

Property Name	VALLEY COTTAGE
Alternative name(s)	
Location	#xx on map
Description 1769 – Triangular plot of land was sold to John Townson, blacksmith, for 14 shillings. On death it passed to William Chamney who sold it to William Edmundson, husbandman, for £39 13s. It consisted of smithy and blacksmith shop with rooms over. Evidence of blacksmith – iron marks were burnt into the beams in the room nearest the road. Lovely stone staircase. The blacksmith had 11 children. 1800's - Elizabeth Bowker tenant shopkeeper. It was referred to as a toffee shop but presumable sold other goods too. Husband John Bowker was regular visitor at the Bay Horse and may have contributed to its downfall. 1851 – John and Elizabeth Bowker and 3 children. John was originally from Eskrigg and Elizabeth from Tunstall. 1871 – John Bowker, age 47 farmer of 14 acres, Elizabeth Bowker, age 49 wife and keeper of grocery shop, Sarah Ann, daughter age 21. An unmarried gentleman's servant who had children Moses, son age 11, scholar, Aaron, son age 9, scholar, Elizabeth, daughter age 7, scholar, Mary Jane, daughter age 4, scholar. All the children were born in Gressingham and (John). Parker Bowker, grandson age 1, was born in 1871 and died in 1872. 1881 – John Bowker, farmer and shopkeeper. Mary Jane had left and Aaron was at Eskrigg. There was a boarder named John Mitchell, age 44, a quarry worker who was born in Sheffield. 1896 – Golden wedding celebrations of Mr and Mrs Bowker. They were well known in the village and he as always willing to lend a hand. She was a useful personage in the village and they had brought up a large and respectable family. Subscriptions, including from the gentry, were readily forthcoming to confer upon them a token of their esteem in which they were held. A special service was held followed by about 50 persons enjoyed a repast in the schoolroom followed by dancing from 7pm. Mrs J Thompon decorated the room and the excellent catering provided by Mrs W Newhouse. They were presented with a marble timepiece made by Mr Gardner of Lancaster along with other presents. Some boys in the village once paid a trick on the shopkeeper. They knew she had a pan of porridge over the fire when they were going to school. One boy went into the shop to distract her while another went on the roof and dropped a sod down the chimney into the porridge pot. Year ?? – owned by the Proctor family and sold to Thomas Fenwick Pearson, lawyer of Kirkby Lonsdale, for £52 10s. On death passed to F F Pearson who died 1910 then to Louis Pearson. 1918 Louis sold to Mary Ann Atkinson of Headingley, Leeds. On her death in 1933 it passed to her son and daughter, Earnest Metcalfe Atkinson and Selina Duckworth Spink. 1937 – piped water and electricity to the property 1930-40 Frederick Leopold and wife Ada Atkinson with sons, George, Ronald (Later Mayor of Kendal) and Earnest. Frederick was very involved with the Methodist Church at Arkholme. Ada died in 1948 and Frederick George in 1965. 1959 Earnest Atkinson became the sole owner and on his death in 1970 passed to heirs J E R Atkinson and A N Hartley. People referred to Mr Atkinson as the Mayor of Gressingham and he was also Father Christmas at the village xmas party. Mr Atkinson was the founder of the Gress, which is now known as the Gressingham Fellowship. It was latterly used as a holiday cottage for the Atkinsons, spending every school holiday here. They also owned Relph's Barn near the church and they made two stables inside after the children refused to come on holiday without their ponies. It came up for sale in 1983 when Marguerita Storey bought it. It was sold to Tom Mullen and Aoife Strahan who have extended the property in 2023. Due to other commitments they decided to let out the property for a few years and Bobby and Sarah Smorts moved in October 2023.	

English Heritage Listing
First record
Inhabitants
Other information

PHOTOGRAPH