



notebook 41.

Selection of Verses

from 1946 — present

which have not appeared in volumes.

Work book for The Rain Dance

How shall it be That after I have learned,
by schools) attention ^{fixed on every} ~~to both whole and~~) part,
these paths, this landscape, having turned, returned
till all's like some loved story got by heart,
~~I too~~ ~~I must let me be no longer known~~
where fence posts ^{walks} greet me and tell foxgloves nod,
where my slow ^{flyer} ~~tree~~ ~~feels~~ & smeller on the earth stand,
or is all this in the mind, perhaps, of God? +
and tree and bird and beast and men savvie,
released forever from the changing year.
held at that moment each was most alive
when all stands shining in the noonday clear
at dawn, at sunset? Is eternity
posseted ^{at some} on the hour which evermore shall be?

X✓

3

Here with approaching age,
a stranger in the land,
forgive me if I rage
to clutch my empty head
because the tests I planned,
the tools that heed my aim,
~~abstain and disappear~~
abstain and disappear,
the same and not the same,
down each conflicting year.
(dimin. b)

My hair grows grey; the lines
across my features crawl;
yet these predicted signs
most signally absent;
this certainty is all,
and in the looking glass
abstain and disappear
my lonely fettins been,
the face coarse face I wear.

No path has dipped or turned
exactly as it should,
or as I had been warned.
Confronting ill and good
had I but understood,
^{I share}
I might have been content
to shew, and to be shewn
conjointly, each event
my own and not my own.

X

Cuberton

got

I brought this watercolor years ago
two miles a tree.
a few creased notes consoled our needy friend,
a careful artist ^{diligently} scrupulously slow
and concentrated on enduring and
his finds not fugitive, nor clearly wrong at
one time he's ^{tried} to ^{sooth} quality;
sealed by the rigours of his ^{earnest} thought
its truth even ^{has long} devolved ^{light} on me.

lost

The earnest hope restored, under glass,
and now hung against a sunlit wall,
I share a humbling glance each time I pass
its silent challenge in the shaded hall
and wonder who, if anyone, must be
my heir to this responsibility.

✓
X 5

The Shortened Day

After uncounted days of drought and flood,
a tired parched season and a spate of rain
in splashing torrents desirably in the town,
an funeral peace abroaches us again;
the dark streams fall, the trees in disrepair,
the fields heat labour ready for the spring;
but in October light the lengthened air
brings new dimensions for our contemplation.

The landmarks have not perished with our hills,
the hills remain, the constellations turn,
the raking sunbeams on the western slopes
show hidden contours we have yet to learn,
and gratefully earth stands ready to obey
the grave commands of the shortened day.

X
✓

In the wet sun of a December day,
when the cliff ^{earth} stems waiting for the spring,
and only running water hurry on
down every slope, here ^{very much} ~~saying~~ to say,
There is a chance you'll may be also hear,
when the west wind blows, the Thrasher's drone,
a noise without a name.
~~a homeless voice if not already known,~~
~~if known, a signal for the returning~~
~~thrushes~~ ~~for the~~ ~~returning~~ ~~for the~~ ~~day round~~ year.

Till now the seasons, toward completion brought,
broke the last note, this coda to the crew
by which the blayman, sower, reaper song'd
that seed-time and ^{its} harvest shall not fail
since man or broken soil ~~blows~~ broadcast seed
or threshed the tattered sleeves up & thumping flat

1953

X

7

Aquarium

A challenge to

(Holday in check) my verbalizing mind

I casted round the new aquarium;
convinced, since to my ears all fish are dumb,
all risk of dialogue was ^{thrust} left behind.

I sought to take each movement as abstract

or applied to its purpose, ^{practical}, ^{functional}

for either mode's consonant with the fact

Then fish as creature looks more functional.

Yet so I go yet, the old ~~comparative~~ search
~~binding~~
for biting ebullet & brought its research
that I could find none better than ^{upon} the striped road perch
or pink-finned Rudd or halech silver Roach,
and grabb'd at gravel-loving Gudgeon, and
golden Dace, to drag my ragged net to law,

leaving

1966

X

✓

I've drawn this landscape now for thirty years,
 longer if scribbles count, from low ground
^{as climbing} to crest
^{as moving to} the heart of it, I've found
 the changing scene which each season wears,
 standing on hillside; how the house appears
 in rain, mist, or when the valley's drowned
 in drifting mist, or ^{night} when ^{blossom crowned},
 the whitest sheet reflects the sun's screen.

And I have drilled my pen to draw each sign
 which he holds here and there with this pencil,
 with blight and blemish, with the staining line
 of storied snow falling limb, that, when the night
 draws darkness over, you may mark and name
 each lonely homestead by its steady light.

X

9

Bus
Country Journey in Winter forty years ago

The bus follows ^{is crowded} with parcelled passengers
 not pledged to travel far who dash away
 down wet lanes in the evening winter day,
 over high stiles, in canyons of firs,
 The bus goes steadily; every window blurs,
 we judge hills traversed by our hand end sway,
^{at each side} ^{lakes}
 a mile, or stopping, stop across gash, and to lay
 round - ^{diminished view of} ⁱⁿ scattered, silent travellers.

Then, at some ^{village} corner, swarming farm boys board,
 well-warmed with liquor, laughing, talking;
 on isolation side, we strain to give
 what skew attention on cramped side seats afford
 to the loud round of jests their coarse arts keep,
 while two behind ^{low} talk of snow and sheets,

X/

Roman Sunday, June 19 60.

Expectant faces turned to the waiting square;
 The Holy Father crossed his high sill;
 crescent & festooning roofs of Pape ^{giving} ~~rocked~~ stormed the air
 and swept with high winds round each pinnacle.
 The Holy Father shook; the world stood still,
 secure with the comfort of his care;
 even I, conditioned not to bend my will
 to any dogma, felt that grace was there.

We'd stood so low, midmost the musty crowd,
 as talents' revenge, critical, withdrawn
 from fable's cameras and rosettes
 yet, for ^{the} ~~that~~ instant merely, we are proud,
 and count among the moments of our lives,
 we share the blessing of that good hole, John.

1969

X

11

With summer over, all surrendered
 to cloud and downpour, failed sunless days,
 evidently we pass familiar ways
 holding our hearts in check that has rebelled
 with the time ^{fears}
~~in~~ ^{some} hope we'd see our dried deshilled,
 the golden sheaves immovably in place,
 pictures remarked by Brueghel, ^{the} ~~a~~ state of grace
^{which} by Palmer painted, by Tiepolo belied.

But here, when we had pledged us to expect
 the harvest's image endlessly renewed,
 bright as the berries on the bird-life there,
 through rainy sleeves the thistles of neglect
 their ragged spikes, a purple-crested stand
 in the half acres of unripened corn

1970

The Seedsmen [J. H. 1841-1922]

The college garden owned a boxwood maze,
 head crest-high, well trimmed, with hedges close swept and bare,
 cut often in those endless ^{hot} summer days
 when ^{sunny} boating, tennis, bowls, and hours to share
 the laughing girls tripped out to frolic there,
 where John who loved her eagerly to muse
 would lope round intent that they should share
 the splendor of his flowerbeds' ^{summer} abode.

While every rose had yielded its old name,
 and each herb ^{perfumed} here
 with ~~herb~~ ^{herb} scented, he would start,
 with crackling leaves, his old accustomed game,
 and chase the gaudy fillies for a kiss,
 already ^{bachelor} roisteron with thimble teeth
 growing like pen or ^{old} sheen lucid iron bloss

Pacing hot sunbaked here, a little shade
 those shadow tufts set as monuments
 by summer's hand, oddly brought to mind
 my father's father who could never lack kind
 simply by touch that were all grass to me—
 like bush, like hedge, a landscape picture—
 a still Henry that can never share,
 his nemesis but his disengaged heir:

Then suddenly I needed that I myself
 can finger soft along the crowded shelf,
 much to the textures of the lone sunburnt
 of weavers, ploughmen, the last harvesters
 of that rich world-horse vivid long ago
 when seasons marked the time with red slow;
 a brother knowledge I may add to, still,
 with no son's son to carry me my staff.

— 1976

X

Moraine the end of the world

Tents huddled, the beds unrolled,
pitched on the high moraine
we're given time enough
by the unceasing sun
to work on weary hours
with necessary work,
though sometimes what we do
we start, ^{small ridges} black clouds drift

On small ship in the sound,
fast-cabled, float secure.
Against the scorching sky
the tall decked cabin with fire.

As of late summer
the high land is over-tops near
the red sand deep,

There's nothing ^{nothing} more ^{nothing} here.

15

First then to plot our route
along that broken slope,
sharpening the disciplines
of toe and finger-tips.
And if we reach the tops
before this long day's done
^{here achieved} we'll stand ~~have reached~~ on goal,
the last peak scaled by men.

If proved too difficult,
well-beaten we return,
we still may wait the end,
~~lodged~~ ^{settled} here on this ~~high~~ moraine,
no whit contented less
with no more sense of shame
^{equally} than those who stayed among
the rubble of their former
home

A Great Headmaster

Early

Drown headlong in the drag-net of a horde
of dull frustrated persons driven to teach
when fair ambition, buckled back on each,
left even the kindest purposeless and bone,
^{tears}
I suffered most unisonous overlord,
his day-long monce never out of reach,
the threatening terrors, the starded hasty speech,
seeding the grudges which my small heart stored.

I'm parted while I still lacked skill and chance
to loose ^{to loose} the arrows of my festung among
and watch his much contort ing countenance
when what seemed feathered compliments became
the unexpected truth ^{contained} so long
infesting like acid and it scorched like flame.

Sonnet beloved of doctors, clergymen,
whose teste, whose mental habits not adverse
to small-scale essays of a leisure hour,
I had here slipped my fence in your tight bane.

1 member of art, my ~~workers~~ ^{ss} ~~will see~~ ~~deets involve~~
some ^{cheap} continuous though, some haphazard exposition
8 certain questions were to be solved,
a ready fluency the prime condition;
mark the coded dangers which rude use affords
to shifty arts' destinations in debate,
or ~~thou~~ ^{ss} blen) selective unconcern
~~that~~ ^{ss} to the sonnet's running net of words
mark its altered disciplines I'd turn
to point what I'd remember or salute.

~~some~~
mark

✓
1957-72

Not his star went - may. Absurd comparsci.
No Florence his sick Town. Tools
Yet there was exile once after a defeat,
and years spent-walking through an alien place
among blind strangers kinder than his own,
and then was return,
^{some} to translated pastures,
to that ^{betrayed,} violent city
immediately home.

✓
19
The Romantic

When the first white flakes
fall out of the black autumn sky
& tobogen across Alaska.

When a friend falls ill
I rehearse the funeral oration,
since I am too completeness,
never having learned to live at ease
with incompleteness.

✓

The Man from the Mountains

A man once met
when I was a foreigner
and could not speak his tongue
told me as much as I needed to know
sitting at a cafe-table
about his life.

From the mountains, as elsewhere -
he pointed vaguely up,
disgrimed the journey
and stamped with swinging arms -
he came to form for work -
this he showed by moving his forearms,
beating with his fists
describing circles and strokes with a finger
to indicate the nature of it.
The machinery was noisy -
hands over ears.

21

Then the war - he awoke and joined
in the shrill cry and puffing lots
and smothering hands - face me
attacking enemy planes -

He ran away to the mountains (^{the} hills?)
and hid (slept?) - cheek on hand; back -

Captured by the enemy
after a lengthy slave -
he lifted caps and plates
and peered under and round them -
Running fingers demonstrated the long close.

He was caught, exhausted -
here he bends and holds his wrists together -
taken with five others to be shot -
under eye of the other head, heavily -
They fell in the repeated volleys -
One - Two - Three, four - five - six -
he supplied the necessary noises -

Wounded he fell, lay still,
and after awhile crawled away
when the enemy had marched off -
thus he served also -

Thanking heaven - on a paved place a
gate was a Catharine;
here was ^{this} Communist country -
he crossed himself rapidly with
nimble surreptitious fingers.

He left a son - had held ^{chest} so high -
from now - and raised her high -
he would telephone her to come and meet me -
many days coming, Telephone Meeting -

I shook hands with the son
and passed his letter, my good friend,
in the expansive gestures,
I wet, before, her scabbly morded slowly
or shaken my head,

The Last Summer, to R.

Decked in our backyard among your flowers
blue-rifled poppies, tall Dahlia treins
in delicate blossom, triggers not yet set -
we brought its seeds fresh from ^{Glenburn} ~~the bottom~~
a rank weed by a stream side, of no repute
a long forsworn's hard work, dear to me, -
and Rose of Sharon in a golden bush,
Thrift with its tiny moss-leads on bare stems,
Carnation letters last then now, still sweet,
Delphinium, Oxalis, Mimulus,
a see their colored candies ...
We draw the sunlight in to warm our bones
against the creaking months, no vex on arts
to melt blossoms & flourish round their names
or map our myth of being where we are.

These flowers are free of anxiety,
in other function than their single lives

Our senses are not focussed to accept -
more than here is offered); we accept
the momentary excellence, ^{Content with} accept ^{not}
^{and} the mood, ^{with instant} the moment, knowing all will pass.

In Colinton: The Scatterings

In May, late, under an open sky
with drifts of cloud that scarcely flicker
a film of shadow over
the noon-warm landscape, half a county wide,
Great caravans of whom-gold
heaped on each neighbouring hillock;
on the bare hillside
where uncertain feet must heed
the yielding surface
8 Not long fassated slabs,
we stood, we took -
brother, daughter, brother, brother's wife, -
to give my sister's robes
to the bright gentle air,
to blow and flicker in the light.
To dash the seeds, like pollen, on
last year's withered grasses,
this year's thrashing stems,

a blossomed spray of bog-moss,
or tiny bilberry bushes
or primroses half-hid

Near by a dark rose scrying;
a distant heath-loved somewhere. Sudden hiss
in the wind's whisper
cutted single cockcrow faraway. A slow
bee-lured nest.

A fitting place for dust
to startegan its journey.

Below the Mournes in May.

The landscape is framed and bounded by
the sinuous edge of the dark mountains;
the middle distance, foothills filled,
in rough bleas gay, mounds of when
yolk-yellow on the turf,
hawthorn breaking white in the ledges,
long ribs of dry-stane wall holding apart
the black-faced eves, the scattered hembs/brown
the black and white cattle grazing
on the rounded skyline of each field
and, overall, bird-song sentences.

And thought of the little images waiting
for the nature-poet-visits,
horimoses, a stitchwort, wetch,
herb-robert lurking in the brambles
as in untraveled lane, a proliferation
of minute appropriate detail -

and though I could only recall,
 indicate, ^{indicate} ~~describ~~
 not identify, the exact whereabouts
 of a few of the celebrated megaliths →
 the tubed dolmen; ^{the} sculptured beast,
 the castle round the souterrain, —
 and accepted these as inevitable
 annotations on my country's past.



Then I remembered that the nature-poet
 has no useful theory for
 class → property relationships
 for the social dialectic,
 the stubborn tenue of the small farm
 the hollowed hutsides of timber
 crowning the high-walled demesnes.

So I was anxiously responsive
 to the fresh graffiti on the gables
 of roofless cottages at the cross roads,
 for those reported something

of more immediate significance
 than the stumps of the round tower beside the church,
 the ruined base of grey stones
 surrounding the Anglo-Norman motte.

— indicating ^{not} ~~the~~ ^{socio-}
 theocratic

X✓ On choosing some verses for

Written before my sister's cremation.

I leaned to catch her quiet marmancy,
my hair-clawed sister on the tilted bed,
her limned knee hoveted on a canvas sleep,
the hooked fables drooping near her weary head.

The sense was plain. The friendly minister
had talked with her, knew how she'd like it planned,
consecrated what her feelings were -
you'll never ⁹ see a poem ¹⁰ I would understand.

I nodded my assent, my hunched thought
& cliff black word, a storm of screaming birds
not, at that instant, to be quelled or caught,
in any ~~refuge~~¹¹ & countable words:

but this injunction I could not deny,
(I was to read a poem at the end),
when we were gathered there to bid goodbye

to wife, grand-mother, mother, sister, friend

So I have wrought these verses for her sake
who shared what love and nurture both demand,
if, ^{we'd} (you'd) imagine, somewhere she's awake,
this is the poem she would understand.

all growth securely grappled to the ground
 strong winter's bark! take my word round:
 among the bushes where the roses stood
 and where here'd be stony stubs of wood
 a young man rather, takes the time to loss
 a word about the weather - as I bess
 I call essent, nor slow my stride to tell
 Not my own ^{garden} ~~tille~~ too, is poor going well.
 " " husband

November dusk, at four o'clock,
 I walk in the deserted park:
 the tight-lipped trees are still; the mist
 less scarcely draw its gauge aside
 since light at eight looked but of day.

The season's in autumnal mood,
 the epoch's end, to every sense
 the essence of the dying if all
 as easily as the bowling-green
 that waits, indifferent, for play.

X ✓ The Boat-builders
The Cankking Irons.

When you lefted them you knew at once
that they had been made for the head,
size, weight, the feel of them and the shape
beautifully adjusted

To the balm of the head and the clasping fingers,
but remote - as a flake) flit - cool
from any of your purposes
a deprivation, a lameness,
something lost forever
^{the nose a}
in, the pastoral garden where
beside the streams of Paradise
we were driven for generations ago.

35

With shrewd snout the hedgehog
snuffles across the lawn
over the long shadows
of sheltered holly hedges

unpredicted presence
its purposes unguessed
bearing a tiny life
^{2 wills}, ^{1 heart} beat, worm-like - (heat, throbby, tangy, warm)

slate spines dragging against
the close cool grass blades and
the prospering clover,
unresting, out of reach

Its secret triggers set
it seemed a symbol
for all timid shyness
all shy wildness, alert

To defend itself by

With withdrawn privacy.
A fellow creature lurking
~~He looks comical~~
Within you hear and more.

✓ ↙ 37

The Bloody Bore

I wrote it over forty years ago,
laid it aside until the ink turned pale;
then they shot it on the radio
~~Not~~
my nose-to-gill cobbled from a country tale.
When once some players offered it a stage, 1957
They blamed for darkness and an empty scene,
I was not there. Now, silent print or tape,
it lies forgotten in a magazine.

It tells how ^{once} an old man had sought ^a shelter
~~less~~ ^{society's workers'} workers
to ~~be~~ ^{and} he ^{were} murdered ⁱⁿ a ^{massacre,} sword
knowing his blackened soul forever lost
unless she mercy (use as arbiter) ^{yield} gives joy my word
that she was honest, ^{an} ^{she} protestant.
^{still &}

After four decades it's ^{far} more relevant.
(Four centuries, four wars, it's still relevant)
Four decades, the last three's almost

In a Country Graveyard

Friends, cousins, strangers related
we edged to the ready place
the broken nests of orcasoca
adjusted to each stiff face.

The minister's voice was steady,
his sentiments sincere
but reciting the memory my father died,
I knew that nothing was here.

With wetting slacks under us, (covered)
deep down into the ground
the coffin covered the crumpled cloth
and the hollow and final sound.

The grave digger slowly slept towards
and whistled York next of kin;
On my nod, with the shade he preferred
I crumpled the first earth in

Mary

Miss Monroch

✓ ✗ 39

In the small classroom
next to the girls' yard
our teacher kept the front bench tree
to rest her bad leg on.

So I think of her seated
Queen Victoria in profile,
her left arm rests a the bench back
her right hand keeps time

to our multibection
tables, reflecting a place - never,
or offers the nimble first signs
for tonic solfe.

X ✓

41

First Ride

My Uncle Dick gave me my mother's brother
my first ride in a motor car.
I can recall the excitement
^{hurrah and}
^{that terrible} of that bright morning,
the high machine at the gate,
with the big brass lamps,
and my uncle cranking the handle,
his floppy cap, his goggles above the peak,
his cowboy's gauntlets;
and Aunt Bertha and my mother
with coloured scarves tying down their hats
and veils, though veils were not unusual
to this occasion (my grand-mother's bonnet
was always securely anchored) —
and the climbing up to the seats
and the hood folded down at the back
like a loony turtle's shell,
and the doors ^{being} shut
with a ^{loud} ^{clash} sound which otherwise
was ^{whimpering} to the driver.

and everybody talking at all
beneath —
as, ^{large - high,} we floated
between the blossoming Hawthorn wells
of that June morning;
and my uncle's masterly skill in navigating
through a drift of straggling, ^{dishmuzzled} cattle
and men ^{tell} ^{in harness} horses drawing to one side
and children, ^{at gates} waving.

But of myself there is memory,
what I looked like, where I sat;
it seems not that I observed this event,
but somehow contained it.

Seminar,
Executives this tier.

The day after the local government seminar I encountered a colleague whose name I had caught somewhere in the maze of programme-budgetary and issue analyses. Cost-effectiveness

So, knowing my man, I stopped to inquire "How's your infrastructure?" "Nearly taken off." and "What about your encounters?" "I'm trying my best to give them up." And the two elderly ladies shook off on their separate ways, smiling, each carrying the spear in their pocket.

The Blue Liss Inn.

thin dark oak

Black beams which seemed original with dresses like any ^{English} ~~country~~ ^{black} but I asked the women behind the bar how old the house was.

²⁶⁵ In the oldest part ^{of} a hundred and sixty years ~~stand~~
a farmhouse then, with outbuildings;
^{But} yet inconvenient for all its size,
with only three bedrooms, and it has a grot;

a farm labourer, they say, who comes around from March until October,
never in winter. holding the passages /
I thought this odd,

for in my country / farm lands were here in November and May.
I must find out when living farms were held in Warwickshire.

Otherwise, this woman behind the bar,
and her husband who, he says has seen the ghost
(have been missed)
by somebody.

Otherwise, this woman behind the bar
and her husband who, he says
she says, has seen the ghost
have been missed by somebody.

Embarcadero

Out of the grey wet sand
the bright concourse of tall buildings,
neon-garlanded, with lit fountains,
thrust away the night sky

The well-dressed shop windows
are full of expensive consumer goods
A bastion of metal cargo-containers
has been erected along the dockside

And in the city most outside
the ^{Boymans van Beuningen} modern art museum
a streakish breeze has waffled a electric basket
and a large red bell into a corner.

Monastery, Tarkhane, Mykonos

To the dry island's dead center
the old bus shuddered, jolted, swerved
abrupt at corners, missing rocks.

No green things in that parched brown land
while the square dove ^{flies} keeps of each fern
while the toy chapels for the Seven
seafarers, each on its own hill,
a saint's day briefly visited.

Maybe in cleft grey brooks cover
treeless else bare tundra spreads,
dun-brown, burnt-brown cinder of time
At last thin hills left, slopes to cups -
not cups, shallow saucers, crazed ark stone -
fences in the quick shrutting dusk

Across the flat dust, Anomara
backdrop of houses, one white now
where bus slows in, driver greets

The group of watching stationary
women black hooded, dark-faced men.

Disincenting for the half hour stops
turn on heel for the sought-piece;
stepping dome, bell-tower thrashing, sound
of dripping water. Face the black door
twisting, step into shadowed yard,
~~Do~~ ^{instant 3 ell!} to church now. In its black womb
tall candles wavered blue embers.

Breathing ^{cold air} fast, we notice
smudged marble which, when fingered, held
^{is still} facts ^{decorated} close to our skin,

Reading slow. The slight young priest,
black as ~~and~~ deep shadow, skull cap, beard,
slubbed to elbow, beckoned. The

screen, thick with bible stories, split,
we face the moving shadow to
closet of holy lumber, icons,
sheathed folios, a wooden

dust clattered with our timid coins.

We followed the quick soles, found stars,
stood on white-washed carpet near
the round stone tent, as the last light
dribbled to the dead cinder's rim.
There silence, resignation, peace
like nothing else on earth, a place,
as empty - as the moon till now
empty - of hope, belief, fear, poised
on the dead centre of the heart.

↙ growth at the hedged bell-tower, carved
with stocky saints in low relief
well fountain's water, then a second

On reading Wallace Stevens' Collected Poems

✓ X
49

This artisan ^{Chiroscano}
Beside the ^{but} ~~cabots~~ of chiroscano,
^{those over} leg on the shelf ^{the} phrase-born ~~body~~ ^{body} fellows (poets)
padded with residents' resonance, balloons
with bouncing echoes of their relations.

Give me instead the crisp meet-withed fellows
sharp and laconic, meting one word do,
^{clipped} the trim compleat, the pointed ^{my} syllables,
the blade-sharp sentence, the exact look -
shear -
break

✓

Easter Flock

There in the meadow where we'll fork the hay
between next August's showers, the Easter day
~~the years~~ more slowly each attended by
her lamb, her twin, or in the warm grass lie
content beside them. In this world of peace
the silent sun lingers the rim of every fleece.

Were I to straddle fence and stride across
I should add nothing: one would rise and toss
a warning bleat; the archipelago
of floating islands would drift off and flow
into a tense ^{but} and momentary dull
till, her tressed beyond them, in each skull
the spunking batteries of alarm adjusted
to secret range where strangers may be tracked.
whole families & erosion and defence
noise mobilized around their innocence.

— So let them hold unmoved, this Easter peace,

51

for neither they nor I have longer lease
of quiet: yet their being ^{presence} offers me
a mood to shore and bark in which will be
an image — to enrich my secret thought
rooted in earth and handble-enough.
True to my sense yet

The Glen of Light-

This open glen's so brimmed with air and light
that space itself has body, haleable;
between the steep fields running left and right
this seems the ^{peaks} fell cuts of a crystal well.

Ribbed
ribbed by green ledges, shadow-sharpened, clear,
grazing and grain their varied textures tilt; ^{spotted}
the small sheep on the mountain flats appear
^{hark} like royal bairns ^{clinging to} a ^{supple} quiet ^{but}
wind-voiced

Too full the sense. This eye is no mortal lens
clouding with time and thought. Peevily
must wear the ^{colours} edges of this innocence
else how could creature man creation see?

The Glen of Wind

The roaring wind, less solid than the ground
but strong as water thrusting from the west
sends leaf and branch like weeds in rivers drowned
that toss and sway and fawn but do not yield.

The long clouds scarf and strip the mountain's crest
as changing shadows flicker field by field
then break in pools of brightness, encircle,
• the wide landscape suddenly revealed
as suddenly darkened, when across the sun
the golden bordered drift is loosely scrawled
and floods of colour pour and pause and run
are blotted up and lost, and spent again.
^{down} on the broad shoulder of the high-blue Glen.

Because of the day-long frost
 and the most drenched atmosphere
 all other colour lost
 were white to tiny-tint and black
 for the honey and the ass
 standing back to back
 on the grey sculptured grass

Poetry, Then.

Poetry, then, is an imitation of Nature by a poetical and
 numerous speech. Let us explain it. [John Dennis: 1701]
 "An Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry, 1701"

Let us explain it. Consider if it is
 a single hobby like collecting stamps
 or vintage cars or crazy artefacts,
 investments all, the best less numerous,
 or annual skyblue travels which result
 in tedious evenings with transparency,
 from the heart's kept view,
~~each adding more or less to begone~~ contentible;
 a game like patience with none opposite:
 relief from ledger's prose; a substitute
 for childhood's dreams; a quiver of quotations;
 polyhisto's rainbow looking-glass; a drug
 to ease the ten-moods ^{slightly echoing} barely resonant
 whose staled pitch thickens mapped hysteria;
 a tipple, a gloss, or some blue sedative.

No. Poetry's an excuse, a way,

an attitude, a holding of the mind
 like a vast radar-dish alert to life,
 prodding the fire ports open, welcoming
 to Nature, Human Nature, ~~that~~ time, this moment -
 All other ports are fogged or overgrown;
 the leger-been ^{is} of with intellect
 bounces ^{es} extra-mediated signals from the moon.

You cannot trace the painter's muddled chart
 for he is lost too, where, before, he saw,
 setting a frame around experience,
 hacking words' echo in the lossing hills,
 the tide's rhythm in the seasons, ^{and} the pulse,
 who now but scribbles in the running sand
 his own esoteric, heretic signature.

The eastward hawers and the worried priests
 swarm as buzz as averse from the holy blood
 in deeper confusion than when they cleaned it,
 to stilt their rainbow over sucking bof.

The politicians' fingers plugging hole
 by hole, each getting mischief, ~~not~~ ^{cannot} ~~get~~ to point,
 being too stiff and cold; the barometer's
 become his compass. The philosopher
 scatters his reasons through the floating web,
 scattering ^{treas} the spider, reverting the ^{treas} birds

Fra Poetry boss gnat, sends run, the moon
 reces through clouds yet slowly changes shape,
 the dyke breaks and the flood looks dark ^{bene} desk end spire,
 later to offer stage for the new song;
 the spider settles on Blok's open palm.

✓ X

-sought fulfilments

high fancies

companions
selected

Of the ambitions which directed me

X were certain skills in games, when I was young,
~~but better still to trounce among~~
~~the balm-thatched huts romantic, best, to be~~
the ~~better still to trounce among~~
but better still to trounce among
for the balm-thatched huts romantic, best, to be
grose fatta of my noble past free,
with heart confessante and sealing tongue;
but to smother, lesser, longest clung to me,
to find a voice I owned in poetry.

Through my account with life is overdrawn
by those many creditors, pride, insolence,
conflict and contention, I can not refrain,
so much else spent, discarded, sled upon
time's meagre track, to load, in vainance,
I never have denied the poet's trade.

The drearest ambitions which condemned me
were skills in certain games when I was young
but even better still to trounce among
the balm-thatched huts romantic, best to be

59

Each year in April I have stood to hear
the curlew's gayety call across the hill,
the small important fences marking clear
assertion of their Templed tenacity,
and, after sunset, when all else was still,
the heather bell peremptorily, until
the constellations and the galaxies
establish old dominion of peace.

Of sought fulfilments which condemned me
~~those~~ skills in certain games when I was young,
~~a~~ ~~poor~~ dream, to leave and trounce among
for the balm-thatched huts romantic best to be
~~less~~ ~~that they be~~
grose fatta of my noble, past free.
with heart confessante and sealing tongue,
but to smother, lesser, longest clung,
to find a voice I owned in poetry.

Inst. Jones V
X 63

my father went without a word.

The sick, the dying, bed by bed,
lay clenched around their own affairs;
Those behind a screen were dead,
was someone's grief, but none of theirs.

It was no west dynastic death
& rather silent now) that more,
but letting ^{go} his final breath
& lonely men went out alone.
^{shattered}

The Blossomed Thorn

The lateness of the season here
^{permits} allows the Thorn to blossom now;
in opulent ^{bare} and brief career
each single bough is bent or shown.

Once walking with ^{a troubled} expect man
I saw one burst of all in flower
that had a beauty of a kind
my senses had no ^{sequence} measure for.

As gazing at it long I stood
a strange awareness stored within
not gold of ^{my} flesh becoming wood
and knocking when the birds began

but of a flowing universe
that bowed at streams) towards the tree
sweet and magnet's silent face

✓ Frost Poems
X
65

^{the}
into that one Reality.

sweary swirly
The running earth, the rushing sky
seemed thrusting cold twig & spray
to load my small identity
^{right shined}
 to pluck myself away.

The Man from Molobar

There in this Irish room
The man from Molobar
sits cross-legged on the floor
and beats his little drum;
though there's no drum to beat
his memory is such
that we imagine it
as true To soft as touch

To that accompaniment
he lifts a wavering song
meandering along,
a some heart's even sent
some narrow jungle track,
^{slow}
a first note village made
swaying and falling back
as the dark fingers his

[es halm and
high]

and somewhere on the rim
through oft that strange alien cry
a cadence makes its way
an old song makes its wavers home
that summons to the heart at the thought
a crossroads country air, —
a strain some singer caught
out of the misty air.

Eugene

C.

✓

67

anxious for verse to come with a release
for jingled motions of a restless mind,
for the expected heart to be at peace
in self esteem restored
absorbed when suddenly word
makes crystal ^{image} of a feeling ill-defined,

I looked about the hills for seven days,
shaded over stable, marked the southward way,
combed through the hall in Gudroy to a place,
bore challenge, bore work
Surprise,
Laughter, of a sort
to shake the rock and bid the first-set shrub.

When I was here before the symbols stood
ready for a song, monitoring the landscape
to shape the sounds that later understood
gave courage to the heart
— or, richer grown, seemed heart

of the world's wisdom when the world was young.

I tell them over, but no answers come
from branch left cuckoo or from braiding corn;
no owl calls now; no hawker blest will dream.
For brown leaf and flower
have served the natural hour,
and berries thicker as the day lengthening thinn.

October hour, with autumn I am gay
as any summer morned with bees
and may again be so another day,
when the thought of time
when the passer bee
has no more lasting than the rest of his

I never learned to wait — or fix my thoughts
^{short}
on enigmas well-densed to represent —
like waving twigs in babbling water caught
the endless drift and flow

our baffled senses know
only when crested on some still event

✓ X

Tard Times

The Letters Snow

We spend our swift years learning how to read
new languages on eager ^{ingat-} sensa ^{sens} see;
first sentences, then coded syllables
then, with assurance, the brief sign that tells / spells
a family's, a people's history
by
in tilt of store or silhouette of tree

But this day walking in the sunset snow
we traced a ^{script} ~~treasure~~ ^{sheep} as yet we hardly know;
the pace & boot and shoe, the clean tyres' tread
were readily identified and read;
the flooding bullock's back, the deep slumped track
of the stuck dog that leapt and bounded back
her ^{when} ~~wit~~ more ^{stately} and close scholarship
we scrutinized the blunred hoof ^{play and}
and argued ^{any} ~~over~~ the little sheltered lane
from hedge to stack which looped and came again
and postulated ⁱⁿ field rats as the cause

↙

71
conformed by crush cast of the small-toed paws;
but what the bird we have no skill to guess
^{that} which crossed this sword, this brittle wilderness,
and where it flew to where it nested warm
in last night's bitter root of driving storm.
^{and see} though in undisturbed caneform.

horse's
the dented crescent, deep slumped track

but tend on now we have no skill to guess
of bird that crossed this sword's edge

The Roaring Stove

All the long evening at the roaring stove
secure and warm against a world of snow,
contented by the only one I love
I read and smoke my pipe and meditate
on the good fortune of my friend's estate
for the time's threats seem far and long ago.

But once or twice I leave the glowing room
unlock the latch and step into the night
to test how hard the little frost's become
by brackets fain to encase of ice;
assured then by the glittering glasses
I greet our nearest neighbour's distant light.

✓ X
73

How here I served you? I have let you waste
the substance of your summer on my mood.
The image of the woman is defaced,
and some mere chaff - they of cloth and wood
performs the household rites, while I, content,
march the firewards to set the turning thought
on ice the hours out, grievedly diligent,
to drag to scull the which, when it is brought,
is seldom worth the labour while you wait,
the little loving gestures left at bay
each mocking moment in sloth robuste,
for perfunctory duty never stoops to play;
yet sometimes, at a pause, I recognise
the lonely beauty in your lifted eyes.

✓

If I had given you that love and care
I long have desired with harsh loyalty
or some flamed concept span of earth and air
and real only ^{is some (by)} in a tree,
Then you had lived in every pulse and bone
and found the meaning in the vine and brier
we have been forced to walk these ways alone
my dry thoughts drooping always on a lead.
Then you had lived as other women live,
warmed by a touch, responsive to a glance
glad to endure, so that endurance gave
the right to share each changing circumstance;
and yet for all my brier you were true
to me as I to something less than you.

✓
75

And by that act of giving my slow hand,
conditioned to the habit, might, in time,
have learned a better caption in command
and turned to ^{from} better purpose many early one
^{sadly} saving my thought for you that has been bound
to twix and feather or to figured stone,
and from that happy discipline, have found
a ^{richer} subtler texture and a warmer tone
for the bare verses which my plodding thought
must always shape of each related sense:
and at some even moment of my day
I might at last hear known emotion brought
to some (^{and now like} established by me) eloquence
on the hearts' hurry and the hearts' delay.

My country's air is cleansing to the heart;
 fresh from the ocean, washed with spray and rain,
 it leaves from leaves and drives along the lane
 and from fasts sometimes opens apart
 to black at turfsmoke, bearing in its stride
 that friendly tang across a lonely glen;
 while its lakes' ripples to a thrashing tide
 or leads the suddenly swerv'down back again.

Shaped by the lively lines of rock and hill
 it ends ^{by} ~~with~~ cotton tufts, lifts the flapping crown
^{with} ~~and's own~~ ~~rids off its head~~ to clear the bare blue sky
 or drunk on hawthorn, leaves the last until
^{startled} caught at sudden thunder stamping by,
 it cuts the rocky thistle, blow for blow.

To such a ^{strip} gets as this our love has come
 that when I speak you don't the words I use,
 and doubt no less the ^{use} moments I am dumb,
 the silence is ^{no more than broken} ~~but~~ lonely twice.
 I am not ^{shift} ~~ever~~ enough to place the blame
 to another shoulders the my own, I know
 it was my selfish and joyful aim
^{shattered} ~~to~~ ^{am}
 Took blade a edge to drive a cruel blow
 to your gentle heart, though ^{not too} ~~for~~ my intent
 which, now it seems beyond your ^{too} ~~my~~ wills,
 had set you safe above all chance event
^{fore brook's} ~~water~~ ^{sober} ~~in~~ the steady ^{sober} ~~structure~~ of my life,
 of the depth of one heart, the look and glow
 (of that which ~~now~~ never ~~can~~ be spent.)
 measure as fonder never spilt
 lightning curving its directness, brightness
 to some closed with the light of ^{grief} ~~grief~~
 autumn remembrance

William Cowper R.A. 1808-1968

Take the burden from me and let me live
 a wiser creature for my foolishness,
 and from ^{the} better hints you most forgive
 achieve each capacity to bless
 His meagre mortal Providence has bound
 to your mortality while life endures,
 to all in this ^{awful} ^{they} ^{is} ^{hostile} ^{may be found}
 the flight ^{that} ^{most rightly} yours;
 grace and peace } which are
 for I need mercy much but blessing more,
 of the debris of my lost esteem
^{wrecked} squandered days
 you stand again the edifice restore
 To the ^{now} ^{small} ^{thin} ^{from} ^{walls}
 To the ^{profound} ^a ^{leaping} dream
 bower and bower in this ^{over} ^{maze}
 broken estate a edifice become
 and ^{deserted} by guests diminished here
 house and house of our spirits home.
 own abode of late begins again

So Connor take our thanks for what you've done;
^{those those} not by ^{the} ^{which} Land abstractions of despair
 which find no ^{ever} ^{dark} ^{abode} for us
 and ^{bry} ^{see} ^{the} ^{same} ^{hostile} ^{case} when we would feel
 lost in lonely ^{which} ^{not run}
 nor by ^{secret} ^{fantastic} ^{labyrinths} ^{where}
 the dream ^{drenched} ^{with} ^{now} ^{but few} ^{to show}
 distorted ^{form} ^{answers} ^{forms} ^{his} ^{agonies} here open.

Not those for you. But by your friendly skill,
 the ^{helping} ^{leaning} women crowded round the door,
 the ^{dom} ^{cart} ^{struggles} ^{up} ^{the} ^{hill}, —
 the ^{poor} and the ^{daughter} of the poor —
 now ^{every} ^{eye} ^{to} ^{frown} ^{the} ^{flogging} will
 now the tired heart ^{and} ^{to} ^{stop} the flogging will
 by mercy made more gentle than before.

✓

You, color, were the first of hunting men
 whose art
still persuaded my young eyes to see
 the shaped colors ^{and} ~~and~~
 to the shape ^{tiny} ~~distant~~ world about me then.

And of ^{1/2} gone recall those days again.

Years are the shadows which companion me,
 the shadowy girls linked and stepping merrily,
 the leaping forked trees of Islandmen,
~~of the person~~.

But now the years have blown that world away
 and left on days and dreams not wrothened
 loosed canopies may
 the enduring heart beneath on weak distress,
 the weary head remembering to pray,
 the children playing on gay circumstances.

Concrete

*

81

Late Spring

Old Frostan holds his snow among low clouds
 waiting. They say, so that last fall to clear
 the last of winter from the frost of spring
 For it is middle April and, by now,
 the busy concrete should be on his ground
 whether his cell among the upland whins
 till the low meadow offer him a home
 with grass enough to last in secure,
 but neither concrete nor the enclos yet
 are evident against the noisy winds
 that roar among the hardy border trees
 Laikes may be heard in bales and of the storm
 and black birds in the hedge which does not mind
 carriageway traffic. But the little flowers
 are few and hardy; and the shaggy yowes
 labore and staggers, snaffing Taft by Taft
 the workers slavers seeking the new press,
 and the young lambs dropped late by auston here

to mess the snowdrifts and the frosty stars
 crowd in the shelter of the whistling storm
 Only the hawthorn with blossom keeps its date
 — and yet there's always somewhere when in gloom
 so though we trace its scarcely evidence —
^{we}
 at least can grieve for that merry bird,
 the yellowhammer trying out his song.

The True Smith of Tivernagh
 to the memory of Pat O'Loch, carpenter.

There is a belled rooster in the Glens
 about a rebel smith the year was turned,
 and every stag's bed fed with local names
 from Crooklin's shadow to the Crayegh wood.

We heard it in a farmhouse at Cloghglass
^{n o'Donnell's}
 the farmer's wife recited the homely rhymes
 I later cast the incident in verse
 and had it printed in The Irish Times

Open 4 eyes of the know
^{old}
 We heard a hoary old man speak
 a tall hillfarmer with white-stubbled cheeks
 beyond there in Glenariffe in that house
^{Rare Nie Fischer}
 the German artist rented for four weeks

The bard who wrote the belles — Shuter's Moore —
 was a known tramp who beat about the Glens;
^{see more Lammes Fair}
 I found no battle book but ^{see still}
^{see Lough Leane}

but
and, being scarce, it cost me eighteen pence

The ballads in the booklet but the words
very far gone to gone to gone for some
that's the common property of men
and only sped along by Struttler Moore.

He died in Belly castle years ago
but is remembered yet if you'd enquire
in any little house among the hills
where any house still shows a gleed of fire

It's often called the Smith of Tievreigh;
there was a smiddy ^{wife}, near that little hill,
and if you ask a man who knows the ground
tell him you want the walls taid of it; still.

But it was Duncan Moore, not Kennedy's
the ballad has it wrong. The jukes were never
somewhere along Glenmore in Red Bay.

85

nor here at Tievreigh. Another trade
was Duncan Moore's; he earned no living men
but well could sack a plough or shoe a mare
In Belly nobley there's a gate to hang
that's hardly, if at all, the worse for wear.

But living at the foot of Tievreigh
our bold Duncan moe his neighbours o' kind
a man would admit, whether else
he thinks about them in his private mind).

For neighbours he'd the wee folk of the hill
to shoe their gentle horses when they came,
for he was friendly with them, let them sport
among his feet, when they proposed a game.

And if he wished to turn another road
here on the slope, he'd drive the long slede in
and bid them face it to shoe and they pleased
so be it bed air trouble them or what.

that they had planned for their master's return
and when he came back rolling from the town
they'd tie his coat the way that he ^{would} be ^{to}
so as see him hopped and safely bedded down.

This was, some say, before that ever was lost,
when the Scotch fairies beat the Irish clean
and never all a single blood into the sea;
thus others will deny, and some's men
a maybe ^{an old} woman, or a place
where someone, remebers, certain said item
has come or will folk at their midnight play
and leave them spectre like decent Irishmen.

Last night when we ~~were~~ gathered round the fire,
an old man told us this that I commit
to paper now. Perhaps in fifty years
folklore collectors ^{may} take note it

Let me add this brief note: That old man is

87

our nearest neighbour, following the trade
of tinner, making churn staves, wheels and shafts
for carts so far apart as Cloughs and Leyde.

He made a zinc-lined lid to cap the well
that runs here beside the hawthorn tree,
and twists and interweaves the straggling twigs
that thoughtless fingers risk no penalty.

He lives alone above that gentle bush
and few the strangers even step his door
but I still wonder if, from dusk to dawn,
he has as many calls as Dancer More.

X /

Sketches?

Garrison Tops.

Here on this headland sheer a thousand feet
with the broad moorland rising to the cliff
on every side see one where it runs back
till right surrenders it to simple slopes
of cloud and mountain; No other world exists
than this we traverse; its inhabitants,
the grazing sheep alert, the wheeling gull,
the small grey lambs starting from the turf
and balancing on broken ~~head~~ bright says,
And no ^{more} mark of man than, long since passed,
& ruined walls stand with its sheltered trees
in southward hollow, and across the slope
a dry-stone wall in fractured scillicate;
The flowers are few, the moss anonymous,
all's here subjection to the elements.

We somehow have for complementary forms
to match the bare ~~unfurnished~~ ^{unfurnished} of scene

79

Thunder, cloud burst, fundamental storm,
some vast bird crying or some screaming beast
roused from the lairs of myth and memory
but no voice fiercer than the lame to' falls
when the booted will on the waiting heart.

The Fairy Hill

Patrick McDonnell speaks:-

As we came up the tree last night at twelve,
 after a ceilidh down at Ballymack,
 a wild coarse night of storm with sheets of rain
 and a pale moon over the mooragh,
 I said, in fun, "A poor night for the fairies;
 they'll not stir far, although it's Hallowe'en."
 And then we crossed the stile at Johnny Keegan's,
 a wallotted ^{of} a place where Johnny lives,
 without a soul to lift a pot for him.

A cross we men, John Keegan, off and on,
 he'd close the stile ~~against us~~ out of spite,
 and threaten ^{law about the right of way;}
 but I don't ^{see} him, to a stile's a stile
 and ^{more} especially for fairies. From the lane
 we saw his front door open to the world,
 and, in beyond, the low room door was wide,
 and a great fire was blazing on the hearth;
 but ^{not} a sight of Johnny do we pass.

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and we both thought odd a man should keep
 his doors wide open a night like this,
 a man not known to look for visitors.

Periodicity

First day and night - disturbed the child & ^{insist} salt-eye
 night cold to wake in, nor the close warm womb
 and placed with nurses, sometimes his own cry
 and day that up goes from the ^{sterned} confined room

The evening short that greets the jaded bell.

The seasons told by holidays and games,
 the taste, the egg, the books, the briny sea,
 by leaves piled in the church porch, by names
 or garlands hanging from a grocer's tree.

These take a while to learn, and as you learn,
 you too are changing into someone else;
 then years appear, the day they say you are born,
 the New Year strange like the tongues of bells

Known once as feelings, known by seasons now,
 the calendar is silent, the sunwarmed earth,
 the smell of fog, the bitter taste of snow,

X ✓

The Tinker's Answer

The tinker set beside his ^{dwarf} wood fire
a ^{six shaw} ~~wood~~. His caravan was drawn
close to the ditch. The pony, and ^{white} the horse
grazed quietly at hand. A grey lamb lay
beside his master; and the tinker's woman
sprawled near him, but withdrew a little way.
Two boys with sunflecked fringes that bespote
their gipsy habit, played piggy on the road,
and half a dozen benton-fowl pecked round
the leather-covered bundles - on the boxes
which took their gust of air before returning
to the long folding customary gloom.

In the afternoon when we had passed before
only the boys were sturdy. The taller boy
had harleyed with us, said his father and mother
down at Waterford were at the stocks but should be back by five
and took the kettle, promising the job

finished by six, or, to certain, half past six

Now it was after six, we stopped to eat,
but recognising the kettle between his knees
still turned and hammered, you asked once again
^{my turn} How soon
~~when~~ and shall be ready? The tinker paused
and turned to the women, telling her how long
in words we couldn't catch. She answered for him.

"In Twenty minutes, love, or half an hour."

The tinker then resumed his hammering,
and we walked slowly down the bridle to fall
the minutes up. And as ^{we} walked I thought
of that green named family, not sorry
that ^{glimmer} in the channels and the crannies
of an ordered state, all taxed and registered,

there should be those who move outside the ^{run} laws
taking and took their time from the sky. As I recollect

item by item of their inventory,
I realised how each was functional
as any fabrication of this age:

He hunted for rabbits, the bentens portfolio, even the children's game was such that two could play without a third, its complements hewed from a splintered boxlid anywhere.

Some say these were not fighters, but instead
are the last contingents
of the lost ^{clanlets} of artificers
who kept the ancient pattern of our crafts,
one mosa and tailor, smoth ⁺ carpenter,
in a low country side of scattered dwellings;
others ^{then} said they were driven onto the roads,
when the police - crowbars had unloosed the walls
for generations since, and so survive
in the hard world which ^{yields} ^{the} ^{one} ^{but}
lets no roof for them.

You take your choice. My choice is ordered by
that Trotter's face avoided ^{an} our question
and his wife's answer for him; something odd
and from end tribal layers in that gesture;
an ordinary ^{workmen's} ~~craftsmen's~~ ~~feel~~ to talk

To where not stored aloof from what he does
To why he does it for a ^{an} oratoralist
but a plain fellow talking to plain men
poor old ^{old} ~~now~~
A pink checked, ~~old~~ professor once knew,
in extreme ^{of} his honours headed by
his every lecture preceded by the porter
who balanced
bearing in a steady load of books,
from the library across the road from
once lectured us on his page Theory -
See us a lecture on
a theory to which his name's attached address
in it unprejudiced students & laborious - ^{voluntarily in the seats}
that the great tellers all begin in Spain
and cross over ^{with} the seas
or teach ^{come by carriage;}
~~student~~
The ^{young} ^{men} ^{men} ^{men}
symbols are the carriers;
but I led not the herd to ask my master
if he were Johnny Tremain Thomas' the Rhymer
as nearly
or among the wild Sweeneys & Reboloe.
?

His enthusiasm preceded by a long
balance a cargo of thick books
which will be opened when quotation begins.

Hard Winter

Low

Safe in my high warm room I sit against
 the wind's unceasing east, the smoking snow
 blow off the slate, the crackling wheels beneath;
 and as my coasting through toboggans over
 a frozen Europe with its muffled towns
 its ^{dead} ~~dead~~ glazed harbours - and its bundled bodies,
 my mind insists ~~the truth~~ beyond my knowing
 what is within my ^{knowledge} ~~knows~~ ears
 what is within my ^{knowledge} ~~knows~~ needs no doubt

that The road down Ballymena through Parkmore
 is closed to traffic - so the news is -
 from where it follows with ^{then} subproved logic
 that the broad hills with all those lonely ^{yokes}
 are tracked at hand and by given searching men,
 the sun has risen, the same dark snuffing dogs
 I met at mixed work on Glenariffe last
 hot calico boy who used to herd her terriers

along the roadside took the converted edge
 cropping the long farm and runs of grass,
 round dark her wispy hay and fragrant care,
 and that young John McNeaten ^{still} not find
 his forty sheep among the ^{use} snow-farmed whins;
 and that Cloghglass will be a bitter place,
 (Cloghglass, the steep wet lane, the long stone house
 with gable to the long slope of the land
 built on bare rock which ^{yards} was the place its name)
 the children not at school, the women knitting,
 while Pat McDonnell - cobbles in the byre
 the bits of harness, waiting for the thaw.

I have the general picture in my mind

✓

J. T.

Summer Park.

When (day long) unexpected sun beat down
 the people drifted to the evening park
 crowning the benches nodding to the flowers
 or flat on grass drew lids against the light
 the runny children's voices star-like hoods
 over the shadows of the specimen trees
 the old men left the shelter at the draught board
 to play their games at walking sticks in dust,
 and on the rough turf where the paths lay out
 the foot bell bounced amidst a dry clay
 assertive fences independent song
 and one high blackbird a a conifer
 said without words what every body felt..
 while simply
 and some self-satisfied smiling at the world).

Poetry Quarterly &
 Brush Weekly 101

7

Expectancy

Do all men wait like this for breaking light
 or tired of waiting, turn to check the time
 with jerky gestures and a swat of words
 till from to numbness they are content at last
 to accept the torturing nerve and the stony lids?

or
 Can one wait worthy, crowning his creased brows
 with tests for justice, brimmed with fair intentions,
 flexing his manly deliberate in't-toys
 and knowing them to let a running eye
 over ^{signals} angles beckon out or seem to beckon?
 or

to not old men with all tasks thrust by
 Content obscured or creased a weariness
 so drugged with rumours than the bearded shore
 to do yes a blinds, guesses, intuitions,
 lies so will or power to do ay all else?

I wait here for this light in my own fashion
not lonely or a rock against the sky,
but as women who bled me in their day,
as men in country places still, have time
working in sowing fields to hear & answer you.

Soliloquy Recount

103

Far off we saw them in the upland field
the furies moving the yellow wedge of corn
counted the furies, giving each a name;
whistled and waved and hoped an answer came
through the bright evening air, of voice maybe
confused in the dry rustle of the leaves
of corn we hoped not misinterpreted
more gesture consequent upon the work
and yet the numbers of the names - and forms
were well-eguated, anyone of them
had strength to answer us with voice or hand.

The Cint Pulling

The neighbours gathered to pull the lint
 at Tullenglass hot August day
 till there were a dozen or fourteen men
 enough for a jury enough for a person
 in another case ^{do you think it's} with you look for hay,
 and pulling the lint it is much the same.

You come to return a debt you owe
 for a day last week or a day to come
~~with no lodges~~
~~for your last or hay or because you know~~
 the doubts of kernels or common drift-
 or now that the weathers ^{turn'd} ~~were~~ ^{very} ~~now~~
 there's a chance ~~payed~~ ^{payed} that you'll need a lift

The bales ^{made of sprutt} made the day before
 are flung in a heap near the open gate
 each puller takes the best of a score
 takes off his jacket and begins to begin

someone is always a little late
 and the gruff old pullers are six ~~four~~ ^{studs} in.

With a left-hand drag and the right wrist's pull
 the light stalks lie on the bent left knee
 the back and straight till the crooked arms full
 on the first side laid on the waiting ^{bans}
 a good belt ready with form on three
 and started tight with a well-relocked hand.

The knot's the same for a sheaf of corn
 a spindly twot, and it passed beneath
 then the lighted beet is given a turn
 and tossed right back with the back below
 the stalks by now are as rough as teeth
^{struggle} as you strive to keep in or even now.

But the song sets out in a ragged line
 the three best men are always abreast
 the ripe talk bubbles its seasoned wine
 the tang of gossip, the old man's crack

The confidence, the predicted jest
that brings the expected answer back.

We are moving across the wind-combed crops
behind each batter - a straggle of beets
the fewest behind the fellow who's slots
to go to the sheaf where his jacket lies
for the long grass here is the best of seats
when his smoke has scattered the midges and flies

A handful of drops will bathe the leaves
or a shadow pass over the grayish green
a man looks up and down, believes
we'll soon be in for the tail of a shower
then the hills are hid by the mist between
and the trees bay hedges at will last so long.

With shoulders

Shoulder back each - or under the ridge
the crowd of us wait for the rain to pass
A line of light on the ^{ever} bull-height's edge

notice

sixes warning the shower is near its end
and the thick crop bleached by the dewy grass
flows back to the left and the stiff backs bend.

We've crossed the field to the other side
a good clear third of the work is done
well, nearly now, for it's not so wide
here at the lower end of the field
as we all march back in the sinking sun
discussing the possible size of the yield

So by ^{the} evening with sun and showers
we're most of us are full of the ^{other} two
and ^{our} throats are dry and my hands are sore
it's time already to stop for the
someone is calling us down to the sun
so we ^{can't}
the loose beets are ~~broken~~ hurriedly

We stand to appraise the work we'd done
as measure the time it will take to end

Then stride half-easiness one by one
 To the ease of slout in the lee of a neck
 Of any bend now then a backwater bend
 The bottle held by the cool smooth neck.

Then down the road to the whitewashed house
 The kitchen is full, when we enter, of folk
 The women with kettles and cups and those
 Who'd finished their bottles with nests still
 seated now in the gloom and the smoke
^{Talking to us}
~~as smoky far then out on the hill.~~

The first relay was already begun
 already falling the second cups
 or putting ^{the} ~~an~~ ^{an} cups to show they are done
 I see the fire gleam on an old man's head
 { The stick at the jamb pot to finish it up
 The knuckles clenched round the griddle bread
 When each has eaten he rises and goes

at his own pace to the waiting boat
 Though the thoughts unspoken, each one of us knows
 tomorrow will be a different day
 and the evening light should be better spent
^{now}
 Then talking of war and the peace of ~~lay~~

It is uphill now for the last unpalable
 The day crowds on and the hours grow short
 The talk dies down. We are grim and sobered
 To a steady routine of hull and bend
 with hardly a hint of the early sport
^{talks}
 and the lessened grace of the rural mind.

The boat is heavier now and thick
 The red shanks lengthen with the load like leaf
 The jangling sees-saws tingle and stick
 as the hands drag slow from the dry soil
 but we crest the hill with a deep relief
 to the rest thin strips of our day-long tort.

111

In it cracked steps on a sunken track
I have learned at last what they tried to explain
To avoid the shock of the breaking stalk
You must catch well up on the stubborn stalk
but the best of advice is always in vain
To one who would gallop before he could walk.

The limit to be taken has narrowed in;
The partners are shoulder to shoulder now
Till even laggards like me begin
to feel we are worth our place on the side
I let the strong stalks swing by the bough
and fell the faint of a beat at a stride.

We reached the grass of the ditch at last
The heat is pallid, we have finished the day
The stout's brought up and the bottles are passed
Bursting and shining, from hand to hand.
The bodies are filled and the match of lance away
in the light cool air of the twilight land.

We talk of the work and are satisfied
With a good job done. But we do not let
A single remark be mistaken for pride
For ~~the~~ life is hard and there's more to do
^{rough}
and harder things to accomplish yet
Before the rest of the harvests though.

X

Then we rise for home and mutter good night
To those who are heading the other way
But step to the ditch in the last of the light
To judge if its deep enough for the job
^{Rebs}
I spit my mouth. I have nothing to say.
My screws scream and my son halms throb.

a

We walk him, three of us, slowly now
Two turn to the left and bid a good night
There's little discussion between the two
We say goodbye at his loosen end
I watch him vanishing out of my sight
No tall hill farmer, my Pleasant friend.

I go on alone with ^a weirsome trees
 splashing the slunks - & the heavy tree
 - 15 dooked now with trees overled
 the road for though if your man still stirrs
 I fumble for rhymes in clumsy way
 but the facts still stick with the looks of burns

There are no fine gestures, the hand that sets
 the ploughman, the ^{reaper} ^{sovereign}
 & the ^{harvester} stark on the hill,
 a large symphed silhouette
 to a fern or a hosta in black and white print
 we have done ^{our} job with degrees of skill
 and Jamie MacDonnell has pulled his lente.

I have given no place to the men who wrought
 their quality, size, condition or fault
 in another poem I might have caught
 the little tale where the wheeling flock
 but this lente was symbol of life or death
 I am stating facts, not reading a book.

I might have talked of the meadowsweet
^{blood red}
 or the fuchsia bright in the dark green hedge
 the alternations of cold and heat
 as the shadow between the wood glen
 those joys & pains that are more than a weep
 to the artless heart in the hearts of men.

I might have argued a scholarly case
 for the custom of mowing, obsolescent,
 how the larger unit has given place
^{beggarly} to a bleaker life and a poorer tradition
 in lessening the strength of the ^{fixed} ~~lofty~~ peasant
 society swiftly invites bendition.

But these are the thoughts of a leisureed man
 with time to remember time for research
 I hope someday to create a plan
 with bring all these under broken bough
^{unwieldy}
 a common ethic - a common church
 a common wealth a the-common ground.

But lint needs a labor that year by year
 in hundreds of fields in this land of ours
 is tackled by thousands who never appear
 in an honours list or the daily press
 The early signs of clesing bowers
 have no agents for items like this

no
 the mannered pattern of the latest school
 but
~~doctored~~

tupil

a
b
c
d
e
f

Ars Poetica

Learn on
Press on

(Scrip bare) He thought tick every now is proved
 by evidence of sense; let no phren fly
 unbelasted, but high as trees are high
 That feel the sun ^{when} shell ^{is} the utmost leaf
~~left~~ you chuse only dear you
~~one~~ of what you've lost say these & loved
 and know the heart-scaud ^{if} when you're gone the grief

This was my craft and discipline - I wrought

the along & close grain ^{as} with a steady tool,
 no even edge tempest allowed to roll.
 doctored the ~~easy~~ flourished ^{now} as slick
 no surface ^{scars} [&] as many than
 as surely as the ~~scally~~ scoller
~~flourish~~ ^{start} ^{curves} to ^{my} ^{obedient} to my sober
 the coloured orange rather scratches then says it
 air-dried this arm to robin.
 the mannered pattern of the latest school

With what I made I have been satisfied

as countryman makes a country cart
 made ^{with} ^{full} ^{bar}
 and for a like use, equal to the last,
 built to endure all honest wear and tear

16'

so long as needed, till it's laid aside
to flake and ^{shatter}umble back to earth and air

My symbol's master was not solid man
But slow and independent carpenter
Lord of acre no men's pensioner
fixt in a place which knew his master still,
~~somewhat often~~ not the darkness of
and prayed for a demanded like the sun
but like a quarry or a spring-fed well.

But there were instants when that symbol failed
when what I made stood idle; no one came
to beg or buy its use. Then I would blame
both time and place and thrust my tools aside
to find my hands a casting better scaled
to fill the empty hollers of my pride.

Or I would say; this is not what they need
The faults my own. Let ^{the} ~~stammer~~ truth be faced
the orphaned, the ~~despoiled~~, the ^{defaced} dish-faced, —
the ~~despoiled~~.

The hungry, unemployed, the refugee

117

These name the world's needs now. And can you tell
the horrors to come and do as few
the shamed and wounded earth and all the seas
In this the broken task of work?
And keep the rape green and rebuild the mith?

What word of yours can ever succour these?
return ~~so much to~~ to ~~the~~ earth ~~had~~
supply the father's care to reckless ~~had~~ —
to the maimed men restore the strength ~~he had~~
~~moaners~~
in the lost fingers — to the dispossessed
Offer a ~~and~~ to bind a ~~eye~~ of ~~deceit~~ in ~~tears~~
~~smooth~~ good-natured and friendly trees
for the lost landscape of their hearts' content?

to provide ~~the~~ less rich ~~was~~ in ~~short~~ tears
by ~~an~~ NOT
which ^{one} of these, if chance should let him spell
your wisest verse, would surely recognise
the certain comfort in your true replies
to the harsh questions lone has set ^{the} your heart?
If you can frame the questions fitly well;
if not, you are defeated from the start

II

Let the mind grasp the symbol which has grown
out of the thresh and welter of my words;
as somehow in spring's gale of singing birds
the grateful ear draws forth a single call
not replete in its range nor by subtlety lone
^{that offers me}
but ^{says} strangely is the ~~greatest~~ ^{most} ~~one~~ of all. central stone

That symbol ^{now} is the farmer on his ground,
hill-farmer with his yowls upon the moss,
and his brown horses moving slow across
the steep ^{green} acres with the falling plough.
At any hour or season he is found
equated to the tasks his years allow.

He does not look before he casts his seed
that it be ^{noted} written down who'll use each grain
and when the red cart climbs the long white lane
with the keeper bent, his slow thought does not run

beyond the reaches ^{now}, that it be decreed
the finish'd web serve such or such a one.

And there are times too when his labour's lost,
^{blood}
by misadventure lost, by rain or drought
or heavy snow storm when the harts are out
or by world-accidents of war or trade.
He toils his channels, reckons all the cost
returns his repart
and mend his harness or refits his sled.

So be the poet. let him till ^{his} years
follow the laws of language, feeling, thought,
that out of his close labour there be wrong
soon aversion for other hearts than his.
If none ^{begets} demands it, let there be no tears
nor will ^{now} come amiss.
Love or love thousand - neither ^{will} come amiss.

✓

The Beastie

The men beside me in the crowded bus
had a small sack of ^{hessian} upon ^{upon} his lap
which heaved and stirred with more than engine's sway.

A red-faced countryman, his tweedy cap
chequered and new marked ^{some} ~~him or hole day~~ ^{This a special day}. Shorting

He saw me looking at the shorting bag
and watched the wonder puckering my brow
and chuckled ^{to himself} quietly. I had to ask.

"It's a grey ferret made with human hair."
The bluish eyes beheld ⁱⁿ the general mask.

To demonstrate this truth he poked a hole,
^{the wet pink nose like} ^{like} pushed at ^{his} finger tips.
"If you'd be up at Kells, you'd see the set.
Since Monday not a nose's crossed his lips.
He'll have to work the day for all he'll get!"

121

Old Men Sitting

Show me a man who's seemingly at peace
with a game, a gadget, or merely listening
to others talking. To the band in the park;
he is himself, no more no less than that.

Yet see the same men talking - at the bar
or walking where he's ^{seen} known; he's another person.
Through his eyes come a dozen news
~~Watch how the eyes behind his eyes before -~~
~~issuing the speech, watching its success~~
~~a crunched observer spying out the land.~~

He is stranger, friend, & wit, professional,
playboy or artist, only but himself.
Each masks a trick his handy consciousness of,
~~should be seen straight and unmaskable.~~
~~or only sometimes when it's not often used.~~

But old men sitting may not be at peace;
they are already absent from themselves.
Then their eyes monitor it's the ^{cooler air} ^{softest sound}
or a speck of dust that smarts a small boy's eye.

