

Timescales

Laureen Johnson

Broch o Houlland, Hol o Scraada
Early 1900s

His graandfaider telled him
aa at he kent
about brochs, an foo dey wir biggit
stane apo stane, an shaa'd him
aa at wis left
at Houlland.

An he ran an he jump an he climmed
ower da girsed-up waas
wi da loch sheenin blue aa aroond
ida height o da day
an he lay ida löf o da broch
oot o da wind,
watchin da feddery sky
an coontin
in centuries.

Dan he stöd at da Hol o Scraada
– open mooth –
an lookit an lookit
at da shoormal sae far fae da sea
an da black tunnel bored ida solid rock
sae lang fae syne
an said 'Whan?
An Daa,
wis da broch here dan?'

löf hollow of the hand
shoormal tideline on beach