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Stuart A. Paterson

Carsethorn to Powillimount

Writers' Walks



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Stuart A Paterson is originally from Ayrshire but now bides in Nithsdale. He is one of Scotland's best known poets, author of many books in Scots and English. In 2017-18 he was BBC Scotland's poet in residence.

Pan Pieces

*Ah'm are in bits an arenae maist days,
Trampin roon back pads, ben scaurs, up braes,
Owre carse an merse tae whaur Ah'll coup mase
Oan thankfu erse, feel grand, lowse baith ma bits
An aw ma pieces bi a Sulwath strand.*

*The bits Ah'm in hae daunerred doon
A wid noo fu o yellae whin,
White-lugged anemones an gowkfloors
Hame tae faeries in the daurklin oors,
Tae Hogus Point whaur Scotland
An its unself-isolatin neebor
Owre the watter are an arenae jyned.*

*Cheese pieces scranned, crumbs slittered
Oan the stanes an grass, Ah've fun again
A braw spot hereaboots whaur Ah can
Let ma bits an pieces aw hing oot.*

*The bits Ah'm arenae in Ah've left twae
Mile up the road ahin a door, fower waas,
A gey auld hoose their watchfu mither
While the bits Ah'm in jist noo pu
Me an awthing Gallowa gey ticht thegither.*



Writers' Walks



From Carsethorn to Powillimount

Time two hours, distance 6 miles, coastal and forest paths.

This is a walk that can only be done when the tide is out, close to the cliffs and caves while avoiding the mudflats. Carsthorn was the unfortunate departure point for thousands of Scots displaced from their land during the Southern Clearances in the 19th century. Leaving Carsthorn head west if the tide is out and you look over the Solway Firth towards Cumbria. You pass only one house, The House on the Shore, and finally reach Powillimount, a hidden gem of a beach encircled by giant rocks, one of which is the Thirlstane.

The Thirlstane is a giant rocky archway into the sea which can only be traversed when the tide is out. Walking back to Carsethorn, you walk beneath Hogus Point and Borron Point with cliffs and background hills towering above you. At no point even if the tide's out, walk onto the mudflats. They may look innocuous but have sucked many people down to a slow death. When returned to Carsthorn, it's always great to nip into the Steamboat (the pub not the shipwreck) for a refreshment.

