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## **BOOK REVIEWS**

### **CONNECTIONS: ARTISTS AND WRITERS IN NORTH CRAVEN PUBLISHED BY THE NORTH CRAVEN BUILDING TRUST & WITH A FOREWARD BY BILL MITCHELL, and photos by MC Brown, locally available at £3.99 etc.**

Inspired by an imaginative exhibition held in Settle at the Folly in 2006, entitled Connections, which brought together the work of artists and writers fired by the beauty of the Craven Dales, this generously illustrated book enables the reader to explore in greater depth the connections between people and places and their interpersonal links. Four trails through Malhamdale, North Ribblesdale, a Turnpike Trail and a trail in the Ingleborough, Greta and Wenning area have also been devised, together with a biographical section which gives additional information about the people in the trails.

In a role call of celebrated artists, poets, writers, engravers, designers, archaeologists, antiquarians, local historians and botanists, such as Turner, Ruskin, Charles Kingsley and William Wordsworth, the Craven dales has triggered some memorable works of art, but there are surprises as well as - Charles l'Anson's modern Yakshi or Indian Tree Sprite was placed in its present position to underline its mythological similarities with the legendary Dales' "boggart" or evil sprite who lived in nearby Hurtle Pot. This modern metal sculpture blends in well in its atmospheric setting among the trees, yet conveys this intriguing and mysterious presence. The cover picture of Connections has a splendidly evocative picture of Gordale Scar shimmering with light by Katherine Homes who was born in Malhamdale and returned to the Dales in 1990 after living in various other areas. Her local landscapes often contain natural materials such as grass, sands and gravel. In the Turnpike Trail section of the book is a beautiful example of an illustration of the Primula species by the great botanist, Reginald Farrer, a talented artist and writer as well as a famous plant-collector and "father of rock gardening". The charm of Constance Pearson's style is immediately apparent in her portrait of The Malham Bus and unsurprisingly her illustrations were much in demand for the Dalesman magazine, providing an excellent period piece for Bill Mitchell's "Seeing the Dales from a Bus", page x.

Connections: Artists and Writers in North Craven has been funded by Allan Gould and Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund which is provided to local authorities to compensate communities affected by aggregates extraction. This fund is managed by The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council. It is a most attractive and stylish presentation of the many talents that the Craven Dales have inspired. It is excellent value and has a most attractive format.