



TIES TO THE LAND

MAN'S ONGOING RELATIONSHIP
WITH THE LAND

Photography by
Alastair Ross

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INTRODUCTION

The 24 photographs in this book are the first in my on going “Ties to the Land” project. Using pinhole cameras and film I explore mankind's relationship with the land and how he uses it. Mankind has always used the land to his own ends and he has left evidence of that across the millennia from the subtle to wholesale reforming of the land. From footprints found in mud dated 5,000 years ago through to the Victorians and beyond to the “white heat” of technology at Sellafield juxtaposed against a Neolithic stone circle, man is everywhere.

Little, if any, of our landscape can be said to be truly wild from the harsh Rannoch Moor to the romantic picturesque English District; man and his influence is everywhere. Even talk of “re-wilding” the land is false; at what point in time do we want to set the clock back to? Man has walked this land for a long time and as a consequence has a long and enduring relationship with it.

Alastair Ross

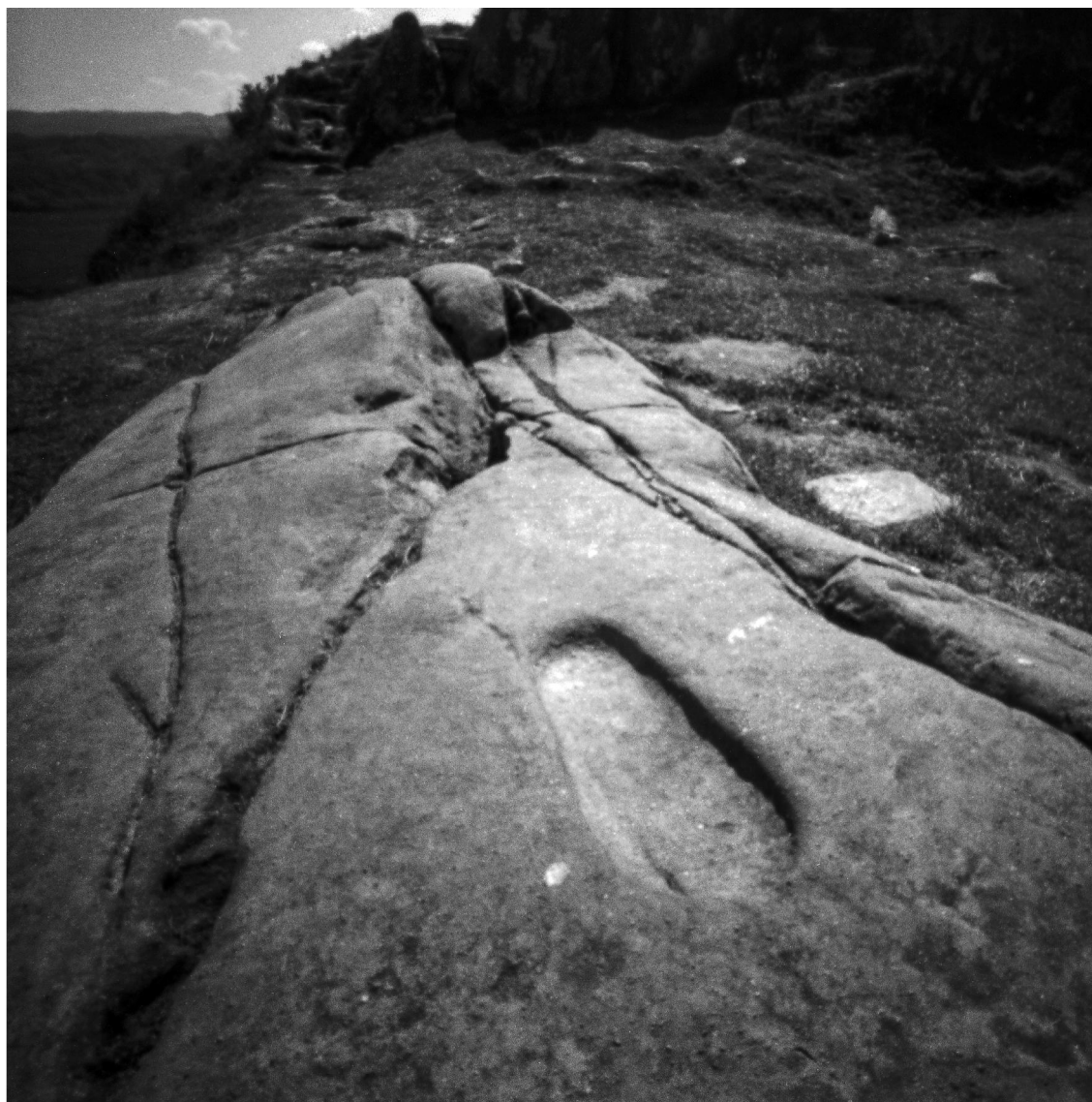
www.alastairrossphotography.co.uk

www.tiestotheland.co.uk

“Touch is a reciprocal action, a gesture of exchange with the world. To make an impression is also to receive one, and the soles of our feet, shaped by the surfaces they press upon, are landscapes themselves with their own worn channels and roving lines. They perhaps most closely resemble the patterns of ridge and swirl revealed when a tide has ebbed over flat sand”

Robert Macfarlane, The Old Ways: A Journey On Foot

















































“Humans are animals and like all animals we leave tracks as we walk: signs of passage made in snow, sand, mud, grass, dew, earth or moss.... We easily forget that we are track-markers, through, because most of our journeys now occur on asphalt and concrete—and these are substances not easily impressed.”

Robert Macfarlane, The Old Ways: A Journey On Foot

LIST OF PLATES



I : Loch Buie, Island of Mull

Rope washed ashore on the beach.

July 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



II: Dunadd, Argyll, Scotland

Footprint in rock, part of the inauguration ceremony of ancient pre-Scottish Kings.

July 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



III: Cup and Ring Marks, Ach-nabreck , Argyll, Scotland

A vast site of various cup and ring marks and rock carvings.

July 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



IV: St Cuthbert's Way, Holy Island, Northumberland

Way markers show the pilgrims way between the mainland and Holy Island.

May 2012
Zero Image 612B
Ilford FP4 Plus



V: Greycroft Stone Circle Sellafield

Stone circle in the Shadow of the former Sellafield nuclear power plant.

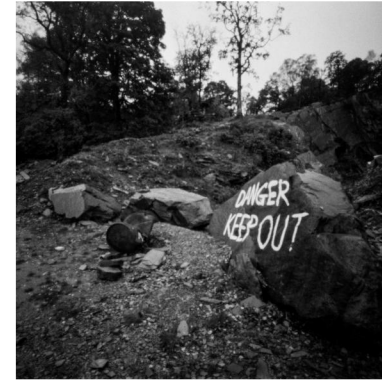
October 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



VII: Tanker

Hodge Close slate quarry, English Lake District.

October 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



VI: Keep out

Hodge Close slate quarry, English Lake District.

October 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



VIII: 1938

Plant room, Llanberis slate quarries, Wales.

January 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



IX: Vanishing Point

Narrow Gauge Railway track amongst the spoil heaps, Llanberis slate quarries, Wales.

January 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



XI: Et in Arcadia ego

Folly built in 1839 by John Paxton for transporting water to other features in the Chatsworth estate.

September 2013
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



X: Victoria Regina, Gib Hill

Neolithic burial mound, protected under the Ancient Monuments Protection Act of 1882.

August 2013
Zero Image 2000
Rollie 400 Infra Red



XII: Footprints in Time

Neolithic footprints left in a layer of clay at Formby Beach. These will be washed away in time.

March 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford FP4 Plus



XIII: Oil Barrel and Cwmorthin Quarry

Here trail bikers and the drone of their little engines clash with the silence of a once bustling quarry.

January 2014



XV : Number 2 Updraft Shaft Pit Head Marker

Thurcroft Colliery was closed in 1992, the land cleared and given over to nature and dirt bikers.

April 2014
Zero Image 2000
Rollei 400 Infra Red



XIV : Longshaw Milestone, Peak District

There is no evidence left of the trackway. Somethings remain, somethings are lost forever.

August 2013



XVI : Penny Hill Wind Farm, South Yorkshire

A thing of beauty standing on the horizon, close up with their constant noise your thoughts change.

April 2014
Zero Image 2000
Rollei 400 Infra Red



XVII : WW2 US Army Mortar Impact, Big Moor, Peak District

Impact crater near Neolithic burial mounds. Now a nature reserve.

April 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford FP4 Plus



XIX : Aira Force, The Lake District

Victorian pleasure garden, now a visitor attraction for the masses

May 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



XVIII - Ashopton Viaduct, Peak District

Ashopton Village abandoned to make way for a reservoir that the Dambusters practiced over

April 2014
Zero Image 2000
Rollei 400 Infra Red



XX : Slate Cutting Saw, Australia Level, Dinorwic Quarries

Started in the late 1700's at its peak it employed over 3,000 men. It closed in the 1960's

April 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford FP4 Plus



XXI : Tank Trap Dice, Bamburgh Beach, Northumberland

Tank traps provide shelter for a number of fires made by day trippers to this popular beach.

May 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



XXIII : Stott Park Bobbin Mill, Lake District

“Mining” the local woods for wood for bobbins for thread, now a tourist attraction.

May 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



XXII : “A Daughter Lost”, Long Meg and Her Daughters Stone Circle, Cumbria

Stone circle with farm track running right through it.

May 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Pan F Plus



XXIV : Abandoned Croft, Staffin, Isle of Skye

With curtains drawn, the ironing board still out and throws over the sofa. The land given over to rushes and grass.

August 2014
Zero Image 2000
Ilford Delta 100

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Alastair Ross is a photographer based in Sheffield on the edge of the Peak District National Park in England. He tends towards landscape, environmental and nature photography, but isn't closed to other genres.

For Alastair photography is about faithfully capturing the moment (or moments as time passes) and conveying a sense of place, that hopefully goes beyond being a simple record shot. Recently Alastair has been introduced to the German word “waldeinsamkeit” - a feeling of solitude, being alone in the woods and a connectedness to nature. “Waldeinsamkeit” best describes what photography and particularly film photography does for him – an opportunity to slow down and enjoy the peace and quiet of nature.

A variety of film was used to create the photographs in this book and as a consequence Prescysol EF was used to develop the films as it allows different films to be processed together. All negatives were scanned at home. To date all photographs have been taken using Zero Image 2000 or Zero Image 612B pinhole cameras.

More details about the project and the locations can be found by visiting www.tiestotheland.co.uk



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Thanks to Rob Hudson (<http://www.robhudsonland.co.uk/>) and Joe Wright (www.joewrightphotography.com) for their valuable feedback and insights whilst I have developed this book.

Special thanks to my family for allowing me to indulge in my hobby and for those times where they have stood patiently around whilst I take what after all aren't the quickest of photographs.



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