

Condensations

Nathan Walker



These slow-collage-word-terrains range language, and are to be read and performed.

In *The First Tigers: The Early History of Rock Climbing in the Lake District* (1972) Alan Hankinson describes how it came to be that in 1881 the “father of rock climbing” Walter Parry Haskett Smith first decided to go to the English Lake District; “he plumped for the point on the map where the contour lines lay thickest together”.

“In June 2016 I was writer in residence at the Armit Museum and Library in Ambleside, Cumbria. The writing I encountered and completed there forms the following ‘condensations’.

The texts are constructed by erasing material from pages of books and manuscripts from the Armit library and archives and superimposing these partially erased pages. These treatments arrange writing on the following subjects: the history of rock climbing in the Lake District; Cumbrian (Cumberland and Westmorland) dialect; the industrial heritage of Cumbria; Westmorland mythology and rituals; and texts by and about cultural figures in Cumbrian history including exiled German artist Kurt Schwitters, mountaineer and magician Aleister Crowley and the historian T. W. Thompson.

These texts have been collaged and written through with my own original writing, West Cumbrian place-names and transcribed conversations with my paternal grandfather (‘Wuky’) on his life on the mountains and specifically his experience of building a cairn on Knock Murton and a wall in his kitchen in West Cumbria.”

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