

Joseph Thompson

Gatelaw Bridge to Criffel

Writers' Walks



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Four legendary walks

Four legendary walks that took place in history within Dumfries and Galloway.

Edinburgh to Dumfries by Robert Fergusson

In September 1773 the poet Robert Fergusson after a day's pub crawl walked all the way from Edinburgh to Dumfries via the Mennoch Pass (some 75 miles) to visit his friend Charles Sammon and drink for days in the town. He wrote a poem in commemoration 'Verses on Visiting Dumfries'. His use of Scots inspired Burns, although the pair never met.

Gatelaw Bridge to Criffel by Joseph Thompson

Joseph Thompson from Penpont walked the 55 miles from Gatelaw Bridge to the top of Criffel in the summer of 1882 and got back in time to go to a dance.

Across D&G by John Keats and Charles Armitage Brown

John Keats and Charles Armitage Brown arrived in Dumfries on 1 July 1818 and in the next 8 days, often rising at 4am, the friends tramped furiously across Dumfries and Galloway, recording their feelings in poems, letters and diary entries on a variety of topics, such as language, whisky ('the annihilator of poetry') and the Scots. They were the original backpackers!

The Well Path by James IV

The Well Path by Durisdeer is part of the old pilgrimage route from the north to Whithorn, crossing the Nith at Thornhill. James IV travelled this route and stayed the night in Penpont where he bought a new pair of shoes in 1507. During this pilgrimage James covered 120 miles and walked the last leg overnight from Wigtown to Whithorn.

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