

# Proud To Call It Home

A word cloud featuring the word 'Newcastle' in various languages and scripts. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with 'newcastle' being the largest and most central word. Other words include 'nyborg', 'castelonovo', 'jaunpils', 'gakhaltzikhe', 'novehrady', 'gherla', 'neufchateau', 'savonlinna', 'newcastleupontyne', 'castilloneuvo', 'nowyzamek', 'newcastlensw', 'shinshiro', 'newcastleunderlyme', 'hercegnovi', 'neuchâtel', 'kotabharu', and 'castelnuovo'.

nyborg castelonovo jaunpils  
neuburg gakhaltzikhe novehrady  
newcastle  
gherla neufchateau savonlinna newcastleupontyne  
newcastlekzn  
castilloneuvo nowyzamek newcastlensw  
shinshiro  
newcastleunderlyme  
hercegnovi  
neuchâtel  
kotabharu  
castelnuovo

## Newcastles of the World

PROUD TO CALL IT HOME

NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD

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First published in Great Britain in 2012 by ID on Tyne Press  
Flat 4, 43 Percy Park, Tynemouth, North Shields, NE30 4JX  
[www.identityontyne.blogspot.com](http://www.identityontyne.blogspot.com)



identity on tyne

ISBN 978-0-9565496-4-8

Cover Design by Sheree Mack

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## FOREWORD



I am delighted that you have chosen to celebrate through poetry, drama and song the gatherings of Newcastles of the world from different continents, peoples and cultures.

Literature and song has been an important part of my consciousness. It had to be so. My maternal grandfather was a coal miner. The first English expression I learned when I started primary school was “Do not send coal to Newcastle”. Why not I enquired! Because all Newcastles mine coal!

I love words and always have. They are a vehicle that has carried me in and out of homes, hearts, streets and around the world. Sorrow or anger, dejection or uplift, exhilaration joy or exuberance words carry me through the length breadth and depth of human feeling! Words energize, inspire and mobilize! Words speak from heart to heart!

Thank you to the writers, young and old, professional and otherwise who have created and crafted words that say what their Newcastle means to them.

## A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Lindiwe Mabuza was born in 1938 in the Coal Mining town of Newcastle. Initially brought up by her grandmother, Mary Makhumalo Msibi, a laundry service provider in a white girl's hostel before the washing machine. She later joined her parents in Johannesburg where her father was a track driver, her mother a domestic worker and factory hand alternatively. The family struggled against grinding poverty and Lindiwe was the only one of four children to finish high school.

With the help of “a good Samaritan” she enrolled at University to increase her understanding of world and African Literature and Culture in South Africa and the United States. Over the years her ability and drive led her into many professions, yet her over-riding ambition was to see the end of the apartheid, “that crime against humanity” in South Africa.

She worked as a Professor, a poet and short story and writer of considerable acclaiming radio journalist, political organizer for the African National Congress (ANC). After the fall of apartheid she served a term in the first democratic parliament. She became South Africa's first black Ambassador to Germany (1995-1999). From 1999-2001 was High Commissioner to Malaysia and Brunei and from 2001 -2009 was High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

## **The Newcastles of the World Alliance**

This anthology has been produced as part of the 2012 Newcastles of the World Alliance meeting. The idea of linking communities who share the name Newcastle came about - as many good ideas do - in two separate places in the world in the mid-1990s.

Newcastle upon Tyne-based John Nicolaou came up with an idea to link those communities who share the name Newcastle. He contacted writers and photographers in English-speaking Newcastles around the world and compiled a book which was published in 2000.

Meanwhile, in 1998 the Mayor of Shinshiro in Japan had taken the initiative to invite representatives of seven Newcastles to his city. They have continued to meet every two years - in Switzerland in 2000, USA (Indiana and Pennsylvania) in 2002, South Africa 2004 and 2010, Newcastle-under-Lyme (UK) in 2006 and Germany in 2008. The aim is to foster friendship and collaboration, and to share and enjoy each others' heritage and culture. Each gathering has taken a discussion theme to ensure practical, usable outcomes, and there has been increasingly useful involvement of young people and of business representatives.

Of all the possibilities for developing international associations, what more natural link is there than with the towns and cities that share the same name?

In July 2012, Newcastle upon Tyne hosted the gathering for the first time and the meeting saw many first-time Newcastles in attendance: Newcastle, Australia; Newcastle, Ontario, Canada; Akhaltsikhe, Georgia; Jaunpils Latvia; Kota Bharu, Malaysia and Nové Hradky in the Czech Republic. The main conference theme was "Branding & Marketing our Newcastles" which, amongst many ideas explored, began discussions of an informal "passport scheme" to link people from Newcastles all over the world.

The expansion of the network means that the richness and depth of the alliance can be relevant to citizens across the world eager to learn about other Newcastles and how their fellow Novocastrians live, work, study and enjoy life across the globe, enabling them to build their own contacts and many more new and exciting projects.

This anthology is one of the many exciting projects that came out of the Alliance in 2012, as well as a collaborative Song for Newcastle, an exhibition of photographs from around the world and a unique schools project which links schools in the Newcastle upon Tyne with overseas Newcastle schools. The aim is to continue to develop and strengthen these programmes and to continue to share in our aim of fostering greater international friendship. We hope this selection of poetry gives an

## Contents

Echoes of the Tyne	2
<i>Collaborative poem specially commissioned for A Night on the Tyne, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2012</i>	
Newcastle, Australia	6
Newcastle, Canada	9
Newcastle, Germany	14
Newcastle, Japan	16
Newcastle, South Africa	18
Newcastle, Switzerland	22
Newcastle, UK	23

## Echoes of the Tyne

The paving slabs on our street  
are still the same concrete  
we slapped with our trainers when we ran.  
The back-lane was our Edgbaston,  
straight and narrow.  
We'd bowl and bat like Geordies –  
bring the rain and the bad light.  
We wouldn't stop  
until the score was settled -  
or when Mum called us in.

Martha's neddin-cake rests  
like a full moon on the scullery workbench,  
the smell of warm dough  
wafting along the passage to the end-room  
where Nancy keeps her savings  
in a yellow-white chest of drawers.  
She has no idea that every Monday, my mother  
borrows a pound note, promising herself  
she'll replace it by Friday, before Nancy clocks-off  
at the liver-salts factory.

We were schooled at the local takeaway  
in the art of earning.  
Washing dishes put callouses  
on our knuckles that made our Mum grimace.  
"What kind of work can these hands do?"  
she'd whisper.

In the close evening shade, rusty flecks  
of light sit upon the water, slack rolling  
in and out of shore, like tears between  
our hearts. At the allotment, Mum grew  
potatoes, spinach, peas but more  
importantly strawberries, organic and  
dipped in a bucket of cold water,  
enjoyed in the hot summer.

This line of beauty we breathe in, as  
sassy pinks die upon the water.

Edie has never married: never met  
the man of her dreams, a man who  
plays for United and bleeds Black  
and White. He has a quiff like Elvis  
and a voice like Pat Boone: smokes filter tip  
cigarettes. He is as hard as December  
and gentle as July; slightly bow-legged with  
a glint in his eye like Russ Conway.  
If ever he swears he puts tuppence in the cuss box.

The blossom tree on Croydon Road  
sheds its momentary glory  
and petals fall -  
cling to the wet pavement  
breaking like silent silver coins.  
The thick silver sea crawls over  
our toes; a cold clinging water, folding  
in on itself – such a beauty  
that keeps on giving. Sparkling russet  
tones clinging like tears  
between our hearts. Our hands grow slack.

Romance is played down for love is -  
carrying the coal up three flights of stairs.  
There will be two children, a boy  
who can kick a ball like his father  
and a girl who can kick even higher.  
On Fridays, maybe Saturdays we'd  
get a film on VHS  
all of us would kick-back,  
and watch it, late into the night.  
We trace these last moments of beauty,  
feeling the chill of the coming end.



Nothing else feels like the  
antithesis of summer with  
everything dripping  
through the window giving a grey tinge.  
A dreary tolerance for a Thursday Morning  
But it's all in a day's work for a superstar.  
The women we grew up with had tell-it-like-it-is  
voices, o aye.  
They favoured vowels, vowels  
that flex mouths like opera singers limbering up  
for an aria. We hear the cawing gulls.  
See their slack flight as they dive into the sea,  
fighting for space and whites tears  
of flesh.

They made soup from bones and  
knitted anything from booties to balaclavas.  
Bless them, for they breastfed their babies and  
had bairns vaccinated via sugar cubes  
for fear anyone might hurt them with a needle,  
harsh tears between our hearts.

Remember the beauty because it's hard work  
and calloused fingers that make true dreams  
slip and slide as they may. We will grasp them,  
bring them home. The women we knew never  
complained out loud but made  
their feelings known in a clash of pans.  
Fish, deep in the water,  
give up skins iridescent russet

There's something lazy  
sitting in school and not at home  
on a beautiful Friday afternoon.  
Waiting for the breeze that breathes summer,  
we can use this energy to light dreams  
with a blue tinge, just like water

seeping into the ground, slack,  
giving and winding into the sea.  
Secretly, we know that the heat of russet  
flames are dampened by our tears.  
Between the meeting of land and sea,  
they believed in the Bible and best butter and  
knew by heart, their Co-op dividend number.

On the way to school,  
we're taking down criminal overlords  
like a vigilante superhero,  
In class, we dump doodles of delicious dreams  
The women we knew, always  
there waiting at the school gates, their headscarves  
blowing like flags in the biting northeasterly wind.  
Something warm to eat  
and books to drip into when we get home.

The sky has changed,  
clouds kissed with an orange tinge. The  
slack pull of the moon over russet waves  
breaking, this long travelled sea this  
wide flowing water,  
this river running through our minds,  
carrying echoes of our hearts,  
telling us this is home.

**Catherine Graham  
Wajid Hussain  
Sheree Mack, UK**

## Newcastle, Australia

*Take an aircraft,*  
from anywhere really,  
and fly in  
    across the Pacific.

*Come in low.*

See the convict-built breakwater  
slowing the tides  
for a smooth-harbour flow.  
Note the city,  
    southside,  
        rising gently  
            on colonial-drawn lines.

Northside,  
    ships lie at dock.  
coal-trains roll in  
and scoop-loaders transfer  
black-heavy cargo  
  to the bowels  
    of now plimsoll-deep ships  
        bound for venues  
            somewhere ... everywhere.

*Follow the river*  
and the University spreads  
from the city  
  its research and learning  
among nurturing and relaxing  
  native-tall grasses and trees.

*Over the hill,*  
    south a bit, Lake Macquarie  
sports sailboats and sailors  
        from daybreak to dusk  
into star-reflecting nights.

*Turn round and dip over the coast.*

Watch surfboarders,  
surfers and sand-players on  
yellow-bright beaches  
  invent fun  
.... over and over again.

You haven't seen the valley yet,  
  lush and rich,  
nor its Aboriginal rock-art  
and remnants from tribes  
long here long  
past.

You haven't seen  
the art and theatre and dance  
or even heard the music  
this place does so well.

You haven't seen  
the tugboats harbour-dance,  
or the kindness and care  
shared by people and groups.

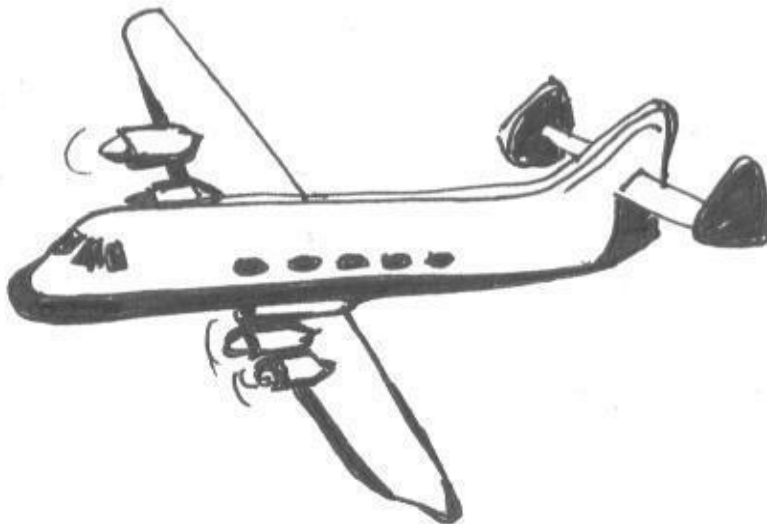
You haven't seen inside  
the Cathedral on the Hill,  
  beacon to ships,  
to travellers and all,  
survivor of earthquake,  
of storms  
and a great ship  
beached fast on the sand like  
a migrating whale  
gone off-course.

*Land now at the airport.*

Newcastle Australia's  
best felt from the ground  
over coffees, in bars,  
with friends, and loved ones.

It's a secret well kept  
from the world on the run,  
But it's willing to share  
its rich treasure trove  
with the free and the brave,  
with the wise and discerning.

**Valerie Shevels, Australia**



## **Newcastle, Canada**

I was born the village we speak of at  
the end of a busy town street Mom  
and Dad in Policing  
And we swam in the old Lion's Pool.  
But now I'm out in her country  
I can see her through a veil of wheat  
corn, apples, brand new homes  
vantage point from end of my lane

## **Trent Flower, Canada**

Old new  
shadows blend  
seasons glow all  
is peace  
Newcastle

## **Ann Harley, Canada**

**Where From Ye Be?**

The streets are lined with trees so tall a  
welcome sign for one and all.

The little village by the lake  
the perfect place your home to make.

The trains whistle, loud and clear  
with apple orchards, oh so near.

Pizza shops and pubs are three  
at the grocery store, our friends we see.

Important events big and small  
are celebrated at Town Hall.

Three church steeples are in our town  
but "true" religion at the arena's found.

Triumph, defeat, laughter, tears  
teams memories shared with beers.

At Christmas time we have a parade  
Many floats, all hand made

When asked abroad "Where from Ye be?"  
"Newcastle, Ontario is home for me."

**Brent Matthews, Canada**

## What Newcastle means to me

To be in a place BUILT on pride...  
and over the centuries; hearing of all its strides,  
heritage of the people coming together,  
to BUILD up and not tear down...  
to keep in perfect harmony of not just PEACE,  
But our little town...

As different background from here and far...  
BUILDING a bridge across this world,  
bringing all Newcastles to be known as one.

What Newcastle means to me...  
seeing this great township of opportunities  
not just for one, but for all cultures therein.

**Yvonne Thomas, Canada**





## Newcastle, Ontario

There is a small town in  
Ontario, where many folks  
seem to go.

An exquisite little  
community, full of love  
and unity.

The perfect spot to buy some land, begin the family you've  
always planned.

A place for youth to grow and learn, where parents need not  
concern.

A postal code of L1B,  
the place that holds your heart's key.

A place no one can outgrow, is Newcastle, Ontario!

**Samantha Trudeau, Canada**



## Newcastle, Ontario

Village, you hold me  
prescribe memories and dreams with your clear boundary  
and when I'm in Timbuktu  
you quench my thirst for home  
always right there  
by the water

**Greg Ward, Canada**



## Neuburg

schlossfest umtanzt  
hutschaubehütet  
kunstbegeistert  
naturbewußt  
und kirchenfromm  
blauumflossen  
burgbewehrt  
und grün umsäumt  
ruhig und rührig  
bunt und lebendig  
bewahrend und freudig  
bereit  
für neues Geschmeide  
am städtischen

**Gerda Stutz, Germany**

## Neuburg - Donau

Hier steht ein mächtiges Schloß, das nie die Sterblichkeit berührt  
In dieses hat Ottheinrich die zarte Susanna geführt.  
Im duftigen Rosengarten lebendig das Brunnenwasser springt  
Und glühendes Liebeswerben, - die Amsel betörend singt.

Das gleißende Abendrot spiegelt in den silbernen Wogen  
Die Schwäne lassen sich nieder, im Schatten des Brückenbogen.  
Es flüstert die Muschelgrotte in der warmen Nacht  
Die Liebe der beiden ist wie ein Feuer entfacht .

Ein Park, der sich in die Windungen der Donau schmiegt  
Und blühende Natur, wo der Duft nie versiegt.  
Aus tiefer Liebe schenkte er Susanna ein kleines Jagdschloß  
Durch die schattenreiche Allee ritt er oft hoch zu Roß.

Über Pflastersteine spazierten die Edlen - in Pelz und Gewand  
Durch verträumte Gassen, immer Hand in Hand.  
Die Bibliothek verschaffte dem Fürsten auch Ehre und Ruhm  
Welche Schriften er auch las, sie wurden sein Eigentum.

Auch rauschende Festgelage mit Musik und Tanz,  
Erotisch und füllig, doch mit vornehmer Distanz.  
Die Bildungsreisen lenkten so oft seinen Schritt  
Deshalb war sein Begehren: die Bücher müssen mit.

Für die Not seines Volkes verschloß er seinen Sinn  
Die neue Burg war nur für die Edlen ein Gewinn Nur  
stattliche Bürgerhäuser säumten die Straßen Seine  
Devise war stets, Leben und Leben lassen.

Doch gibt es heute noch Zeiten, in denen das Schloss lebt  
Heiter und beschwingt der Geist des Fürsten schwebt.  
Durch die Räume hallt ein fröhlicher Gesang  
In sonnenhellem Entzücken ertönt der jubilierende Klang

**Brigitte Zechmeister, Germany**

## Haiku of Shinshiro

Tweeting birds  
Shadows are cast on  
Sakurabuchi

Moonlight  
Spreading gradually  
Across the rice terrace

From Mt. Ganbo  
See Mt. Fuji in the distance  
With sweat on the face

Shitaragahara  
Hearing battle cries  
First frog calls in the season

## Mr. Tatsuo Natsume, Japan

School of sweet fish  
In clear water flowing  
Toyokawa River

## Ms. Michiko Suganuma, Japan



Hi-Ondori  
Against the summer sky For  
the repose of the souls

**Ms. Kyoko Hamaguchi, Japan**

Summer is coming  
Young leaves at the castle Full  
of light delighting the eyes

**Ms. Mitsue Fujii, Japan**

The first tea of the season  
Served first to no one But  
the guests

**Ms. Katsuko Nakajima**

## Newcastle, South Africa

### No Fun

It is no fun my friend  
No joy  
In the eye that blinks  
From all these grim fields  
With their predictable  
Bumper harvest graves  
Especially the children's assembly-line  
In those black cemeteries  
And the crude messages  
Of apartheid slaughter  
Between the lines of birth and death It  
is no fun

Not at all funny  
When suddenly every day  
This conflagration of graves  
Shapes questions  
And the reasons why  
Our young seedlings  
This tender fruit of love  
This softness of bone of brain  
That even now needs a shield  
My closed arms around  
My full breast and heart  
To give in all seasons  
And the reasons why  
This future is fertilized  
With gun-powder  
It is not funny at all

It is not a game at all  
When explosives  
Packed into some pieces of steel  
Burst spread consume  
My child's flesh  
Burns then bone then marrow  
Our blood waters  
Their deserts of hate

These are no mere games  
Of hide and seek  
When children battle armoured trucks  
Trap battalions with dare  
It is no simple game  
But war against  
Hitler's•sons•and•daughters

**Lindiwe Mabuza, South Africa**





## The journey

The air I breathe the  
soil I step on the  
landscapes I see,  
Newcastle, you define me.

Previously named Waterfall River Township  
this is my home.  
Named after the Duke of Newcastle  
Newcastle, South Africa is my home.  
Having been a coal mining powerhouse a  
battleground for the Anglo-Boer War  
a supply station for the first and second World Wars.  
This is my home.  
It defines who I am.

You are a mother of note.  
Politicians, musicians, athletes  
have all grown up under your shadow.  
Mac Maharaj was born here.  
Lucky Dube put you on the music map  
Chief Albert Luthuli walked on your ground.  
Anton Lembede drank your water. Dr.  
Frank Mdlalose calls you home.  
Ambassador Lindiwe Mabuza calls you home too.  
I too, call you home.  
So did the legendary boxer Theo Mthembu.  
No, no, no, no, not only them,  
many other heroes and heroines call you home.  
Newcastle, your role in the liberation struggle shines bright,  
brighter than the sun.  
Newcastle, you define me.

Whether I was working hard from my palace at Leazes Terrace.  
Whether I was gracing the streets of Europe and America.  
Whether I was at St. James, the greatest church in the Toon.  
Newcastle South Africa, you were still my home.

Newcastle, you didn't stop defining me when I left your shores,  
you embraced me from afar.  
Memories of you always made me to miss you.

I missed walking down Allen Street.  
I missed the long queues waiting for my portion of chips at Porto.  
I missed the views of the Majuba pass.

I have been around the globe, a long journey it was.  
I need to quench my thirst.  
Let me drink from the Ntshingwayo Dam. Newcastle,  
I am back in your loving arms.  
Let the *Newcastle Advertiser* update me on what you have been up to  
Newcastle, you never stopped to define me.

**Ndukuyakhe Ndlovu, South Africa**

## Neuchâtel, Switzerland

### Hymne neuchâtelois

Nous sommes les enfants heureux  
De la meilleure des patries;  
Nous aimons ses coteaux ombreux,  
Son doux lac, ses combes fleuries, Et  
la paisible majesté  
De ses grandes joux séculaires,  
Et le soleil qui les éclaire,  
Le soleil de la liberté!

Là-haut sur l'Alpe aux blancs sommets,  
Aux jours anciens de notre histoire,  
Nos aïeux déjà l'acclamaient  
Quand il s'est levé dans sa gloire. Vers  
d'autres destins emportés Poursuivant  
ce rêve d'aurore,  
Leurs yeux au loin cherchaient encore,  
Le soleil de la liberté!

Mais voici qu'au son des tambours  
Descend la jeune République;  
Neuchâtel, sur ses vieilles tours,  
Fait flotter la croix helvétique.  
Béni soit Dieu dans sa bonté,  
Et les hommes au fier courage, Qui  
préparèrent sous l'outrage,  
Le soleil de la liberté!

Ils furent les bons travailleurs  
Qui pour les autres ensemencent;  
Nous aussi dans des jours meilleurs,  
Répondons le grain d'espérance, Afin  
qu'au souffle des étés  
La moisson du peuple grandisse  
Moisson d'amour et de justice,  
Au soleil de la liberté!

"Hymne Neuchâtelois" is the anthem of the Republic and Canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland . The text was written by Henri Warnery

***Home***

She welcomes with a smile as wide as the Tyne:  
This city celebrates different voices.

Her daughters sold clothes, second-hand at Sandgate  
as the boats sailed like long-lost lovers into Dean Street,  
keeping their promise.

Reborn, her lassie sings a brand new song,  
silencing the battalion of buses  
that bully past the building societies,

while the lads that once danced for their daddies  
push bairns in buggies, with one hand.  
And still, people remain puddled  
by the play of her spirited, underground rivers that  
flow, like lifeblood right up to Spital Tongues.

She is a carnival of bridges skinning a heron-coloured sky.  
Flooded with pride, she lands her logo  
like kisses, on lamp-posts in Grey Street.

**Catherine Graham**



“10•foot off  
of  
the•ground”

He's walking through Memphis,  
Apparently

He's belting it out  
with a raging need  
dramatic pauses  
to tell me how this place  
enlightens him,  
how he's unsure how it  
makes him feel.  
It made me think  
what could I write about  
my City  
that's a little more than just  
chanting  
"Newcastle, Newcastle, Newcastle!"

on match day.

Maybe I could try  
and paint  
a nice watercolour  
to capture  
the bridge  
and the castle keep.

Photography for the fog  
on the Tyne  
near the swing bridge -  
but what  
words  
can I use  
to share the *meaning*  
of this place.

Pondering one evening  
I walked home from the shops  
with my two year old in tow.  
Behind came

a couple of local burly lads  
just into earshot,  
Effin' and blindin' away

until suddenly one  
of them said:

"Ow Man,  
watch yer language in front of th bairn"  
and so with a hush they walked past,  
a little further  
in front they restarted their conversation of  
'He said, she said  
and what I'll do to him  
                        next time if  
he says that again'

Me and the bairn  
crossed the asphalt  
onto the concrete slabs  
and towards our wooden door, I  
smiled as my daughter ran up  
the stairs  
I thought  
I don't *need* a song  
I have my own stories,

Living in this city Proud  
to call it Home.

**Wajid Hussain, UK**

## Ode to the Stottie cake

I'm a Northern lass through and through.  
Cut through this black flesh  
to see strata after strata  
of brown shades of stottie cake.  
Rolling and wrapping around my body.

Stottie cake, the melt in the mouth bread.  
Stottie cake, the thick flat disc of fluffy bread.  
Stottie cake, white at the edges bread.  
Stottie cake, the dusted and crusted bread.  
No one knows where the name comes from.  
*Gregg's* the bakers have said they christened  
the bread because it was thrown  
onto the oven floor.

Whatever, wherever, I can't believe  
that ordinary bread dough makes  
something so special.  
Leftovers kneaded and rolled together,

thrown onto the oven floor,  
smouldering amongst the ashes,  
turned over and baked again.

Thick and flat straight out of the oven.  
Finger burning hot, tear off a piece and  
eat it straight away.

It's warm and gooey and takes me home.  
When cooler grab another bit  
and forget butter, spread with peas pudding.

Peas pudding hot  
peas pudding cold  
peas pudding in the pot  
nine days old.

Cooled stottie cake, spread with peas pudding  
stuffed with ham, delicious  
for breakfast, lunch and tea.

The stottie cake  
filling the gap crying with hunger  
for generations of Northern folk.

I'm a Northern lass through and through,  
cut through this black flesh  
and see thick discs of stottie cake  
rolling and wrapping around my body  
to the core.

**Sheree Mack, UK**





# iD

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ISBN 978-0-9565496-4-8