

# Blea Moor (Burbladthwait?)



A Batty

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Front cover. Limestone outcrop on Blea Moor, the location of area1. *Photograph A Batty*

# Burbladthwait?

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This is an update to a recently published paper (Batty A 2014). Further research has now extended the survey (Fig 1) and also revealed a possible connection with this area and a 13th century monastic charter.

The survey shows more enclosure remains extending the area to the east and west. These areas are mostly underlain with Glacial till over which a layer of peat has formed. The enclosure remains have sunk into the peat making them difficult to define which means there may be more that are completely buried which will be impossible to find.

The monastic charter (Brownbill J 1916) dated 22 Feb 1203-4 states,

*“Preterea sciendum quad tres voccarie, scilicet Qwersyd, Souterskales et Burbladthwait remeneant prefato Ade et heredibus suis cum Bosco”.....*

Translated (Bishop D 2004) this states,

“Furthermore it is to be known that the three cow pastures namely Qwerside, Southerscales, and Burbladthwait are to remain with the aforesaid Adam and his heirs together with the wood”.....

The map (Fig 3) shows the possible location of the three cow pastures, these are all within the outer boundary of Adam de Staveleys Southerscales estate. It must be noted in the perambulation that the three cow pastures have to remain with Adam which obviously means he had them previously. The eastern side of the Southerscales boundary is abutted by the Selside and Birkwith estate owned by the de Morevilles before being part of the Abbey lands.

In 1189-1190 Richard de Moreville and Avice his wife grant to the monks the pasture of Selside and Birkwith.

In 1189-1194 William de Moreville confirms to the monks the pasture which his father and mother had given them in Selside and Birkwith for a rent of half a mark yearly.

In 1189-1194 Nigel de Mowbray confirms the gift in the preceding charters.

Before 1209 Roland son of Uctred constable of the king of Scotland and Helen his wife confirm to the monks the pasture of Selside and Birkwith.

In 1220 William de Mowbray confirms to the monks Selside and Birkwith, Newby,

South Scales and various liberties, remitting also the half mark rent due for Selside.

In this charter it states,

*"...in puram et perpetuam elimosinam totam terram et pasturam de Seleset et Birkwyth quas habent ex dono Ricardi de Morewyl et Avice uxoris sue cum pertinentiis suis per rectas et plenarias divisas suas;...."*

Translated (Bishop D 2004) this states,

..."in pure and perpetual alms the whole land and pasture of Selside and Birkwith which they hold by the gift of Richard de Moreville and Avicia his wife with their appurtenances by their correct and full boundaries;...."

Some writers have stated that Burbladthwait is probably Birkwith, as can be seen Adam de Staveley had no interest in the Selside and Birkwith lands, the charters clearly state that the de Morvilles gave these lands to the Abbey. Therefore it would seem logical to assume that the three cow pastures were within his own estate of Southerscales (Fig 3) It is important to make a distinction between the Southerscales estate as a whole and Southerscales cow pasture. When the Southerscales estate is mentioned in the monastic charters it is usually followed by a full perambulation description so there can be no doubt about the area being discussed, but when the Southerscales cow pasture is mentioned there is no detail of the area and its bounds. The Qwerside cow pasture to some extent is self explanatory, and it would seem logical to place the Southerscales cow pasture in the SE area of the estate this would include all the best grazing land within the estate, this leaves the area now called Blea Moor, so is this Burbladthwaite cow pasture? it is my opinion there is no other obvious location.

A translation of the name Burbladthwait reveals the following Bur = *cottage or dwelling* lad = *small stream*, thwait = *clearing or clearing in a wood*. When this translation is compared to the survey area 1 (Fig2) it can be seen that there are the remains of what may be described as a cottage, there is also a stream and this area is more likely to have been cleared first as it is good land being situated within an area of limestone outcropping. The whole area of Blea Moor/Burbladthwait may have taken its name from the enclosed area and structures, the same as Southerscales and Southerscales cow pasture. Radiocarbon dating of the structures would show if they were contemporary with the Monastic charters, one problem of course is that we do not know how long these names may pre-date the charters and also how long the Staveley family had owned the estate.

There does seem to be mounting evidence that some monastic charter and perambulation names are considerably older than the dates of the charters in which they are being used, for example the Hermitage in Gauber pasture, mentioned in several monastic boundary perambulations is dated by coins to the mid 9th century (Batty A. Crack N 2009).(Batty A. Batty A 2009) Another possible example is the settlement on Brows pasture Chapel-le-dale which has several radiocarbon dates in the Anglo Saxon period and could possibly be the Berccarii also mentioned in monastic boundary perambulations. As can be seen it is possible that the site on Blea Moor could also date to the Anglo Saxon period.

## Bibliography.

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Batty A. 2014 Blea Moor Archaeological Survey.  
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Brownbill J. 1916 The Coucher Book of Furness Abbey vol 2 part 2. All monastic record references in this paper come from this volume.

Bishop D. 2004 Translation of Coucher records.

# Blea Moor

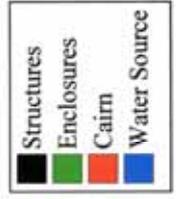
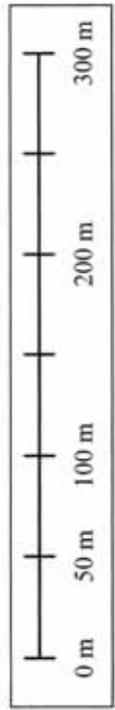


Fig 1 Full survey.

# Area 1

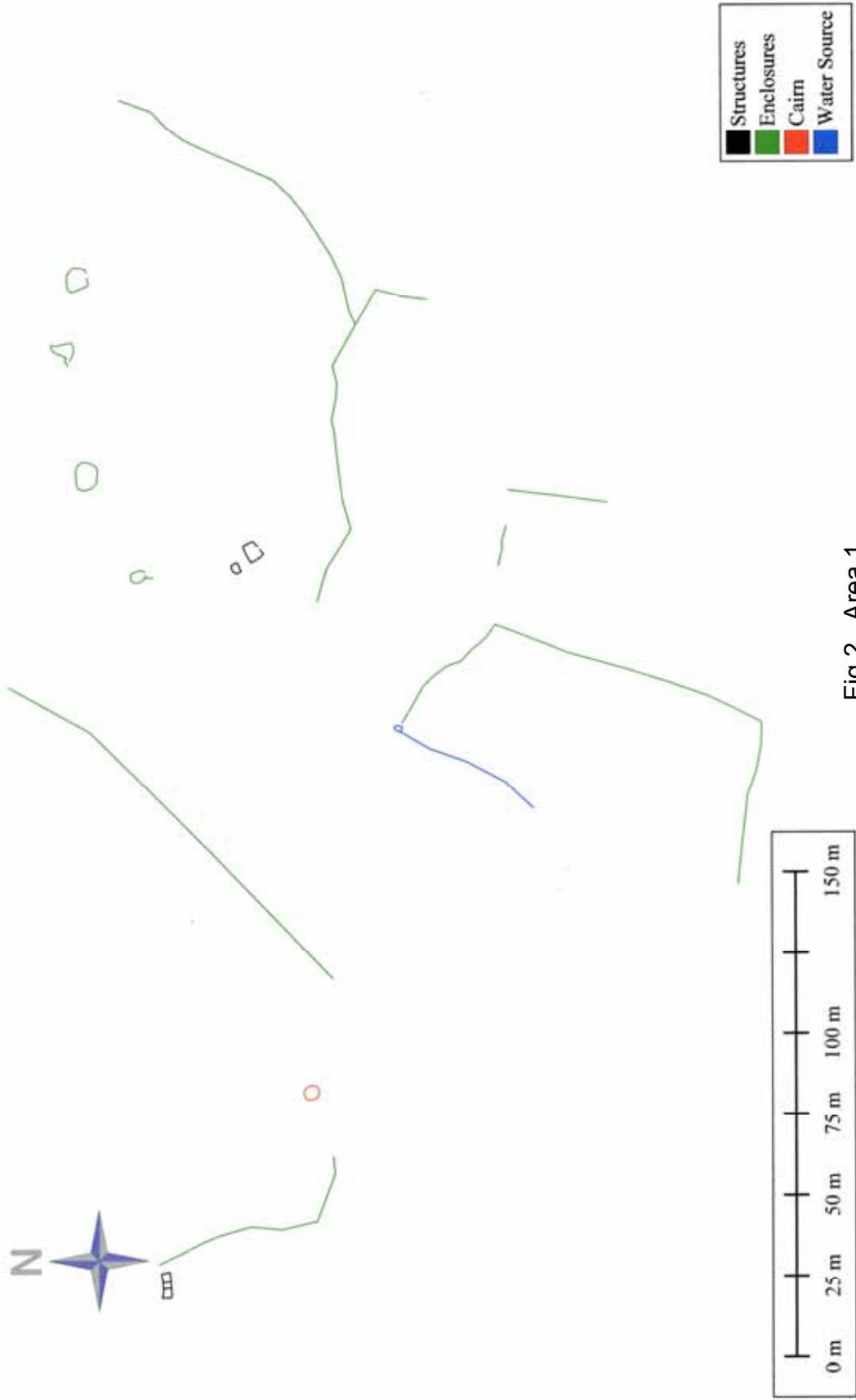


Fig 2. Area 1

# Southerscales Boundary Early 13th Century

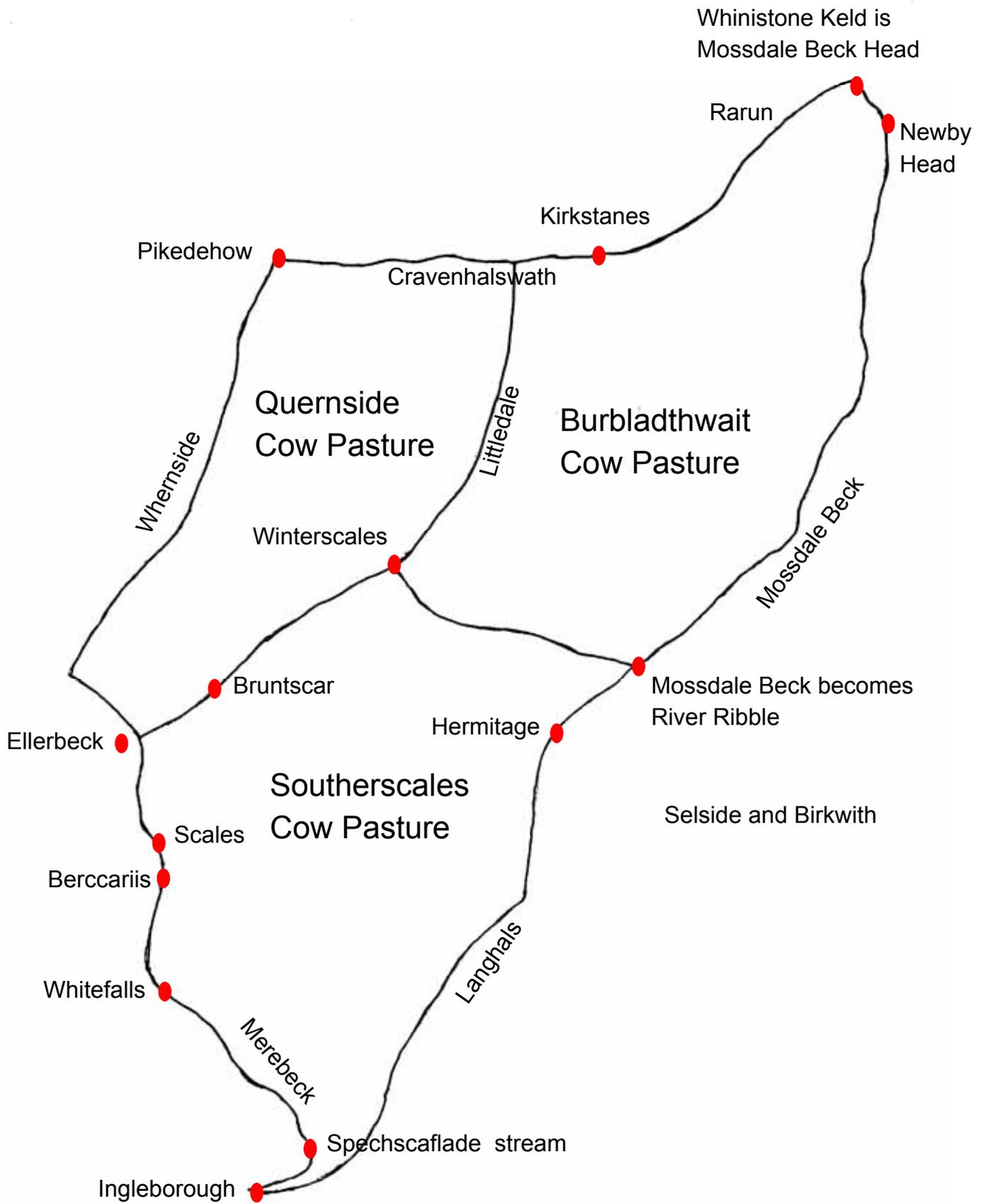


Fig 3. Map showing Southerscales Monastic boundary and proposed location of three cow pastures.  
*Drawn by A Batty*