An Excursion to the Lakes in Westmoreland and Cumberland, 1773 with A Tour

through Cumberland in 1774

**William Hutchinson, edited by Anthony Seward**, Bookcase, Carlisle, 2016. Softback, 196pp. £12. ISBN9781904147923

This carefully edited, attractively illustrated and reasonably priced book puts William Hutchinson’s early writings about the topography, antiquities and culture of Cumberland and Westmorland within the reach of a much wider audience than ever before.

Seward reproduces the first edition of Hutchinson’s *Excursion* (1774), and supplements this text by interpolating passages from the second, revised edition of 1776. He also includes the Cumberland portion of Hutchinson’s *A Tour through Part of the Northern Counties* (1776). In both cases, Hutchinson’s often extensive footnotes have been reprinted as endnotes, where they appear alongside Seward’s own annotations. Although some might object that removing the footnotes in this way upsets the ‘feel’ of reading Hutchison’s works in the original, most readers will thank Seward for presenting us with a lightly (but judiciously) annotated and eminently readable text.

In his introduction, Seward expertly situates these works within their immediate historical and cultural contexts. In doing so, he calls attention to the array of discourses (topographical, antiquarian, literary and artistic) that inform and enliven Hutchinson’s prose. Readers familiar with Hutchinson’s writings will welcome the opportunity to lay their hands on a softback copy of his works. Readers who have not had the pleasure of perusing Hutchinson’s *Excursion* and *Tour* before will be delighted by his accounts of the landscapes of Cumberland and Westmorland as they appeared to travellers on the cusp of the first great age of Lakeland tourism.

**Christopher Donaldson**