

Midsummer in Mallerstang

It was inevitable that the prolonged good weather through May and early June would take a nosedive at some point into more typical unsettled stormy conditions. I'm a fan of those fine dawns and late evenings, especially in June, when all the fresh growth is gilded with warm sunlight. However it takes some stamina to keep photographing at those extreme ends of the day. The sun now sets pretty close to my bedtime, and as for dawn – well, I'd really rather keep my eyes shut and not have to think about it. So, taking photos of stormy skies at a normal time of day, not before breakfast, nor after supper, came as a relief. Mallerstang, along with the other Cumbrian Dales, looks yet more gorgeous in June with the meadows brim full of buttercups. The weather forecast now promises more fine weather but meanwhile the looming black clouds have been a welcome interlude, relieving some of the drought and also giving my photos a gritty character. And me some sleep!



A spur of the path along the bank of the River Eden leads to Outhgill church in Mallerstang. I needed to be quick to catch this dramatic lighting that made Mallerstang Edge stand out so well. Two shots were all I managed but I'm pleased with the atmospheric result. The 'lead in' quality of the foreground path works well. It's always good to think of a photo not simply in two dimensional terms. There's an obvious strong point of focus (again an important contribution in a photo) in the Church. I've not used a grad filter (I don't have one) so what you see is how it was apart from a bit of sharpening and added contrast (by 'curves') in Photoshop. I used spot metering on the church and set the camera to aperture priority with an f stop of 22 with the resulting speed of $1/30^{\text{th}}$ second. A tripod was an advantage rather than an absolute necessity.