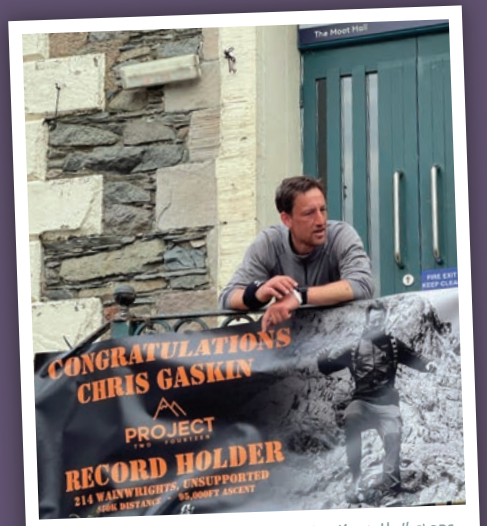
As I would need to travel with a pack containing food, sleeping system, tent, cooker, gas, spare clothes and safety kit, including a tracker, I needed to minimise non-essential items in order to travel as light as possible. I resorted to slimming everything down, decanting food, only taking one spare pair of socks and squeezing out half a tube of toothpaste – no point carrying anything not required.

Food made up the bulk of the weight, but I limited myself to 550g/2000kcal per day – this was made up of Resilient Nutrition nut butter pouches, a chocolate protein cookie, a Peperami, a FirePot dehydrated meal, some salt tablets and Precision Hydration sachets, which helped to replace minerals lost during each day's activities. I would be burning 6000–8000kcal per day, but it just wasn't feasible to carry enough to replace all of this. This inevitably resulted in significant weight loss during the event, but I had bulked up in preparation.

During the event there were many moments where the going got really tough, but none more so than on the eighth day. It started the same as the seven before, but I was lacking energy and the weight loss was visible. To keep my trousers up, I had to attach them to the waist-belt of my backpack as my elasticated trouser-belt had become ineffective! At 10:30 I was moving slowly and, no matter how much I tried, I just couldn't get out of first gear. After several short stops I found a spot, took off my pack, laid down and disconnected from the moment. My mind wandered and I thought about why I was here.

One of the reasons I had embarked on this challenge was to support fellow military veterans. I'm acutely aware of the mental and physical challenges that befall those who experience conflict while on operations, so I teamed up with the charity Walking With The Wounded. They help veterans to get back on their feet and make positive contributions to society. I would go on to raise £8k, but I didn't know that then.

However, as I lay there, I thought about all those who had already donated, those who would be helped by the fundraising and the fact that I had already covered a fair distance. After about an hour, I stood up and started moving, one foot in front of the other, climbing as I went. After a while I was jogging, then running and by the end of that day I had covered some 52km, the longest distance thus far.



All over after the final climb up the Moot Hall steps

Three days later, as I sat on Whiteside watching what I knew to be the final sunrise of the project, I became a little emotional. I had not intended to keep moving through the night, but I knew I needed to do something different to push myself a little harder and, I hoped, raise more funds for the charity. During that final stint, I went on to cover some 114km and tick off forty-six Wainwrights, thereby completing the 214 Wainwright fells in 11 days, 10 hours and 58 minutes, setting the record for the first person to complete them solo and unsupported.

I must finish, however, by noting that while I was indeed solo and unsupported out on the fells, during my training I was not. I couldn't have succeeded without the support of my wife Kelly and son Kyran, and a friend and veteran Tim Sluman, who has supported me on other challenges and who was watching my tracker for any signs that I had fallen. He probably had less sleep than I did in the latter part of the project!

Christopher Gaskin – West Yorkshire
Membership No. 4198

Daily Summary

Day 1 (18 May 2021) – Moot Hall, Keswick to Base Brown. Weather: sunny. 50 km, 16 fells. Ascent: 3,273 metres.

Day 2 – Base Brown to Gavel Fell (Ennerdale Water). Sunny. 51 km, 19 fells. 3,407m.

Day 3 – Gavel Fell (Ennerdale Water) to Buckbarrow. Mild at first but then heavy rain, strong winds and mist. 38 km, 13 fells. 3,131m.

Day 4 – Buckbarrow to Hard Knott. Heavy rain and strong winds. 38km, 13 fells. 3,739m.

Day 5 – Hard Knott to Lingmoor Fell. Dry. 45km, 14 fells. 2,784m.

Day 6 – Lingmoor Fell to Loughrigg Fell. Sunny to start, then driving hail and snow. 43km, 19 fells. 3,041m.

Day 7 – Loughrigg Fell to Yoke. Overcast, turning warm. 48km, 22 fells. 3,620m.

Day 8 – Yoke to Bonscale Pike. Overcast, with showers. 52km, 21 fells. 2,930m.

Day 9 – Bonscale Pike to Hart Side. Clear, but patches of rain. 47km, 19 fells. 4,131m.

Day 10 - Hart Side to Carrock Fell. Intermittent sun and rain, with periods of low visibility. 51km, 15 fells. 2,515m.

Day 11 (28/29th May) – Carrock Fell to Moot Hall, Keswick. Intermittent sun, rain with periods of low visibility, but ending with sunshine. 114km, 46 fells. 6,670m.

For full details of Chris' achievement and information of future challenges, go to: Instagram – mr.g.runningfree and Facebook – www.facebook.com/christopher.gaskin.5437

The Wainwright Society

Wainwright and the 214 fells

The genesis of this article came about following a conversation I had with David Johnson (editor of *Footsteps*) in 2013 whilst he was writing an article about the Society's list of 214 completers. The opening paragraph read: 'We know from letters AW wrote that he was aware, and approved of, people climbing to the summits of all the 214 fells described in his Pictorial Guides. This will be the subject of a future article in *Footsteps*.' This, belatedly, is the article referred to in that text …

It is not known when Alfred Wainwright made the decision to write the Pictorial Guides. In his closing remarks in Book One, he stated: 'I suppose it might be said, to add impressiveness to the whole thing, that this book has been twenty years in the making', and there followed a reference to his first visit to Lakeland in 1930. In *Fellwanderer*, written in 1966, Wainwright described how that first holiday changed the course of his life. 'That week changed my life; its haunting perfection gave me no rest afterwards. For me there could be no other place, and when in due course an opportunity offered itself the Lake District became my home. Truly my home. Not merely a place to work and eat and go to bed. A place to live. A place to be. I had no roots there, but I resolved to grow some, and they would go deep, into the very rocks.'



Wainwright made references about his plans to write a book about Lakeland in letters to friends and other writing in the 1930s and 40s including this reference in a letter to Eric Maudsley in May 1942: 'Actually, you know, I came here to write and draw. Wordsworth and Wainwright, these two! … The real classic, however, will not be published until about 1960. My life's blood will be in it: it will be my memorial. This, of course will be WAINWRIGHT'S GUIDE TO THE LAKELAND HILLS. Look out for these publications on the bookstalls, in vivid yellow jackets. And please buy a copy, for auld lang syne!' (*The Wainwright Letters* p. 51)

Wainwright claimed in *Fellwanderer* and in subsequent television interviews that he wrote the guides for his own satisfaction and, at first, was not planning to publish the books. 'At that time, I had no thought of publication. I was working for my own pleasure and enjoying it hugely. I was gathering together all my notes and drawings and a host of recollections, and putting them in a book so that when I became an old man I could look through them at leisure, recall all my memories, and go on fellwalking in spirit long after my legs had given up.' But a study of *The Eastern Fells* seems to belie this assertion. The language used in dozens of references indicates that he was writing for an audience of fellwalkers and not just for himself.


Derek Cockell, on his completion on Blencathra in August 2009, with his wife Alison and Beattie

'There is no public path across the field behind the farmhouse at Fornside. Ask permission at the farm to cross the fellside beyond: gates give access.' (Great Dodd 7)

'Prudent pedestrians will heed the warning and take no further interest in this page. What follows is therefore exclusively for the walker who (a) holds his life cheaply, or (b) reacts to such signs as a bull to a red rag.' (Great Mell Fell 3)

Furthermore, the advertising material he devised made it clear that the book had been written for walkers: 'Primarily it is a book for fellwalkers, for those who know the fells intimately and for those who know them but little.' (Advertising flyer for *The Eastern Fells*)

Towards the end of *Fellwanderer*, Wainwright wrote: 'I will close by wishing you many many happy days on the fells. You will be following in my footsteps, wherever you go, and I hope you find the enjoyment I found: I am sure you will.' Thousands of walkers did exactly that and just days after the publication of Book One, the fan letters began arriving. Many of Wainwright's replies have been published in *The Wainwright Letters* (from which the quotations below are also taken).

With the publication of Book 7, the last in the main series, the concept of the 214 Lakeland fells was established in the minds of walkers who had bought the Guides. Who knows who was the first to complete the 214 summits and write to Wainwright to inform him of the achievement? The earliest reference in *The Wainwright Letters* is a reply sent by AW to Meg, a six-year-old dog on 5 July 1971. The letter was written by Meg's owner, Max Hargreaves, who had been responsible for organising a petition to have Wainwright honoured for his work on the Pictorial Guides. He was writing to Wainwright to explain that Meg had just completed her first round of the 214 fells. In reply AW wrote: 'My dear Meg ... I think you are a super little girl. You are the tops, really and truly. Yes, a few others have climbed all the 214 hills but they were big strong men. The youngest I know of was a boy from Carlisle, but he was 16 (sixteen, not six). So you hold the record and ought to get Daddy to write to the papers about it and get you on television.' (Letter 188, p.268). From his reply, it is clear that Wainwright had seen news of other completions of the 214 fells.

In a second letter, written three years later, Meg was reporting that she had completed a second round. Wainwright was fulsome in his praise of her exploits: 'Dear Meg ... I must confess that your letter the other day, informing me that you had now climbed all the Lakeland fells for a second time, was a great surprise to me. It is a truly remarkable performance. You ought to go down in history with Scott and Amundsen and Drake and Marco Polo. Never before in the records of fellwalking has there been such an achievement as yours. I myself was nearly sixty before I could claim to have climbed all the fells – you were six.' (Letter 189, p.269)


Mark Abbott, our Walks Leader, completing the 214 on Harter Fell (Eskdale) in March 2017, fifty years to the day from his first fell

Another three years passed, and this time Max wrote the letter explaining his part in organising the honours petition. He also revealed that he was the source of the letters from Meg. AW replied: 'Of course I remember Meg, and actually have been expecting to hear from her with a report that she has completed the trinity [her third round]. Since she first wrote I have had scores of letters from correspondents proudly announcing that they have climbed all the 214 fells, and asking if they have broken a record. I never fail to tell them about little Meg (which seems to deflate their ego because they never write again). I hope she keeps well and still has a fond liking for the high places of Lakeland.' (Letter 191, p.271)

AW had a long correspondence with Margaret Ainley, who delighted in telling him of the walking exploits of her young daughter, Catherine. In a reply, written in 1975, AW could not resist using Meg as an example of a 214 completer: 'Dear Margaret ... It was nice to hear from you again and have an up to date report on Catherine's latest peak-bagging successes ... Even so, she is going to have to pull up her socks to beat the record of one of my correspondents, this being a little girl of six years, from Southport, who wrote to say she had climbed all the 214 fells in the seven books, and last week sent me further word that, now at nine years of age, she had done them all a second time.' (Letter 212, p.293)

Mr Morris wrote to AW in 1974 to tell him of his intention to climb all the 214 fells and his plans for a further fifteen rounds. Wainwright was clearly bemused by this ambition and suggested an alternative plan: 'Dear Mr Morris … I have noted your ambition to climb all the 214 Lakeland fells, and I have checked your arithmetic and found it faultless, but I am mightily perplexed by your intention to repeat the performance 15 times.[*] ... What I would advise is that you tackle every one of the 214 over the next few years, plus 56 lesser fells I have listed in a book called *The Outlying Fells of Lakeland* due to be published in a few weeks, thus making 270 in all.' (Letter 181, pp.261-2)

*Mr Morris had realised that in climbing the 214 fells fifteen times, he would have climbed a total of 3,210 fells – the height in feet of Scafell Pike!

Others who wrote to him received congratulations: 'Dear Mr Sager ... Your climbing of all the 214 fells, especially as you live so far from the district, was a splendid performance for which you have my congratulations.' (Letter 299, p.366)

From the selection of letters quoted above there is ample evidence that AW regarded climbing the 214 fells as a worthwhile ambition. It is clear that many people wrote to him about climbing the 214 and that he encouraged them to do so and always offered congratulations to people who proudly wrote to him about their achievements. And the goal of climbing the 214 fells continues to attract hill walkers. In the years since David Johnson wrote his article, the number of Society members on the Completers Register has tripled to 1,200.

This is an article about achieving ambition. One man's ambition to write a 'love letter' to the Lakeland fells and the ambition of thousands who were inspired to follow in his footsteps and discover the unique joys of walking and climbing in a captivating landscape. This reminds me of the wise advice of Alfred Wainwright in another of his books: 'One should always have a definite objective, in a walk as in life – it is so much more satisfying to reach a target by personal effort than to wander aimlessly. An objective is an ambition, and life without ambition is … well, aimless wandering.' (Introduction p. iv, *A Coast to Coast Walk*)

Derek Cockell – Bishops Lydeard
Membership No. 13



For all the latest Society news, please visit us online at: www.wainwright.org.uk or follow us on Facebook or Twitter

Membership Discounts 2022

Please see the Society Website for all details. **Some discounters require you to show your Society Membership card, so please have it with you.**

ESTABLISHMENT	LOCATION	DISCOUNT ON
Blencathra Centre	Threlkeld	Self Catering
Blenheim Lodge	Bowness-On-Windermere	B&B
Bowderstone Bunkhouse	Borrowdale	Self Catering
Chapelfield Cottage	Borrowdale	Self Catering
Coniston Coppermines	Various	Self Catering
Cotswold Outdoor (inc. Snow+Rock and Runners Need)	Various	Gear
Cumbria Magazine	Magazine	Retail and Leisure
Greenbank Country House	Borrowdale	B&B
Haven Cottage	Ambleside	B&B
Horsman's Jewellers	Ambleside	Retail and Leisure
Kellah Farm	nr Haltwhistle	B&B
Lakeland Walker	Magazine	Retail and Leisure
Lakeland Walks & Talks	Various	Guided Tours
Lothlorien	Kent's Bank	Self Catering
Mountain Life at Rheged	Penrith	Gear
Outdoor World Direct	Web and Huddersfield	Gear
Rosemount Hotel	Windermere	B&B
Royal Oak	Rosthwaite	Hotel
Salutation	Ambleside	Hotel & Meals
Seatoller House	Borrowdale	B&B
Sonata Guest House	Kendal	B&B
Striding Edge	Website	Retail and Leisure
Stuart Sports	Bowness on Windermere	Retail
Wainwright House	Kendal	B&B
Walking World	Website	Retail and Leisure

The Finest Half-Dozen?

If you piled up all the volumes written about Lakeland, they'd probably overtop Scafell Pike; indeed, I've just counted nearly a hundred on my bookshelf, of which I rate many as real classics. Of course, for most people reading this, AW's Pictorial Guides will comprise the finest of such books.

At the conclusion of the seventh guide, AW produced lists of what he considered to be the finest half-dozen fells, the six best summits, the six best places to be (other than summits) and, possibly rather oddly for one so numerically precise, eleven finest ridge walks. In that spirit, and in no special order, I hereby submit my top half-dozen Lakeland books, excluding AW's, for your consideration. All are still obtainable, even if second-hand online.

Off to the Lakes: Jessica Lofthouse. Published by Robert Hale Ltd., 1949.

This eloquently elegiac evocation of the Lake District at the end of the Second World War was published at a time when English topographical writing was reaching one of its peaks following the bleak wartime years. Hale was also responsible for the County Books and Regions of Britain series. Born in Clitheroe a couple of months before AW, Jessica Lofthouse moved to Blackburn aged eleven and the two were in the same class at Blakey Moor School for a while.

The Lake District: W. H. Pearsall & W. Pennington. Collins New Naturalist series, 1973.

This book, which includes a chapter on climate – a sobering read in these days of climate change – was dedicated to 'all those young people, from industry, universities and sixth forms who, in "the inquiring spirit of the old naturalists", have helped in so many ways with the field studies needed to complete this book, help which has included … carrying a boat up Rossett Gill and Sty Head, and camping on the High Street ridge through a full gale.'

A Lifetime of Mountains: A. Harry Griffin. Aurum Press, 2005.

Which of Harry Griffin's fifteen Lake District books to choose? They are all inspirational and written with the real knowledge and craft that a long lifetime in Lakeland and in journalism brought him. From Coniston Tigers, about his early rock-climbing experiences from the late 1920s, to *Freeman of the Hills*, recording a round of the District's 2000 footers in his 67th year, they are full of interest and detail – indeed many of them were illustrated by Wainwright. *A Lifetime of Mountains* is a selection of the Country Diary articles Griffin wrote for the *Guardian* for over half a century. A friend of AW, Griffin was occasionally critical of the guides for attracting too many people to the fells, while Wainwright sometimes tried to avoid him on the hills, thinking him a chatterbox.

The Plague Dogs: Richard Adams. Penguin Books, 1978.

I finished re-reading *The Plague Dogs* for the umpteenth time on the day that its author died. Long a favourite of mine, it combines a great tale of human cruelty and ultimate redemption, with brilliant descriptive writing about the district. This is another book that AW, a lifelong lover of animals, illuminated with his illustrations, and I've long thought of it as one of Lakeland's best explorations. A few walkers have followed some of the routes taken by the dogs during their adventures, but beware – don't try to repeat Mr Geoffrey Westcott's quest!

Mines and Mining in the English Lake District: John Postlethwaite. Republished by Michael Moon, 1975.

I've long been interested in industrial archaeology and it's obvious from his guides that Wainwright had a keen curiosity for the remains of mines and quarries on the fells. Postlethwaite's book, first published in 1877, paints a detailed picture of the geology of the district and describes the many mines working at the time. Although there are only few surviving remains now, it is possible, with this book, to conjure up a picture of what the scene was like 150 years ago. Postlethwaite has certainly been an inspiration for latter-day recorders of the mining scene such as Ian Tyler and Eric Holland.

The English Lakes – a History: Ian Thompson. Bloomsbury, 2010.

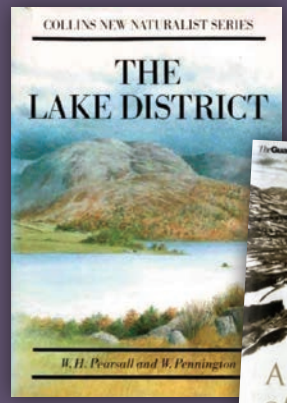
Written by a Barrovian, this is a painstakingly researched and beautifully written history of the district, its landscape and personalities, from the dawn of tourism in the early 18th century to the present day. The book is full of interesting asides, and dedicates half a dozen pages to AW. It is illustrated with many prints of Lakeland scenes by artists from William Gilpin to, of course, Alfred Wainwright, as well as the author's own superb landscape photographs.

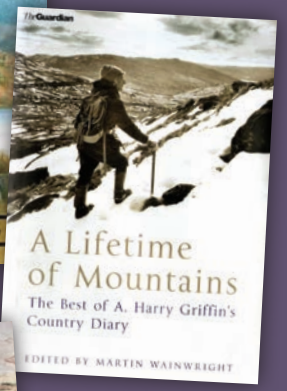
Wait a minute! AW wrote *seven* guides to the Lake District, so I'm going to slip in just one more to my list.

Giant Brog and the Motorway: John Cunliffe. Andre Deutsch, 1976.

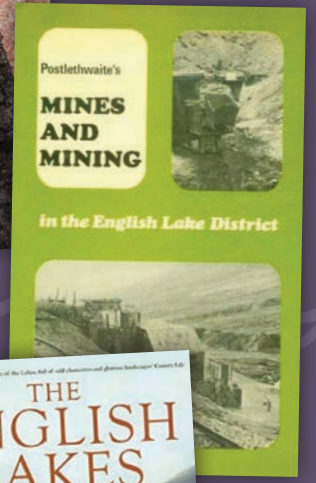
Written by John Cunliffe while he was still a teacher in Kendal and before he wrote *Postman Pat* and *Rosie and Jim*, this is a children's book, illustrated by Alexy Pendle, with a conservation message relevant to kids of all ages. I'm not going to give any plot details away, but this book of less than three dozen pages (half of them are pictures) is well worth a look and should put a thoughtful smile on your face.

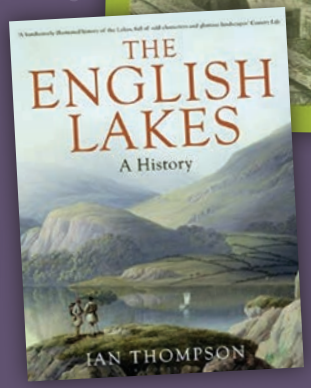
Phil Clayton – Wolverhampton
Membership No. 3517

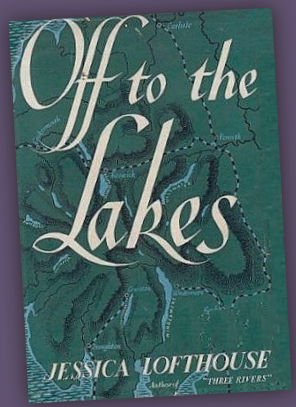


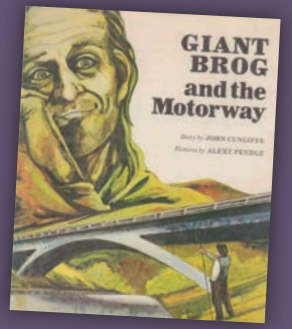












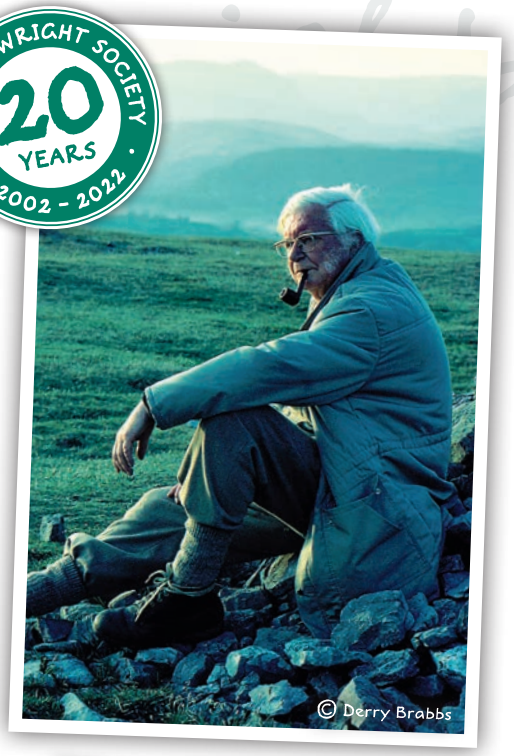
Society News

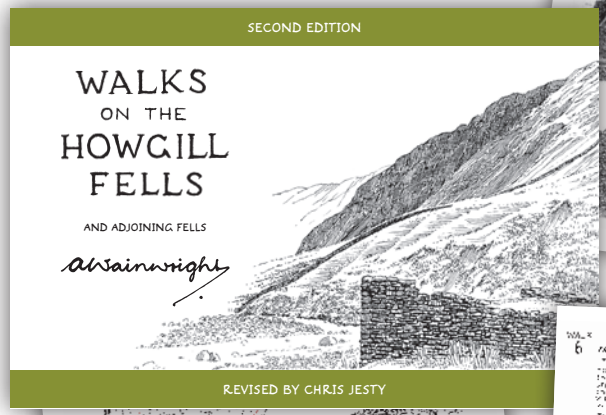
SOCIETY 20th ANNIVERSARY

We're holding a special event on Saturday 12 November to mark the Society's 20th Anniversary. This will include a walk to the summit of Dove Crag. Further details will be given in due course, but members may wish to note that the event venue will be Ambleside Parish Centre, Vicarage Road, Ambleside LA22 9DH.

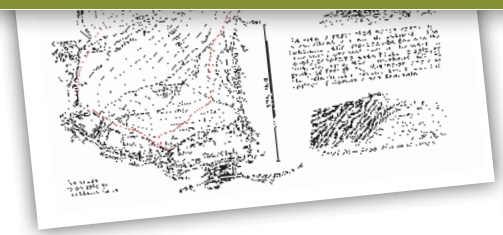
WALKS ON THE HOWGILL FELLS

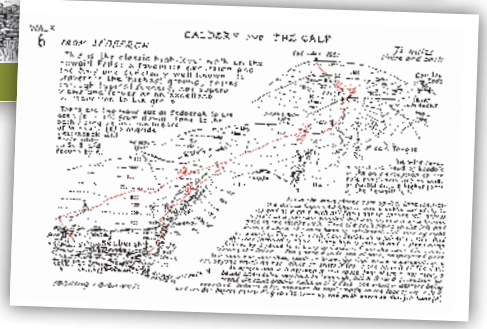
We're very pleased to report that re-publication of *Walks on the Howgill Fells* is on track. We aim to have the book available for sale from April 2022. It's fitting that the book should be re-published this year, fifty years from its first publication. We're also delighted that the Trustees of the Wainwright Estate have given the Society permission to include some additional introductory material. The walks and route descriptions as revised by Chris Jesty have not been changed. We'll let you know when the book is available for purchase through the Society's website.











2022 CHALLENGE – WAINWRIGHT'S NORTHERN FELLS

Huge thanks to everyone who has put their name forward to take part in the Society's 2022 Challenge. It's particularly pleasing to report that with just one exception (for special reasons) each of the eighty-two walks is being undertaken by a different Society member. In other words, and unlike in many previous years, no member has had to be 'encouraged' to tackle an extra one or two Challenge walks. Our thanks to Mark Abbott, our Walks Organiser, for all he has done to make this year's Challenge such a success.

The Challenge is a great activity in itself, but we also aim this year to raise as much money as we can through Society members' and other donations for the work of Animal Rescue Cumbria. You can read on page 7 how the Society's contribution, which will include the profits from our 2023 Calendar sales, will support Animal Rescue in providing improved facilities at the Wainwright Shelter, Kapellan.

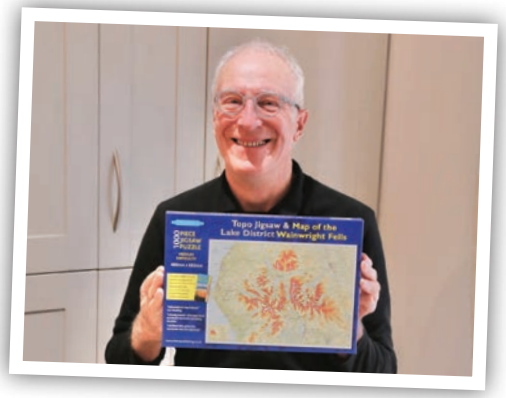
STORM ARWEN

The storm unfortunately brought down thousands of trees within the Lake District, resulting in the Lake District National Park Authority having to close temporarily a number of popular walking routes in whole or in part. Work is continuing and the Park Authority has moved quickly to clear as many fallen trees as possible. Two 'Miles without Stiles' routes that are popular with Society members are now fully open again: these are the railway path from Keswick to Threlkeld and the accessible route to Orrest Head summit.



KENDAL WALKING FESTIVAL, 6–9 MAY 2022

Society member John Burland will again be supporting this popular festival by giving his presentation 'An Evening with Alfred Wainwright', on Friday 6 May. Full details of all the events, a number of which reference AW, can be found at www.kendalwalkingfestival.co.uk.



A JIGSAW PUZZLE

Peter Knowles, a Society member and keen fellwalker, runs Keswick-based Rivers Publishing, which produced the Topographical Map of the Lake District Wainwright Fells. A jigsaw puzzle of the map has been made. For more details, see the advert on page 20. Peter said: 'I hope it will brighten a few lives – especially those who cannot access the fells for whatever reason.' Peter has kindly offered a puzzle as a prize and this will be awarded to the member who correctly answers the following question and whose name is drawn from the hat. The question is: a map of which of the 214 fells, drawn by AW, was '… the result of an amateur survey, using jigsaw tactics in lieu of precise instruments'? To enter, send the answer to: footsteps@wainwright.org.uk (or by post to: 18 Pease Way, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9YZ) by 21 March – when the winner will be notified.

WAINWRIGHT LECTURE ON YOUTUBE



The last issue of *Footsteps* included an article by Society member Liz Woodham, titled *Wainwright in Academia*. Liz is a fourth-year part-time PhD researcher at the University of Lancaster. Her thesis relates to the cultural history of fellwalking in the English Lake District as told through guidebooks. Liz has delivered a talk for the University of Cumbria, specific to AW's guides, and a recording can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLpQyNZWjXQ

Dates for your Diary

WAINWRIGHT SOCIETY WALKS 2022

Members are invited to join the following walks, which will be led by Mark Abbott, our Walks Organiser. Details of these walks will be given on the website and in future issues of *Footsteps*, but if you have any questions regarding them, contact Mark by email at: walkevents@wainwright.org.uk, or by phone: 01606 79336 or 07944 435511.

- **Saturday 19 March – Arnside**

  6½ miles with 550ft of ascent. Time: 3½ hours. Difficulty: easy. Meet at Arnside Pier, at 10am.

  Welcome in the new walking season with bracing sea air and fine views over Morecambe Bay and the Kent estuary. In *Westmorland Heritage* Alfred Wainwright wrote of Arnside: 'The village and its environs are places of quiet delight, with … a wide view beyond to the hills of southern Lakeland'. This largely coastal walk includes a look at Arnside Tower, a late-14th-century pele tower, followed by a short climb up to the trig point on Arnside Knott.

- **Saturday 30 April – Ingleborough from Clapham**

  8½ miles with 2,000ft of ascent. Time: 6 hours. Difficulty: strenuous. Meet at 10am, at Clapham Car Park (there is a £1 charge).

  Celebrate the Society's 2021 re-publication of *Walks in Limestone Country* by climbing one of England's premier and iconic mountains. AW wrote: 'Of the many walks described in this book, the ascent of Ingleborough from Clapham is pre-eminent, the finest of all, a classic. Oh yes, this is the best.' The walk will leave the village via Clapham Drive, pass close by Ingleborough Cave, up Trow Gill and pause at the renowned Gaping Gill, one of the largest and deepest underground chambers in Britain. The return will be via Newby Moss, viewing some of the limestone features described by AW in Walk 10, before a short walk on Clapham Old Road heads back to the village.

- **Saturday 21 May – Carrock Fell and High Pike (Society Challenge Walk)**

  7½ miles with 1,550t of ascent. Time: 6 hours. Difficulty: moderate/strenuous. Meet at 10am at Calebreck (Grid Ref: NY 345358), 4 miles north of Mungrisdale. There is plenty of parking in the vicinity.

  In *The Northern Fells* (Carrock Fell 3), AW wrote: 'Carrock is a delightful climb, as rough as one cares to make it. In the northern area of Lakeland it ranks next to Blencathra for interest and excitement and beauty of surroundings.' With exceptional geology, the summit also has the remains of a hill-fort to add to 'its glorious view'.

- **Saturday 18 June – Catbells and the Newlands Valley**
- **Saturday 23 July – Skiddaw House and Great Calva**
- **Saturday 24 September – Keswick to Threlkeld Railway Trail**
- **October (Lecture day, date TBC) – Grisedale from Glenridding**
- **Saturday 12 November – Ambleside and Dove Crag (Society 20th Anniversary – see page 30)**

2022 MEMORIAL LECTURE – Rheged. Date and details to be advised.

IMPORTANT NOTICE – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Members are reminded that the 2022 AGM will be held on the 26 March at 3pm, via ZOOM. Information on how to join online is enclosed with this issue along with the Agenda.

The Wainwright Society accepts no responsibility for the views, opinions, products or services contained within the Society magazine, *Footsteps*, neither is it responsible for their content or accuracy.

Footsteps is designed and produced by The Wainwright Society.

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