

St Mary's Way

Lancaster Cathedral - St Mary's,
Cleator



A Pilgrimage Walk

This magnificent pilgrimage walk links the Catholic Cathedral of St Peter in Lancaster with the shrine to Our Lady at Cleator. The 67 mile route takes in quiet canal side paths, the wide open views of Morcambe Bay, England's longest lake and a climb in the shadow of Lakeland's highest mountains, finishing at the peaceful grotto built in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes in West Cumbria.

The complete route runs from Lancaster to Arnside, Grange-Over-Sands to Lakeside at Windermere, along the west side of Windermere to Elterwater then over to Rosthwaite then to Ennerdale Bridge and finally to Cleator. The route follows a number of well-established long distance walks including the Lancashire Coastal Way, the Windermere Way, the Cumbria Way and the Coast to Coast Walk.

Notes:

The notes and maps in this guide have been produced in good faith, details on the ground may change. The maps are not to scale and are to indicate the route only, you should use Ordnance Survey Maps explorer 296, OL7, OL6 & OL4. The route crosses some of the high Lakeland passes, you should be able to use a map and compass. Do not use the rights of way across Morcambe Bay due to fast tides and quicksand. You undertake this walk at your own risk and it is up to you to ensure you are suitably equipped to do so. Text and maps copyright Peter Robinson. Photographs copyright Benedict Robinson. I hope you enjoy the walk as much as we did and the weather is kind! Let me know if I need to change any details of the route via e-mail: peterrobinson408@gmail.com.

November 2018

Day 1 Lancaster to Arnside 15 miles

From the front of the cathedral turn right and walk along St Peter's road, cross over Nelson Street and continue along St Peter's Road. At the next junction turn left onto Moor Lane, look for the opening in the wall on the far side of the bridge and the steps leading down to the canal.

Descend to the canal and follow the tow path for 5 miles towards Hest Bank. This is pleasant walking on a shared pedestrian and cycle route, the tarmac surface allowing you to stride out and put the miles in. The tow path leads you through the outskirts of Lancaster, over the magnificent Lune aqueduct and out into open countryside towards the coast.

The canal enters Hest Bank through a cutting, look out for a path to the left sign posted for the shore at the longboat mooring point. Go down the steps and cross over onto Station Road, follow this down crossing over Marine Drive and the West Coast main line by the crossing to the beach.

Hest Bank is a good place to stop for a break or an early lunch. There are picnic benches beside the canal as you enter Hest Bank, there are also a number of benches along the beach front where you can rest and enjoy the magnificent views across Morcambe bay to the Furness peninsular and the Lakeland fells beyond. The beach also has a small café that sells beverages and light meals. While Moracmbe Bay is beautiful to look at its quicksands and fast rising tides make it a place of real danger. Do not venture onto the sands or attempt to cross the Bay by the rights of way, heed the many warning signs.

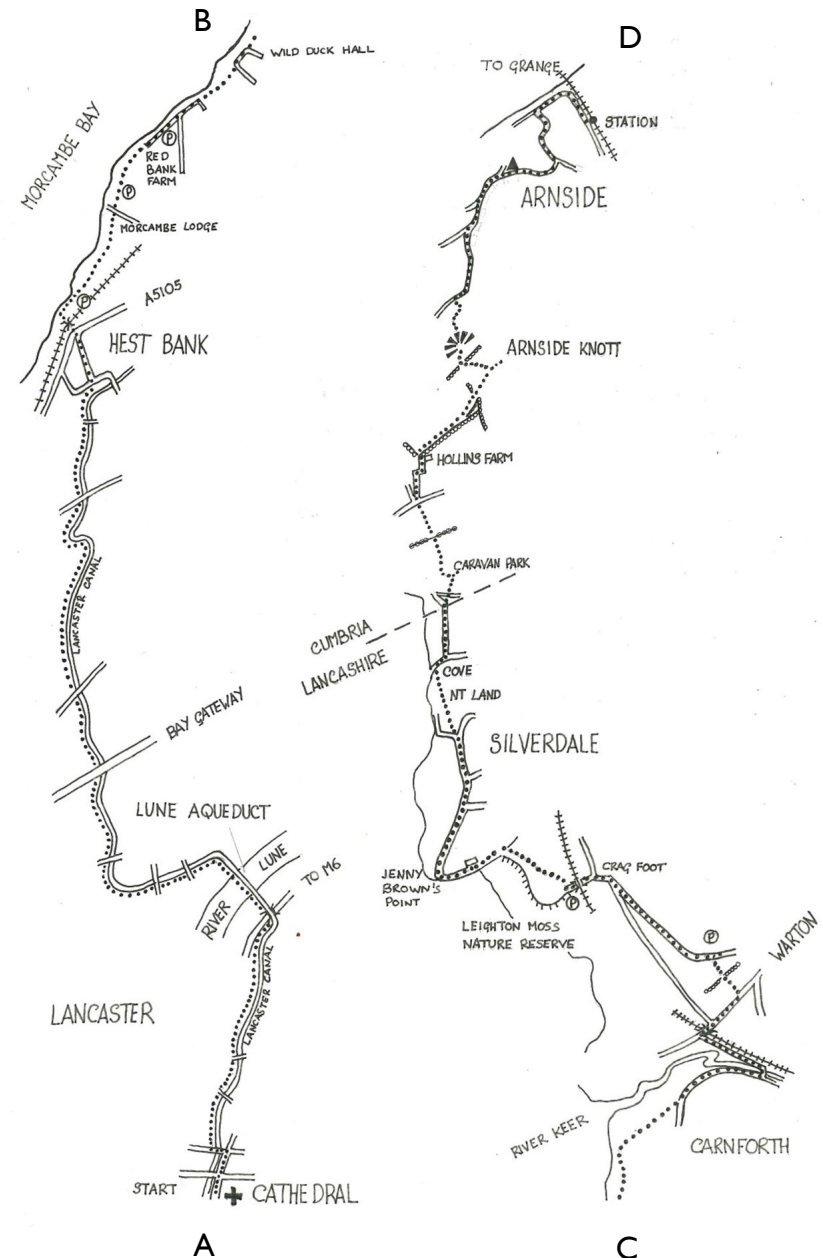
Continue north along the coast, from here onwards you will follow the route of the Lancashire Coastal Way and so should follow these sign posts.

There are a number of benches between here and Carnforth where you can stop for lunch.

Close to Carnforth the path turns inland towards Millhead. You will go through a gate near the top of the inlet, continue onwards until you join the road. Follow Shore Road along, look out for a wooden bridge on your left crossing the river Keer. Cross over it and follow the path uphill until it joins the road, turn right over the railway bridge towards Warton. If you are feeling tired you can turn left along New Road towards Cragg Foot however there is no footpath here so you will need to beware of traffic. Alternatively you can follow the Lancashire Coastal Way route along Sandy Lane into

Alternatively you can follow the Lancashire Coastal Way route along Sandy Lane into towards Warton. Look out for lane on your left after the garage as you descend the

Map 1: Lancaster Cathedral to Arnside



hill. Follow this footpath up into the field and then continue straight up the right hand side of the field to the corner of the field and cross the stile (which is hidden in the trees) and join Crag Road. Turn left and follow the road until it joins New Road at Crag Foot. Follow the road and take the footpath to the left in front of the sign for Silverdale.

You are now at Leighton Moss RSPB reserve which boasts the largest reed bed in north-west England and is home to a wide range of spectacular wildlife including otters, bearded tits, marsh harriers, egrets and red deer.

From here follow the signs for the Lancashire Coastal Way along the top of the sea defences then through a gate at the end of them. Turn left along the shoreline past an old chimney towards Jenny Brown's point and on to Silverdale along Lindeth Road. At the T junction in Silverdale turn right up the hill along Shore Road and then take the footpath up the steps on the left sign posted across the National Trust land for the Cove. Cross the fields and through the gate, follow the lane down to the Cove, then turn right through the gate and up the road. At the T junction turn left and follow the road. You will now cross the Lancashire/ Cumbria border. Immediately after turn right on the foot path through the gate and over a small road. At the next sign post turn left then right down a road on the caravan site. Turn immediately left at the sign post through the trees, then follow the gravel path across the fields and along the wall for Far Arnside. At the road take the track on your right for Hollins farm, ignoring the road directly opposite for Far Arnside. Continue along the track and through the gate following signs for Arnside Knott. Once past the farm buildings turn right and follow the track towards the top of Arnside Knott. Close to the top of the hill pass through a gate in a stone wall then turn left and follow the track through the trees and another gate. The path then opens out with magnificent views over the Kent Estuary.

Descend the hill down the north side until you pick up Knott Lane, the road that leads down towards Arnside. Follow the road down to a T junction, turn left opposite the convenience store and follow the road down to the shore.

You will need to make your way to the railway station at Arnside and catch the train to Grange Over Sands for the next stage of your journey.



Day 2 Grange-Over-Sands to Lakeside 9 miles

You will need to keep your wits about you today, there is a complex web of footpaths on today's walk. Care will be needed in navigation as it will be easy to miss the correct footpath if you are not concentrating. You will climb a limestone hill with fine views over the estuary and of the Lakeland mountains to the north, visit a medieval priory and walk alongside a steam railway before reaching the foot of Lake Windermere.

From the railway station turn left along the road passing the ornamental gardens on your left, at the mini-roundabout turn tight and follow the pavement along the left hand side past a row of houses. Just as you are leaving the town and the pavement runs out look out for a footpath on your left sign posted for Hampsfell, the first stage of your journey today. Go through the gap in the stone wall. Follow the path up through the coppiced woodland, go over the metalled road following the sign for Hampsfell. A little further on at the fork in the path bear left following the sign for Hampsfell. Continue up through the woodland until you see the remains of a stone dam wall with an old pipe protruding from it directly in front of you, behind it are two disused concrete reservoirs. To the left of this is a wooden waymarker post with yellow arrows on it, you should take the left hand path. Follow this path up the hill, it slowly bares to the right and eventually leaves the woodland onto a track with open

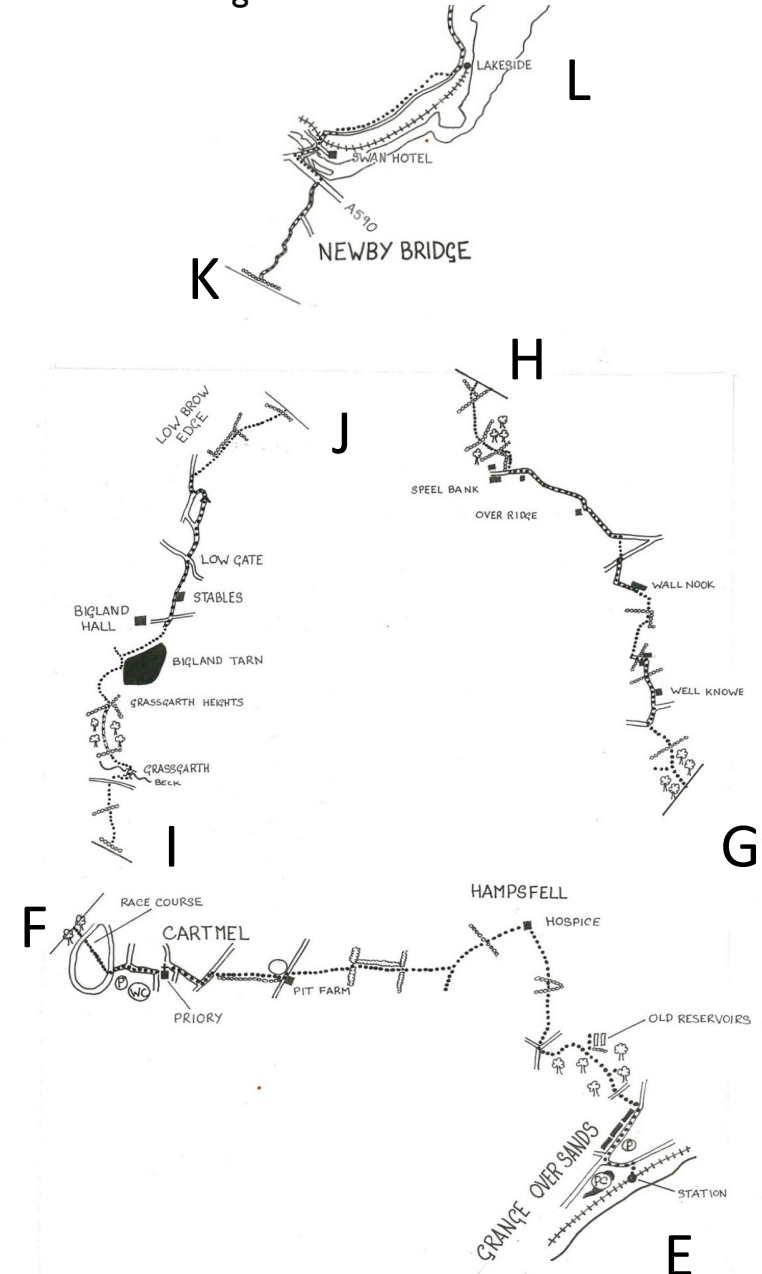
fields in front. Turn right up the track then right again at the sign post for a permitted byway. Pass through the kissing gate on your left and follow the path uphill through the field, climb over the stone stile in the next stone wall. Continue diagonally to the right up the hill towards the wooden steps over the next wall. Now follow the path over the limestone outcrops until the hospice on the top of



Hampsfell comes into view. Walk to the hospice and climb its steps for magnificent views back over the bay towards your starting point at Lancaster and north towards the Lakeland fells that you will soon be crossing.

Looking west down the hill you will be able to see the next point in your journey, Cartmel and its priory, below. Follow the well worn track across the field in a south westerly direction towards a stone wall. Climb the stile over the wall and continue

Grange over Sands to Lakeside





on , take the right fork in the path, the path then begins to descend steeply down through some hawthorn bushes.

Cross another stone wall and continue down the field with the hedge on the right of you. Go through the next gate, then cross the field diagonally towards the farm buildings,

heading for the gate that opens

onto the lane. Once through the gate turn left then almost immediately right and follow the path to the left of the horse exercise area. Follow the path through the field, through the next gate and down a narrow alleyway with a high wooden fence to the right. At the end of this step out onto the road, you are now in Cartmel. Turn left then down the road then immediately right, you will see Cartmel priory directly ahead of you. Go through the gate into the churchyard, follow the path around the priory to the entrance.

Leave the Priory church yard by the main gate and walk forwards into Cartmel, go through the main square, past the market cross, where the road forks bear left and head for the race course. Once through the race course gate look for the sign post pointing to the right, the foot path cuts diagonally across the course towards the trees. This path is diverted on race days, you should pay attention to any warning signs and follow the instructions. Follow the path up through the trees, at the fork in the path bear right then carry through a narrow stone stile and out into the field. Cross the field to a gate join the road and turn right.

Walk along the road for a short distance and look out for a footpath on your left up a lane sign posted for 'Well Knowe'. Follow this track up past the houses ignoring footpaths to the right and left. Passing an old quarry continue ahead and through a wooden gate to the left of a house. This brings you out into a farm yard, follow the sign for 'Wall Nook' pointing to the path on the left between the two buildings. Go through the gate and turn right across the field. Aim for the top right corner of the field and cross the stone stile, you will be able to see 'Wall Nook' ahead of you. Pass through the gate in front of Wall Nook and continue down the lane, as the lane joins with another from the left look out for a narrow stone stile ahead of you, pass through this

and across the field and through another narrow stone stile on the other side and out onto a road. Turn left along the road and climb the hill past Over Ridge, soon after you crest the hill with views towards Haverthwaite in front of you. The road then drops down the hill and passes Speel Bank bungalow on your left. Just before the road enters Speel Bank farm look out for a footpath to your right heading up hill beside a stone wall. Follow this up, the footpath then bears left above the farm and enters a woodland. Soon after you pass through a gate and out onto open land. Follow the Cumbria Coastal Way footpath signs across the fell, through a stile and bearing right towards a gate and down towards Grassgarth, care will need to be taken here as the signs are in a poor state of repair. Cross through a gate onto the road then go through a kissing gate opposite and to the right and into a field. The path heads right and down the hill to a bridge over a small beck, it then heads left up the hill again towards a gate in the wall and into some trees. You now follow a pleasant path through High Striders Wood towards Grassgarth Heights. Pass through a gate and out onto the open fell, from here there are far reaching views over the Levens estuary to the light house shaped Sir John Barrow monument above Ulverston. Soon after Bigland Tarn comes into view. At the split in the path leave the Cumbria Coastal Way and take the right hand route sign posted for High Brow Edge. Carry on along the left hand side of Bigland Tarn past the boat house and join the fenced lane that leads down past the stables and join the road at a junction. Take the road directly opposite and head downhill towards Low Brow Edge, after the road descends steeply through a hairpin bend look out for a foot path on your right. This passes through a gateway into a playing field, follow the track past a bungalow. Follow a stone wall, keeping it to your left. Cross the wall and follow the path uphill to your right, it is easy to lose the path in places so you will need to watch where you are going. Continue down the hill and join a track. Pass through the gate and continue following the track down the hill until it joins a minor road. Continue down the hill towards the noise of the A590 at Newby Bridge. *Lakeside & Haverthwaite railway info here.*

You can choose to finish your day's walk here if you wish, although it will add another mile or two to your walk tomorrow, Newby Bridge has a number of fine hotels where you can spend the night. There are campsites in the area, however you will need to leave the route to access them by bus or taxi. You also have the option of shortening the third day of your walk by catching the ferry from Lakeside to Waterhead near Ambleside via Bowness and rejoining the pilgrimage route via Loughrigg Fell and Loughrigg Tarn and down to Elterwater.

If you are continuing on to Lakeside you should follow the pavement to your left and cross over to the other side of the A590 at the safe crossing place, this is a busy road so take care. Follow the pavement to the left and cross the bridge to the Swan



Hotel. In summer the riverside terrace is busy with people enjoying a drink beside the Leven close to where it drains from Windermere. Follow the road around the left side of the hotel, ignoring the road branching off to your left. Continue over the Lakeside and Haverthwaite steam railway and follow the road towards Lakeside. There is no pavement on this busy road so care needs to be taken, look

out for a sign post to your left directing you to a footpath that runs parallel to the road. The path undulates along the side of the hill and is definitely preferable to avoiding cars on the road below. The path descends once again to join the road at Lakeside, follow it as it cuts diagonally across a field and then exit through the gate back onto the road. Almost opposite is Lakeside station, the terminus of the lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway. From here you can catch a ferry boat up Lake Windermere to Bowness-on-Windermere and Ambleside.

Day 3 Lakeside to Elterwater 15 miles

Today you will enjoy a magnificent walk along almost the whole length of Lake Windermere before turning away from the lake towards the Langdales, towards the end of the day you will enjoy one of the classic, jaw dropping views of the Lake District.

Turn right out of the station car park at lakeside and follow the road northwards, this section of the road is less busy but care will still need to be taken here. Pass through Low Stott Park past the bobbin mill. After just under two miles you will reach the first entrance to the YMCA National Centre, pass this and continue onto the YMCA main entrance. Shortly afterwards a footpath leaves the road to your right, follow the path through some woodland and down to the lake. Follow the path along the edge of the lake, during the winter months or after heavy rain it may become difficult to pass here due to the path being flooded. At Boat House Wood turn inland and follow the track up the hill, as you pass through an opening in stone wall look for the foot path sign pointing to your right, take the right one of the two paths. Follow the path uphill through the trees staying near the wall. Continue up the steep hill and join the road. Turn right along the road and down the steep hill, after a mile look for a footpath to your right just past some houses, follow this along the lakeshore to Rawlinson Nab.

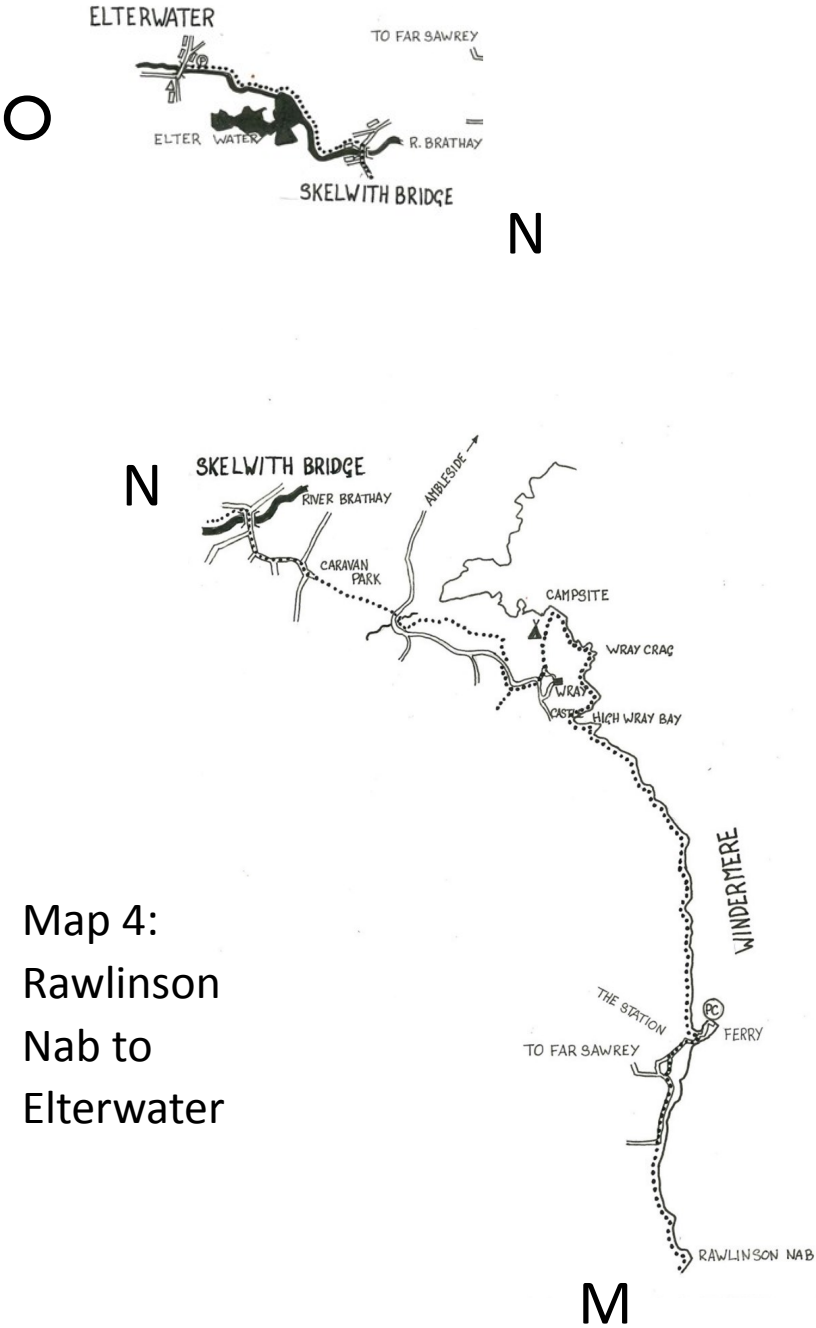
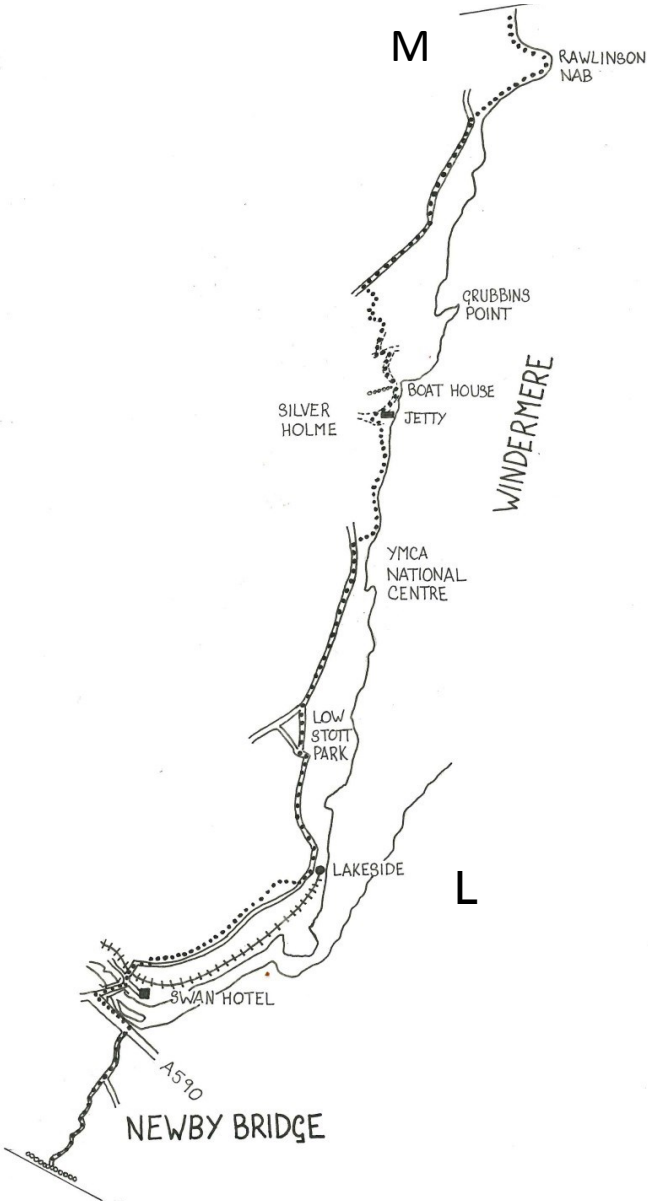
This is a good place to stop for a break, a bench provides a comfortable place to sit where you can enjoy the view back down the lake towards your starting point.

Continue walking along the lake, picking out the houses you would like to live in. The path leaves the lake and joins the road beside a wooden bungalow, turn right along the road. Follow the road along and up a steep hill, at the fork take the right hand road signposted for 'The Ferry'. Follow this short section of road until it joins another at a T junction beside a sign for Far Sawrey. Turn right here, look for the footpath on your right, signposted 'Ferry to Bowness' go through the gate and follow this down the hill adjacent to the road, cross over the road, through the gate and rejoin the path, follow this until you reach the courtyard café beneath 'The Station'. Add information about the Station here. This is another good resting place, public toilets are available beside the ferry jetty.

Continue along the lakeside path from the café. From here onwards the path is much more busy with other walkers. The surface is good and you are able to stretch out and put the miles in. Follow signs for Wray Castle. Once at Wray Castle (info about Wray Castle here) you can turn left up the hill and visit the castle or continue along



Map 3: Lakeside to Rawlinson Nab



the shoreline to Low Wray National Trust Campsite. The campsite has a small shop that is open during the summer months.

Follow the signs for 'Ambleside' through the campsite and onto the lane. At the entrance to the campsite turn right along the road through an attractive group of old farm buildings. At the T junction cross the road and join the bridleway that runs adjacent to the road, follow this along through the fields, ignoring the bridleway



leading off to the left for Hawkshead. The bridleway then re-joins the road, cross over and join the bridleway again following signs for Ambleside. Follow the path through the woods until it emerges at the road beside Pullwood Bay holiday park. Turn right here and follow the footpath adjacent to the road. At the bottom of the hill look for a footpath to your left heading uphill through a field. Go through the gate and follow the path over the hill through a further three gates before joining a lane beside the entrance to Skelwith Fold caravan park. Turn left here, walk down the lane and join the road.

Turn right and walk through the hamlet of Skelwith Fold. Take the left fork signposted 'Skelwith'. As the road begins to go down the hill stop for a moment. The view in front of you is one of the best in the Lake District, looking down to Skelwith Bridge towards Elterwater with the Langdale Pikes rising behind.

Follow the road down the steep hill until you reach the junction at Skelwith Bridge. Go over the bridge and turn left beside the café sign. Follow the land through the old slate works and onto the path following signs for Elterwater. You now have 1.5 miles of walking through beautiful scenery alongside the river Brathay and Elter Water until you reach the village of Elterwater, your destination for the day.



Day 4 Elterwater to Borrowdale 10 miles

Today you plunge into the heart of the Lakeland fells, following Great Langdale valley, over stake pass and down lonely Langstrath before reaching your journey's end in beautiful Borrowdale. You will be following the route of the Cumbria Way for much of today.

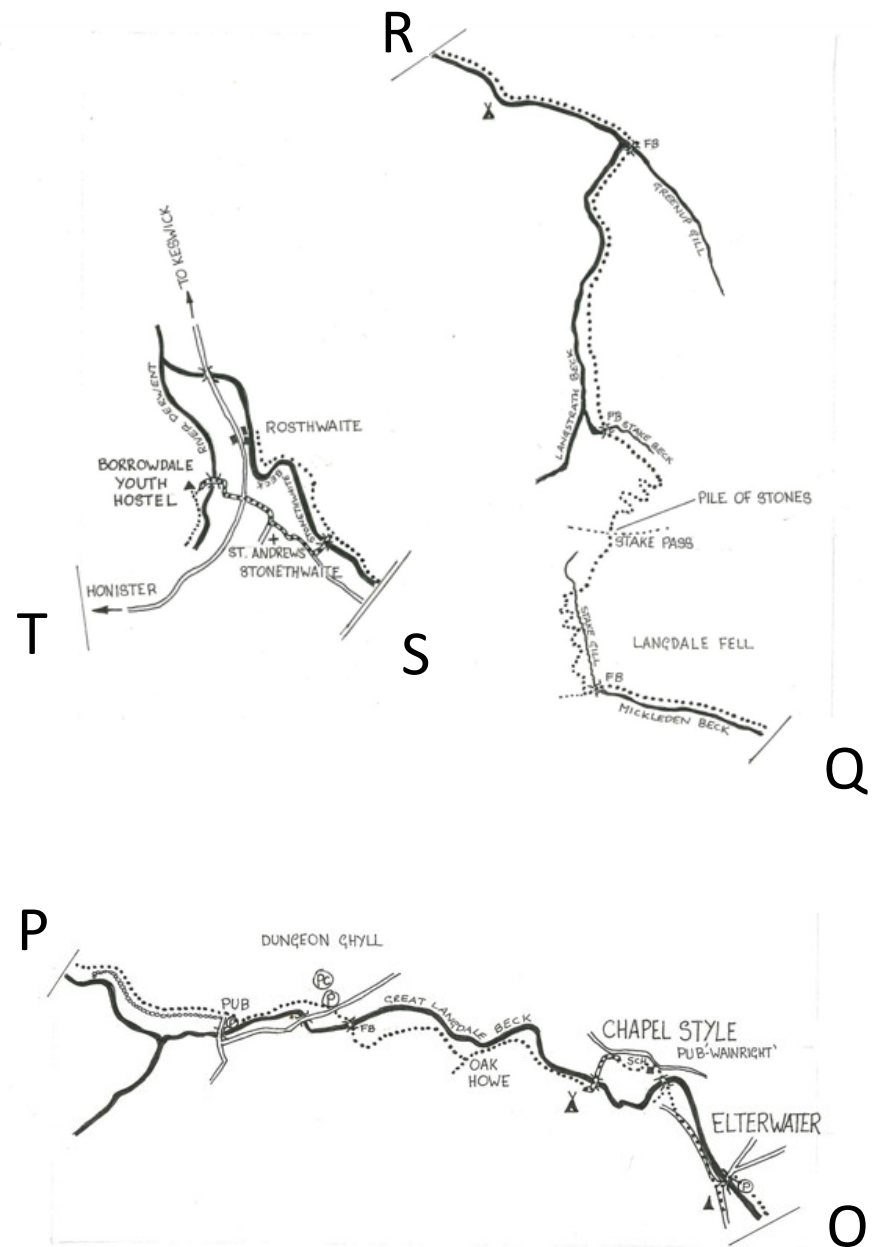
From the National Trust car park turn left over the bridge then immediately right up a small road following the signs for Chapel Stile. At chapel stile go over the bridge and follow the path onto the road. Turn left past the 'Wainright' pub, look out for the path signed for Bays Brown Campsite. Follow the path past the primary school, down the lane and over the stone bridge. Follow the path through the campsite. Ignore the path to the right that crosses the wooden bridge, instead head left towards Oak Howe. Once past the buildings turn right and head towards Dungeon Ghyll. Cross the road into Stickle Ghyll National Trust car park, toilets available here. Turn left through the gate (leaving the Cumbria Way route for a short time) following the signs for the Old Dungeon Ghyll hotel. Walk through the fields and emerge through a gate at the car park. Head up the hill to the right of the buildings then go left behind them and through the gate and out onto a stony track. Follow this towards Stake Pass, cross a wooden foot bridge over Steak Gill then at the cairn with a sign post take the right hand path up towards Stake Pass. Climb the steep well made path up the fellside and over the pass, the summit is marked by a large cairn.

The views now open up down Langstrath with Langstrath beck flowing towards Stonethwaite and Borrowdale. Descend the pass on the winding path down to a wooden foot bridge that crosses Stake Beck. Take the right path past the old ash tree and remain on the right hand side of Langstrath beck as you continue down the valley. At the end of the valet take the left path towards Stonethwaite. At Stonethwaite



bridge turn left over the bridge and into Stonethwaite. Turn right and follow the road past the school and houses to the T junction. At this point you can turn left and visit the little church of St Andrews. Information on church here. Retrace your steps and follow the lane to the main road B5289 then cross over and follow the lane down to Borrowdale

Elterwater to Borrowdale



Day 5 Borrowdale to Ennerdale Bridge

13 miles

Today's walk takes you through the high central fells under the shadow of Great Gable and Pillar into Wild Ennerdale.

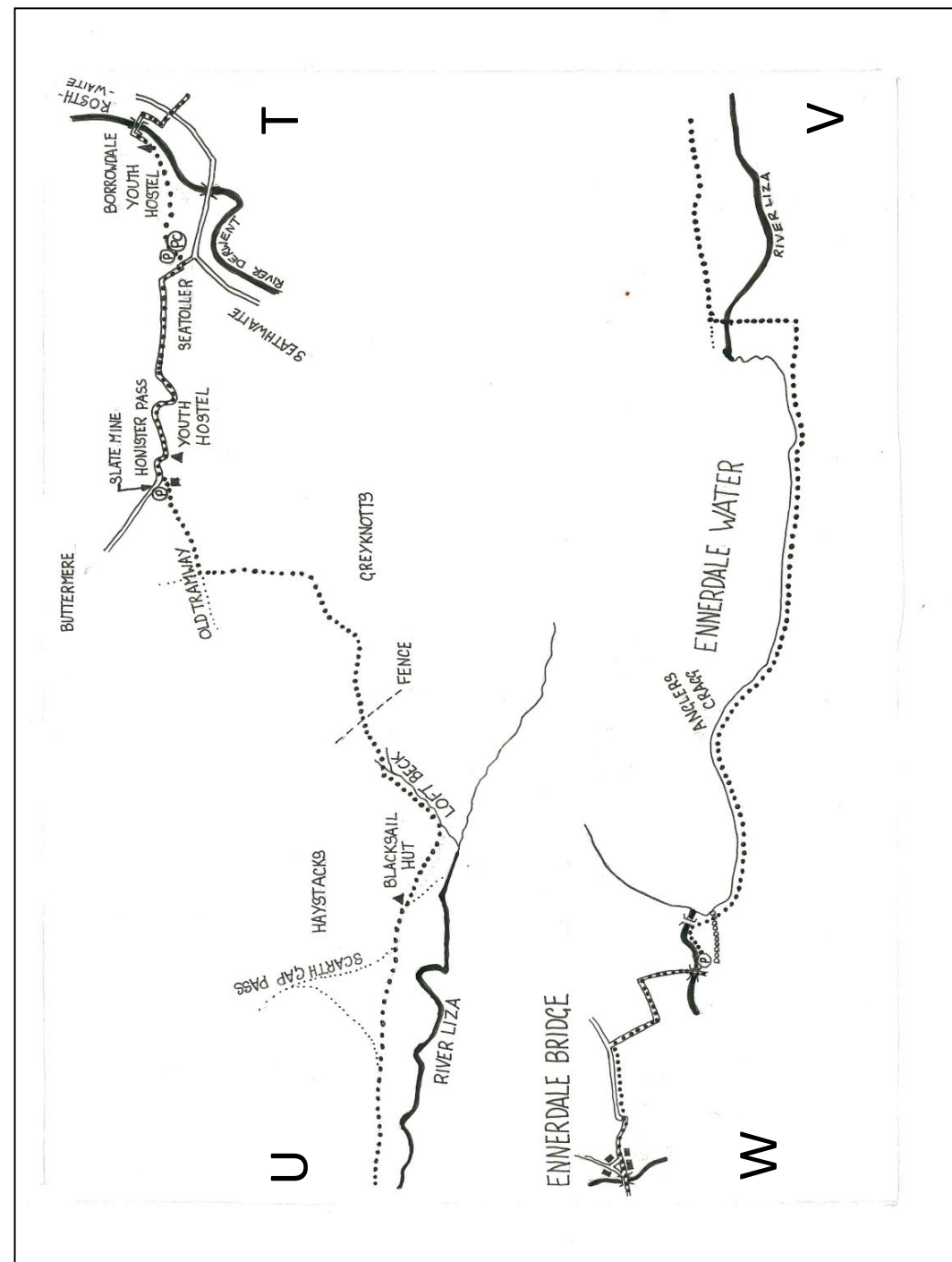
From Rosthwaite follow the road up to the top of Honister pass. If staying at the Youth Hostel turn right outside of the front door and follow the footpath until it emerges in a small car park (toilets open in the summer), then follow the road up the pass. At the top continue past the Youth Hostel to the quarry buildings (café here), go around to the right of them follow the path sign posted Great Gable & Haystacks up the hill to the left of the quarry access road. The path is a former incline used to lower slate to the top of the pass, the wooden sleepers are still in place. You will be able to see the remains of old slate workings around you. Information on Honister Mine here.

At the top follow the path that leads off to the left (south) towards Grey Knotts. Follow the path up then to the right as it skirts the fell side, views open up down the Buttermere valley. Look out for a path that forks off to the right just after a cairn (grid reference 216,128). Follow this in a south westerly direction, cairns mark the route. Go through a wooden gate in a fence then descend Loft Beck into the Ennerdale Valley. Great Gable towers above.

At the bottom of the hill turn right, do not cross the River Liza, follow the path along the fell side until you reach Blacksail Youth Hostel. The hostel is open all day and there is a serve yourself café. From Blacksail follow the forestry track down the valley with magnificent views of Pillar towering above, after four miles you will come to Ennerdale Youth Hostel.

Shortly after a road leads off to the left crossing the River Liza on a concrete bridge, follow this down the walled lane across the valley then turn right following the path along the left (south) side of the lake. Care needs to be taken when following the path around the side of Anglers Crag as there are steep drops into the lake.

At the end of the lake follow the track down to the road at Bleach Green. Follow the road for 1.5 miles to Ennerdale Bridge.



Day 6 Ennerdale Bridge to Cleator

5 miles

Today we climb out of Ennerdale Bridge and walk through the secluded Nannycatch valley to our destination at Cleator. This final stretch is only five miles giving you time to enjoy the Grotto on your arrival or if you are timing your walk to coincide with the annual pilgrimage to Cleator each September you will arrive in plenty of time for the 3:00 pm Pilgrimage mass in the Grotto.



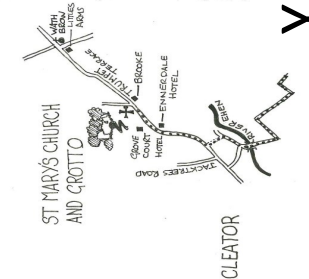
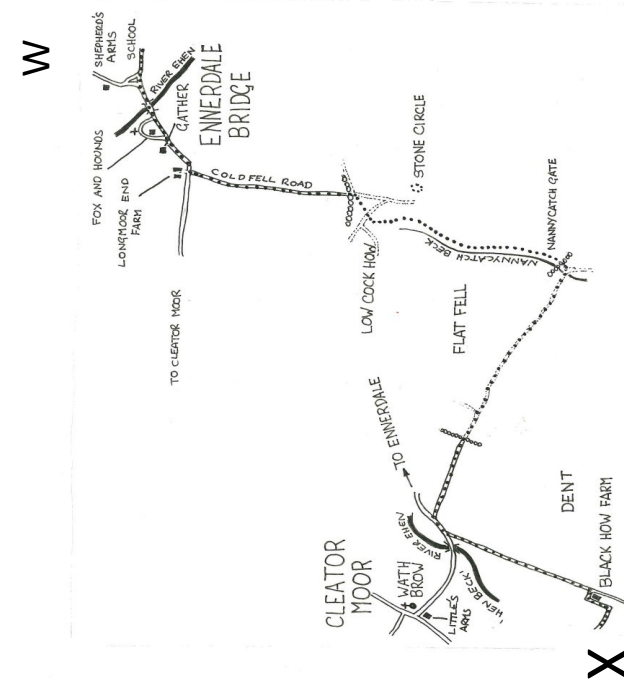
From Ennerdale Bridge follow the road up the hill in the direction of Cleator Moor. At the junction take the road to the left sign posted for Gosforth. Follow the footpath up the hill to the right of the road, keep off the road itself as it is narrow and can be busy at certain times of the day. At the top of the hill the road passes through a stone wall,

cross the cattle grid then head right across the grass, after a few minutes cross the farm track and join the well made footpath that runs along the left side of the valley. Continue along and down into Nannycatch valley. Go through the gate then take the path to the right, follow this along keeping the forestry plantation and

Dent fell to your left until you reach a gate. Go through this onto the tarmac road continuing down hill past a large white house on your left, the former reservoir



Ennerdale Bridge to Cleator



keeper's house, until you join the Cleator Moor to Ennerdale road at the bottom of the hill. Turn left here and follow the road in the direction of Cleator Moor until you reach Wath Bridge, a sandstone bridge over the river Ehen. This stretch of the river is known locally as 'Hen Beck' and is a popular picnic spot in the summer, it is a good place to rest for a while. Before you cross the bridge take the left road, known locally as the 'Fell Road' up the hill, this then takes you along the fellside with open views over the beck and towards the coast.



Once at Black How farm take the track on the right between the farm buildings, follow the track left behind the farm and then right down the hill until you reach a bridge over the beck. Cross this then at the road turn right down Hilden Road, at the end of the row of semi-detached houses take the footpath on your left up the hill until it joins the main road. Cross over and head right following the pavement past the Ennerdale Country House hotel until you reach St Mary's church. To find the Grotto walk through the carpark and go through the gates at the left of the hedge into the graveyard. Follow the path around to the left and into the Grotto.

