CAR PARKS

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Category: Observations

I don't know what it says about me, but some of my favourite places in the world are car parks. Let me quickly point out that I don't mean horrible multi-story concrete monstrosities in city centres. I love the car park at Honister in the Lake District. It can be noisy, dusty and crowded, but if you go north you climb up Dale Head and a southward track takes you onto the slopes of Brandreth from where Great Gable, Fleetwith Pike and all sorts of other good mountains are within easy range. Recently, the car park at the foot of the Coledale Mine Road has become a favourite; it's just a hop, step, jump and a series of scrambles from the Causey Pike Ridge. What could be better?

Well, perhaps the Steel Rig Carpark in Northumberland is better - I'm not sure. The view of Hadrian's Wall marching over the crags is stunning and the area is great for walking. From family picnics with my mam and dad, to long hikes with friends on cold, snowy days; a lot of happy memories have started from Steel Rig.

And that is why I like some car parks. The places where you turn the engine off, get your boots on, shoulder your rucksack and head off into the hills, full of energy and expectation. Then at the end of the day, you flop back in the car, ease your boots and hot smelly socks off and luxuriate in the satisfaction of a good day in the hills.

Car parks can be good places: where is your favourite?