



**BLACKWELL,
THE ARTS &
CRAFTS HOUSE**

3 WINDERMERE ARTS & CRAFTS WANDER **BLACKWELL THE ARTS & CRAFTS HOUSE**

Discover the inspiration behind one of the gems of the Arts and Crafts movement on this wander through the gently rolling countryside beside Windermere.

Distance: 5.1 miles/8.2km
Total ascent: 655ft/200m
Approximate time: 2-2½ hours plus time for sightseeing
Start/finish: Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House
Terrain: Moderate – country roads; lakeside trail; town centre paths and pavements; grassy paths; rough tracks; includes short uphill sections.

A Take some time to explore Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House and its grounds. A masterpiece of the Arts and Crafts movement, it was designed by architect MH Baillie Scott for Sir Edward and Lady Holt and showcases exquisite examples of craftsmanship from the period – notice the beautiful hand-crafted stained glass, the ornate columns in the White Room and of course Arthur Simpson’s intricate wood carving.

1 Walk down Blackwell’s drive and turn left along the road.

2 Go left at the T-junction.

3 About 180 metres after passing a 30mph speed limit sign, take the road on the left.

B This area above Windermere is dotted with homes built for Victorian and Edwardian businessmen. Like the Holts, the Manchester brewers who commissioned Blackwell, they saw the Lake District as an escape from the industrial heartlands of the north-west. Imagine how peaceful these wooded slopes would have seemed in comparison with bustling Deansgate or grimy Salford!

4 At the T-junction, turn right.

5 After 100 metres, turn left along the ferry road.

6 After 250 metres, turn right along a surfaced cycleway – signposted Bowness.

7 After just 130 metres, turn left along the Cockshott Point path.

C Cockshott Point was bought by the National Trust in the 1920s with the help of children’s book writer Beatrix Potter. Like the Holts, her family spent holidays in the Lake District, and it was these early experiences of the area that inspired her to set up home here in later life.

8 Follow a shady track to a road.

9 Bear left.

D Many of the families who owned homes close to the lake would have had boats moored up along these shores. The Holts were no exception: they enjoyed trips out on the water in their boat ‘S L Wasp’.

10 At the junction with the main road (A592), turn right.

11 Turn left along Back Belsfield Road.

12 Go left at the next road junction.

13 After about 130 metres, turn right up Brantfell Road.

14 Go through the gate at the road-end and follow the path uphill.

15 Go through a kissing-gate and turn right – signposted Post Knott.

E This broad track was used in Victorian times by the guests at the Windermere Hydro Hotel who used to come to the area to ‘take the waters’ for their supposed health benefits.

16 Beyond the kissing-gate, follow the path to a bench on Post Knott.

F The glorious view across the lake from here includes the Old Man of Coniston. This fell is thought to be the inspiration for ‘Kanchenjunga’ in Swallowdale, one of the Swallows and Amazons books written by Arthur Ransome. The Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry in Kendal has many of Ransome’s personal items, including his desk and typewriter.

17 Head left, go through a kissing-gate and then walk uphill with the fenced woodland on your left.

18 At the fence corner, if you’re feeling energetic, you can head right to climb the steep, grassy slopes of Brant Fell for another view of the lake. Otherwise, from the fence corner, veer fractionally left of your previous line. Without a guiding path, aim in the general direction of the white buildings almost one kilometre away as you walk between two rocky-topped hillocks and pass to the left of a pond.

G This is just the sort of countryside where the junior girls of Huyton College, having been evacuated to Blackwell during the Liverpool Blitz in 1941, would have enjoyed walking and helping local farmers. Today, a room at the house is dedicated to memories of the time when Blackwell was a school.

19 Drop to a broad path just to the left of a fenced area of saplings. Turn right.

20 After a stile and gate, drop to a minor road and turn right.

21 Go straight across at a crossroads – along Lindeth Lane.

22 In 600 metres, turn right along a lane marked by a footpath sign.

23 The sealed lane ends at Lindeth Farm. Follow a rough track to the left, through a gate and across farmland. Just after an isolated cottage, keep left, following the waymarkers.

H Wooded areas such as this would have provided the inspiration and raw material for a young Arthur Simpson, the master craftsman who carved Blackwell’s intricate woodwork. He would sometimes skip school and wander through the countryside near his Kendal home, carving objects from sticks and branches.

24 About 20 metres beyond a large wooden gate, use some steps on the right to descend beside a wall. At the bottom of the slope, go through a kissing-gate. Follow a grassy path beside another wall.

25 Go through a kissing-gate on the other side of Ash Cottage’s driveway. Bear left. A grassy path runs parallel with the driveway for 90 metres and then swings right.

26 After a bend to the left, ignore the track to the left on the next bend; instead, follow the route down to the right.

27 Turn right along the road.

28 Take the next road on the left. Blackwell’s driveway is on the right in 150 metres.

I Before departing stay a while to revisit the delightful rooms and exhibits in Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House – take in the unforgettable vista from the window seat in the White Room and be sure to enjoy the grounds and the panorama over Windermere.



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