

AXIS

&

ALLIES

BOOK ONE

ACT ONE

What trouble is beyond the rage of man?

What heavy burden will he not endure?

Jealousy, faction, quarelling, & battle,

The bloodiness of war, the grief of war.

Sophocles

Canto 1

So arose the practice of celebration in exalted verse the battles & other notable deeds of men together with those of the gods. This was, & is today...
the office & practice of all poets

Boccaccio

Invocation

There is a glade in an ancient forest
Where glittering pools of molten azure
Assail the soul... insliding, moonbeam-bless'd,
Bathing in blissful dreamtimes gleaming pure;

Attended by

My nine naked maidens,
Vulvaean lullaby lilting thro' love's garden.

She harps a song, she summons stars,

She waltzes round the waters,

She treats these tender battlescars,

She paints a floating lotus,

She strums her summergold guitars,

Loxianic daughters!

How lovely & how livid floods thy light,

What verses & what wonders must I write?

My Muses weave their tryptych tones,

O rich enchanted chime!

Soft music hones their mystic moans,

& so... my *all* must rhyme,

When with the hopes of heroes up Parnassus slopes I'll climb!

Dedication

Five hundred years ago, my gracious prince,
Oer thirty thousand ancestors were yours,
Victoria, of all them, must convince
Ye are most worthy of we troubadors;
Your fruitful days
Adds to our garden joy,
What piles of high-steep'd praise heap'd on Di's happy boy.

Remembering thine own fair birth
When I was only seven,
Your majesty has grown on Earth
Among the Sons of Heaven,
New to the world ye've shewn true worth
Aye, & that's a given -
Maturity hast bless'd thy diadem,
At heart thou art of *us* & less of *them*.

My prince, with praise, I offer thee
This book of rumbling words,
From Mnemone to Melody...
Midst lines of waltzing thirds,
Life shimmers ever phosphorous as if t'were sufi birds.

To My Readers

I know these words rest heavy in the hands,
When reading them must pass a little while,
But think of me alone in distant lands,
With heavy load, abroad that extra mile;
Thro' thorn, up steep,
In search of awesome views,
Where I would sit in deep communion with the Muse.

I hope my global chronicle
Will preserve the violent show
Of our planet's lust for battle -
As we sail the bloody flow,
Friends be ready for to Google
All words ye do not know,
For as we mine thro' human history
This is a kind of University!

Prepare a bath, pour out your wines,
Light up a candle flame,
Encase your minds, embrace these lines,
Enlightenment our aim,
War's but a terrible business – not glory, nor a game.

Argument

I sing of Mars, whose blood-besplatter'd reign
Lived long among the secret brotherhoods,
& if these verses vast mine aim deem plain:
To elevate auld lives before the floods;
When to the stars,
Or in the upmost caves,
This exile song of Mars an epic epoch saves.

As the vestige Villanovan
Found in Verruchian tombs,
As golden-thron'd Glasgerion
Immortalised ladies looms,
Ready, my young lithe mind.... Open!
When poetry resumes,
I'll pay the world its histrionic dues,
Quite polyamorous to every muse.

Non sono nazifaschisti,
Our freedom forged in blood,
The mystery of history
Spreads thro' me like a wood,
In which I'll twist unfettered feet as only Clio could.

Memorials

I stretch to grasp the gross orphean lyre,
These fingers on the fringe with fuga fraught,
When en-plein-air whisp'ring perfumes transpire,
Hyblean murmours of prophetic thought;

Exultation!

Donning the tangl'd mane,
Offer I my nation a poem of the vein.

As when old Thales' Iliad
By princely rhapsodes utter'd,
The mind behind these lines glows glad
Whenever they'll be mutter'd,
As if some new Upanishad
Down the Deccan flutter'd,
Containing all the epos of an age,
Far from the sterile tombstone of the page.

As when elders Albanian
Sang legends kith & kin,
Or a herdsman harps Suqatran
From word-hordes held within,
Verse-vestibules of history maintain Cruachan's Djinn!

Arcadia

Always preparing, always repairing,
The new ensemble of a Danaan song
No single impulse, but many sharing,
A swirl of verse, a whirl of words among

Eternal heights

Of endless mountenance,

Where crossing cloudless nights wild woodland swans advance!

I shall sing as Chibiatos

Held a wedding in his spell,

With brave Iagoo's starry gloss

What marvellous tales I'll tell,

Where like Tikkana, vigorous,

I'll play my heroes well,

For as Srinatha's verse wyrd words refines,

With phrase obscure I'll flutter through these lines.

From erudition constancy

To genius applies,

Consistency, coherency,

Watch phaerie wonders rise

From paranormal mutterings, then given golden guise.

Epyllians

There is a wonder in an epic muse,
Once tasted nothing mortal may compare,
Where else may such diverse sciences fuse
In such softling exultations of air;

Wondering how

This music moves to me,

"A poet am I now, a poet shall I be"

With Saint John & the Patmos vine,

The bard of the Scyldingas,

Dante's Comeddia Divine,

Tasso's inspired Crusaders,

With Spenser's store of faerie wine

& Milton's masterclass,

I made my bed - from patchwork eiderdown,

I pluck'd my quills & ink'd them up in town!

As nature's mystic essence glows

Thro' May-sprung flower fair,

My poesy flows from rose to rose -

A garden all may share -

Truthful to duty & of breadth of beauty well aware.

Astrophel

Reposing in those unscath'd, cloister'd nooks,
How many antique fancies shall I read
Merging their better thoughts within these books,
From Solomon to Binyon's Memphis Mead;
Midst Adam Smith
I found my social niche,
To spend a youth-life with the poesy of pastiche.

Along the road I drank my wine,
While others gave it gladly,
Good souls were they, those friends of mine,
Much thanks to all who've had me,
Some tickl'd by my soul-sunshine,
Others flummox'd madly,
For poets & their strangely ancient ways
Are meant to men astound... affront... amaze.

As from the Wealth of Nations rise
The pleasures of the soul,
Invested ties friendship supplies
Have puffed me proud & tall,
To conjure something rich & queer to steer us, each & all.

Poeticus

I am a man, many have gone before
& will come yet, to these I trust this song,
Pray let her fly to every foreign shore,
Shewing the World how once the World went wrong;
Such manic times
Have ended, only just,
Whose freshness fills my rhymes far from the bookish dust.

I would the world should hear this song
& sing her down the ages,
So when the epic, proud & long,
Renaissance ever stages,
Let poets ply their trade among
All mine antique pages,
& find a thing or two that they could use
In future conversations with the Muse.

Namore shall Homers chaunt War's praise
Or Owens curse it's game,
Some psychic craze, unbridl'd days,
Crude torture, quelling shame,
This is my long-wrought testament to what Mankind became.

Canto 2

Perhaps when distant people on other planets pick up some wavelength of
ours all they hear is a continuous scream

Iris Murdoch

Ambush

Follow faint traces of light & lazar

Along great lanes of space innum'erable,

To these twin systems of a distant star,
Lock'd in combat's mortal incurable;
Where Usgoth hordes
Embattle Dadghabbi,
Wielding electric swords in timeless chivalry.

Upon the fringes of the fray
Debonair leutenant rides,
His strong & stately steed of grey,
By the jet-black vortex glides,
Splitting the skies with startling neigh,
Assaulted on all sides,
A Knight hauls reigns & gallops into space -
Trailing his vapours three Gaargants gave chase.

Upon a tapestry of stars
Hooves of quartz-crystal pound,
The Usgoth Gaars, all fangs & scars,
Gain steadily the ground,
Tripping the light fantastic at the searing speed of sound.

Space

The Chase Ends

Just a wee spot on the dimple of time,

A billion galaxies all around us,
& them a wee spot, mere provincial clime,
The universe spread always preponderous;
Where life & light
Hone in on airy rocks,
Some mastering space-flight, some shepherds & their flocks.

Amidst this endless star-array
Balrog faced his pursuers,
As tho' a Roman in the day
Of Tullus Hostilius -
Two sets of triplets make affray
For their populaces -
As like some last unwounded Roman son,
Our Knight faced three 'Quirini' one-by-one.

Combat is join'd, a flash of blades,
Two toss'd into the void,
Last Usgoth fades, in Balrog wades,
Some speeding asteroid,
To slay his foe, alas his steed by Usgoth spear annoy'd.

Space

Genesis

Before we taste the worst of wasted lives,
Whom others breath deny by martial deed,

Before that flailing Alien arrives
On Earth alight his bruis'd & thirsty steed,
Before an age
Is born in wounds & gore,
Let us devise the stage & lay its playful floor.

From stardust is a planet made,
Then leave the rest to science,
Until we hear the rise & fade
Of songbirds in alliance,
A never-ceasing serenade,
Most happy circumstance
Of swallows following Dawn's constant roll,
Aslant a planet spinning pole-to-pole.

Curving sleekly like a discuss,
Lights flashing strobe-on-strobe,
The collossus that is COSMOS,
Coughs up a tiny probe,
To analyze a climate, sizeing carbon & microbe.

Earth

The Approach

On the flaming hoof rode the vorpal steed,
Out of the sapphire region tween the stars,

Past Sol's slumb'rous giants, to scythe at speed
Thro' the rocky ring, yon roseate Mars;
Full into view
Appear'd a peopl'd world,
What pearl of green & blue, where whisp-white cloud-swirls curl'd.

Wings shredded so they could not steer,
Slash'd talons trailing crimson,
All thro the scorching stratosphere
Fell the Vampyre Stallion,
No wince, no flinch, nor cry of fear,
At that vast collision -
Marsh forests fly & land in piny piles
The shatter'd tundra of a hundred miles.

All thro' primeval Tunguska
Would devastation flood,
At a crater's smoking centre
No beast of Eden stood;
Hail Alien! bulbous, bewing'd, fangs thirsting manling blood.

Siberia

The Sorceress

Long-Horn leads his sick steed thro Tulgey wood,
On ev'ry side bewitching whispering,

A phantom cry to curdle human blood,
A fence of ghoulish eyes lights a clearing;
Tooth gate gnarl-grown,
Fang'd entrance to her lair,
This gaunt, dishevell'd crone with such a hellish stare.

He steps thro arms framing a door,
Gloom enters as black as tar,
"I have not seen your like before!"
"I am from another star..."
"Come sup this flesh, this putrid sore,"
Cackles Baba Yaga,
Passing her guest a leg of leprosie,
He drank & thank'd for help, her only fee

A draught of blood, he slit his wrist,
Her beastly thirst to slake,
O mystic tryst! At witch-door hiss'd
Gigantic scarlet snake,
"This is sharp maw'd Zmei Gorynich, you to the Beast shall take..."

Asia

The Bargain

In the Necropolis' most deepest tomb,

Far from the prying eyes of Seraphim,
Balrog swept down the shit-clad catacomb,
Unto the Anti-Heaven's inner rim;
Wide halls of bone,
Caterwauls amplified,
Before the Serpent Throne beats his fantastic glide.

*"O suave, majestic demagogue
I humbly stand before thee,
The cosmos knows me as Balrog,
Lieutenant of Dadghabbi,
In these claws I command a cog,
Heights of Technology,
With it you can defeat thy ancylent foes..."*
His chrome circlet with sparkling azure glows.

*"What is the price? " "A war!" "Indeed
I can arrange the course -
But why?" "My steed may only feed
Upon the mortal sauce..."*

Low whinnies of encouragement crept from his wounded horse.

Pandemonium

Rousing the Aesir

Belial dons Nordic Loki's disguise
Climbs the visceral stairwell to Utgard,

Gallops his charger thro Wolkendurst skies,
To hover o'er the grandeur of Asgard;
Towards the sound
Of heroes rejoicing
He steers his steed to ground upon a graceful wing.

He strode thro' those halls of glory,
Acknowledges each table,
Serv'd by the lusty Valkyrie
With meat & mead & fable,
He enters now a fine city,
Carv'd from Roman marble,
His mission hidden by a face of stone,
Enters Heaven & kneels at Odin's throne

"Hullo!" said Frigg, "Why cometh here!"

"Satanus calls for War!"

Fond was the cheer from the Aesir
Loki skipped cross the floor
& raised them with a battle cry to rouse the rage of Thor.

Valhalla

The Indifference of Jove

Saint Peter hoodah'd cross the skiey plains

Upon a silver, tuskless Elephant,
His seraph-captain rhythmic with the reigns...
Resplendent with immortal Amorant
All sides lustred
Roses celestial,
Chasm-clinging cluster'd oer clear terrestrial.

He rode thro Paradise Mountains
To the voice more like a dream,
Echoing amidst the fountains
Where the holy rivers stream,
*"Since I offer'd Man redemption
Souls I would once redeem,
He errs more than the sinful sons of Eve,
If they rejoice in killing then why grieve?"*

*There are dark troubles brewing sire,
Satanus plots a war,
With daemons dire & dragons fire,
The Aesir to the fore,'*
"Silence!" urged Jove, " & let them be, tis just another war."

Divinnia

Conversazione

The goddess KARMA flew to Fairyland,
Convers'd with Mab, Queen of the Pixie Glen,

Around them lovely daffadillies fann'd,
Far from the prying eyes of Gods & Men
They sip sweet brews,
Rare teas of wildflowers,
Sharing their recent news, minutes turn to hours....

A wood nymph with translucent wings
Serves them best blueberry cakes,
Sings Mab, "*These new Gods & their Kings*
Seldom learn from late mistakes,
& discontent with what Fate brings,
Each lusts more while he takes -
In that I trust not Satanus, nor Mars,
Lords of land's cancers & the sea's catarrhs.

In these futurities foreseen
Your days must grow busy?"
"Not quite, my queen, I choose one scene
So very carefully -
Two families shall represent all of humanity."

Fairyland

Canto 3

War is energy enslaved

William Blake

Death of Innocence

A century of blood-stench drags the breeze,

Annals of Empire draw towards a close

Like some rogue priest bent double with disease,

Soon shall they quake! New cataclysmic throes;

One hundred years
My tempers train shall delve,
Thro all the blood & tears... Nineteen Hundred & Twelve...

The Kasier calls a konferenz,
Large maps besprawling table,
*"As Russia, with the funds of France,
Shall soon become full stable,
I wish the borders to advance
As soon as is able,
Dark clouds are gather'd yon the Vistula,
It must be war... & sooner the better."*

Faint rumbles on a stormy night,
Harsh whispers in the trees,
Lush flash of light illumines the fight,
Knocks INNOCENCE to knees,
Her grain-faced murderer administ'ring the final squeeze.

Europe

1912

Hitler

Elfin painter took leave of Vienna,
Fair jewel of the dual monarchy,
By officers branded, '*Herr Deserter*',
Rejected by the Arts Academie;

Some quarter-Jew
Pluck'd from obscurity,
Enslaved by the milieu's intrigues of destiny.

Dawn lit the surging Salzburg heights,
An Alp in his stout heart grew,
His memories of bitter sleights
Cleans'd by Bavarian dew,
Upon the winds young mountain kites
In eagle fashion flew...

"So fate has brought me here to Germany!"

Thought swept upon the wing & flutter'd free.

From wooded lake, to street a gleam,
Here seem'd a blither Rome,
As beggars dream to taste ice-cream
He deem'd this place his home,
Where pure-blood Aryans & the anti-semitic roam.

Munich

1913

Assassin!

A Crown Prince peers out from the motorcade,
His House of Hapsburg gorging on conquest,
Whose tall, broad-chested soldiers on parade,
Hold back the Slavic peasantry oppress'd;

Soft eyelids close,
Flora fills his vision...
A maiden sniffs her rose in her secret garden...

She laughs & they laugh together,
Rows of roses grow & bud,
Redd'ning fields stretching forever
In a wave transform to wood,
Forming crosses in the heather
Names crudely ink'd in blood...
An orphan'd girl chokes on her rose & dies,
Snakes slithing from the sockets of her eyes.

Young Stag slips from silent shadows,
His stern lips firmly curl'd,
The hammer blows, the bullet glows,
A blast of black doom hurl'd,
A shot to slain an Arch Duke, hear it echo round the world!

Sarajevo

June 28th 1914

Outbreak

From sylvan pool uprose the brooding Tsar,
Old gen'ral's waiting silent on the rise -
Trusting his cousins not to start a war,
How casual the call to '*Mobilise!*'

This one word flies
From the Romanov serve,
Der Kaiser soon replies, seduced by conflict's verve.

Thus a moment'ry decision
The world with War's rug smothers,
Epic duel of man & nation,
Cruel dread of doting mothers,
Crude destroyer of religion,
Bandsman of rude brothers,
Famed time of glory, honour, passion, pride,
But days of shame as Hell's highway grows wide.

Born of the bed-soil of Jena,
Fed on the dirt & blood,
Our Max Stemmler aims his Mauser
At movements in the wood...
A shot! A scream! A murd'rous gleam, War's truth now understood.

Europa

August 20th 1914

All Quiet on the Western Front

'Twas just another day in the trenches,
The 'stand to' bugler blew before the dawn,
From profound slumbers the soldier wrenches,
Slugs, frogs, bats, rats & beetles flee his yawn;

Breakfast before

Shelling begins at eight...

Less murder, more the bore men call the '*Morning Hate*'.

Those walking with the Lord worshipt,

Others played or talk'd instead,

Those gaunt are by despair oft gripp'd,

Some stand up & lost their head,

The 'stand-to' call'd as sunshine slipp'd

Into a bed of red,

The '*Evening Hate*' cooling with fading light,

Both sides prepare patrols to pass the night.

The day's tedium passes hard,

Some requisition rest,

Some muse, some bard, some lose at cards,

Some gaze out to the West,

Watching a crimson streak that might have issued from Christ's breast.

France

March 1918

The Death of Pat Sumner

There is a madness in the mind of man,

The water torture of a constant war,

Always up fighting, always in the van,

Pat phantasizes of his native shore

& left the trench,
For him, the War over,
Pretending to be French all the way to Dover.

He dodg'd home to his early life
Always near & yet so far
To feall upon his pretty wife,
Trousers mingling with her bra,
Then came the cruel, unyielding knife
To open up the scar,
A knock at the door, two stone-faced Sergeants
Are come to fetch this white feather to France.

His family's tearful farewell
Still haunting all the while
He paced the cell, a living hell
& barely legal trial,
Shot at the wall... deserter sprawls sporting insane death-smile.

France

January 1916

East Lancashire's War

*"Give some fella a gun, 'ees an 'ero,
Give 'im a conscience, 'ee gets thrown in jail!"
"Charlie," said Rose, "I wunt want yer to go!"
"Now why would I wanna leave you?" a wail*

Strays down the street
With his next door neighbour,
"Put summat on yer feet & go get yer mother!"

Beneath the rugged Hameldon
Marching by a brown canal,
Morosely passing thro Hapton
As at some dour funeral,
& reel, at length, thro' Accrington
To hear of their own Pal...
Where on the Town Hall notice boards they see
'Patrick Sumner has died for his country.'

Freda broke down & in her heart
An ache to never die,
Charlie's thoughts dart, world wrench'd apart,
"Revenge! Revenge!" he cry
& raced to add his signature to Gen'ral Haig's supply.

Lancashire

November 1916

Passcheandale

Sallow soldiers splash thro' boot-sucking mud,
Clinging like poor relations, twice as fast
It breeds, each shell-hole nauseate with blood,
Swollen black lads bolt upright in repast

& yet more rains -
An English Pioneer,
Slow-walks the wooden veins, two German scouts appear...

Blasting one dead, aim switch'd sharp right,
Max dodg'd the angry bullet,
Slipping into thick slime & shite,
Duckboard tilts Charlie in it,
Both surge to meet in mucky fight,
Groan, grapple, grasp with grit...
Til KARMA descends, convertite goddess,
To part the duel, men break in weariness,

They'll finish this some other day;
Meanwhile the leaf Maple
Has hack'd a way thro bullet spray
& shrapnel pluvial,
To seize the village yet to name this most brutal battle.

Flanders

November 1917

Imperial Dusk

The Western Empires muster'd twelve vast hosts,
The Hindenburg enflamed, full fierce the fray,
Some presence pins the peasants at their posts,
To die for Prussia & to die today;

"Ach! Krieg ist Krieg!"

Thro' Victorian feud

Of murder & intrigue, the world has bled & spew'd.

Naught could curtail the disaster

Of this national disgrace,

From dank holes half-men surrender,

Happiness on each etch-face,

On all sides it seems Der Kaiser

Has lost his crucial race

To win the War before the sure deadline...

America has stiffen'd Britain's spine!

Across the scene was slowly drawn

A curtain waste & long,

On Eagle throne, sat limp & lone,

The culprit joins the throng

Increasing in volumity, wondering what went wrong?

Potsdam

September 29th 1918

BOOK ONE

ACT TWO

In the track of great armies there must follow lean years

Lao-Tse

Canto 1

Where there's life there's hope

Terence

Armistice

The War is over, namore the killing,
Live ye wilted blooms of many nations,
Peace mops the sodden brow &, god willing,
All creeds & contrees share share relations;
Order'd to yield,
The Wehrmacht leave the trench,
Behind, a bitter field & the ecstatic French.

The Hohenzollern dynasty
Emulates the ancient Czar,
Forfeits the Kaiser's monarchy
To the fortunes lost in war,
The Junkers of old Germany
Are gather'd at Weimar,
To delegate a democratic air,
Some *treacherous* republic to declare.

By this rain-swept roadside seated,
Sobbing for Germany,
His dejected & defeated
Yet wunderbar contree,
Hitler *sensing* her lowest ebb, seizes her destiny.

Pasewalk

November 1918

Homecoming

At the Douamont fort, by sunset shades,
A vet'ran lays a wreath to heal Verdun,
Prays for the poor souls of fallen comrades
Then bought a ticket bound for Briancon;
Two hundred francs,
Two shirts, a suit & shoes,
Plus ev'ry Frenchman's thanks for battling the Blues.

Slowly click-clack'd the climbing train

Up thro' the Alpine passes,

Attack'd by sheets of driving rain

He wipes his misty glasses...

"At last! Mon coeur sees home again!"

Lights & pretty lasses

Recieve returns of jubilant heroes -

One quarter of Frenchmen left to the crows.

He smiles in pleasant atmosphere,

A gasp! *"C'est Jean-Francois!"*

Halting the cheer he orders beer,

Drenching thirst in nectar, *"Deux francs," "Deux francs! C'est ridicule pour une Stella Artois!"*

France

1919

War & Peace

As those arms of the Star-Spangl'd nation,

Game-enders of Europe's lust for violence,

Shrivel daily into isolation,

Two tough gargantuans of her defence

Settle to eat

Well-plann'd, home-made dinner,

Fanning the shady heat from their cool veranda.

Mrs Patton pours up red wine
While musings gentlemen share,
Wisdoms word-draped in southern whine,
On the art of Tank Warfare,
*"To penetrate the foe's front line
One must concentrate there..."*
*"Yes, strike like cobras with artillery,
Not spreading out defending infantry."*

After Mrs Eisenhower
Had serv'd the last liqueur,
Soldiers shower, within the hour,
They'll hear a bright lecture
On *'Pursuit of Routing Armies,'* by the young MacArthur.

Camp Meade

1920

Baby Boom

Charlie Sumner stagger'd down Accy Road,
Havelock's lock-in for a quick whiskey,
Then thro' his crude two-up, two-down, tiptoed -
To pounce upon his wife, drunk & frisky;
"Gerroff!" a clout,
His silent smile's intrigue
Bends to triumphant shout... *"We've won the blummin' league!"*

How rare is it to find true mate
To share thy meagre ration,
They rush upstairs to celebrate,
Indulge youth's perfect passion,
Without a jonny, for (of late),
Babies are in fashion,
He gasps as he sighs as his seed slips in,
A cry! Rose rises, "*Our Jack needs feedin!*"

His wife away.... some charabanc
Lets off a lively BOOM!
Torturous pang, the clammy clang
Of battle claims the room,
While friends that fell at Passcheandale wail, "*Charlie!*" thro' the gloom.

Burnley

1921

The Nazi Party

He mutter'd thro the Englischer Garten,
Thoughts foregleaming the forthcoming meeting,
Leaves sport the yellowing tinge of Autumn,
The blare of Bayern Bandsmen billowing
Into the streets,
Where with a spiky fist
Brawling right-winger meets the cut-throat communist.

*"For over fifteen centuries
Reign'd the Holy Roman law,
When Fate unites the Germanies
We shall speak the peace once more
& Versaille's damned iniquities
Demolish with a roar!"*

"Rubbish!" some quatted heckler dares a noise,
Dragg'd off, rough'd up by tough-mouth'd bully-boys.

All hail the darling of the Right,
Staunch National Socialist,
Anti-Semite, ready to fight,
With politic & fist,
The pillars of democracy... his horde applaud upryst.

Munich

1922

Mein Kampf

The world's press finds the Blumenburgstrasse,
Beholds the new media sensation,
Some strange, enigmatic insurrector
Shrieking, *"I am the nation's salvation!"*
Thought's purest prime
Summons Hess to his room,
Dictating all the time he mused on Summer's bloom.

*"The Germans are the Master Race
& over the Earth shall lord,
We must secure our living space
Eastwards with Teutonic sword,
Where Slavic chaff shall serve our grace
& Sanhedrim abhor'd
Be cut out like the cancer that they are -
Then build a global throne upon the scar...

But first there must come War's dull pain,
The reckoning with France,
Conquer the Seine then march to gain
Russia's champaigne expanse..."*

A warbling lark left them entranced, watching the blossom dance.

Landsberg

1924

Mussolini

As rivers gently drift along the glen,
Then gather speed & gallop down the falls,
Ceasar is elevated by his men,
Crosses the Rubicon, reaches Rome's walls;
Sick government
Falls to Fascist control
Whose Black-shirts implement the sounding of his soul.

Ciano left the rush of Rome
To meet his lord & idol,
Strolling about his famous home
Beneath some crumbling castle,
Where playing in the sunswabb'd gloam
A pretty, pig-tail'd girl,
"Signori, who is she?" "My youngest child."
"Her name?" "Edda, already she is wild!"

Il Duce donn'd his sleeping robe,
"My boy I must retire,"
Thick fingers probe the spinning globe,
Rest on his heart's desire -
The little isle of Malta to connect his black empire.

Rocca Delle Caminale

1925

Squadron-Leader Bligh

With skilful ease he piloted the plane,
Such views to command from the soaring sky,
Thro' patchwork carpet snaked the Bognor train,
'Tween tenements of barley rusks & rye;
Swooping the Downs
Went our stylish flyer,
Cruising oer coastal towns, circling Chichester's spire.

At first they saw his bi-plane's speck,
Then heard propellers spinning,
Winging over the field to check
His eleven were winning,
Landing his steed, kiss'd Katie's neck
"I'll rescue the inning!"
"We need a six off the last ball to win!"
Giles Smythe-Tompkinson bowls a wicked spin...

With willow-flash the ball was sent
Beyond the bound'ry rims,
"Huzzahs!" are vent, into the tent
For sandwiches & pimms,
Says Nigel Bligh, *"Back to the sky before the evening dims!"*

Goodwood

1928

The Wall Street Crash

Young land of the liquer-laced razzmatazz,
Grown richer from the Big War's victory,
Home to the silver screen & jive-cat jazz,
Flag-waving for global prosperity;
Along Wall Street
Ford motorcades whizz by,
Princeton & Yale compete for share-blocks rising high...

Whose shares, in one black instant fell,
 Auguring a global doom,
Strain'd faces yelling, "*Sell! Sell! Sell!*"
 Burst the pink bubblegum boom,
Twas like some scene from Dante's Hell
 As chaos gript the room,
& thro it all one sharp sound to derange -
The staccato click of the Stock Exchange.

"All dem good times dey be over,"
 Serfs cry from shore to shore,
How ruthless the great leveller,
 When Rich stoop with the Poor,
A wicked vortex sucking up currencies by the score.

New York

1929

Canto 2

Oh, more or less than man - in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs necks thy footstool, now
An empire couldst thy crush, command, rebuild...

Lord Byron

Der Fuhrer

Max Stemmler took Kreuzberg's mendicant streets,
Striding dejected, cursing cruel fortune,
Each crashing bank his labour's theft repeats,
Made money might as well be on the moon;
On cafe wall
New poster burns starbrite,
Piercing his solemn soul as if 'twere holy light.

He bought the party newspaper,

Absorb'd it over coffee,
The Voelkischer Beobachter
Offers fresh philosophy,
Promising to make life better
& today, a rally!
He asks for the bill, "*Danke, that was nice.*"
"Since you've come in it has doubl'd in price!"

Scathing accuser shouts out , "*Jews*
Murder economies!"
Visions & views... pairs of worn shoes,
In their stumbling phrenzies,
Sped home to spread the growing gospel to their families.

Berlin

1930

Unter Den Linten

Hitler breakfasts by the Wilhemstrasse,
Watching the wheels of his private army,
For those who own Berlin control Prussia
& those who control Prussia, Germany!
Behind the flag,
Luddendorf whispers, "*This*
Accursed man shall drag us all down the abyss!"

Men drank until the sunset made

A berth for the *Evening Star*,
Then form'd a joyous cavalcade
Neath the Brandenburger bar,
Where Bismark's men did proud parade
The Kaiser's spoils of war...
Ent'ring the city, under the lime trees,
Ribbons of torchflame flicker in the breeze.

"Seig heil! Seig heil! Seig heil! Seig heil!"

Der Fuhrer close to tears,
For those that fail faith must prevail,
Arms jerks up to the cheers,

"We must build up a Reich that shall endure ten hundred years!"

Berlin

January 1933

Anti-Semitism

In the heart of European Jewry,
Fair city of the Rotheschilde's high finance,
Miff'd Moses Grunfeld dismiss'd from duty,
Former friends fill'd with fiery arrogance;
A hiss, a jeer,
"Go scum, go spread the news,
Your kind will not wurk here, you & your filthy Jews."

He walk'd (they forced him from the tram)

Into the Jewish boycott,
His heckles up, hands all a-clam,
Some cassirean gauntlet,
Trying to buy some bread & jam
Abuse all he could get...
Up oer orizon crept a storm of tears,
He went to sit with father & his fears.

He wander'd thro' the cemet'ry
Between the Jewish graves,
On bended knee, in misery,
Tears streaming down in waves,
His parents' tomb some spiteful, scarlet hakenkreuz enslaves.

Frankfurt

1934

Death of Anatoly Stiltski

As Phoebus prick'd the dusty harvest haze,
Stalin's lapdogs surrounded quaint Moshny,
Amid this bastion of the old ways,
Anatoly fear'd for his family;
Ring of cold steel
His wee home's scape-proof mesh,
Machine-gun muzzles wheel & lacerate his flesh.

While wife & daughter wail & gnash,

His sons weep & thrash in vain,
All toss'd aside like filthy trash,
'Brethren' burning long-grown grain...
By slaughter'd cow, like human rash
They stagger'd thro Ukraine
To this city of cold, modern concrete,
Where hunch'd, hungry man-shadows stalk the street.

While pondering in pity's square
Her kids beg with a song,
Old merchant's stare soothes their despair,
*"Your boys look fit & strong -
Come work for me!"* her family timidly tag along.

Kiev

1934

Oaths of Loyalty

Heavenly vale of operatic hearts,
Hemm'd in by behemoths huge, hewn from stone,
Those cool, majestic mountains of the Harz,
Witness a soldier of the Aesir born;
An eagle flings
His wings to airy dawn
As ev'ry treetop sings for chandelier'd dawn.

On receiving the Reich leader

He dismiss'd der Fuhrergaurd,
Offers men of the Third Jager,
Lords of La Haye Saint's courtyard,
*"I have made my men a soldier
Enough to hold Asgard!"*
An appeal to Hitler's warrior creed
Not hopeful gesture but resolute deed.

Awe trembles as his soul's captain
His Honour Guard inspects,
Hitler has won his devotion,
Aft' solemn oath extracts,
His ear is pinch'd & in that instant Rommel's all accepts.

Goslar

1934

The New Rome

Clutching crude spears & shields of Rhino hide,
Brave tassel-beards defend these lands once free,
Tho' overhead planes glide cross countryside
Spitting caustic droplets without mercy;
As lethal mist
Poisons their thirsty land,
The will to still resist erodes to sinking sand.

As shadows of Mount Antoto

Drew long over Ababba,
A last, hot flash of bullets flow
From their fearless Emporer,
Chok'd on the hopeless word to go...
Then hail the conqueror,
When Mussolini's legions, triumphant,
Banish the anguish of late Rome's lament.

"My good people are suffering!"

Tears stain'd Selasso's eye,
Altho' the king was stood weeping,
The League sits idly by...
Men melting into mountains underneath a bomber sky.

Abyssinia

March 1935

Hitler Youth

Max Stemmler roar'd along the autobahn,
Resurgant tribute to a great country,
Musing upon the Battle of the Marne,
So close to gay Paris & victory!
He park'd the car,
Bear-hugg'd his eldest son,
"My boy if we must War, with you the battles won."

Khan dined with peers clever & couth

As his malleable mind
Was bombarded with Nazi truth,
The majesty of their kind,
Carefree below the starry roof
They talk'd & laugh'd & dined,
Singing proud songs, so strong & beautiful,
Of Lebensraum & the love of battle!

They run & swim & fight & share
The life of Herr Soldier,
As mountain air rang with fanfare,
They planted Swastika
On summits for their glorious Fatherland & Fuhrer.

Harz Mountains

1935

An Evening with the SS

Oer the Prussian fief of Westphalia
Arises grand & gothic citadel,
Home for an order, & its Grandmaster,
Himmler & his infamous Shutstaffel;
Unbridl'd lord,
Far from the chicken farm,
Sharp'ning the Fowler's sword to conquer Lebensraum.

Young Gerhart Buscher - blonde, blue-eyed -

Deem'd the racially ideal,
& to long days lessons applied
His cool, fanatical zeal,
Til one fine night, heart thumping pride,
Sat haught at Heydrich's meal,
An invitation follow'd the supper,
"Come show us your skills with the rapier!"

Baron Von Grolsch made the first play,
Set on him in a flash,
Blades raid away, graceful ballet,
Til with an uncheck'd slash,
Stormblasting pain stings Buscher's brain, cheek splits with spilling gash.

Wewelseberg

1936

Olympic Games

The cavalcade of old Olympia
Settles its sacred flame upon Berlin,
Oer *Hindenburg* trails our Orphic banner,
Below, even the Juden are let in;
Majestic roar,
O scale Wagnerian!
Here modern man does war in *his* coliseum.

As Jesse Owen took the track

All eyes focus'd upon him,
Racism hating skin-stain black
Quadruples his vigour's vim,
Some leaping cheetah from the crack,
The stadium grew dim,
A whirl of pounding thighs & bursting lung...
How soon, how proud, '*Star Spangl'd Banner*' sung.

How disgusted grows Der Fuhrer,
This white supremacist,
Some dog-runner, some dumb nigger,
Wins medals white men miss'd...
Glanc'd at his wrist, hiss'd "*I must leave...*" blood trickling from clench'd fist.

Berlin

1936

Canto 3

Before him ran a miserable confusion
Ruin & battle & a grievous end
On struggle, blood & struggle, on terror, dire terror

Gwalchmai Ap Meilyr

Jewish Wedding

A carriage trundl'd thro the ribbon fog,
As tho 'twere cushion'd in romantic myst,
The Grunfelds gather'd in their synagogue,
Speechless til Heidi & her husband kiss'd;
Tears splash the floor,
Happily wept Anna,
Joyously crying for her beautiful daughter.

The Rabbi's household welcomes them,
Full-feasted celebration,

Moses toasts, "*Shalom Alachem!*"

Franz keeps faithful tradition

Stamping on glasses, cries, "*Lechaim!*"

To the Hebrew nation...

When into this sacred ceremony

Bursts a brash & brawling brown-shirt bully.

Worm-filthy mouth spew'd forth abuse,

Breath-stench a bottl'd beer,

"You heard the news, you filthy Jews,

No longer welcome here!"

Scatter'd platters, romance shatters, batter'd by rattl'd fear.

Frankfurt

1936

Fascist Knot

Hitler receiv'd his conquering idol,

A dazzle of banners & manoeuvres!

Impresses his hero with mock battle,

"How like the Spartans march these fine soldiers!"

"My friend please speak

Beneath the Glockenturm,"

The Mai-feld's bound'ries creak e'en in a Donnersturm.

Wooded Mussolini's mood unique

At supper's conversation,

*“The British Empire has grown weak,
Wrote off the Tscheschienne nation,
Together we shall climb the peak
Of our proper station,
Forcing the course of history’s censor,
Steal victory thro all the pomp of war.”*

Two sister nations buck & rise
To ride the wylde warhorse;
First centralize, then march to prise
Thy neighbour’s realms by force,
Then sail in search of empire, letting conquest take its course.

Berlin

November 1937

Pierre & Veronique

In the proudest city of the Loiret,
Deliver'd from the English by the Maid,
Two perfectly-lustred, loving lips met,
The drudge of harsh reality allay'd;
For in life's youth
(Our spirit's velvet glove),
They knew but one bold truth, to love is to know love!

Pierre carresses Veronique
Whispers *“Je t’adore ma chere!”*

Hands stroking slender, quatchless cheek,
Hers sliding thro' his soft hair,
They watch comrade communists speak,
Jacquerie fills the square,
Sporting pitchforks & the sickle banner...
"Vite!" gasps Pierre, "We're late for lit'rature!"

They rush'd into the lecture hall,
Took their shushing places,
The floral roll of Verlaine's soul
Spread its vernal graces,
While finger-tips touch tingling at his poesy's pretty places.

Orleans

1937

The Question of Versaille

Churchill lurch'd from his back-bench wilderness,
Round his thick neck dangl'd the Dardanelles,
Projecting deep resonance to impress
Upon Parliament of Fascist perils;

"I prophesise

That Berlin maniac

Has fool'd us to the wise, this man must soon attack!

Let us urge the world to rally

Against this cruel dictator,

*How potent the deterency
If we should pool with Russia,
So let us rouse our own country,
Raising aulden vigour,
Germany is re-arming at a pace,
We must build air fleets to stay in the race!"*

The House laugh their indignant laugh,
Chamberlain sat him down,
A telegraph from the Berghof
Pulls from his stately gown,
"Mister Hitler is all for peace!" cheers drown the single frown.

London

March 1938

Nazi Party Rally

The moment Max Stemmler stepped from the train

He was thrust into a passionate sea,
Religious fervour proscribing his brain,
Heart leaping up to all the pageantry;

Bold church bells cheer,

"O lord, tis glorious!"

Der Fuhrer, he ist here! He has come among us!"

They follow'd the phrenzied fanfare,

The eagle-mantl'd banner,

The dreamy, acolytic stare,
The rows of cool stormtrooper,
A mighty fleet gracing the air
& glorious armour,
Past the Kongressbau pulsing hypnotic
To the Zepp'linfeld writhing erotic...

Where oratory masterful
Draws the crowd to climax,
His beautiful, triumphant will
Spits venom at the Czechs,
"Justice for the Sudetenland!" Max faints, his heart's reflex.

Nuremburg

June 1938

Munich

As distant peals of thunder draw closer,
About the Kehlsteinhaus tough Zephyrs swirl'd,
No wonder, here, delusions of grandeur,
An eagle's nest perch'd high atop the world;
Hitler commands
They drive below the snow,
Wringing his clammy hands, singing, '*Bring on the foe!*'

His villa was the field agreed,
By the piny, mountain wood,

*"The Sudetenland must be freed
From spillage of German blood,
It must be now if I must lead
In full stride of manhood,
For never! never! never! shall I yield
Even if Earth becometh battlefield!"*

*"If you want war why let us come,
Our time wasted I see!"*
Adolf struck dumb, a softer drum,

*"Will the Allies agree
To the secession?" "Si!"* such was that easy victory.

Berghof

Septmeber 15th 1938

Conquest of Czechoslovakia

The famous Ides of March, der Fuhrer acts,
Imperial intentions here reveal'd,
Tastebuds whetted for further Tscheschienne trachts
He summons Hascha to the battlefield;
*"Your poor country
Stands friendless & alone,
You MUST sign this decree lest we attack at dawn!"*

Von Ribbentrop shaking his pen,
Goering bluffing for the pot,

They hounded Hascha round the den,
His temp'rament tired & hot,
He faints! but is reviv'd again
By Morrel's morphine shot...
Thus half adream in the first flush of day
This crush'd man signs his poor contree away.

Abandon'd by their 'friends' abroad,
Betray'd & left naked
Before the sword of Hitler's horde,
A simple sentence said,
"Today twas us, tomorrow you, we live to count the dead!"

Prague

March 1939

War's Reality

The scales are falling from Chamberlain's eyes,
The deceit & the ridicule shines clear,
Childish to swallow Hitler's streams of lies
The evil dreams of his regime seem near?
*"Bright shines hindsight,
Tis inevitable,
That man was born to fight, that man yearns for battle."*

As he rose before the members
Certain sections boo'd & hiss'd,

*"The world is turning serious,
For the German jingoist
Had thought he could deceive us!
But now we must resist,
For only a fool would think, come the hour,
Rise up, would we not, with all our power!"*

Von Ribbentrop & Ciano stroll
Thro' gardens blushing Spring,
Teutonic drawl, *"Those Poles shall fall
Beneath our battering!"*

"You crave Danzig?" "No, we crave war!"... Ciano's awakening.

Berlin

May 1939

War's Promise

While Britain rode the slow boat to Russia,
Von Ribbentrop touch'd down in his Condor,
Playing at the perfect ambassador,
Keeping *The Boss* out of *Der Fuhrer's* war,
The Great Bear rose
Full ready to release,
From its ferocious claws, the keys to War & Peace.

*"I reckon world needs sortin out!"
Says good ol' Charlie Sumner,*

Sipping a thick, black pint of stout,

Sat in 'tat room o' Mitre,

"Gerrys fer feyting, 'ave no doubt,

It sez so in paper"

We must finish off Nazis fer them Jews."

"Aye!" sniff'd the barman, " & we'd best not lose!"

Pierre embraced his sweetheart's glow,

Kissing her salty cheek,

"Alas I go to Maginot,

Shed no tears Veronique...

Ah! Partir c'est mourir un peu!" she wept but would not speak.

Paris

August 24th 1939

BOOK ONE

ACT THREE

What trouble is beyond the rage of man?

What heavy burden will he not endure?

Jealousy, faction, quarelling, & battle,

The bloodiness of war, the grief of war.

Sophocles

Canto 1

The barbarians are to arrive today

C.P Cavafy

& Wars Begin

Dawn's grey warning crept cross the Baltic Sea,

A silhouette slow forming on the line,

Rough broadsides disturbing serenity

Belch'd out by Krupps of the Schleswig-Holstein;

With solemn thud

The first shots of the war

Scatters concrete & mud across the Polish shore.

The Reichstag sit, silent, subdued,

Observing their leader jeer,

"The Polish race, backward & crude,

Violates our dear frontier!

Bombs shall meet bombs in bitter feud,

*Your first captain stands here,
In 'fourteen I offer'd my dying breath,
I don my coat til victory or death!*

*If England dares to test our might
In battle once again
Then let us fight, our Eagle's flight
Surpass'd her fatten'd hen,
We shall War all the way be it a single year or ten!"*

Berlin

Sept 1st 1939

Diplomatic Formalities

A telegram left the lap of London
Bound for a distant British embassy,
By whose ambassador, suave Henderson -
Deliver'd to the Reich-chancellery;
At daggers drawn
With sly Von Ribbentrop,
Voice rugged as the stone found on the Spion Kop,

*"I have the honour to relate
A note from his Majesty's
Court... if Germany acts too late
In giving assurances
To withdraw from Poland, War's state*

Exists twixt our contrees...

You have until eleven to decide!"

Von Ribbentrop slithers to Hitler's side,

To transfer the ultimatum

(His hands had dug the hole),

Hitler struck dumb, "*Then war hast come,*

England has serv'd the ball!"

Goering whispers, "*If ve lose this War then god help us all!"*

Berlin

September 3rd 1939

A New War

The Sumner clan gathers round a wireless,

Rose fiddles nervous with 'er wedding ring,

Charlie shush'd the kids, "*This is serious!"*

The crackling voice of their stammering king

Grave parley spoke,

An old sensation grew,

The bane of common folk, their worst fears turning true.

Freda stroked Gem, her jet black cat,

Gazed up at Hargher Chimney,

Saw 'er grandson in an 'ard hat

Motoring across the sea,

"Y'know ah Pat'll be in that..."

"Don't bi daft!" sez Charlie,

"It'll all bi over bi Christmas grub!"

He took 'is eldest down ter Rosegrove Club.

A cue-ball crack sank winning black,

"Well son, what will it be?"

"I think..." voice slack, *"Speak up our Jack."*

"...Mebbe Merchant Navy."

*"Good choice lad, nah sup up, gotta get gas mask
fer baby."*

Burnley - September 3rd - 1939

The Agony of Poland

As this monstrous, mechanized juggernaut

Pours in an endless torrent from the West,

Seizing maladroit forces by the throat

The blitzkrieg theorem passes first test;

All Warsaw prays,

Surrounded by the foe,

Tho' yet her anthem plays on local radio.

Hitler steers his half-track rumble

Thro' the war-torn countryside,

Brandishing a single pistol,

& whip of harden'd oxhide,

His finest aide-de-camp, Rommel,

Makes studies by his side -
When coming on the first hospital train,
Refused to see his soldiers suffer pain.

They drove on thro the ghostly fog
Enveloping the town,
A pining dog, a synagogue
Charr'd black from burning down,
Where perch'd a crow, it's beady, yellow eyes now fleck'd with brown.

Sosnowiec

September 8th 1939

B.E.F.

That happy breed of men cheer'd off to war;
Geordie, Scouser, Taffy, Scot & Cockney -
Shepherded yon the Cornubian shore
By Captains of His Highnesses Navy;
Unfit to fight
Modern, first-class conflict,
As when the Roman might was challenged by the Pict.

They sail'd around Amoriga,
Dodging periscopic glare,
*"We'll hang out our washing on the
Siegfried line!"* enlightens air,
Human paraphernalia

Landed at Saint Nazaire -

Where lines of vital communication

String across the basin of a nation.

Tommy Sumner fingers the dust

Coating the farmhouse grey,

Ketchup's bland must, bayonet rust,

Hand grenades & Nestle

Spoke volumes & invok'd those occupants of yesterday.

France

September 13th 1939

Vae Victis

Festival terms charming to extasi

The breathless followers of his visions,

Hitler's voice soars upon the victory,

"The Almighty Lord has bless'd our weapons,

Surrenders wrung,

We suffer sleights no more!"

Poland - the very young victims of 'Total War,'

Whose citizens now garden-weeds,

Their modern-age conqueror,

Now rules, he says, subhuman breeds,

Whose anthem plays no longer,

"In these fields we shall plant the seeds

*Of our German future,
But first we must defeat the Western foes!"*

He orders an attack before the snows.

Towards the front the Russians race,
Usurping spoils of war,
Vast empires face in that same place
Where they had met before...

Hands shaking ever warily like when men meet their whore.

Brest Litovsk

September 17th 1939

Stalemate in the West

The Phoney War is raging at its height,
Both sides conduct a fierce leaflet campaign,
Sometimes patrols skirmish into the night,
Sometimes a ship slips neath the Spanish Main;

What tensions rise

Each time Hitler aborts!

Unheterlan Allies content to man the forts.

Twisted steps are swiftly taken,
Thro' Nazi racial doctrine,
A Pole told she is now German
As her Ahnenpass stamp'd clean,
Resisting pacification

Leads to but one mean scene -
Rotting husbands rocking at the gallows,
Bandsmen drowning wailing of their widows.

Gallant little Belgium proclaims
Her arm'd neutrality,
Sidestepping games, chief of her aims,
Avoid hostility!
But selfishness breeds weakness says the court of history.

Europe

December 1940

Winter War

Christmas comes & goes without a victor,
The warring nations observe strangest truce,
The only battles broker'd by Russia,
Slipping a violent neck thro Finland's noose;
The Red Army
Check'd long the whole frontier,
Foe fighting stubbornly, belief relieving fear.

Thick furs fire at fifty paces,
But for ev'ry man they slay,
Five more Ivan took fresh places,
Five fresh men to hold at bay,
Sheer exhaustion etch'd drain'd faces,

Working both night & day...
Desperate Sisu holding grimly on,
But in the end, the brave end, War's are won.

Yes War! the ancient arbiter
Of disputing nations,
Whose proud victor may cast censure,
Politic's extensions,
For battlefield diplomacy drowns converse with it's guns.

Helsinki

February 1940

Teutonica

Germany faces the decadent West,
As bouyant as the coming of the Spring,
When leafy woods are at their loveliest,
& bowers vibrant in their blossoming,
When golden streams
Sol sends set on the scene,
Shine brightly gorgeous beams glinting off each machine.

Hitler boards the Amerika,
Under stars he trundles west,
Stirring strains of his dear Wagner
Lull him to a good hours rest,
Whirrs time by... train reaches bunker,

His bomb-proof Felsennest...
Der Fuhrer prays before his bloodshed starts,
"O God of Battles steel my soldiers hearts!"

Facing the tranquil occident,
Rommel reclines with wines,
Calm & content, his regiment
Must thunder thro the lines,
Flicking thro Sun Tzu, Von Clauswic & DeGaulle's recent lines.

Germany

May 10th 1940

Canto 2

To delight in conquest is to delight in slaughter
Lao-Tse

Invasion

Aft shouts of war the shafts begin to fly,
No longer must men idle through long days,
The sun was barely half-an-hour high
& all the lowland borders were ablaze;

Wilhemina

Took flight across the sea,
The crooked Swastika denuding empery.

Primal rules of modern warfare
Are possess total surprise
& wholly dominate the air -
Thro' Ardennes a phalanx flies,
Cheval-de-frise embatter'd bare
Beneath the Stuka skies,

Rev three lethal lines of polsih'd Panzer
As tho they faced the French off Trafalgar.

King Leopold laments the end
Of proud neutrality,
Now forced to fend off German 'friend'
Ravaging his contree -
We learn from history we learn nothing from history.

Brussels

May 10th 1940

Lightning War

Deep amidst the forested Sedan Gap
Rommel's panzers are re-fuelling for free,
From some deserted garage steals a map
To guide them thro' the champaign to the sea;
The tanks are full
No time to hesitate,
Breakneck into battle, for waiting games vexate.

Pontoons creaking beneath the tracks,
Blitzkreig rolls all guns blazing,
France buckling under wide attacks,
Morale ever descending,
At last the Gallic backbone cracks
Sedan's surrendering -

Rommel photographs its ghostly fortress
Whose scenes of slaughter sanities emboss.

Down rag & tag daggletail roads
He thrust a lethal lance,
Dull air explodes as carts & loads
Crush'd by ceaseless advance,
Once more Prussian milit'rism shall pierce Gaul's arrogance.

France

May 14th 1940

Britain Stirs

German arms form an arm-like corridor,
Fist punching up thro' Flanders to the coast,
Not wheel'd to Paris, as lost the last war,
Where given up is Galleini's ghost;
Spirit thought dead
Seizes the Cinque ports,
The ghoul-songs of the dead blew thro' abandon'd forts.

Adm'ral Ramsey climb'd Henry's keep,
& with Nelsonian stance,
Gazes across the hoary deep
To the distant dark of France,
Where brave embattl'd Britons heap
Slim chips upon one chance...

To slip back to Blighty via Dunkerque...

"It's crazy, but I've got to make it work!"

For once the British do not reel
Before the German gale,
From Grand Fort Phillipe down to Lille
Fresh defences prevail,
From now on each bloodthirsty inch is fought for tooth & nail.

France

May 27th 1940

Dunkerque

Panic grips the fabl'd British army,
Her soldiers splinter'd into shatter'd shards,
Her wounded left to face the enemy,
Her dead rotting, her ordinance scrap-yards;
Her officers
Check chaos with their guns,
"Form a queue you blighters, I'll shoot each swine that runs!"

The Shark-Head in mad triumph rolls,
Her jubilant pilot gloats
At two rickety, wooden moles,
The pathetic little boats,
Where cold, exhausted, starving souls
Grab anything that floats;

"How long until Der Fuhrer wiil prevail?"

He spies a strange machine upon his tail..

The late night labours of boffins

This new 'Spitfire' employs,

Messerschmitt spins, wings dorsal fins,

The beaches burst in noise,

"'Bout bleedin time!" screams Tommy, *"Three cheers for the Brylcreem Boys!"*

Malo-les-bains

May 31st 1940

The French at the Evacuation

Only Lille desires the honour of France,

Endures a losing battle to the end,

La Garde in front of La Belle Alliance

Would have been glad to call these soldats friend;

Full fierce they fought

Like rigid rocks of Rome,

For ev'ry second bought sends some son safely home.

After many an adventure

Two poilus find safety's grace,

Howling bagpipes call to muster

Bearded dregs of English race,

Out of many a wine cellar

Falls a drunken disgrace...

Together they all stagger thro the night,

The last few ships for Dover to alight.

Boarding the pack'd Saint Helier

Henri slips then falls &

Screams out, "Pierre!" but oil-slick hair

& lone, ring-finger'd hand

Are gone, leaving no trace but shallow footsteps in the sand.

Dunkerque

June 2nd 1940

Echoes of Defeat

Tho' stretch'd to breaking point the laden crews

Rescue one long days worth of French soldiers,

But shouts of British perfidy ensues

When the rear guard reach the clutter'd beaches;

They fought to save

Those footsteps in the sand,

Now gone across the wave, gone to the promis'd land.

"..the odious apparatus

Of the Nazi privateers

We shall fight on fields & beaches,

Offer I blood, sweat & tears,

If the empire of the English

Should last a thousand years,

Then let men say this was her finest hour!"

Churchill's few words fills many men with power.

The floating corpse of poor LeGrand

Wash'd up close by Calais

Above, huge band of gen'ral's stand,

Bedeckt in sylvan grey,

Viewing *those* cliffs... over the waves an eagle surfs the spray.

France

June 4th 1940

France's Ignominy

How they fought on the field of Alesia!

How they conquer'd all with Napoleon!

How they endured the seige of the Kaiser!

How they bled at the bloodbath of Verdun!

War shown no care,

Les personnes du Paris

Ominously declare theirs an open city.

As ageing Petain chair'd the meet,

His cabinet divided...

"Monsieurs we must, accede defeat,

To battle on misguided!"

"Non! to Afric we must retreat,

Fight like corner'd tigers!"

"Oui! If we go we shall retain our pride,"

"Mais! prison camps must cloak the countryside!"

"What of our comrades, les Angliches?"

"They offer union..."

To fight, they wish, to the finish..."

"Tis naught but corpse fusion,"

Says Petain, *"She shall soon have her neck rung like a chicken."*

Bordeaux

June 17th 1940

Conqueror!

Clear as crystal in his reminiscence,

The world-historical adventurer

Tours poppy fields where his youthful vibrance

Once expended as some despatch runner;

"How good & true

Our sacrifice all seems!"

He sighs while driven to the city of his dreams.

Embedded in his consciousness

Were the palaces & rues,

The operatic spaciousness

That an artist soul imbues

With electric vivaciousness,

As tho' she were a muse...

Past Tower & Arc to the Invalides,
With papparazi following his lead.

He gazed thro' the sarcophagus
Into his hero's core,
In silences, stood glorious,
On Alexander's shore...

"This city is wondrous but we must make our Berlin more!"

Paris

June 23rd 1940

Vital Days

Swastikas hanging from the Brandenburg,
Hitler skulk'd back to the Reichschancell'ry,
Aft Belgium, Holland, France & Luxemburg,
One more army, determin'd utterly;

A giant map

Frames the situation,

One dew-bejewell'd gap protects that damn'd nation.

"A fleet of mine layers shall build

A bristling ballustradus,

The legions then may land unkill'd

From Ramsgate to Lyme Regis,

Soon British fields for Berlin till'd,

But first remember this,

*That only one pre-requisite is there,
We must control the all-important air."*

From the glades of well-won battle
Twelve men made Field-Marshal,
His favour'd sons receive batons -
Goering's lust not yet full,
His baton *must* be kingsize with ivory enamel.

Berlin

July 19th 1940

Canto 3

There is no question of my giving help to Britain.
How can I fight for a thing, freedom, which is denied to me

Nehru

Home Guard

The Battle for France is truly over,
The Battle of Britain hath now begun,
The Royal Air Force face the Luftwaffe,
Her nine hundred outnumber'd three to one;
Sky-lines are drawn,
Two cross'd cautious fencers,
The first few flights are flown probing for weaknesses.

Sarge hands out two rounds for practice,

"That's all the top brass could spare,

Right lads, aim yer rifles at this

Scrawny scarecrow with straw hair..."

From man-to-man these misfits miss,

"Ya bleedin shower, there

Won't be a second chance wi' them Germans!"

This time the scarecrow is cut to ribbons.

He shouts out, "*March!*" & off they sail

Into the nearest pub,

Pints of real ale, a Great War tayle

& Mrs Braithwaite's grub,

Not looking like England's front line, more like a rambler's club.

Scarborough

July 1940

Alderangriffe

Before the morning's twilight mystery,

Black Bentley slinks thro Royal Tunbridge Wells,

Crunching the gravel of fair Calverly,

A villa echoes to its butler's bells;

Behold Dowding!

Man at the Air Force helm,

Appointment by the King, 'Defender of the Realm.'

He was chauffer'd to the centre

Of the Operations room,

"Morning girls, what news the weather?"

"Clear from Deal to Ilfracombe!"

Cathode BLIPS now growing louder

Red bulbs scarleting gloom,

Models move thro' imaginary air,

The stick-work of a master croupier.

...forty... sixty... eighty... & more

Bandits fast approaching

The Southern shore..." with clammy claw

Dreamt dangers struck Dowding,

"Send five squadrons to intercept," his ties unloosening.

Biggin Hill

August 13th 1940

Royal Air Force

"Queen to Bishop seven... that's check & mate!"

Squeals Ginger 'to his Squadron-Leader, Bligh,

As crackling speakerage did emanate

The screaming call to scramble & to fly!

Aft 'Tally ho!

Soon cruising thro the skies,

With bold "Bandits below!" they swoop to scoop the prize.

"...in the field of human conflict

Have so many owed so much

To so few!" The Few's hearts were prick'd

By Churchill's Tyrtaean touch,

"You know, Nigel, we shan't be lick'd!"

& both their spirits such

They craved the day & that day's victory

As if awaiting Spain off Tilbury.

Bligh conducts a daisy-cutter,

Keen to renew the fray,

"Spot of dinner?" he join'd Ginger,

"A wizard show today!"

The ground crew call, "She's ready Nige!" to cockpit, "Chocks away!"

Kenley

August 15th 1940

Bombing the Reich

They watch'd the wonder of the Milky Way,

There Phaeton's crashing chariot did scorch

A splash of stars awash with Hera's spray,

Glittering in the trail of Luna's torch;

AS Mondenschein

Silvers the cloudy seas,

These steel wings aquiline float on propeller breeze.

Xaver basks in chic revelrie

Infesting the late night bars,

Vesta's disturb'd tranquility

As the sirens sound for Mars,

Flak throws up bright hostility

Where searchlight sweeps the stars...

"What a disgraceful form of War to wage!"

Sleep-robb'd storm round the shelters in a rage.

She crawls outside to count the cost,

Picks up a dropt pamphlet,

"The War is lost while you are boss'd

By Hitler's cabinet!"

"Now they have started something!" "Der Fuhrer shall finish it!"

Berlin

August 28th 1940

The Blitz

The scales are tilting from Fighter Command,

More empty seats at meal-times ev'ry day,

How terrible the strain upon that band,

Then here they come again, the cross & grey!

Twelve hundred planes

In eight-square miles of sky,

Bringing the burning rains to churn the old Thames dry.

At the exposed heart of Empire

Has the world curtail'd all sense?

Sirens squeal & children cry a

Lament for lost innocence,

Mason'ry crumbles into fire,

Here Andersson's defence

Lies mangl'd in a corrugated heap,

Besdie the mess charr'd infants seem asleep.

The half-lights shine beneath the ground

On tunnels & platforms,

Tho' songs abound sleep passes round

These e'er fidgeting dorms

Of whiskey, fags, soft sneaky shags & hopes for lonely homes.

Kings Cross

September 1940

Battle of Britain

Paladin Goering hurls his armada

Luring the allied airmen to demise,

Another Phlegra, another Zama

Unfolds upon the frail blue meadow skies;

"Now is the time!"

Ring-fingers fist a THWACK!

From Cherbourg to Trondheim his Luftflotten attack.

Nigh on ev'ry plane was scrambl'd

As the bloody crux was fed,

Such battle royale entangl'd

Thro the smoky swirl-skies spread,

Where the fate of Britain dangl'd

On such a slender thread,

That unless this loss of pilots soon staunch'd

Tomorrow should see the invasion launch'd.

Dantean surge of sulphurix
Swept thro the streets aflame,
Firedrake antics, like sixty-six,
But this time Lady Dame
Shone brilliant defiance as wave after wan wave came.

London

September 15th 1940

Destiny of War

Refraining from his guttural bombast
Hitler convers'd calmly over luncheon,
*"The season for a sea-invasion pass'd,
Then let us continue bombing London..."*
A sad truth aired,
*"This War now beckons long,
Tho' not fully prepared our will shall prove too strong."*

"England" spoke thwarted conqueror,
Cousins willing to admire,
*"Have subjugated India
With far superior fire,
Her Raj precursors our Russia..."*
*But... her global empire
Must be destroy'd when all this fighting ends,*

When all I wanted was to be their friends."

"Russia!?" says Hess in stark surprise,

"Why yes, it has to be!"

Divining eyes gaze to the skies,

"Our one true enemy,

Whose rabbits must be swiftly slain or chain'd in slavery."

Berlin

October 1940

A New Rome

The Generalissimo took supper,

Settl'd in his leather with Chianti,

Imagined he sat with Calphurnia

'Fore pouring over maps & strategy;

His brilliance

Unecho'd in the field,

The Vallettan defence offer'd him meagre yield.

Wily Britain builds strength in stealth -

East of Cyrenaica

The forces of the Commonwealth

Cross Egypt's ancient border,

In fiery line & perfect health

To claim an Uttica -

From Bardia & dune-sunk lunar sands

Push'd Italy's panic-stricken warbands.

Pride-swallowing Mussolini

Neath Hitler's stern voice squirms,

"Fuhrer! help me! my grand army

Rack'd with retreat & worms!"

"Of course my friend, but in the end it must be on my terms."

Rome

December 1940

Death of Eleanor Stemmler

"I'm delighted to tell you Frau Stemmler

A sanatorium has been founded

With facilities to help your daughter..."

"They will take good care of my beloved?"

"I'm sure they will,

All prospects beckon fine,

Now if you could just fill these forms in & then sign..."

Eleanor enter'd the abbey

Breathing air quite crisp & clean,

Hippocratic morality

Sacrificed to cleanse the gene

& guarantee supremacy,

Small matter of hygiene -

When feeble-minded deem'd unfit to live

By eugenists no doctor could forgive.

She went out her for a country ride
With exited patients,
Cool monoxide hard pump'd inside,
When closed the precious vents,
She died crying, "*Momma!*" fingers scraping desperate dents.

Hessen

Christmas Day 1940

BOOK TWO

ACT ONE

The most dangerous moment comes with victory
Napoleon

Canto 1

The belief in the possibility of a short decisive war appears to be one of the
most ancient & dangerous of human illusions
Robert Lynd

Desert Fox

As Rommel took first steps on Afric sand,
All about servants of the fiasco
Load ships, evacuation was at hand,
Arms strewn as if by Trasimene's flow;
He cocks his cap
Thigh-cracks a riding whip,
"Someone get me a map, I want to take a trip."

His plane flew lofty on the tour
Of simmering hot Syrte,
Sang some nomadic troubadour,
"What beauty & how ghastly!"
Italy flees along the shore
Yon mud-baked Benghazi,
"We shall form a fresh defence line down there!"
With that they whip back westward thro' the air.

Between palm-leaf lined boulevards
Parades the Werhmacht grey,
Like picture-cards, ev'ry ten yards
& what a hand to play,
When his aces, the Panzers, have arrived to join the fray.

Tripoli

February 14th

1941

Bligh's Capture

There is a heat at the heart of battle
Which only the heroical may bare,
Molder's aim unlooses brutish rattle,
Sends Ginger smithereening into air;
Death-barber'd cry
Peals from that pilot's end,
For Squadron-Leader Bligh has lost his bestest friend.

He fell upon the Major's tail
With bleak, red mist descending,
Let off such lethal eight-gun hail,
It seem'd t'were never-ending,
Yet rages are condemned to fail
'Gin such skilful wending..
For being blind in pursuit of vengeance
He'd almost flown atop the shores of France.

Some sharp-eyed coastal battery,
Blasted the wings off Bligh,
How steadily his chute thwacks free,
Drifts slowly thro' the sky,
Towards those waiting muzzles with a bitter-season'd sigh

France

April

1941

The Agony of France

The Gauls welcome the Nazi supermen,
Preferring peace unto resistant pain,
Tho' still rare alters midst occupation
Bare secretly the cross of lost Lorraine;
Shining spirit
Of old Ambriorix
Repugnant in the spit of one imperatrix.

"Nazi batardes!" Veronique curs'd,
Stubbing out her cigarette,
*"They rape our country & what's worse
Les cochons fou raped Annette!
Somebody has to be the first
To challenge such mind-set,
We must form an arm'd group for resistance!
"Domain...reviens dormir,"* whisper'd Constance.

Slipping grace'fly to her lover,
Tongue-probing lust to share,
Under cover, like a glove her
Man thrust his must down there,
Where tho' her panting sweet still did she long for dear Pierre.

Orleans

June

1941

A Letter Home

Six torrid months sends Lina's mind a-whirl,
Still grieving for the loss of her daughter,
*"She always seem'd a fit & healthy girl,
How could she have died of pneumonia?"*

*"My darling wife,
We must give up her ghost,"*

Fresh toast & butter knife... Friedrich fetch'd in the post.

"Papa, this is Khan's handwriting!"

Max snatch'd at his son's hand,
Tensions delay'd the opening,
Too few contents too soon scann'd,
*"All is well! But he is missing,
Mama, his food so bland...
Ev'rywhere the army victorious...
He is sure he will be home for Christmas!"*

*"The proudest I have ever been,
My boy he is so brave!"*

Xaver's eye-sheen films with dark green,
Affection he did crave,
So rush'd to join the U-boat arm, for action & the wave.

Berlin

June

1941

Fog of War

Stalin tosses the despatch to the fire,
"Hitler prepares to invade, cries London,
They only want to plunge us in their mire!"
Molotov reads a note from Washington;
"The twenty third..."
"When will this nonsense end?
Attacking is absurd, Herr Hitler is our friend!"

Good company kept Khan Stemmler
For the battles yet to come,
Singing songs all thro Silesia
Of Moscow & Lebensraum,
Proudly bearing the Swastika
Upon the labarum,
This battle banner beaming & unfurl'd,
Full flying to defend the Western world.

Thro' frontier gaurds passes freight train
Honouring the treaty,
Loaded with grain from the Ukraine,
Unaware completely
Watching it trundle by them some stormtrooper company!

Poland

June 21st

1941

War in the East

Gunflash invigorates the Eastern dawn
Marking the onset of Barbarossa,
A thousand miles of battle-lines are drawn,
Scale dwarfing the grandstanding of Wagner;
Each Kesselschact
Tannenburg remembers,
Desperate pockets pack'd with hordes of prisoners.

Like a destructive Tsunami
Upon the shores of Asia,
The spearheads roll relentlessly
Beyond Pomenaria
& Ukraine down to the Black Sea -
Pitiful defender
Builds bastions from a friable glass,
Crush'd effortlessly as the Panzers pass.

The granges growing less & less,
All round the brown steppes band,
Vast & endless, vapid, friendless,
Honey-rich feindesland -
Stalin's colossal empire in the palm of Hitler's hand.

Byelorussia

July

1941

Death Squad

Buscher goes about his work with relish,
Hunts down the local Party Kommissar,
Whips him, strips him, rips him like a catfish,
The shocking face of unangelic War;
Penn'd in Juden
Made sad, Schutzstaffel slaves,
"Follow me you vermin, we go to dig your graves!"

Nazi bestiality pours
Oer conquer'd territory,
Sanguinarius Quaesitors -
Einsatzgruppen - kill for glee,
Clipboards notch numbers for the cause
Quite meticulously,
Impressing Himmler with the murder's pace,
"I shall observe a mass shooting take place."

The bullets whizz, his shoe-shine spit
Splatter'd with blood & brain,
Edge of death-pit, close to vomit,
The dying squirm in pain,
"These methods are too crude, we must do something more humane..."

Byeloruss

August 15th

1941

Subjugations

Buscher rode to the gorge at Babi-Yar,
Black conduit to extermination,
Stripping Jewesses of dress, slip & bra,
He lined them in naked degradation;
Life's last moments
Wailing in extremis,
Machine gunner opens, delivering death's kiss.

He rode thro' warm Autumnal rain
To a solemn city square,
Men strung up in their grevous pain
Dance short-time upon the air,
Nearby Dosia waits in train,
Voluptuous & fair...
Buscher trots slowly all along her line,
Dismisses the rest, *"This one shall be mine..."*

Send her to my house in Bremen!"
Beady eyes undress her...
Young Konstantin boil'd up within,
Sprinted home to Mother,
With tear-streak'd eyes she splurged out, *"They have stolen sister!"*

Kiev

September

1941

Drang Noch Osten

Stalin's laughter haunts Hitler's garish dreams,
Ghosts whisper, "*Delenda est Carthago!*"
Come morning konferenz his sol-fa screams,
"*I must begin the drive upon Moscow!*"
"*Perhaps we should*
First form a winter's line?"
"*Nonsense! with one last shove the Kremlin shall be mine.*"

Those mucky & encouching seas,
Thick, brown, froze ev'ry axle,
The Wehrmacht sinks up to it's knees,
Jackboots suck'd from each ankle,
Their throttle roar more flagging breeze,
A foundering battle..
While Ollie rifles thro' the Russian dead
Some sleep-coat stands & stabs him in his head.

Khan blew that black-tooth'd grin away
& dug his friend's death-hole,
The grave fill'd in, loss felt like kin
For friendship touches soul,
While from the ruthless Heavens Winter's first snowflake did fall.

Dorogobuzh

October 7th

1941

Canto 2

Schon schwebert ihr in ungemebnen Fernen
Den sel'gen Gottertraum
Und leuchtet neu, gesellig, unter Sternen
Im lichtbesaten Raum

Goethe

Day in the Life

Dust devils swept the deadlock of Tobruk,
Dead heart of this most dreadful of dead lands,
The molten, hostile sky of the Menluk,
Medusa's blood-serpents squirming thro' sands;
As Dawn slow grows
Eager for the slaughter
Tommy Sumner arose... life short, but days shorter.

From out a mess tin he did shave,
Nobbly knee'd in khaki pants,
White knight of a Crusader wave,
Carthaginian elephants,
Steel citadels becometh grave,
Flames licking from the vents...
& with a best mate shot on either side
A brown-eyed boy from Burnley nearly died.

As Billy writhed in agony,
On hot sand worm-guts spill'd,
How terribl'y veterancy
Such hellish sights did build,
'If mi number int on it,' Tommy thought, 'I sha'nt get kill'd!'

Cyrenaica

November

1941

Glimpse of Glory

Fascisti race to the gates of Moscow,
Ran ragged in her ruin'd environs,
Ice-caked at thirty-five below zero,
& the Russkis still scrapping like demons;
Skirting the verge
Of that fabled city,
One last glorious surge must seize them victory!

Kampfswagon engine warm'd by fires,
Khan's company advances,
On reconnaissance's acquires
Most mythical of glances,
In nearing distance Moscow's spires
Flutter like goldfinches,
Rough volley of gunshot disturbs the dream
For motley crews of workers on them stream!

With the Panzers frozen solid
A few leagues to the rear,
Entrench'd Russian, with wrench & gun,
Defending ever near,
With pishah sight those spires espied... mist shrouds... then disappear.

Khimki

December 3rd

1941

American Opinion

Rita clocks off another working day
Making deadly acroutements of War,
Collected her ever-increasing pay,
Then nipp'd for a quick whiskey at Hank's Bar;
Conversation
Deepens at the refill,
"I did not raise my son just to die for Churchill!"

*"I fought," said Hank, "In Flanders' mire,
Back in NineteenSeventeen,
Pull'd Britain's chestnuts from the fire
In scenes like ya've never seen,
Just so that lousy old empire
Remains our global queen!"*
A tear slipp'd from the corner of his eye,
"Y'know I saw a lotta good men die."

She drain'd the glass, gush'd from her core,
"God bless America!"
Walk'd through the door to Ned's new store
To buy a newspaper,
Whose front page dominated once more by Mister Hitler!

Jerkwater
December 6th
1941

Pearl Harbour

Sol's fiery portal rose from silken sea,

Illumes a fleet thro' mellow morning mist,
Upon the flat-top of the Akagi
Yamamoto crush'd pearl in shaking fist;
World-airwaves fill,
"Tora-Tora-Tora!"
Instreaming for the kill, screaming, "*The Emperor!*"

Steeds dived down to Battleship Row
Like Samurai swift-charging,
Twin-streak a speeding torpedo,
Drop big bombs from whizzing wing
Awfly spectacular the show,
Noble ships exploding,
Day of Lusitanian proportions,
Echoes resounding round the wide oceans.

"KERWHOOM!" The West Virginia
Joins the sunken others,
Oklahoma, Arizona –
But not the carriers –
Thro' chance or fate, steaming at sea, peacef'ly on manouveres!

Hawaii

8.15 AM

America Goes to War

A veil of snow covers the capital,
But for the widely drifting Potomac,

A pageant of the pleasant wonderful,
Oblivious to enemy attack;
Rooseveltdt dines
Within those Whitehouse walls,
One call him realigns, the perfidy appalls.

News tickers widely read loud,
What words to be receiving,
Rude shock electrifies the crowd
Jaws dropping disbelieving,
A father's tear slips sad & proud,
Portending his grieving...
Leaving his bag on the roof of the car
Off raced Carlton to tell the news to Ma.

Tongue-babbling fast back at the farm,
At last she gets the gist,
"Don't join the army, boy, stay calm,"
"But Ma, I must enlist!"

She tried to soothe him with soft hands, they stroked a firm-clench'd fist.

Jerkwater
December 7th
1941

Winston Churchill

Face sighing stern, lips draining brandy glass,
Marlborough's blood congealing for the fight,

Depress'd with this unpleasant presentness,
No way to win the Wars in mortal sight;
 Stuff'd from dinner,
 Half-cock'd cheeks all aglow,
He orders his butler to fetch the radio...

"... attack'd the Hawaiian islands..."

Splash & splurt, out burst his drink,
Thunder clouds throttling ambitions

Pierced by often dreamt of chink,

"All the tides & all the oceans,

Dare this be what I think?"

By private line he reach'd the President -
To serve his hopes, it seem'd, an angel sent.

"God be with you!" how civilly

Men ended strange phone call

With boyish glee he vee'd vict'ry,

"So we've won after all..."

Now Hitler's fate is seal'd," he utter'd with a sterner drawl.

London

December 7th

1941

World War

With Rommel retreating to Gazala,

 'Barossa nearing annihilation,

Hitler ponders within Amerika,

Reflecting upon the escalation;
With timely blow
An ally ne'er vanquish't
Has strode into the show in ways he would have wish'd.

Summoning the Reichstag android
Speaks Hitler, virulently,
*"Rooseveltdt's war we can't avoid –
The responsibilty
Of this half-Judaiz'd, negroid,
Capitalist country!
Standing side-by-side with the Emporer,
I have declared war on America!"*

As the claque joy demonstrated
A twinge shook Goering's gut,
Long-awaited, ever-fated,
The World War nails hard shut,
A Reichmarshall soft whispering, *"Germany is kaput!"*

Berlin
December 11th
1941

Resettlement

The Star of Poland stitch'd in yellow band
Order'd to mark the arm of every Jew,
Upon a pack'd platform the Grunfelds stand,
As cattle wagons clatter into view;

Peasant & priest
Into that cramm'd space sent,
Trains lurch into the East, towards resettlement.

Poland's pitiful freight trains flow,
Desperation stagnates air,
One welcome smile softens the blow
Jakob stands so calmly there,
To led them thro' the grey ghetto,
A flat for all to share -
Two rooms & one tiny lavatory
To serve his reunited family.

Nikki slipt to the ghetto wall,
The sign '*Verboten*' said,
Chasing the roll of her blue ball,
The sentry shot her dead...
Wailing *kinah* to side & *sheloshim* the Grunfelds sped.

Warsaw
December
1941

Death of Khan Stemmler

All across the front the counter-strikes start,
Urged on by vengeance, Stalin & Smirnoff,
It seems once more the ghosts of Bounaparte
Have fled the cruel cannons of Kutuzov;

Adolf aghast,
Thin hair afleck with grey,
"The army will stand fast, we must not fight like Ney!"

Fighting firm with heavy losses
Germans slow the grand Russian,
But their invincible hubris
Defeated to depression,
Like Sargon's dies supremus
With the Kullumaeen...
Without his fingers, toes & half-a-nose
Khan staggers lifelorn thro the drifting snows.

CRACK! CRACK! he falls in writhing pain,
Snow stain'd red where he bled,
His warm breaths wane, the bloody mane
Of some befang'd wolfshead
Brushes his cheek while ripping throat... today the pack well fed.

Russia
Christmas Day
1941

Canto 3

The soldiers fight & the kings are heroes

The Talmud

The Final Question

Heydrich receives Hitler's whim thro Himmler,
Schutzstaffel konferenz to Wansee borne,
Yachts dallying on a gentle water
Sumptuous luncheons laid on level lawn;
Aft finger-licks
& champagne guzzl'd hard,
Men stepp'd thro' the dorics of some villa's façade.

"The time hath come for Endlosung,"

Chirp'd Heydrich over brandy,
"Ev'ry last drop of blood be wrung
From the Jews methodic'ly,
Sparing not the avengant young,
Raise hands if you agree..."

This fateful act of faith bedfellows share,
Adds Eichmann, "Let us breath, at last, clean air..."

*At Auswich an innovation
Has successfully been tried,
The gas Zyklon... deportation
Shall drain Europa wide,
In fifty months eleven million Jews will have died..."*

Berlin

January

1942

Treblinka

Life weary, yet life always lingers on,
At least in Warsaw some know family,
One morning the SS form a cordon
To take away the old ones forcibly;
"You will be sent
To safe & special camp,"
Laughing inside they meant to extinguish life's lamp.

The Starbearers pack tight without
Water nor ventilation,

Days trundle by 'til rough shout "Out!"
A primitive train station,
Old Hersz is fill'd with gnawing doubt
At the explanation
That for these showers they must strip to skin,
He kiss'd his Kaiser's cross & crept within.

The Harikvah soon screaming roar,
As hissing swirl'd the gas,
Squirm, writhe & claw... alive no more
They search'd each mouth & ass,
& form'd possession-mountains, ditching deep the warm corpses.

Poland

July 22nd

1942

Desert Surge

On a day suffocating & stormy,
Resplendant bloom'd the Rose of Jericho,
Til' crush'd beneath grinding machinery
Of Afrikans advancing row by row;
Led by Rommel,
Darling of the masses,
To conquer the Kanal & claim the Caucasus.

With flair & flourish he attack'd
Across hard & calcin'd earth,

Hot battle's corrosive impact
His to steer by right of birth,
At last Tobruk captured intact,
Much blood spilt for it's worth,
A port from which a warring conqueror
Could drive the British out of Africa.

To Alamein the Eighth withdraw,
Digging-in defences,
Midst Cairo's War th'embassadour
Urns his secret papers...
The fleet, from Alexandria, flees for safer harbours.

Egypt
August 7th
1942

Stalin's City

The Sixth Army thunders to the Volga,
The Swastika hoisted over Elbrus,
In front - unending acres of Asia,
Behind - the wide wake of the conquerors;
Resting their flank
Upon the deep, dark Don,
Onwards advanced each tank, onwards & ever on!

With sleeves roll'd up, sporting short pants,
On mountain slope stood Willie,
Watching apartments, parks & plants

Of this white cubist city,
The first hint of caution supplants
Invincibility!
For infesting the city & the plain,
The Red Army seems set to fight again.

Above shored-up defences pour
Fourth Richtofen Air Fleet,
Planes by the score have brought the War
To level ev'ry street,
The will Man gains to resist ills soul-temper'd in the heat.

Stalingrad
August 23rd

El Alamein

Stiff-borne by dreams from his fade-worn Fuhrer,
Fraught by an all-expectant Germany,
Ill on the air of the wide, wide Delta,
The Pyramids in immediacy;
Rommel orders
His neurasthenic men,
"Boys, rev up the panzers, advance them once again."

Droving North of the Quattara
Their iron-clad caravans
Rode the ridge Alem el Halfa
To the Somuan Shermans,
Stonish shells from sandy shelter,

Wreak havoc with his plans...
He paus'd, the pale moon growing paler still,
Up from the south warm sandstorms shriek & shrill.

Dust settles on a dead terrain,
Enmein'd with armour'd hulk,
Glancing in pain, long lists of slain,
"A tanker has been sunk..."
He took the news heart-sighing, *"Call it off!"* & left to sulk.

Jabel Kalakh

September 3rd

1942

Guadalcanal

America, at last, enters battle,
Aslant volcanic isle rainforested,
Strange & stagnant, humid, pestilential,
By lizards & swarm'd insects infested;
When bugles blare,
Comes forth the fierce attack,
Banzais scything thro air silenced by CRACK! CRACK! CRACK!

Men fought on with furious rage
Midst the giant hardwood trees,
Mottl'd by squawking foliage,
Warm swamp-waters tickling knees,
Where, fell'd by Wars that others wage,
Full riddl'd with disease'

The last thing many marines would have seen
Were piercing chrystals' fanatical glean!

Up, up went Nippon's battlecry
Along the Bloody Ridge,
"Banzai!" "Banzai!" "Maline you die!"
Six hard days of carnage,
But like brave Barnes at Gettysburg defenders would not budge.

Solomon Islands

September 14th

1942

Close Run Thing

Stalag luft twelve bustl'd with goons & drones,
'How terribly boring,' thought a restless Bligh,
Sauntering cross to Flight-Leftenant Jones,
Who thinks, *"Meseems, A twinkle in his eye!"*
"Tonights the night,
Are the cutters ready..."

Bligh's eyes burn'd action bright for life & liberty.

Stars fire & thro' the wire they went
With never a half-look back,
Shunning Sol's harvest fluorescent

March'd thro night's covering black,
The dark Black Forest three weeks spent,
They climb'd into a stack...
Dawn swallowing the last of her moonbeams,
The *Ranz des Vaches* resounding round their dreams.

To gunshot & Teutonic shout
They woke up with a fright,
Rough bundl'd out, fell'd with a clout
They stood up to such sight...
Almost touching the Heaven slopes of some Helvetian height.

Hoch Finstermunz

August 1941

Urban Crucible

Paulus put down the phone on der Fuhrer,
Turn'd to his gen'rals, "*That man must be mad,
Not content for us to reach the Volga,
Ev'ry brick of this city must be had!*"
With cautious voice
He order'd the advance,
Restricted of all choice, condemn'd to court with chance.

Immazed the *Drang Nach Osten's* flow
All in the rubble carcass,
This hellish huge, grey grain silo,
Held by ragged defenders,
Dread lingering in each shadow,
Wylde shots blast at noises -

Where rages vicious hand-to-hand combat
In sewer, stairwell, cellar, shop-front, flat.

Pity the poor civilian,
Courageous troglodyte,
An alien subt'anean
Defending its birthright,
This is its city, its property, its striving, its fight.

Stalingrad
September 19th
1942

Nuclear Advent

Einstein has warn'd Roosevelt directly,
"The unspeakable fury of the Bomb,"
A project given top priority,
Harnessing the power of the atom;
Stately support,
No Bounaparte error -
"Fulton, how can a boat travel underwater?"

Midst desolate New Mexico,
At arid Los Alamos,
Best scientists secretly stow,
Clergy of the compound cross,
To blend together all they know
& pitch it on a toss...
Compiling theories & equations,
Creating this ultimate of weapons.

Fifteen thousand tons of silver
Escorted from Fort Knox,
Chance formula produces the
Radioactive rocks -
First controll'd chain-reaction epic universe unlocks.

Chicago
December
1942

BOOK TWO

ACT TWO

"Can this be death?" thought Prince Andrew, looking with a quite new envious glance at the grass, the wormwood, & the streamlet of smoke that curl'd up from the rotating black ball. "I cannot, I do not wish to die. I love life - I love this grass, this earth, this air..."

Tolstoy

Canto 1

No bastard ever won a war by dying for his country.
He won it by making the other poor, dumb bastard die for his country

George Scott

Counter Attack!

How brutal when two granite wills collide,
Men kick'd to death defending an ideal,
The Red Army has trawl'd the nation wide
For fodder to feed into Hades' wheel;
Adolf Hitler
Remains, tho devil's kin,
Some petty dictator in the times of Stalin.

The Russians & their countersway
Cross the wide Don's ice floe pitch,
Tween old Kletskaya's russet clay
& stark Serafimovich,
Blustering blizzard enfogs day,
Fell workings of a witch...
"Achtung!" beside the Wehrmacht's flimsy flanks -
Rows of lethal, lextalionic tanks!

As PANIC acquires grave station
She spreads her pungent breeze -
Chain reaction, six months gains gone,

The conqueror far flees,
But for the Sixth, that wounded Knight, trapp'd on its bleeding knees.

Stalingrad
December 22nd
1942

Nippon Noon

Sanguine waters surround the Solomons,
The Sun of Empire starts her long descent,
Humbl'd & hurt by brash Americans,
Epitomised by one hardy sergeant;
Our big, bald Al,
As rough as gruff could be,
Stuck on Guadalcanal from Hicksville, Tennessee.

He watch'd the vaulting Perseids
Cause foeman's vapouressence,
At times was forced to close his lids
To starbrite phosphorescence,
Struck by th'enchauting Leonids
& life's impermanence,
He remember'd what his Pa used to say,
"Son, life's a loan, you'll pay the debt one day."

The Yankee seizes seas & skies
As the Imperatour,
Lowers his eyes, slouches & sighs,
"The army may withdraw..."
Bows Tojo, *"Yes, your majesty..."* & scuttles thro the door.

Tokyo
December 31st
1942

Imperial Dementia

The pursuit of unbridl'd ambition,
Bezerking wildly thro' civilised lands,
Oft leads to phantasies, as the vision
Of Empire crumbles to glitter-bone sands;
Hitler muses
Midst these mythopoeics,
So serenely ponders, "*O, what should I do next?*"

Another Christmas passes by
Still elusive, victory,
Cheer found but when his childish eye
Casts oer a model city,
By marble fire-place a sigh
Of wistful self pity...
Reliev'd by smashing up plastic soldiers
With models of rockets & jet fighters.

Retiring to his simple bed,
Old nightmares draw yet near,
Convulsions shred the shrieking dread,
Awake... awash with fear,
Blue lips babbling strange nonsense, gasping, "*He... He... He's been here!*"

The Berghof

January

1943

Ghetto

Clack-dish echoes thro' miserable streets,
But nobody has anything to give,
Death & disease with malnutrition meets
Where only HOPE whispers the will to live;
God's earthly flail
Flung flat across Warsaw,
Grand flagellant unveils his ghoulish threshing floor.

Faith uplifted with the Torah
& the flesh of Hebrewdom,
Moses lights up the Menorah
Kinsfolk hand-held as they hum,
Proclaiming '*Happy Hanukah*'
& as the meal was done
Ludwig told stories of the Maccabees...
In bursts a breathless Karl with, "*Father please*

May we converse?" they left the room,
"I harbour gloomy news,
They wish our doom, up chimney flume
Intend to send the Jews,"
"This is not true..." "It is, but if they come we must refuse!"

Warsaw

January

1943

War at Sea

"Up periscope!" unveils a killing ground,
By Seawolves circl'd in their hungry packs,
The feast is set, curl'd smoke plumes all around,
The silence broken, ev'rywhere... attacks!
Cold & enpearl'd
Submariner deep rides,
Bellum Navale swirl'd beneath the whirling tides.

With heavy beard & nerves half shot
Xaver cursed his dank abode,
Oftimes his stomach gripp'd a knot
As the depth-charges explode,
But when a new course he did plot
& foemen torpedoed,
He felt his place with the warring nations,
Claxons caterwaul ... to action stations!

Elizabeth sinks! Jack Sumner's
Clothes sea-salt saturates,
Haul'd by shoulders, joins the others,
Last lot of his shipmates,
Cramm'd in a bulging, wooden boat to contemplate their fates.

The North Sea

February 1st

1943

The Pendulum Turns

From the depths of the tractor factory
Comes a lowly corp'ral crackling broadcast,
Heard in ev'ry homestead of Germany,
"Der Fatherland, der Fuhrer to the last!"

Lost & alone,

"Why are we forsaken?"

All animals hath flown, endure here only men.

Ivan came in ev'rywhereness,

"Hund wollt ihr ewig leben?"

In kingly, heroistic dress

Willie urges on his men,

Thro' daunting danger & duress

Til they were dead, & then

He sat with his wife's photo one last time,

Last round blew out his brains, walls coat with slime.

Paulus grappl'd with cruel conscience,

Cow'ring in the corner,

Christian sense curtails defence,

Consenting surrender,

How glad that captured mass of men meant for Siberia.

Stalingrad

February 2nd

1943

Death of Jack Sumner

They rais'd their spirits with an old sing-song,
Soon silenced by surfacing submarine,
At once old sailors knew something was wrong,
Those long, square-jaw'd faces far too serene;
Cold reasoning,
Der Fuhrer's directive,
"Pity is burdening, let no opponent live."

Sighting muzzles upon them aimed
Fuel enough for frighten'd flap,
"We are unarm'd, ye not ashamed!?"
Blonde rating straighten'd his cap,
Took four bullets, bloody & maim'd,
Croak'd, *"Cheerio old chap!"*
To this miraculously unhurt Jack,
Led breathless, daring not to answer back...

As Xaver survey'd the murder
He caught a faint movement...
As a Stemmler slays a Sumner,
Now unambivalent,
The goddess KARMA flit the scene & to another went.

The Atlantic Ocean

February 3rd

1943

Death of Xaver Stemmler

E'er since the battle of Trafalgar Bay,
Those vigilant, oak-hull'd leviathans
Have held the oceans in an island's sway,
"England expects!" Ev'ry battle stations;
Night turns to day,
Depth charge to each quarter,
The decks awash with spray as under the water

Wee submarines are toss'd about,
BOOM-BOOM-BOOOOM & BOOM again,
Some sub-aquatic boxing bout...
Like fountains in a garden
Seawater spouts fill with grave doubt
Entrapp'd & frighten'd men...
Men coat their trousers in a cruddy goo,
As ships ripp'd up & simply flipp'd in two.

Almighty Ocean rushes in,
Thetis astride the bull,
Cat'clysmic din, Xaver aspin,
What weight crushes his skull,
To sleep the deep forever in the cold crypt of that hull.

The Atlantic Ocean

February

1943

Desert War

Rommel retreats into Tunisia,
Romantic lands of Hannibal's Carthage,
Fought for by Roman, Vandal & Berber,
Inspiring War, beautiful War, to wage;
Then takes his last
Glance over Africa,
The vital days are pass'd, now to face Der Fuhrer.

Tommy Sumner enter'd a room,
To bivouac there nightly,
Sauce bottle moved, boobytrap <BOOM>
The poor sod copp'd a blighty...
Soon led thro sad hospital gloom,
Leg sawn off at the knee,
From clench'd fingers the surgeon eas'd his gun,
Tom stared back blankly, "*Yer goin' home son!*"

The Via Balbia is strewn
With hulks & jerricans,
The Arabs' boon, from sten to spoon,
Bedecking caravans,
Nearby... naked bronze corpses rot forgotten in the sands.

Libya

May 15th

1943

Canto 2

Grim was it in that dawn to be alive
Except to those who like their mornings bloody

Sagittarius

Apocalypse

Four riders climb thro' the bowels of DIS,
Steeds fording the flammable Phlegethon
& the dark, brown, dismal Stygian piss,
To cross the waters of the Acheron;
Past Cerberus,
Three-headed, howling hound,
Over Lake Avernus, they stand on Midgard's ground.

The air soon thick with snort & steam,
Oer the Red, White, Black & Pale,
The Moon took on a crimson gleam....
As struck up a fearsome gale,
Around the hoof what horrors stream
Pungent in noxious veil,
A thousand Civiallos & their sneer
Releas'd on Earth to furnish curse & fear.

Mars lifts his blade, strike splits the ground,
Lungs bellow martial roar,
Lor'lein sound startling the hounds
Pacing the Paynim shore,
Whom approach him & approaching yield the first sign of War.

Europa

Divine War

At first it seems a cloud of far distance,
Choking the icy wastes of Cocytus,
The standards of the King of Hell advance,
Behold! the Grand Armee of Satanus;
Waving rough sword
In motions of his might,
Behind, a *Daemon-horde*, above, a *Dragonsflight*.

Odin's counsel with proud limbs went
From the stallion Sleipnir
To his son & heir-lieutenant,
Swinging his hammer Mjolnir,
Toward the trembling Occident
Points Gungnir, the great spear,
Sol tentatively rising from the East,
Grew too afraid to light the royal feast.

On clinquant rays three saints descend,
George, Michael & Denys,
Jove's holy blend, merged to defend
His dreams of Liberty,
Blades sharpen'd for the battle, feather'd backs against the sea.

Britannia

Warring Gods

Mars dons a breastplate of bronze bright gleaming,
Sharpens his broadsword, polishes his shield,
Lowers his helm, sunny velvets a-streaming,
He sets out marching to the battlefield;
A trumpet blast
Summons his snarling hounds,
The flock to his feet fast with long, muscular bounds.

Ra whispers ancyeant sorcery,
Tis the sacred call to arm,
Round a rare & regal valley
Lilts the chorus of that charm -
Ragged mummies march steadfastly
Below this locust swarm -
As thro' their ranks strides a Scorpion King,
Those howling hounds reduced to whimpering.

Battle ensues! tooth, axe & claw
Thro' mummy-mass Mars wades,
Tears rags & gore, but still they roar,
Apep slain by Ra's blades -
Mars flees by flying chariot as day's dread battle fades.

Africa

Halting Hell

Satanus tried to set the sea on fire
& boil the flesh of Neptune from his bones,
But the blade of Saint George, Jove's first flyer,
Whips safely off the flames with brisk cyclones;
Yet felt a bite,
Pure ichor gushing free,
He fought the Dragonsflight with terrible fury.

In raging snick-a-snack attack
Deus dripping from bright eyes,
Three dragon skulls split with a crack,
To the final beast he flies,
Slicing its wings from bony back,
One heart thrust & it dies,
This day of evil darkness pacified,
Groans of dismay erupting from shore-side.

Dreadful Babababashurath,
The dauphin Lizard king,
Bred wrack'd with wrath, son of 'Gorath,
Black bone where once was wing,
Sank deep with the dragonicide, its limp tail following.

Europa

Season in Hell

Balrog, chief cause & culprit of these rhymes,
Tours the seven circles of Satanus,
Meph' found him with the broken-hearted crimes,
"Our lord bids thee return to Cocytus!"
With hugeous urge
Of his wing gigantic,
Hades sways to the surge rippling forth concentric.

Roaming over dismember'd souls
Astrew the fiery cavern,
Yon Caina, Judeccan falls,
Lands by the Anti-Heaven,
Striding along skeletal halls
Toward the cloven one -
The pair well met, aft converse serpentine
They saunter thro' dungeons incarnadine,

Where imps collect the crimson goo,
Long in labours wheeling,
When these first few drops from the Jew
Wepeps down from the ceiling,
Ghouls sing Carmen Cruenta to the crude *Doom Bell's* peeling.

Pandemonium

The Vanity of Jove

Thro' realms empyrean flew Gabriel,
Jove lay luxuriant 'neath peacock fan,
Unint'rested as minions of Hell
Spread suffering & helplessness thro' man;
"Your majesty,"
Th'archangel duly bow'd,
"I have a dream for thee," & conjured up a cloud...

*"Tis one shared by those lunatics,
Idolators of Hitler..."*
Across quintessence picture flicks
Of some darken'd chiasa,
*"Where there should be a crucifix
There hangs the swastika..."*
For Gabriel, it seem'd, eternity
Pass'd pleading to his master's vanity.

At last was heard that sovran voice
Run thro' rushing waters,
*"Cast is my choice, send the envoys
To the Saintly Quarters,
We are to war, send for the steeds, summon my Sky Daughters!"*

Divinia

Above the sacred sites of Shangri-La
Star temple climbs where Lord Vishnu resides,
Watch'd by those ancient spirits from afar,
Blessing his mind with bliss & more besides;
Fabulous wings
Of golden Garuda,
Whispers of Hindu kings armour the Preserver.

Th'immortal met three lithe lizards
In a mystic kind of war,
As a wonderment of wizards
Whisk'd from Vijiyanagar
Conjur'd up whirlwinds & blizzards
Aiding their battle-star,
Hurling two wounded dragons to the ground
The other panick'd with pathetic sound.

All desert-wrapp'd by Meru's vaults
Enstatured Indra stands,
Like angry Colts, the jagged bolts
In each of those four hands,
Went thundering to finish off the Wyvrn in the sands.

Asia

Holy Waters

Uncle Sam sat enthroned with Liberty
Upon the voyage East to Albion,
Entertain'd elegantly pleasantly

By his royal emissary, Dagon;
Relaxed, despite
The stern vein of that day,
How soon the deadly fight, how soon the frightful fray?

Little did those deities know
That out of the stagnant Styx,
A fleet of foul Sea-Devils flow,
So vicious in vilesome mix,
The brave Mermen could only slow
The foe with eye-glow fixt
Upon a shimmering, sun-brusht surface,
Up to that barge they roar & rage & race!

Neptune appears & checks progress
With trident, crown & shield,
Grim devils press their gruesomeness,
But Gods will rarely yield,
Soon corpses float about him, as is his the battlefield.

Oceania

Canto 3

This hungry war opens his vasty jaws

Shakespeare

Lost at Sea

Rose & Freda arrive at the butchers,
Sov'reigns & ha'pennys stretching round the back,
Where, as they went shuffling to the counters,
Foze Freda by a vision of 'er Jack;
 Pellucid glow,
Flank'd by blue guardian,

"Rose, love, we've gotta go... forget bloody bacon!"

Boy soldiers play War midst sandbags,
Down Cog Lane a telegram,
Some Azrael along the flags...
Maggie drops 'er jar of jam,
Flush-hot, slips on her pumps & rags,
Rush'd out to find 'er mam...
Collar'd with Granny flappin' down the street,
For sev'ral seconds cold hearts lost their beat...

"Our Jack is missing, presumed dead!"
The 'ole street 'eard 'er shout,
Base fears that fed on common dread,
Calamity & doubt
Are rude-releas'd into the world while shrikin' 'er eyes out.

Burnley

May

1943

Invasion of Italy

*"What is it all for, love & peace & war,
When both the wide way'd Earth & Man's action
Remain as constant as the Northern star?"*
Muse three old, mid-day crones down the station;
Their wise old eye
Translates the censor'd news,

Watching the trains pass by pack'd with Palermo's Jews.

From harbours of Tunisia
Arab maidens sang goodbyes
To a fabulous flotilla
Form'd to ferry the Allies
To sandy old Sicilia,
Neath luscious summerskies,
Overwhelming the unprepared beaches
Of shell-shock'd, co-axial defenders.

The scenery invokes the gleam
Of early Punic Wars,
When first the dream by hawk Tireme
Brought yon the Roman shores,
Spreading Hellenic legacy – cultura, learning, laws.

Panormus

July 10th

1943

Escape from Colditz

Bligh look'd upon the verdant Molden vale,
Sheer schloss serenely firmamentward shoots,
So foreboding he grew a chloric pale,
Heart sinking to the bottom of his boots;
Oflag IVC,
Cold castle for bad boys,
Broad gates bolted firmly with such soul-scarring noise.

O'er the claustrophobic courtyard,
After evening's cramp'd appeal,
He watch'd the patterns of the guard,
Felt familiar feelings swell,
*"I've made a plan, it sounds quite hard,
But best give it a bell!"*
He told the season'd escape officer,
"Yes, good luck, it's time we hit another..."

Nigel appear'd quite debonair
In German uniform,
Snook down the stair with perfect care,
Dropp'd where bright flashlights comb,
Brush'd off the dust, saunter'd outside & headed off for home.

Germany

July

1943

Conquest of Italy

Languor usurps the last coragio,
The fair share of the fighting has been fought,
No faith to summon Jupiter Stator,
Arms thrown aside men made for safest port;
From Alpine mists
The Tramontana blows,
Summoning fresh fascists, vile packs of Nazi crows.

The coup chair'd by Badaglio

*"The country is in turmoil
Thus, Mussolini, 'YOU MUST Go!"*
Fat man's blood begins to boil,
He look'd around, *"Et tu Ciano!?"*
Caught in a traitor's coil,
Summararily dismiss'd by the King,
Then arrested... nursing his broken wing...

Altho' the temple of Janus
Hath closed it's doors to war,
Hitler's panzers, Goth invaders,
Roll with a clank & roar,
Thro' Rome's gorgeous museum streets pepper'd with tombs of yore.

Rome
September 10th
1943

Savage Rape

*"At last! At last! The bastards are going
& we shall know freedom!"* sings Christina,
All round th'evacuation full flowing,
Rejoicing she turn'd the calm road's corner...
She froze, face grey,
Four soldiers hanging there,
Into an alleyway they dragg'd her by the hair.

The spittle spat with hate & spite,

Lashing out with fist & tongue,
For love of life she put up fight,
But of course they were too strong
& raped her thro' the dead of night,
None of them thought it wrong
To throw her barely breathing in a bin...
Next morning found by frantic Konstantin.

By now those Germans were long gone
& there his mother died,
An old Russian gave him a gun,
Clutch'd tightly as he cried,
"I shall avenge my family!" such hate to rage inside.

Kiev

November 6th

1943

Home Run

Bligh gazed upon the golden coast of Spain,
Close to the end of his great adventure,
Saw only friendly faces on the train,
Far from those at the start of his saga;
Back in Colditz,
Nervy, knife-edge moments,
With Fritz checking tickets & well-forged documents.

He rode his luck to Switzerland,
Compassment the Northern Star,

At Geneva he shook the hand
Of a man named Jean-Francois,
They drove thro checkpoints seldom mann'd
To Perpignan, by car,
Where with a gourd of wine, a quart of cheese,
Young Miguel guides him cross the Pyrenees.

The Holy Grail! Empiric Rock,
His heart leapt up to see,
In sublime shock he made a dock
Of the Royal Navy,
"I am an escaped airman, could you spare a spot of tea?"

Gibralta
December
1943

Return of Rommel

Hitler summons his favourite marshal,
Still could he stir that dusty soldier's soul,
*"This year they must try & cross the channel,
I give you France & the Atlantic Wall...*
From Kirkenes
Around the Norman shore,
Down to the Pyrenees, a thousand miles or more."

As he tours the sea defences,
Twitchy gen'ral's round him host,
"Incomplete!" agreed consensus

Shattering Der Fuhrer's boast,
"We must stop them on the beaches
In one day at the most...
If we do not then this War will be lost!"
His voice grew deep, concern'd & edged with frost.

Waving his Field-Marshal's baton
Like wizards weave their wands,
Foxen-vision sinks one-by-one
Obstacles in the sands,
To cause death & destruction when occasion makes demands.

Le Vivier

January

1944

Auswich

The darkest hour is that before the dawn,
By Slavophilic internecinum
Along the Valambrossa freight trains blown,
Halting at the sidings of th'abysm;
What ghastly smell,
Foul & nauseating
Ill-welcomes them to Hell... *"Line up for delousing..."*

They come to where the Grunfeld's stood
& choose the two old fathers
With Heidi pale, whose thinning blood
That daily weaker courses,

All hugg'd & kiss'd the best they could
Until they kick'd Moses,
Yanking three kinsfolk from good family,
Put on the path to ash-eternity.

Stripping naked, they march to where
A sweet ensemble play'd,
"Why do you stare?" punching the air,
Brick chimney... all hopes fade,
Two brothers face death hand-in-hand, breath poison'd as they pray'd.

Poland

April

1944

Budding Love

Time rushes as the brush of history
Cast lasting varnish round embattled Earth,
Sennets resounding loud for Liberty,
A generation's sacrifice her worth;
Hebe's darlings
From valley, peak & shore
Lull'd by true valour's wings & poetry in war.

Maggie "I'll-do-my-bit" Sumner
Sign'd up to the Land's Army,
Threshing 'Down South' in hot weather,
Slim, scruffy, sweaty, sultry,
"My name is Carlton Dillinger..."
"Oh aye! Mi name's Maggie!"

"Nice to meet ya ma'm!" "This one's got manners!"

"When d'ya finish?" "Soon... will yer wait fer us?"

By wee heliochryse they walk,
Soon skipping hand in hand,
They stop to smoke, soon drop the talk,
As lust's sudden demand
Consummates the bond between America & England.

Devon

March

1944

BOOK TWO

ACT THREE

Germany is making every effort in reconciling the apparently conflicting social interests which threaten the integral unity of all nations... with the same spirit which governs our actions at home we wish to establish our relations abroad

Adolf Hitler

Canto 1

If Hitler invaded Hell I would make at least a favourable reference to the
devil in the House of Commons

Churchill

Soldier's Homecoming

The soldier may be taken from the War,
But the War will never leave the soldier,
Into Rosegrove the train roll'd... as a door
Flung ope, there stood worm-eyed Tommy Sumner;
His only leg
Tip-tapp'd onto platform,
He paus'd, roll'd up a fag & hobbl'd his way home.

He was a simple, honest man
From streets pluck'd ordinary,
Out-serving the ferocious span
That was his 'Tour of Duty,'
But home was where the hate began,
Twas alien country -
The fate of Western civilisation
Depends on jam, suet, spam & bacon.

Tommy carried little Lucy
To bed & said, "Goodnight..."

*"Goodnight," said she, innocently,
"Why did yer 'ave to fight?"
"To save the world from one bad man, go sleep or he might bite!"*

Burnley

May

1944

Love's Bond

The moon was full & the night rippl'd fair
For the homecoming of Monsieur Merlot,
Gently drifting on a cushion of air,
Dogs barking in the farmyard dark below;
Piercing the night
Shone a secret beacon,
Bright, flickering flashlight of his destination.

With wonderful euphoria
Feet thump back on native ground,
Poetical adventurer,
Unborn children to astound...
Welcoming this paratrooper
The Maquis gather'd round...
For their lovely leader, Miss Innocent,
It seems to Earth an angel had been sent.

"Pierre!" "Veronique!" love's embrace,
They share desperate cling,
While passions race the jaundiced face

Of Constance simpering
Distorts to monstrous maelstrom... blister'd with twisted feeling.

France
May 29th
1944

Denial & Destiny

Across Ribbentrop's desk scorches 'The Sixth,'
He has the spy sack'd as a dissident,
"Heavy seas must deny that narrow width,
Send out "INVASION IS NOT IMMINENT..."
Generals peel
Their presence from the shore,
To play at pale Kriegspiel, lost in an unreal war.

From the auld Roche Guyon castle,
Duke Rochefoucourt's stately seat,
Bound a happy, bouyant Rommel
Like the cat who got the treat,
With the promise of no trouble
Drives smiling down the street,
To give his wife a gift on her birthday,
The tension of the front-lines far away!

Upon the fringes of the Reich,
Fair coast of Normandy,
The Naiad psyche draws Friedrich
To sunset-colour'd sea,

"I am ready," heart thumping free, "To die for Germany!"

Lion-Sur-Mer

June 5th

1944

The French Resistance

"Blessent mon Coeur d'une lueur monotone!"

The second half of a Verlaine malaise,
The Herresgruppe obtain'd oer the phone,

"Expect the invasion within two days!"

"If they will come

Then Calais it must be,

No need to beat the drum alerting Normandy!"

Veronique's Maquis & Pierre,

Gather'd in lip-hush stable,

English newsreaders grace the air,

"The dice are on the table!"

This moment's majesty they share

Mote profound than fable...

Six patriots switch off the radio,

Then slip into the night to start the show.

Hastening to the sabotage,

Rail-bridge soon river rocks,

Across the stage a pent-up rage

Administers rude shocks;

Resisting, restless regions of down'd pylons, damag'd docks.

France
June 6th
1944

Piercing the Atlantic Wall

Now entering the end-days of our War,
Grand finale of the Age of Empires,
Long story drench'd in misery & gore,
Now liberty attends to Hades' fires;
Aft, "Three-two-one,"
Leaps first paratrooper,
Vanguarding invasion of Festung Europa.

Tis night, & the bright moon outglows,
Laird of the silvery scene,
Blossoming from droning shadows,
Drifting earthly-wise serene,
Cloud-burst rows of silken heroes,
Yclad in Kendal Green -
While ordinary men storm'd the beaches;
Plumbers, miners, doctors, cops & teachers.

Lancasters race oer lethal beach,
Blasted waste by mortar,
Where yet to reach the bluff, to breach
Roads thro' awful slaughter,
Men bray by bobbing bodies bloating in bloody water.

Omaha Beach

June 6th

1944

Death of Freidrich Stemmler

Preparing to storm the bunker again
Rare nobility buffs Patrick Sumner
As tho' perch'd on the Pharsalian plain,
Sense stirr'd by the thrilling bagpipe's muster;
Veterans cast
A vision of Dunkerque,
France meets their feet at last... at last they go to work.

Dusty Friedrich drops down his gun
Hoping quarter, hands held high,
Steps out by a dying Frenchman
& his spike-entabl'd thigh,
Surrenders to an Englishman,
They stood there eye-to-eye...
Tho' good of soul Pat's anger fail'd the test,
His rifle raises... piercing panting chest...

Satisfied, the Goddess Karma
Departs the Norman shore,
Where a Sumner slew a Stemmler,
"What did you do that for?"
"One of 'em kill'd mi brother... had to even up the score."

Lion-Sur-Mer

June 6th

1944

The Longest Day

The breath of morning bursts between the drape,
Atomies dancing in a budding beam,
Frau Rommel felt a nuzzle at the nape,
Made love to her love-choice as if adream;
His strength fashions
The vestments of their core...
Knockings bursting passions... their young son at the door...

All the world gains confirmation
That the Invasion was on,
"Great & timely operation!"
Pipe the newsmen of London,
"Sev'ral miles of penetration,"
Thought Charlie of his son,
"Longissimus dies cito conditur!"
He told his wife, daughter & his mother..

From starry cirque, arcane séance,
Freda's fair spirit flew
To distant France, her mystic trance
Merges with milky view
Of Patrick resting by roadside, *"He's reyt, 'ee will pull thro'."*

Burnley

June 6th

1944

Betrayal!

What emotion transforms man to Judas?
Of all heartaches it must be Jealousy;
Constance leads the Gestapo with a hiss
To an old farm own'd by his family;
Saw them embrace
At an upstairs window,
Taut pulls the hate-tinged face as lonely torments grow.

The sound of jackboots on the stair
& rough Teutonic clamour
Drove Veronique to clutch Pierre
Full-zested avec l'amour...
The door burst ope, our noble pair
Shy captivity's floor,
Shape-shooting as they run into the room...
Pierre leaps on a sly, stick-grenade <BOOM>...

She groan'd & rose, her soul's own mate
Sprawl'd lifeless where he died,
Dust dissipates, before too late
She tried her suicide...
An empty... *CLICK*... & by the hair '*Der Bitch!*' was dragg'd outside.

France

July

1944

Bomb Plot

Noblesse oblige, when duty outranks praise,
Stauffenburg slips his oath's constrictive grip,
Mindful of Mankind's most valourous days,
He dares to strike at his dictatorship -
Not at the tail,
Aft' which ye face the bite,
But thro' the hissing veil the head conjures in fright.

He stepp'd into the conf'rence room,
Hitler glancds a curt "Hello!"
The situation maps cry doom...
He placed his briefcase calm & low
Near Hitler's feet, as sly as fume
This Colonel, quick yet slow,
Takes his leave, when driving thro' the compound,
He made no flinch as bomb-blast wrenches sound.

Midst the Fuhrerhauptquartier's
Dull rubble's wracken rush,
Shredded trousers, shirt in tatters,
Hair tangl'd toilet brush,
"Fate has saved me, I now decree such treachery we crush!"

Wolf's Lair

July 20th

1944

Canto 2

Many a slippery tear scuds on the cheek

Many a flank gaping & crimson

Many a pool of blood round the field

Gruffudd Ab Yr Ywad Coch

Vengeance!

They said in the night all the cats are grey,
Suspicion falls on all but his closest,
The 'coup' fizzles to naught by close of day,
Its circle of usurping soul-depress'd;
"Ich bin OK!"
Grateful Volk hear his voice,
"Providence dost display my destiny her choice..."

Financiers of treachery,
Self-made victims of the plot,
Von Stauffenburg dealt with quickly
For defying the despot,
"Long live our sacred Germany!"
Proud-statured as he's shot,
I wish you could have seen his dying face,
So free of doubt, weightless & full of grace.

Tied to a blood-stained wooden rack,
Sorrowful Stulpnafel,
Screams as the crack cut cross his back,
"No more!" the bull-whip fell,
"Give me a name you filthy hund," a whisper, *"Herr Rommel..."*

Berlin

August

1944

Rousing the Reich

"Is Paris burning?" whisp'd wistful Hitler,
Fat face so pale & puffy, taut & tense,
He grunts as enters General Molder,
"It can't go on, this War is lost..." "NONSENSE!"
Chasing rainbows,
A vision is devised,
For deity still flows & soldier mesmerised.

*"Tis time to mobilise fully
All of the land's resources,
From the workers of Germany
Draw Volksgrenadier forces,
Show iron vein til victory
Rides on Asgard's horses,
Back to the Reich as the Ultramarxist
Breaks ranks with the Ultracapitalist!"*

*Yes, we shall fight upon the Rhine
As did Fred'rick the Great,
No Nineteen Nineteen shall define
The future German state..."*

Sighs Molder, *"I shall try again..."* for that man was his fate.

Wolf's Lair

August 31st

1944

Death of Rommel

Two automons knock'd on a legend's door,
Charging their target with highest treason,
But.. for his services throughout the war
Der Fuhrer has permitted him poison;

Serenity

Succumbs his famous wits,

"Speak with your family, but for fifteen minutes!"

He told his wife of his life's debt,

Embraced his beloved son,

Donn'd old Afrika Korps jacket,

Attach'd Field Marshall's baton,

She was nobility, & yet

She wept when he was gone,

Away into the forest & his fate,

Car halts, his captors leave the car & wait...

By seat-slump'd star these pale drones stand,

Now Rommel 'gan to cry,

"Death by the hand of one's own land

So hard," stripp'd of all pride,

He wheez'd his last, closed gemmy lids, thought of his wife & died.

Swabia

October 14th

1944

Battle of the Bulge

The Allies stand at Germany's threshold,
Hitler denudes defences in the East,
Inspires his troops with the gusto of old,
Once more the grand gods of battle may feast!
Thro' the Ardennes
Trail miles of martial queues,
Fresh aircraft, tanks & men, "*To Antwerp & the Meuse!*"

Fog drowns the leaves, the ice breeze chills,
Vee-Twos trail fiery blazes,
Thro' twisted vales 'neath snow-capt hills
Are pack'd with park'd-up panzers,
No vernal cluster'd Daffodils
Escort Winter soldiers,
Attacking Allied lines desperately,
How different from triumphal 'forty.

All-in for the Fascist menace,
Three aces... world grows hush,
Hitler's grimace, the other ace
Flipp'd for a royal flush,
The Allies claim the bulging pot, upon three sides now push.

France
December
27th

Death of Frau Stemmler

Karolina gazed on beautiful spires,
Medieval majesty up-streaming,
Untouch'd by this damn'd war's destructive fires,
The World of old all dazzling & dreaming;
Her cousin Klaus
Meets her at the station,
Soon in a coffehaus flows good conversation.

Bligh flew over Franconia
Where the target drew in sight,
Gothic temple of Der Fuhrer
One moment before midnight,
From the belly of his bomber
Drops the poor people's plight...
A grey deluge of terror from the skies,
Frau Stemmler cursed Herr Hitler as she dies.

As ghastly Magdeburg suffer'd
This city too knows hell,
Bligh glides his bird & at the word
His load adds to the swell,
A far cry from gallant 'forty this slaughter ariel.

Nuremburg

Jan 2nd

1945

Desperations

Tho' shehila stay'd, these breathing corpses,
Dancing attendant to the Kapo's stick,
Are oft' selected to *please* the doctors...
Young Ludwig gains six inches with a brick;
They pass him by,
Clutching a surgeon's knife,
A joyous, silent sigh... another day of life!

*"If you're content with a little
Enough's as good as a feast,"*
But poor Joseph drops his kettle
& could not digest the yeast,
Bones a-wasting ever brittle,
As flesh bore he the least,
Today the guards would bundle him away...
Ludwig sits down to pray where last he lay.

The rumble of the Russian hosts
Approaching daily near,
Like phantom ghosts the gibbet posts
& ovens disappear...
When rainbow stars are driven off to march the snowy fear.

Auswitz

Jan 20th

1945

Landsturm

Max Stemmler requisition'd by Goebells,
Reich-remnant summon'd to the Prussien,
Oathsworn to resist in bloody battles
The brainwash of the Bolshevik Russian;
His sons were dead,
Them martyrs in his eyes,
Blessing the blood they bled he dons the Jager's guise.

No rhyme nor reason could explain
The thrall of the Nazi hymns,
Tho' zest of Hitler's early reign
Now death's gory paroxysms,
When loyalty could still ordain
Stepping into chasms...
The GI's pierce the gloomy atmosphere
With an unanswer'd, "*What we doing here?*"

Of the banality of war,
An old man grown full sick,
Thro' shatter'd door he'd seen before
Torn poster clung to brick,
'All this we owe to der Fuhrer!' he laughs all lunatic.

Berlin

February 3rd

1945

Death March

The stripes are march'd across the killing ground
Men call Poland, strong shoulder'd Pharisees,
Where Etta Grunfeld in despair is drown'd,
Life's struggle yielding, drooping to her knees;
How Anna gasps
Trying to help in vain,
"Keep moving!" grey guard rasps & blows out Etta's brain.

Ragged, stagg'ring, skeletal train
Files past a Yankee bomber,
Hungry as wolves, in constant pain,
For what seem'd like forever,
Wraiths in the wicked snow & rain
Tragedize together,
Carrying the pall of the ill-condemn'd,
Marching to what could only be their end.

From town-to-town two worlds collide,
From ginger-bread houses
The truth is tried, tho' warmth inside,
Human heart-flow freezes,
The Volk, at last, forced to account, them murder's witnesses.

Germany

February

1945

General Patton

A roofless, star-mark'd jeep screeches to halt,
Georgie spat out globule of cigar phlegm,
"Boys!" he address'd his American salt,
"Find 'em, fix 'em, fight 'em & finish 'em!
An ounce of sweat
Worth a gallon of blood,
Always audacious, get to grips, give it 'em good!"

As generals love glory true,
This Third Army matador,
Instills LUCKY, his plucky crew,
With rampant passion for war,
The Third Army's matador,
"Advance over, under or through!"
Reaching Remagen's shore
A rail-bridge claim'd worth more than weight in gold,
Battles won by the brave & Wars the bold.

Patton pauses upon the Rhine,
Perches on pontoon plate,
Arches his spine, piss flows like wine,
Hissing with pent-up hate...
Zips up his fly, claims th'eastern bank to slay the Kaiser-state.

Emmerich

April 2nd

1945

Canto 3

The victor will not be ask'd afterwards whether he told the truth or not,
in starting & waging a war it is not right that matters, but victory

Adolf Hitler

White House

The blood of good men stains Okinawa,
The President prepares to share their fate,
Into the air that soothes the state of Georgia

His life's last breaths wheeze out with gremlin grate;
He coughs, complains
Of headaches terrible,
As mighty spirit drains... & bows & leaves battle.

Being flesh & mind a human
But in stature an oak tree,
Missouri's own Harry Truman
Gains the land's Presidency,
The ultimate American
To rule them sensibly
& what a time to take that foremost seat -
The Axis Powers verging on defeat.

Debriefing held behind closed door,
*"We have a new weapon
Ready in four months,"* sat in awe
(How else could one listen),
"If it saves lives... shortens the war... then I say... yes... go on."

Washington

April 12th

1945

Death Camp

If this is life then life should welcome death,
Thousands of abjects thro' dull wraithdom tread,
Despair & typhus pungent on the breath,
Grey, ghastly heaps & gutters full of dead;

Bestarv'd of meat,
To stay his certain end,
A priest prepares to eat the dead flesh of his friend.

As one the rough guards up & leave
Just before GI's arrive,
Whose haunted eyes could ne'er believe
Stick-like rakes are still alive,
All that these green lads could achieve
Was feed those who survive,
Tho' more like skeletons; thin skin stretching,
A dirge of moans... what spectres... what retching.

As Anna show'd her slump'd nephew
To Carlton Dillinger,
All blotch'd & blue, "*What can you do?*"
"Mam, I ain't no doctor..."
Then Ludwig spasm'd... died... cried she for them all together.

Belsen
April 16th
1945

Death of Il Duce

As paths of glory lead but to the grave,
On haunted men past deeds a heavy load,
Beside the beauty of the Como wave
Rough partisans blockade the convoy road;

Suspicious storm'd!
Amid the gen'ralry,
Luftwaffe uniform'd, their own Mussolini!

After a brief & angry trial
Weeping Ceasar swiftly shot,
Then driven from that Alpine pile
To be strung up at a spot
Where hungry subjects could revile
His corpse as it did rot...
Piss'd on & spat at & hurl'd with abuse,
Full twenty years of torments letting loose.

She stept into Loreto square
Next to a cursing nun,
Her angry stare turn'd to a glare,
She aim'd a stranger's gun
& shot that bastard man five times, once for each murder'd son.

Milan
April 29th
1945

Death of Der Fuhrer

Entombed in the dark end-game of his time,
Inside der Fuhrerbunker life withdraws,
From geocentric Wolkenkuck-kuck-sheim,
Projecting, still, the virtue of his cause;
For still he hiss'd
The cold core of his cause,
"Global Jewry resist! Uphold the racial laws!"

After simple ceremony
Two lovers were join'd as one,
But one hour of matrimony
'Til her husband clutch'd his gun
& stept into eternity...
She, swallowing poison,
Plants tender kisses on his fingertips,
"My darling!" last words slip from dying lips.

Men paus'd awhile before the sight,
Dowsing them in petrol,
Coup'l'd alight, firedrakes in flight,
A Viking funeral,
A captain of a sinking ship, a king lost in battle.

Berlin
Mayday
1945

Victory in Europe

There is a scent of lilac in the scene,
The birds are twittering, how sweet the song,
Hosts of soft buds lighten the valley green,
Bloom, birds & bees float back where they belong;
Nature disturb'd,
By gruff sound of staff car,
A callous clime soon curb'd... come men, come end the War.

Monty noticed his starch-dress'd guest
Still stood stiff with arrogance,
*"Your nation must heed this request
To cease with thy remonstrance
'Gainst Allied nations, east & west,
& with them phoenix France..."*
On tabletop an armistice appears,
Small moment to cut short the Thousand Years.

Admiral Doenitz signs his name
Upon a poignant page,
Accepts the shame, the varlet blame,
Of this most violent age
& with a last, *"Heil Hitler!"* murder exeunts from the stage.

Friesland

May 8th

1945

VE Day

Round Fence & Barley, Altham & Burnley,
Bonfires ablaze, day spreading fine & fair,
Towards Pendle's shepherd solitary,
Sylphs escort joyous mafficking on air;
Gleeful Sumners,
Free from their weary load,
Join the festive numbers flocking to Manny Road.

T'was the greatest of street parties
(Since the Golden Jubilee),
Flags of all the Allied contrees
Fluttering in victory,
Fun, feastings & festivities
As life's resurgency
Spreads colours lighting up those party hats,
Worn both by peasants & by diplomats.

They'd suffer'd War fer six rude years,
Life's problems growing plump
Thro' tides of tears, thro' childish fears,
Dead sons & Tommy's stump,
The Sumners battled on... young Maggie rubs her baby-bump!

Burnley

May 8th

1945

Death of a Reichsfuhrer

This scrawny, short, Schutzstaffel Mongoloid,
High priest of Aryan supremacy,
Shaves moustache smooth in order to avoid
The scales of denazied authority;
Tho' unsuspect -
Panic'd false papers thrust...
The photo records check'd, his eye-patch guise was crush'd.

"Are you Himmler?" he deft defies
Gentle interrogation,
When stripp'd & search'd, the doctor tries
A small dental inspection,
Dull glimmers prise the narrow eyes,
Beacons of decision...
Crushing a small capsule of cyanide,
This secret death namore his teeth shall hide.

The Fowler died & with him went
The sad wyghts of Wansee,
Whose wails had sent the innocent
Unto that twisted tree,
Where they would hang from countless nooses' cruellest misery.

Lueneburg

May 25th

1945

Collapse of the Reich

Only Goebells would join his god in doom,
The Nazi magick sever'd from it's source,
The rest scurry like rodents thro' the gloom,
Watch'd by a rider & his snow-white horse;
Zhukov astride,
Majesty a-saddle,
Pyerun personified, mastery in battle.

A citizen enters a train,
But the scar that mark'd his skin,
Saw him manhandl'd off the train
By avengant Konstantin,
Black memories flood-boiling brain,
The face brought back the sin...
For what this slug did to dear Dosia
He drew his knife & slew Gerhart Buscher.

Nervous Eichmann went on in flight
Touch'd down by sultry port,
In came the night, his nerves asprite,
He smiled, boarded the boat,
Bound for distant Buenos Aires, diamonds about his throat.

Barcelona

May 1945

Nuclear Dawn

On flexing his muscle Truman insists,
Despite Japan's offers of perfect peace,
B29 whines thro' dense morning mists,
A break in the clouds... the new bomb's release;
Their mission done
Men turn & bank away,
Flash brighter than the sun washes th'Enola Gay.

Nippon's fair skies were ripp'd apart
By an awesome sphere of fire,
Hotter than Sol's star-boilant heart,
Birth of the new messiah,

No brush of Pre-Raphaelite art
Could paint this awful pyre
As in horrific instant Balrog comes
Bestride ten raging trillion atoms.

Cometh the cloud of fungal shape,
No nat'ral law could halt
Its gruesome rape, a cityscape
Spectres of Hebrew salt,
Forms leprous, red-raw populace, or shadows in asphalt.

Hiroshima

August 6th

1945

BOOK THREE

ACT ONE

A great tragedy has ended. A great victory has been won.
The skies no longer rain death - the seas bare only commerce -
men everywhere walk upright in the sunlight.

General Douglas MacArthur

Canto 1

It is Magnificent, but it is not war

Marshall Canrobert

Victory in Japan

Today the fever of the globe subsides,
A state of peace restored unto the world,
Across Missouri's deck MacArthur strides,
For him the battle banners sadly furl'd;
His brood had brought
The safety of the Earth,
Full fiercely had they fought for lasting Freedom's birth.

War brands a mark upon the slave
& hurls him to the slaughter,
Death pins a badge upon the brave,
Whose names are writ in water,
Fate carves respects into each grave,
Memorized forever...

Forever, ah! forever but to be
Forgotten like the Spanish Tragedie.

This most devastating conflict
In all our histories,
A many victim-forged edict
To Man's stupidities,
Trompeting bloodlet knowledge of his capabilities.

Tokyo Bay
August 14th
1945

War is Over

The Alps felt the first frost-fall of the year,
A soft, white sheet to blanket all with snow,
Jean Francois look'd down from a higher tier
Upon the rooves of Briancon below;
With scarfless throat,
No spike, no pick, no rope,
Like some rough mountain goat he scamper'd down the slope.

By underwater mountain stream,
Crystal waters crisp & clear,
Jean descended as if adream,
Startl'd herds of roving deer
Sent scattering by friendly beam,
Then as the inn grew near,
He thank'd his god, his land, his libertie,
Cursing the name infernal of Nazi.

He stept into 'Les Montemar,'
Life lazes at a pace,
Walks to the bar, "Stella Artois..."
"Huit francs..." straight waiter-face,
"Huit francs! Huit francs pour un Artois, monsieur c'est un disgrace!"

France
September
1945

Meeting the Parents

To the vale twixt Pendle & Hameldon,
Carlton Dillinger rail'd his Christmas leave,
Stept into an alien environ
Where terraces thro' chimney forests weave;
Ah! there she stood,
Like some broad from the farms,
Countenance calm & good, their daughter in her arms.

She led him thro' those slummish rows,
Humming with community,
Where cloth cap, cobbles & torn clothes
Hardest work'd for Victory,
Upon the front door-step stood Rose
& behind her Charlie,
Glowing in his grand-paternal summer,
"Yer may be a Yank but yer a Sumner!"

Despite six years of hardship pass'd,
Christmas found the Winners,
War's awful blast over at last
& to top their dinners,
"I've bin ter Flossy Bennets fer a pound o' bananas!"

Burnley
Christmas Day
1945

The Last Grunfeld

At first her body had refused the food,
Tho' soon she made a full recovery
But for the empty void that was her brood,
A family without a family:
Her thoughts ascrew,
Her soul too shock'd to grieve,
What Anna had lived thro' no man could dare believe.

The hospital left in the dark
That is the day of Winter,
Small portion of this new 'Deutschmark'
Was all the Allies leant her,
She took a seat in leaf-shorn park,
Took a seat with nature,
The nature of a cold & hostile land,
Could anybody ever understand?

She stood there huddl'd in the damp,
O lowly echelon,
Crude bench her camp, waiting the lamp...
Since Titus & Chillon,
The vicarious atonement of the anointed one.

Germany

1946

Two Mothers

"We're shackin' up mam!" sez Maggie Sumner,
Rose gave a joyous blessing with her tears,
How handsome was this Seargent Dillinger
If only *she* could turn back thirty years...
...& then... bombshell,
Love-bubble dissipates
"O Mam, prepare y'sell... we're livin' in the States!"

They pledge their troth at Saint Mary's,
Honeymoon by Morecambe sea,
Then a taylor for childhood fairies,
Very far from family,
Maggie drives past countless dairies,
Carlton points at a tree...
"I used to climb that as a boy!" he said,
His white farm-house cresting the mount ahead.

Rita's life-reason, brightest pearl,

Returns to her by car,
Her senses swirl, who is this girl?"
Maggie, come meet mah ma!"
"Well aint ya girl just beautiful!" Maggie replied with, *"Ta!"*

Jerkwater

1946

Grand Palace of Justice

Of an empire born & drown'd in crimson,
Naught but wire-zones by conq'rers occupied,
Cigs, soap & shoes fuse with prostitution,
High-browed JUSTICE combing the countryside;
How deft they sought
Those pale, arch-criminals
Array'd in Hitler's court... evil's first disciples.

Faced with denouement for their crimes,
These cauterized men appear
As scapegoats for those crazy times,
Televised throughout the year,
Where daily with his honour climb'd
One dashing cavalier
With ever-present energy, Goering,
Still preaching loyally for his darling.

Judgement pluck'd from the fearsome well
Of the world's opinion,
Harken! Doom bell! The Reichmarshall
Swallows secret poison,
His comrades don the sack... noose... trapdoor... <THWACK>... oblivion...

Nuremburg
1947

Jewish Homeland

As when an absent husband's footfalls near
The restless, sleepless bed & echo loud
All thro' an iron house, when wives appear
As naked fields of pleasure to be plough'd;
The promised land,
With its people conjoins,
Hebrew at the news-stands bought by these brand new coins.

The pages of the Exodus
Mirrors to the modern Jews,
Those ictims of witch-hunt purges,
Reviled for sacred values,
Having since the march of Titus
Wander'd Europa's views,
Millennial persecutions endured,
Until the cause of all those woes here cured.

Anna Grunfeld got off the train
End of the torrid line,
To start again, despite the pain,
Beneath a pure sunshine -
Where after two Millenia Moses views Palestine.

Jerusalem
1948

The Death of Stalin

While hatching plans of ditching Russia's Jews
In Gulags grim, his last & ghastly whim,
A life of drinking drains a body's fuse,
His doctors afraid to even touch him;
A morning sun
Climbs oer Muscovy,
For him forever gone whom never more shall see.

The Devil & his Grandmother
Blends with the loyal people,
Cultish-grieving their enigma,
At his Red Square funeral,
Despite a vile reign of terror
Largely responsible
For forty million dead citizens,
Not counting those slain by the Nazi guns.

Such hordes of terracottan rows
For his procession came,
From steppe & snows, to stop & pause
By monster, death-still, tame,
While elsewhere pale subordinates still murder in his name.

Moscow

1953

Arms Race

Desirable of Peace prepare for War;
The march of arms in place, Stalin's last wish
*“Match these American efforts, & more,
As when the Kaiser outsail'd the English!”*
Dream science burns,
The first Hydrogen bomb
Well-tested & upturns the equilibrium.

Starvations as vast treasuries
Drain on dwindling billions,
Zhukov forges awesome armies
Resolution's millions,
As to the conquest of the sea
Go monstrous galleons,
While ready to unload Mankind's first fear
Long-range bombers patrol the pearly sphere.

Supplicants bow to Moscow's pact,
Forming an Eastern Bloc,
If one attack'd, by brothers back'd
& murdering amok
When mach-ballistic missiles will unleash the vengant shock.

Warsaw

1955

Canto 2

Americas
oscuras
inclinada

hacia nosotros surge
la estrella de los publicos
nacen heroes

Pablo Naruda

A Game of Ten-Pin

The Warsaw pact hath drawn the battle- lines,
America looks 'underneath the bed,'
Searching for proof of Moscow's dark designs,
From now on anyone could be a Red!
Pledging belief,
Witchfinders bind the air,
Negrodom breathes relief, hate-spite channels elsewhere.

"Have fun!" call'd Maggie Dillinger
To her husband & his pal,
A Solokov from Croatia
Portering the hospital,
Boys high-fiving happy driver,
The chubby-cheek'd Big Al,
Together them went roaring off to bowl,
The nickels toss'd, their team sheet pins the wall...

All was ultra-jingoism,
They shouted Ivan's name,
Communism, lib'ralism,
Perhaps they're just the same,
They bann'd him from the bowling club before he play'd a game.

Jerkwater

1958

The Spreading Fear

While Kruschev builds missiles like butchers
Produce their sausage strings, a stag arose,
Fate's button in democratic clutches,
Such missile-gap young Kennedy shall close;
Whose precise tracks
Across the world shall fly
In nuclear attacks.... nigh ev'ry one must die.

Maria never read the news,
She found it too depressing,
Preffer'd, instead, her bedroom views
& Mother Mary's blessing,
Luigi, tho', loved to peruse,
Thro' the Cold War chessing,
"Mama!" he said, *"The Yanks are coming here..."*
Feeding her goats she feign'd she did not hear.

But when she saw those silos grand,
Grew, she, ten years older,
Sensing the hand of doomsday land
Hard upon her shoulder
"My son," she sigh'd, *"He'll die so young..."* just as he
had told her.

Gioia del Colle

1961

Cuban Crisis

With nationhood the field of future War,
The Cuban turning Texan hopes estrange,
Its closeness to Louisiana's shore
Brings megalithic Moscow within range;
Silos... palm trees...
Conceal & camaufrage - CHECK SPELLINBH
"Good god, sir, what are these?" "Man, this aint no mirage!"

Fidel Castro inspects the strip
Glibly waiting warheadrie,
An act of supreme brinkmanship
John Fitzgerald Kennedy,
On launch buttons asserts his grip
Averting World War Three,
For Mutually Assured Destructions
Temporalizes Man's politicians!

Faced with the last day of its days,
Mankind solves its crisis,
Some harper plays melodic lays
My friends remember this...
Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis!

The Brink

1962

Maggie Dillinger

Flying oer English fields... via Heathrow,
& Euston... same fields up to Manchester,
The moors round Rawtenstall were brush'd with snow,
A strange sensation, home to Lancashire;
Drizzle-soak'd air,
Winds roaming all achill,
She aims a poignant stare, "*Kids, that there's Pendle Hill!*"

Up Manny Road bi Shanks' Pony,
Sees Trafalgar flats amaze,
Instead of tender history
Faded pockets of past days,
But jesting with her family
Invokes old jokes & ways,
The bungalow housing her mam & dad
Soon full of booze, soon riotous, soon mad!

Mam rocks her latest grand-child, Bern,
*"Most folk don't give a toss,
What people earn's their main concern!"*
"Aye, & the bleedin cost,"
Pipes Dad, "*These days yer neighbours would prefer yer to get lost!*"

Burnley

1963

Death of Churchill

Back to the halls of power nobly trekk'd
Our cigar smoking stalwart of the West,
To the hustings returns, out of respect
Prime epaulette is pinn'd upon his breast;
That famous fire
Still glimmers in the eye,
His memoirs of empire revive the noble prize.

But age is age & to us all
Must pass eventually,
Forever to resign the role
As he moves to Sicily,
& breaks his hip, a clumsy fall,
Pain hidden stoic'ly,
He hugs his darling wife & takes her hand,
"Take me home, I wish to die in England."

Three hundred thousand sombre file,
Their Wellington, their mate,
Mile-after-mile, a human Nile,
Their civic oak in state;
E'er buried in the grand grounds of his ancestor's estate.

Blenheim Palace

1964

Imperial Twilight

Twixt battles lost & won vast empires stand,
Tho' soon to be but words upon a page,
Now all seems vain where once was good & grand,
The passing of the European age;
Westminster's Halls
No longer emanate
Those loud, ambitious calls to make a nation great!

Britannia long ador'd the waves
For from them, prosperity,
Her banquets served by global knaves,
Phoenician hegemony,
Her sailors hornpip'd to their graves
For captain & country,
Being the maiden of the maritime,
Tho' short of sun hers proved a golden clime!

Her Royal Highness, with a sigh,
Hands the Superpowers
The global high, tho' riggers cry,
"The oceans still are ours!"
The sharpest eyes the world possesses keen-eyed at the towers!

Pacifica

1967

Conquering the Moon

Sol shines on his planetary minions,
Wee fraction of fractions, sliver of space,
Still more than a million Marathons
Hazels the arena of man's Space Race;
America
Inches into the lead,
To tread the far lunar a starry feat indeed!

The shuttle nears that rocky span,
Settles perfectly design'd,
<BEEP> *"This is one small leap for man,
One giant leap for mankind!"*
What wond'rous art & science can
Spring from the human mind,
That in a matter of a thousand years -
Men worshipping the moon to landing gears.

The Stars & Stripes are plunged into
A wave of dusty grey,
Commanding view! Vast orb of blue
Shone bright & far away,
How lucky was that little crew what knew the moon that day.

Sea of Tranquility

1969

Mi Dad

For King & Contree young men take up arms,
Or then again, only for the shilling,
The forces, *'Testament & Book of Psalms,'*
Guiding consciences thro' coming killing;
Unfeeling fears,
For he was very brave,
To tangerine Tangiers travell'd mi father, Dave.

Under David Bowie mullet
In the market, sad & slow,
Looking deep into his wallet
Saw his fundage very low,
So he thought awhile, thought, *'Fuck it!*
To Britain I must go!'
& fending off for London, land & sea,
He sat near Euston with a cup of tea...

Beside him stood an officer
Recruiting in the street,
"We can offer the young soldier
Free travel with the fleet
Full fitness, high adrenelin, good friendship & fresh meat!"

London

May

1973

Toyboy

Drain'd by the stresses of this modern life,
The Dillingers pleasantly separate,
He takes a sleek & sexy Texan wife
While Maggie, too, seeks out a second mate;
At Port-au-Prince
She finds a paradise,
Where credit cards convince lithe, young blacks to entice.

Jules met her by the crystal caves
& kiss'd her in the moonlight,
Went down with her to see the graves,
Soil-sunk since that shameful fight,
When White Men came to shore in waves
& claim'd a satellite -
Pipping both Cuba & the KGB,
A conquest in the name of Liberty.

*"Tho' dollars have replaced cannon
Still on they come!"* he said,
"Lets have some fun," they sank in sun,
Drank rum & ran to bed -
She quiver'd as his tongue deliver'd lightning to her head.

Haiti
September
1973

Canto 3

There shall be peace forever between these people
Zeus, the all-seeing met with destiny to confirm it
Singing all follow our footsteps

Aeschylus

World Cup

It seems mankind has found a safer War,
Better for conducting trials of nations,
Congeal'd, tarsticky pools of blood no more,

Just a ball & its country's champions;
Gladiators,
With trident-studded boot,
Thousands of spectators stood breathless as they shoot.

Four years have pass'd since that great day
When Muller stunn'd the English,
Each Dutchman seem'd a new Pele,
A penalty to finish!
But puff'd-up by patriot bray
The Germans accomplish
A goal, & then another, turns the tide,
The final whistle hails a nation's pride.

Max Stemmler bellows with the crowd,
Tho' now an ageing man,
Proud to be loud, proud to be proud,
Beckenbaur in the van,
A golden globe is held aloft, the game had gone to plan.

Munich

1974

The Last Soldier

The one-man War of Hiroo Onada
Comes to an end one honour-bursting day,
Wielding his war-flag at the surrender,
His sword still sharp, his hair now gushing grey;

With high-held head
He leaves a life behind,
Scores of unsoldier'd dead, the last lad of his kind.

He stepp'd into another age
& could hardly recognize
Fierce teenagers, crime waves a-rage
& women painting their eyes...
The sacred lands wear new image,
Severing ancyeut ties...
*"Where is Japan? What devils walk the street?
Did we give up our pride with our defeat?"*

He stood at the hurricane's eye,
Twas alien indeed,
Noise drown'd a cry, the world flasht by,
At such terrific speed,
The lonely sole survivor of the empire's fallen breed.

Tokyo
1974

Imperial Soldier

The very walls of Royal Priam's town
Could not defy mi father in his prime,
Ennobl'd by a duty to the Crown,
He went to police the war-zones of his time;
Wild libido,

Good-looks unstoppable,
While mano e mano his ruck undroppable.

A lad so very far away,
From Pendle & its grazing,
Gazes on Kowloon's god-sent bay,
A moment quite amazing,
With pockets full of six-week pay
Went he devil-raising,
& found a brothel, where an eager miss
Gave him the works, including syphilis!

On passing from hospital bed
He was quite promptly jail'd,
"Wounds inflicted yourself," they said,
"You have in service fail'd..."
Thus serving boot-tough sentences a better man was
bailed!

Hong Kong
September
1973

Peacekeeper

Dad noticed how the spotted hawks in flight
Pass'd on wide pinions thro' the lofty air,
To where some steep, untrodden mountain height
Caught the last tresses of the Sun God's hair;
A Burnley lad
So far from dear Turf Moor

Lit by an eastern light on Stasinusian shore

With roving mind the catalyst,
Poppa enter'd the UN,
Some post-apocalyptic fist,
Band of noble bable-men,
Whom on Men's liberties insist -
Into the lion's den
Of brawling Greeks & Turks to separate -
Hotbed of honour, howling, heat & hate!

These days he reads the Odyssey
& feels a Ulysees,
Exiled oersea, a memory
Of home across the seas,
Would keep him sane while sweltering in forty-six
degrees.

Cyprus

July

1974

Hometime

Dad's final Christmas sporting soldier's boot
Spent back in Belfast, dreaming of Burnley,
Far from these towns him paid to troubleshoot,
Impatient miscreanted vileynie;
With Santa's hat,
Beef-buttie & mince pies,
Aloof, alone, he sat, sad on the steep'd rise.

While Pops watch'd streets for terrorists,
They sat & scoff'd their stuffing,
Sang Cath'lic carols nice & piss'd
While father supp'd on nothing,
Thinking, *'I should be an artist*
On a marlb'ro puffing,
Instead of handling steely killer's gun...'
Right there & then he knew his tours were
done.

Well, they offer'd him promotion,
But he'd made up his mind,
No more "BULLEN!" bloodshed sullen,
Outlook redefined,
He caught the boat to Liverpool & left the lads
behind.

The Irish Sea

May

1976

Imperial Soviet

Hear the knocking at the world's ending,
Whence arms machines have begg'd to justify
Th'excessive circus of defence spending,
The tragedy of infinite supply;
The zenith hour
Of our grand Soviet,
Landlock'd superpower courting the free world debt.

From Cuba to West Africa
Men promote the Marxist creed,
Libya & Ethiopia
Are mounting her martial seed
& even Nicaragua
Swallows the market greed...
But not those in the mountain heights unseen,
What furies fly from the Mujahadeen.

Men like Osama Bin Laden
To Washington have sold
Brave acumen for each weapon
To prise the Russian hold...
Sewing a fresh Knockehahn of the Teutoburger Wald.

Afghanistan

1980

Weidervereinigung

The world doffs its cap to the defeated,
Along the long road to recovery,
Economic foundations completed,
The phoenix of a powerful country,
Fully re-grown,
All hearts must heed her call,
Focus'd on that cold stone, Volk cries, "*Bring down the Wall!*"

Germans set aside their factions,
Breaking shackles put in place
By the crude, disgusting actions

Of the so-call'd master race,
Long-lasting celebrations,
The Wall becomes a space
Where creeps the dollar imperialist
Thro' wide'ning holes unbrick'd by freedom's fist.

Yon Borodino talons reach,
Draped in a smiling guise,
"Aint life a peach," strange adverts teach
The tongue to phantasize,
Dissolving hard-earn'd roubles in a BigMac, shake & fries.

Moscow

1989

Glasnost

From permafrost to burning Crimea,
Russians embrace communist theorum,
Sharing a vision of utopia,
But with Paradise there's just one problem -
Our Human mind,
So volatile, unwise,
Possesses self-designed seeds of our own demise.

Latvia & Uzbekistan,
Ukraine & Lirgizia,

Moldavia & Khazakstan,
Elegant Estonia,
Azerbaijahn, Jadhikistan,
Byelorus & Georgia,
All ballot independence as the Wall
Crumbles into a heap, Germany whole.

The victor of the Great World War -
Hollywood & Disney,
Vast oceans roar against thy shore,
Land of the soaring free,
Entangl'd in alliances from sea to shining sea.

USA

1991

Modern Holocaust

Back in the city where the Arch Duke died,
Murder to herald those millions more,
Man's thoughts return to gruesome genocide
Fed by another bloody civil war;
Massive schism
Of Yugoslavia,
Petrifies each Muslim of Eastern Bosnia.

The UN leave the safe enclave
& Allah's few to their fears,
The Serbs come on, wave-after-wave,
One hundred & fifty years

Since they were flung into a grave,
Protruding spikes & spears -
Where reaching a warehouse in Glogova,
Thro' their forces flies the goddess KARMA.

Our modern times denies this real,
Machine guns & grenades
Whip, whoom, & wheel, as wounds congeal
Ten thousand join the shades,
But as gored corpses fill the pits, Europa's War-lust fades.

Srebrenica

1995

BOOK THREE

ACT TWO

How morally corrupt are we that we need a war
to feel good about ourselves

Tim Robbins

Canto 1

The most persistent sound which reverberates through man's history is the
beating of war drums
Arthur Koestler

Terrorist

As Atta travelled to the flying school
He read a little verse from the Koran,
A system of belief so soon to duel
The decadence of the American;
Skimming the blue
With his flight instructor,
Him & his secret few, cells of sacred terror.

He was the first of those nineteen,
Full frenzied & factitious,
Stalking the airways as unseen
Servants of the ambitious
Al Qu'aida, what does this mean?
What outcome their wishes,
To penetrate the land of liberty
& channel hate into a strange fury?

Turning off the television,
They chatted man-to-man,

Sacred mission! The decision
To instigate the plan
Was theirs & theirs by birthright like the death-flights of Japan.

Florida
2001

Twin Towers

Twas early morn across America,
A new day gracing th'Atlantic seaboard,
Four seperate Death Squads, vers'd in terror,
Prepare to unsheathe Allah's sacred sword;
"Can we help you?"
The stewardesses sought,
How deftly sharp-blades drew red lines across the throat.

A sinking feeling swept the zone,
Nobody knew what to do,
Up struck a low, whimpering moan
As stark reality grew,
They fudged & fumbled with sky-phone,
"Remember I love you!"
"The plane has been taken by hijackers!"
"I'm scared..." "Kiss the kids..." "Please don't forget us!"

Tough-faced, head-banded Arabs cry
Above the engine whine,

"No-one shall die!" their dreamy eye
Seem'd bless'd with the divine,
As thro' the windows rose the distant Manhattan skyline.

Flight 11
September 11th
08:40

The North Tower

How vastly the capital of the Earth
Outrolls her concrete sprawl without abate,
World-famous monuments peep from its girth -
Liberty's torchlight & the Empire State,
Dwarf'd by the twins,
Unrivall'd gemini...
The tragedy begins... a child points to the sky....

Peering upon the ants below,
From the hundred & first floor,
She froze dolicapaxan slow
As the wings of death did roar,
Life flashing by before the blow,
Then she was there namore,
Caught in Dantean incineration
As on all sides surges devastation.

Struck edifice stood like a rock,
Then... shook with a shudder,
Its aftershock spreads block-by-block

*"There's been a disaster!"
"Man, a goddam jet has flown into the World Trade Centre!"*

New York City

08:47

The South Tower

The city's finest swiftly steal the show,
Surmount stairwells like salmon 'gin the stream
For bravery applauded as they go
Up to the smoke, the sulphur & the scream;
Many have flock'd,
Watchers at the windows
Mystified & shellshock'd... a roar of engine grows...

Airplane ploughing kamakaze
Blows up inside the tower,
So ferocious was this fury
Not felt since Okinawa,
Parts of bodies, luggage, debris,
Falls in grisly shower -
Black smoke & flames licking from gaping hole
Down on the screaming streets sharp, shard-darts fall.

Paulo tried to avert his eyes,
He tried, but then who could?
As from the skies a figure flies

To land with wincing thud,
Leaving three hundred dollar dress & flesh-fleck'd pool of blood.

New York

09.32

Death of the Towers

From musing-grounds around old Rusthall Wood
I dallied home, poesis almost spent,
A spot of morning strolling to the good
My house-mate serves up pleasant refreshment;

A spotted tart,

A pot of sweet Earl Grey,

"A film's about to start!" "Which one?" "The Longest Day!"

Naive young lads switch on the box,
Wise men crank up the volume,
Twin Towers crumble into rocks,
Twas a new & brutal doom -
Casting such global aftershocks
From that dusty mushroom,
Wide-surgin' thro' a world of steel & brick
Straight from some seventies disaster flick!

What image splash'd across TV

From Sky to Channel Four,

We sip our tea hesitantly,

Bleak portents to the fore,

Are Men condemned to ever live their lives in fear of War?

Royal Tunbridge Wells

Osama Bin Laden

Hidden by hills half-way around the globe,
Blackbeard bounty rising by the second,
His darkling-quoited eyes & pure white robe,
Reveals the Moor, less man more a legend;
He laughs out loud,
Hands clapping in bright glee,
Quite jubilant & proud of his mind's artistry.

Within a secret desert den
Dwells the world's most wanted man,
Watching reports on CNN,
Almost all had gone to plan,
On either side enraptured men,
His friends the Taliban
Congratulating him on the attacks
Some henchmen hands him Saddam Hussein's fax.

His guards proclaim the victory,
Kaleshnikov salute,
Across that tree-lorn, steel contree,
To pied skies proud men shoot,
Then bask no more in triumph... for the War all turn astute.

Afghanistan

11:30

Revenge

The Allies muster a massive reply,
Cluster-bombs fall from stratofortesses
Preparing paths defenceless from the sky
For ground squadrons & their special forces;
A fierce advance
Against the Taliban,
Taking heroic stance, defending to a man.

Step-by-step the Allies struggle
Thro' the rugged mountain bar,
The Taliban have fled Kabul
& battle-scarr'd Kandahar,
All the local warlords huddle
Around Bin Laden's star,
Hiding in his protective catacomb,
Glendower of the Tora-Boran gloom.

As every day the noises near
Capture draws on closer,
Fresh hopes appear, bereft of fear,
Cautiously Osama
Sped west to Pakistan thro' the passes of Paktia.

Afghanistan

November

2001

Bombing Madrid

Nine hundred & eleven days are pass'd
Since Allah's children struck the western core,
More handsome Jihadis wake from repast,
Bin Laden's whims thrusting them to the fore;
This is Jihad,
A culture & a cause,
As out of Attobad their chief conducts the Wars.

It seem'd another routine day
As rush hour fast receded,
"The Christian elite shall pay!"
Was warning wide unheeded,
Both Eta & the IRA
Truly superceeded,
Pack'd trains explode at Atocha station,
Striking horror thro' the Spanish nation.

Within a week the cell is found,
Some dirty hideaway,
Arm'd police surround the plot of ground,
Young Arabs kneel & pray,
Then blow themselves to kingdom come as martyrs pass away.

Legures

2003

A New Blitz

As Londoners rose glorious & gay,
The thirtieth Olympiad was theirs,
Whose families were flung into the fray
As thro the tube the first explosion tears;
Entrusted tasks,
With bomb-laden ruck-sacks,
The citizen unmask, the terrorist attacks.

They had bought a single ticket,
Rode from Luton to Kings Cross,
Like openers at the wicket
When the Ashes first were lost,
Men of faith & peace & cricket,
But noble & brainwash'd,
A sleeper cell awoken to their rage,
A lion-thought pacing a bitter cage.

The waking world look'd on in awe,
When will we ever learn?
Still dying for the sake of war
Man's miseries return -
The filth, the fears, the hate, the tears, the bloodshed & the burn.

London

July 7th

2005

Canto 2

Poetry wants something enormous, barbarous, savage

Denis Diderot

New Beginnings

I had assumed my quillerie was done...
My soul exhumes th'electric, triptych train
& in a half-light Nostradamian
Projects through time, I shall to thee again,
Muse of my life
When wedded with all this
Thou art the waspen knife embedded in my bliss.

I took a walk round Whittinghame
On an early summer's day
When bees about wild garlic hum
& gorse golden in god's sway,
Hearing a faerie kettledrum
Beat yonder house crow-grey,
Where Balfour read Plato before Israel,
& sens'd I had not finish'd yet my tale.

I clambour'd through thick thornbush throng,
Veins pierc'd by splinter-pin,
Not sucking tongue, nor needle long,
Could pluck it from within,
You know, that itch you just can't scratch that's just beneath skin.

East Lothian

Erudition

Shaking Calliope from her slumbers
I took a bag of books up to the park,
Late summer sun lighting random numbers
At any given one of them may spark
 Some word obscure,
 Some sweet, well-metered line,
Hot drops of poesy pure to quench mine art's design

From Nether Stowey balladry
 To Virgil in translation,
Thro Rilke's Orphic sonnetry
 To Spender's generation,
How many notions bloom'd in me,
 Groom'd by transcreation,
As now Lucretius & the Tempest lie
Preganant with possibilities nearby.

As when th'entower'd Lady Jane
 Scratch'd poesy with a pin,
From Autumn's rain I'll cross the main,
 Unleash the coil within
& tour, once more, the Roman shore, Muse let the
 games begin!

Edinburgh

Italy

I flew to Salzburg & a land unique,
Breath'd in the Berchtesgaden fairytale,
The Residenzmuseum at Munich,
Then Dachau, where I heard the phantoms' wail;

Poi, Adesso,

Giro d'Italia -

Arquata del Tronto, where Tony Loffreda...

A man of eighty-seven years
Such a wonderful tale did tell,
Of how a Scotsman disappears
From the German hounds & yell,
At last the Gustav line appears
To break their trickster spell,
Now Jack McShiel stands tall, 'Hugo' no more
Hugs his young friend & gallops back to war.

I, too, embraced that man so good ,
For he was still alive,
I stopp'd & stood in Dante's wood,
Approaching thirty-five,
To share Tony's affection for the world
which he did strive.

Ascoli Piceno

October

Compositions

From Santa Catarina up the coast,
I sent my silent thoughts out to the day,
These are the moments Muses love the most
When to art's cauldron they are come to play;
Euterpe first
Shall leave a lyric there,
To ease my rambling thirst for all the world to
share.

Finding fairest pharie abode
Of delicious asphodels,
As if my younger poet strode
Thro' the woods by Tunbridge Wells,
Still trundling on in tryptych mode
To form my Book of Kells,
From engineering & endurance carv'd,
An inimitable instance unstarv'd!

Upon the cliff, high over sea,
Some fisherboat below,
My thought flies free, pure melody,
Thro' poesy's pantings flow,
Beneath the slanting Torre Santa Maria dell'Alto

Puglia

Ascending Parnassus

Leaving Brindisi, Diomedes sire,
I sail'd for Hellas on a busty breeze,
To where Xerxes & Persia's proud empire
Defiled upon the Isle Pelopponese;
Thro' night we swept,
'Til Dawn in purpling robes
Around Lefkadi crepp'd with golden finger probes.

At Sami Bay we mused & moor'd -
Silver-tongued Odysseus
Built here his famous multi-floor'd
Pearl of pillar'd palaces -
Now further down the coast restor'd
The sea-cove of Phorcys!
On such stuff we Litologists depend,
To serve our pens when versifyings end.

I wander'd on in melody,
With notebook, fruit & pen,
Lidoriki, Galaksidi,
Itea's olive glen,
& on up to Parnassus, yonder Chrissos town, &
then...

Delphi

Exclamations

...Ye Bards! this is what sunset should look like
From Delphi, blood-orange, immaculate,
I urge on thee to take this healthy hike
Up to the trench where Pegasus placed foot;
Come quench your thirst!
Our Castalian Spring
Shall make ye poet first, & then a druid-king!

But only if ye persevere
Thro' twenty years of training,
Sing lyrics when the skies are clear,
Write renku when them raining,
Embrace the decades full austere,
Ever be abstaining,
From all the crude distractions of a life,
Whose only succor comes with thy true wife!

Deem women, where the Muses dwell,
Heart, twinkle, touch & trust,
Art's dewy dell more musty cell
When lusting them non-plussed,
My love lies with me as I write, without her I am
dust!

Delphi

Culminations

Parnasso now - body, mind & soul -
A promise made so many years before,
When Calliope heard my vernal call
& Clio aim'd its arrows at World War;
An oracle,
A phantasy, a dream -
Yon Arachova's hill I stepp'd across the stream,

Gently passing wild sparagmos
Which the maenads madly gorge,
Beside nymphaeon thyiados
For the higher slopes I forge,
Where juice of orgies soak'd the moss -
For England & King George
I plant myself upon the pointed steep,
Some Wallace on a bleeding Saxon Heap.

Just Aborigenes who see
Jasmin Valencia,
Could ever be this close to me,
Burnley's Che Guevera,
Whom on a pittance tour'd the world to sing its
aria!

Mount Parnassus

As total televisual effect
Comes from a congregation of its parts,
& the Beatles, however circumspect,
Only together won a nation's hearts;
My Muses nine
Hold hands in merry ring,
& I, sipping my wine, as, at the beginning...

She dons the mask of comedy,
She holds a globe & compass,
Two lyre a tender melody,
Euterpe holds her aulos,
Wearing a veil, Melopmene,
Fills the air with pathos,
Clio translating scrolls from ancylent days
& Calliope floating sacred lays.

From Heaven Lord Apollo drifts,
With Mercury mid-flow,
The moment shifts, Euterpe lifts
Us onto sandal'd toe,
As one we fly oer mountains high, the mortal
world below.

Eubea

Deities

They landed me beside a gorge of green

& greys & beige in rugged rock ingrain'd,
Beholden to a beauty rarely seen,
& in that moment holy bliss obtain'd;
Where silver lines
Swept 'cross the snowy tops,
Below those hoary pines to roaring water drops.

I saw the twelve Olympians
Resume their former glories,
Mars & his rude centurions
Are banish'd to old stories,
Satanus & his minions
Beaten, & what's more is,
Their dark endeavours ever put away,
The celebrating Gods before me play.

A medievil psaltery
Was slowly pass'd among
The company, a symphony
Of poetry & song,
Sing Plato, Aristophones & Xenophon along!

Mount Olympus

Canto 3

An eye for an eye blinds the world
Ghandi

Departures

Accompanied by Apollonians,
O mystic ladies of these sentences!
I gallivant from my Europeans
& its coetanian acquaintances;

To India,
In silence, I did fly,
Musing poesia beneath a breathless sky.

About us atmospherics sailed
With a gamesome energy,
& I, a Wellesley, as we sail'd
In a barque of destiny
Beyond Iraq... beneath me paled
The Sea of Araby,
As Byron rode to Ali Pasha's fest,
Yes! Yes! I was a poet in the East.

My plane unbarks in India,
O diamond of the crown!
The emperor, the hag-beggar,
The pale-face & the brown,
The gutter-dwellers looking up, the godheads looking down.

Mumbai

Orientalia

We stand at the gateway to India,
Grand sentinel arch of Britannia's stream
About us the swirl of Bon Bohia,
Thou seven-islanded mercantile dream;
All senses drown'd
In native hue & cry,
I swathe thro' sights & sound sweat-streaming, lips parch'd dry.

I saw so many miseries
But I saw much beauty too,
All of mankind's categories
Thro' this single city drew,
What mixture of cacophonies
Climb'd with the morning dew -
Them to mine ears did seem a morning choir,
The chauntings of the children of empire.

I step 'tween mendicants, oxen,
Fresh stools, strays, tips & crows,
Strange monkeymen, hags, swine & then
A sense of friendship grows,
One glorious sub-continent, as complex as a rose!

Dharavi

Angels of Death

The *Kuber* grew dense with the stench of death,
Decks sticky with the dead crews' bloody pool,
Their captain panicking breath-on-sharp-breath
Beneath such bullies barely out of school;

"Tis Allah's will

*& , with Allah willing,
Five thousand we shall kill, kill & keep on killing!"*

Each lad was born in poverty
Midst the slums of Pakistan,
Each son was bought for no small fee,
Little pawns in grander plan,
Up in Thatta's rugged country
Hard train'd the Taliban
& the keen-eyed Lashkar-e-Taiba,
Melding proud, young footsoldiers together.

When them just ten miles from the shore,
They cut the captain's throat,
With bag & oar ten 'students' pour
Into a dinghy boat,
Flinging Islamic retribution 'cross the Mumbai moat.

The Arabian Sea
26th November 2008
19.30

First Landing

Night nestled midst the vast financial core
Of our globe's most massive democracy,
Where twenty seven million or more
Live in a state of guarded apathy;
The terror threat
For Mumbaikers distinct,
But far too fast to fret vast lives in living link'd.

Three wallahs watch the rubber craft
Slip inside their slummy quay,
Ten kempt lads leap ashore & laugh'd,
Shaking off the liquid sea,
An old man thought this rather daft,
Asking who could they be?
"Mind your business," spoke a lad in blue,
Not in Mharati but fluent Urdu.

They clasp'd each others shoulder-blades,
& there did pray awhile,
Ten young, outrageous renegades
Into five pairs now file,
& flag down five black hackney cabs to fly the final mile.

Colaba

20.30

Victoria Station

Still dripping in her British Empire bling,
Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus,
To temple, village, wages & wedding
Carries half of India's passengers;
Fifty-four lives
Buy their one-way singles,
Amang men, bairns & wives random murder mingles.

As Ajamal sprays cold bullets wide

He feels the floor vibrating,
The sadness of his suicide
This moment satiating,
His friend & team-mate by his side
& them both awaiting
The Heaven that a martyr hopes to gain,
Thoughts amplified by infidels in pain.

As policemen leapt into battle,
They instantly leapt out,
Pot-shot pistols, jamming rifles,
Were never in the bout,
Where should be floods of bravery the Law found only drought.

CST Sation

21.50

Attacking the Taj

As gunmen from the sanguine Leopold
Make contact with a fellow battleteam,
For the next part of the raid to unfold
They had to strike at Mumbai's social cream;
Security
All gunn'd down merciless,
Such brash militancy the World shall first witness!

I felt a modern movie star
As I soak'd up the superb views

Some Maharajah at the bar
In his sparkling diamond shoes,
My soul sensed Vishnu's avatar
& there began to muse
On this moment's explosive catalyst,
A thousand thoughts too terrible to list!

I'd never felt alive before,
Our streets now the front line,
As more & more the art of War,
Moves through this life of mine,
First nervousness on undergrounds now gunsounds as we dine!

The Golden Dragon

21.55

Wounded!

The call came in from deepest Pakistan,
"Brothers, you may commence your killing spree!"
But nothing in their multi-layer'd plan
Prepared them for such spangling luxury;
Wild opulence
Takes peasant minds aback...
Gathering their senses they went on the attack.

Splitting their murder squad in two
One vaults the cantilever
& every movement in their view
Soon dying, non-believer,
Into my own life-space they flew

Like the swine-flu fever,
Unwelcome & unwanted & unwell,
We sweated til a bullet broke the spell.

Shot ripping through mine upper arm,
Dropp'd I, death-pretending,
No magi psalm, no pagan charm
Could prevent death-pending...
I held my breath until I heard those murderers descending

The Golden Dragon

22.35

Mumbai Musings

I crawl'd upon the rooftop of the Taj,
All fire & brimstone in the floors below,
Strange place to find my soiree round the Raj,
A seat no other man would surely know;
Art lock'd in synch,
My subject & my song,
& I the living link, some lyrical King Kong.

As helicopters overhead
Went swoop-a-hoop like dragons,
I saw the discs & cable thread
Of pressmen in their wagonsm

Wonder'd how many then were dead,
Lives fell'd by terror-guns,
& in stiff heaps of twisted sleeping piled,
It seem'd as if Laxsmi on me had smiled.

I sat there in a bloody daze
A poet rooftop high,
Watching those blazing fingers raise
Rude angers to the sky,
There waiting for my rescuers sat down & wondered why?

Taj

6.30

After-Storm

The glitz, the glamour & the grandiose
Reduced to rubble at that privilege,
Now future tourists shall forever pose
By Taj & Trident as at Arnhem Bridge;
The all-clear sounds,
The hotels are secure,
Namore howling hellhounds must Mumbaikers endure.

While standing in the CST
I closed mine eyes a moment,
Imagining the liberty
Of murderous militant
The deep & extreme agony
Of screaming innocent -

My gloomy heart begins to palpitate
Full ruminating on a friendless fate.

I found my way to sleeper class
Upon the Hospet train,
To slowly pass that mighty mass
Of skyscraper & crane,
Sat fingering my bullet-wound & wincing at the pain

Mumbai

BOOK THREE

ACT THREE

*Ennosigee feu du centre de terre.
Fera trembler au tour de cite' neufue:
Deux grands rochiers long temps feront la guerre,
Puis Arethuse rougira nouveau fleuve*

Nostradamus

Canto 1

Study the past, if you would divine the future

Confucious

Mystic Mountain

As busses thunder'd over Tamil plains,
I wonder'd why my Muse had brought me here
Until, out of the misty monsoon rains,
Strange, solitary mountainscapes appear;
Them mystic climb
& one especially,
Inspiring mind to rhyme & find good poetry

*"Arunachala rising red,
Mountain of sacred musing,
Upon thy peak I'll make a bed
& there with future fusing,
I'll sing the visions in my head
Happily perusing,
Thro' parch-lipp'd patterns as they slow rehearse,
The long resounding march of Homer's verse."*

I sat cross-legged, folded arms,
A third eye opens wide,
Beyond the farms, Pondy's gendarmes,
The Bay of Bengal's glide,

My vision drives deep into space t'where sayers-stars abide.

Arunachala

Poetic Meeting

From Poppi's field rose enchanting accent,

"Dante Alighieri is my name,

Sent to attend thy poetic descent

Into the ovens of infernal flame!"

"Let it be so,

Let us retrace the ride

That was thine Inferno, when Virgil was thy guide."

"Poet, thy path we have observ'd

From heavenly echelons,

How thro' thy task ye have conserv'd

Man's Wars & his raw weapons,

How ye wonder'd what hells reserv'd

For man's evil actions -

For questions to be illuminated,

My mortal form her rejuvenated."

The poet led me from the peak

Tho' all seem'd in my mind -

Forest of teak, bent branches creak
Before us & behind,
Until we reach Hell's opening by devil's art design'd

Asia

Gates of Hell

'ABANDON HOPE ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE,'

Dante trembl'd once more before the gloom,
Then to nook-smitten depths did dissappear,
I join'd him as a robber stalks a tomb;
As deep distance
Echoes a frightful sound,
Sonambulants advance cautiously underground.

Round stinkweed shrub a scrum did break,
Won by some toothless hoodlum,
Who gorged it down like it was steak -
Hermann Goering look'd on glum,
Him once had made Albion quake,
Turn'd London to a slum -
Now forced to bear, thro' an eternal gloom,
Asthma, marasmus, spasm, qualm & rheum.

A whittle seperates the drones,
Imps whip them back to work
Breaking great stones with vulture bones,
Stings sulphur those that shirk,

"Let us move deeper," says Dante & leads me thro the murk.

Molbolgia

Eternal Tortures

Encountering the last few laps of Hell
We improvis'd steep course thro' Caina,
Our eyes upon a dreary vision fell,
Pale-faced & shrunk in weary demeanour;
Some demon shade,
Its eye-pits flicking flame,
Clutch'd tight a crooked blade... Herr Hitler was his name.

*"He was placed so close to evil,
With the sins of treachery,
Those high sinners of the Devil
Who betray their own country
& in its destruction revel,"*
There for eternity,
Hounded by hosts of hungry mosquitoes,
He was condemn'd to dwell on all his woes.

As ev'ry victim stood in train,
& endless stretch'd the queues,
His shade was slain, heinous pain,
Then for the next renews -
Leaving him screaming, "*Mercy!*" we drudge on thro' glooping ooze.

Caina

Rise of Satanus

Up-dripping from the scum of Avernus,
The Proud Aspirer seems a giant ram,
O wrath-swollen dragon of Satanus,
Lurching to feast upon the Holy Lamb;
Torn, flaggy wings
Stretch from his brazen back,
While innum' rable things hiss thro' a fissure crack.

The Worm unfurls his scaly tail,
His monstrous body rumbles,
Wings flapping as a mainyard sail,
While stinking sulphur grumbles -
Steaming from teeth stain'd gobbet stale -
Out some sinner tumbles,
Screaming in desperation at his crimes
A frail endtimer 'til the end of times.

For battle leaves the Lizard King
Across Vesuvo's waste,
Now half-footing, now half-flying,
Quite rowdy in his haste,

The hordes of Hell behind him in a glow of hate encased.

Ausonia

Pearly Gates

A golden stairwell in our hearts appears,
& so we rose into those realms of bliss,
A stunning clock of seven spinning spheres,
The perfect paradise that Heaven is;
With my wise friend
We for the centre made,
To silently ascend stairs of immortal jade.

We reach the heart of Helios
Where leaders of medicine,
Noble-minded poet-scholars,
Chaucer, Blake & Tennyson,
Sat with pious & religious
Men of education -
Discussing how the hearts of humans beat
With lyric-love, so summer-island sweet

"This is a perfect walk," I said,
Tears fill'd the happy eye,
On Dante led, all fear had fled,
As Heaven towers high,
Omniscient immensities of gladness amplify.

Sphere of the Sun

Epic Vistas

Like Burnley men when misty Pendle clears,
Fresh vistas spread, ev'ry fibre tingl'd,
Symphonious, the planetary spheres,
Mazy in a spangling motion mingl'd;
The Righteous blurr'd,
Merging as solid gold,
Spelling the holy word in splendours manifold.

'DILIGITE JUSTITIAM.'

Forms upon the firmament,
Then, *'QUI JUDIATIS TERRAM,'*
Spread across the starry tent,
Yet other phrases praise the Lamb,
We watch'd them all silent,
& yet, our souls were singing in concord
To this lovely libretto of the Lord.

*"Now," said Dante, "Our paths must part,
This time together flown,
Before ye start open thy heart
& turn thy sins to stone,"*

Then with a smile he join'd his kin & left me there alone.

Ring of Jupiter

Circle of Fixed Stars

I climb'd up to a pearly battlement,
Mocking all human art, from this fortress,
With stars & planets circumambient,
I saw Christ on his triumphal progress;
Saintly nation,
Forming translucent flame,
Gracious congregation chaunting their saviour's name.

I reach a sacred area;
Biblical bibliotèques
Contain ancient apocrypha,
Younger angels plung'd in texts
To help divine Divinnia,
& claim the name of rex,
Threshing thro' epic such as Gilgamesh,
Learning of how the Gods to return flesh.

As I left those crowded cloudlands
& their holy library,
I saw thousands of air-islands
Floating on crystal sea,
Spinning aswirl a palace form'd from pure infinity.

Empyrean

Epiphany

As gradients upend alpinismo
& scientologists can sell no more,
My way was barr'd by starry ocean's flow,
So took a breath of faith & swam for shore;
I closed my eyes'
Til finger-tips touch beach,
Above such wonders rise, the Paradise in reach!

I tip-toed thro' those holy halls
Upon a course collision,
Portraits of saints hung from the walls,
"Forgive my imposition..."
Tho' hoary, Jove's glory enthralls,
Beatific in vision!
My senses bath'd in light & swath'd with awe -
Alas... I write... can recollect no more.

I felt my soul a rosy bird
Across the western glow,
Bringing the word, wings undeterr'd,
To where all futures flow,
'Til, *"Nihil humani a me alienum puto!"*

Tamil Nadu

Canto 2

Brighter morn awaits the human day,
War with its million horrors, & fierce hell
Shall live but in the memory of Time,
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,
Look back & shudder at his younger years.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

For Liberty

Between the mists that cloaks immortal spheres
& realms of aether soak'd illuminous,
The twinkling of a candelabrum nears,
Behold, the city ever glorious!
O'erall sate Jove
In regal diety,
While singing angels wove gimcrack'd marqueterie.

The highest hordes of Heaven glow,
Pure & perfect was the path
To the foot-hills of Vesuvo
& Babababagorath,
His seven heads left Averno,
Seven serpent-tongues spit wrath,
At Seraphim, whose bows of golden fires
Loose arrows - thro' Hells gates the Beast retires.

Towards the long, horn'd, thick-scal'd tale
Gabriel took keen aim,
A whoosh, a wail, a gushing flail,
The Dragon maim'd & lame,
Angels smear'd in the dragonsblood & stepp'd into the flame.

Hell

Gargantua

Dragonsflight bares the brunt of the Gryphon,
Below their fight, embattl'd in the surf,
War Celtic braves for noble Gwyddion,
All glory-worthy roaring to the turf;
Sam's martial star
Emblazon'd on his tank,
He puffs on his cigar for how Hell's legions stank.

His guns shell-after-shell did throw
To destroy & invalid,
& drove his tanks into a foe
Of flesh-hood foul & acrid,
Be-elzebub survey'd the show
Now worried & well hid,
A message from his master brings relief,
"Return to Hell..." in joyous disbelief

Sam watch'd his routing enemies,
View sweetening his veins,
Archangel frees pale Saint Denys
From her barbaric chains,
"Pyerun awaits our armies, come we march to Asgard's plains."

Gaul

Stone to Dust

Mars has retreated to Olympus Mount,
His wounds attended clean by succubi,
From magic flute notes of sweet-loving fount,
Then leaves his lustful Venus with a sigh;

"Still rages War!"

"My love, come back to bed,"

Mars wraps his greaves once more & off to battle sped

Odin withdraws to Valhalla,
Multitudinous the throng,
Brings his Aesir all together,
Speaking truths with wounded tongue,

"Encroaches East & West terror,

Our time may not be long,

Stand before me captains of each legion

That did not march to subjugate Pyerun!"

He turn'd unto that troop of horse,
The pale, white, black & red,

"Take swiftest course to fetch a force

That standest in good stead

Of our friend Lord Satanus..." hard hooves to the master sped.

Asgard

The Assault of Hell

Some say the descent to Hell is easy,
But not if harken'd from the divine spheres,
Fine-linen'd Jove drove his wool-white army,
Steps heralded by stythneaf trumpeteers;
Cerberus chain'd,
Crossing the Acheron,
A horde of angels drain'd the cess-pool Stygian!

The Nether Regions' cack & piss
Bore Babababagorath,
Pleiades sever'd with a hiss,
Skulls & carcass clear'd from path,
The Daemon hordes defending Dis
Suffer'd the Holy Wrath,
Unleash'd by the Ark of the Covenant,
On to the Phlegethon those pure souls went.

Balrog detects Satanus face
Is laced with ancyent fear,
*"Desperate race, at fearsome pace
The Hosts of Heaven near!"*
Claw raises gourd... *"But my side of the bargain hold I here..."*

Pandemonium

Twilight of the Gods

How gruesome is the Gotterdammerung,
Fought in the gracious name of Liberty,
Odin weeps for his heroes, dead so young,
Dabbing his tears he turns unto Loki;

"Wherefore art the

Armies of Hell?" a smile -

The enfant terrible turns back into Belial.

Away flew that treacherous cur,
Leaves a black & sack-cloth cloud,
At the call for his surrender
Odin bark'd refusals proud,
Forced to the gates of Valhalla
The moon dons blood-red shroud,
Whence from the skies rain'd stars & satellite,
The dense one slain & with him drain'd the fight.

As Michael, George, Zorya, Pyerun,
Ice King, Volodomyr,
Sam, Gwyddion & the Gryphon,
Took leave of the Aesir,
Their land & lives behind a rising ocean disappear.

Asgard

The Last Stand of Satanus

Midst Malebolge's rolling bolgias,
Satanus & his firm shall make their stand,
Flank'd by Geryons & vile Barbariccas,
Sword of unholy fire in talon'd hand;
 Tho' forces thinn'd,
 This first attack he foils,
With fast, sulphuric wind & sore, malignant boils.

Saint Michael at the Dragon flies
 & chains the grand betrayer,
Jove flings starlight from divine eyes
 At the Martial warrior,
Who drops to knees, flops, groans & sighs,
 Always & forever,
His Age of Wars was over with the guts
White-spilling from a thousand bleeding cuts.

The Devil swivels to his seat
 By Balrog & Belial,
Odin's defeat now deem'd complete,
 *"Then we have pass'd the trial
& honour has been satisfied, Balrog the promis'd file..."*

Pandemonium

Balrog's Legacy

Long-horn hastily mounts his vampyre steed,
Replenish'd of it's stock of scarlet fuel,
"Satanus, I shall help you as agreed,"
He gave his friend the crackling, azure jewel;
& giddiyupp'd
Beyond the halls of Hell,
To violently erupt by Midgard's cloudy swell.

Shooting beyond the stratosphere,
Summer twinkles with the stars,
Satanus watch'd them disappear,
Slouch'd 'hind adamantine bars,
Stroking technological gear
To aid his future wars,
Placing a diamond in sockets to glean
Secrets mysterious filling the screen.

Grey Tepig passes Jupiter
Uranus & Pluto,
Her remarkable passenger
Hauls reigns, as she did slow,
Balrog back-glances on a distant planet's blue-green glow!

Space

Heavenly Judgement

Jove greets the gods, campus-stella seated,
On deathless islands spinning round his own,
Mars stood there, dejected & defeated,
Chain'd to white rocks in front of Heaven's throne;
His trial begins,
The prosecution starts,
Listing furious sins & probing jury's hearts.

"But we need him," sings Liberty,
"When tyranny uprising,"
"Surely not," sang Saraswathi,
"His Wars aid each tyrant king,"
"He should keep his divinity,"
Offers Bucks & Sterling,
"I disagree," says greying Gwyddion,
"Just look at what his presence here has done!"

After all the Gods had rais'd their voice
A show of hands was sought,
They made their choice, Angels rejoice,
"Guilty!" proclaim'd the court -
Gurgling upon congealing blood, *"NO...."* groans the war-god's throat.

Empyrean

War's Futility

We are all planets to a greater star

As stars subservant to a further force,
At last Balrog returns to his own war,
Dadghab-at-arms tethers grey-feather'd horse;
Shock & relief
Swept thro his regiment,
Whose chieftans shall debrief their errant lieutenant.

Says Balrog, *"I have seen a sphere
Not worth our recognition..."*
"Then come," says Gen'ral Balthazeer,
*"There is a vital mission,
The armies of the Usgoth near,
We are in decision,
& press on you the need for an attack,
To win the day & fling these rascals back!"*

The mighty Balrog join'd a horde
Of dashing cavalry,
He proudly pour'd with plasma-sword
Into the enemy,
To be soon slain for from War's pain tragedy comes only

Dadghabbi

Canto 3

I want to be remembered as a guy who sings peace to all nations –
not as a soldier

Harry Patch

The Death of Osama

This epic's conception & creation
Ran parallel to one *Jackal's* career,
A human supernova of sensation
Who taught we peaceful moderns how to fear;

One moonless night
Two flights of Navy Seals,
With Attobad in sight & Hermes in their heels,

Landfall, as when brave Pizarro
Dared conquer Cajamarca,
All hunting down *Geronimo*
To end a sorry saga,
The first hint of the new morn's glow
On a world grown darker,
Bin Laden's last look on this planet stuns -
The muzzles of cold American guns!

Bang! Bang! Two blasts, blood-chest, blood-
head,
& hunters slay their stag,
Checking him dead they swiftly led,
His body in a bag,
To promptly be buried at sea wrapp'd in his
old foe's flag.

Resurgances

I watch the news, sipping my mellow wine,
& from it deeper messages did glean,
Sensing the Hesiodic voice divine
To sing what has become & what has been;
& in that song,
My life's true charity,

Distinguish right & wrong for all posterity.

The answer is we learn from War
Life shall burn where'er it flares,
So let us learn from it no more
& bend our swords to ploughshares,
Come deem them righteous rulers, awe
To those who show men care,
Friends, let us concentrate all strength & mind
On Loving Mother nature & her kind.

Invested with new purposes
I dusted down this file,
Waking verses, like couriers,
Await the final mile,
Less than a gross of lines to go, like Thonis at the Nile.

Conclusions

Beyond the national epics I have sung
& doing so have donn'd a wider robe,
Waved off the world into an Age so young
Thro' poesy's contribution to that globe;
All-comers find
A corner of your own,
To muse within one's mind up mountains all alone.

To me the years of World War Two
Were a modern Trojan War,
Enough to elevate its view
Over all the wars before,
Herr Hitler & his surly crew
Denied their cancer-core,
Whence from the steaming of those human turds
The fabric of existence turn'd to words.

For in this world there is enough
For all from all the farms,
Instead life tough, work hard, fate rough.
As debt-stricken alarms
Pluck economies from crisis & expenditure on arms

Americana

These lyrics sung have swept across the world,
Of how a famous age once came to be,
When overall a single flag unfurl'd
Still honouring hard-won democracy;
Americans
Before thee tyrants fear,
Freedom blessing thy guns like films of Lars Von
Trier.

Ye were late-welcom'd to the show,
Thank the Lord ye made the stage,
From whence I'd like the world to know
Wars which our ancestors wage,
Ye slamm'd to standstill blow-by-blow,
E'er ready to engage
All flashfire conflicts with thy water-hose,
Your Washington brings warfare to a close!

Sing future bards of how the West,
Law Lords of liberty,
An eagle's nest of conscience, lest
The world would not feel free,
To do those things we love to do wherever we may be!

Atacama

As every star is lock'd in position,
& has been since the very dawn of time,
Beyond the sweep of deep inquisition,
More perfect than Medea in her prime;
The ebon sky
Has slowly fill'd with lights,
Where spirits stellify beyond the sattelites.

Now dishes in the desert shoot
Their lasars, whose components

Quadrillioningly compute
New galaxies in moments,
An interferometric flute
Piping to space-rodents,
Who, star-by-star come scuttling to the trails
Of knowledge which mans progress slow unveils.

From the fountains of destruction
A finer age must flow,
Reconstruction seals instruction,
Temples from ruins grow,
Qual Quattro Collone di Santa Maria al Bagno

London

The age for building empires long over,
The time for global harmony arriv'd,
World flocks to Heathrow, Stanstead & Dover
For here the truce Olympic has survived;
Among the crowd
Three blood-lines in a row,
Of native athletes proud, watching the discuss throw...

While Stiltskis cheer for young Ukraine
The Sumners cheer for Britain,

& for their blond, Aryan mane,
The Stemmler clan still smitten,
All share the surge, & there obtain
Phrenzies long verboten,
For only in the realms of friendly sport
Our ancient tribal urgencies now fought.

Amidst the Stratford stratosphere
All nations' banners fly,
A final cheer, a tiny tear
Swells in old Tommy's eye
For this is what he'd fought for, for the friends he'd once seen die.

20/12/2012

Ye men shall speak of us with sheer disgust,
How on Earth could we have let War happen,
To thee I leave this tryptychrie in trust,
So things like these should not occur again:
A grievous weight,
Responsibility,
Beginning on this date for all futurity!

At this collective crossroads stands
The Equinox procession,
Auspicious moment for all lands
Aquarius in session,

Come seize existence in our hands
Drag it from recession,
When with the solstice & the sun-align'd,
We'll leave our bleak barbarians behind

I watch the blizzard snow-fall flake
The land in blanchless white,
& sens'd the break, the World's remake,
A thaw must come tonight,
& in the morn, all baby fresh, the future beaming bright!

Finale

When two traditions meet in epic song,
There history & poetry converge
Upon a point called nexus, whence among
Man's consciousness progressive senses merge;
Tilling the soil,
Planting these sapling shoots,
Which over time uncoil as fields of figs & fruits.

So grow, ye lotus-burnish'd gold,
Ye zest-infested lemon,
Go store these tales of glories old
For future to look back on,
Five thousand years must now unfold

Before this age is run;
Half-way, of course, some Homer might arise
& half-an-age in poesy realize.

I paced the slopes up Pendle Hill
Upon that Christmas Day,
The weather chill, the heather still,
With one last thing to say -
If destiny lies in our hands let them for laughter
pray.

Climaxes

Whom of the future could vile Mars defend?
His ossuary of the World full-boned,
Oer-brimming with dim pathos at the end
Of slaughters calculated & condoned;
His wanton-ness
Mankind made to endure,
Maturing, more or less, we find, at last, the cure.

Warfare hath flown, per dans cette terre,
Le mort caches sont bien,
Borders are open everywhere
To every European,
Whose ancestors dark trials did share,

Hauled below the Scaean
Unnumber'd, multitudinous, immense -
How many lives robb'd of life's innocence?

Asoka's edicts I have seen
War's monuments may you,
Past days have been disturb'd, obscene,
But from the gore their grew
A peaceful pearl, a precious planetary parvenu!

Family Trees

The Sumners

Patrick = Freda
(1880-1916) (1882-1905)

::

Charlie = Rose
(1900-70) (1902-81)

::

Tommy - Jack - Patrick - Margaret

(1922-95) (1923-43) (1926-2003) (1924-2013)

::

Kathleen

(1946-2020)

The Dillingers

Harold = Rita

(1895-1918) (1900-79)

::

Carlton = *Margaret Sumner*

(1917-1993) (1924-2013)

::

Jacqueline - Bernard

(1945-2038) (1950-2023)

The Stiltskis

Anatoly = Kristina
(1897-1943) (1892-1934)

::

Sergei - Konstantin - Dosia
(1919-?) (1921-2001) (1923-82)

The Stemmlers

Max = Karolina
(1894-1979) (1896-1945)

::

Eleanor - Xaver - Khan - Freidrieich
(1923-40) (1922-43) (1921-42) (1928-44)

The Grunfelds

Herz = Maria

(1862-1944) (1864-89)

::

Anna = Moses - Jakob = Helen

(1882-1935)(1887-1943) (1913-45)(1912-44)

::

Heidi = Franz - Joseph

(1912-44) (1906-44) (1913-45)

::

Etta = Karl

(1908-45) (1909-44)

::

Nikki
(1936-42)

::

Ludwig
(1930-45)