

## NO POPE ON THE TITANIC

"No Pope on the side of the Titanic"  
grinned cherubic Father Flynn  
eyed behind dull - watered spectacles,  
rubbing his liver speckled hands  
benevolently across his ample girth.

Seagulls moved silently  
beyond his lace covered  
windows, appearing and  
disappearing behind the lace  
while hidden from my sight  
existed Belfast Lough echoing  
among its seagulls cries  
the remembrance of that  
ship's departing siren, moving  
from the watery womb of its  
steel girdered creation  
towards iced death in a far sea.

Within the warmth of a laced  
curtained Bangor home the  
echoes of haunting ragtime  
filled my head as emphatic empathetic  
nostalgia mixed with sea side  
fun on Bangor esplanade.  
For me the haunting refrain  
of ragtime echoing for the  
Titanic was mixed with  
an echoing nostalgia for  
Africa evoked by lace  
curtains, Virgin Mary, the Pope  
Proteas and a wooden desiccated  
bucks head strung upon a damp wall.

Both visions of liner and Africa  
congealed and coalesced into  
sharpened images of animate  
desire, which seemed like a  
mythical beast gnawing silently  
at my innards, twisting my  
head from deep within my neck

and chest to view my present  
Northern reality as compared to  
my Southern matrix.

I felt within my Africanized  
nostalgia, as if my emigrating  
Irish ancestors had walked  
backwards within my soul  
dragging my shadowed psyche  
from its own Afri - base  
sideways to rain clouded, crowded  
shore.

## DUBLIN

Feminine - souled mother city with its  
curlicued lamps, churches and pubs  
displaying love for its children  
but still opening upward  
outward  
to enfold the stranger,  
as he passes slowly  
down its paved terraces,  
viewing  
Joycean grime and Easter madness  
where Molly Bloom spent her  
wombic blood  
on pavements soon to be  
covered with Easter agony.

From ancient Tarean hills to Tara Street Station  
muscles moving up O'Connell  
past O'Connell to the General Post Office  
brash red  
now unseen  
substituted with an  
enormous tricolor of Eirean hue.

This female city has experienced  
abortion within its exploding womb  
as ancient Easter blood from crucifixion  
recycled like the Liffey returned  
to martyr again and again  
its adoring but abject children.

## DRUM MANOR

Petrified ash - snakes lie submerged  
in chocolate leaved mud  
as my boots cold to the toes  
and taking on damp  
struggle across them  
attaching  
    kicking  
        crushing  
under foot.

Phallic life symbols  
of present growth  
emphatically striking - raping  
the Irish earth taking possession  
of land and ancient historical past.

As I struggle across them to get back  
to the path meandering through the  
forest, the sense of struggling through  
life across the soul's petrified roots  
that grip and delay one,  
strikes  
the soul – mind's eye.

## IRISH WHISKEY

Clear water , adding sound  
to grace like Bushmills  
being poured into  
Waterford crystal , forcing  
its way down the channel  
of love towards ultimate  
consummation with the  
yearning earth  
as the golden liquid  
pours forth into waiting  
tumbler  
readied for wanting  
throat,  
both adding to  
a strong stroking of the  
parched soul.

Irish holy water  
Irish holy whiskey  
both add a liquid dimension  
to an original , ancient way  
of being.

## MARTELLO TERRACE , BRAY

Land encased in concrete  
promenade  
provides man - made  
barricade  
against the vehement black ,  
spitting and cursing  
of the sea  
as it pushes towards the  
land mass.  
The earth has its revenge  
driving forward from  
Brayhead into the  
spermous spume of angry  
emotionalised salt - sea.

Between this angry conjunction  
appears Victorian bandstand ,  
Edwardian boarding house  
and row of multi - coloured  
terraced homes.

The spirit of the frail man  
of interior - conscience - monologue  
pouring - out - his - soul into  
sea - air is very present with me ,  
and I view conflux  
of Bray through soulglasseyed  
goldrimmedspectaclesoul.

## INN AT BALLYRONAN

Within the cozy, quaint  
charm of Gallagher's Inn  
violence suffused the air  
like an exploding rain cloud.  
Guerrilla attack of  
exploding flame  
had bisected the  
quaint Irish charm  
and created  
a new reality of  
rusticity - small fire in ancient  
grate, burning within ancient  
stone, while above dark beams  
reflect the reddened flame.  
Bay window facing on to  
tempestuous,  
wintering Lough Neagh  
encloses a small  
green headland  
sheltering  
an overturned fishing boat  
and  
two white wild swans  
from the violent  
rain  
wind  
swept waves  
and angry spirits.

## INCHIGEELA

Once again we have the meeting  
of sacred and profane.  
Aching head, bursting  
with emotional possession  
tries to battle rampant  
phallic head  
in bursting desire.  
My emotion and my brain and penis  
are united in one  
driving passion  
to possess all  
that life can offer and  
it is within this state  
of exalted unified grace  
that I exist within the  
Lake Hotel feeling past history  
of Collins,  
De Valera,  
and McBride  
shadowing past me in the  
entrance hall,  
up the staircase  
to the lighted candle  
in front of the Virgin on the landing dresser  
reminding one of the present  
where the Virgin now superimposes  
her substance onto past  
political agony.  
And so onto bed to surround  
myself with duvet down and  
Celtic dust  
of ages, future present.



## MARY - VISIONED

Stiff necked  
eyes orbed  
into  
balls of unblinking ice  
as the earth heat  
presented  
images of a woman  
of peace  
adorned in white  
and blue  
promising love  
for all.  
Air - sound was  
incorporated by  
rosary beads  
slipping  
    ball  
        by ball  
through interlaced fingers  
of entranced love.  
Spiritual essence intertwined  
vision and visionary  
in one unified sense  
of ultimate human purpose  
undefined within terrestrial  
sight but formulated  
within  
    the universal essence of  
        being.

## BLACK CROW IN THE HEDGE

Black crows hover and dive  
among bracken covered hedges  
co - existent among harsh life.  
Feathers caught on thorns in  
order to sustain life ;  
breath life  
into two  
co - existent elements of faith  
interlocked , interpenetrated  
in a death struggle to  
eventually survive , just  
as human soul  
struggles  
with human soul to  
predestinate or exculpate  
the sins of bloodied  
ancestry and warring generations.  
From crow comes the cry of  
the soul as it  
attempts to survive and  
in its cry it screams the  
agony of the land's vibration.

PORT GLENONE ( BETHLEHEM MONASTERY )

Hedges and oak  
divide the green land into  
cultivable arable earth  
surrounded by free - flowing  
black crow  
interpenetrated through my  
soul - sight  
by my spirit swept by  
the emotional crow  
as I battle to open  
my fields between its  
hedges  
to the plough of  
arable cultivation.

On the walk between darkened trees overhead  
cap pulled down over my eyes  
boots scuffing through  
black leaves ,  
my body dissolves  
into fragments  
of natural element  
earth , air , water and  
fire  
I am all of these - and  
none of these ,  
but am all.



## POETRY AND WHISKEY

Stylised golden flow  
intermingled  
in smoke - filled  
alcoholic haze  
cheap stout  
and bar crisps.  
Salt grains scatter  
across the ancient  
wooden top ,  
elbows deposited in  
the cracks shaped  
through Collins, Casey and De Valera  
chrome fitting  
                    reflects jagged image ;  
cross outlining  
                    bleeding stigmata ;  
while all flesh is rounded  
                    within metallic glow.  
Emotion surged through  
                    with poetic ideal  
activates  
and ravages the soul.

## THE GASLIGHT

Oak topped wrought iron table  
cluttered with empty and near empty  
bottles and glasses  
surrounded by fiddled Irish  
reel  
as Guinness drips slowly  
to the stone-ware floor and  
Jerry slumps forward trying to  
salvage a few drops of the  
precious liquid.

Students in glasses and spiky crew cut  
laugh and arm wrestle  
while gasoliers fire  
to the merry jig of the  
strummed banjo.

A christmas wreath hangs solidly  
in the window without moving  
even though the windows are  
frosted,  
not a whisper of cold air penetrates the  
warmed interior.

Cozy intimate interior  
reflects emotionally intimate  
interior of my soul  
slowly twisting in harmonious string  
with the vibrating violin.

This intimacy engenders an  
undertone of sexual warmth  
as if my warmed soul  
tries to force my body  
to respond to its added desire  
but  
it is burdened with too much  
inhibited mortality.

A man passes and  
winks  
at me

creating  
momentary panic suffused  
with a pleased acceptance  
of joining the ranks of  
palpitating  
strumming  
flesh  
seeking its own resurrection.

## CELTIC CROSS

A fantastic vision  
of pagan ancientness  
and barbaric cruelty  
flame and iron  
    heat and smelt  
around rounded cross ,  
as my inner force  
reverts to its ancient way  
of feeling ,  
    seeing ,  
        being,  
surrounded by rounded  
cross within which  
the soul yearns for  
barbaric cruelty and  
the force of pagan pleasure.

Within those ancient eternal flames  
my heart - eye returns to stare  
                    gape  
reach out and touch  
with hand moving through flame  
being encompassed , while  
soul - life twists away from white  
heat but cannot escape.

Slowly drawn within inflamed circle  
uniting soul with ancient rite.  
heated blood ,  
    blood sacrifice  
between rounded moon and  
    rounded cross.