

### **Walk 3: Rigg Knot (Latterbarrow)**

Rigg Knot, where Tom spots Victoria Juniper in Chapter 4 of *Spylark*, is described as ‘an even-sided hill surrounded by conifers, with a view of the whole northern quarter of the lake.’ This walk, on the quiet Western shore of Windermere, features Wray Castle (‘Blythe Castle’ in the book). The castle is an enormous ‘gothic revival’ structure (which means it’s not as old as it looks) and has been often criticised as out of place in its lakeland setting, including by the wife of James Dobson the Liverpool Surgeon who built it in 1840, who said she would never live in it, and by author Nathaniel Hawthorne who described it as a ‘great foolish toy’. But, along with Beatrix Potter who stayed there for holidays, we love it! With its turrets and towers and jackdaws keeping watch over its wooded grounds, it’s a wonderfully atmospheric place to explore at the end of the walk.

**Distance:** 5 miles

**Start:** Travelling from Ambleside, take a minor road off the B5286 signposted ‘Wray Castle’. Just after the entrance to the castle there is a layby on the right with parking for several cars. If this is full head into the castle where you can park in the National Trust pay and display car park The exact location can be found here:

Three word digital address	Coordinates	Ordnance Survey Map
<a href="http://cocoons.asking.obstinate">///cocoons.asking.obstinate</a>	54.397838, -2.969640	OL 7: NY 372 007

A nice alternative would be to get the ‘Green Cruise’ boat from Ambleside to the Wray Castle boathouse, and start the walk from there. <https://www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk/cruises-fares/green-cruise>).

**Summary:** A varied and delightful walk at any time of year. Meadows and woodland paths, and a short, steep climb for fantastic views.

**Spy:** In summer look out for some spectacular wild flower meadows. On the climb up Latterbarrow alder trees predominate – look out for their catkins in the spring and small cones in the autumn. The castle has its own gothic style boat house with its own harbour which is well worth a look. And keep an eye out for mysterious ice cream vans in the car park!

1. From the layby walk south for about 250m along the road to a footpath sign pointing right. Follow the yellow arrows to a footbridge made of stone slabs. (A) (This is a good moment to play a quick game of Pooh sticks in the small stream).
2. The path continues, through a kissing gate, then another gate and into a field with a fence on your left. Cross a stile (look out for the special gate for dogs) and follow the sign-posted path, through some delightful fields and meadows, with views of Blelham Tarn on the right, until you reach some cottages. (B) (Beware of the small but hostile dog that snarled and snapped at us for the next mile!)
3. After the cottages continue on a tarmac road for about 100m and take a right turn towards a farm, followed in just a few steps by a left turn signed ‘Loanthwaite, Hawkshead, Outgate.’ ([///stadium.shots.crank](http://stadium.shots.crank)). Follow the signed path through more fields and through a number of

gates and stiles to arrive at a cluster of buildings marked on the map as Loanthwaite. (C)  
(///tooth.gobblers.shining)

4. Take a left turn and walk up the tarmac lane, enjoying the views as the lane rises towards the road. At the T-junction with the main road, turn left, walk about 100m along the road and look out for a right hand footpath sign for Latterbarrow (D).

5. Follow the unmistakable path, easy at first, then steep, then easy again, all the way to the top, turning back occasionally to enjoy the expansive views towards Hawkshead, Grizedale Forest and the Coniston fells beyond. At the top there is no actual trig point, but a rather unusual stone monument marking the 244m (803ft) summit of Latterbarrow. Look out for the 'lone runner doing some leg stretches' (chapter 8) while enjoying the views of the lake, the fells and even Morecambe Bay to the south, (E).

6. Pick up the grassy path that leads down the hill, with the lake right in front of you. Go through a kissing gate into some woods, jump over a stream, over a stile, and arrive at a gate on a track opposite the National Trust's Basecamp (///overlook.breeze.feast). (F).

7. Turn left along the path which soon leaves the woods for open country until you reach the pretty hamlet of High Wray, (G). Turn right, go past a small road signed 'Ferry', and look for a house named 'The Cottage'. Here you will find a footpath signed 'To the lake' which points over a stone stile. (///machinery.lunching.diets)

8. Follow the path through a field. (If you're scared of cows, and there are cows in the field, the stone wall on your left will make you feel safe!) Go through a kissing gate and head down to the lakeshore at High Wray Bay, (H).

9. At the shore turn left and follow the fine path along the lake, passing through two gates, not missing the National Trust sign pointing you right into the grounds of the castle. Take some time to explore the castle grounds. (I) As you make your way back to the start along the drive way, enjoy the great views of the Langdale Pikes.