

12.

The Red Hand:

a poemosaic



I

O Fidil plays at crossroads or at squares
where folk jorgather on a summer night,
O fidil, lonely fidil, you can make
a tired foot light, a troubled heart to break.
I too have heard you, creeping down the stairs
to watch them dance by fire - or candle light.

II

✓ How can I write of Ulster ?

Every word
I ever wrote has Ulster back of it.

III

McCormick, you have bid the Scot
go back beyond the tumult thought
and old familiar belt of Burns,
where the grey Pict winter turns
into the mild and merry spring
of that blithe April blossoming,
of that seawash and sunbright star
we think of when we name Dunbar

Scots too by faith, by speech, by blood,
I heard you and I understood;
but to my grief I could not find
that quality of heart and mind
in any man in our tale,
no poet spreads so wide a sail.

I would go back to base my stand
upon the wisdom of the land,
upon the hearty strength and hope
in cliff or glen or firkyd slope,
upon the visionary light

about our lonely shores by night,
upon the old untiring dream
of tree and mossy rock and stream.

But when I seek to match my thought
with dexterous phrases clean and taut,
I jumble in the fashioning,
Tangle and knot it like a string.
There are no cunning hands to show
me how the fingers ought to go;
no skilful touch to knead the stuff
into a clay alive enough
for my dull thumb to give a shape
from which the joy cannot escape.

Forgive me then if oft I may
in making this go far astray,
mistaking rocket's glow for star —
Remember we had no Dunbar.

IV

I had thought to bring to mind
a kind of beauty and a kind
of courage reckoning not blind
that since time started seems t' have grown
part of the Ulster sky and stone
til man and tree and word are one.
Our bravery is not to dare
incredible demons of the air,
the wind of comets in your hair.
Our loveliness must never be
ignorant of time's equity,
wapt in bodes claystoffpanoply.

It is our courage clear to know
the incidence of rain and snow
and tread the way we wish to go.
It is our beauty to delight
in stark austerity of light
and warm at heart to walk the right.

I had thought to bring these two
together in a song as true

as sunrise or the fall of dew.
But I have only brought to mind
the desolation of the blind
time tortured remnants of my kind.

V

O Ulster muse your strong a bitter heart
has bid me make a song for sake of you,
play once before I die the patriot's part,
and praise or blame what's worthy or untrue

Born at your core, the palpitating core
which concentrates the province, drawing in
the strength and vigor of both hill and shore
til something is distilled, a discipline
of mind and gesture that across the world
is known as yours peculiarly alone,
a tilt of banner flying out or furled,
stuck in the sand or grounded safe on stone.

Born at this core a spending growing years
fed by your fields a streams, beneath your skies
spared by such hopes a limited by fears
so scattered by the skill of hands a eyes

that have each image signals from your face
and know not any shape save what you give,
I have attained a small articulate grace
and seek to snare with that the fugitive.

Too long & often I have let my tongue
cry out in bitterness, in bitterness,
because I saw the crushing of the young,
old dotards master, courtesy's distress,
wrong braggart, bludgeon violence, a shame,
the Judas look, the pennies on the drum,
he burred his, the spit bestabber's name,
and bruised beauty manacled a dumb.

Then, sober in my utterance I shall make
a little snare of words to catch and hold
not only broken hands or the spent hearts' ache
but Joshua's blood a dreams a tinker told.

Be near me Ulster, lest I do you wrong,
still up the scale what shold be masculine,
and make a fairy chorus of a song
that must be strong & rank with sweat a brine

Yet let not any sweetness that there is
glit by the tangled verse unnoticed:
heather and whin; there yet are primroses
along the road to Clady in the spring.

VI

I scorn the Celt yet something in my blood
moves strangely at the slant of Antrim rain;
a beggar woman in a misty lane
blessing your penny by the holy wood:
green hills astir with shadowy brotherhood
of jay a-hors; or a wild refrain
with laughter in it somewhere, a great pain,
heard by a heath or in a lonely wood.

I know, I know the wrong this spirit's done;
the dark young man snatched dry of hope & life,
then flung into the gutter, left to rot,
who might have wed up handsome daughter & son
and livid in quiet with a housewife wife,
but at the thought of Eire' I forgot.

Far back the shouting Briton in joyay,
 the sallow Roman with his banners host,
 the fair beard plaited in the Saxon way.
 The long ship bringing terror to the coast,
 Then the dark Celtic Christian with his cross,
 the red Scot flying from a brother slain,
 the English trooper plowing when a moss,
 the saint Scot praying in the thin grey rain.
 These stir a mingle, leaping in my blood,
 and what I am is only what they were,
 if good is much in that where they were good
~~a treacherous and iritable kin~~
~~and bad~~ only in my brief despair.
 Kelt, Briton, Roman, Saxon, Dane a Scot
 till a this island tied a crazy knot.

What other bloom than this? What other bloom
 stuck in a hat or carried on a pole
 can bless the unborn infant in the womb
 with freedom's last a arrogace of soul?

my orangeflily, flower of flaming gold,
 I have grown sad to see you used as mark
 by lousy masters who have sold a sold
 bright nail by nail our covenanted ark.

O flowers of freedom, I have heard you sung
 by drunken ruffians rancors in the night,
 yet spite the rage some loneliness still clung
 that left your petals rich with memory's light.

Thro Newtownbreda or thro Saintfield go,
 and there is every windowbox set gay
 with these bright blossoms in their golden row
 to celebrate a more than holiday:
 and I have stopt there leaning on my stick,
 my heart uplifted by the blossoming
 til joy from mind erast the statesman's politic,
 and freedom was a very lovely thing.

So, by this token let us know each other,
 that he who wears the lily in his hat
 claims freedom for himself a for his brother,
 and asks no more nor less from life than that.

When I hear the row of drums in the street
 my heart steps quicker than my feet
 and when the bagpipes skirl and cry

X

I left my head and hold it high
for I remember the days aye
when I marcht afield with the piping men

The sun comes up in a cloudless sky
the drum roll loud a the bagpipes cry;
the lodges gather to the bang of the drum,
and proud with banners the tall men come,
with faces bright
in the morning air,
the they dance all night
in the bonfires glare.

Who standing gaping mid the whin of spring
first calls the circled mound the Giant's Ring;
and where three roads met turning at a loss
to his direction numbered Headless Cross;
and when a horseman slew him once again
to one remarked 'This is the Trooper's Lane';
and after, as he witt his bloody sword
said 'No name better now than Slaughterford?
and as I guess, when out with gun or pike
two hundred years ahead, behind a dyke
crouching to watch the yeomen fling a rope
over a high bank near the quarry slope,
whistled to one beside him in the corn
"That Fairy Thorn is now the Hanging Thorn".

I am in love with the Ulster names,
each clean hard name like a wave-smooth stone.
Tyrella, Rostrevor are wavering flames.
The names I mean are Broughshane, Malone,
Dundlace, Dunservick, bone of my bone.

The words of a song are the soul of a race.
I put these words in a little song;
and every name is the name of a place,
Cladyhalliday, Annalong,
Clonroot is the towland where I belong.

Spell them out to an Englishman
whose ear is dull with an empire's roar —
Lisnelinchy and Larriban,
Broughshane, Doagh, a Donegore,
Kilwangske, Kilclief and Moneymore,

or if he should plead that he was born
in sight & sound of the Tyne's great ships
I will answer him: Mapheranmore
Shake that name with your twisted lips.
Hark how he falters a slurs and trips

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Even suppose that each name were freed
from legend's ivy and history's moss,
there still would be music in Carrick-a-rede
to men forget its the Rock across
the track of the salmon from Bally-a-Ross.

Enough of the magic will cling a long
till a new race rise and the old decay,
for a man to rejoice in the paths of old
Slenish, Downpatrick, and Murrough Bay,
little Rani's Island, and Killyleagh.

So keep ye the names of your painter's schools,
Siena, Senlis, the Umbrian plain;
I dream of a day when these bickering fools
will make out of love for Trooper's lane
a better book than Hells again.

Let the Lakeland poets of England fade
before the glory that quivers & comes
out of the sunset over Knocklayde
& the clear land thro' of protestant drums
rise with the memory of martyrs.

on every name will a new Jane fall
of gentleness working its wonder on wrath;
instead of Nazareth Cashendall;
yet if a voice should on Calvary call
Christ will have taken the Grey Man's Path.

XI

The Roe, the Bush, the Lagan, & the Bann:
O Phœnix and Abana of my dreams,
O brown with peat, O Salmon calling streams,
so reckless were shall drown the heart of man.
I stood aloft on bridge or cliff to scan
more famous rivers crested rich with temes
dead kings & poets gave till fancy seems
like some high laden galley Tyman.

Amaz'd a overwhelmed by that array,
lost & a stranger in a world remote,
I've shut my eyes & turn'd my face away
to gain the compass points to guide my boat
& anchor safe in shallows, or to float
with the six milewater slowly to Lough Neagh.

XII

make me sad, then make me merry,
break a man's the heart of me;
applebloom of Ballinderry,
cherry trees of Aghalee.

let me banish from my lyric every fantasy and dream
and concentrate on the Pig Marketing Board and the
Barn Drainage scheme.

near Aghalee I felt my heart grow light,
for appleblossom, appleblossom spread
its perfumed pink, till all the land was bright
and sunshine flooded raindark stacks & shed.

Here I am native. Easily occurs
the phrase that I had never thought to say.
I am that tree, that gatepost, that daffodil,
I am this dust, this whin, this blackened hay;

and where that figure moves about his task,
I am beside him, shadow. I am he.
God is not far to seek. No skyblue mask.
I see his gnarled hands in that apple-tree.

Then on I went with rapt ecstatic face
until I came to Lurgan in the rain,
and saw the women in the market-place
Toot cheapjack tinsel wares for earning fair.

Then once again I knew myself apart,
with nothing kindred bone, lost, alone;
and time's old load came down upon my heart,
and spring had no more blossom than a stone.

When I went out to Ballyclare
a sabbath peace lay on the land,
lost skylarks filled the shining air
and whin was gold on either hand.

Before a farm where joy abode
were speckled fowls and daffodils,
and at a turning of the road
the spring bright wonder of the hills,
and lambs on nervous legs that shook,
black quiet cattle treading slow
like pictures in a colors book
, used to copy long ago.

So when I came to Ballyclare
the heart within me didn't sang,
for laughing children thronged the square
and golden church bells rang a ring.

Then I was glad that I was born
kinsfellow of a place so fair.
A gaggle'd driven pheasant his horn
and detrol filled the Easter air.

There at the corner where the smithy stood
 -and silent farmers led great horses in,
 a letiol pump as red as angry blood
 blushed lever with one yellow as the whin:
 but -at the bridge end where I used down
 to meet my father coming from the train
 a lonely lark climbed up into the sun
 and left a trail of song as bright as rain.

When I went out to Donegore
 the bloom was white upon the thorn
 when I went out to Donegore
 from Sixmilewater to the crest
 my heart exulted in my breast
 with pride of being Antrim born,

for all the way was primroses
 and white the bloom upon the thorn,
 for all the way was primroses
 with here and there wood violet,
 -and apple not in blossom yet,
 and aslards stirring to be born.

O bondsman of the roaring town
 in birdsong finding liberty,
 O bondsman of the roaring town
 I stood within a little wood
 -and felt the full beatitude
 of every lively bird a tree,

and knew that I had come upon
 my sworn a signal place in time,
 and knew that I had come upon
 the sanctuary unaware,
 delivered from my griefs & cares
 by the redemption of the climb.

Here where the master takes his rest
 beneath the sod that breaks in flower,
 here where the master takes his rest
 his love beside, his labor done,
 here by the grave of Ferguson
 I share his wisdom for an hour.

I left the town just as the rain began
 a drizzle over sweaty summer streets
 that for the first hour rolls in pellets of dust
 before it coats the pavement with its scum.
 The train was stuffy with that station smell
 distilled of stale memories of excursions,
 and half-fact people hunched themselves in corners.

dull spirits of aspidistra flying from
long sheets of aspidistra in July,
but taking with them in their nervous flight
essence of aspidistra in their hearts.

The whistle blew. A fat man shook his flag.
Doors slammed. The engine shunted. We were off.

We rattled past the backyards of the town
gathering steed and rocking now and then,
washing on lines and women shaking dusters,
and scrawny lads that scratcht in leafs of dust,
and at a corner, where a public house
bore on its wall a painting of that King
who saved us from the Pope and wooden shoes,
a host of workless fellows kicking a ball
of string and paper that split into shreds
as the vindictive drizzle rotted it.

A stretch then a long slablands to the right,
with here & there a white gull picking worms,
- and half a mile out stranded, rotting, green,
the shattered timbers of a coasting bulk.

A lunch then to the left, a tunnel's dusk,
- and we were riding thro a wooded hill.
The wires cried drearily. The drizzle broke

into a pelting shower of whistling rain
that beat & lastt the windows of the train,
~~came thro in dirty trickles where putty had fought.~~

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XIX

Among the holly trees of Drumnasole
upon the out-thrust leaf the light is blue.
From rock to rock into the rippled bowl
the laced foam leaps dizzyly askew.

The garlic odor's lazy on the air.
The channeld grassblades are rain diamonded.
Rain puddled stones with flint splits here a there
lie tumbled in the barren river bed:

for there the stream falls sudden out of sight,
not to be found again unless you look
far down the glen and in the open light
tho whins and salleys for a narrow brook.

So love's high cataract breaks on my heart,
does lovely things of sheer abandoned glee,
is lost awhile, in secret runs apart,
returns diminist singing quietly.

XX

We found a rock beyond the piped spray
- and croucht to gaze in wonder at the fall.
The penitent trees shut out the day
so we were in a cage of palegreen light

bold as a well.

Before a dripping berg of fernsill'd wall
down which there cold and fell
wide jets of yellow foam that broke in white
on mossy stones, and cutt in narrow ledge
staggered a yard, - and took a curving leath
into the beer brown hood a falcon deep,
to ripple to the boulder angled edge
with frost blown bundles like the frost on beers.
The troubled mind lulld quiet by the roar
lost present tense of memory and fear
til I forgot the load our generation bore.

XXI

I stood upon the crest above the sea
where the sheer path leads down its goat foot way,
beneath me came the roar of Murrough Bay
where the old war wears on unendingly
twixt rock and wave. The mist enfolding me
now shrouded sight, or now in jocicter play
brought noon upon the bleakness of the day,
hid thorn at hand or baird a distant tree.

I stood beside a little granite cross

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on which a lover of good men had spelt
the clear shark names unbaffled yet by moss,
to keep their worth a certain time in mind.
Somehow, the scene & sentiment were signed
with the unavailing flourish of the kelt.

XXII

Here where McQuillen built his God a house,
behind the sandhills at the water's edge,
where Trout scound Margy ends in shoal & sedge,
and the black nun still seeks her blessed spouse,
where sodded safely til the last carouse
the turbulent M'Donnells, ledge on ledge,
lie rankt within, where by the leaning ledge
deaf to the sea sleep new anonymous;
in this rich acre brimmed with memories
that roof the shattered walls and shuffle down
the timechart steps with halfheard elegies,
here where a man should tread with quiet care,
the tourists gaze oblivious to renown,
the golfers' shout is harsh upon the air.

XXIII

My wonder mounted as I gapt awhile,
mood glance along the shoulder of Knocklayde,
gangs arable a meadow, ditch & stile,
the seal of plow, the signature of shade.

Wide acres barren easy to the plow,
small climbing corners difficult to reach,
yet vivid green with crops on crazy brow,
or interlocked with gorse in quarry breach.
Foolhardy men who violently tear
and scrabble for a foothold lest they fall,
cliff rock, wing sod, a loose twist earth & air,
while in the valley there is room for all.

XXIV

High in the misted Heather of Benmore
where Long na Crannach leans her twisted trees
where within a bracken clutch about your knees
^{just ahead} and ~~far you hear~~ ^{a lead} the seas perpetual roar
thrust from the earth are rounded flats of stone
like naked floors from whence the walls have gone
with closeknit grain no weed has rooted on
the over it the feathered seeds have blown.
Across each rock the lines are parallel
scord ground and groaven as an artist once
had drawn his symbols on the bladed bronze
but faded of ogham that we still can spell.
Here the deep ice retreating to the north
^{have learned} bore at the rocks with talon granite toes
till now a quarry man sees these & knows

from what chill air the glacier drifted forth
An age left this: with here and there a rock
terribly poised upon an anxious cliff.
Ten thousand years: and this faint hieroglyph
circuits the story in a single shock.

The thoughts strong singing: Of the world I know
what simple pattern will avert decay
what scribble spell what faces drove this way
and left no track ^{even} ~~back~~ on a slate below
the drains we core into the concrete road
the rusted cables and the buckled lines
the insulated rods the flooded mines
what form of breath thro such draft gutters blow?

The narrow thought - the complement of this
in my frail mind what marks remain to show
the traffic of the time, the ebb and flow
the use of slab, the fall of precipice
Shreds twigs straw shards a aimless scattered things
drift on the beaten ledges in the dark.
But what the epitaph these striae mark
or what the mean of my heart's wanderings?

XXV

Rathlin the west light and the tall black stacks
 the hurtling puffins and the guillemots
 rocketting fast on faces into the surge
 sun-rooey mounded fort of swordgit kings
 and cresting the small hill a heron surprised
 trailing off with offended arrogance
 the oyster catchers eggs you found on a ledge
 when the gull-hen parents cried in a narrowing circle
 and down by basket bough a sparrowhawk
 striking the gull's nest in a flurried fury

the hooded features murmur over the turf-flow
 of Neil the hiper and the gingaels cry.

for our nurture and our spent wits' succ'd
 we hurried to an island Rathlin knowing
 loopt by steel cliffs and circled by the ocean
 islands are well-heads of the world's salvation
 There men at peace in fields or driving cattle
 women at doors and children brown and shy
 sheep on the hills the mare with the stumbling foal
 the sick calf in the corn the stacks of sods,
 the white road with each bough a bright surprise
 Craymacaggan Mullyroger ally Usket

the charlock yellow barley the warm sweet beans
 and the perpetual crying of the birds
 brought back clear joy and merry sanity.

fresh in a salty gneall
 we lackt for home and sawt small ragged clouds
 But in the city of our dreadful night
 men fought with men because of a slobbered rag
 or history remembered wrongly. In the streets
 crowds shouted the old shibboleths of late
 drove from their midst the strangers of a creed
 and set the little flame licking up the curtain

XXVI

O Rathlin Ragleny Restraining of the ships
 Bruckan's the pool and care. That mariner
 of whose vast fleet two hundred sank at once
 the wooded isle then now a ledge of horn
 along the Glebe and not another tree.

There the King's daughter sat upon a stone
 and cried and there a galley grated iron
 and pirates seized her. There Cuchullin saw
 and leaping to the stone struck blade at breast
 Provd only to the King who he had claimed
 the daughters hand and bed as rescue fee
 by bloody wrist, cloke atop, thrust out ad shear

He stood on Kinsale Head and saw the smoke
spire from the hatches round the boat through bay
of Rattlin Rocklin Rockraun of the oaks
and rags along the cliff tops impotent
while child and woman store of grain and ox
smoked to the girth by the English brand
This Sorley Boy this Charlie Yellowhair
and where Sir Arthur Chichester kneels down
facing his kneeling wife in the carver tomb
in Carrickfergus Church of Nicholas
over the smaller effigy of Sir John
bearing his heraldon. Mc'Donnell stood by gate
James son of Charlie Charlie Yellowlocks
When fat ye' your head Sir John? I min' the day
'clippit it off when ye' wad hae ambrocht me.

This is mere legendary
I do not care. In Heaven's eye its' true
There's little justice enough in our history.

The holy well has power to heal all hurts
bruises - cuts - scabs - rashes - wrenches - burns
it falls and rises with the sea below
Blest by that fiery comet Columcille

27
who stolft breast before he flamed ahead
to make Iona forever a lovely name
it could not cure my sprain nor the poison swelling
in my left hand tho' bathed three times with care
It is no good for sprains Mc'Quilken said;
had card his ankle twisted in a dyke
wet kerchief in a day worn unobserved
in muddy boot. He did not doubt my faith.

I'll go agen before my summer ends
where once I went with those two best of friends
into the Mourne's heart to the lonely lake
where broad streams over flat wide boulders make
great shields of sunny gold seen miles away
where cotton o' the bog like tufts of wool
gleeces the marshy places cleft and pool
rich with old glorious browns no brush cord snare
We shrode together thro' a fitful day
of sunsplash slanting rain and misty air
for one of us was bidden to observe
peaks pattern shoulder shadow waters curve
and plot it all in color for a price.

But what can buy the freedom of the heart
the courage given by hills, by hills apart
and wise, with none to interfere but God
and his creation, none to knock the sod
with foolish charge of crop, with rasping plow

yet once aware what right or hope but twice
I might attain the tame unbaffled brow?
Is not this lonely landscape of the mind
my own and gone, nor theirs who went with me
a state of grace of being of a kind
not to be won by any sorcery?

XXX

But these are not my hills they are too high
they have not been since we slipp slowly over
abost to any force beneath the sky
They are too harsh for me to be their lover.

The broad stone working with the flattened stream
the sheer place barren and the timeless peak
not even sharp against the sun's last gleam
can I find comfort in them I may speak:

for they are from a world beyond my reach
not the warm human world of broken earth
the hard warm flints along the lifted beach
the old stone altar and the baked clay hearth

I do not fear a bare land but am high
The curlewscreaming moors have no affright
the bogbrown troutstream hissing hurriedly
can flash no terror in the blackest night

29
But the cold summit harried by the rain
smothers by cloud or banners far with snow
has all the sheer sublimities of pain
I leave for braver hearts than mine to know.

XXXI

Great elemental mountains high in cloud
with April adders leaping waterfalls
and gorse wood launch endless Argo armadas
Munchausen guidebook to the peaks of bliss
enlargement of the spirit bulge of breast
Tall jancies smash the stars, glare fast the sun
Exult in Bigness. Greatest Ever Was.
Milton's - an anthill. Watch me Soar and Sing.
The waiter murmured Coffee in the lounge.

XXXII

The wandering pedaling man
drunk in a barn brain with a steel shod heel
the balladsinging woman not his wife
and left her body under an empty sack.
The cycling postman saw him early out
a stonebreaker and a farmer with a cow
bellowing calf at daybreak saw him pass
The counsel for the Crown with plastered hair
repeated in his speech the lovely names
Castlewellan Annalong and Bryangford

XXXIII

I passed at light a house with trees enroot,
 the murderers who somehow did not hang
 for redleSSLlaughter, but died of the fates
 beyond the ocean, screaming at the end.

XXXIV

I stood upon a little hill in Down
 with anguish poised upon its mellow brine
 the passing shower has left me in the sun
 but thrown cool scarves of shade on other hills
 from Castlewellan with its brace of spires
 along the sharp edge to the crest of Croob
 the cotton clouds were bellow'd sails and bales
 with blues whose range to island them in light
 the landskip stelt its colors pattern out
 the grazing pocket with moving cattle black
 and brown the rich potations of green
 the lighter corn with squares of charlock gold
 the grey stone ledges lines of darker trees
 the gash of quarry with its clayred wound
 and caught between green slopes the little lough
 Alnatura blue as the lot of the sky,
 with one white house against a narrow field
 the new slacks that left but hardly weathered yet
 and gulls that rose and settled with slow cry
 on the low marsh places to the right
 and one rook circling in the middle air

I lost the ache of self my heart gone out
 into the shapes among the dykes of stone
 on gulls wing pecking at the horses feet
 I was in all and yet included all
 that are and far of earth was but projected
 from the stored images within my mind

like God on chaos dreaming forth a world

It had not been before me and would end
 when my will would. I could control its end

Then as I stood a cry from one behind
 emerging from the sombreans cool gloom
 forth snared frenzy to my dulling sense

Here to this hill well wall'd from ranging beast
 one turned gasping with the terrible word
 of Patric landed with his murdered god
 to work here by the green mouth o' the Quoyle
 why must another god break into my dream?

XXXV

O Quoyle with laicd greenery to its edge
 O horsty road to Saul O shattered tower
 and crumbled castle by the tidal lough
 This is an holy corner of our land
 a miracle each ledge a blessed thought
 in every bend - and dip in the narrow lanes
 Patric that stern and melancholy man
 galloping his saddle of humility

with the throbbing sore in his heart his friend betrays
Saint match'd by Heaven down northern mood
no rollicking fellow singing his way to God
no gentle Francis with each gesture a holm
water & him was water - and the cross
no iron prelate breaking kings in his hands
but an earnest man with clearness of great hills
and the loneliness of moorland bogs and skies
sure in his faith but not in his own strength
bare before deary frighted by his dream
heroic honest seldom daring to laugh
hissing forever in the herd of deer
leaving his fires alight on every hill.

XXXVI

The spirit led me up Carnarney hill
and spread the country flat before my eyes
from Ilemish nipple blunt in mouth of cloud
to the long Antrim slope where steadily
the naked pylons thread across the bogs
and the silver lough's sleekt grey a black with squalls
But no voice spoke temptation: his me fling
myself a gaze to time and providence
There were larks singing in a patch of blue
then quiet rain fell on the ring of stones.

XXXVII

Blackstaff, the river takes its secret way
from the smooth hills to reach the busy sea:
hidden by warehouse walls from light of day,
brick'd over, bridged, it journeys quietly.

At vantage point I watch it rise with rain,
slap the footbridges at the thaw of snow,
or weary, late in August, slip a drain
between crust buckets to the mud below.

Men built it over a surrounded it
with the drab architecture of their hovels,
drave out the sea from foul a sandy spit,
and farther back along the steep slopes
bound it a harness to the roaring mill.
Those walls are broken down, the roofs are wreck'd;
and bramble clings along the shattered sill
rich with the bitter berries of neglect

XXXVIII

Thus then my country not parturient
but boulder sterile craggy harsh and bare
not the round bellied meadow indolent
or the heald gashes of the living shore

My stock, if head's a measure, otherwise
legged ample acres tant with eager growth
cockt eye for manifesto of the skies
- and by the corn god's rising made their oath.

But by the westward girt were pluckt a flung
across two waters to another ground
There set about familiar tasks of dung
and furrow til the slow aghen was found
Letters on sage the way they came a went
my restless fathers takes a tidal course
the stakes of history rise or fall percent
remarks the notice for the leaf ad swerve
in ten was not such but decision made
a man upon a fate or by a fire
ties of his ailing father or his trade
or weary for the arms of his desire
to back and forth until they growing thing
that rooted us to earth's fierce humping glo
the hudder light that swirls the loins with string
and warms the chill hearts thro' th' untrdden snow
the growing thing was shattered broken euen
There is no seed or crop to know my land
No sod responds. Thought wanders share a lean
across the whin and heather of my land.

XXXIX
These are my hills and I am known
to every tossing wrap of air
to every gull adversely blown
and hedge or ditch bnd thick or bare
These are my hills and I am known
as comrade of the stream and stone

These are my hills. I ask no rent
of stubborn cloe or naked tree
I only go the way he went
who once was wise and kind to me.
These were his hills - and now are mine
who own them by his rod and sign

XL

Here Samuel Bundy spent neglected years
at tillage of a crop wond always fail
for men one barren soil tho barley ears
till big and lasseld over all decade

and in this place he labored at his verse
to name the legends of the time toodht walls
of tabbed banners shadows tall and fierce
of bescon flames - and flying trumpet calls

So when to Ballyhornan first I came
the all the air was troubled with unrest
for may mad whin had set the fields afame
- and hawthorn flickers every hedge's crest

I did not turn my fancy forage wit
to memory of Irelands weary wrong
the every mossy stone was mard with it
and sorrow deepend with the skylarks song

I felt my hand reach out across the dark
& that old person poet with his rimes
for he had seen this whin and heard the lark
and cunct the barren exile of his times.

XL I

For fifty years his body lay
beneath the sod beneath the sod
for fifty years his body lay
waiting the trump of judgment day
the judgment of his God.

Then when the fifty years were sped
above the sod below the sod
then when the fifty years were sped
God put a thought in a poets head
who seldom thought of God

The poet rose and said Ill go
-and find the grave of Ferguson
The poet rose and said Ill go
tho to a place I do not know
now fifty years are done

He went and found the primroses
that mark the grave of Ferguson
and stood awhile until in these
plain words Godswill was done

Good man good poet and good friend
of every shred of Irishry
Good man good poet and good friend
God help me be so at the end
Amen so let it be.

And so the weary ghosts content
and turned to seek his rest done
and so the weary ghosts content
how God his judging word has sent
alls well with Ferguson.

XL II

We climbed the hill we threaded thru
the tilted stones and broken stones
seeking the cypress or the yew
that shades and wards the poets bones

We found the place. We found the name
in granite letters sharp and clear
the record of his learned fame
the dignity the rank the year

But not a hint was there or sign
to mark him poet, shell him lord
of those who use the singing line
the native word ^{phrase} the naked word

I fretted at the thought of this
but my love picked a cowslip up
said look the clusters primroses
the Kingcup and the buttercup

The speedwell too and bloomless yet
a rose beside that heavy stone
let this and this repay the debt
and song of lark and thrush alone

Then I said: Someone on his grave
as on a chieftain's grave should lay
the lunula the ring the glaive
the cup of bodkin penciled clay.

XLIII

When I was four years old we went
to see Roads End in County Down
to hear the grim and eloquent
Sir Edward strait from London town

Now I have read and weighed the thing
I passed my judgment on his fame
assess his feeble blustering
and phrase the vigor of my blame

But far below the layers of thought
the lessening years deposited
still in the wildest depths uncaught
where dwells that child's untroubled head
is platform on a grassy place
a cheering crowd of sash gay men
a lifted just a scowling face
Sir Edward Carson 1910.

XLIV

Let us name them slowly over,
let us name them Grant McKinley
Adams Adams Polk Buchanan
little men none gave a chance to
spread on counter quickly bundled

Names on poster faded colors
circus plays here vanquish summer
boys who cheered it unremembered
only tourist sees the notice
notice with the ragged corners
fastened on a rolling gatepost
only tourist stops to read it
shell smudged name of clown or rider

Here at home they sat on Council
cleated contract square official
fills fake entries on the schedule
sold blind mare to aged farmer

stolen gravel from the highway
gave to glory loud with trumpets
sidesmen elders stewards and wardens

Only one is worth our claiming
he went out to mocking laughter
weak defeated still professor
with a vision undefeated
of the city of the future
was an outlaw from its borders
and the congress of the nations
lifting Peace up as their banner.

Yet the streak of weakness in him
left Gen. Debs to cough in prison
and Czar Nicholas' dirty murderer

Better God should give Ted Roosevelt
hearty humbug draft rough rider
for the faded little brother
sticking ragged to the gatepost
on the gable or the boarding

XLV

Who then to praise as worth our loving thought
for any gesture given or vision caught?

Hans Sloane hot student and exacting man
booklover and physician to Queen Anne
Rollo Sillahue Eldred Pottinger
are these the names that still make pulses stir

Nay of these heroes surely there is one.
Put up your sword, not you, John Nicholson

I name today the men who live before
and purchas't glory for this barren shore
first troops of brigands swarming to the east
enslave the Indian and exploit his beast
to bully China into signing her H. Pottinger
apology to the curst poisoner
or hypocritical within her gate Hart
betray an empire and destroy a state

Then this who made his name for shapely ship Harland
and bled his brains out with a jailing grip
or this or this with fortune out of sooth
Cobacco liner matches jam or rope
I said there surely must be more than these
mere traffickers in coarse commodities
There must have been a man with kindly wit
who still could live wisely live and laugh at it
O friendly Percy styling at Dromore
his yearn for Hafiz or a lesser bore,
or Farquhar, eager, gay, and dissolute;
or Swift's flight from Yarria and Kilroot;
or Knowles, who pushes back th' infinist play
and bears the dances lessons for today
or gentle Thomson that most genial man
with quiet skill in courtesy and sedan

Laurens
E. Pottinger
Sillahue
Nicholson

XLVI

This man is dead who living loved so much
 the whorled mollusc secret in the stream
 the stoned lantern black against the gleam
 of sunset and the wild flowers eager touch
 the heralds love the qualities of rock
 the color'd mansions of the sunlit pool
 adept of eye and just he snared the full
 excitement in the camera's instant lock.

Let love be mad a use is found for skill
 that sixty years achieved. Let there is lost
 only the restless tongue the trumpet will
 but that somehow the pattern of a leaf
 a shells shape or a flourish of the frost
 is richer for his lessing from our grief.

XLVII

I wine you stubborn plowman of the heart
 here is the acre needs your wisest care
 cleave this unyielding earth with splendid share
 and break the black weedrooted clod apart
 without your strength scarce any shoot will start
 or spike of corn thrust friendly spear and fair
 when merry blossoms crowd the rainfresh air
 and burst the hollering eaves brisk swallows dart
 So forth to labor. Eager at your side
 here are a few will watch the hardpat skill
 by the firm grip or seek to match your stride
 with gazing eye first on a tree or hill
 then at the sowing with us also ride
 and when atlast the crashing reaper's still

XLVIII

They speak you fair and praise you to your face
 are happy once again to welcome here
 a famous son. They rise to you and cheer
 since you've made Antrim an immortal place
 Then back to their old wallows of disgrace
 the treacheries begot by hate and fear
 the haunted rents the pulpits bought too dear
 and the sick motley of the money race.

Be not a leper yet: dashel the mist
 that wreaths already round your valiant name
 Thro' the soft wavy strand that swathes each limb
 by huxters span. Thrust then a naked fist
 and stand above their barbed praise or blane
 -a captain of Gods angry scratchin'.

XLIX

You Francis Joseph Bigger in my youth
 were shape of one who loved this country well
 You hoarded up the scattered twigs of truth
 of those who battle eager ever fell.

I can remember moving here and there
 about the dream hacket rooms of your old house
 stopping a moment to return the stare
 of some green coated volunteer
 who gazed with pity from his tarmist frame
 or pushing back with nervous fingers
 the curtain from young Ennet's clay cold mask:
 the odor of murdered blood forever lingers
 crying to heedless ears the unaccomplish task
 of picking book up rich with magic name

of some old poet stained with rebel tear
 whereat you smile and growing garrulous
 repeat the tale deliberate the year
 when Rose Morris or Henry Joy
 first had the vision comes to every boy
 who strides these hills or bears - an old time play
 by ballad singer running in his trade
 or old wise woman heavy with the lore
 of faery horn and danesforts crumbling spell
 and I remember too how at the door
 with lifted hand you stood to cry farewell
 with laughing bearing of a Gaelic chief
 and gesture of the ancient Keltic fashion
 Your self is draped with the wretched leaf
 and strangers pass your windows with no thought
 for that old anger - and hot naked passion
 I yet may live to see the fight refought
 to see the foeman driven to the tide
 and these long hills by blood so often bought
 bear croth and punishment for a peoples pride
 So Francis Joseph Biggar rest you then
 your memory shall not die out from men
 but while I live I shall recall that day
 the words of forty workers rage and roar
 when you stood laughly in the Keltic way
 with lifted hand at your dreamcastles door.

L

Carson I cannot speak with formal phrase
 or raise
 the sculptured rhetoric of grief
 to praise
 a bronze shape signifying
 love of his country, stark sincerity,
 courage and eloquence
 Rather I mark the jaw grown coarse with lying
 the old heart rotten with black violence
 and the deaf gestures of hypocrisy
 The thousands line the streets to watch you pass
 not cheering now as when you passed before
 in brae bedecked with lilies and with flags
 saluting each hoarse roar
 I note their hungry faces note their rags
 and pity them not you.
 Who mourns for Carson now? Who mourns him? Who?
 The people mourn their leader dumb and dead
 recall not his harsh word when someone said
 that age and penury might know some ease;
 forget his juggling mastery of the seas
 that hurried us to danger ere he went
 branded a failure and incompetent.

Somewhere I thought that in the cloudless sky
 a host of angry spirits made them cry
 over who have died by violence and hate
 over this wasted island since he shewed
 the violent road

and jolted men's minds by his insurgent breath
with the unholy stratagems of death

Mourn him ye others who tho' his endeavours
won all his profit ye are glutted with
Mourn well your hero he is gone forever
and gone with him the power behind the myth :
the drunken landlord and the bankrupt peers
the crooked lawyer and the party hack
the cultured bishop bland are fattered here
Mourn well . Your hero is not coming back.
and with him goes the kingdom and the glory
all ye are left with is an empty story
and the slow horror of the certain end
when hunger's bony finger points the way
and on no distant day
the angry men will see by easy sign
that North and South each worker is a friend
and rise and claim what's yours as theirs and mine
Mourn well ye thieves of summer this harsh season
and this chill closure of your treachery
This instant I rejoice I live to see
for tho' it prospers yet I call it treason .

L1

I call to mind the famous Sergeant Quigg
who dragged the wounded safe and went for more
Born where the Bush runs by with heart & lung
he did not know what he was fighting for

He did not know. He was not asked. He went
because his master sent. A country boy
he knew winds buffet nettles touch the scents
of chest high bearfields out near Ballintoy

He was not wise . he heard blaspheming men
call him a fool for his daft bravery
Yet when Cuchullin summons them open
Quigg will be there beneath the Hostling Tree .

LII

There is no pity left in me
for any who recall Parnell
the trial of his adultery
has sunk to Hollywood from hell

May Lenn blight whoever shook
John Redmond's hand or Healy's hand
and let hell's fury scour the book
that -drives love of native land

But I reserve my deepest curse
for Gaelic speakers folk-dance-folk
for them I keep a savage verse
the thing has gone beyond a joke .

LIII

Black doctors selling cure-all herbalists
 who prove all doctors liars missionaries
 working coppers to complete the round
 -and sat a draughty corner shaken fists
 make Marx the rigid basis of -a curse
 to bring Craigmorn toppling to the ground

Hedged in a narrow place -a bitter man
 scolds thro St. Paul with savage ignorance
 -and bickers with dull hecklers in his crowd
 a red-faced fellow maps salvation's plan
 with scroll and pointer. With a scornful face glance
 I pass, my head unbloody and unbowed.

LIV

Where shall we go on Saturday
 Where do we ever go

A hint at Rooney's going to the match
 a half an hour coming home

Then tea at half past six
 shopping with the misses
 down the Shankill
 down North Street-

Then stop awhile at the pigeon shop
 maybe meet Andy or Joe

Quick drinks near ten

The one woman waiting with her basket full

Then home to bathe the kids

Christ died for you it says

on the board outside the mission

Christ died for me.

What did he die for?

What do we live for?

What is it all about?

Be quiet, head,

Love done with anxious thought.

Be quieted, O heart.

Where shall we go on Saturday?

LV

It is good to stand in your own backyard
 -and watch your pigeons black against the sun
 Then beat in circles back
 to the old tarblack shed.

Here I stand and watch my little flock of pigeons
 wheel away from me into the west
 -and I don't know
 if they'll ever come back.

LVI

I saw with my nose flat and whitened
 from the smoky numbers lot
 -a thin grey man sucking tobacco
 in the kitchen back of the shop

Then over the frosted window
 -a woman push in with a jif
 and three men knock the frost off pints
 as they sat in a corner snug

and round the lamp at the corner
a band of revolutionists sang
and left their red faces to heaven
as they stood in a fairy ring

LVII

Then when I have the table cleared
the things wash'd up
and the children hacket off to bed
when Tom sits by the stove reading
with his spectacles on
and falling into a noisy doze
I step out and lean on the verandah rail
and watch the rain slant across the squares of light
the windows throw on the sodden earth
and dream of North Street on Saturday night.

LVIII

I never knew the greatest cracks of all
safe in the goal or deadly with the ball
but I saw Rollo count the memory sweet
of the light magic of his flying feet
and rate above dim Red Branch deeds in worth
the great Ted Ryans bumbled to the earth
and Bill McCracken stuffing in his pocket
the famous Alan Morton Rangers rocket
and with that master never to be forgot
that other prince of craft Elisha Scott

how from the leaping foreheads of his Joe
he flickt the ball or turned from swinging toe
Elisha Scott, Baill Scott, and another as good
safe in the sticks altho not kin by blood
Tom Scott Tom Scott I know where you are lying
beneath the square tower and the dark yews crying
Gillespie too, Mick Hamill Gallagher
that intricate and deft artificer
who wove his patterns thro the Scots' defence
then out and back with poct's insolence

But while the memorys clear and sharp and bright
let me spell out the names that were delight
First alfy Harland Maultsaid Tommy Frame
where nows he name to equal any name
and when was better halfback but seen
Bob Wallace Jerry Morgan McIlveen
The forwards, name them over: they were greet
Cowen McCracken Savage skill and weight
then McIlreavy and upon the wing
the light McGullen. Naming these I bump
before my eyes the crowded shouting stands
the roar'd approval or the echoed "Hands"
O it will be a poor and niggard age
can share no column on the figurd page
between reports of commissar or king
or small dictators hoarsely blustering
can share no column written crisp and terse
in praise of centerhalves and goalkeepers.

LIX

I sing this song for love of you
 O city for love of you
 I know you, was born within you
 therefore I love you

Streets oily with the smeared shopsigns
 new things
 Slums paperblown and dusty
 with dirty children playing house
 Ships with lights on the rigging
 and belching portholes
 Chimneys secular and spires
 Quiet avenues
 with names on the gates like whiffs of spring
 Summer songs are far from you
 Your streets are barren
 Your walls high
 Behind and above the green hills call
 (from every street you can see a hill)
 but the crowded streets call
 And I heed them
 They say Come.
 Join us. Join us. Come.
 And I go.

I mix with your other children
 snuffling beggars
 with sad stories on little slates
 broken-bosomed men with cracking boards
 to advertise a fight or a cruise,

barefooted boys with newspapers

lines of waiting workless men
 long limousines exulting in their power
 and messengers on wheels of fire

Then a quiet voice whispers
 Not always so
 and I dream as I walk
 and the voice again
 New Jerusalem
 and in my heart I sing amen
 O City that I love so

LX

O Comrade Chairman would the lectures
 with heat and smoke the halls a jetsis blur
 I have sat down. Blake's lyric dies away
 and there's a gale of coughing. small and grey

The first man puts his question Do I think
 his mumble spires thro smoke I cough and blurt
 and got an answer Then the atheist
 puts all the blame on the weak back of Christ
 a Catholic bicker Paddy Gantry
 irrelevant as once plunges free
 into the Land League's history His rebuke
 is read by a young marxist from his book
 He spoils the phrases knowing them to me
 then glowing heart is lit with poetry
 with thumbs in vest-sleeve holes he is dismissed
 by haughty middle-aged trades unionist
 and my replies are hrd. They shuffle out.
 I wonder will they bring my dream about.

It is colder in the narrow canyon
of warehouses
empty, the leases fallen in
or mortgaged to the bank
the windows dirty
with one here and there
letters bold for a radio agent
or a once famous name now agent-for-pains
But in a side street
a shuffling crowd of men in cloth caps
waiting.

The tongue I spoke may no be froe the Clyde
or whaur you mountains carry cloots or snow
but I ha'e learntit at me grannie's side
when round the grate we githered from the baw
and I ha'e sat nea' gurnin in the bed
afeard for warlock boddies i' the dark
whaur me oor granda wi' aye redder head
tore me the ramblin rime o' Cutty Sark

But I ha'e run awheen wi' plantins thro'.
an down a hundred loaves wi' a bird
an jin myself an exiled foam leek you
among the beggars gets the rule the world

for I ha'e jaunt me claes wi' clabber an' dirt
an down the caessies whaur the big wheels turn
hae left the slow pain mount on eyes, na hurt
but wheengin for the maddlin as a burn

-a burn whaur I kin slawn an wash me clane
or a 'tew muck I hadna stell the jink
McDrannis if I ken right a ye name,
I think I ken the verra place tae look!

The little fields are our defence
against an age of competence -

LXIV

From the Brae to the Bridge you will never find a trace
of a young man or a young woman that court and make love
A curse is on this lowland and a blight hangs on the place
because of offence to the little folk or the good god above.

The young men walk apart and talk in low whispers alone
The young girls tell their mothers to darn the old men's socks
but every heart in the place is as heavy as stone
and I might as well look for love in a cairn of cold rocks

Yet if the good god made the little apples for us
and the stars in the dark and the stars in the fading light
He surely made the merry life of a little house
and noisy children, a wife, and a high turf fire at night.

LXV

I think it is a foolish thing
to bind love with a reading ring
or to to to the money hirin fair
to see of a likely young girl be there
- and since of cattle you have a back
to come with a worthless woman back

I have a wife in Neary Town
in Derry and two more in Down
a wife in every town I know
so if she please me not I let her go.

LXVI

57
I left this dreamy lowland tho only the butt of a lad
now I come back in evening with no more than ever I had
but I hear the trees in the graveyard cry out as I pass along
in the trees old way to the winds old song

the the brise of a sow or heifer be reckond in bound or bound
or a stupid man mortgage a lifetime to own an acre of ground
no little they'll get in the end if the sun be right or wrong
than the cry in trees as the winds old song

LXVII

When Lane turned sharp to avoid a cliff of clay
we caught turfreek. Then twenty yards away
we flumpst a farm dog well into a hollow
and stood to watch the darting curve of swallow
or fit of light days bat from mossy wall.
Then from the door a woman came to call
some creature by the cry she used to come
from the now darkling uplands safely home

We reacht her slower than the tottering lamb
black nose and bleating. "Since she lost her dam
in the great snow last march an orphan child
could not ha got more close to me" she smiled
and picked the lamb up. and the black mouth sucked
a big red finger.

Up here the snow must have been very deep
It was bad enough in town.

We had to keep
indoors for two whole days except for going

out to the pump. When it had quit the snowing
our first care was the sheep, and then to clear
a footway to the road. A fortnight near
before we could account for all the stock
we lost at least a dozen of the flock
a great prize randy ram and seven ewes
But William Todd beyond the Springhead Knowes
lost more than that. And farther back there were
right decent people ruined for many a year

LXVIII

A man shall walk attended by his dog
walk slowly with slow words of ancient worth :
not one from Helltown to the Tressay Bog
but knows by instinctive wisdom from the earth .

I have seen men at fair to sell and buy .
I think now of a little crowd of men
about - a horse and shouting angrily
because one asat buckfenny back open .

And the air was raw with scuds of hail ,
and the brown road was streaming mud and dung -
these men afame with anger more than all
shake out their coarse moods with embittered Tongue .

Eager to watch and gazing lest a blow
should call the fist or stick to make reply ,
I hustled and pressed as hoisted on tip of toe
to miss no state of lip or twitch of eye .

Yet gaping out beyond the thrusting crowd
I saw a slow man move with heavy feet
turn ulster back gone green , as slow and proud
he and his dog unheeding cross the street .

LXIX

The fretted by the siren's urgent scream
the endless tumult for unmeaning things
the impotence the waste the bickerings
I move in memory richer than in dream
for we have stood & watch the far red beam
strike the dread rock , have seen the marvellous wings
horos near the Stacks , have traced the old stone rings
and found a rule and measure for esteem

So when provoked almost to bitterness
or moved to blame a friend or jail a friend
because of the old choler in my bones
I mock my stubborn pride as having less
to shew forth than that happy man who owns
the only foal in all the lower End .

LXX

" Father O'Hare " said the girl to the priest ,
" We've heard by a letter this mornin
that a rich american uncle of da's
has left him his heir without warnin "

Surely a house on a hill or a view like this
of the Island stretchin afore us
is needin a name will make folks look up
an never dae til ignore us

me mother an me has talkt it out
 Mount Gran is the name we've decided
 We'd be grateful now if yer Reverence wuz
 the first or the neighbors that heard it

If he's yer will the young priest said
 Iis meself will surely begin it
 Henceforth the name ov dis place is Mount Grand
 -and the heart ov poverty in it.

LXXI.

High on a pile of broken stones
 percht on a barrel of pitch
 I sat and smokt and spoke to a man
 and pointed across the ditch

Who was it builded the little mound
 It was the Danes he said
 but tho they lifted these heavy stones
 They were wee and their hair was red

The men who came in the ships I astert
 I thought them tall and fair
 with shining eyes and glittering shields
 and stray on their lossing hair

He shook his head I ha heard of them
 They burned the churches and stole
 These wee red fellows were other danes
 won't harm no decent soul

A kindly sort of folk they were
 They made these caves and mounds
 and helpt the ailing wanderer
 who chancest upon their grounds

The wicked woman who beat her girl
 the landlор who press'd for his rent
 They put great frogs into their churns
 for warning and punishment

But they were just and being just
 They held to their own with care
 hearkt the man would dig the thorn
 or ruin the mound with his share

Remember this young man said he
 from an old man done and grey
 It was better for the country
 before they went away.

The farmboy only older than myself
by two hundred years sight like a grandfather
shifted his ragged body on the stack
and plucked a longer straw. With chin on knees
I sat not looking at him, gazing out
beyond the lime-washed pillars at the yard
where a late hen hatched shard all afternoon
ran clucking back and scratching round the door
From the open byre came swish of lazy tails
and quiet breathing till a bucket fell.

Rooks gathered in the tall elms near the house
The suns hot crested torch set earth afire
till stack and hedge were in a smouldering haze
Tomorrow Id be going home again
for two months now Sandy and I had been
close friends and comrades in this country life
I had learnt much from him. More than I will
ever learn in so short a time. Today
I walk more surely for the knowledge he gave
know more surely of cow and horse of crop and root
that wins my heart at when a screaming train
tears thro green acres from town to smoky town
Now life became the thing to be heard men curse at
had used us each for each then suddenly no
2 three months time the bad word go to sea
an older cousin promised that last year...
to all his people always went to sea
the bed in a country place of corn and flax
and early familiar with the ways of cattle.

For their small meadows stumbled to the sea's edge
and broke in cliff and sponge to the waves.
And brine was on the bay the creatures munched
swung a long to the milk. They spread from Kilkenny
over the dry fields at the proper time
and got good crops: as good as any dung:
while blackhead gulls screamed at the tail o' the plow.

He would go to sea for thirty or forty years
then settle down a boatman or a pilot
at some lost crumbling cliff-foot round the coast;
but never again go back to work on the land.

It seemed a foolish thing to lose his wisdom
hard mastered skill he's spent his boyhood getting,
only to turn his hand to rope and sail;
and eat hounds pork and biscuit who knew how
to slit hogs throat or slack the heavy sheaves.

Tomorrow I was going home for good.
And if I came next year he would be gone
in spite of that. Old Brennan's black bell roared
The moyley cow, that was James' pet, lowed quietly.
The shadows of the elms and stacks spread out
What sun was left shone on the bits of stubble:
a curlew or some other wandering bird
cried from the lough. Far off an engine hooted.

Tomorrow I was going home for good.
I had the thought. I tried to picture short
an anties on the long float or picking up
hard little woodfalls bitter to the tongue
or crawling on our bellies after beans
or whipping up the shilly, a whacking pigs
till their red buttocks quivered as they ran.

But it was useless. I was going home
and sandy here was going away to sea

He never was at best a clever talker
at least his eyes were full of comradeship
and pity at the parting. I had been
the first boy to run with him as a friend
for he had no brothers or sisters was an orphan
and always was a sort of hired lad
out working for his rich & sullen people.

Now he was going away, a hired lad
undertaking to the sea till the shore ends
and I was going home to a city of brick
to bind myself to a desk and a shelf of books

The sun set dark behind the Antrim ridge
and there was one star over Meldersley Hill.
I shall not be more sad at any death.

LXXIII

The warm drugged teats still drum into the pain
the split hooves falter her step back in place
the brown cow lows and whisks a lazy tail
a red hand wipes the hair from Jenny's face.

The gate is open now, the handle jangles
tosses of the rim of buckets one by one
and sukie sukie sukie Jenny calls
as her mother did as she has ever done.

LXXIV

West south west a strong wind is flowing
I snuff and lose and stuff again
Over the land of my fathers blowing
it caught this sweetness of fruit and rain.

O friendly winds I have not forgotten
the shape of apples the color of plum
They lie in the orchards bruised and rotten
while children are hungry and I am dumb.

Turn again blow to where forever
Sow in the earth their bones are laid
till them I start on the harsh endeavor
that the skull they had shall not be betrayed.

LXXV

And then they grabbed roots by the roadside there
a lacy face down in the strength. My grandfather
was six years old. His mother caught the fever
over the half door of her little house
from a poor starveling begging a bunch of tea.
His grandfather who had eaten of the roasted ox
on rough Neagh near Rans Island, took him home
chaff little postblue jets before the fire.
and gave him a face to remember for kindness
and a story to tell done in seventy years
There was food in the country. They shift grain
and cattle by the boatload from the ports
There was no lack save in the economy
that men must profit the small children die
must profit the the clachan be dispersed
and cows crush nettles on the broken hearts
There is a legend in the history books
of kindly Britain rushing down aid

repealing Corn Laws listening to Bright
for the sake of hungry Ireland. This is the fact
they freed the corn blower the price of bread
for the thousands toiling in their new gaunt mills
so that they'd never need raise their wages
There was no thought of us. Both grain & cattle
were shipped from a starving land to foreign places.
Remember this and add it to the tally.

These profligous men landstealers landenclosers
shippers of cattle & grain from a starving country
death's in their blood. They cannot make & live.
They intent dealt a will it to their children

I walked thro' the ragged bark of a shipping lord
the harsley run & seed, degenerate roses
the hawks all grass & dock, the lodge lands crackt
the unfert margin nibbled by ribbon builders
blazing their red brick where he strew'd the vine.
A name and fortune? I forgot his name.
His fortunes burning the guts of a foolish man
dealt wills and handed on. No picture or poem
no shape of stone no test tube held to the light
or coil shock unplug to the lips of sense;
not even a fair name in a peasant's ballad
or the memory at a show of a comely beast
They shipped both grain & cattle from a land
where men ran hungry.

LXXXI

Shape them of these a living unity
of Enniskillen & of Larriban
black valley smoke and bare unfriendly sea,
gentle - and hawthorn beset the Westerman.

With jumbling hand I slate before your eyes
 The shadowy substance of the words I heard
 Lingering at dusk by a forsaken grave
 Standing in sunlight on a certain hill
 Or walking late in October thro' misted trees
 Where perilous raindrops hang till the tense buds throb
 Acrossing a quiet street from roar & roar
 An island swift on its shore with brake and horn
 When voices out of the air cried to my heart-
 Tattered my gesture to a narrow frame
 Voices I heard before beside a fire
 Sleek with a old woman's dry & muffled whisper
 Voices I know today compelling men
 Break the chain of comfort-for the flinty track
 Out of this mingled music I have made this play
 As a man is sometimes driven aginst his will
 For I had lovd the delicate lineaments
 I'd shaft for my heart out of this terrible story
 And had no wish to publish them abroad
 Loving so much as I do the private meaning
 The hidden thing 't allusive the secret unward.
 But a compulsion stern than any before
 Crackt which at my wayward thought and carefree hand
 And left me a restless captive till I began
 And only in this track won liberty
 By making n'Craeken move before your eyes
 Tone eloquent and Russell whimsical
 Hope hearse with bedrock truth & Many n'Craeken
 Shame faint heart discretion by her flamin' faith.

⁶⁹
 They rode thro' Ballymena
 and they strode thro' Antrim Town
 and the song that they were singing
 was for Croppies all lie down.
 O Croppies all lie down.

They counter-marched and marched
 and they heard the gallows tree
 They burnt the old man's cottage
 Hangs belad for all to see

But out by hedge and loanin'
 and in the market town
 men whispered as they bargained
 Of the herb without the crown.

Too many years too many years
 The names are flakt away
 for what were sharply chiseld stones
 but there is this to say:

I have seen a lad for Ireland
 Face the clanging door of grief
 with only the wheeling sky thro' bars
 as a banner for relief.

I went by Templepatrick
 and back by Ballyclare
 and at a leafy corner
 I met a shadow here

He spoke slow words of courage
with a humor grim as dry
They buried me long ago at Mallusk
but I can't ride or lie.

I have been about the places
that knew my face of old
I have seen a wheel o' ferries
and make your blood run cold

a braggart stuck in a statesman's place
and a harridan took it while at his knee
a slobbering wench to bless the hand
that murders liberty

as a ignorant priest with a bitter tongue
bless his slaves into hate
he painted her on the gable end
as the face of the old debate...

But to the ^{rascals}
drumming drummers master
shouting their fear of the ^{people}
the croppies ^{will never} be down.

I walkt with ghosts on Donegore,
McCracken's ghost, and Dickey's ghost,
James Burns, Paul Douglas, and James Orr.
It was James Hope that told me most.

For those they rose for liberty,
and rallied here, the brave and gay,
their triumph had not made them free
while man still lives man for lay.

And tho' they meant the best they knew,
was that poor weaver knew the most
and til the Red Dawn thunders thro',
hell be a small impatient ghost.

LXXX

Over the open country the level sun declines.
The trees at Castle Upton were only just in leaf,
and standing there in the quiet a name came into my mind,
a face on a crackled canvas, a word a thought of grief.

Here as I thought of the weaver who fought & wrought for his class,
and lay an outlaw hidden a marsh with singing men.
I heard a lonely corncrake cry out in the nested grass,
and climbing to keep the sun in sight a lark began again.

Over the hedge as I pondered a blackbird stopped to stare,
then glided off to a thicket as joy came into my mind.
The fight goes on forever. There's strength in this autumn air.
over the rebel country the bloodred sun declined.

LXXXI

This season of the year
for days before and after the children's feast
I fill my pocket with ripe hazel nuts,
an act that is somehow mystical and wise:

The Nuts of Knowledge first & the Salmon rodd,
the as a symbol of the truth untaught
of the sweet core that must be broken to.

But down in my heart Cuchullin, young again,
drags down a branch, or Dermot in long flight
gives - a wet joyful kiss weary love.

How many Irish crooning in the woods
have tested the strangest knowledge in the world.

LXXXII

I stand upon the hallowed ground
where Henry Joy McCracken died,
while well-drest bitches, bookies, nuns,
meant my thought on every side.

LXXXIII

They are discussing where you lie
in Clifton Street or St Georges Yard,
these the dull heirs of treachery,
is it not hard McCracken, is it not hard?

Were I to rise and do as you
bright shining things for liberty
the same tall gallows that you knew
would serve for me McCracken, would serve for me.

LXXXIV

I crossst the whingay mountain where
that witty agitator Tone
shook out his splendid shock of hair
and claimed this land the Peoples own.

But that was far too long ago.
Today I pass your striding men
They did not even grant 'Hello'
Wolfe Tone, you will have scarce a friend!

LXXXV

We sought the broken limestone road
that Mary McCracken took to find
her brother and the outlawed men
in secret only kept in mind.

We found a track of grass and stone
a lane, a path, a winding way
under the trees, beside a pond,
behind the mill, a dirt, or clay.

And as we traced it out I thought
of Mary and of those she met
and wondered on what other road
your tieless feet will seek me yet.

Let us mourn for the pattern broken,
let us cry for the high strings misst.
Cuchullin is dead and will not waken:
We have no craft to break his rest.

Patric walks with the deer no longer;
the words of his wisdom all are said.
The voice in the glen is the voice of a stranger.
Strange are the cars on the mountain road.

I stood awhile in the sunset glimmer,
spears of silver over black of the heat.
Not far now was the shouting summer.
Autumn is early. The stacks are wet.

Hills that trembled to heroes' passing;
rocks that splintered to flying speer;
swallows and starlings are crossing and crossing,
but the raven returns no more.

Brief for a moment, brief and ungainly,
a man or two of an alien race
caught the gesture and beauty only
to find the tracks of it lost in the grass.

Henry McCracken, James Hope, and the others
sought to lift up the fallen flag.
but the black night gathers and gathers,
swords of silver over a bog.

On this our Patric's eve I read intent
of Henry Joy McCracken's bitter end,
grown sad that all his ardent violent
show'd in this place a time have scarce a friend.
Remembered too when Carson's coffin came
thru' sober thousands to his honored rest,
my wife and I protestants at his fame
for Hope's forgotten grave made lonely quest.

O Ireland, Patric's island let us make
from Inverness this happy prophecy
that for each lost and baffled dreamer's sake
high treason shall not long prosperity
forever: but that justice to its birth
belated stirs beneath the frost split earth.

I am weary of Deirdre and Grainne
and the high valor of Cathullin and Feinn
What this island needs
is not a new myth or a more remarkable legend
but a new shape of living.

What was now the Gael or the Fenian
Oisin or the Red Branch Concober?
The swift angles of death achieved by these
have ruined the story of Ireland forever.

Sarsfield, Tone, McCracken, Connolly, and Casement
and the dozen other names studded to your lips
they were shields from birth.

They went forth to battle
and now we have
the worst slums in Britain
mortal sepsis. Censorship
the Sweepstakes - as compulsory trich

Break the moulds
make and establish a new shape.

Do not talk lone of Deirdre or even
of Charlotte Dectors hot doating comes,
they are with the broken bindings.

I want a hard clean bright future
of electricity and workers councils.

Let me here celebrate a lonely saint
who tho his name is borne in memory
by any preconfessor or priest
is clean forgotten as a human being.

For centuries - a figure of straw and sand
stiff with the usual ritual of Rome
they kept him safely in the pulpit's shadow
and only spoke of his shadowy precedence
as of the cloud high masters of the dawn
great ringing names with no defining features
to mark them those of shouting kingly men.

But I have found the dust-blown off the page
strong cleansing voices from the misty age
proclaiming Patric as an urgent man
a violent ignorant warm-hearted fellow
with little humor and vast tenderness
the angelant humility of saints
enduing his little finger grace as magic.

Ere Patric came seek Slemish high
to face his boyhood's master
across the fields there fled a cry
that urged him hurry faster

then suddenly plane cut up the sky
Who suffered hot disaster?

Something was here that has not passed away
Something was closer to the narrow narrow
Old Chief Salute! altho your cause is lost
and Patrick's name's before'd in every town
by any Christian brother or bookies' tort.

You saw the pale young god come up the hill
with quiet chant and bowing of the head
but in your heart the brown-faced heroes shrank
and shook their spears aginst his gentleness

The way your eyes strange hands of mystery came
and weakness crept along your twitching limbs
knees bentled up in gesture of surrender
as all the women in you cried to him.

But with clenched fist you gathered strength and turned
with king's head to the ring of wattle huts
and barked commanding that the king be brought
the boards and planks tied so that none escape
you strode about and set flame here and there
and persist dual amid the children's cries
and trampling of mad cattle.

Had drift had sped beyond his utmost prayer.
When Patrick came
O milice I did not bow to a swineherd's god
I have known men who worship something worse
I have not worshipped but I lack the courage
To burn my books as heretic in the blaze.

79

I stood outside
in April sunshine gazing at the trees
The rector's car roared up the hill in second
stopped at the gate. The sexton hurried in
a small bell jangled in the little tower
then a woman with two boys came down the lane
and a man who had talked some across the wall
about his life of work and the change in the world,
and a boy with the rector (at the rector's son)
to play the organ went into the porch
and left me in the sunshine with the trees.

Eight souls to worship where St. Patrick strode
with chanting followers to convert the chief
who'd held him swineherd a stark Flemish top!
Then last conquered the pale Galilean
O Chief from thy screaming pyre of but and bone

They've gutted Patrick to a greasy smoke
Loftus Beresford Boulter Alexander
Robinson Upson in Bath, the stodgy butt
of the cynical conflet. These are the famous ones —
a dismal roll of others unremembered
the best of them Percy, Branwell, Parnell, Taylor,
Percy the friend of the poets, Parnell the poet
Branwell remembered by Eliot as Jeremy Taylor

No voice of Ulster speaks in any of these
mere chafflains wan army of occupation

or lacks of a party sharing out the spoils
they gave a blessing and received a croaker

There's one live hopes of, a good honest man
outspoken, strong who has caught a flying gleam
somewhere I know not and follows steadily
speaking the honest comment his heart dictates
I think he is wrong at times but love his vigor
I am not sure if time will make him great
but this : he has been brave against privilege
Patrician for our success? Who knows? Who knows.

81

The Hall is packed. Boys perch on windowsills
The yellow air runs down the joggery panes
while in the heavy dome the lights burn green
We rise with stumble as the Preacher enters
He waves us down. The organ gives a grunt
Three thousand voices sing from small red books
and flowers an avalanche a cloud of sand
and in a fine precarious on a ledge
or a cracking palm over a drifted well.

The Preacher starts with fist and Bible slam
Come back you whistling sonner there Come back
God calls you by the torture of his wounds
The lower, the lower's a reverendg blood.

We sniff and wallow. Bull gods stand before me
with slit throats dripping dark upon the stone
The Lamb's stretched out and bleeding. Pigs are stuck
I once saw pigs killed in a country place
the knife cut throat then slit the belly up —

There's no redemption save the blood of Christ
A thin voice falters Jesus take me now.
The trumpet Preacher trays his beard delight
Wholl come wChrist- wholl come this very night
Tomorrow! Why tomorrow you may be —
tonight. The Blood. Tonight. Your Soul. Tonight

We sing again. Emanuel's veins sport on
The red faced country girls stand up and shout
— and, simply naked, young drapers murmur "Strong"

I am gript by the ^{man} fellow beside. He must be a hude.

The trumpet on the platform plays agen
There'll be no jinking here. In my Father's house.
Let us keep seated til the second verse
Defy the Devil. Pull old Satans tail
and give a shout for Jesus.

^{Someone faints}
a girl at the back of the hall begins to scream
self conscious men in navy sunday suits
creak down the aisle a huddle her sobbing out.
The crowd stands up. It is the Second Verse
Three cheers for Jesus and again three cheers
old Nick retreats advances. Hells mouth gapes
The trumpet plays upon the strained nerves
that crack into salvation here and there
sobbing and snatching up all over the hall.
Innumerable dangers threatens us. Hells mouth gapes
the gnawing worm, the bubbling hains and narrow
only by redder cement of blood
See see where Christ's blood streams i' the firmament.

O Shout salvation and hammer the drum
with banner and cymbals Christ will come
Stand in a ring at the corner and roar
the wetter the soot the blacker the smoke
Jesus will love you all the more

You in the smart cut evening dress
You in that sinful lowcut frock
Jesus will wipe up your rottiness
Rattle the box as another knock.

Lientenant Plum with the yellow hair
Major Plum will lead us in prayer
The Sister Thomson wishes to say
Colonel Thomson wishes to say
Brigadier Thomson wishes to say
Archangel Thomson wishes to say
how the devil tempted her yesterday
no - yesterday not the other day
and Captain Blow has a thrilling story
of the jaws of death and sudden glory
after which he hopes to tell
of the night when he prayed in Cuppens cell
and Joe the converted boxer will speak
of the value of self denial week
denial week denial week

The congregation tickled with the torch
 a shortsighted fellow shook hands with me twice
 and lost my brother was not very ill
 I have no brother. I am seldom ill.

But if on the other hand as Arnold says
 Arnold Ruskin Ruskin Emerson Carlyle
 so finally when we seek to segregate
 the ethical element if such there be

The six heads in the congregation now
 I sit for my doge far down the horsebox few
 my last sight a marble urn and a line of Latin

Christ scarcely counts. Salvation comes
 by looking abife like a set of suns.

I passed a Mission Hall on a starry night
 one Sunday in September near Jordans town
 and thro' the open window I stopped to catch
 hearing the faith delivered to the saints
 so old the tickle herringades it as is bitter.

O Christ you are either a pig with a spitting throat
 or a thin dry gutless thing like a dragonfly
 bound down in a box with other gods for men to peer and gloat
 men old to the very marrow men old and gutless and dry.

O Christ you are dressed as a lonely and terrible King
 with jagged thunderbolts poised in weak and wounded hands
 while hooded angels crouch with shaken and frightened wing
 or run with summoning trumpets over desolate lands

O Christ these are not you of the merciful word
^{golden}
 to gentle jester's joke or the countryman's measured lore
 who wove his little stories of broonstick lenny a bird
 and took ja his merry friends the fisherman and the whore

I know a man who never bears false witness
 is never angry cruel or afraid
 speaks only charitable things dumb on the rest:
 and has no malice even for those who have wronged him
 is honest in his actions happy looking
 delights in music watercolor and simple jokes
 plays cricket once but now odd rounds of golf
 He gives a breath of cleanliness to a room
 but never tells a soul what he believes.

I call to mind that old woman I once met
 a beggar selling matches in the street
 I see she said Christ crying great big tears
 over a foolish world. And then again
 Foul river seem to ken whin troubles comes
 its lake a plank you got tae carry awhile
 but no byer sel Christ allus gies a han'
 and takes the heavy on o't: if yell let im.

I call to mind the man with the ass and cart
 the ass and cart a mile along the road
 heading steady for home with manly rein
 the man alone in a lane face turned to the hedge
 eyes shut in a holy ecstasy of prayer
 and wthers hair blown by a hawthorn wind
 And I will plead of God for the sake of them
 that he call not down his fire upon this province
 but share it for their sakes and the love they bear him.

and I say there is a Christ in our own hills
 Christ walking thro the Mountains with a merry eye
 smoking a cigarette with bunkers in Tyrone
 or giving sweets to children in Sandy Row
 and being moved on by the police for blocking the traffic
 Christ driving a herd of ewes down into Glenarm
 or knocking a nail in a plank in a yard in Larne

It is the fashion to speak of forgotten men
 we are forgotten men in an older sense
 were part of Ulster by our hopes and struggles
 sweated into the soot the stuff of our bones
 omitted from the books and the country stories
 and only noted by students. for our values are
 not here embroidered on the popular banners.

We represent to men by our lives and thoughts
 first freedom and justice following then honesty
 and the full cup of life to blanched lips

So let the forgotten shake from the broken bindings

I trust John Toland greet you. You have not heard
 of Christianity not Mysteries
 or of Amyntor or of Pantheism
 or any of the other titles of my books.

I was born in County Derry of the oaks
 a score of years before the terrible seige
 Dundys treason and Walker's stuffing of pockets
 a Catholic first I broke with the older faith
 and from my fifteenth year has learnt to be
 not bound in my understanding to any man
 a layman at Oxford from the Bodleian shelves
 I gathered and sorted pebbles for my ship
 launched my first volley was driven back to Ireland
 the bishops crying heresy after me

In Dublin my book was burnt by the common hangman
I fled to England again escaping arrest
lived later in Hanover in Germany
friendly with witty princes taking my place
with wise men seeking in proverbs and great lachers
At forty I settled in Putney to write again
for the blasphemous bishols had ruined the faith of Christ
had covered God with the trappings of tinsel glory
and shackled the minds of men to the foolish tricks
and crazy antics of a conjuror
So I spoke again then finding my strength and life
in the naked word Christ spoke to common men
and not in the pulpit thunders of prelate or priest
I spoke for the Jews that no man should oppress them
when greatest lords grew Jeard of their weaker wits
I died in poverty at fifty two
still demonstrating truth establishing error
and breaking the bubble jollies of Jovous men.
My epitaph defines the last I had played
as "Fighter for truth, assertor of liberty"
I ask you to remember in your struggle
the side I took, and, I am at an oportune
to think you will maybe find a hint or gesture
in which heralds I paid to better your aim.

There is no statue for me in a public place
but I do not complain of that. I only complain
that you let the muckdons errors still trouble men
that you are not yet rid of the superstitions mind

that freedom goes down and liberty's broken in pieces
while men with tongues and hands stand idle by
Yet I took and carried the savagest blades of my day
John Toland fighter for truth, assertor of liberty.

89

I am William Edmundson from West Moreland
You have never heard of me. I'd be content
to be lost into the common heritage
But it is not thus now. The inner light
I torcht this Ulster is a smoky candle.
My tale begins as Cromwell's soldier:
I fought this Scotland til the King went down
and cheered the flight of Charles from Worcester field.
Then safe in peace because a brother-askt
settled in Antrim in a Bass Lane shop.
To England for new stuff fell in with Friends
Sot first light's scorch & burned thoughtful home.

The flint was hard agan the ore drossed heart.
I wrestled brachiale the face lit up
and the blood warm as eager in the veins,
was soft at first, as a Quaker jape,
but won to safety as the freeheart's grace.

Antrim of Ireland was the place that first
heared word against the mocking steeple house,
the oath forbed, the life work out in love,
the clear assertion of the indwelling god.

At Lurgan I conversed one who with Penn
made treaty never broken.

Then walked with Fox in an orchard close Derry.
Ulster again, was driven from Coleraine.

Crossed Sperrins into Derry converting some
Clough, Strabane, Dungannon & other places:
jail in Aragh. In Mulligan assault
stocks in Bellinbet: fourteen weeks with others
in stark hell's kitchen of a Care cell.
derry age 20 prison. Newborough.

The said with Fox for the Americas
New England, Rhode Island, & the Barbadoes
I write this. Fox ~~said~~ with also. You may read.

In Ireland in the warring years of James
I stood between the blundering Protestant
and insolent Papist. And in Williams day
I stood between the blundering Catholic
and braggart Protestant. My wife was killed
my sons and I stood waiting for the rope
were saved by long and immortal joy
At seventy six I rode six hundred miles
shaking the light in fifty English towns
met friends each year in London at the Meeting
and fell asleep when nigh on eighty six

The light and truth I rode far in joyful
a breach by difference in another way
I was for the clear heart and the honest speech
the soul of any precious as the soul
of one they call a monarch. (also stood
against King's strength and an opaque for justice
Yet not I but the love of Christ in me

O Ulster I have rid across your acres
been flung into your mine as water, thrust into burns,
bound by your trees. There is no Ulster rock
but I remember the merciful kiss to my flesh
and all your players & dancers in country fairs
alto ye stand me yet I lovd your grace
and only spoke to reveal that grace to you
Where I am now I remember Ulster clearly
and speak again to Ulster. First, be clean
then lit with joy and imprint with the Christ
down loves assaults up to the battered walls
and break them down, and banner in the day
of victory in a land of loving neighbors
no longer mockt by steeplehouses and courts
for this is a comely land if men were good.

I am forgotten too the eminence
sat in the heavy curtains of my bed
a marquess' eldest son a stupendous lord
born to a little mother by a countess
and die in that 20 years of expert breath
smirk with the threat of swift mortality
I sought my brief life out at twenty six.

I wrote a novel once in six mad weeks
a fitful romance of tortured love
not read now and no wonder. But I wrote
and printed songs to fill the mouth of Jamine
when people I loved were dying by the road
I spoke of Shelley, Shelley and John Keats
Keats with the leaping death in his tearing lung

before the fashion turned to praise their worth.

In Naples seeking health for my bleeding life
They held me captive as a liberal lord
I left the gaudy follies of my class
The billets-doux the masques the lackey's fees

Oliver for music and writing for making life
rich & the torch and hearing for the many
who loveth in the dark without a song.
I caught my faint life out at twenty six

in Naples tyrant madam pestilent

They made a statue of me, set it up
a shaft of bronze by fellow townsman made
then decently forgotten they shifted it

to clear a corner for a sprawling preacher
Leviathan's bigotry to this very day
They hid me away because I was a reproach
preferring rather the cold mouth Henry Cooke

hurt by the Janine to a little tune.
They have hid the bronze beneath the gilded dome

safe in the shadow. Only tourists find it.

I & this I beg you remember music a verse
and no dark lives without them. Take a pledge
not to desist till any Irish child
has choice of either or some other choice
to fill his days and nights with majesty.

I was the sickly son of a brigand lance
scion of India robbers as planters of death
seeking too late to justify the wrong.

They laid my body on the ground I lay
under the restless trees on the side of a hill

Now speculators have surrounded me
with redbrick Tudor villas by the row
the shirts of another brigand class than mine

I caught my brief life out at twenty six
but think of me with Byron, Percy Shelley,
and Keats with the smear of blood on the handkerchief,
and take the wish for that wherein I fail
But always music and art for the common people.

You have heard my name. James Hope of Templepatrick
a weaver by trade. I was with McCracken at Antrim
and later with Tom Russell as Robert Emmet
I have told the gist of the matter to Doctor Madden
it's buried in his books. I am here to say
that what I fought for with my pike and pistol
and later with my native wits and caution
is still unknown. Some fought for a dreambright Erin
after a half fancy or like a legend
some for a jaded land of lords and song
I fought, and the best men fought, remember I knew them
not for a dream in the heart or a song on the lips

but for a country free from tithe and rent-
 a country of many peasants owning their acres
 beholder & no stiff squire or whispering cleric
 a country ruled by committees without a King.
 where every man was equal with every other
 -and none was master. If a peculiar humor
 in being remembers by those who'd free this place
 from Saxon bondage as has it over to Celtic
 who'd like each man lord to be a Gael

You'll never see a free Ireland without regard
 for the ownership of land and the strife of classes
 You'll get the first by working thro' the second
 when you think of McCracken or Russell or any one
 or safe at the sudden sun a Mart's fort
 remember that and repeat it meaning it

With that as theory and your plan of action
 my help must end except for this advice
 Work only with honest men and tenperate
 Keep weather eye for spies. They are at it still.
 and for your leader chose the well tried man
 with no equivocation. The well meaning merchants
 part out our ranks until the struggle came
 the fled streets.

The workers are your hope

Give me a smith and keep your gentlemen
 but avoid whoever drinks or talks too much
 and the extreme man urging premature action
 Be those your rules, good surely can only befall.

With this for consolation, the result is safe
 the people must win as surely as the strong
 delays and hesitant ones brand it may

Is this the ninepenny jidil that I bought
from an old man in a shop with a merry eye
who took it out from under the counter
blew the cobwebs off it
and stroked it lovingly?

Is this the ninepenny jidil that I bought?

And what were the nine pennies that I gave
that he counted with such care & set in a pile
for I caught a glimpse of the drawer behind the counter
with eight coins square coins coins
that have not been current a long while?

O what were the nine pennies that I gave?

The Mourne Mountains like a team of bears
 tumbling into the sea
 the embroider'd fields like a monk's patcht cloak
 spreading their skirts to every door
 the peasants leisurely allowing
 the chickens and dogs to wander at will
 the bare trees standing silent
 entangle the stranger's dream

I remember a small pub
 on the borders of Ly zone
 where the country turns suddenly untamable
 with roads over steep hills
 and bogs round corners

I remember the walk over the bog
 the black ooze warm between the toes
 and the purple stains on the mouth
 the moths that rose losting
 when we jumbled for berries with slippery fingers

I remember a small pub
 and the impulsive girl behind the bar
 and the strong Irish whisky over the smoking turf
 and the bawdy talk
 and the rain on the road outside
 till that great head drowsy

nodding over a glass
 not so in a day out?

and that deaf hand stretcht for a shining pen
 twitch and stiffen in a tangle of wire?

They were not bad people
 and do not deserve such an end.

Its curves are gentle but the skull's no curve.

C. Sennie took the old man out of the cave.

1938

The Servant Man . BV

The Mourns Mountains . TV

Taylors Pub . FV

Turnley's Tower CR

Oasis . BV

Romane Mt (way) .

1939 Barley Field
Chapel Park

