



Mapa Scotland (*Mapa Szkocji*)

in Jan Tomasik, died 1991

He was wedged into the Firth
 of Lorne when I saw him, one hand
 reaching to Ben Nevis, checking the elev-
 -ation; the other clutching his quarter-
 inch map, its folds long tattered.
 He was engrossed in his own creation:
 a colossal concrete model of Scotland,
 so big you could leap from peak to peak, scramble over its topography
 Set within a low retaining wall it might have been an oval play-park. From
 outer space it would have shown the face of Scotland as a well-carved, perfect
 cam- -eo. Though old and worn, he was intent, deliberate, visualising how
 it would look layered in colour from greens through shades of
 browns to purples to enliven grey cement. And river basins:
 if he'd got them right, the streams would trickle from corries
 and heights, gather pace to rush through gorges, wind
 across flood plains, drain into estuaries and firths.
 All that measuring and levelling
 to make it accurate. A work of art, of head and hand
 and heart in fusion; a vision, a gift for his adopted land,
 ho -mage to Scotland whose coast, from Montrose
 to Col -dingham, the 1st Polish Armoured
 Div -ision had defended secretly. They were soon to leave
 for Normandy. When peace came, they stayed on, settled
 down. He bought the land, the old house where they had
 trained together, modelled terrains to check supply
 lin-es, strategies. The map remains a symbol
 of friendship bridging nations,
 of skill and spirit, of endless
 cr -eativity which no war
 can quench.

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