

## Chapter IV

### Wray

During a holiday in the West country in the autumn of 1877, Hardwicke proposed marriage to Edith Fletcher. Her mother took the precaution of consulting Edward Thring in confidence about the suitability of his Godson, as a husband for her daughter. In his reply Thring assured her that he would have readily given his consent if Hardwicke had asked for his own daughter. He continued by saying that he was a close friend of the family and had a high opinion of them all.

"He is so far from commonplace, so original, so full of strange power, that I find it impossible to form the same kind of absolute judgement on his future that I could do in less exceptional cases, but I have every confidence that the outcome will be good. I have never known anything wrong or mean about him ... I believe he is sincerely desirous of doing the right always ... on the whole I have such high hopes of it and trust him so much, that I am able to give a verdict in his favour - which need not be concealed unless you wish it."<sup>1</sup>

They were very much suited to one another. Edith shared many of his interests, especially his love of nature and all beautiful things in literature, music and art. Her calm, quiet, gentle temperament was a good foil to his restless energy and had a steadying influence upon him.

The marriage took place in Brathay Church, which is a small church near to Croft, Ambleside, the home of Edith, on the 29 January 1878. Hardwicke's father conducted the ceremony, assisted by Edward Thring and Lewis Nettleship. Although it was in term time and particularly difficult for Lewis Nettleship to leave Balliol, Hardwicke insisted that he could not contemplate

---

<sup>1</sup> Rawnsley, E.F. Canon Rawnsley - Maclehose, Jackson & Co., 1923 - p.39.

such an important occasion without his presence. Of course he was delighted to come, after making a humorous protest, that running Balliol was of little importance, compared with Hardwicke's marriage and hoping that no other friend would decide to get married in the middle of next term. The winter of 1877-8 was one of the most severe ever recorded. In spite of the wintry conditions, the sun shone on the wedding day, sparkling on the snow covered fells, creating a beautiful scene. As they left the churchyard, Edith placed her bouquet on her father's grave, before the wedding party proceeded to the vicarage of Low Wray, which was to be their new home, on the western shore of Windermere. When the elderly poet Charles Tennyson Turner heard of Edith's action, he wrote a sonnet entitled, "The Wedding Posy" and sent it to the couple. It is thought that it may have been the last sonnet he wrote. On the first day of their married life, Hardwicke wrote a tribute to Edith,

"If at the end of many years my bearing is more manly, my disposition less selfish, my manners less bearish and my thoughts more helpful to those about me, you may know that Edith has done this and much more for me."<sup>1</sup>

Wray being such a beautiful, but small country parish, well hidden from the main road, on the back side of Lake Windermere, it seems reasonable to suppose that Hardwicke and his wife would settle down to a quiet, gentle country life, to live happily in obscurity. Professor Baldwin Brown, who knew Hardwicke from his Uppingham days, wrote advising him to spend his time in reading and thinking, to resist the temptation to get carried away in his usual enthusiastic fashion by the affairs of the moment, taking up one thing after another, above all to keep out of Diocesan affairs. Professor Brown's final advice was that Hardwicke must tell everyone that he had come to Wray to read. This advice was, for the most part, unheeded, although perhaps some reading was done. Before long the little vicarage was a social and cultural centre for visiting friends and parishioners. Among the constant visitors were Edward Thring, Herr David, the

<sup>1</sup>Rawnsley. E.F., Canon Rawnsley, Maclehose, Jackson & Co. 1923, p41

musician, Lewis Nettleship, the Macans, Professor Edward Caird, Professor Knight, J.H. Shorthouse and the Skrines. From all these and the many other visitors, Hardwicke gained inspiration from the stimulating discussions and conversations. There were many crowded supper parties and the little vicarage was usually packed, such was the warm hospitality and stimulating company. The Parish and the Diocese soon discovered they had an energetic priest, who took an interest in all that was happening around him, even if it involved constant journeys of seven miles to Windermere by road or rowing across the lake to and from Low Wood, whatever the weather or time of day.

A year after their marriage, when Hardwicke's health was not too good, as he was having trouble with his throat, Edith met a lady and her three friends who were planning an extended tour of Egypt, Sinai and Palestine. In order to keep the expense of such a tour within acceptable limits, the four wished to find two more travellers to join their group. The problem was that there was only a fortnight left before the journey was to begin. This did not deter Hardwicke and Edith who had such excursions as one of their chief ambitions in life. Hardwicke set about finding a locum tenens and Edith saw to the domestic arrangements necessary for a six month absence from the vicarage, together with seeing to personal packing. Within the fortnight all problems were under control. Passports were applied for and bookings made on the Kaiser i Hind. Hardwicke did not request leave of absence from his parish, but sent a note to a very surprised Bishop Goodwin, telling him of their journey and arrangements. The plan almost foundered when they went to collect their passports from a London post office, within a few hours of their departure time. The persistence of Hardwicke successfully recovered the vital documents from the depths of the post office, just before they were sent to a dead letter office, because of an inaccuracy in the address. They arrived safely at Alexandria and then spent the next two months travelling on camel back, "Till a lone uninhabited land seemed no longer strange and riding a camel the most natural means of transit."<sup>1</sup> In Egypt they went to the pyramids.

<sup>1</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, Maclehose, Jackson & Co., 1923, p44

Then after visiting Petra, they went on to Gaza where the chirping of grasshoppers reminded them of Lincolnshire. Then they continued on to Beersheba, where they appreciated seeing some greenery after the endless stretches of desert, from there to Hebron and Jerusalem. Hardwicke was interested in archaeology, so some time was spent exploring Biblical sites, especially at Michmash, on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Society. The rest of the journey was accomplished on horseback, first to Damascus, through the snows of Lebanon and among the cedars, collecting some of the cones, to Beirut, where Hardwicke lectured to the Syrian school. They returned home by way of Cyprus, Constantinople, Greece and the Danube, having travelled for six months. This long journey was of great value to Hardwicke in stimulating his interest in Biblical history and life, in gaining an insight into Eastern life and thought, in a more vivid way than a long course of reading.

On his return to Wray he plunged into the work of the parish, concerning himself with every aspect of its activities. He gave lectures on his tour, not only locally, but throughout the country, being much in demand because of his vivid and amusing style of lecturing. Not only did he lecture on his travels in the East, but on matters nearer home of a practical nature - on health and hygiene. He evidently gathered information from experts before embarking on these. One of the experts was Dr. Beale who had persuaded him to turn from the profession of doctor to that of a priest. He was evidently asked for some kind of chart as a visual aid for these talks. He replied saying, "Don't frighten people too much by telling them a lot of infinitesimal disease-producing horrors of which a blue bottle could carry enough to kill a parish."<sup>1</sup> and as to the chart he dismissed it as, "a diagram of horrors", which would not be helpful.

Hardwicke, supported by Edith, shared the lives of the inhabitants of their small parish, getting to know them well, which was and still is, not easy to achieve among northern country folk. He persuaded them to try new things in their daily lives and worship,

<sup>1</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, Maclehose, Jackson & Co., 1923, p46

as in the service of thanksgiving for the harvest, when he got them to gather together in the village and walk in procession down the hill to the church, carrying with them their harvest gifts of fruits, vegetables and grains, together with the implements used in the harvest, such as ploughs, harrows, cutters, scythes, forks and hay rakes. Once experienced, the parishioners entered into such activities with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

In addition to his parish duties, Hardwicke pursued many other interests connected with the District. He enjoyed walking on the fells, gathering information on geology, botany, natural history and archaeology. The last named led him to explore the Roman remains at Ravenglass. He also catalogued the church plate in the rural deanery, making many notes and sketches. When concerts of music were held, he gave interesting introductions about the lives and work of the composers concerned.

His first winter at Wray was bitterly cold, to such an extent that Lake Windermere froze. This led him to think of Wordsworth whom he greatly admired and quoted from his "Prelude":-

"All shod with steel,  
We hissed along the polished ice in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasure, - the resounding horn,  
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare."<sup>1</sup>

Two or three years later, when Hardwicke interviewed some people who had known Wordsworth, a builder told him that he and his friend William Brown, had been taught to skate by the poet and continued by saying,

"He was a ter'ble girt skater ... he would put ya hand i' his breast (he wore a frilled shirt i' them daays) and t'other hand i' his waistband, same as shepherds do to

---

<sup>1</sup>"The Prelude"

keep their hands warm, and he would stand up straight and swaay and swing away grandly."<sup>1</sup>

Hardwicke himself has described this event:-

"The ice bore in the Pullwyke Bay and between Belle Grange and the Island, long before it was safe to venture across from Wray to Lowwood. In those first few days we seemed to have the ice almost to ourselves. Towards evening there came both from Ambleside and Bowness, the village folk, and what had been before silence, except for the thunderous cracks that sounded from shore to shore, and the murmurs of the uneasy frost giant, became now filled with sound, for the men brought their hockey sticks with them ..."<sup>2</sup>

As the news of the frozen lake spread, crowds of Lancashire people came on visits. Local hotels had a good trade in supplying "take away" hot pots for lunch. At least one unwary skater placed the very hot dish upon the ice and on returning to eat the warming food after a few spins on the ice, found only a hole of dark water. There were a few pools where the wild fowl congregated and by their movements prevented them freezing over. This led to a tragedy, when a well known local man who was skating to his home at High Wray after dark, hit one of these holes and went under the ice and was drowned. No one realized what had happened until dawn and then there was deep mourning in the parish.

Sixteen years later the lake froze again and Hardwicke has vividly described what happened on that occasion. He had been to Lancashire on business, where he heard that there were twenty two degrees of frost and Windermere was frozen. A crowd of men from Manchester had also heard the news and determined not to miss the chance of some exciting skating. The train was full of

---

<sup>1</sup>Reminiscences of Wordsworth among the Peasantry of Westmoreland, a paper written in 1881 and read at the AGM of the Wordsworth Society in London, 1882, p27. Robert Browning was in the chair

<sup>2</sup>Rawnsley, H.D., By Fell and Dale at the English Lakes, Maciehose, Glasgow, 1911, p27

happy expectant skaters, including Hardwicke, who wrote of the journey,

"Preston was reached, its river alive with boys let loose from school; Lancaster was passed, and it seemed as if the whole town were in promenade upon the Lune. Soon the hills of Lakeland shone like the far-seen scars of the Carrara hills away above the waters to the West."<sup>1</sup>

So many people were waiting on Kendal station that extra carriages were added to the train. The train seemed to crawl, so impatient were the travellers to reach their destination. Many thought they could have walked faster. Windermere, however, was reached at last and packed omnibuses carried them down to the Lake, where they beheld an amazing scene. There were so many people rushing hither and thither like so many black ants. Hardwick thought the scene was like an " ... old Dutch city in midwinter." There were ponies pulling sleighs with tinkling bells; fathers pushing small children in perambulators; a hurdy-gurdy man and a brass band, whose players did their best with frozen lips and fingers. Tea and oranges were available to keep the crowds revived. Looking at the happy scene, so full of life and movement, Hardwicke's thoughts went to the slums of Manchester and he wished all of the inhabitants could be there, even if only for an hour. This time there were red flags to mark the danger spots.

These early years of his ministry at Wray were happy and busy ones. For Edith and Hardwicke, this happiness was completed by the birth of a son, Noël on the 14 December 1880. Their delight was further enhanced by the continuation of old friendships and the making of new ones. One of the former was Ruskin.

John Ruskin's father was a sherry merchant who imported fine wines from Spain, which were produced by Pedro Domecq. His success in business was largely due to his custom of calling personally upon his customers. This involved long journeys

<sup>1</sup>Rawnsley, H.D., By Fell and Dale at the English Lakes, p31

throughout England and Scotland. Whenever possible he was accompanied by his wife, Margaret and son, John, frequently staying at the homes of his customers. Thus, from early childhood, the small boy received the stimulus and breadth of vision, through being exposed to many fine treasures in beautiful country houses, which influenced the rest of his life. In 1824, at the age of five years, John Ruskin was taken by his nurse to Friars' Crag, overlooking Derwentwater, on one of the visits to Keswick. This occasion had a profound effect upon him, as he has recorded,

"The first thing which I remember, as an event in life, was being taken by my nurse to the brow of Friars' Crag, Derwentwater; the intense joy, mingled with awe, that I had in looking through the mossy roots, over the crag, into the dark lake, has associated itself more or less with all twining roots of trees ever since."<sup>1</sup>

Further visits took place when he was aged seven and eleven.<sup>2</sup> In these early years he came under the spell of the Lake District. No matter what other interests and activities claimed his attention during his life, his thoughts returned constantly to the beauty of the Lakes. In spite of extensive travels abroad, his fascination with the Lake District grew stronger. His first long vacation as an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford in 1837, found him in Keswick again, with his father. Together they climbed Scafell and Helvellyn, with a good guide from Keswick, who was knowledgeable about mineralogy. The next year he returned to do more climbing on Skiddaw, Helvellyn, Causey Pike, Langdales and Coniston Old Man, warning his friend in a letter to beware of breaking bones on Scafell and recommending the walk to Watendlath, returning to Lodore and then by rowing boat to Keswick.

It was nine years later, 1847, before he got to the Lakes again, but this time he was full of gloom, perhaps due to the pangs of love,

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in The Lake District - an Anthology compiled by Norman Nicholson Part IV, Ch.17, Sec.13, p96

<sup>2</sup>On this occasion he kept a record of his visit, which he made into a poem which was completed in 1832 and given the name, "Iteriad"



although he blamed the grilled salmon for breakfast or his prolonged study of Christian Art by Lord Lindsay. The next year he married Euphemia ("Effie") Gray and they spent their honeymoon at Keswick.

The next nineteen years were full of achievement and fame, but sadly of domestic unhappiness, with no visits to his beloved Lakes. At last, in 1867, he managed to make the journey and stayed at the Derwentwater Hotel at Portinscale, where he found peace and happiness. This was shattered by ill health, with bouts of giddiness and semi-blindness which were diagnosed as being due to strain and overwork and he was forbidden to work for several months.

In 1870 Ruskin was appointed Slade Professor of Art at Oxford, but after a while, his health broke down again, due to the extra work. He was seriously ill and felt the urgent need to return to his beloved Lakeland. While he was making preparations, a small property at Coniston was up for sale. On hearing of it, Ruskin bought it unseen for fifteen hundred pounds. It was in a very poor state, a typical rough cast Cumbrian cottage, described by Ruskin as, "a mere shed of rotten timber and loose stones", but he had in addition, ten acres of roughish land and a breathtaking view of Coniston Lake.<sup>1</sup> This was Brantwood, which was to be his home for the rest of his life. At once he set about having the property repaired, adding the wonderful turret on the south west corner, which enabled him to enjoy the beautiful view in all directions. While the building work was being carried out, Ruskin was organising paths in his ten acres of woodland. Altogether he spent about £4000 on these alterations and repairs. It was the 12 September 1872 before he was able to take up residence. Therefore he was well established at Brantwood, when Hardwicke arrived at Wray and although Ruskin had to spend time in Oxford, as Slade Professor until 1879 and then from 1883 to 1889, together with frequent travels abroad, the two friends were able to visit one another, since they lived fairly close together. Hardwicke found these visits stimulating, especially because of

<sup>1</sup>Then known as Thurston Water

their discussions and exchange of ideas. In 1879, Ruskin had been asked by Reverend F.A. Malleson the vicar of Broughton, near Coniston, to write a series of letters concerning the Lord's Prayer for the Furness Clerical Society's meetings. Hardwicke was one of a small group of priests who received these letters and took part in discussions on them with Ruskin. In them, Ruskin stressed the need for belief, "... in the Fatherhood of God and childlike obedience to the commands of old fashioned religion and morality." He found the medieval forms of worship preferable when compared with the English Liturgy and warned against the prevailing tendency to water down or explain away "... stern duties and simple faiths."<sup>1</sup>

Some have thought that of the five major influences in Hardwicke's life - Wordsworth, Thring, Tennyson, Jowett and Ruskin, the last named had the greatest impact upon him, beginning with the Hinksey road digging, as a practical example of social awareness and his belief in the nobility of work and the supreme importance of craftsmanship. It was due to Ruskin that Edith and Hardwicke introduced wood carving classes to their parishioners, so that they might experience the joy of creating something with their own hands, thereby enriching their lives. Both of them took part in this activity, as learners and teachers, believing God was to be found in all beautiful things. Their lives were busy and happy, but Edith found time to continue working at her water colour painting, while Hardwicke managed to produce a book in 1881, of Lake Country Sonnets,<sup>2</sup> \* which describe the beauty of the district.

At the same time, being a great admirer, he collected all the local matter he could find, concerning Wordsworth, which still existed thirty years after his death in 1850 - a year before Hardwicke was born.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Collingwood, W.G., The Life of John Ruskin, Methuen & Co., London 1900, p359

<sup>2</sup>Rawnsley, H.D., Sonnets at the English Lakes, Longmans, Green & Co., 1881

\* See Appendix 6

<sup>3</sup>See note 2, p36

Into all this activity and happiness, in August 1882, came the sad news of the sudden death of his father, Canon Robert Drummond Burrell Rawnsley. The news was all the more devastating, since Edith, Hardwicke and their baby son had just returned to Wray from a happy visit to Halton Holgate. They had, however, the memory of their lovely visit. Hardwicke missed his father, especially for his wide literary knowledge and his valuable advice in his literary endeavours.

During the same summer, Hardwicke met Beatrix Potter for the first time, when she was a shy sixteen year old. The Potter family lived at Bolton Gardens, South Kensington and were wealthy through the manufacture of Lancashire cotton. Beatrix and her brother Bertram were brought up in typical Victorian fashion, which meant that it was rather a lonely, secluded life, especially for Beatrix, when her brother went to boarding school. Both children loved the holidays in the country, often in Scotland, where they were able to indulge their passion for natural history, taking special interest in flowers and small animals. Their strict Presbyterian nurse unbent so far as to tell them stories of Gaelic fairy lore. All these interests were continued at home, smuggling into the house a variety of small creatures, dead and alive. They had no reservations about skinning the dead ones and boiling their bodies so that they had clean bones for their nature museum. When they went on holiday their pets went with them, everything from a rabbit and hedgehog, to her brother's falcon, owl, dog and jackdaw.

In 1882 their father leased Wray Castle,\* where Hardwicke's cousins had lived, for the summer. Mr. Potter was a keen photographer, an interest of Edith and Hardwicke, so that it was natural for a close friendship to develop between the two families. Beatrix responded to the warmth and enthusiasm of Hardwicke and her shyness began to evaporate. Their shared interest in natural history and his experiments in taxidermy, when at Uppingham, made a strong bond between them. She was also

---

\* Appendix 7

fascinated by the fact that Hardwicke had written books which were published. Nearly twenty years later he encouraged and advised her when she began to consider publishing her first book, *Peter Rabbit*. In the face of considerable parental opposition and disapproval, at what was considered an unsuitable, unbecoming and a too physically demanding activity for a daughter of a wealthy family, she persevered until she achieved considerable success. By 1905 she had earned sufficient money, together with a small legacy from an aunt, to buy the Lakeland farm of Hill Top, in the village of Sawrey. During her many holidays at Wray Castle and this foothold of her own property in the Lake District, the friendship with the Rawnsleys flourished and deepened.

At the beginning of 1883,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Greenall, a landowner of Lingholme, Keswick, whose property would be at risk, discovered that nine quarry owners were formulating a plan to build a railway for the purpose of conveying slate from their quarries. The Bill for the proposed single track railway was already before the Examiner of Standing Orders. The railway would be eight miles long, beginning at Braithwaite station on the C.K. and P. line in the parish of Crosthwaite, to end near Buttermere Hawes, on the south side of the road leading from Rosthwaite to Buttermere, in the parish of Brigham. The capital was fixed at £30,000, with borrowing powers for an additional £10,000.<sup>2</sup> When this information reached Hardwicke's ears, he realised the threat to his beloved Lake Country and acted at once, by writing a letter to *The Standard*, on the 2nd February, in the following terms,

"Wray Vicarage  
February 2nd, 1883

Sir,

The public has not been warned a moment too soon, and owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Greenall, Lingholme, Keswick, for having sounded the alarm.

---

<sup>1</sup>The scheme had been proposed in 1881. Mr. H.C. Marshall, a landowner whose land would be involved, had no opposition and felt that most local people wanted the line

<sup>2</sup>From *The English Lakes Visitor* and *Keswick Visitor*, the 3 February 1883, in the Fitz Museum, Keswick

The question that the Select Committee of the House of Commons will have to decide is one of great interest, not only to us who are dwellers at the Lakes, but to all the thousands who crowd hither annually from stifling city and railway haunted district, to find peace and freedom from the bustle of their time. And the question simply stated is this - Are the proprietors who work a certain slate quarry up in Honister to be allowed to damage irretrievably the health, rest and pleasure ground of the whole of their fellow countrymen who come there for needed quiet and rest, in order that they - the owners - may put a few more shillings a truckload into their private pockets? And this when it can be proved that all the slate required can be carted to the train, and that the public are either willing to pay the price for carting that particular slate or can get as good elsewhere. Let the slate train once roar along the western side of Derwentwater, let it once cross the lovely vale of Newlands, and Keswick as the resort of weary men in search of rest will cease to be.

Each year these public grounds of recreation and health are narrowed and invaded by private greed, miscalled enterprise. When will true public spirit awake, and in the best interests of its age, and the generations of busy England yet unborn, protest and claim state protection in a matter that concerns the State only?

Your obedient servant,

H.D. Rawnsley"<sup>1</sup>

This letter had the desired effect of arousing support against the scheme. More letters were written, especially by W.H. Hills of Ambleside, a retired Sunderland bookseller, who lived at The Knoll, where Harriet Martineau had lived, and also Gordon Somervell, the brother of Robert, who was a shoe manufacturer in Kendal and a keen defender of the Lake District. Appeals were made to friends and to anyone likely to be in sympathy with the cause. The result of all this effort, with encouragement from

---

<sup>1</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, pp49-50

members of the Commons Preservation Society, was the establishment of a Borrowdale and Derwentwater Defence Fund which raised £402. A Derwentwater and Borrowdale Defence Committee was formed to work in conjunction with the Commons Preservation Society. Hardwicke acted as Honorary Secretary with Gordon Somervell as Treasurer. In addition, there were nineteen local secretaries throughout the country. Robert Somervell, a friend<sup>1</sup> of Hardwicke's, was the secretary in Liverpool, while M.J.B. Baddeley, the writer of guide books, held the office in Sheffield and W.H. Hills in Ambleside. There were more than 150 men and women as committee members, all with the aim of fighting against the Railway Bill. Many important people gave their support, e.g. Alfred Tennyson; Robert Browning; William Morris; the Duke of Westminster; Lord Coleridge, the Lord Chief Justice; Octavia Hill; Robert Hunter; the Reverend Samuel Barnett, together with several headmasters of public schools and representatives of universities; and John Ruskin.<sup>2</sup> Hardwicke, on approaching the last named for permission to use his name received the following reply,

"Dear Rawsley,

You may always put my name without asking leave to any petition against the railways anywhere. But it's all of no use. You will soon have a Cook's tourist railway up Scawfell and another up Helvellyn and another up Skiddaw, and then a connecting line all round.

Yours affectionately,

J. Ruskin"<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>They had been close friends when Hardwicke was recovering from his illness brought on by overwork in Soho

<sup>2</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24

<sup>3</sup>Quoted by Murphy, Graham, Founders of the National Trust, Christopher Helm, 1987. By courtesy of Mr G. Simpson, Keswick

Ruskin did not object to main line railways, but strongly objected to their extension into areas of beautiful scenery. He wrote a powerful preface to, "A Protest against the Extension of Railways in the Lake District", written by Mr. Robert Somervell in 1876.

Opposition to the scheme found expression in the press,<sup>1</sup> which variously extolled the beauty and health giving properties of the area, at the same time stressing the many literary associations of the District, while highlighting the monetary factor and greed, which would lead to the destruction of so much beauty and pointing out the interests of the owners, whose property was involved. Even *Punch* entered into the protest with a poem called, "Lakes and Locomotives";

"What ho, my merry Philistines here's news and no mistake,  
They're going to run a railway round and spoil each pretty  
lake,  
And near the famous cataract that Southey sang of yore  
The locomotive's noise shall drown the murmur of Lodore."<sup>2</sup>

Petitions also were organized nationally, to be signed by landowners and all those of the population who were interested, and sent to Parliament. Strangely, local opinions were not particularly considered. This omission was noted by H. Moser who considered it a great weakness in their strategy of defence.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, there were only six Keswick people to be found among the one hundred and fifty committee members, five being landowners and the sixth being Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley. Perhaps this was because local people thought the railway might bring increased trade and employment for them, or as Hardwicke discovered from a farmer in Borrowdale that in his opinion,

---

<sup>1</sup>e.g. *The Westmorland Gazette, The Standard, The Spectator, Lakes Visitor and Guardian*

<sup>2</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., *Canon Rawnsley*, Maclehose, Jackson & Co., 1923, p51

<sup>3</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24/71 H. Moser to W.H. Hills 3/3/83

"It will be a gay bit of life with a rail mind ye, and folks will set watches by t'trains; it will happen be a girt improvement to Borridale will t'railway."<sup>1</sup>

On 6 March 1883 the second reading of the Bill took place. It was passed and sent to a select committee for consideration of the promoter's case. This filled the opposers with much foreboding. Both sides were ready for battle, when suddenly the Bill was withdrawn on 9 April. This was not because of the efforts of the Defence Committee, but because H.C. Marshall, the landowner over whose land most of the proposed line was to pass, could not agree with the promoters over mineral rights. Far from being a big let down and waste of time for the Defence Committee, this affair had spotlighted the need for a more permanent organisation, which could act promptly if any more deleterious proposals were made against the Lake District.

This need was put forward by Hardwicke as being urgent, at the annual meeting of the Wordsworth Society, presided over by Matthew Arnold, Westminster, in May 1833. He made a strong case for a powerful committee, backed by members of Parliament, "... and a considerable sum of money behind us for expenses."<sup>2</sup> The result was the creation of the Lake District Defence Society (L.D.D.S.). This was to have a committee of fifty members, thirteen of which were to form an executive committee. In addition there were to be local committees in major cities, such as Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Newcastle, Bradford and London. £5000 was to be available as required for fighting any proposal which would lead to damaging the Lake Country. The minimum subscription was to be £1 and no financial liability would be incurred above that.<sup>3</sup>

That this was a necessary step became evident within three months of the Buttermere and Braithwaite Railway affair, when another Bill appeared dealing with the plan to build a railway

<sup>1</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24 Rawnsley to Wordsworth Society on the Proposed Permanent Lake District Defence Society. p6

<sup>2</sup>DSO/24 (M.3 p18) p11

<sup>3</sup>Ibid



along the shores of Ennerdale. This line was to be six and a quarter miles long, from the Whitehaven - Egremont - Cleator Moor line at Eskett Junction, to the head of Ennerdale Water, again for the purpose of conveying iron ore for mineral speculators. Ennerdale is a more remote area and there was less publicity and public outcry than previously, that is apart from Hardwicke, who immediately went to London. The second reading of the Bill took place on the 6 July 1883 and was passed by seven votes. Hardwicke and James Bryce, chairman of the C.P.S.<sup>1</sup> gave evidence at the Select Committee, this time bringing forward economic problems, since the promoters were rather vague as to how much iron ore was available. They were successful and the Bill was thrown out. In the following year the Bill appeared in a slightly amended form, i.e. avoiding common lands and going further away from the Lake. The L.D.D.S. again stressed that the veins of ore were insignificant, "small and of slight value." There was a new element brought out by James Bryce, when the committee was asked to find out, "Whether the proposed railway would interfere with the enjoyment of the visiting public to the Lake District by injuriously affecting the scenery or otherwise,"<sup>2</sup> thereby stating the importance of environmental issues in considering railway schemes. The L.M.W.R. withdrew from the scheme which meant a big reduction of the finances for the line and the Bill was lost.

*Punch* printed a cartoon called, "The Ladies of the Lakes" i.e. the three lovely ladies, Ennerdale, Borrowdale, Derwentwater, being rescued by the doughty knight of St. Stephen's from the Railway Rough and Mineral Miscreant, who would have done them fatal injury. "The artist was Linley Sambourne who wrote to Hardwicke saying, "We shall keep our eye guarding the Lakes if possible."<sup>3</sup> After these victories, Mr. W.H. Hills wrote to Hardwicke,

"The victory is wholly due to your enthusiasm and energy, which, in fact, were the life and soul of the

---

<sup>1</sup>C.P.S. (Commons Preservation Society)

<sup>2</sup>Hansard 25/2/84, cc/xxxiv, 1823

<sup>3</sup>From Rawnsley, E.F. , Canon Rawnsley, p53

struggle. None of us would have done anything but for you, or if some of us had done something, it would have been done in a way which would not have led us to victory. You found the men and the sinews of war and generalled the army."<sup>1</sup>

This was indeed a generous tribute from a man who had worked tirelessly himself for the cause.

After the excitement of the fight and its victory came the task of drawing up the constitution of the L.D.D.S. stating its aims and objects. Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, the poet's grandson, who at that time was living and working in Winchester as a schoolmaster, although his heart was in the Lake District, gave valuable assistance. He set out clearly the aims as follows, "The Society has been formed in readiness to present a powerful and united opposition to all schemes injurious to the Lake District."<sup>2</sup> Dissension arose, however, when Hardwicke strongly advocated that the protection of rights of way and access over commons should be stated in the aims. Other members were against such a definite, written statement, wishing to use the argument when it suited them. Hardwicke countered by quoting the reply to the press of the Select Committee in the Ennerdale case,

"We are careful for the masses in refusing to allow their recreation ground to be made impossible for them in the future. Parliament does not forget that the work of the world demands that there shall be rest places for weary workers."<sup>3</sup>

Those who opposed Hardwicke had visions of the area being swamped by a great influx of fell walkers who would cause some damage. Then there were the rival claims of protection of beauty and the need for money and the earning of a living, by whatever means possible. This thorny problem still exists today, together with the wearing away of the landscape by so many tramping feet, or as one commentator has said, "The Lake District is being

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, p52

<sup>2</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24/9/3, Gordon Wordsworth's transcript

<sup>3</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, p53

loved to death." Farmers view access with mixed feelings because there is always some inevitable damage, e.g. to growing crops, walls, fences and animals, especially sheep at lambing time. Hardwicke became increasingly isolated and turned to the C.P.S., as a few years later the problems of access became acute.

One of the causes of the problems experienced by the L.D.D.S. was the fact that there was little in the way of local support, nor was much attempt made to encourage any. In fact, Hardwicke, in his speech to the Wordsworth Society<sup>1</sup> said, "Inhabitants of the dales are not the safest guardians of their lovely homes." Just as the executive committee consisted mostly of non inhabitants of the Lake District, so was the membership. Less than ten per cent of the four hundred membership came from Cumberland or Westmorland; twenty per cent were from the Manchester area, with about a quarter from London and the Home Counties. They consisted for the most part of important people in intellectual circles, such as the vice-chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge; the principals of St. Andrews, Glasgow and Manchester universities; the headmasters of Rugby and Uppingham and masters from Eton, Harrow and Winchester.<sup>2</sup> The first joint secretaries were Albert Fleming, a lawyer who was very useful but lived away for a good part of the year; William Henry Hills, who worked hard for the society and Hardwicke. The treasurer was Gordon Somervell. In addition to the influential people who had supported the Buttermere and Borrowdale campaign, many more such people joined them e.g. W.E. Forster, who was responsible for the 1870 Education Act; Sir John Simon, the sanitary reformer; Matthew Arnold; George du Maurier, the artist and novelist; Kate Greenaway, famous for her illustrations in children's books; Sir Frederick Leighton; Edward Burne Jones; Alfred W. Hunt - these three being artists; Alfred Waterhouse, the architect; R.H. Hutton, the joint editor and proprietor of *The Spectator*; Edward Caird, the political economist; and Benjamin Jowett, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford 1882-1886. There was even a royal connection, through

---

<sup>1</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24/15/1

<sup>2</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24/9/1, list of members and guarantors

the Duke of Albany who wished to be on the committee. The Duchess continued his work after his death in London, 1884.<sup>1</sup>

Worthy and well meaning as all these learned and important people were, acting from the highest motives, they failed to take into account the views of local people, who thought railways would bring trade and wealth to the District. Consequently, it is not surprising that attacks against them appeared in the local press. They were accused of being elitist and wanting to keep such a beautiful area select for themselves. It was pointed out that railways made it possible for people crowded together in towns and cities, to escape for a little while to enjoy the beautiful scenery and fresh air, as the popularity of excursions to Windermere and Bowness bore witness.<sup>2</sup> Hardwicke and his followers were called, "cheap aesthetes" and "noisy sentimentalists." It was stated that, "Cumberland people ... could look after their own interests without interference from outsiders who put the protection of scenery before the livelihoods of the locals."<sup>3</sup>

There already existed from 1870 the English Lake District Association (E.L.D.A.) whose stated aims were to:-

"Popularize the Lake District as a Place of Residence and as a Resort for Visitors, by assisting to maintain in good order existing Roads and Footpaths, rendering Points of Interest more accessible, without impairing their natural beauty; and generally encouraging the Prosperity of Trade."<sup>4</sup>

These aims, especially the last seven words, meant that there was little co-operation between the two groups, indeed they were usually at loggerheads. The arguments between them seemed to strengthen the belief of L.D.D.S. that local people were not the most suitable defenders of their beautiful territory.

<sup>1</sup>C.C.R.O. DSO/24/15/1

<sup>2</sup>e.g. Whit Monday 1883, *Westmorland Gazette*, 19/5/1883

<sup>3</sup>*Whitehaven News*, Marshall & Walton, *The Lake Counties*, p214

<sup>4</sup>Pamphlet, *The English Lake District - A Pocket Companion for Tourists in Lakeland*, published by E.L.D.A. (?1870)

Meanwhile, after the death of Hardwicke's father, he was offered the living of Halton Holgate, since his grandfather and father had ministered in the parish from 1825, about forty seven years altogether. This caused him much heart searching and he was sorely tempted to accept, but finally decided against the offer. Further suggestions were made to Hardwicke with regard to accepting a bigger parish. St.. Jude's, Whitechapel, was put forward by Canon Barnett, then an opportunity arose at Barrow and the offer of the living of Plumtree near Nottingham was made. At this point, the Bishop of Carlisle, Harvey Goodwin, offered him the living of Crosthwaite, Keswick in May 1883. By way of persuasion the Bishop wrote to him,

"The vicarage as you probably know is simply charming, and will be tolerable even when the Braithwaite and Buttermere vandals have done their worst ... In my opinion the post which I offer you is as near Heaven as anything in this world can be."<sup>1</sup>

Such words and Hardwicke's love of the Lakes, together with his regard for Bishop Goodwin, led Hardwicke to accept this lovely Lakeland parish. He was inducted to Crosthwaite.<sup>2</sup> The occasion was described in the churchwardens' record as follows,

"The big south door not having any lock, and being fastened inside by means of a wooden beam,<sup>3</sup> the party went to the small door ... Mr. Rawnsley then entered the church and locked the party out. He then went to the belfry and lustily tolled the bell sixty four strokes and then made a pause, after which he gave forty one\* strokes more."<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, pp54-55

<sup>2</sup>The 8 July 1893

<sup>3</sup>It is still there

\* 105 strokes altogether. It was the custom to toll the bell once for each of the years the incumbent meant to stay. In his usual enthusiastic way Hardwicke meant to be there a long time!

<sup>4</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, p55

Hardwicke and Edith moved in August into the vicarage where Mrs. Lynn Linton had lived and which she described in her novel, Christopher Kirkland, remaining there for almost thirty four years.