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The Better Poems of  
John Hewitt, selected  
from the fourteen notebooks  
he has so far filled with  
verses:

arranged chronologically  
backwards for the years

1938 from the month of June  
until the first of January 1933.

## Octobron

This Octobron first cried at chill of sponge  
before day imperceptibly grew light  
over the wet slates of an autumn world,  
high in a wide room with a hissing jar  
of yellow gas beside a brass rail'd bed.  
A heavy child, his mother had been big  
since the long summer when she sat to gaze  
across the glittering boughs assurd a boy  
was kicking in her. His first memory  
was muffled dream of rest upon her breasts  
whence he was lifted soon since they began  
to swell and ache and offer curdled milk.

Years after in a drawer he found the pump  
a strange glass angled with a rubber bulb.

His sister met the nurse upon the stairs  
and sobbed with disappointment at her news.  
She needed a small sister for her games  
and found a male redundant.

31.V.38

## Immortality

## Sonnet

I would achieve an immortality  
not of this tedious mind, this troubled bone  
that cries for peace and whimpers finding none  
to match th' unbarker'd beauty of a tree  
for thought, convert'd by <sup>times, becomes</sup> natures strategy,  
accepts <sup>the diffusion</sup> the breaking of the skeleton;  
nor that my name & features should be known  
when bangles make tomorrow history;

rather the immortality of song  
not scrawled in an ink gone brown with rust,  
but clear from implicated right or wrong  
such as spring's wandering hstner takes on trust  
one of the blackbird's call familiar long  
but not if last year's singer lies in dust

W.H. Jones

26.V.38

## Stallion

## Sonnet

Caught in a wedge of clanging tins & cars  
that screech their comfortable arrogance  
boys shouting shrilly of <sup>homework</sup> everted wars  
<sup>buskers</sup> toutting <sup>and</sup> crooners craving <sup>glance</sup> for penny glance  
a man strode anxious dragging frosty bit  
as the brown stallion with the long white rose  
battered the squaresets with shark <sup>shark</sup> itching feet  
or veered like windswept schooner tugging loose.

Then I remembered from the whin gay ridge  
pausing with you to watch the sleek mare run  
to toss mare tasseled page above the hedge  
and whinny to the passing stallion  
as brown boy trotted him across the ditch  
and foolish foal lay kicking in the sun.

22. IV. 38

5. V. 38

## Afternoon in May

## Sonnet

Here in this quiet afternoon of may  
when butterflies and blossoms make no noise  
a dark bee drones and roves his plundered way  
towards when burns like animagined Troy's  
a small wind stirs the glittering ashbough's lace  
and light on wallflower a on honesty  
hows undimmed love from heralds face  
a blackbird in my neighbour's apple-tree  
flutes a low ripple, listens for reply  
no smudge save thumbnail moon breaks blue of sky  
the cherry lets its last gay metal fall.  
The year heaves gently, lancing in her stride,  
her hale cheek'd hopes of March well satisfied.

## Oasis

Sheer from the sea we scrambled over chalk,  
flat tilted loads of limestone starting steep,  
the green between bracken & primroses  
creeping & whin yokeyellow in the sun.

Behind, above, to parapet the sky  
now blue with tufted white flung out a scutched  
a toothed edge of basalt pinnacles.

Leaning against hills' slant a shortend breath  
and dizzled by the ricochet of light,  
we burst & shivered in the glowing air  
til, topping cone of rods & mossy stones,  
we stood erect-between the sky & sea  
and caught the sudden wonder of the height.

Before us swift a hollow gently scoopt  
from chalk & shelf curving to score buttress cliff,  
fields tills for corn, fields grazing lazy kine,  
riggs for potatoes, rising to the left,  
where someone wearing red was laboring  
at the green margin of a narrow strip,  
and out beyond - a man a straining horse  
combs slope with harrow over rutted earth.  
High on the right hand sentinel'd by trees  
slate roofs & thatches sent three trails of smoke

21.11.38

against the boulder littered mountainside  
where shifting goats almost invisible  
move forward nibbling & no prompting cry.  
In one green square sheep tugged a bent by lambs  
stood patient and fulfilled.

Then down ears  
with rocky jolt a stirring down eyes  
a low red cent cricket slowly in between  
two winding walls of blackthorn contained stone.

Breath held a heightened at the circumstance  
we turned a smiling blackthorn gave  
a muted salute of green near realized  
and on the brink of entrance.

Slowly then  
we slide stumbled down the cone of sods  
leaving a little world we dare not break  
and could not enter to its gentleness.

### lyric:

Let this last lyric of a passing day  
cry its slow fading way  
into some lonely crevice of your mind.  
Remote a strange, remember that its art  
once held the heartbreak of another heart -  
whose world went dumb a blind.

The time should crumble as the world should break,  
disaster overtake  
the friendly gesturing hand, the gentle word  
yet love a pity shall endure & be  
the first green beacon on the barren tree  
and the first wakened bird.

18.11.38

## Vacation

## Sonnet

I have gone back into another time  
 have spent two days admiring lamb & gosse  
 lies wagtail rodding, slow man mixing lime  
 with bunching horseradish tied to jogging horse;  
 watched dreaming ducks a black calf newly born  
 carried behind thin cow down narrow lane;  
 have learned wrens' habit from the silent of them  
 and talked with farmers on the chance of rain:  
 flung stones at sticks, skinned flat stones on the sea  
 leaned over brook to gaze at stickleback  
 concerned myself with rooks' economy  
 and followed slowly goats' close bitten track  
 and shared a small boy's wonder at a nest  
 with five eggs warm yet from the robin's breast.

15.11.38

## Sere and Yellow.

The younger brothers of my early friends  
 at whom we peers because they still wore earls  
 are cranking up their cars or playing golf  
 have small mustaches & walk out with girls

The elder sisters of my early friends  
 who all were names only yesterday  
 are living now beyond the terminus.  
 their sons wear blazers & their daughters play.

I sometimes stop & ask my early friends  
 in teashops if their luck is out or in,  
 and as they reach their hats down from the rack  
 I notice how their hair is getting thin.

11-14 '15

## Turnley's Tower

I mounted slow the hollow stair  
and sat awhile in Turnley's Tower  
thinking of that eccentric man  
whose dreams died in a foolish son  
that litigation battened on.

Francis Turnley on orient shores  
made a fortune in five years  
that fifty more could hardly spend  
over eighty thousand pounds  
buying here & buying there  
in his passionate character  
one estate at Drumnesole  
the other here at Cawdronall  
in eighteen forty-five he died  
at Richmond Lodge in Hollywood

He made his roads he built a school  
at Carnlough. He longed to rule  
over land a man a beast  
like a mandarin of the east.

He ordered this commanded that  
jenetic as deliberate  
suggesting even these should be

a proselytes society,  
of servant girls who's hire out  
to Papist farmers round about  
and win them by their works of faith  
to the reformation path.

Then he made jenetic will,  
left the house at Drumnesole  
as a haven for the insane  
under charge of clergymen  
now in wiser circumstance  
who had been afflicted once.

Then he orders they should write  
on a rock in all men's sight  
where the basalt slabs outcrop  
Craig a Tunnel's heather top  
in the English or the Greek  
certain words St. Matthew spoke  
When he sent the folk away  
he went up the hill to pray  
when the evening was come

Now the hill he stood is dumb  
save for the cry of passing gull  
or peewit crying at night fall

There is no lettered rock or stone

where Christ or Turnley stood alone  
contested will and foolish son  
with one thing more the tally's done

He built this tower a perfect square  
rising to forty feet or near  
in the new town of the Glens  
where Mac Donnell's lorded once  
stipulated garrison  
of a solitary man  
armed with bayonet and gun  
with a pike and with a brace  
of fine pistols in a case  
for the place did then decide  
on one Daniel MacBride  
if he undertook to ring  
the bell at nine each evening

*Qmet a hundred*  
Dead for ninety seven years  
*Rule* all his passionate desires  
No high temper *flicking* daub'd with clay  
shall make turbulent the day  
Sun shall pass and moon shall rise  
in the transitory skies  
and the rain shall rot the stone  
sand shall rub the edges down  
the Turnleys live at Drummasole  
and one still at Cuskerdale  
none prays for France now at all.

I have been to Drummasole  
stood beneath the waterfall  
climbed the cliff the waters beat  
fern hung ledge and mossy step  
to the Hazel at the top  
followed close the twisted course  
to its mistwrappt mountain source  
passed from Hazel up to bracken  
crost stone fences into whin  
til bog cotton tufts begin  
and I say no waterfall  
can be a man's memorial.

A mountain can. He thought of that  
They cheated him by law's debate

And in this very place I sit  
the strict command he left is broke.

They ring the bell at nine o'clock  
if they remember or are free  
from any great activity  
like buying fish or washing clothes

And now but I now seems to muse  
on that violent eager heart  
who dreamt the carver's mason's art  
should keep his name awhile in mind  
when he was dry bones in the ground

who always thought high places were  
fulfilment of his character  
Text cut in rock or rock like tower.

Lagan 1943

### Flight (of Swans)

The three swans broke the water with a splash  
dragging black feet & stretching urgent necks  
beating great shining wings & flapping clear  
to gleam a flash their silver in the sky  
March tawled grey & blowing near down

I paused to marvel hearing in the wind  
the whistle of their flight.

They headed strait  
across the curve & hollow of my path  
for the lead level of the upper lake  
that slaps forever on its flat wet stones

When they were lost I jumbled with my thoughts.  
They are not lovely.

Feather balanced still  
is beautiful to see, but this mere instinct  
this natural motion a form's a lesser thing.  
I do not praise the stone for being stone.

7. IV. 38

1 think them so remembering a hoen  
and the high places that left beyond the brush  
of whirring wing into a quiet sky  
beyond life's screaming tends a drumming year

Rigged on little fisles hatch & die  
fly so about the business of ten break  
no cumrance of wisdom landed on.

They are lovely only in the dream slakt mind.

So ran my thought the scathing arguments  
clipping into thin places my intellect  
proud in its disillusion proud a hood.

But sudden beat of pinions open;  
I raise my solemn face.

Apon the three  
came whistling down the long slant of the lane  
bright in its troubled air a shadowless,  
and I re joie in the wide angled lantern,  
my heart plucked from its grief & set afame  
with something out of time a out of space.

-

*Released**The Heart Expands*

Wash'd & awake into a morning world  
 among the glassbright jets of air & sun  
 so early up that sunlight still was cold  
 and thought-made easy ripples of the dawn  
 hills raised green shoulders working us away  
 smoke stringing into space out of a louse  
 calls out its comfort-to a friendly sky  
 I sudden knew myself as generous  
 large amiable gestures of my mind  
 saluted tree a stone a spire & fence  
 considerate of cobwebs pausing round  
 included all for herring good at once.

*Sonnet*

If I make quittance of myself & die  
 by poisons air or poison I'll have lost  
 such rest-conjunctions of the earth & sky  
 my doubtful comfort is not worth the cost.  
 And yet I would not die at bating word  
 from any braggart. How then to survive  
 when the silent strapped splinters down my sword  
 and only casts & cripples are alive?

Or is breath valid in a sheltered time  
 for such as I who cannot build anew  
 save on the trembling scaffold of a vine  
 that April's first bright broadside whistles this?

So rain my fancy. Henceforth let it be  
 I live my life with quiet urgency.

30. III.

I cross a labor'd plot of ground  
 where cunning men with shade a grain  
 this weary years of still have found  
 the comfort of recurring shade.

I break the rods of my slow mind  
 with tools that some old master wrought-  
 yet when the yield is cut I find  
 a harvest alien to my thought-.

I turned my touch to Campion  
 and fingers thro his book of ayres:  
 the griefs of his orphanion,  
 his madrigal's remote despairs,  
 mood not at all or scarce could move  
 my eager thought was so horsest  
 by such complexities of love  
 as tremble in your gentle breast.

30. IV.

### Transitional Romantic

In the grey city where the restless dead  
 beckon & nod in every corner's gust,  
 where any how a pale queen's delicate tread  
 makes wistful music on the printless dust,

I walkt among the shadows crying hail  
 to shade of poet & to Lassionate Knight:  
 they paused to speak, then stopped afraid to fail  
 turning to glancing leaves against the light.

I turned my face & walkt among a crowd  
 where still men slanted changes for the time:  
 but my broad heart went slowly with the proud  
 who have no anger & who live in rime.

Edinburgh

29. III

## Coronach

Pipes that cried thro' the dreams of my boyhood  
 out of the bindings with golden names  
 calling the broadswords over the border  
 summoning clarsen to reive or to wane  
 where is the music now crying & crying  
 over the locks & glens in the twilight  
 as the braw foun' of the dees haken & unvers  
 Pillock of Donegal. Lockaber is more

13. III

## Carillon

What use then to assert the nightingale  
 a mark on bark or shell of curling snail  
 at six or sunday of a certain week?  
 Not this ~~as~~ this a man strains throat to speak:  
 (The guller caught by no eye but his own  
 let the thrush gaze intent on shell & stone  
 if snash for good the nurture cannot share  
 if void & rotten who shell know to care?  
 mostly can I shew I care?

I heard bells jangling for an ended world

What little wind there was caught smoke & cold  
 a thinning smudge against a sunset sky  
 no stars as yet. Two rooks lastt urgently.  
 A chortling starling also late & lost  
 rustles the heavy currant bush a crost  
 before my waiting face upon the dew.

I heard bells jangle for a fensitt day:  
 for no eye but my own light drifts away.

14 II

## The Jug of Punch

I remember a small pub  
on the borders of Tyrone  
where the country turns suddenly untenable  
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 notes that rose hosting  
when we jumbled for berries on slippery pine

I remember a small pub  
and the vivacious girl behind the bar  
and the strong bush whiskey over the smoking turf  
and the bawdy talk  
and the rain on the road outside

With that great head drooping  
nodding over a glass  
now so in a bombshelter;  
and that deaf hand stretcht for a shining peat  
twitch & stiffen in a tangle of wire;  
They were not bad people  
and did not deserve such an end.

## The Servant Man

I said at breakfast: We can do wi help  
I must find out if everyone's bestroke  
down in the village

You're own late for that  
Jean grumbled on. You should ha' thought before.

When I came in from the byre a man was there  
standing at the pump in a creasy coat.  
James Galt his name. He'd worked across the Glen  
for several years: he's fallen out with them  
and begged a chance to start.

I knew him sober a steady worker  
It was no concern of mine why he had left.  
The corn was ripe now and a deal to do,  
and help was scarce enough.

I started him.

In the forenoon of that day we cleared a field  
then after dinner went across the loamin  
to give my neighbour Andrew Scott a hand.  
We did right well & got his long field cut  
by six o'clock.

I halted the machine  
close by the hedge & turned to look for Salt.  
He was not there.

I called for Andrew Scott.

He shouted that he'd seen James working hard awhile ago but had lost sight of him.  
I curst the loafer.

So he's a fancy now to treat us stricter —  
Then he was used with —

Stopping short at six  
as if he wrought in some town factory.

At home I askt my wife if she had seen him.  
She had not since the time he left with me.  
We blamed each other for engaging him.  
We took him in when he had been thrown out  
by wise people.

Now this was our thanks.  
He'd never lift another rake for me.  
I never had a name for driving men  
But now this made it hard to keep that name.

There was the horse and reaper to put in.  
He might ha'done that.

I put the horse in, spread the waterproof  
over the reaper in a sheltered corner  
and took a turn block at the corn we'd cut.

It was a cold night after a warm day:  
a little wind was stirring in the elms,

I'd not ask for more.

and all the rooks were nested safe at home  
when I came to the gate & opened it.

I started sudden.

In the fading light  
I saw long rows of stocks where there were none  
when we left off for dinner.

I went in.

At first I could see no one in the light  
then I came on him stooping steadily  
down in the narrow corner by the burn.  
I shouted to him "James Galt. Do you hear  
It's nearly dark a time that ye were done.  
Then when I came to him he straightend up  
and smiled a slow wise smile.

"I doubt ye miss me

From Andrew Scott's long field

By God I did  
I thought ye'd left at six to learn me how  
to treat a servant man with decency  
and I was angry at your insolence.  
But now James Galt I do not ask for this.  
I work as man or beast as long as this.  
I never had a name for driving folks  
He smiled open looked at the heavy sky  
It's going to rain the night on Kenora for sure  
Are ye gone till we see the storm <sup>when we were coming home</sup> til its end?  
Come on. We did, <sup>at just before we'd done</sup> the big drops fell upon my head and neck.

15. I. 38

*The Storm.*

The gate is swinging by one hinge  
 wings are scattered on the pavement  
 the writers chrysanthemums have drooped  
 themselves with mud  
 the lake has a feathered edge  
 the old grasses make a dry noise  
 and I think of my friend  
 on a ship going home.

18. X. 37

*Calf*

The warm drugged cattle still drum into the parlour  
 the split hooves falter then step back in place  
 the brown cow lows a whisks a lazy tail  
 a red hand wipes the hair from Jenny's face

The gate is open now, the handle falls  
 loudly on rim of buckets one by one  
 and sukie sukie sukie Jenny calls  
 as since time woke her people all have done.

930

18-X-37

## Drummasole

Among the holly trees of Drummasole  
upon the upthrust leaf the light is blue  
From rock to rock into the rippled bowl  
the laced foam leaps dizzyly askew

The garlic odors lag in the air:  
The channelled grass-blades are rain-diamonded;  
Rain-puddled stones with flint-splits here & there,  
lie tumbled in the barren river bed

for there the stream falls suddenly out of sight  
not to be found again unless you look  
far down the glen and in a broader light  
thru whis & salleys for a narrow brook.

So love's high cataract breaks on my heart  
with lively gestures of abandoned glee,  
is lost awhile, in secret runs apart  
comes slow a deeper singing quietly

"Labour Progress" Jan 1945  
Trish Jones July 1946

4.X.37

Ulsterman

Sonnet

Far back the shouting Briton in furay;  
the sallow Roman with his banner'd host;  
the fair beard planted in the Saxon way;  
the beaked ship torching terror to the coast.

Then the dark chanting Celt with cup & cross;  
the red Scot flying from a brother slain;  
the English trooper plowing thru a moss;  
the gaunt 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 or much in that where they were good  
~~and bushy only in my brief despair~~  
a turbulent and irritable deer

Celt, Briton, Roman, Saxon, Dane, a Scot;  
time on this island tied a crazy knot.

14-X-37

# The Wayward Leaf

I stood to watch the crumpled leaf's decline  
 the launcht keel waves, then slow drift of fall  
 and pensie mus'd at this prepositions sign  
 sad at the same mortality of all  
 that leads no staying land or warning call

But eas'd with facts immittable flow  
 turn stone to enjoy the leaf's last dance  
 There is no pity when we hause to know  
 how things are interwoven, safe from chance,  
 the distant war, this tare, my ganagij glances

To launch this leaf, to shell the secret cause  
 why just this leaf shoud break on just this day  
 would sum the vaporous fabric of the law  
 that keep the cirusing comets on their way  
 and bid some men blashme & some men pray

Secure in comfort of philosophy  
 I watch the young bud I trust aside the leaf  
 thought of the hidden magic of the tree  
 that sets Spring's promist joy aginst our gulf  
 the pinked summer & the tilted leaf

Then like a sharrowhawk in my sky  
 he fell a farney with a shadow'd wing

who knows who knows if this be not a lie  
 and only briefly Spring has echoed Spring,  
 and new thase reacht, Earth's tilt work so such thing

This leaf falls unregarded, meaning less  
 and in a crazy maze all matters more  
 incapable to punish or to bless  
 and unresponsive down late or low.  
 in vain we vex us with the sense thereof.

hus 2 Potus 7.1.37 Bell Sept 1941  
 19. IX. 37  
 last load 1000 years of bush poetry

Today we carted home the last brown leaf  
 and hooke't the scythe aginst the dry barn wall  
 the yellow borders on the chestnut leaf,  
 the beech leafs yellow, all.

Tomorrow we must bring the apples in  
 they are as red as they shall ever be  
 already starlings eager to begin  
 have tasted many a tree.

And in the garden, all the roses done,  
 the sun lies gently where he once sprang bold  
 on withered golden rod a snapdragon  
 and tarmst marigold.

17. IX. 37

## Sonnet

Mocked by the fretting thought of permanence  
 The sick desire to leave a shape or sound  
 That will survive when I am orders hence  
 And find cold comfort bedded underground

and how whatever I leave is left to chance  
 Event of bomb or gradual decay  
 A fascist epoch or the gay advance  
 Of happy people on a wiser day

Yet knowing hope a frail a brittle thing  
 I set my still against what things abide  
 The brooding mountain a recurring spring  
 And need no succor from my expert pride  
<sup>Letter written across the page</sup>  
 Save in the scores across <sup>a</sup> window-pane  
 Of its transitory diamonds of the rain.

by

5

17. IX. 37

## Nor Even Truce: Sonnet

There was a time a man might steep his days  
 Into an arabesque of excellence  
 Include the still of gesture & the phrase  
 And take no thought for war's impertinence

Let Emoke thunder with a people free  
 Or men be kings or be no longer kings  
 They did not vex the lonely quality  
 Of his remote and wise imagining.

But tho' I fly the dark & striking street  
 As less a quiet acre of delight  
 The bombers shadow jowls at my feet  
 Or breaks the surface of my careful night.

The war is on, & til all bugles cease  
 I shall not dare to make a separate peace.

17. IX. 37

## The Descent

## Sonnet

We slipped - slithered down the tree thick hill  
 caught branch that snapt, was flung a cast away  
 set heel on withered leaf secure in clay  
 but steered us precipitate until  
 hand caught a tusock on a rocky sill  
 and we dropt heights we woud not dare in play  
 groping with face ting whipt in leaf dark day  
 dislodging stones that bounded a were still

With bleeding shins, two suns wrench'd in flight  
 hands cut & shiny with th' uncertain moss  
 we trust thru the last thicket and were free  
 Then safe a grass we marvel'd at the light  
 when sudden from the pinelips beat across  
 the cloudless blue a leon leisurely.

## Mirror

I am the mirror. I remember, remember . . .  
 all I have seen lies buried drownd in me  
 caught rigid like the shells & colored stones  
 and only stirring into motion when  
 light ripples up my surface into features  
 then for awhile the fronds & tentacles  
 spine flick a shape before collapsing back  
 into the timeless images of depth

The calm man with disaster at twelve o'clock  
 carefully knots his tie with unconscious twist  
 the anxious wife arranges her colored ribbon,  
 the singing woman brushes sparks from her hair,  
 and older will strain the gaze for streaks of grey;  
 the happy child exploring squeezes nose  
 against the coolest surface in his world:  
 the young man lessing catches his father's eyes,  
 the old man glimpses a mouth forgotten for years  
 I am the mirror.

What can you see in me?  
 I remember you.

17.IX.37

## Tuan

I read but late of the pagan who never died  
 but ran this shape after shape unsatisfied  
 outliving the adventurous Kings with whom he came  
 to give this westernmost island a memorable name

I wonder too if in some grey draughty union word  
 a doating hawk remembered a dimpled shield as a sword  
 and got only scars looks hard words a mockery  
 for each poor tattered rag of glorious memory.

So when the nest-bearded beggar hammered my door  
 the leaping & curving shapes of the stag or the boar  
 the hawk's & the salmon's steady noise a fell  
 were well within my fancy's beck a call.

His demanding arrogant mien & his insolent talk  
 were harsh with the granite memories of the hawk  
 and while I stood in silence gazing at him there  
 the frozen eyes of the salmon returned my stare  
 but I gave him a bite and a bit to put in his bag  
 because of the lonely grace of the nervous stag.

9.IX.37

## The Lane

The house was curtailed nest, the ledges cliff,  
 the byres & barns bright white against the sun,  
 commended in our passing down the lane -  
 Good careful folk live here wise thrifty folk;  
 but not the niggard thrift of the slow peasant.

Then down the lane, nettles on either side,  
 the long docks near them, poison & remedy,  
 the tufted knapweed in the boggy grass:  
 cool lane that holds a narrow spine of snow  
 when the hills' bare open & the wet trees black.

The lane grows glaary, squelches to a stream,  
 with little clouds of mud in the deeper parts  
 we rouse in passing.

Not one stepping stone.

The water running out of the tangled grass  
 into the tangled grass with the smudge of oil  
 blue at its roots; uncertain of direction,  
 half following the path, half counter to it,  
 veining at nuts & lying shallow pools  
 in trampled places: for the lane goes down  
 to ford the brook above the waterfall;  
 brown foaming stream against ice-polish'd rocks,  
 to left the cleft frogs make in, to the right  
 the hiss & uproar of the waterfall.

23.VIII.37

I like the lane because I remember the snow,  
 remember the dogs as a dog het splatters across.  
 I'd like it enough to love it if it were dry,  
 but the care of stepping, the attentive eye  
 fixt on the feet distracts the free mind's joy  
 from richer matters of woundwort & scabious.

So I walk in silence next, til sage on stone  
 I scrape the worst mud off storm to ask  
 why didn't they do something about the lane.

My first colloquial blank verse  
 To my surprise, something of the sort  
 Edward Thomas

Lane was as bad as crackpot

### Rest them and Rest

Let peace be on me with a soothing hand  
 here at the high noon a the prime of day.  
 Let no hurt creature cry across the land,  
 but kestrel dreaming haws above his prey.

Let not my ~~fançay~~ drowsy fancy move beyond  
 the sparrow in the eve spilling rain  
 the meadow sweet mustard above the land  
 the glittering apples in the sunlit lane.

Be still, unresting murmur of the sea  
 or far, unbridling, as the streamlet flows.  
 I must not break from my still reverie  
 until some blundering bee shall ~~break~~ this rose.

20.VIII.37

## Harvest Moon.

The moon's bright ring of green a gold;  
 one star below dark bank of cloud  
 I shall remember when I'm old:  
 remembering I shall be proud  
 that when storm mockt the reapers' care  
 and threatened flood upon the land  
 I took my harvest from the air  
 and stackt my corn with merry hand.

19.VIII.37

I give my thought a jind my thought again  
 in green a gold of passing summer's pride  
 yet all the while I am dissatisfied  
 with timid disquisitions on the rain  
 or heather massing on the mountainside.

for when the core imagination bares  
 til thought & object both are reconciled  
 I find no stanga where the pictures fill  
 of crumpled carton on the café stairs  
 or sallow woman big with her fifth child.

19. VIII. 37

## Orchard Wind

West southwest a strong wind is blowing  
 I sniff a rose a sniff again.  
 Over the land of my fathers blowing,  
 it caught this sweetness of fruit or rain.

O friendly wind I have not forgotten  
 The shape of apple, the color of plum.  
 They lie in the orchards bruised & rotten  
 while children are hungry & I am dumb.

Turn again blow to where forever  
 cold is the earth their bones are laid  
 tell them I start on the harsh endeavor  
 that the skill they had shall not be betrayed.

To Armagh, staying at Longley

19. VIII. 37

## Autumnal

Tis early dark. The lamps are lit.  
 A cold wind stirs the thinning trees.  
 Here in the lonely gloom I sit  
 and mount my timid sophistries

how autumn counts its labor'd store  
 and winter's broom but clears the way  
 for spring's insurgent green once more  
 and sunshine of a summer day.

My wit insists the truth of this  
 would warn my heart grudge no salute  
 to the snug egg, the chrysalis  
 the seed within the fallen fruit

But heart remembers spring by spring  
 the promise broken or deferd  
 the yearly less exciting wing  
 the dwindling joy of bud & bird.

Each year's a death. I grieve to see  
 the acceleration of the cold:  
 the leaves but touch the shivering tree  
 with a green light and I am old.

VIII. 37

## Ode

Fling up your song against the rims of gold  
 Sing on & climb the sky with threads of gold  
 O Skylark soar. Lift up my troubled heart  
 You are not mortal. I grow slow & old.  
 In these few narrowing days glut sense with sound  
 That when I seek the cold home underground  
 The color dies the song will not depart.

But fool! Too well I know  
 The song goes with the color. All must go.

But let me brood not on the songless days  
 When even the thin rain rilling to the stone  
 or the blind shapes that traffic moulds cold morn  
 are bears not passing. Let me rather turn  
 To the trill rippling sky a eager heart  
 all beat a feather teach to blood a bone  
 so that in ripeness!  
 accept composedly my oaken sky

High in your flight I lose the drag of time,  
 am ageless with you in an arc of joy  
 Rome is unbuilt. (Dan) Chaucer makes no rhyme  
 Creation glitters new & clean in leaf,  
 serene above the cooling mists of grief  
 as feather next with tragedy of Troy,  
 nor care for last man's death  
 on the red leaf hill wake with poison'd breath.

Yet not secure. The fragile human art  
 can soon but briefly & ere you descend,  
 the clash of finite & of infinite  
 hurls me agenst the upward rushing earth.  
 Back then to the small hole my narrow heart  
 finds home & joy for as a chrest friend,  
 for now mortality  
 bares talon & vanes pinion over me

I hear the song but faintly now & far  
 It leaves me as '50. The echoes fail.  
 That pulsing source of feathers was no star  
 to pin the skies forever in this place.  
 The grace that passes is the much more of grace?  
 Not so. The blithest memory grows stale.  
 The charitable morn  
 chokes the creast lying lips, the tongues that scold

Unmastered yet, no rival sheeds such bright  
 arrows of music at the heart of death:  
 no other David. But the broken light  
 brings silence over. Troubled & alone  
 I trip a tracery, strike blind foot on stone,  
 Lash eye on cobweb, catch a frightened breath,  
 Then by worn pathways come  
 down the hustl hillside to Jamilia lone.

B. J.

19.VIII.37

## Mourne Mountains

But these are not my hills : they are too high :  
 They have not been, since ice <sup>brown</sup> swept slowly over,  
 abait to any force beneath its stay .

They are too harsh for me to be their cover  
 & to claim me to

The broad stone winding with the flatland stream  
 The sheer <sup>rock</sup> place barren, or 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 landskip flints along the gravel beach,  
 the tilted dolmen, or the baked clay hearth .

I do not fear a bare land but a high .  
 The curlews screaming moors have no affright.  
 The bog brown trout stream thrusting hurriedly  
 can flesh no terror in the blackest night .

But the cold summit harried by the rain  
 smoked by clouds or banners for with snow  
 has all the high sublimities of pain  
 I leave for never hearts than mine to know .

17.VIII.37

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## Down Emnence .

I stood upon a little hill in Down  
 with august hoist upon its mellow prime ;  
 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 billowy sails a bales  
 with blues whole range to island them in light .  
 The landskip spelt its colors pattern out :  
 the grazing rocks with moving cattle, black  
 and brown, the rich potato rigs of green ,  
 the lighter corn with squares of charlot gold ,  
 the grey stone ditches, lines of darker trees  
 the gash of quarry with its clay red wound  
 and caught between green slopes the little trough  
 Altnadra blue as the top of the sky .

with one white horse against a narrow field  
 the new stacks thatch but hardly weathered yet  
 and gulls that rose a settled air slow cry  
 on the low marshy places to the right  
 and one rook cruising in the middle air .

I lost the acte of self, my heart gone out  
 into the shapes among the dykes of stone  
 on gull's wing, pecking at the horse's feet .  
 I was in all a yet included all ,

What are a fan of earth was but projected  
from the stars images within my mind  
like God on Chaos dreaming for it a world.  
It had not been before me a world and  
when my will wished.

Then as I stood a cry from one behind  
emerging from the souterrain's cool gloom  
brought sudden frenzy to my dulling sense.

Here to this hill, well walled from ranging feet,  
we hurried gasping with the terrible word  
of Patric landed with his murderer god  
brought here by the green mouth of the Gravyle.

Why must another god break on my dream?

## Summer Wind

After a week of weary sun on dust  
the green drains from the stiff ungainly stem  
the coat unbuttoned on the sunburnt skin  
I woke this morning to a world of wind  
hearing it first then sighted in the curtains  
slamming a door unusual, frolicking in:  
without wet glad cool face uplifted, happy  
breast cleaner deeper a new ecstasy  
in cloud cartwheeling a the flowing grasses  
combs, lovely all flowers lively a swoon.

Thought but on vigor to surprise itself  
I said: This is the spring come back again  
all times a lie. I am not grown so old.  
I can recapture joy with this mangled  
that's richer now in color with the wind  
and has gone back to beauty from withering

and light step lifted let the thought pervade  
my heart's old load of trouble.

Even so  
the leaves have a dry rustle in this wind.

13. VIII. 37

The song being ended  
 with stride of dark  
 along the white arc  
 whence the music descended  
 in silence we turn  
 too sorry to learn  
 that the silence after  
 is part of the song.

13. VIII. 37

From me by you  
 as true to true  
 no act can make  
 the gay heart break  
 for each is known  
 & marrow of bone  
 and flesh on his  
 has nothing hid.

Nor you to me  
 unfaithful be  
 identity  
 has made us one  
 who has been two  
 for I with you  
 in slant of sun  
 one shadow throw

and love shall prove  
 that love is love  
 whatever else  
 the lewd big spells.

10. VIII. 37

Pod.

That rain a heat with no bodies for their forms  
should have the magic to turn the elastic earth  
into a lawn or a rose!

I marvel at the apple reddening growing  
turning a rounder side to the beckoning sun  
life in it working its way self justified:  
but the secret sea in the pod is beyond my grasp.

First the flat flanks of the hood, then the swelling out;  
then the long pod heavy on the nervous stem;  
the secret lies in the pod growing there unseen.

The small child in the womb is no fuller of terror.

10. VIII. 37

Atomy

I know my reckless hand with bitten nails  
clapped with red blains or callous on the palm  
is shape of shadow or a chance result  
of whirling changes of life & changes of death.

The tree I see  
is what has happened when sun struck the ground  
the grass blade a device for making green  
out of the colorless air.

But that you hill, the hill I always remember  
where there are no hills  
hill I have walked on, watched in hope of heat  
with the fire when or with the when in spring

- but that you hill is a precarious world  
of small electric forms the mind rejects  
and reigns in its myriad galaxies of chance  
I can but challenge

For me the finest thing is that old hill  
was there before I whispered a will be  
long after my name is weathered from the stone.

9.VIII.37

## Rain &amp; Heat

I went my way.

The warm rain in my face  
beaded my lashes sat upon my brow  
too soft to his into the open ground  
turn grey to darker grey the dusty earth  
and shone upon the stones  
then ceased.

The bundled clouds drew back, their task  
accomplish.

And in steady wave on wave  
the great heat came, like heat that throbs the ears  
with jungle thunder & the sound of drums

The earth had opened to the feather rain  
and taken him as that girl the shower of gold  
lays now fullseeded, warm & well content;  
then with spread bosom to the kissing heat  
gave back in mist what has been taken in rain,  
breathes in her loves gentleness & strength  
and now exhal'd new vigor of her own.

The heat & cold drifts the rain has barely reached  
and could back heavy with new qualities  
like the full glory of an answering cloud  
or alternation of unequal rain.

3.VIII.37 57

Stone

The jont, the flint, the ammonite,  
the pecker, crystal or the guern  
these please & tease the restless sight  
while fancy matches shape in turn.

But, weather here they still endure  
the incidence of frost & rain  
each in its shape a strength secure  
from love's erosion, file of pain.

Of forms that flower'd when earth grew cool  
and blossomed to fantastic grace  
the crystal still is beautiful  
the bare flint shows a lovely face.

Of things laid down as life ran on  
by quiet creatures in the dark  
the ammonites the elder son,  
the pecker is the patriarch

When men found will to master seed  
and grasp the sky & spring's return  
they pray'd to God they sow'd the seed  
they carv'd a jont, they left a guern

And we for all our boasted pride  
our arrogance of hand or eye  
what shape of ours shall still abide  
th' indifferent favors of the sky?

3.VIII.37

## Day break at Longgall

I shall indeed remember such a dawn:  
 The rent clouds glowing in three separate wounds  
 The grey light slowly smoking over the dew  
 Birds just awing awake surprised began  
 Their melody increasing with the light-  
 til, less still left, it was too long & clear:  
 The new wind woken also in the reeds  
 stirring for passage, taking sudden flight  
 and shaking bies against the bitter sky  
 til life resound & run a song involved  
 The secret spider on the field of corn.

After a midnight due to I just;  
 Give benzedrine, I do not sleep.

Book 12

"The Bell" July 1941

27.VI.37

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## May

Already summer crested the decline  
 The surf of blossom fails the high green tide  
 Languishes at full. The sullen midnights' lime  
 Of silver light has its precarious hour.  
 A weariness now drowses on the flower  
 That into seed - apple has not died.

The swallows that were absent in the eaves  
 Turn wing less deeply. None shall pause to see  
 Untutored fledglings fluster in the leaves.  
 Only the hay cut wet a laid in rows  
 achieves that rich & aromatic close  
 The heart demands for all maturity.

Mowing golf links, West End Road

12. VI. 37

## This Is My Country,

This is my country not parturient  
 but boulder & sterile cragging harsh & bare  
 not the round bellied meadow indolent  
 or the heady gashes of the loving share

My stock, if reads a measure, otherwise  
 legs ample acres, tant with eager growth,  
 cock-eye for manifesto of the skies  
 and by the corn god thrusting made their oath

But by the westward just were plucked & flung  
 across two waters to another ground  
 there set about Jamilia tasks of dung  
 and furrow till the flow again was found.

Letters in page the way they went and came  
 my restless jetties takes a tidal curve  
 the shapes of history clear of praise or blame  
 but draft the motive for the leap or swerve:

In them was not such; but decision made -  
 a man upon a gate or by a fire  
 tire of his ailing after on his trade,  
 or eape for the arms of his desire.

so back & forth until the growing thing  
 that rooted us to earth's firea pumping flow  
 the hidden light that swelled the loins with spring  
 and warmed the chill hearts thro' the unbroken snow,

The growing thing was sheltered broken clean.  
 There is no seed or crop to know my land  
 No sod responds. Thought wanders spare & lean  
 across the wilin a letter of my land.

1.V.37

## Anniversary

## Sonnet

The third spring now leaps sunward into leaf  
 Late with the melted snow delayed by frost  
 that spread across the landscape of our grief  
 with flooded slate so hardly to be crost.

On this green crest we stand to see once more  
 new summer reaching parts of rich increase  
 the full flowers' vigor & the bursting core  
 slow with the gestures of a lowest peace:

and all that wealth glimpt, that rejoicing gain  
 toothed to a piercing sweetness by the threat  
 not of familiar incidence of pain  
 blunt or breath, the anger or regret

but from the stark risk in what man's jolly's melt  
 - the warning siren and the masquerade -

## Last Enemy

Having survived

the pulpit angers of frustrates men  
 hell's threat no mercy save its broken will  
 flaked to gods sweet leas in a shirt

and the precarious courtesies of kings  
 starchamba master, billeting of wrong  
 the insolent loss  
 the small squire's crop & meadow  
 the fisted short

we slant slowly now  
 down the long arterial  
 naked to

the interim report, the experts lie,  
 and the ambiguous average.

22. IV. 37

## Ghosts

I have no ghosts.

My dead are safely dead:  
 my grandfather reading the paper, my grandmother  
 jumbling in cupboards, John with his bag of clubs  
 standing idly, his left hand licked by the dog  
 or walking rapidly talking of Mark Twain.

These are flat images flickering in the mind  
 with focus narrowing widening nearly lost  
 They are not repeating these acts on another plane  
 and when they did them they were not shadows of things  
 but suffering creatures moving with joy or pain.

They survive now only in the brittle thoughts  
 of a dwindling group of people.

Gather the scattered colors & shapes & words  
 If I could  
 and make a mannikin of them & name it John  
 there wouldn't be much of him there who used to take  
 a sharper shape than any other man.

The winter evening reading & asking questions  
 while my grandfather straightened his tasseled cap  
 and dealt with the weather had surely <sup>a cable</sup> been  
 of contact on so merely physical level.

I knew his mind & mocked him a lord him well  
 He knew my rash opinions & jeered at them

Yet he is dead, & has not spoken to me  
 or even shifted a glass of water on a table.  
 I even forgot the particular sounds of his voice.

Died first to the senses active dying again  
 to the senses in memory, touch & hearing are gone:  
 only a listless eye remembers his face

17.11.37.

## Scrutiny

What things will bear my thinking on  
yet leave me gay & proud?  
Ashamed at foolishness began  
to catch the gaping crowd.

The fleshy word, the positive tried,  
The hurt face turned away,  
The stupid lie, the man denied,  
The mean content of day:

Those seldom uttered vanities  
That trod upon my walk  
The dream of faces round my knees  
That sway the way I talk

The sense of power & heat a shew  
in success I am strong  
mockt by an ear that aches & know  
a songbird by its song.

The jumbling craft exposed beside  
the lines that leak a line  
The effort to assess the tide  
in one mind's dribbled sieve

Yet this I claim for what it's worth  
and that's enough to save  
the laughing heart I got at birth  
until I reach my grave

A place to love, a life to share  
No chance & change of day -  
that - with a strange here & there  
will keep me proud & gay.

15. IV '37

# Gallery Piece.

Milo the athlete bullockeater strong  
 denying age remembering his youth  
 the seven Pythian crowns the greater six  
 Olympic laurels, striding thro the wood  
 broke twig that neard his face with savage crack  
 gripp'd here a tree strong and lost a sapling by  
 dash up to clover by a bigger branch  
 that slipp'd his hold he storms agenst an oak  
 rock root loose, clove by parting right & left

But he was old the tree asserting back  
 caught hands together in the trunk rejoined  
 foot prise was useless; he was sick a old  
 hung like a lackey at the whipping post  
 wond wake to anger stuck the cracking tree  
 sank into pity for his stoned jaws  
 curst luck that let him prop its pillars up  
 when his masterester & his fellow scholars  
 hurried bapety from the quaking roof  
 and now left him alone in the dark wood.

Then with thongt soft footed stole his dread  
 the barbed hides breaked nearer, woke to shout  
 startling a bird enrap'd the circling bushes  
 was pawed a man's desilence . . .

I will set  
 his right leg so aginst the crooked root  
 repeat the strong high rhythm in twisted bough

I know a lord will loose the knotted purse  
 for just this panel to bedeck his wall

and in the labor I shall get relief  
 from the hot frenzy clawing at my days.  
 for this poor Milo my sharp sympathy  
 began with pity for his strength in age  
 dragg'd downward to a bloody screaming thing.  
 My oak's not his, but caught alike to him  
 I'll make my struggle in the colors of his  
 and in the making half forget my sorrow  
 for as the hand moves surely o the leaf  
 rejoices in the forms that are revealed  
 I lose the self's never pities in delight.

For my Olympic crowns go seek the walls  
 of the small chapel by the western gate  
 Men safe at them a spell my name with those  
 that made Sciria an enchanted place.

If this survive, this warping painted board  
 prey to howm a beetle prey to dust  
 I think that men will see the truth of it  
 and pity me my stinted grasp of days

and lose their pity in the chancellois line  
It's abundant life of color in the forms  
as far as how have clearer hearts for this.

And when we broke the door down I went in  
saw here & there the painted fantasies  
the whimpering lips of decadent disgrace  
the lewd impostures of the secret Jews  
- struck but this glass & canvas, rift a face  
of some weak woman's face  
tore ragged edge across a nativity  
and orders all to flames.

My glance alert  
caught sight Sir of this tortured thing we brought  
a dully panel, in some by an Aryan  
with strength & the last of life in its cracked face  
Well wife it for a nail it to your wall  
the fit place for its skill, a certain skill  
I know Sir let you rightly disallow  
the painter's as no craft for shooting men  
wounds let the honied women play with it  
in the long hours waiting for the child

But here in this there's something speaks to me,  
the cruelty a strength.

Your weary eyes  
weary from statecraft cares, may find a peace  
and after peace turn once again to power

with vision brighter . . .

a gray servant bounded  
I pushed him back & hurried up the stairs  
The doors were bolted - I could hear inside  
the Toy dictator stamp & storm like mad  
A boot & shoulder broke the gilded lock  
He crooked & cried, then leapt to swaying lips  
I find a miss.

A picture tumbled down  
I must have cut the cord with a scimitar  
and hit him on the head.

It was a scream:  
the silly bupper propp against the wall  
rubbing his battered skull as begging a chance  
bent a run. The orders were of course  
to bring him in for trial. He tries escape  
I had to shoot him. And I am not sorry  
for I remembered John at the way they left him  
and you yourself have several scores of yr own  
A trial might have been better. Still it's over..

I took the picture home as a souvenir  
a peculiar picture for the leader to have -  
it ought by rights be hung in the gallery  
with large appropriate label under it -  
The subject "dabor exploited but breaking free!"

1.10.37

## Spanish Place Names

Names that were once  
embazoned on the banners of our wars  
hang now with dusty wreaths  
in tattered gloom above the oaken stalls.

Now you become  
new words on the flags & lips of men  
who live for no harsh empire's trampled peoples  
but for a world set free.

++ 1.10.37

With chance & change of war  
Spain eases in our thought  
we turn again  
to the bird thrusting  
and the fat thrush.

17.11.37 73

## O How can I Survive?

O How can I survive  
a toppling world's decay  
just to mere street & life  
with war on any day?  
at worst, the drummed collapse  
before the fascist mob  
salute with hand & lips  
at menace of poison club;  
at best, achieved success  
for workers' hope a cause  
enduring its repress-  
-ion of Stein Hobnail laws:  
blow in either case

the world of nurture known  
the individual face  
the right to stand alone.

O How can I survive  
whose heart is gagged down  
freedom from the here  
the hearts' own discipline?

March  
1939.Phalanx *Last version Aug 1944*

This is the season men in lanes may say  
 light lasts a cockstride longer every day  
 and the sky's grey apron bellies snow  
 and few birds slew  
 along the turning twigs, black lipp'd with frost  
 yet at this gate a entrance of the spring  
*house*  
 I half to make my sober reckoning  
 what may be gained before the year do last.  
 Salvadore be

~~Now while I watch the last stroke fast my face~~  
~~rain falls on faces in another place~~  
~~when men with swollen fingers dare not blow~~  
~~for fear they slew~~  
~~the crawling scoundrel lies the stunted trench~~  
~~and on the splinters trees as bud appears~~  
~~nor will pintil men move in winter years~~  
~~and the wind comes without the alluvial stench.~~

No spring for Spain. No spring for me world  
~~for me none~~ only till aggressions are  
~~the last~~  
~~scoundrel~~  
~~forever from an aching eyes~~  
~~out of the stars~~  
~~and now can turn intent & be released~~  
~~slow & repetitive in word & thought~~  
~~now dead hooded misbegot~~  
~~warm laughing women, hearty fassinate men.~~

75  
christen the gestures by our fathers taught,  
essaying simple gestures of our own.

To let this be, to bring upon the life  
 unregimented legs talkative  
 to build a world where one might catch a glance  
 and stop to dance <sup>guarantee of friend</sup>  
 glad of the ~~sudden~~ <sup>of twist</sup> smile or touch  
 there will be found no lot of tongue or heart  
 where no one chides the man who walks apart  
 because they know ~~his~~ silence makes them rich:

to bring this life? Is it by frightened prayer  
 to doubtful father who may not be here  
 or ~~wishes~~ <sup>scarcely care</sup> jail in man's old & stale  
 that ~~always~~ <sup>mostly</sup> jail? meaning  
 Not there. The negro screaming in the night  
 is mobbed by ghostly ghost gods uncountable  
 street phosphorescent gods from death's cold hell  
 all gods retreat into the infinite.

Can art make certain justice comes to men?  
 Art can but ~~dance~~ <sup>sing according to</sup> never lose the time.  
 This man had still to hisel a & break  
 great stones awake  
 a lecher king's whip cracked him to his best:  
 and this ~~caught~~ <sup>tore</sup> music from the Thunder once  
~~incongruous~~ <sup>at</sup> order of a ~~drunken~~ <sup>magical</sup> <sup>laffit</sup> prince.  
 The hand that drew this was a fool at last.  
 cowards

## Surrender

Not here. ~~The quiet hope of influence~~  
 walk ~~quietly~~ <sup>quietly</sup> within your ~~hedges~~ <sup>hedges</sup> fence  
 and set the hedges in order, tend with care  
 the blossoms there.

Be happy to achieve a ~~balance~~ <sup>balanced</sup> slate  
 for hours & pulses of your family  
 prune your tall fancies like a fruiting tree  
 and bid its ~~slow~~ <sup>slow</sup> growth bulge like drowsy grape

Well then, and well. But if a roar should come:  
 Who knows what trumpet or demanding drum?  
 The jenit field can no more than bramble hedge  
 turn back war's edge  
 Here still may smoke your house against the day  
~~not your leaves only, not alone with~~  
~~the lowered head against the foot or shade~~  
~~the low rank broken but with bombers load~~  
~~but the high crest of mortara grenade~~  
~~to run to crouch in jeopardy~~  
 shoulder

These jail us all. Art Quality a Prayer:  
 Can love be blessing for the beam stabb'd air  
 Here before the great ninth wave  
 at his gate sentance of the spring  
 house wondering

~~When red autumn robes the widow tree~~  
~~You that I love shall stand by me & turn~~  
~~hands upon me, & watch springs promise burn~~  
~~and coil across the twilight quietly.~~  
~~If when the ades a moors have stert them lower~~  
~~a the cold waters have run sighing back~~  
~~who left shall venture from obtrusive rock~~  
~~to count old landmarks on the ocean's floor?~~

To win the life my aching senses need  
 I must be bondsman to a narrow creed  
 I must strip off my fancies & desires  
 like ~~flintcut~~ <sup>flintcut</sup> ~~wheat~~ <sup>wheat</sup> tynes  
 and ride upon the winds that jolt & hurt.  
 I must ~~sue over~~ <sup>sue over</sup> the attempted grace  
 the uncertain gestures of the dancer's pace  
 for ~~rago~~ <sup>honest</sup> mind, ~~stiff~~ <sup>sharp</sup> eye & hand alert.

Instead of as before from bush a bird  
 obtaining beauty's retrospective word  
 I must attend, before the order is done  
 make order one  
 with ~~blindright~~ <sup>blindright</sup> action triggered on a law  
 I must become as more the man I was  
 wait at a trifling ease for applause  
 an epigram or attitude my care

Then courage first & caution: in reserve  
 that love of laughter which must ever serve  
 to keep me wise o'er life the brittle thing  
 breaks break & wrong  
 upon the smooth & old sun-setter stone  
 for in the strict occasions of delight  
 always my impulse urges me stretch out  
 the warm hand's mercy ere I go alone.

20. II. 37

## Choice

What is the choice that the year must offer  
 for one awake in his land & lead  
 emotions erosion he must suffer  
 his arteries harder, his dreams go bad,

or take his turn with the green proceeding  
 where chance has set him in front or behind  
 may see perhaps the rescue speedily  
 or the close of kiss and the final land

gripe out angry at Queen and poodle  
 barge into beggar with rush down steps  
 curse his birds a velvet cuddle  
 could not assuage with its sticky lips

Thrust at, stabbed by each moments' pity  
 dragged by skirts till courage in rags  
 finds his philosophy pulls like putty  
 at mouth of hunger or shapely legs :

with his only hope of a sheer salvation  
 a tense tennis row to a scammed crew  
 twisted nostril bent a good education  
 splitting his pitiful spirit in two.

## The Spokesmen

It is the fashion to speak of forgotten men  
 we are forgotten men in an older sense  
 were last of Ulster by our hopes a struggle  
 sweated into the sods 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 a thoughts  
 first freedom a justice following, then honesty  
 and the full cup of life & parched lips

So let the forgotten speak from the broken bandages

I first John Toland greet you. You have not heard  
 of "Christianity Not Mysterious"  
 or of "Anagnorisis" or of "Pantheist.com"  
 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 siege  
 Dundys treason & Ulkeris stuffing his pockets.  
 A Catholic first I broke with the elder faith  
 and from my fourteenth year had learned to be  
 not bound in my understanding to any man.

at Leyden, at Oxford from the Bodleian shelves  
 I gathered a sorted pebbles for my sling  
 Launched my first volley, was driven back to Ireland  
 The bishops crying heresy after me.

In Dublin my book was burnt by the common hangmen  
 I fled to England again escaping arrest;

but later in Hanover in Germany,  
 friendly with witty princes, taking my place  
 with wise men seeking in proverbs & great ladies.

At forty I settled in Putney to write open  
 for the blasphemous bishops had stoled the faith of Christ  
 Had covered God with its trappings of tinsel glory  
 and shackled the minds of men & the foolish tricks  
 and crazy artis of a conjuror.

So I strode against them finding my strength a hole  
 in the naked word Christ gave to common men

and not in the pulpit thunders of prelate or priest.

I strode for the Jews that no man should oppress them  
 when ignorant lords grew fond of their livelier wits.

I died in poverty at fifty two  
 still demonstrating truth establishing error  
 and pricking the bubble follies of jampionsmen.

My epitaph defines the part I play'd  
 as "fighter for Truth, assertor of liberty"  
 I ask you to remember in your struggle  
 the side I took.

To think you'll maybe find a hint or gesture  
 in which perhaps I failed, 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 miraculous errors still trouble men  
 that you are not rid of the superstitious mind  
 that freedom goes down a liberty's broken in pieces  
 while men with tongues & hands stand idle by.  
 Yet I took a Larrikin to savagest blades of my day -  
 John Toland, Fighter for Truth Assertor of Liberty.

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 thro' Ulster is a smoky candle

my tale begins as Cromwell's soldier:  
 I fought thro' Scotland til the King went down  
 and cheered the flight of Charles from Worcester field.  
 Then safe in peace because a broken asket  
 settled in Antrim in a Bow Lane shop.  
 To England for new stuffs fell in with friends  
 set first lights' scorch & burned thoughtful home.

The flint was hard against the ore drossed heart.  
 I wrestled back into the face lit up

and the blood warm a eager in the veins  
was gapt at, Gary, as a Quaker pipe  
but won to safety & the free heart's grace.

Antin of Ireland was the place that first  
leerd word aginst the working steeple house  
the oak forbids the life workt out in love  
the clear assertion of the indwelling God.

At Lurgan I converted one old with Penn  
made treaty never broken.  
Then walkt with Fox in an orchard close to pray  
Ulster agen, was driven from Coleraine  
crossed Sperrins into Derry converting some  
Clough Stabane Dungannon & many places  
jail in Armagh: in Mullingar assault  
stocks in Bellmarket: fourteen weeks with knives  
in stench hell's kitchen of a Caron cell  
Derry agen a prison & in Maryboro.

Then sailed with Fox for the Americas  
New England Rhode Island & the Barbadoes  
I unit of this - Fox also. You may need:

I Ireland in the warring years of James  
I stood between the blunderd Protestant  
and insolent Papist. And in William's day  
I stood between the blunderd Catholic

and braggart Protestant. my wife was killed  
my sons a / stood waiting for the rope  
were saved for immortal service.

At seventy six I rode six hundred miles  
speaking the light in fifty English towns  
met Friends each year in London at its Meeting  
and fell asleep when night on eighty six.

The light a Truth I rode for is forgot  
or preacht by different men in another way  
I was for the clear heart & the honest speech  
the soul of any precious as the soul  
of one they call a Monarch. I also stood  
against King's strength & anopance 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 & water, thrust into barns  
bound by no trees. There is no Ulster rock  
but I remember the merciful kiss to my flesh.  
And all your players & dancers in country fairs  
altho ye stand me yet I lov'd your grace  
and only spoke to reveal that grace to you.

When I am now I remember Ulster clearly  
and speak again to Ulster.

Frist, be clear

Then lit with joy and impat with the Christ  
drum loves assaults ad to the barded walls  
et break them down a trumpet in the day  
of honesty in a land of loving neighbors  
for this is a comely land if men were good.

I am forgotten too the eminence  
set in the heavy curtains of my bed  
a marquess eldest son & stippling lord  
born to a little mother by a countess  
and heir in that to years of nervous health  
quick with the threat of swift mortality

I caught my brief life out at twenty six.

I wrote a novel once in six mad weeks  
a pitiful romance of tortured love  
not read now or 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 & John Keats  
Keats with the sleeping 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

<sup>palm}</sup>  
the billets-down, the mesques, the jockey's beer }  
Dive for music & writing, for making life  
rich to the touch a bearing for the many  
who hoveld in the dark without a song.

I caught my faint life out at twenty six  
in Naples tyrant maden, pestilent.

They made a statue of me, set it up  
a stele of bronze by fellow townsman made  
Then decently forgotten. They shifted it  
to clear a corner for a crawling preacher  
who flaunts his bigotry to this very day.  
Loving poetry music & common people  
They hid me away because I was a reproach  
preferring rather the Londoner Henry Cooke  
with his hard face & my weak sensitive face  
Last by the Janine to a little tune.  
They have hid the bronze beneath the gilded dome  
safe in the shadow. Only tourists find it.

In this I beg you remember music a verse  
and the black lives without them. Take a pledge  
not to desist til any Irish child  
has choice of either or some other choice  
to fill his days a nights with majesty.

I was the sickly son of a bigard house,

scion of Tudor robbers & planters of death  
seeking too late to justify the wrong.

They laid my body on the ground I loved  
under the restless trees on the side of a hill  
Now speculators have surrounded me  
with red brick Tudor villas row on row  
the spoils 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 failed  
But always music & art for the common people.

You have heard of me. James Hope of Templepatrick  
a weaver by trade. I was with McCracken at Antrim  
and later with Tom Russell & Robert Emmet.  
I have told the first of this to Doctor Madden  
it's buried in his books. I am here to say  
that what I fought for with my pike a pistol  
and later with my native arms a caisson  
is still unknown.

Some fought for a dreambright Erin  
after a poet's fancy or like a legend  
some for a jentral land of lords a song  
I fought for the best man fought, remember I knew him

not for a dream in the heart or a song on the lips  
but for a country free from little & great  
a country of many peasants owning their acres  
beholder does stiff square a wimping cleric  
<sup>blushing</sup>  
a country ruled by committees without a King  
where every man was equal with every other  
and none was master.

I find peculiar humor  
in being remembered by those who free this place  
from Saxon bondage a land it over to Keltic  
who'd like each man lord & be a Gael.

You'll never see a free Ireland without regard  
for its ownership of land & the strife of classes  
You'll get the first by working thro' the second

When you think of McCracken or Russell or even me  
or gaze at the sudden sun on McArt's fort  
remember that a repeat it meaning it

With that as theory a your plan of action  
my help must end except for this advice.

Work ong with honest men a temperate  
keek weather eye for spies.

They are at it still.  
And for your leaders choose the well tried man  
with no equivocation.

Not Name / Flowering Branch

Book  
Non-Trad Poets USA

26.XI.36 91

The kindly merchants  
set out our ranks until the struggle came  
the fled at ease.

The workers are your Cope.  
Give me a weaver a keep your gentleman  
but avoid whoever drinks or talks too much  
and let these men urge premature action.

Be those your rules. Good surely must befall  
with this for consolation: the result is safe.  
The people will concur as surely as in spring  
the cuckoo must come or it is not spring.

Lyrical: "Let Out a Thrush"

let out a thrush begin  
or color catch my eye  
maybe a spring woke when  
under a reeling sky

and all at once I lose  
mortality's despair  
having so much to choose  
out of the teeming air.

23.XI.36

## Porter

## Sonnet

For years kiss'd figleaf with a secret prayer  
 Th' assault was doubles. Who was here to see?  
 Two thought at least - by me to man the air  
 He stay'd . with scented pipe at twelve a' th'ell.

The left chain broke. Bit blood. A foot was crushed  
 His mind in plaster has not mattered since  
 Encount' in hell his porters hat was burst  
 For dakin's salute or cousin of a prince.

Tini telescott. Brown mumble earock jails  
 The slow boot scraping a the palsied land  
 was kind by sign. The festine never jails.  
 The friendly smile pretends to understand.

Who now on stick joids break a step grow slow  
 where tide rips chime with its undertow.

Wn Paul, Lakeport, CA 8114

23.XI.36

## Nomad

Before he cracked his pony up he stood  
 and flapp'd his arms to wake the frozen blood.  
 I thought of man at plow, or man in yard,  
 teamdriven, carter, when the frost is hard  
 repeating this as men have ever done  
 since shaggy herdsman stay'd beyond Bosun.

23.XI.36

## Earth tiller

Out of a smoky bus with dripping glass  
will to reveal the place I must not pass  
still hot from office & its drowsy steam  
I pull back in a lazy dream,  
a dream of certain values safe & warm  
from street of hunger or season's turn.

The frozen mists beneath my heavy head  
jaggs thru the trailing mists inside my head  
and waking to the frost a lifted eye  
caught mansepe standing stark against the sky  
spade over shoulder.

As I nearer came  
my central heated comfort chilled for shame

How dare I less him muffled and absurd  
who's free & native as a bush or bird?  
Earth wrought in anxious labor brought him forth  
to compensate for fulness of death.

I fear my page advised my flimsy hide  
by sufferance of his charitable spade.  
By what equation can I claim my share  
in frosty'd furrow or November air?

Now w Ulster 1944 Book  
nowhere Poets 1948 23.XI.36  
N.Y. Times 1949

## Frost.

With frost again the thought is clear & wise  
that rain made dismal with a misty despair  
light leaps along the lashes of the eyes.  
a tree is true for its being bare.  
The ~~shades~~ that sag from noon dipping skies  
jolt back to girdle in the dawned air.

So must the world seem keen & very bright  
done whose page is on board of things  
who knows, last summer bush turned autumn,  
no promise in th' inevitable springs  
all swift of shadow down done of light  
the false songs gone & gone the restless ways.

Revision of 1st stanza July 1943

With frost again the thought is clear and wise  
that rain made dismal with a misty despair;  
the raw bleak earth beneath clouds-narrowed skies  
finds new horizons in the naked air.  
dipper leaps along the lashes of the eyes:  
a tree is true for its being bare.

## Hazel

This season of the year  
 for days before & after the children's feast,  
 I fill my pocket with ripe hazel nuts,  
 an act that's somehow mystical & wise :  
 the nuts of knowledge first, or the Salmon gold,  
 then as reminder of a certain link  
 with a nurturing core that must be broken to.

But down in my heart, Cuchullin, young again,  
 drags down a cluster. Demod in fog & light  
 gives a tired joyful & his weary love.

How many Irish crocheting in the woods  
 have tested the strongest knowledge in the world?

## Despondency I

Slow moving in an autumn world of death  
 the last leaf stiff, the dropp'd leaves rotting fast  
 the stalked weed fires yield at their dying breath  
 and the wet earth unfriendly seems a cold  
 the restless mind begins at once to cast  
 the years account a thumb his labor'd gold

I could account as well as any one  
 for the crammed seasons have come laden home  
 with moon gilt petal or grape fat with sun  
 or shapes that once had blared a weary page  
 but now with careful hand's acquaintance come  
 to glow sharp crystal & like chrysophae

I could have written down : By this & this  
 my mind has profit. But by this a loss  
 sum then the total for analysis is  
 that when I trudge in the next year's mist  
 I'll know what wears back what to engross  
 how best to trade the fabrics of my heart.

But somehow in the nature of the sky  
 the cold clouds black against a veining moon  
 the wind alive & crying bitterly  
 this seems completer term than I had thought  
 the menace I foretold from blue of June

is with a dark finality enwrought.

So I will go untroubled, letting slip  
the things that need my hand & keep them mine,  
reserving only love a comradeship,  
a joy in laughter and a restless tongue.  
What else remains at the long year's decline  
of all we sought deliberate being young?

This is the end. Henceforth the mowings loose  
will drift a welter after every gale  
lurch in the doldrums for a moment since  
and then break out into a shuddering sea  
abiding but to crash that will not fail  
the long tides that will sweep us utterly.

## Despondency II

Caught trudging in a mood of querulous fear  
because of world mischance a man betrayed  
by a rough gale's first roadside of the year  
I brooded fiercely on the agonies  
of that equation, till at least dismayed  
I bent with the strong tempest like a tree

The storm has left a naked world of light  
with stark clean shadows on the barren trees  
clear sky of blue wind-curdled & a white  
wet glittering grass-blades thrust from rich black mold  
and pigeons on the tiled ridge at their ease  
safe from the shadow, feather grey and cold.

Mid-autumn's frost. Let the balance tilt  
We do not fear the whipping sleet or snow  
It's electric northern sky awroa gilt  
We have survived beyond the sleeted flood  
What lies at times heart cannot harm us now  
This moment glistens with eternal good.

26.X.36

## Birthday Sonnet-

The years come on with quicker head & bring  
 Tangled cargoes of my restless sense  
 The hours waste blotted from indifference  
 The hours unresolved a gnawing  
 for patterns utterance. Sticky buds of spring,  
 grey greasy wool caught on a rusted fence  
 a jester's bended fellow's eloquence  
 - a boy's first eloquent knotted on a string ...

What shall devise of these a symmetry  
 and what shall give me form a attitude  
 leaving me somehow integral a free  
 to add an unpredicted test or tone  
 yet keep the balance twixt t' uncertain flood  
 and the more cautious but unyielding bone?

26.X.36

## Sonnet

I said in little shamed or reticent  
 how this or that health misty on my mind  
 attain'd fast flourish or gone grey & blind  
 blind what I thought had otherwise been meant  
 Yet each I noted til beach was bent  
 a steady slope by dead land long designed  
 that somehow in its labor I might join  
 it abiding phrase of song a wisdom bent.

So far myself already is achieved  
 a body of responses for a tree  
 a cliff or the first snowfall of the year.

But what word yet the hand must be believed  
 for death or courage or denouement  
 by any dock, clerk, or engineer?

20.X.36

Gulls in a high gale screaming & calling  
 The trees are crying, their branches thin  
 Gulls are rising & crossing & falling  
 trying to pick a hole in the wind:

Leading north to the lake of shelter  
 away from the sea's long tumult of waves  
 leading north from the desolate welter  
 the spume beet ledges, the thundering caves.

I stood aghast at that resolute flying.  
 by wind's worst circumstance disciplined  
 and wonders with what success I was trying  
 to pick my particular hole in the wind.

## Desk

Now for the first time I have a desk  
 plain oak with nine drawers that lock.

I have written on shining tables beside flowers  
 I have torn out a cigaret packet  
 and written on the plain side of its carton  
 I have written on the backs of envelopes and  
 election addresses.

But as against this seeming carelessness  
 I have always copied the verses out  
 in a neat a regular series of exercise books  
 like this  
 frequently revising them in the process.

I remember the summer mornings when I was  
 just a poet  
 awakening with delight  
 and writing on my raised knee in the start sun

Most of all  
 I have written with my leg flung over the arm  
 of a comfortable chair  
 resting its tilted feet on my thigh

I do not make poems on the spot  
 I see a face or a pair of moving hands  
 teasing over a net  
 or another face at a meeting  
 or a tree reminds me of something overheard  
 in the difficult life that moves on the  
 rim of my mind.  
 a peculiar hill  
 a voice over a ledge in angust dusk.

I do not shout home breathless  
 to spill the clearest words on a white page  
 I walk quietly lest  
 talking may be of collective security  
 or what someone says in a book.

It may be days after a week  
 [A poem I made the other day arises up  
 from a memory lying sleeping and mossy  
 for 25 years. And never turned over before]  
 Then I sit down, throw my leg over the  
 arm of the chair  
 and begin to write.

I have a desk now  
 let me apostrophise it

### Desk on your oak

I shall ground my work henceforth  
 Be firm beneath my hand  
 Keep my pen and fingers  
 perpetually aware of growth a change.

Let me find words only  
 for clear songs and sharp sentences

Be soggy and soft under  
 the willowy rhetoric of sands  
 and shade beneath  
 the word unguaranteed

Steadily against me  
 force out the true word, the unerring  
 arrow.

Yet let me not lose in strength  
 the subtlety  
 the delicate overton the whisper  
 the leaf fall, the grass blade floating  
 and the spider under it  
 the color of the birds' eye  
 the curve of the corner of the mouth.

I do not know  
 if together our nests achieve

the lyric of the epoch  
 the perfect anthology piece  
 or even the slender but fragrant  
 passport etcetera.

Perhaps someday someone will  
 store seed packets in those drawers  
 or crack your back  
 with loads of dampstained magazines

I hope that before such a day  
 I write on you the true word  
 the word that takes life by itself and  
 runs away  
 and becomes a part of men's minds  
 imperceptibly forever.

They went forth to Battle

I am weary of Deirdre and Grannie  
 and the high oala of Cuchullin and Fionn

What this island needs  
 is not a new myth or a more remarkable  
 legend  
 but a new shape of living

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

Sarsfield, Tone, McCracken, Connolly & Higgins  
 and the dozen other names that leak by your lips  
 they were spilt from birth.

They went forth to Battle

and now we have

The worst slums in Britain  
 funeral sepsis Censorship  
 the Sweepstakes and the Christen Hunt.

Break the world  
 make and establish a new shape.

Do not talk to me of Denise or even  
of Charlotte Delsay that doting comes

They are with the broken bindings

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

Epitaph for an Ornithologist 29.IX.36

Put me where crows can pick my eyes a feast  
and after rain less worst the bleak bone clean  
let bats or juncos find my skull a rest  
and letch their lung my family herein

Epitaph for a Seafarer 29.IX.36

Back to the earth but not to be awhile  
the rock I loved: mere silt or blowing dust.  
on some cliff face let wind with flinty file  
score me the only epitaph I trust.

### *Geranium tea*

The financial basis of tailors'  
trolley holes must be sought in the  
interpolations of Churchmen and razorblades

Earnings necessarily invalidate  
doctrines of crimson

On one side of the Parthenon are ranged  
lavender arabesques in porphyry  
illustrating the incidence of historical  
gastitis in the legal compilations  
of Rhode Island or the Isle of Rhodes.

Supply <sup>16 1/4</sup> nutmeg Rayholes.

The rhomboid catalog contains  
reference to an ostrich of sugar  
an ibex of platitudes  
a square jacket of brokersmen from  
Lugan  
a cabinet minister  
and an illuminated pantry

From the juxtaposition of ram  
and bushes may be established the consequent  
of molar glaciation

The athletic insolence imposes itself  
in blue drawers on the mandible yellow  
whiskers of Lord Clanwilliam and the  
stotted sex of Robespierre who every  
brigade took a narrow jacket of pink  
screws from his hair as dropt them lightly  
in baroque curves on the hindquarters  
of a Cromwellian camel hired for that  
purpose.

Chimneys deposit large bundles  
of green paper in the nest pockets of  
sanitary inspectors on the first Thursday  
of each afternoon

Drums knock the obsolete snowball  
gradually away

The sixth house of four emits  
helmettiffs at intervals and coils  
of photographic directories. Simultaneously  
the wooden tail of the alibiator peacock  
squeaks  
in a series of lightness and nice

The fortunate time is temetopure  
and gregarious.

Poste Restante?

17. IX. 36.

### October's Child

I watch the stack tilt on the garth fulfills  
rooks in the stubble rooks appear fly lone  
the burst sack drift til half its store is spilled  
the swallows uncut from whence the little hares come,  
and know the secret worth of being born  
when the full can brims up its purple foam  
and clustred haws weigh down the splinters from

I came in the full ripeness of the year  
my mother held me from the lambs first heat  
best bluebell days and blossoming of pear  
the sultry noon of rose + meadowsweet  
over the ridge of summer til she came  
weary to gaze upon the ample wheat  
kindled with poppies to a sudden flame

Then when men's harvests fill the motley barn  
and hope reposing blessed the laden ark  
she brought me whimpering in a twilight morn  
to follow candle in the crowding dark  
and nurst me warm when time was dumb with snow  
and rocked me quiet when the trees were stark  
~~that headed: woke when I began a year ago X~~  
that were the first green things I learned to know  
So the I love the seasons in their turn  
for sake of her that bore me glad this each

when the last leaves are swept a set to burn  
 I touch a magic deeper than my speech  
 There is a strength & richness & an end  
 no other season's fledglings ever reach.  
 The year's fulfillment knows them not as friend

My child, if I stand ever fatter one  
 Let it be born at stripping of the tree  
 in mellow noon of an October sun  
 a well tilled greater of this north country  
 and let the full year tinture every thought  
 not summers pride or springs green argency  
 but thought & action to completion brought.

New West Park  
9/18

R. Bell  
1941

16. IX. 36

## Leaf

O Fall of the leaf! I am tired  
 with this sunset let me be still.  
 The tips of the stubble are fired  
 by the slanted blade of the sun  
 sheeting his plane in the hill

Let me smolder so and be done.

x x x x

The withered leaf tumbles & turns  
 over lazy islands of air  
 more lonely now as it turns  
 than when it was green overhead

Let me draw from antennal despair  
 the strength to be tired without dread

x x x x

The pigeons a dozen or two  
 take a half mile circle of light  
 they are west in the green a blue  
 and delicate gold of the sky

Let me narrow in on my night  
 with that effortless certainty,

x x x x

23.VII.36

## The Wind That Shakes the Barley

I know the wind's play in the ripening grain  
 have watched it rock a head or two of barley  
 when not a blade stirs in the quieted field  
 have seen the dark green tremble over the light  
 and then the gold overrun over the dusty brown  
 its quiet shadows over the tufted stacks

And I have thought of that wind as a woman  
 exulting in fecundity - and strength  
 in issues of life & its continuance  
 til the obvious symbols brake against my joy  
 litter the track with looking lines of fancies

So I love corn a wheat a oats a barley  
 far more than flax a beet potato rips  
 and there is pity in the sneaded turnip

But yesterday as the small rocking train  
 shuttled its gritty way in slanting rain  
 I passed wide fields of corn blown down a wind  
 with tufts still standing like undanted squares  
 against the terrible lances of the night  
 who had swelled what was a look'd army low.

I thought of my symbol of the joyful woman

parturient & rejoicing. It had failed  
 I caught <sup>a</sup> madder metaphor of fear.

The wind in the corn last night was a colt unleashed  
 the wind in the corn last night was a transfix'd stallion  
 who rolls his manes in the softest billows of green

The ripe grain is not only the quiet love  
<sup>fondles</sup>  
 the gentle issues of life & the mother joy  
 for loves not only that or merely that:  
 there is at its core the unquench'd lust  
 the restless slattring at the soft flesh bruised

It's not the tips of sense touch joy or pain  
 they're felt along <sup>body</sup> back crease of professed hand).

19.VII.36

## Bunamangay

## Sonnet

Here where M'Guillen built his God a Louse  
 Below the sandhills at the water's edge  
 Where trout скончал Mary ends in shoal a sedge  
 And the black nun still seeks her blessed spouse  
 Where rodded safely til the last carous  
 The turbulent MacDonells, ledge on ledge  
 Lie rankt within, close by the leening ledge  
 Deep to the sea sleep men anonymous.

In this rich acre brimmed with memories  
 That roof the shattered walls & shuffle down  
 The timeeft steps with chaunted elegies  
 Here where a man stands head with quiet care  
 Still tourists gaze oblivious to renown  
 No golfer's shout is harsh upon the air.

15.VII.36

Fors West Red Cross  
Annual

## Ulster Names

I am in love with the Ulster names,  
 Each clean hard name like a wavemooth stone:  
 Tyrella, Roskeev are wavering flames.  
 The names I mean are Dunlace, (Malone),  
 Brundod, Dunservick, Portglenone.

<sup>names the land</sup>  
 The words of a song shell the heart ja race.  
 I put these words in a little song,  
 and every name is the name of a place.  
 Cladyalliday, Annalong;  
 Clonroot is the townland where I belong.

~~Shell them out to an Englishmen  
 whose ear is dull with the city's roar:  
 Monaghan and Larriban,  
 Doneghadee, and Donegore,  
 Kilwughter, Kilclief, or Doneglmore,~~

~~One if he shone pride himself was born  
 Within the sight of the channels' ships  
 I will counter him: Magherenourne.  
 Sleep that sound with your lazy lips.  
 Hear how the strength into feebleness slips.~~

Even suppose that each name were freed  
 From legends' way a history's nose

Here still would be music in Carrick a rede  
 No man forget its the rock across  
 the track of the Salmon from Isey & Ross.

So keep ye the names of the painters schools,  
 Barbizon smile the Umbrian plain.  
 I dream a day when there quarrelling fools  
 shall <sup>make</sup> out of love for May or Broughshane  
 a book like the book of Hells again.

Let the Lakeland poets of England fade  
 before the long hot summer comes  
 out of the sunset over Knocklayde  
 The clear hard note of the protestant drums  
 wise with the memory of martyrdoms.

On every name will a new Jane fall  
 Of gentleness working its wonder or wrath;  
 Down struck, or more, as Custendall.  
 Raise your shrine where you feel the call  
 I'll have mine by the Grey man's Path.

## Wood

## Sonnet

Not only in the spring's high breaker brimmed  
 but outcast crying in the frosty air  
 the rocktop fir, the pine-tree ragged stare  
 the naked ash-tree like a maiden limb'd  
 the splintered star with moon of harvest rimmed  
 the gaifer breed perpetual autumn's leaf  
 the yew that keeps my jammers in his care  
 frost foliage levin lit, or rain bedimmed:

I have loved these, have made such attitudes  
 such gestures all my mipes of joy  
 find quiet in th' inviolable woods  
 that not all London's terror can destroy  
 attempt to make my hearts hide & these woods  
 word end in oak what willow school'd esay.

L.L.VT. 3<sup>b</sup>  
28.V.

## The Famine

~~Second~~

And then they grubbed roots by the roadside there  
or lay face down in stings.

My grandfather  
was six years old.

His mother caught the fever  
over the halfdoor of her little house  
from a poor starving beggar - a bunch of tea.  
His grandfather who had eaten of the roasted ox  
on Dingle Head near Ross Island took him home  
clad little frostblue fingers before the fire  
and gave him a face to remember for kindness  
and a story to tell home 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 its the chickens be destroyed  
and cows crush nettles on the broken hearts

There is some legend in the history books  
of kindly Britain coming down and  
repealing Cornlaws listening to Bright  
for the sake of hungry Ireland.

This is the fact  
they feed the corn & lower the price of bread

for the thousands toiling in their new gaunt mills  
so that they never need raise their wages.  
There was no thought of us.

Both grain & cattle  
were shift from a starving land to foreign places  
Remember this & add it to the tally.

These prosperous men landstealers landenclosers  
shifters of cattle & grain from a starving country  
death's in their blood. They cannot make to live.  
They inherit death & will it to their children.

I walkt thro' the ragged park of a shifting lord  
the persley man & seed degenerate roses  
the hedges all grass a dock the hedge banks crackt  
the unfleckt margin nibbled by ribbon builders  
planting their redbrick where he shewd the view.  
A name a fortune? I forget his name  
His fortune's burning thoughts of a foolish man  
death will'd handed on. No picture or poem,  
no shape of stone, no testube held to light,  
a coil shock tingling to the tips of sense  
not even a fair name in a peasants' ballad  
or the memory at a show of a comely beast.

They shift both grain & cattle from a land  
where men ran hungry a children cried & died.

30. IV. 36

## Twentieth Century Croon

Which word you choose?  
A sum of money or an ocean cruise.

Does your hair come out  
in the comb. Are you too stout?

Does your golf lack inspiration  
What about your right starvation  
Is your neck thin?

Can you give up smoking

Do you think the church less failed

Are you fond of private joking

Are you ladder brane  
bladder stone & v.s.

Dyspeptic

Want your tonsils septic

Discard that truss

Secure a colored reproduction of the Angelus

Do you always need the folder  
of directions with each packet  
Get used before you're older  
Buy the collar with the jacket

Don't forget the old boy's meeting  
Send your mother birthday greeting  
Art is long a time is fleeting

Tear the motto. lose the ticket  
Drop the butt or burn your pocket  
Are you ladder brane  
Are you ladder brane  
Is your horse your own  
Is your soul your own  
Have you a hope.

Send 4 penny stamps for your horoscope.  
It was she Cleopatra after all

The man will call Tuesday for its receipt  
What man

## Recipes

Heads for seven meatless dinners

Doubles bubbles all the winners

Easy crossword for beginners

Shell is blizzing full of winners

The man will call Tuesday for the empties  
What man  
The man. Tuesday.

Please turn over. See it now play  
Not Tuesday  
make it any other day.

Wist Henry

30. IV. 36

## Swan's Nest

The way I go is by a mere  
with osiers breaking light in green  
where in the autumn of the year  
the nine great floating swans were seen.

But when the pond was frozen, grey,  
and grey the sky - as wing of goose  
stiff-necked, four rose a swum away,  
their parents' home no further use.

With splash of February sun  
when blue rift thro' the latter sky  
I saw two flying after one  
toward where the northern mountains lie.

The two deserted parents then  
unrest by loss & satisfied,  
built up the low round nest again  
on grassbank by the waterside

The weary hen could wing a lead  
as if to sleep away the spring  
the once or twice she rose to spread  
the loving still, but weary wing.

A monk like paid them closer heed  
and studied with what elegance  
the old swan sails thro' rush & reed  
dreaming of nine great floating swans.

20.11.36

To a Floral Display on  
Shakespeare's Birthday

Sonnet

First, daffodils, March ragged, being bold —  
O name them slowly over with delight :  
The sycamore with sticky tufts bedight ;  
The elms' tense twigs unwilling downfold ;  
Gorse mingled on the hill ; the primrose crept  
From snowy corner ; Holly's jagged spike :  
Each with the singing phrase had made it bright  
Immortal music from that throat of gold.

These, tardy lispers, by your memory  
We dedicate the placket neath bleaker skies  
And born of spring more vigorous than time  
For who save you has wrought such poetry  
From what was else most common to men's eyes  
Or turns the bitter waters into wine ?

The Heart of Grief

Brooding on the sorrowful heart of things  
not tragedy that sheers man's highest peak  
not shoeshole sadness pity of cuff or heel  
or the narrowgated lives from dark to dark  
for we can change that when we have the will  
but

The return half the grand certificate  
The faded cutting of the famous man  
The talk of Ladysmith & Spion Kop  
round watchman's brazier in November frost  
The velvet cap with Ternish'd date, the bat  
split at the handle with the rubber perch  
found in the attic under a pile of music  
The rusted buckles on the family album

Brooding on these I sought a phrase for life  
Something to stab out with a muffled thrust

'It's Stendhal sung by a tipsy clerk.'

adelp*hi*

16. III. 36

## Revolution Sonnet-

My name is Revolution. I will speak.  
 You find in me no feathered sentiment.  
 Not pity makes me base upon the weak  
 the tiptoe slope of half a continent;  
 but law that's slept of changelessness & change;  
 the alternation of the upward slope  
 the spiral core of being tant to range  
 back on itself & yet surmounting slope  
 reach levels that deny the limited  
 validity that once was wisest deed;  
 & 'insurgent' (and that thrusts aside the dead  
 the daffodil's negation of the seeds.)

Choose then the little choice that is your own;  
 death's rigid circle, life's inverted cone.

30.1.36

## China

Never for me the agate or the jade  
 the elegance of lacquer or the full  
 brush flourish over silk. Let this horse unafraid  
 on the bamboo above the rushy pool  
 let bronze not rust  
 and clay horse flake a crumble into dust  
 The strange new China will be beautiful.

What of the fly black eyes  
 the dripping sores the terror from the air  
 the famine in the land  
 the flooded acres full of the dull skies  
 the severed hand  
 the headless student lying in the square  
 the crying children sold  
 for rice with rizzard fist-reluctant doled?

Never for me the agate or the jade  
 til the new China on her thick rich earth  
 sings with her jostling millions satisfied.

Then let the land that never tried  
 finger the clay in unfamiliar ways  
 or paint beneath the glaze  
 a mark on silk a poem newly made  
 of brotherhood a justice come donit

(Summer once)

6.7.36

Summer 1915

My father's brother was a friendly man  
 would pull fantastic faces for your smile  
 He'd tilt a strawhat over a merry eye  
 and sing a jaunty song with a slapping cane

He drew bright posters you'd sit & stare a chum  
 and painted trees and fields on Saturdays

He had a wife who kept a certain time  
 of shortbread in a cupboard with no lock.

He had a son who was too small to dig  
 Then war came.

Photos in the newspapers  
 and flags hung on a map.

He went away.

What have I done to make a mad world arise?

31.XII.35

At the Year's End

After - a Christmas staved by no belief  
 a blank adjournment of the year's routine  
 with neither pushing bed nor spinning leaf  
 to trouble the heart with yellow or with green

a new year's eve that is no precipice  
 as once was, hanging on a broken tongue  
 the springhill shock of growing old a wise  
 that only mocks the soberminded young

my growth has alters. I can find no wings  
 jarred by times pebble at the core bare tree  
 and caught there rigid. Nowhere pigeon's wings  
 have left toolt gashes for a child to see.

my rod has struck clear water from the rock  
 when most I needed. But the place conspired  
 a heron stiff by Cleggan loch, a flock  
 of slow crows homing brought the touch desired

a mound of earth, a strange lamp checkered face  
 a voice, a word of old remembered still  
 joy ribbed on canvas altitude of grace  
 broken from stone or black up a hill

12.XI.35

But kiss can not be square to calendar  
 map it may be but as some old seaman's chart  
 with here a dolphin there a scroll, a star  
 and in between the voyage of the heart.

Sonnet 18.XI.35

Now to this harsh acquittal we are come  
 beyond the health a terror of our fears  
 in vain forever to unfeeling ears  
 prosperity may sound reproachful drum  
 intent on shaping speech for what is dumb  
 and out of pain during the end of tears  
 no work in life save forty fighting years  
 each morning poised upon a martyrdom.

Yet not a weighed deliberate act of will  
 but by a fuscous change in heart & thought  
 making a contact signal word & deed  
 so the strict eye a hand that loves its skill  
 there shall arrive the truth that is not taught  
 shall come a strength the baffled people need.

### Swans in the City

Walls by a mill a hoarding on a street  
 a flooded field of tangled tufts lies  
 quiet as mountain day break to the feet  
 of punctual thousands mark times enterprise  
 beyond the wall along the flat bare street.

Here thrust from water crooked alleys sway  
 and gusty winds from chimney or from spire  
 brush thumb on plush a lighter smudge of grey  
 over the dull bed surface of the mine  
 I passing song on bus lift eager eyes  
 to mark each morning with sincere surprise  
 the peace the grace the gentle elegance  
 smooth on the water of nine floating swans

and the joys of personality  
 the little quarrels twist & twirl and me  
 or involutions of daft policies  
 far in the Asian mountains or in Spain  
 twist thought a feeling into meshy skein  
 by the swift benediction of a glance  
 I am reborn each morning the red right  
 to the unaltered wisdom of delight.

For the doorway knock at the engird heart

The tenants' absent wandering apart  
safe off the last sod's edge with those nine swans  
moving beyond life's painful millions  
and their dim troubles, in a secret place  
won somehow back to time's first state of grace

26.IX.35

let me make verse a man might stop to say  
breasting a hill a gazing on a bay  
or a tired mother to a drowsy child  
his small impatient anger reconciled

I grant too that lies I made come into mind  
when a hoarse rebel stammers to his kind  
in smoky loft or in a windy place  
the dreams a torches brightening each face.

Let not my words break insolent a mule  
by lying fashion praised, not understood  
in esoteric phrases void of wit  
like crossword puzzle or a way to knit.

## The Return

The gulls began at daybreak in the mist  
gliding a smooth adagio astern.  
Intent on it they slowly dropt aside,  
then with a hurry flapt back into place.

The scuds, the cormorants, upon each buoy  
sat still aloof averting their long heads,  
reflected stencil of black silhouette.  
I'd taken a bet with myself to find 'em there.

Day brightening & the mist being thin & torn,  
a flock of crows from the woods at Claudeboye  
Least safe a high above on bobbing track

Over the spume a welter of the waves  
I flung my scraps of bread & the screaming started,  
the rival hunger - the pedantic skill,  
disdaining jostle for swoop of dignity;  
always life poised upon the edge of pain.

The quiet that had come upon my spirit  
since at the flat Meuse field I'd found my place  
in the strait film of men's immortal stride  
was cut to flicker. Superimposing shots  
set me at angles with a marvellous sky:  
Rattlin, the Westlight, & the tall black stacks,

The hurtling puffins & the guillemots  
rocketing fast on faces into the surge:  
Dunmanrooey mounted fort of sword grit kings:  
and, cresting the small hill, a heron surprised  
hailing off with offended arrogance;  
The oystercatcher's eggs you found on a ledge  
when its frightened parents cried in a narrowing circle;  
and down by uslet long a sparrowhawk  
striking the gull's breast in a flamed fury.

As I sit here my thought is punctuated  
by the hard rattle of the protestant drums.  
Down in my pulses, in the blood of my people,  
the same drums given calling hill to hill,  
warning, exultation, menace and joy.  
The blow a loom have shaft as, we at least  
remember the torches & the palisades,  
despite the rocky road to the river ford  
and tedious bather of the headland shall.

On each return to Ulster I am resolved.  
I had made resolution to be ready.

A year more back a murtherer than any before;  
just daily use of living out my love,  
existence that before was spent in snatches  
with cold & lonely intervals of self,  
learning a mind, judging a spirit's tension,

sailslowering for the weaker of the wood:  
thrusting one side of an arch to hold low's keystone  
That span is steady. Lay the trowel by.

A long year vibrant with cross trumpet calls  
rally bant a hand a voice for beauty  
a bitter tongue for what I took as fraud  
Voice jogging close at elbow to be uttered  
but brush't aside to whisper into dreams  
To bear a student error or lift a banner  
of mercy & justice in a smoky room  
War imminent & its black wing unashet  
by careless gapers at a showy neon  
but threat so dread for those who watch the sky line  
that you & I dare not delay to give  
what little craft we had to rouse & warn them  
Skirmish with those false prophets bleating gently  
the crazy circle of draft circumstance  
and the oversimplie chart of easy rescue  
an electric day with that high volted rebel  
whales bather the walls of Jolly with his head  
for longer than I've cried upon this planet  
and nervous night beneath its flashing beam  
gathering little pebbles for the sling  
of that little strifling Davis, liberty.  
For sever'd weeks alone of vast endeavor  
raise a beacon for the night bewildered  
who rather love their darkness than your light

Name me the faces rocking in the shadow:  
 the white tired face of the exile German woman  
 behind her gentle words the whip a pistol,  
 working relentless murder. Ole Lopez;  
 the grim goodhumored face of the dramatist  
 whose fancies tried a little the' his cripple,  
 encountered in the rain of an Irish June,  
 yet bright with a type wisdom a gay courage;  
 the rough cut face the strong mouth eloquent  
 of the one major prophet of the north,  
 always a little into vanity,

flattered to silence on his stormy dream;  
 X the bruised face of the boy taken at midnight;  
 the ivory sculpture of the ageless woman,  
 who rallied her sex & freedom & saw it lost,  
 and turned bravely a class & won it back;  
 the hooded features rumble over the feet  
 of Neil the Piper and the grizzled cry

Not one of these but gave us strength & wisdom,  
 wisdom & sympathy, strength & reverence.  
 And when the world's walls trembled bengulf us,  
 we had the strength to face the foisted disaster,  
 and cry salute to the clean stars beyond.

Yet for our maritime & our short arts success  
 we hurried to an island, Rathlin, known if  
 loopt by steel cliffs & circled by the ocean;

islands are well heads of the world's salvation  
 These men at peace, in fields, or driving cattle,  
 women at doors and children from a sty,  
 sleep on the hills, the mare with the stumbling foal,  
 the sick call in the corn, the stacks of sods,  
 the white road with each laugh a bright surprise,  
 Craignacaggan, Mullroger, Ally, Usket,  
 the charlock yellow barley, the warm sweet beans,  
 and the perpetual crying of the birds,  
 brought back clear joy a merry sanity

Not once a social conscience troubled us.  
 leaning on rocks, or perch precarions  
 on the stone walls between bare field & field,  
 we let the free heart flutter til it forms,  
 and near the sun, a happy stay of light

So we decided what our days must mean,  
 sustenance of sense a steady growth to ripeness,  
 hands, eyes & arts bound slave to poetry;  
 the briefest pain to be the oyster's grit.

This then decided, fresh in a salty squalor,  
 we tacked for home & cast small ragged clouds.

But in the city of our dreadful night  
 men fought with men because of a slotterdray,

a history remembered wrongly

In the streets

crowds shouted the stale shibboleths of hate,  
drew from them midst the strangers & a creed,  
and set the little flame flickering in the curtain.

So we were thrust back out of the fair of light  
into the flickering gloom.

The warded arts

plays on the broken bottles of despair,  
struck the tincans of helpless misery,  
and poising was smothered by the drums.

Brief, for a moment, we grasp the hem of Peace

Along the minor roads by the trees

The tansy's golden buttons & the shells  
of a new mollusk tilted the bounding heart  
back to the track of transient permanence.

There too, a pile of corn or heavy sheep,  
brown gold against blue shadow of green tree,  
stabilized the shifting pattern of belief.

But the old battles still <sup>were</sup> left unknown:  
new driven from their homes to beg for shelter  
or seize it.

Bragg'd authority insolent,  
saw insolent tongue or tilt of bulging pocket

What hope, we thought then, for the poor? people,  
what hope for our desire to bring them life,  
abundant life; just for the body's need,  
then for the heart?

The broader field of time  
brought bushy concern for men. The leagues <sup>delay,</sup>  
the bullfrog leader & the bearded king,  
widening to a net to mesh the world,  
narrowing to a personal decision,  
that must be made to keep a score of self  
not flashing off at wheelwhirl of event.

I remembered one who went to die in France,  
leaving the war & wishing only to faint,  
but dreading more the pointed jibe & gibe,  
and what his son might think when he had grown.

Remembered too, that <sup>the</sup> left hand with brush,  
glad to slosh filth & human excrement,  
rather than crack his flees in a frosty trench,  
& have his cold sensitive wrists scrub bare with suspense.

Then when to Bristol, town of Clatterton.  
I went alone, intent upon my blade;  
Camp followers o' the wayward feet of men,  
hoarder of trifles scattered by the road,  
of things well made or broken or half made,  
strainer of cinders, winnower of dust,

preserver of the lands, keeper of names,  
lucky of time, ostler of the Apocalypse;  
suddenly there descended over me  
sense of the instant's emergence into time,  
my flight no more or less on the rims of space  
than the busy features of Cabot after a son  
lading the little vessel for adventure  
ruling their course & kicking off the crew,  
George Fox's marriage, Wesley's earnest speech,  
Burke's rhetoric or the dreams of a western heathen  
blueprinted by Bob Somley & his friends.

I walked the streets aware of older streets  
before the black glass & the chromium  
Corn Street, Wine Street, Red Lodge, Christmas Steps  
Paragon Terrace built with the price of slaves  
and the famous gothic of St. Mary Redcliffe.

And when chance sent me jolted to the south  
over the Mendip hills by Cheddar Gorge  
Westover Weathay crossing the river Brue  
the thing was plainer. Life was eternal life:  
the windfalls littered in the tufted grass  
the bigger apples nestled in a leaf  
men milking in the meadows, tawny roads  
red roofs of tiles, stacks thatched with yellow straw  
life was eternal involving every instant  
Change creed or state: apples of Somerset

make alea to be drunk by living men

At Mearns in a windwhiff-field as flat as bog  
(My Antim eye had noted. So it proved)  
There had been dug a magic hole thro time  
revealing a crisscross raft of oak & alder  
and silver birch with the bark not rotted yet  
where men had wrought a song before Christ's birth  
the nail scard pot, bone comb, smoothing of jet  
the shattered blade the amber beads the bones  
the baked clay hearth the bars of hammer'd iron  
(A cliff flint's edge can strike a clever light  
Then any hilted tables taft report)

Man has gone on, endures the incidence  
of Rome & Caesar, but to see the end  
of wood a crucifixion Thor & Moloch  
if not man individual with these faces  
jaws set so, brows this angle, eyes this color,  
man has gone on essential man the Maker  
the double man destroyer in his blood  
slashing the wood a leaping hills of sap  
smearing a plain with slums & firing the whin  
yet out of his nature making something lovely  
a bronze blade meant to kill but left precise  
Always the touch of immortality  
when the things of death; the mark of life  
on things with else no secondary meaning

For it is not the wars that we remember  
but the chiselled face, the brooch, the silver bangle  
the temple and the sonnet: these are man

And knowing this I thought of the things I can do:  
I knew my choice was the choice of life or good:  
to men still choose the way of death a evil  
life in them works denial of their waste  
to the perfect economy of art,  
cleaves thus their chaos with a feathered joy  
a faith now rendered standands for may leave  
a symbol life's the richer for a gesture  
recovers that may add another sense.

I saw how the two engines of my thought  
and being spite the clogging grease of self  
beat in the right direction  
First positive action gearing the destroyer  
crushing the rocks for basis digging clear  
the level left for justice the hard way  
for mercy: tentative effort following  
of sheer creation out of my sense fed scope  
leaving the things I love no poorer for  
my loving them or adding where I can  
my touch of life of life articulate  
thus not a particular focus of memories  
so at the ship's stern as I feel its gills

appraising each swift arabesque of hunger  
I grew aware of the conflict of my being  
the interplay of memory a thought  
as having the dialectic in my sinews  
was eager for the resolving synthesis

I wrote these words out alwhile recognising  
the shifting lights I mist in definition  
yet some the jumbling pattern was not worthless  
that I or you in dark days coming after  
might not despair because of the uncharted  
but more at bidding of this uncomely compass  
No more than a needle stuck in a straw  
and floating in a shaking bowl of water

7.9.35

## Autumn

Year's equilibrium, the balance stick  
 hoist moment on the fulcrum of the heart  
 blue flash split second of Kingfisher dart  
 tree growing thro' the mirror more than tree  
 Cross road of bone & spirit growth a death  
 tides turn the crested whisher of the sea  
 the hammer lifted the intaken breath

Let me this moment stand this autumn day  
 before a leaf falls the they tremble brown  
 spirit & stiff twigs the life run out of them  
 the worlds spin down a spring is close at hand  
 earthunderside the prophecy condemn  
 now is forever. There is nothing more  
 can be so more. Just as there never was

Heart of the Whirlwind let the tempest roar  
 a all flesh fail & written up as grass

Heart of the Whirlwind here forever safe  
 truth touch & tasted there shall always be  
 a flame & watch if it turn blue or red

O Christ how we O Christ the broken bread.

## Certificate "A"

The complicated texture of escape

Tonight in Arthur Street a woman stands  
 last's huxter with the sore mouth painted red

Let's rhetoric so counter it with prose  
 the ragged crooner pockets the last penny,  
 puts on his cap.

The last queen shuffles in.

We sit on cushioned seats at one and six  
 We sit on cushioned seats at half a crown.

The white sheet glitters at the villain's face  
 is twenty feet from ear dear  
 a two yard work a jive foot smear  
 the camera thrusts him flat back in his place.

The fatuous lady's on her satin bed  
 the women feel skin skin against the sheer  
 her boudoir bosom moves we sit a gale

The small mechanic with the green wind rails  
 races & stretch his legs beside the warmth  
 the warm room girl beside him sinks beneath  
 the hot caress of Mengo's crooked mouth

We say: O Look! the patterns exquisite  
or when a wheel cuts in . the master Pabst.

I say: I hope the worldizer won't play  
The critic in the Quarterly reviewed  
But is there no Walt Disney after this  
But is there no Walt Disney after this

The animated photographs of kings  
and bouter princes walking with their swords  
not tipping them : for they are trained to walk  
excite our mirth . We mock them . Not too long  
The clerk beholds us tells at least two rows  
he saw the King's bare knees at summer camp  
The dark man sitting next me glares at us  
I tap his ankle neatly going out

And at this moment - lunges like a cat  
heads mewling on the yardwalls of the town

We sit on cushioned seats at half a crown .

### Sonnet

This angry self dismayed by fly a leaf  
cold in the dawn a nervous in a crowd  
seeking by day the shortest way from grief  
and only stood in corner safely proud  
this little self out of its narrowness  
would trust warm eager hearts of fellowship  
raise jupers not to bairam but to bless  
and more deft-knife in school a loving grip.

Bridge me the gap then . Let the charge come this  
Power singing down the channel of my mind  
may reach crescendo spite in narrow slice  
drive wheel core rock light sidewalks broad a red  
Now at springtickle only you will find  
small stones not even clift for clumsy use

## Aquarium

Let wonder leave us for another place,  
 trees bns for nurture of themselves alone:  
 be no rock split or turned: let stone be stone  
 black with the hearty fires of a beaten race

Poised in the sunlit graver of the case  
 the smooth fish makes the jet of troubled bone  
 turns tail on twitching features not its own  
 and moves expert on any plane of grace.

Learn that if it be possible and try  
 new scopes of motion, death is in the old  
 no feathers rescues trumpet from the sky  
 so truth remains so having once been told

This' tides of being swing unhurriedly  
 & strike, who knows, sunk shaft of shattered gold

## Sonnet

Back to task impatient with insist  
 the woven stargaze the use rich phrase  
 the phial distillation of bright days  
 put by the banner a unclench the fist  
 let pigeon loose a moment on your wrist  
 or calf palm nuzzle this a <sup>beday</sup> leafy place  
 pluck clove, a flying flat above the race  
 watch stickleback's nest tactic curve a twist

You then shall have the craft & the thought to slay  
 and may be give a tree remembered name  
 at any rate grow old a riper wise  
 a failing stat if this be brief escape  
 back to the stir you shall not waste your blame  
 on what's less sense than dance of dragonflies.

## Sonnet

19.XI.34

## Creation

A spinning cloud of luminous mist  
 a jagged flash of a bursting cell  
 Tall Helen's body, Lenin's fist,  
 Caruso's throat, Da Vinci's wrist,  
 a spirocete or a hawthorn smell

measles strung on the rusting wire  
 tubercular baby crying for food  
 a calving cow in a draughty byre  
 the camel's dung of an Arab's fire  
 a sick wolf slinking into the wood.

I make this mark on a flimsy page  
 and know not when or where it will end  
 crinkle a yellow a dusty age  
 or fuddle to the state of a Savin's rape  
 light-fingered wife of a merry friend.

## The Ninepenny Fiddle

Is this the Ninepenny fiddle 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 fiddle that I bought?

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

O what were the nine pennies that I gave

### Note on Agriculture

The little fields are our defence  
against an age of competence

These are my hills & I am known  
to every tossing wish of air  
& every gull adversely blown  
and rocking tree broad thick or bare  
These are my hills & I am known  
as comrade to each stream & stone

These are my hills. I ask no rent  
of stubborn clod or naked tree  
I only go the way he went  
who once was wise a kind to me  
These were his hills I make them mine  
by magic of his rod & sign.

### Rivers of Ulster

The Roe, the Bush, the Lagan, & the Bann,  
O Pharpar & Abana of my dreams!  
O brown with leat! O salmon calling streams  
you lay soft comfort to road weary man.  
I lie <sup>in</sup> ~~stood~~ aloft on bridge or cliff to scan  
<sup>nine hundred</sup>  
more famous rivers crested rich with themes  
dead kings and poets gave til fancy gleams  
like some high gilded <sup>{</sup>galleys <sup>tiremen</sup>} Tyrian.

Ameed & overwhelmed by that array  
lost a sharper in a world remote  
Lie shut my eyes & turn my face away  
To gain the compass point to guide my boat  
to anchor safe in shallows or to float  
with the six mile water slowly to Lough Neagh

## Mament

Let us mourn for the lantern broken  
 let us cry for the high dream lost  
 Cuchullin is dead - and never will waken  
 We have no craft to break his rest.

Patric walks with the deer no longer  
 rewards 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 for awhile in the sunset glimmer  
 streaks of silver over black of the peat  
 Not far now was the spring or the summer  
 Autumn is early. The stacks are wet

Hills that shook near the heroes' passing  
 rocks that splintered the flying spear  
 swallows and starlings are crossing & crossing  
 but the raven returns as more

Brief, for a moment, brief & ungainly  
 a man or two of a sleek race  
 caught to gesture and beauty only  
 to find the shadow lost in the grass

There was Hope McCracken the others

scrabbled in dark for the fallen flag  
 but the darkness gathers and gathers  
 streaks of silver over the bog.

30.10.34

## Crisis

The rebel shamed me with his steady eye  
 The flat blunt phrase stabbed sheer beneath my tongue  
 I swayed a moment, reeling in my mind  
 saw telescope in second bitter years  
 misunderstanding again, physical pain  
 my world flung to the winds for rankless people

Then sickened by my fear, hysterical  
 I caught a sentence counter'd his cold blade  
 right happily & saw my books & pictures  
 take quiet places again about my heart  
 secure for love a talk & poetry

28.11.34

## Fishing Boats at Peel

No more than elbow's height by him I stood,  
 my sunburnt father with wind finger'd hair,  
 while a great sea rose to its golden flood  
 and hoist a moment here.

The setting sun behind the castle wall  
 made bronze a gold of weather chiseld stone;  
 agenst the grey the steep of nests was tall,  
 the hoisting sails outblow.

Then one by one the nooniings cast away  
 the brown boats steadied out into the gold  
 with bobbing bows that lifted yellow spray  
 as the great ebbwars rolled.

We stood until in the red twilight glow  
 dark shapes of sail were lost into the west  
 where our own Irish hills as low ago  
 had lookt their loveliest.

I did not know then what I gaff to see  
 would be a storied memory of the past  
 ere yet the years had broken over me  
 and swampt my pennond mast

But now I know to look on everything  
as tho before tomorrow's sun will rise  
it may, for all its happiness or sting,  
be taken from our eyes.

## Peaks of Love

12. IV. 34

I had grown sorrowful at the thought of love  
and the magnificent heights enjoyed thereof.  
Places that took on light & radiance  
because of a gesture of hand or a glance  
and have a meaning somewhere safe in time  
with more than the stability of time  
more of the stuff abiding than a stone  
carved into values in dim Babylon  
while I must go my miserable way  
upset against the waning light of day  
and lying bound by shadows in the night  
who stood with you on such a height  
and there fat joy that somewhere out of space  
still rings its ripples of delight and grace  
Then proud with love's old lifting of the least  
I shed my sorrow, for I saw my bark  
in joy was all continuing a sure  
so long as segment seasons must endure:  
for our first peaks of love thus scald & won  
are not mere chemic clay or crumbling stone  
but bright smooth foot hills of the spirits sprung  
shadowed alone by an unfigured wing  
as steep before us rises still to stride  
to summer's tree thick flowering mountainside  
and there beyond the sober slopes unfold  
of rich autumnal peace of bronze & gold  
and farther west against the broad moon's cheek  
love's winter ages crest, life's ultimate peak

20. III. 34

## Sonnet

Walk slowly in the sunlight while you can  
 draw down the narrowing streams of life a bower  
 for surely what gives vigor to a flower  
 must be of nature to the least of man  
 Walk slowly, do not <sup>break</sup> the pulsing plan  
 with zeal of thought. Give growth unshattered low  
 from spring's keen incidence to autumn's down  
 hearkt in a ripening ray's unburned stem.

Too soon the goads will sound. The hollowing clacks  
 shake lower as a steeple over all the land  
 and rancors hasten scatter the slow flacks  
 or student with glove insulated hand  
 score the green sunlit fields at flasht command  
 with screeching steel or roar of blasted rocks

28. II. 34

## Peter's Mother

I am a woman with a forgotten name  
 mother of Simon a Andrew I am known  
 by the reflected light they shed on me . . .  
 a common woman without vanity  
 nor like John's mother <sup>break</sup> wheeling for a throne  
 for her beloved sons . . . I have no name  
 Yet in humility am nearer to  
 the customary time life turns his  
 for faithful soul a body I never knew  
 the searching embrace of sense Gabriel  
 was wed a bedded with a fisherman  
 watch him put out from Galilean shore  
 his sons beside him waving little hands  
 and later shaded eyes at cloudy sunset  
 when he a they oared out a bigger boat  
 No other song than my own ever troubled me  
 And yet I do not judge her her great day  
 when that slim lad rode thro' the singing crowd  
 for if I meet the terrible ecstasy  
 I miss't the breaking heart. For when their world  
 their little world of love a prophecy  
 was crumpled like a piece of dirty cloth  
 they came back crying to the tressled house  
 by shore familiar and were comforted  
 with buttermilk a fresh baked griddle bread.

27.II.34

## Premature Epitaph

I am a pink & ribbony jellyfish  
stranded on this particular shore of time  
prodded by stick nosed over by wet dog  
jagged pains peck by darting beak of gull.

At each touch I exude a squirt of ink

Am happiest if the little dirty yet  
smear salt upon me a tang of home.

For with sun high wind gritty hopes but faint  
the roaring didn't reach when next he comes  
and I shall grab a blubbery last alone.

17.I.34

## Chance : a Lyric

All unexpected things : -  
a face, the glance of an eye,  
the flash of sun on sudden wings,  
and thin rain falling from a clear sky,  
whatever is strange,  
unpredicted, come without drums,  
birds heart dare hope in the chances of change  
when death's grey moment comes.

Adelphi

23. XI. 33

## Prelude to an Ode for Barnum

So to the tented ground where showmen come  
on festive eve I wandered dismally  
saw rusty coated Barker with a drum  
and heard the dreary burden of his cry.

Then under canvas flat that hid the sky  
but let the winds four little brothers in  
I gat' at freaks a monsters strange as sin

The Human Seal who balanc'd on his nose  
a paper spell a jugg'ld ball a stick  
The Taboo'd lady with too little clothes  
The Spotted lady sure to make you sick  
The Incharubber Man whose only trick  
was pulling up the skin from his jingly chest  
and La Belle Eve Miss Blackpool fully dress'd.

The stench of shawls & dirty bodies round  
the stale tobacco & the blue thick air  
the spittle slippery puddles on the ground  
confined to fill my belly with despair  
so staggering out a round I knew not where  
I came upon a sideshow - went in  
& gat' at freaks a monsters strange as sin.

The Gracer with his jipers charged to cheer  
the Boxing Bishop with short talks to men

The Politician's barefact policies  
that bronco'd up a billow'd down open  
The Bearded Bunker snarling in his den  
The Spotted Spaniard who 3 times a week  
sells submarines a lepto Turk a Greek

The Smallest Whiskey drinker on the Earth  
The Tallest Biblereader in Brazil  
The only Nazi who has given birth  
& babies who saluted light in Heil  
The Bankrupt Yankee who once bought the Hill  
called Calvary: in transit lost were broken  
and there's no cross or Christ in all Hoboken.

The Team of Fasting Men who sit upon  
a pile of loaves a die by dull degrees  
This was perhaps the Greatest Piece of Fun  
the four Protectors nearly bettered these  
who building Tarffwalls on bleeding knees  
stopt now a ten to notice with a sigh  
birds bees & clouds float taxless thro the sky.

The Greatest Thrill for half a Century  
was where a young man knelt & laid him down  
for tank to crush shell mesh & fire to play  
till there was nothing left save dust of bone  
Then at a given signal with a gun  
another lad with glory on his face

stept from the crowd & knelt in the same place.

So neat the action & so humorous  
 The sick performance from the Golden Band  
 That blared above the racket & the jass  
 To well ground Dutchman with fat jewelled hand  
 who sold the Music Tanks a sound to land  
 The Show was built on / crept to the door  
 and taught a caught until my eyes were sore.



*No more*

### Dairdre

I would have her go to school  
 at the cracked mountain pool  
 Learn the best arithmetic  
 with twelve pebbles and a stick  
 know by climbing hill or tree  
 the textures of geography  
 master grammar's hardest word  
 in the deaf phrases of a bird  
 know a splash stone's ordering rings  
 more account than rings a king's  
 and a bobbing scut in sight  
 more than all the verse man write  
 love rock's edges: and in frost  
 find the pattern I have lost

Then her body disciplined  
 by the sweet rigors of the wind  
 Taught by water ice before  
 what is possible desire  
 Taught by water fire & ice  
 went of thought the only rice  
 may she leave the oldest school  
 happy, strong & beautiful.

7.X.34

## Salute 18th Newly Born

O little child altho my angry voice  
 sounds only as a blurred discordant noise  
 in ears that have unpealed yester eve  
 yet I salute you, for you too will share  
 in all the desperate delights of air  
 that rock me on this planet. You'll achieve  
 to grief that shakes the heart up & the joys  
 keen at the signal, ere the course is run  
 forgotten in the leave & tip of breath  
 when recall'd when the tense cord is won  
 a half remembered in the clinch of death.

You'll learn the comfortable touch of wood  
 kindly as cradle table board or bed  
 & intimate as stick or welcome gate  
 & stars will greet you half misundertood  
 flint by your knees but walls about your head  
 a landmark with the heart confederate.  
 Water is friendly too but not so near  
 will play you false & batter on your heart  
 waf't in your vessel & the banner'd pier  
 or leave you bea't. Gay singing brooks will start  
 clear rhythms within your mind that suddenly  
 smil a ae last against a rotten tree;  
 or lish into the ripples and are gone . . .

Both air & fire hot flying element  
 will be imparted in the reckoning  
 bear up a dash the sunward soaring wing  
 revive or burn soft the how or thid wide rent  
 blow bitterly & whistle insolent.

And yet these are not life's most pitiful  
 There's the handcraft-blearn the skill down  
 the cleaving spirit set to shape & school  
 a broken ere the tournament begin.

There's hope that's shattered by a foolish word  
 a happiness standing in a flesh  
 that circles space & crumbles into ash  
 the meteor the instant sunstruck bird  
 the leaping salmon ending in a splash.

There's death in harvest, a then's death in spring  
 chance snatched at proving useless a deceit  
 with just a pistol shoulder in the street  
 and pistol in the alley. shrunken heart  
 returns to at the end of wandering  
 fat days of glad & laggard years of dearth

O little sister I have said too much  
 here mated my own sorrow & my rope  
 last thought of your bright eyes, your fingers clutch  
 in large sweaty hands on the ape.

Were I to express a wish or a command  
that you should hear a hearing might obey  
a comfort of the best I understand  
this is the troubled question I would say:

If you want light the candle still must burn  
on this mad planet that's lyes ent a tomb  
where time's too short & there's too much to learn.

Creep back into the comfortable womb.

For My Wife.

21-28.1X  
a 12.X. } 33

### Tristan : The Lay of the Goatleaf

As the year turns a autumn's anxious care  
loads creaking wagon tho' the woodland bare  
tis my delight on windless eves to stride  
when I meet broods upon the country side  
the stacks, the sheaves, the uncut acres wide  
eve-misted meadows, lanes leaf carpeted  
with sorrowful old stories in my head  
of lovers unvictorious and dead

For they have died in eagerness of spring  
or come to die after slow wayfaring  
on summer's crest. But time must tremble on  
their passion's flaggs before the frosty dawn  
I therefore seek to fix my fancy bright  
above the burl a tumult of the night  
and gain me peace a rest from vex'd thought  
that we this love must into grief be brought  
as tho' the salt of sorrow must have place  
in passion. That the world gapes at & praises  
For surely there was beauty in some face  
that liv'd with love in no rime garnish phrases  
and men we never knew who dwelt may be  
in Helen's town or by the Cretan sea  
knew love's bright metal unassold of rust  
so happy seasons ere they came to dust  
and left no bitter music in the wind

So I gain solace telling slowly over  
 some patinated story of a lover  
 most alien to me who laid a girl  
 with not-a (single) feature, or a curl  
 resembling yours and how they came to die  
 because fate shaft the play implacably  
 and I rejoice in that we two are not  
 starcross'd & meslt in pitiable plot  
 but follow paths where <sup>no</sup> high tempers storm  
 and keep to valley meadows safe & warm.

X Then let me <sup>bind</sup> ease this moment with a song  
 not beacond black with any embers wrong  
 tho' that fell later and they both are laid  
 These famous lovers in the seagreen shade

When the proud Mark beginneth thus the tale  
 leaves Tristan laid the dreamy-bladed pale  
 dear lady I salt he had brought to be  
 King's wife a consort from the Irish sea.  
 He dredging passion that might work them woe  
 bid this, his sister's youngling, turn from them & go  
 to Allemaine may be or Prince or France  
 where there were deeds enough to dare his lance  
 and call his blade & succor, where he might  
 become a famous captain of the field  
 or lastly fall in some avoided plain  
 where one word neek his quality in vain.

Young Tristan bowed before the King's command  
 and sought her lover in his cloud dim land  
 but love with eagle feet fled after him  
 and followed followed to the seas gold rim  
 calling him back calling him over & over  
 to Lyonesse to spring the bay a clover  
 the wind & the young corn a storm his  
 the summer evenings when his lady's kiss  
 burnt its red rose upon his pallid cheek  
 and brimmed with love's old acts he dare not speak

Beloved Heart your beauty is no less  
 than that wove sculptured queen's in Lyonesse  
 You are as skild in fancy as as wise  
 as Maeve or Grainne'. Your far traveled eyes  
 have mastered shapes a fantasies beyond  
 the narrow shores to which this legend's bound  
 and yet your wits as gentle & intense  
 as any legendary innocence  
 and your bright image has so mastered me  
 that the the crisp leaves drift a flicker from the tree  
 I tread the springy hillsides of delight  
 where first I strode with Love.

I darkling night  
 I toss & wake because your image there  
 stands naked laughing with moon fingers hair

So surely were you caught from me by fate

and set in dream dim island desolate  
 I wond go out to seek you never rest  
 til liq on brow a weary breast on breast  
 bring back the rapture of our eager spring

Your days have had their leagues of wandering -  
 Your days alone : and yet no burden fool  
 bonds slave to desk at counter or in school  
 I've had my luck , escatt the dismal bell  
 of teaching halfstard message boys to spell  
 or monting dubious history to a cont-  
 whose fatter fortunes in dilated stout  
 need never do my spirit violence  
 by weipping tea or pulling sticky fence -  
 My best luck's you -

X But now no more of this  
 The story's Tristans .. Tristans .. only his .

When Tristán had once more in Lyonesse  
 he wore the habit & the ragged dress  
 of one who was a laborer (est he shoud  
 be noted of the King's high brotherhood)  
 and spoken of in court by clumsy folk  
 where Mark or finding that his order broke  
 shoud bind or stay .

And in remembred glade  
 the young man hided , of the sun afraid  
 and only moving for it atere for bread

177  
 and needed victual to some woodman's sled  
 where his poor raiment & his gentle mien  
 drew back the slot bolts .

Spring was young & green  
 on hill & brake . The country side was gay  
 and deckt her freshest for the Easter day  
 when the King's Son of Heaven shoud arise  
 from wet black earth to comfortable skies  
 and his new sing for joy that death was slain  
 and gone the iron bondage of Horain  
 the streets' white & the anger of the storm

The word was noise in cottage & in farm  
 that Mark & his high company shoud come  
 with drawn a flag to his tall castell home  
 here & make worship for the season's grace  
 Then Tristán deemed she too at gentler pace  
 would follow with her fairer retinue .  
 So seeking out the bridle path he knew  
 the soft foot rather than the King's high way  
 where mighty harches lit a greener day  
 he cut his mane when a sally went  
 and raised it in the grasses just beyond  
 the hoof mark rats where her keen eye shoud mark  
 the Lacie's letters . Since the way was dark  
 he bound a trail of honey suckle bright  
 though it flower yet where winds drift & light  
 wind set away the willow & comfet

his lady's page to question a to dwell

When the broad Mark rode by with banners open  
young Tristan stole apart a hid a near  
the woodland way. and in a hour was 'ware  
of bolt other menders lessing there

Breath held a clenched fist straining white & knuckled  
till nodding palfrey struck the honey suckle  
he stirs not in his breath rigid agony  
till moving gaze found rest in tangled tree

We too have gone down little roads in spring  
from Shangford inland slowly, motorcup  
have stoppt while you stretch up to cut a take  
the flowered goatleaf. I have lifted you  
beyond the scatter of thorn for blossom's sake  
this shower of leafy rain or early dew  
and you have filled the car with golden whin  
one night in April - let me not begin  
for all your days with growing things are bright  
till even ivy has its cool delight.

When Isolt saw the corner name she bade  
the company ride on save Branwen, maid  
and close heart's sister, t' whom she showed the sign  
and shake: This love is some deal fault o' thine  
so thou must bear the danger share with me  
the troubled secret's chill anxiety.

Go seek him out be surely bides a near  
and bid him greet me. Bring him bring him here  
The knight was found & brought other with ease  
and for awhile love caught beneath the trees.

So that dear spring while still at Tintagel  
King Mark & his gay fellowship did dwell  
the lovers had their stolen brief delight.

The love hath more than any captain's might  
their parting sped upon them: and the later tale  
is black with sorrow for a fateful sail  
bore him across the least dividing sea  
to new Isolt in a new country.

It is not here to speak of that. But one  
made a sweet ballad in the years agone  
of that short snatch of joy vouchsafed to them  
as a gay thread embroidered round the hem  
of a dark robe of pity. I have sung  
this ballad in our unmeless English tongue  
and set for love's own sake & my delight  
my story close to Tristan. That you might  
not deem me childish to engage my art  
on an old legend distant from your heart  
for all things uncomely I think or do  
have scope or purpose none save love of you.

20.IX.33

Stone builds its wall of China, towers its Rome  
 but touch of wood is friendly sign of home  
 cradles it with a bower we come to die  
 staves off clay's traffic & the charge of sky.

Sonnet

14.IX.33

Our love is field in memorable things  
 not the mad passions flaring a soon dead  
 but quiet joy that weaves an endless thread  
 dear moments rich with wisdom's traffickings -  
 Howbeit, say, in sunset when a lost lark sings  
 the moon thro' Digswell trees that rises red  
 to torch the sheaves: reeds arching overhead  
 stars perch'd on rippling. dawnhill star of wings

A thousand more whereof we share the life  
 given by old forgotten happy men  
 who knew the craft of chisel & of knife  
 nurtured on these own love gives back again  
 must give - how we not felt it in the blood  
 new gentleness to stone new strength to wood.

Aclæon

Sonnet

as that poor hunter stalking unaware  
 came suddenly on Diana in a pool  
 where dripping branches kept the sunlight cool  
 and shook gold fingers in the crystal air  
 abeyance by wonders surfeit hardly dare  
 gaze on the shining body beautiful  
 but straightway must cry out lightblinded fool  
 til the brown goddess turned a saw him there

I finding you unthought of - like to him  
 who for his sacrifice was driven away  
 from terror flying as from forest fire  
 Thro' sunny gaps, dark thickets green a dim  
 I have been followed followed night a day  
 by the lone baying tongues of my desire.

30.VI.33

## Thirst-

And I have also journeys here  
 Have gypsied always east & south  
 by dribbled wine by Flemish beer  
 The old man's just across his mouth

by water brought in jolting cart  
 in days of drought by feet brown  
 deep streams that split a hill apart  
 by fountains in a sunny town

by cupped hands dipping to twist  
 by waterspiders in the well  
 by mountain saddle lost in mist  
 by cocoa in a cheap hotel

by sulky brooks on hot dry stones  
 by ferns that overhang a pool  
 by rockspings no one names or owns  
 and covers when the tide is full

by tea from golden knuckled hand  
 of black silk lady in the gloom  
 by coffee from a coffee stand  
 by pottings glass in smoky room

But where shall drink at travels' end  
 in tumbled tavern or hostel new  
 wait what if any enemy friend  
 O how will taste its quiet view?

14.VI.33

## Pathetic Fallacy

## Sonnet

I have known men who carried to the end  
 as shining moment in their dusty years  
 a sea spread out just round a white road's bend  
 or concrete crying thro' the moon's bright spears  
 a tree that tapped the window or a field  
 rich with red nettle a the flowering horn  
 a flight of pipers when the churchbell pealed  
 a field of clover or a field of corn

Am I then foolish that I put a vine  
 Even that's denoted here that I have known  
 because the tedious fashion of the time  
 rates steel a concrete over leaf a bone  
 selects for praise from sunny countryside  
 a Langair's shadow or a pylons stride.

## Lyric: Refusal

14. VI. 33.

I cannot, such the craft that I have learned  
 the masters follow, quiet candles burn  
 make melody of Marx & Dylan pride  
 so traets will not turn aside  
 letting the lark go by without a song  
 because the city squares are still with woe

Let those who will pen stiff steelputted verse  
 make ampare lyrics & adjust their gears  
 with oily fist a greasy overall  
 the sea a cliff a gannet's call  
 still seen done more work  
 my brief attention on this cooling earth

## Impenitence

I have taken every spring  
 as insistent hint & sing  
 and the summer's warm delay  
 erode its ly ric day by day  
 but for all my diligence  
 they have brought me meagre peace  
 weary hand & drowsy brain  
 sought for sympathy in vain  
 and my years step tiptoe fast  
 each far shorter than the last  
 til before I know there'll be  
 not a leaf on any tree  
 not a jaggot laid a stone  
 when the snow leaves at the door  
 not a stick to mark the spot  
 where I lie in earth joy or .

But when don't mocks restless thought  
 at the crazy world I bought  
 for my consolation here  
 whispers in the chilling air  
 "you shall gain in God's good time  
 blessing for your batch of mine . "

12.V.33

## The Mould.

I who have known your body's excellence  
by sight by touch by every eager sense  
have sought and ride in constant faith to find  
a snare of words to set your wayward mind

My happiest days before you came were spent  
with open books a loots eloquent  
and when the anxious thought made mock of time  
devoted to the discipline of wine  
my answer was: By gentle martyrdom  
the spirit gathers strength. It will come

So now I know howe my art foretold  
and from the tension in the steady mould

Lover Book

27.VI.33

## The Touch of Things

I know the touch of things: the play of mind  
upon the smooth or rugged surfaces:  
have reaht rich ecstasy by merely thought-  
sent skating over glaciers of sense:  
admine in a logical intellectual way  
the pattern a tree makes leaning across a window.

But these remain outside me. Light & shadow  
move over them a change them after thought  
til I become a strange anthology  
bound by no thread save of a nimble wit  
a find no fabric for my spirits' house.

If life's to me full just a riper wisdom  
these things must turn to blood & blood & muscle  
til flesh & eye is April rain transmuted  
a light of sunne the sun on Antrim cliff's

Then when I set a flock of dreams adrift  
they will be pipers wandering at will  
not paper boats blown in among the reeds  
or helter skelter down the spated stream  
but have small eager beings of their own  
to flane or circle byg possible cloud,  
a tem with homesick hearts come back alone.

25.11.33

## Sunset on Howth Head

We stood at sunset on the Hill of Howth  
 a watchful day draw his tabern banners home  
 over the flat Meath plain. The Harbor lights  
 play golden snakes & ladders on the water  
 while out to sea there was naught visible  
 but swerving falling gulls' cries broke the mist  
 & far above our heads a lonely lark  
 sang a rhapsody of his crystal time  
 as over all the low tide on the shore  
 blured leering's edge with baffled mystery

We stood awhile not speaking. There were no  
 words possible to utter. Hearts that wore  
 Jane's badge of bright hopes unattained as yet  
 and for an instant we were basal secure  
 with music in our ears & storm feet  
 to darkening landscape of dream cursed, like  
 fading from sight & leaving only song  
 lark's lyre winds soft answer murmur'd surf  
 that turned Sweetness a high delight  
 its bitterness a sorrow of the island.

Then night came. So not speaking we turned back  
 down crumbling paths the better to the road  
 the lark sang on a startled lovers mood  
 like rabbits in the bracken. Overhead

scarce visible the ragged clouds drove fast  
 - the dust of war cars hurrying to battle  
 that lay before us ere we build our dream.

But for a moment we had been content-  
 and now with rage limbs a singing heart  
 we faced the troubled city's night of fear.

186 190.

## Flame's Delight

O you who are shaper of a flame's delight  
in being flame yet delicate and white  
who burn against the stars or are not quenched  
when fate a hill a glimmering down are dressed  
with plastic's sunshine, how may I who make  
my noisy ballads for the people's sake  
grow subtle in my thought a tune my song  
to gentle beauty entwined with woe  
A lonely wisdom moving quiet ways  
above the flags a tumult of my days?

Yet in your heart you must have understood  
the old drums throbbing thro' the leafy bough  
and the raw wise beyond the scale of verse  
like flame you can be passionate a fierce  
so to the insect of that terrible fire  
I hold the blemish'd blade of my desire  
Leave leave a shining core to consume me quick  
O you who are shaper of a flame's delight.

10.16.33

11. IV. 33

## Sonnet

There in the lonely quarry where at dawn  
Larks rise on jets of music out of sight  
we stood together in the warm spring night  
with eyes turned to the hills whence day withdrawn  
had made a fading primrose of the light  
There was no sound. The eager larks had gone  
The dark earth lay content. Thin scattered while  
the tattered banner of the clouds was blown  
across the moon.

Then suddenly we heard  
low as a sob the wind begin to cry  
and we're a lyre more than any bird  
has ever clung on: mingled of the sky,  
the dreaming land by way of spring unstrid  
and on new passions quiet ecstasy.

I-J-33

## The Crucified.

Now God is in the rock & thorn,  
 but if I seek him there he flies,  
 and is perpetually reborn  
 in ~~buttermilk~~ & rabbits' eyes  
 skylerk's song

But these are shy stony approachs,  
 stale out of sight, take earth while.  
 The only God that I can touch  
 is Christ whom I here crucified.

This was composed while sitting alone  
 in the Quarry, so silent - cold  
 not notice the leaf fall - the wind  
 stings a winter cold - in 1923 I  
 wrote the lines above

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Yeats, Frost, Thomas, Hopkins  
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