George M. Trevelyan and his enduring love for Langdale valley have shaped what you see today.

George’s influence is far-reaching beyond Langdale; visit our website to find out about his family’s story at Wallington (Northumberland), how he helped preserve Housesteads Roman Fort along Hadrian’s Wall and prevented development on Ashridge Estate, Hertfordshire.

By staying at our campsite, coming to Sticklebarn or paying to park, you are helping us to continue his legacy by looking after Langdale valley. Thank you for your support.

“Before modern times there was walking, but not the perfection of walking, because there was no tea.”

George M. Trevelyan

Celebrated historian George M. Trevelyan first began holidaying in Langdale in 1905. The next 50 years would see him fall completely in love with this valley, inspiring him to become its chief protector.

This year we’re celebrating the impact his actions have had on Langdale.

Follow the route for a lifetime of his enjoyment, dedicated hard work and vision.
Did you know...

1. Robin Ghyll can be seen on the road into Langdale valley and was the Trevelyan’s family home. From here he wrote the famed ‘Garibaldi’ trilogy and ‘History of England’.

2. Next to Sticklebarn is Low Millbeck farm, purchased with Harry Place farm and donated in 1944. These fields were turned over to grow oats, kale and turnips during the war years.

3. The Old Dungeon Ghyll, Stool End and Wall End farms cover an area of 400 acres and were donated in 1929. As some of the first working farms in the Lake District to be looked after by the National Trust, they highlight the importance of supporting the agricultural heritage and protecting these cultural working landscapes.

4. George’s love for Langdale came from staying at Stool End farm in his younger days, using it as a base to explore the fells with his friends from Trinity College, Cambridge. George believed, “after a day’s walk, everything has twice its usual value”.

5. Inspired by Robert Louis Stevenson’s Kidnapped, a young George and his friends created the game ‘The Man-Hunt’, now known as ‘The Lake Hunt’. They would set out from Stool End for four days of adventure on the fells. Bad weather, terrain and distance weren’t important in this game of pursuit and capture, going “as hard as we could possibly go over a chaos of wet rocks”. George took part in these hunts until he retired aged 50.

6. George hugely valued access and recreational space for all, believing “unless we can refresh ourselves at least by intermittent contact with nature, we grow awry”. Langdale campsite was donated so the valley can continue to be enjoyed and explored today.

7. No longer a working farm, Side House was donated by George’s daughter Mary, and Trinity College, after his death in July 1962. This generous gift to the National Trust completed the preservation of the land in the valley head. George is buried in the churchyard at Chapel Stile, alongside his family.

Directions to points

1 - 2. Go uphill through Sticklebarn car park, heading towards Stickle Ghyll through the gate and gap in the wall. Once in the field, pass the NT Stickle Ghyll sign and turn left after 20m. Walking uphill here is about as rough as the terrain will get on the route.

3 - 5. Go through the gate here but don’t cross the stream, instead turn immediately left downhill and go through a second kissing gate to take you to the back of the Old Dungeon Ghyll hotel. Follow the road to front of Sticklebarn, go over Great Langdale Beck and turn right at the road junction.

6. Enter the campsite to your left, following the main track past the climbing wall and camping pods and head towards the woods. Turn right, go through a gate, over the footbridge and through a second gate into fields. Here walk uphill about 50m and turn left following the field path towards the drystone walls and stile.

7. Follow the field path towards the white buildings of Side House farm. There’s a footbridge to cross here and a kissing gate leads you into the yard. Leave the farm and head towards the Langdale road to get back to Sticklebarn.