

# Axis & Allies

*DAMO*

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## Family Trees

### **The Sumners**

*from Jeff Sumner*  
(1730-1801)

Patrick = Freda  
(1880-1916) (1882-1905)

::

Charlie = Rose  
(1900-70) (1902-81)

::

*Mavis Johnstone* = Tommy - Jack - Patrick - Margaret = *Carlton Dillinger*  
(1922-95) (1923-43) (1926-) (1924-)

### **The Dillingers**

*from Alexander MacDonald*  
(1689-1783)

Harold = Rita  
(1895-1918) (1900-79)

::

Carlton = *Margaret Sumner*  
(1917-) (1924-)

::

Jacqueline - Bernard  
(1945-) (1950-)

### **The Johnstones**

*from Fred Johnstone*  
(1787-1845)

John = Susan  
(1913-38) (1914-40)

::

Kenny - Mavis = *Tommy Sumner*  
(1935-) (1937-)

### **The Stiltskis**

*from Stefan Stiltski*  
(1790-1822)

Anatoly = Kristina  
(1897-1943) (1892-1934)

::

Sergei - Konstantin - Dosia  
(1919-?) (1921-) (1923-82)

### **The Stemmlers**

*from Paul Stemmler*  
(1730-82)

Max = Karolina  
(1894-1979) (1896-1945)

::

Eleanor - Xaver - Khan - Freidriech  
(1923-40) (1922-43) (1921-42) (1928-44)

### **The Grunfelds**

*from Nathan Rothschild*  
(1777-1836)

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)

::

Nikki  
(1936-42)

::

Etta = Karl  
(1908-45) (1909-44)

::

Ludwig  
(1930-45)

**Book I**

**Rome**

**Canto 1**

*The Trojan War, the flight of Aeneas  
& the foundation of Rome.*

*Triremes pleines tout aage captif,  
Temps bon a` mal, le doux pour amertume:  
Proye a` Barbares trop tost seront hatifs,  
Cupid de voir plaindre au vent la plume.*

Mighty men of valour, men train'd for battle, who could  
handle shield & spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions,  
& were as swift as gazelles on the mountains.

*Chronicles 12:8*

## Forbidden Fruit

Upon immortal Mount Olympus dwell  
The brightest members of that pantheon  
Which binds all mortal motion to its spell  
Before man's works are swallow'd by the sun;  
Our story falls,  
Where Jupiter resides,  
Thro Heaven's gleaming halls a golden apple glides.

Upon its deep, dawn-colour'd skin  
Was written, "*For the finest!*"  
Three goddesses desire to win  
Much smitten by the contest,  
Their chatter making such a din  
To find out who was bless'd,  
With beauty's art, more than the other two,  
Said Jupiter, "*I know what you must do!*"

*Seek out a pure & mortal youth  
To cure your bickering,  
His choice, I sooth, rare voice of truth,  
Shall judge your siren spring,  
But still I sense these strange events shall violence to us bring!"*

## Olympus

## The Judgement of Paris

They search'd the Earth for that rare quality  
Which fortifies a man from lustful thought,  
Noble enough to admire true beauty,  
Give honest answers to opinions sought;  
Just one was found,  
This handsome Prince of Troy,  
Three goddesses drew round, seductive, sweet & coy.

*"Tell, prithee, Paris, which of us,  
Fairer than fairest flower?"  
Mineroa offer'd genius  
& Juno promis'd power,  
"If I am chosen," sigh'd Venus,  
"The roseate bower  
Of womanhood shall spread across thy mind -  
When you may pluck first bloom from womankind!"*

*"Then thee I choose..." from Venus flew  
Helen's bright araura,  
The other two most humble grew,  
Mumbling their displeasure,  
"Now hurry!" sang the victor, "To Lacedaemonia!"*

## Troy

## Helen

Not setting sun, not rosy-finger'd dawn,  
Not ocean pearl, not breezy mountain air,  
Not spider-spun, not lazy summer lawn,  
Could ever to this temptress smile compare;  
Her divine hand  
Won by the Spartan king,  
Many a grecian band gifts to their wedding bring.

During wine-soak'd festivities  
Paris took her to one side,  
Venus entwined their destinies,  
Watch'd that hot, bedswerving bride  
Sing lush, erotic melodies,  
Sucking his love inside -  
& soon, in the fine zen of enchantment,  
Silent thro spacious halls soft footsteps went.

The moon made webbing in the waves,  
Men row'd their ship to sea,  
History craves the golden graves  
Of immortality -  
As silken-sheeted sweethearts drink the milk of exstasi.

## Aegean

## The Fall of Troy

Hard upon the western fringe of Asia  
Have disembark'd the arks of Greek command,  
Turning Trojan treachery to terror,  
An enemy encamped upon the sand;  
Tween gate & shore  
Theirs was a bloody scene,  
A decade fraught with war fought for a gorgeous queen.

Noble the men of Achea,  
Midst armies of swarming bees,  
Men like the Dardan Aeneas,  
Armipotent Achilles,  
High King of Salaminia  
& striking Ulysees,  
Into a flock of falcon-men enfuse -  
Now Menaleus dreams a daring ruse.

As gods affect the mortal course  
& fate is fickle starred,  
A wooden horse (with secret force)  
Wheel'd into this courtyard -  
*"The war is over,"* sing the crowds... the gates that night  
unbarr'd...

## Troy

### Wanderings of Aeneas

As swollen rivers rampage pitiless  
Wreaking, havoc & damage thro the fields,  
From piazzas to royal palaces  
Terrific tide of flashing bronze & shields;  
Stone torn from stone,  
Illium up in flames  
A bitter killing zone of dust & screams & names.

Day drew a veil across the night  
Vital Aeneas survives!  
Men mingle for his muckle might  
With weapon, wisdom & wives  
Eyes reflecting his guiding light  
They offer him their lives,  
Watching the citadel crash on the town  
As mountain Ashes cold farmers hack down.

Sailing on thro plague & terror,  
Beyond the Strophades,  
Past Ithica, Sicilia,  
Yon the Phoenecian seas,  
Blown to holy Ausonia upon the Latin breeze.

### Italy

### The House of Aeneas

From Trojan blood hath sprung Ascanius  
Alba Longa rising amid the hills  
Fair city handed to young Silvius -  
Boy born amidst the whistling woodland rills;  
Old druids sing  
Of consanguinity,  
A catalogue of kings, Sylvian monarchy.

The lad grew manly, died, then came  
Aeneas & Latinus,  
Atys & Alba share the fame  
With Capys & Capetus,  
Then em'rald Tiber wins its name  
As poor Tiberinus  
Is drown'd crossing the ancyeut Albula,  
*"This flow my father's shrine!"* sang Agrippa...

Who ruled a wise & wondrous king  
Begetting Romulus,  
Struck by lightning, his scarab ring  
Shared with Aventinus,  
Whose tomb lies on this fragrant slope close to his  
grandfather's.

### The Aventine Hill

### Rape of Rhea

Amulius usurps Numitor's throne  
Murders his nephew very clandestine  
Then to prevent avengers being born,  
Shuts up his niece to serve the vestal wine;  
The Gods angry!  
Full KARMA to restore,  
To this 'long white city' they send a paramour,

Who creeps within fair Rhea's room  
Upon soft-feather'd sandals,  
A shade seducing turpid gloom  
With silks & censor'd candles,  
Its vibrant seed invades her womb  
Like the warring Vandals,  
She moan'd with must & murmuring divine  
Tasted nirvana arching back her spine.

The ghost fled from the ravishing  
For her a tragic taylor  
Days fluttering from fall to spring  
Toward her pregnant grail  
Where she shall be Philomele & then the nightingale.

### Alba Longa

### Romulus & Remus

Twin babes are born, raging Amulius,  
Murders fair Rhea, orders their demise,  
Left to die on the Tiber so helpless,  
A she-wolf hears their tender, anxious cries;  
Soft-suckled there  
Til some pure-eyed shepherd  
Brings twin babes in his care... Quirini think them dead.

Faustalus raised them wise & couth  
Hiding them from destiny  
Time drew them unto manly youth  
& back into *their* city  
Where Numitor could see the truth  
Hugs them happily;  
His grandsons' plan some brave pincer attack -  
Soon pinning wicked uncle to his back.

KARMA descends to tend the crime  
Dress'd in her saffron gown  
*"For time cures time!"* From scarlet slime  
They raise the silver crown  
& place it on their grandfather before a shell-shocked town.

### Alba Longa

## Death of Remus

The brothers are soon burning with the urge  
To build a prosp'rous city of their own,  
Certain Quirini join the questing surge  
With cattle trains & tools to hack the stone;  
    Choosing the hills  
    Old Faustulus called home  
To name it causes ills, a Remo or a Rome?

*"Then we shall let the gods decide -  
    Augury tutelary!"*  
Each settled on his own hill-side  
    Waiting word from Mercury  
Oer Remulus six vultures glide  
    Giving priority  
But not long aft above the Palatine  
Twelve vultures fly, cries Remulus, "*A sign!*"

Inveighing quickly, thick words shoot,  
    Bickers flickering flame  
Such fierce dispute! None could refute  
    The other brothers claim  
Til Romulus drew scimitar & won eternal fame!

## Rome

## Canto 2

*The march of Rome, from the conquest of the Sabines  
to the Conquest of Judea*

Esso alterro l'orgoglio delli Arabi  
che di retro as Annibale passaro  
l'alpestre rocce, Po, di che tu lalei

Dante

### Rape of the Sabines

How fair art thou, virgin Capillia  
Riding this oxen train which parts the plain  
Aiming for the festive consualia  
Rome has declared about great Neptune's fane;  
To laugh & play  
With many a Sabine  
She joined that joyous day, ate hearty & drank wine.

At once this plush extravagance  
Boldly broken by conch blast,  
When shrieking women left to chance  
& sex-starved brigand outcast,  
She tried to flee this grotesque dance,  
Her father watched aghast,  
Each lover had a mistress in his eye  
Toxeus took one to her desp'rate cry.

Romulus came to kiss her cheek  
"Your name?" "Capillia!"  
"Fortuna speaks!" her weep-wells leak,  
Mixing shock with terror,  
Her parents march'd to Cares by some gruff Roman soldier.

**Rome**

### Sabine War

Men of angry Caenina primed to rise  
Their standards reach Rome's outskirts one fine day,  
Where Romulus narrows jaguar eyes,  
Driving his best soldiers into the fray;  
Great champions  
Make contact stone-on-stone!  
Despite sacred paeans the Romans give a groan.

As winds opposing contest war  
Thro heaven's arching reaches  
Men leapt thro murder's gory jaw  
& all its varied chances  
Spears dripping with blood-sable gore,  
Black the smoking torches -  
Til running thro the shafts of flying spears  
The women croon with loosen'd hair & tears.

"Husbands! Fathers! Sons & Brothers!"  
War paused round profound kneel,  
"We are mothers, we are lovers!"  
Yes, tis love that we feel!"  
As weapons drop two nations merge so urgent the appeal.

**Rome**

## SPQR

A new king wins the throne, the lust returns;  
Tullus Hostilius is all for war  
With brother Alba how the hot blood burns  
Far from the day both left the Trojan shore -  
To ease the blow  
Two sets of triplets found  
Two populaces flow about the battleground.

Combat is join'd, a flash of blades  
Two Roman brothers lay dead  
The last pursued thro olive glades  
By Quirini each wounded  
As thick cuts seep, their vigour fades  
To action Rome's last sped  
& one-by-one cut down his enemy  
Behold the saviour of a great contree!

Alas the Alba Longese  
Are forced to share the home  
Of that city whose victory  
Has set a phrase in stone,  
Being, '*Senatus Populares Quirini & Rome*'

## Italy

743 BC

## March of Rome

The legacy of Achean tenure  
Peppers these precious Ausonian shores,  
Temple-cities rich with trade & culture  
Beyond the ambit of the Roman laws;  
Whose eagles fly  
Spurr'd on by battledrum,  
The math'maticians sigh, their time for conquest come.

Ev'ry man should have a river  
Ev'ry man should have a hill,  
So when death does him deliver  
At the moment of the kill  
He can thank life & forgive her  
For beating his heart still -  
So many dying men now think of Greece  
That those alive fly home in search of peace.

This diamond isle does interest  
The rising Roman state  
Captains obsess'd with more conquest  
Sail cross Messina's strait -  
Segesta's Carthaginians left to their gruesome fate.

## Sicily

254 BC

## Cannae

Unbalanced by the Sicilian loss,  
Fleet driven from the Thyrranean foam,  
Her combined races pacing mountain moss,  
Shall cross the Alps to bring the war to Rome;  
Cleverly led,  
Hannibal of Carthage  
Harvests the latin dead in horrible carnage.

The senate moves to meet the threat -  
Men outnumbering the foe,  
Drive back the centre-line, & yet  
They rout not, moves sure & slow,  
Dragging legions within its net,  
Round them the flanks now flow...  
Such slaughter! five hundred deaths a minute!  
What terror drives thro the breathless senate!

Now for glorious Hannibal  
These his halycon days  
Seiges, battle, cities rubble,  
His soldiers sack & raze -  
But for one tall determin'd wall's rogue, defiant displays

**Rome**  
**210 BC**

## Conquering Carthage

Cursing the grand redoubt of stoic Rome  
Hannibal hurls his spear at gates full huge  
Then plies pursuivance down the pathways home -  
Not stunning war nor cunning subterfuge  
Help'd him prevail,  
Now in his bitter wake  
Young Scipio set sail a vital war to make.

Skirting the everlasting sands  
Where pass'd the Trojan hero,  
In perfect health the legion lands  
As ruddy-cheek'd as Dido,  
Marching inland conquest expands  
Til carthage cuts the flow,  
Its saviour-gen'ral blocks the plains of Zama,  
Where waits the judgement of the goddess KARMA.

This time the black Numidians  
With Scipio reside,  
Neath seering suns the Phoenicians  
& all his dreams have died,  
*"Huzzah!"* sing proud Centurians, *"Let us to Carthage ride!"*

**Africa**  
**203 BC**

### **Flight of the Imperatrix**

Amid Quirini ruins rests a nest,  
A family of eagles regal born,  
Wing surfing air toward the windy West  
Followers of the fringes of the dawn;  
To separate,  
One seeks Sardinia,  
The other meets a mate aslant Iberia.

Their siblings ply the Appenines -  
One soars oer Sicilia,  
Another spans wide seas of wine  
To the shores of Africa,  
The last winds thro the grand Alpine  
To southern Gallia -  
Behind these flights, returning from the east,  
Their mother brings new dishes for the feast.

Maternal cry now summons home  
Her battle-bouyant brood,  
Soon thro the gloam oer yonder Rome  
Her family she view'd  
Eager to greet their master & to taste the Grecian food.

**Alban Hills**  
**160 BC**

### **Hellas**

With the Western Meditteranean  
Enraptured at the lilt of Latin tongue,  
Golden eagles survey the Aegean  
& the old league of Grecia beating strong;  
These classic lands  
Proclaim'd a sister shore  
As one the senate stands & votes for conq'ring war.

As Persia wooed Asia Minor,  
Her made imperial queen  
Thro glory-faded Achea  
March'd the Roman war-machine,  
To absorb her clever culture  
& all her wisdom ween -  
Seeking a Platonic ressurection,  
Osmosis-seeping intussusception.

Tho swollen on philosophie  
& pregnant with the arts,  
The legions see brutality  
Best way to break men's hearts -  
When none survive to wave away their wives in slavish carts.

**Corinth**  
**146 BC**

## Pompey the Great

Flying toward the oriental glow  
Rising yon Karakorum's spicy trail  
The trudging legions following below  
Led by a leading player of my taylor;  
    An eagle soars  
    Where Ida's zephyrs swirl'd,  
For now the Trojan wars return'd to Asia's world.

Pompey surveys the crumbl'd stones  
    Of his city's sacred seed,  
Then took the time to topple thrones  
    With assurity & speed,  
Resistance heap'd in piles of bones,  
    "Grammercy!" princes plead -  
Judea tamed by pillum, fear & fire,  
Its sullen people praying for messiah!

Great triumph given to the bold  
    Darling of all his days  
Th'uncouth, the gold, the youth, the old,  
    On him shall heap much praise,  
Amid the fuss young Julius sways dazzled with amaze.

**Rome**  
**61 BC**

## Canto 3

*The empire of Rome, from Ceasar to Constantine,  
& the birth of Christianity*

This hungry war opens his vasty jaws

**Shakespeare**

## Julius Ceasar

As men are born with auras rarely seen  
When power seems to latch upon the soul  
& regal purples paint a princely green,  
Flagitious paths of glory lead to Gaul;  
One whirlwind war -  
Veni! Vede! Vici!  
Even Britannia shore visits in victory.

Revolting Vercingetorix  
Celtic chieftanship allies,  
Imperils this imperatrix -  
But from traps this eagle flies  
To stretch its wings & soon the Styx  
Surrounds the Gaullish rise -  
Delivering vermillion checkmate,  
How swiftly turn the swelling tides of fate.

The onerous cast from the walls,  
Died innocent each child,  
The fortress falls, the gore-dress'd Gauls  
With Romans reconcil'd,  
Their captain knelt beneath a man on whom the gods hath smiled.

**Alesia**  
**52 BC**

## Power Struggle

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,  
Seizes control,  
One star stands in his way,  
The bright, immortal soul that is famous Pompey,

Who flees to Alexandria  
& the pleasures of the East  
Where the long-lash'd Cleoptara  
On his passion is releas'd,  
Lust disturb'd by panting soldier,  
*"Sir, Ceasar has releas'd  
His legions all along th' Aegyptian shore!"  
"Then Rome must know a bloody civil war!"*

How soon the Pharsalian plain  
Knee deep in fratricide,  
Joining the slain in gurgling pain  
The challenger has died,  
& Ceasar proclaim'd emperor, Cleopatra his bride.

**Rome**  
**46 BC**

### Death of Ceasar

A queen of immaculate quality,  
Power like no Roman had ever known,  
A son set to secure his legacy -  
No wonder Ceasar topp'l'd from the throne;  
The bloody knives  
Of Brutus & his firm  
Shall turn so many lives to fodder for the worm.

As a pirate's power vacuum  
Ever fill'd by civil wars,  
The soothsayers' prescient doom  
Curses Mark Anthony's cause,  
So sultry in her wooing room  
Queen Cleopatra's claws  
Unveil to win Octavian with lust -  
But choosing not his bulging loins to thrust

He preffers paths of death-paved arms  
The world was his to grasp -  
One bite beclams those vixen charms,  
Her suicidal asp  
Slithers into historic song, acidic was its rasp.

**Aegypt**  
**30 BC**

### Gesu

Rays of pure stardust pulse across the Earth,  
According to some alien design  
When diety desires a humble birth  
& interplanetary spheres align,  
The Starchild born,  
Warm & mellow manger,  
His writ the world to warn of the Devil's danger.

The virgin mother sent her child  
To a cult of strict Essene,  
With whom the Dead Sea scrolls were filed,  
Ancyent prophecies to glean,  
By them this little lad was styled  
Until he turn'd thirteen,  
When Mary's boy return'd to Nazereth,  
Naught but hell-burning brains & smells of death.

Like sharp, shark fins the sins of man  
Round the incarnate swirl'd,  
Where Romans ran their sordid plan,  
Their war-polluted world -  
Boy tutor'd in messiahdom or heaven's face unfurl'd.

**Judea**  
**13 AD**

## Frontier

Round Ceasar's son, august Octavian,  
Imperium ablaze with burnish'd gold,  
But for the story of the lost legion,  
Slaughter'd within the Teutoburger Wald;  
Sublunary,  
Crunching cross spangling snow,  
Vet'rans of that army lit by a ghostly glow.

As the sun revived their terror,  
Gleaming coronet of dawn,  
They could hear the battle's clangour  
Skeletons about them grown,  
Mute & eyeless skulls together  
Down shallow death-pits thrown -  
Thro press of shield & shrieking arrow maze  
Few men of blood seldom view half their days.

Altho' the proud Italian  
Lives unsubduable,  
The Aryan barbarian  
Has made his Mars mortal,  
Wrought ruin on legionairres rarely rivall'd in battle.

## Germania

16

## Death of Gesu

Bound by the Jew's Messianic cravings  
The Nazarene Essene gathers his voice  
Dismiss'd by Rome, "*Strange religious ravings!*"  
His teachings give the common man a choice;  
*"Heaven on Earth!"*  
The fearful Sannhedrim  
Deny his sacred birth, steer Pilate's doelful whim.

This 'imposter' promptly taken  
To the hill of Calvary,  
Where the sins of man awaken,  
Crucified upon the tree,  
*"Father, why am I foresaken?"*  
Jesus weeps eerily -  
As soldier's spear is ribward driven hilt  
First flickers of the Holy Roman guilt.

His followers proclaim him king,  
Trumpet their history -  
Sin-forgiving & storm-stilling  
Miracle ministry,  
The perishing ephemeron of Christianity.

33

## Jerusalem

## Two Emperors

With thrilling conquest quick'ning converse still  
Celtic bastions of the misty west  
Slowly eroded by the Roman will  
Til only the Pictish paint defies conquest;  
Tough nut to crack,  
Trajan turns his eyes East  
Imperial attacks upon Persia increas'd.

Trajan enters his death-charg'd hour  
His empire vast extended,  
& grants Hadrian godlike power,  
Their world must be defended -  
But grapes of the Euphrates sour,  
There the drive east ended,  
While southern push choked on the Sahara  
& Gothic shock block'd northern Europa.

Upon a tour of Albion  
He saw the ravages  
Inflicted on each proud legion  
By Scottish savages,

*"Our world ends here!"* the wall east-steer'd to stop the pillagers.

## Lugdovallium

122

## Constantius

As Athens' sheer Acropolis did rise  
To marvel man & rival Heaven's gates  
Then slowly weaken'd by the sea-salt skies  
When cracking marble glory dissapates;  
The Roman realm  
On stressful fault survives,  
Brow-batter'd at the helm by blunt assassin knives.

The emporer's preffer'd legion  
To these painted problems ride,  
Bouy'd by the pagan pantheon,  
His young blood-son by his side,  
Death for many a flaming dun  
Restores the Roman pride -  
When of grim warfare he had won his fill  
He turns for Rome, burning a fev'rish ill.

& when Constantius did die,  
His Britons full of praise,  
Up climbs a cry, up to the sky  
His son the soldiers raise,

On battle-broaden'd shoulders shorn from Caledon's braw  
days.

## York

306

## Triumph of Christ

Driven by fate's rightful inheritance  
Soft music zinging thro his singing soul,  
Thro silviculture legionairres advance,  
Until a blaze of light on them did fall;  
Grand cross of cloud  
Trails bianco banner,  
With sacred words endow'd, reading, "*By this conquer!*"

The warlord asks "*What does this mean?*"  
"*The Christians...*" men reply,  
Epiphany settles serene,  
Angels passing thro mind's eye,  
"*Men, build a cross of golden sheen  
To proud above us fly -  
Pure emblem of our rising righteousness!*"  
"*What phantom!*" cries fearful Maxentius.

The battle won by Constantine  
Who built a finer Rome,  
Oer Byzantine, brought by design,  
Rose Forum, Hippodrome, -  
The Troynavant of Asia, the Palladiums new home

## Constantinople

333

## Book II

### The War of the Cross

*Vn peu de temps les temples des couleurs  
De blanc & noir des deux entre meslee:  
Rouges & iaunes leur embleront les leurs,  
Sang, terre, peste, faim, feu d'eau affollee.*

## The Sack of Rome

### Canto 1

*The march of Islam, the birth of Japan  
& the battle of Ronceveaux*

Two chieftans leave the palatial table  
Viziers of Visigoth & Vandal,  
Colluded Rome's empire drifts unstable  
Deluded thro orgiastic scandal;  
They fetter'd hands,  
"Let's drain this corpse of blood!"  
Then left for native lands, fated & understood.

First Vandal shakes the verve of Gaul,  
Breaks flacid Iberia,  
Then sailing seas of silver shoal,  
Vanquishes North Africa,  
Forcing Rome's Forum to recall  
Forces from Britannia -  
Where Celt experiences liberty  
With growing sense of incredulity.

Protion of that princely bargain  
Owed by the Gothic horde  
Whose shocking sin floweth sanguine  
Bringing Asgard abroad,  
To sack a mighty capital & lick the crimson sword.

God of our fathers, what is man!  
That thou towards him with hand so various...  
Temper'st thy providence through his short cause

**John Milton**

**Italia**  
**410**

## Fall of Rome

Rome risen from the ashes as a bird,  
Fate has not yet dictated she shall fall,  
Tho' fetterless her sense of freedom stirr'd,  
The rumor-mill a growing hill-snowball;  
The '*Scourge of God*'  
Has Rome upon the run,  
All kneel beneath the rod of Atilla the Hun!

Headquartering in Hungary  
Master of vast resources,  
Between the Rhine & Euxine Sea  
Went watering his horses,  
With victories in Italy  
Lavish'd on his forces -  
Before a life of excess pierc'd his heart  
As pearl-divers may die by stingray dart.

Then strode noble Theodoric,  
The old empire divides,  
Thro' phantastical rhetoric  
Phlebotomy subsides -  
Driving the Latin tiremes from the Adriatic tides.

## Ravenna

525

## Byzantium

Altho' the western empire has been lost  
Constantinople prospers in the east,  
Justinian by Ceasar's soul emboss'd,  
Once more the conq'ring legions are releas'd;  
Vi et armis!  
Seccession by the sword  
Stain'd by fatalities the cession'ry restor'd.

This was a golden age for Greece  
& the ghosts of Pericles  
When freedom from Roman release  
Philosophical degrees,  
Th' Aegean sea swimming in peace,  
With empire overseas  
Flying rival of the classical past -  
Their dying emporer now breathes his last.

Soon offspring of each brave bear-skin  
That laid the west full low,  
Round Etna spin, old Rome rewin,  
Back-wrested Cathargo,  
Drive legionairres from lion's lairs & push them from the Po.

## Europe

580

## Christianitas

Along road-ruin the Vicar of Christ  
Trode patiently until God led him home -  
To a derelict bastion enticed,  
The silted squares & jilted walls of Rome;  
All in this place,  
The Cult of Saints begun,  
Feel penitence thro grace for murdering *His* son.

Agents leave that angel centre  
Wielding the growing gospel,  
Some reach the Franks of Lutetia  
Who won that town thro battle,  
Others harry Hibernia,  
Her serpentry dispel,  
Some preach alone along the Pictish shore,  
Light-beacons of Iona & Lismore.

Christ may have claim'd the wild Britons,  
But Britain torn in twain -  
As pale Saxons, fearless pagans,  
Spread through the Celtic plain,  
Til Saint Augustine mounts the cross in King Aethelbert's  
reign.

**Kent**  
**597**

## Islamica

In Pagan Mecca was a mountain born,  
Took meditations in the Hiran cave,  
From Heaven's will Qu'ranic verses shorn,  
Soon clear'd from town with condescending wave;  
But Medina  
His righteousness perceiv'd,  
Submitting to Allah believing souls reciev'd.

The Meccanese rode to rid  
The world of this strange prophet,  
Their violent actions made valid  
By visions of Mahomet,  
Preaching that paradise would bid  
For death in battle met -  
A decade pass'd when turn'd the desert tide,  
Mecca Muslim, then Islam's Imam died.

Men who have tasted the divine  
Holler up a sandstorm,  
Drive Byzantine from Palestein,  
Make Damascus their home,  
& from their holy city whip the Papal priests to Rome.

**Jerusalem**  
**638**

## Nippon

As Allah & Jehova have enchased  
The western world with civilising light  
The presence of the Buddha, bubble-faced,  
Enthus'd with life this Chinese satellite;  
Ascend Nippon!  
Thine emperor Jimnu  
Descended from the sun-god Amaterasu.

Spirit shelter'd by Shinto shields,  
Poise proud as sitting vulture,  
Peasantry work the paddy-fields  
Planting rice for the future,  
Clan-unity & kingship brings  
Long seed-time of culture  
When scatter'd settlements merino flow  
Into an oriental Jericho.

The apple-blossom Japanese  
Map out their first city,  
Progressive breeze - royal decrees  
Admit a monast'ry,  
& university to carve & study Koyiki.

**Nara**  
**710**

## March of Islam

The endless swirl of eternal Jihad,  
Sworn duty in the prophet's sacred name,  
Admits all other worship to be bad,  
*"Claim Allah or be consumed by hellflame!"*  
As warring ants  
Invade the termite's nest  
The Muslim olliphants blow north, south, east & west,

& ride old trade routes thro Persia  
To Kabul & Samarkand,  
Fill the Nile's rain-fertile delta,  
Spill hot blood on Tunis' sand,  
Launch fleets forth from North Africa  
Toward a promised land  
An earthly paradise of golden grain -  
How soon the Saracens have spread thro Spain.

A city grows of pretty bricks  
Thro which great culture flows;  
Med'cine, physics, Grecian classics,  
Chess pieces, sweeter prose  
& Methavita's mosque where pillars mass in classy rows.

**Cordoba**  
**751**

## Monjoie!

Great Charlemagne has claim'd the Frankish throne,  
Swearing the Papal faith he will sustain  
Strikes blows prodigious yon the Rhine & Rhone,  
A bustling empire in his sapphire train;  
Proud by his side  
Valiant Count Roland,  
Lion of violent pride, *Durendal* in his hand.

The Frankish king a palm's breadth drew  
His sword, *Joyeux*, for glory,  
Nobles from Normandy, Poitou,  
Maine, Lyonnais, Brittany,  
Tourain, Flanders, Guyeme, Anjou,  
Gascon & Picardie  
Traverse the ancient vales of Ronceveaux  
Soon Spain appears in endless swathes below.

Now the battle is upon us  
Tween Christian & Moor,  
When treacherous Spanish passes  
Soon wretched scenes of war  
Where decomposing knights magnets for slugs & nuzzling  
boar.

**Pyrynnees**

778

## Le Chansons du Roland

For France must father Carolinga fly,  
Roland commands the rear-guard curtle axe,  
This is a day on which brave men must die  
Lover's congress shuddering to climax;  
Hosts pagan grow,  
*"Count Roland blow thy horn!"*  
*"That act would shame me so, we face the foe alone!"*

They fought among the dull-hued stones,  
*Dragon* faces *Orriflame*,  
When many splint'ring emir bones  
Knew briefly *Durendal's* name,  
The field a symphony of moans -  
Winning eternal fame  
Only the master of the Franks still stands,  
Seizing his olliphant with slimy hands

Riffs of haunted thunder resound  
For fifty leagues or more,  
King Charles turns round... the battleground  
A charnel-house of gore,  
Forming the ghostly frontier of a great religious war.

**Ronceveaux**

778

## Canto 2

*The birth of England, France & Germany,  
their first crusade against Islam*

Riding swiftly, Minaya Alvar Fanez kill'd thirty-four Moors  
with his sharp sword; his arm was staion'd with the blood  
dripping down to his elbow.

*The Poem of 'The Cid'*

## Carolingia

On Christmas Day was crown'd great Charlemagne;  
Conquering kings far from his place of birth  
Renews the music of the Ceasar strain,  
His armies birds in sky & trees on earth;  
Once more empire  
Upon the planet won,  
When hot, white seed would sire & crown a spotless son.

This pious Loius took a wife,  
That Gabriel should deem good,  
Thro midnight passions conjured life  
Protecting his pater's blood,  
Each wise as Rome, each fair as Fife,  
Each strong as Flemish wood,  
Each gather'd by their father's dying bed -  
He drew them close & choking phlegm then said,

*"None of you shall be emporer,  
But each a realm shall reign;  
Italia, Germania,  
The Franks & Aquitaine..."*

Then with his lands divided from his heart warm blood did  
drain.

**Aachen**

**843**

## Vikings

The crow-dark, horse-swift, norse-driven dragons,  
Bow-keen, wave-cleaving, crossing western sea,  
Quaffing culdee blood from frothing flagons  
Fill Albyn coast with hosts of empery;  
Highlands, islands,  
New-found Norwegian fjords;  
Neutralized thro violence - mace, battleaxe & sword.

Bezerker kingdom thrust its span  
Entrusting their gods of war  
To Lindisfarne, the Isle of Man,  
All along the Pictish shore,  
Then rais'd their gaze on Aethalstan,  
Blood-eagles to the fore,  
The days of village pillaging have pass'd,  
These traders now intend a raid to last.

They rampage thro Northumbria  
Right down to Watling Street,  
East Anglia & Murcia  
Low-wittl'd with defeat -  
How long before the Saxons are themselves conquer'd  
complete?

**Sanctae Eadmundestow**

**880**

## Alfred

Only the lords of Wessex would defy  
This victual flamboyance of the Vikings,  
"Are we not Saxons?" rang their captain's cry,  
The morning chorus of the English kings;  
As great a man  
As ever was Pompey,  
He drives his battle-plan along the old Ridgeway.

They met the Norsemen on the hill  
Their liberties to defend,  
A moment to make time stand still,  
Immortality suspend -  
Britain some Nordic overspill  
Or war-heroic blend?  
The Saxons win the better of the fight  
The ravens break the cloth & put to flight.

He builds a worthy capital  
Writ law in native tongue,  
The chronicle of his struggle  
Preserv'd in prose & song,  
Then married into Mercia to make his nation strong.

**Winchester**

**892**

## Holy Roman Empire

Distant princes court Alfred's grand-daughters,  
Enchanted by their dancing beauty's youth,  
Perfect as pearl, skin soft as springwaters,  
Hankering for human virtue & truth;  
King Otho's bride,  
Edgitha, shares his reign -  
Her father's blood allied with sacred Charlemagne.

*"How I yearn," sighs the emperor,  
To unite all Germany,  
Bind beautiful Bavaria,  
Soul-alluring Lombardy  
& heather-scented Swabia  
With sunny Saxony -  
Administering, with Papal consent,  
The central portions of our continent."*

Soon rose a sense of nationhood  
Tied by Teutonic tongue,  
In hall & wood tall tales of blood,  
The Niebelungen song,  
Did stir the spirit where the soul of Seigried set among.

**Germania**

**962**

## The Rise of Paris

Long since the notion struck the Parisii  
To settle by the Seine, & since sublime  
Lutetia prais'd each Ceasar's victory,  
This eagle's nest amidst the mists of time  
Claims Frankish throne,  
Whose jangling jongleurs sing,  
*"One of our very own has been elected king!"*

How many noble knights advance  
Their daughters to be his bride  
Of Hugh Capet, the first in France,  
The Parisians felt pride,  
But only one would stand a chance  
As once again allied,  
The blood of Charlemagne & Alfred merge.  
One wedding night with mighty, spunkish surge.

*"So this is life!"* the pilgrim said  
Upon the path to Spain,  
With fruit & bread he slowly tread  
The roads of Aquitaine  
& on the route... the valorous, the vocal & the vain.

**France**

**990**

## Hastings

Destiny haunts the Duke of Normandy,  
Not knowing where his spirit's lamp shall burn  
He sends a fleet across the western sea -  
Five years have pass'd & still no men return;  
His friends enflamed,  
News blowing town-to-town  
A commoner proclaim'd king of the English crown.

He landed at Pevensey Bay,  
There hands out the native lands,  
King Harold did appear one day,  
Long shield wall on hilltop stands,  
The norman nobles knelt to pray  
With crosses in their hands  
& with the Song of Roland in their ears  
The breathless moment of attrition nears.

When a battle is in balance  
Faith does the fight inspire,  
Crestward advance the best of France,  
To forge a fresh empire,  
Where William lays Harold's corpse upon a perfumed pyre.

**England**  
1066

## Taking the Cross

It seems Pope Urban's essence moves thro air,  
Prospering thro the priesthood with keen zeal,  
From the Praetendarius of Llanfair  
To the old Thesaurarius of Lille;  
Christ's foremost knight  
Towers oer Europe's thrones,  
*"The Muslims must we fight!"* rous'd his convictive tones.

*"My brave, young hawks open thy mind  
To Heaven & His glories,  
Thy quadrivium leave behind  
Renege thine earthly follies,  
With my grand gaurd of falcons bind,  
Mutatis Mutandis!  
Jerusalem is greiving for our grace  
To free her from the Saracen embrace."*

By redemption tempted afar,  
Men bend on steely knee,  
Neath sacred star them bless'd, they are  
The Crucesignati!  
Those continental cavaliers of Christianity.

**Claremont**  
1095

## Crusaders

What gory impulse grows through Christendom,  
"God wills it!" uproar the monks of Cluny,  
The voiceferous van against Islam,  
Their cause help'd by Henry of Burgandy;  
Whose brimming ships  
Sail cross the Biscay bay -  
Trumpets on trembling lips Sacracen sentrys pray.

The raiding parties ebb & flow  
Twixt Braga & Toledo,  
Henry reclaims the Duoro  
&, unnoposed, Oporto,  
As mile-on-mile from grand Minho  
To mooresque Mondego,  
Portugal & her waking, native lands  
Return like stigmata to saintly hands.

The news reaches the prophet's world  
Of this Hispanic loss,  
Banners unfurl'd, blasphemies hurl'd,  
The Cresent curs'd the Cross,  
Soon pools of blood shall be soak'd up by spongey mountain  
moss.

**Palestein**  
**1097**

## The First Crusade

One hundred thousand claim their crucifix,  
Galloping to the Gallilean hills,  
Each man a pawn of papal politics,  
With sword & lance & sleek dipteran quills;  
O spirit shield,  
Of sweet death deified,  
Whence from the battlefield souls rise on heaven's tide.

At last they capture Antioch,  
Long seige of land & water,  
Fighting infidel rock-by-rock,  
Apocalyptic slaughter!  
Daily depleting human stock -  
War's terminal quota;  
Hymn-mingled, body-mangl'd battlefield  
Til Heaven-kissing-earth these efforts yield.

Miracle follows miracle,  
The city stands no chance,  
Its citadel finally fell  
To young fellows of France,  
Lungs bellowing, "*Avanti!*" "*Adelante!*" & "*Advance!*"

**Jerusalem**  
**1099**

### Canto 3

*The birth of Berlin, the second & third crusades,  
& the rise of the Mongol menace*

The battles may last for a long time, perhaps even years. There are powerful forces on both sides, & the war is important to both armies. Its not a battle of good against evil. Its awar between forces that are fighting for the balance of ppower, & , when that type of battle begins, it lasts longer than others - because Allah is on both sides.

**Paulo Coelho**

### The Second Crusade

The road to Jerusalem hatch'd open  
Protected by the sacred Knight's Templar,  
The European flock to sense Heaven -  
The desperate, the pilgrim, the bizarre;  
Whose western ways  
Encroach upon the east,  
As thro the desert haze the Seljuk Turks releas'd.

The news had prick'd thro Paereaus  
To this kingdom in the sun,  
*"The English are victorious!  
London delivers Lisbon!  
These omens tiding serious  
For Allah's talisman!"*  
But at a stroke that optimism falls,  
A shout rings out, *"The Turks are at the walls."*

These rampant Mohammedians  
Cut off the Holy Land,  
Where bastions of Christians  
More castles made of sand,  
& Rome's relieving armies stopp'd & slaughter'd out of hand.

**Dorylaeum**

**1147**

### Birth of Berlin

As rivers seek a causeway to the sea  
& change their course when rocky terran strong,  
The violent crusaders of Germany  
Admonish with crosses this heathen throng;  
*"Ye pagans proud,  
Baptise or be deceas'd!"*  
Slavs form a rabble crowd, flee deep into the east.

As curdling milk congeals to cream  
Steps tentative turn to stride,  
Into abandon'd forests teem  
The Aryans, sky-blue eyed,  
By this insignificant stream  
Tween Elbe & Oder's glide  
They build a town amid the finny lakes,  
Where beauty flows as early morning breaks.

Knights bound for Lithuania,  
To convert pagans there,  
Exeunt from the silviculture,  
Ride to a cobbl'd square,  
There break their fast, come mid-day mass men sing a battle-  
prayer.

**Germania**

**1147**

### Ghengiz Khan

The babe born with a blood-clot in his fist  
Knew fratricide before his father died,  
Posion'd by rival tribesmen, the promised  
Inheritance was his, & now a bride;  
Nothing they lack,  
Leading a simple life,  
Until Chief Krull attack'd & stole away his wife.

As from defeat the notion springs  
Of victory's existance,  
Brave Temujin tightens bowstrings,  
Makes men respect insistance,  
Launch'd them upon vendetta's wings  
To his violent vengeance,  
Where saving his wife from that devil's den  
He boil'd alive Chief Krull & all his men.

This was no ordinary soul,  
Spirit excelsior  
Could hear the rolling thunder call  
Of conquest & of war,  
When all the surface of the world would tremble at his awe.

**Mongolia**

**1181**

### Sa-Lah-Din

The crescent league cries faith & sacred war;  
Turban'd Berbers, pitch-black Afric captains,  
Pristine Emirs, the shark-paced Almacor,  
The sunburnt Syrians & Saracens;  
Lord of the helm  
One man unites them all,  
To raise Outremer's realm & seize the wailing wall.

Damascus & Aleppo fall  
To the dark Mujahaddin  
Crushing Christian armies small  
At the slaughter of Hattin,  
"Allah!" the cause, "Allah!" the call,  
"Allah!" & he will win,  
Until on heaven's city he look'd down  
Where man-on-man press'd forward for renown.

The situation sancrosanct  
Beneath a saffron sky,  
The Templars thank'd their lord, outflank'd,  
They knew they were to die,  
But to preserve their paradise they could but only try.

### Jerusalem

1187

### Frederick Babarossa

Being the European Suzerain  
Capp'd by the Iron Crown of Lombardy  
Chapter of the Milites Christi  
Red-bearded confidante of Charlemagne;  
Congregations,  
Heard stirring aria,  
*"Seek your soul salvations, march with your emperor!"*

Off they waltz'd to war's grave meeting,  
Steady the firm demeanour,  
Strong hearts in strong chests a-beating,  
Lusty the vibrant vigour,  
Upon their arms, golden gleaming,  
Day-tinting sun shone brighter,  
Pregnant with the promise of perfect day -  
The mighty breath of life in human clay.

Alas! it was a simple stream  
That kill'd a greater king,  
His drowning dream saw Heaven's gleam  
Thro Selaph glimmering,  
Where seraph's beckon'd heavenwards toward the reckoning!

### Cilicia

1190

## Richard I

The Lionheart of England goes to war;  
His helm, respect-expostulating deeds,  
His sword, the sacred fury of god's law,  
His shield, the lamb & all his righteous needs;  
His pond'rous mace,  
Shall shatter wagging foes,  
His helm, the noble grace of English Country Rose.

Seeking Allah's extirpation,  
Preaching peace but wielding war,  
Making trails of acerbation,  
*"Come & fight!"* corbrechtan roar,  
Confrontation's hesitation  
Runs thro Mohammed's corps  
As all along the front His Highness rode  
No man dared meet the challenge of his sword.

As Saladin & his army  
Repell'd from Arsuf plain,  
The victory, elusively,  
From both men did abstain,  
All they would win was peace to pray & bury all their slain.

**Jaffa**  
**1192**

## Teutonic Knights

A thirsty seige, sunrise upon sunrise  
Of endless killing, moats filling with dead,  
Breeding legions of disease-spreading flies,  
Maggots burying thro meagre, mouldy bread;  
Behind those walls  
A German hospital  
Of dedicated souls primed for zealous battle.

In the long wars of religion  
At the gates of Christendom,  
Suffering their faith in fusion  
With their god & his bellum,  
Happy Hanseatic legion,  
Ordu pugnatorum,  
Raising the lofty flag of heaven's fight,  
Germanic in their blood, in blade a knight!

Tiring beseigers melt away  
Inspired crusaders cheer,  
Then kneel & pray, them to this day  
Knew god's justice would steer,  
Sensing they had been spared by fate, but for what course  
unclear.

**Acre**  
**1197**

## Spanish Rebirth

The troubador descended from the ben,  
With him was human artistry allied,  
Singing of arms & empires & the men  
Who battles fought & kingdoms gentrified;  
Bold verses fired  
The Castillian court,  
What balladry inspired the reconquista fought!

El Cid's brave endeavours enflamed  
The grave Spanish militia,  
Who were, for far too long, ashamed  
Of Hispanic patria,  
Navarra, Aragon, reclaim'd  
With gold Galicia,  
Where no more rose the five-times daily din  
Of the worship-summoning Muezzin.

The Almohads of Africa  
Were sent to stem the tide,  
Grand Grenada's land-armada,  
But murder met their stride  
When seven progressive Islamic centuries had died.

**Las Navas de Toloda**

**1212**

## The Mongol Threat

Dark tribes have unified beneath one king,  
Traverse the Gobi to the Chinese Wall,  
Bring all their might to bare upon Beijing,  
Conquer & then absorb her cultured soul;  
Karakorum  
New heart of history,  
Mongol imperium marches into glory.

By mountain, forest, steppe & sea  
Ride the Khan's ambassadors,  
Insulting Persian perfidy -  
Two of them sent back headless  
Decapitates diplomacy -  
Ghengiz grows vehement  
& pointing westward with a frozen sword  
A storm of arrows oer the Silk Road soar'd.

The blood-debt settl'd & repaid  
Five hundred thousand times,  
A cavalcade of violence flay'd  
A path thro Persian climes,  
Both Christendom & Islam tremble at the Mongol crimes.

**Asia**

**1222**

**Book III**

**The New World**

**Canto 1**

*Movements of medieval armies,  
the rise of Moscow & the fall of Constantinople*

*L'horrible guerre qu'en l'Occident s'appreste,  
L'an ensuiuant viendra la pestilence  
Si fort l'horrible que ieune, vieux, ne beste,  
Sang, feu. Mercure, Mars, Iupiter en France.*

The barbarians are to arrive today

**C.P Cavafy**

## Mongol Advance

Tho Ghengiz Khan is dead his spirit soars  
Boundless as impenetrable blue skies,  
His young horseman shall see the coursing wars  
With steel-hued, slanting & rapacious eyes;  
Warrior race,  
Blood-forged formidable,  
Whole villages erase - scenes indescribable!

Thro hilly Urals hoof-prints pound  
Splashing thro Volga's water,  
At Novogrod the godless found  
Resistance meant, 'No quarter!'  
A trail of bodies choke the ground  
From Kiev to Georgia,  
Where noble men grovel for liberty -  
The bloody swamp of Mongol slavery.

Morad rode on into the west  
For all the gold god made,  
Yon Budapest onto the crest  
Of Christendom's crusade,  
Where forest high & haunted halt this heathen cavalcade!

**Europe**  
**1241**

## Teutonic Knights

*A thirsty siege, sunrise upon sunrise  
Of endless killing, filling moats with dead,  
Breeding legions of disease-spreading flies,  
Whose maggots bury thro the meagre bread;  
Behind those walls  
A german hospital  
Of dedicated souls primed for zealous battle.*

*In the long wars of religion  
At the gates of Christendom,  
Suffering their faith in fusion  
With their god & his bellum,  
Happy Hanseatic legion,  
Ordu pugnatorum,  
Raising the lofty flag of heaven's fight,  
Germanic in their blood, in blade a knight!*

*Tiring besiegers melt away  
Inspired crusaders cheer,  
Then kneel & pray, them to this day  
Knew god's justice would steer,  
Sensing they had been spared by fate, but for what fate unclear?*

**Acre**  
**1256**

## Mamluk Dawn

When the dissaffected wake from slumber,  
My gentlemen, afraid be of your slaves,  
Else Spartacus admit to that number  
& royal rosegardens would grow your graves;  
As in Egypt,  
Where bold the servent grew,  
Whose swordpoints drive edict, militaristic coup!

A new *paras* enters the game  
Of Palestein & its plots,  
Wishing to win outrageous fame  
With speed & Parthian shots,  
They are the first to inflict shame  
The loss that glory rots,  
For coming on the roving Mongol horde  
They, one-by-one along the ridge, drew sword.

Morad stood in the bodygaurd  
Of the royal Ordu,  
The fighting hard, the day ill-starr'd,  
The royal horse withdrew,  
An unexpected moment, '*Full retreat,*' blew Hulegu.

**Ayn Jelut**  
1260

## Death of Morad

The Mamluk may have driven Mongol back.  
But Islam still quivers in its mercy,  
Hashassin forts crush'd neath a fresh attack,  
Then Araby up to the Grecian sea;  
Such victories,  
Have crippl'd Kings with fear,  
Miscarry pregnancies as Morad's armies near.

In Xanadu's lush pleasure dome  
He met the great khan, Kubla,  
"General, welcome to my home,  
What's mine must be your pleasure,  
When done ye must traverse the foam,  
Launching from Korea  
An invincible fleet of invasion,  
Putting to sleep these peoples of Nippon."

Some strobile typhoon foils their flow,  
Lucky kamikaze!  
Minamoto Tamatono  
Shoots arrows cross the sea,  
One slicing open Morad's throat who choked in agony.

**Japan**  
1274

### Crusader Sunset

The Mamluk Sultan shares the spoils of war,  
From Cairo, beehive of the Muslim sphere,  
His horsemen rode, & the Levantine shore  
Was port-by-port broken upon the spear;  
Christ's foremost hymns  
Silenced by Mahomet,  
Leaves scaphelated limbs & deep-seated regret.

From Nazareth to Tripoli  
Thro Haifa & Ceasara,  
Acres of Christianity  
Ever shrinking area,  
Til Giaour gains his victory,  
Antioch & Acre -  
The Templars heavy-heartedly lament  
As Europeward the European sent.

In man the old spirit hath sprung  
To conquer lands for gain,  
When kings are young, when heroes sung,  
Increase the crown's domain  
As did Edward Plantagent in Prince Llewellyn's reign.

**Gwynned**  
**1291**

### Ottoman Empire

The Seljuk Sultans have long warfare won -  
From Marmora to Anatolia  
All fawn before the ultimate sultan,  
This Turkestani chief now emperor!  
Europe aghast,  
Greece forms a falcon host,  
Byzantium bypass'd, Turk storms the Balkan coast.

Thro Thessalonika & Thrace  
Thrives the Bey & Pasha brown,  
The Serbians tarnish disgrace  
As the Macedon knock'd down,  
All Bulgars put in sunless place  
As Islam wins renown,  
Inflicting fear within each Latin court,  
An invisible serpent at the throat.

The *Plain of Blackbirds* hosts the duel  
To end the Balkan war,  
The day runs cruel, the Sultan's rule  
Thro Europe's corner tore -  
Beyond, kings live in luxury, but wolves growl at the door.

**Albania**  
**1389**

### Rise of Moscow

From squabbling fractions of the Mongol zone  
Nobility clings to the Golden Horde,  
Keeping the Russian prince firm on his throne  
Beneath the cushion'd presses of a sword;  
Cunning masters  
Of realpolitik,  
Centralising taxes thro royal rhetoric.

As slavic leaders unified  
To secure their native soil,  
One drifted to the other side,  
Determin'd to stay loyal,  
Asian might aiding Ivan's ride,  
This folly fierce to foil -  
For in the ruins of Novogorod  
He dedicates his victory to god.

Respectful of this loyalty  
The Duke of Vladamir  
Made royalty, thro Muscovy  
His palaces appear,  
Ordain'd to rule a wilderness stretching to Korea.

**Russia**  
**1392**

### Teutonica

As when a lover lusts with wanton arms,  
Or when the pilgrim yearns for sainted bone,  
& thinkers first hear of the desert's charms,  
Or when in Arthur's chest the Grailquest grown;  
Bright knights advance,  
Their destiny releas'd  
Into the vast expanse that is the slavic East.

The swordbrothers did first remove  
Baltic tribesmen from Prussia,  
Then caught in an annual groove  
Fortify the Vistula,  
Better in mettle did they prove  
Oer Lithuania -  
But by battle's bouncebackability  
Pagans ally with Poland's proud army,

Whom on a day amid the lakes,  
Administer defeat -  
The white wave breaks, what anguish aches,  
Too proud to call retreat,  
Charges the doom'd Grandmaster, '*Drang nach Osten*'  
incomplete.

**Tannenburg**  
**1403**

## The Fall of Constantinople

As panting deer outpace the panther's claws,  
Then sleep where wolves oft meet in company,  
The Ottoman clamps down his drooling jaws  
    Upon outposted Christianity;  
    Eighty thousand  
    Gore-grizzl'd warriors,  
Encamp upon the sand kissing soft Bosphorous.

As cannon swallow gunpowder,  
    Spitting out destructive balls,  
    Such a clamour ripples louder  
From the beaches neath the walls,  
Scenes of sorry death enshroud her,  
    Byzantium she falls -  
As Janissaries slew the last Ceasar,  
Crescent flags command the Kerkoporta.

Leaving the Sultan to his prize  
    The Genoese flee,  
    The local wisemen realize  
    Passage to Italy,  
Leaving a city changing name, shaming its history!

**Istanbul**  
**1453**

## Canto 2

*The rise of the Spanish Empire,  
from Hispania to South America*

Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis

**Anonymous**

## New Spain

Not knowing world empire was theirs' to sire  
Isobel promises fair Fernando,  
With passion elevating cannonfire,  
Grenada soon falls neath their combined blow;  
United land  
Centred upon Castille,  
Chief of the bible brand with homicidal zeal.

From Genoa Columbus came  
From Cadiz his fleet set sail,  
The lure of spice, the lust for fame  
Thro that mission did prevail,  
Each sunset 'rison flash'd aflame  
Or brooded on a gale,  
'Til verging on murderous mutiny  
Thin verdant sliver parted sky & sea.

*"I claim this place for regal Spain,"*  
A flag thrust in the rocks,  
*"This pleasant rain must grow our grain*  
*& feed our teeming flocks,"*

On board a sickly sailor breaths out death-streams of smallpox.

## America

1492

## India

With Ottoman monopolising trade  
Tween Occident & spicy Orient,  
A fresh attempt to reach the east is made,  
Vasco de Gama sailing on the scent;  
On him god smiles,  
The sea of storms was calm,  
Pass'd many ocean miles with hardly an alarm.

Landing at ruby Kerala  
Saraswhati on her plinth,  
Gold traded for thymimia,  
Pepper, amethyst, jacinth,  
From gorgeous gardens of Goa  
Extracted hyacinth,  
There leaving soldiers to secure the vine  
The fleet twice cross'd the equinoctal line.

& reciev'd a royal welcome  
Lining the Lisbon shore,  
Sum-after-sum a vast income  
Pass'd thro de Gama's door  
For now defenders of the faith are loving Mammon more.

## Portugal

1500

## Death of Chivalry

Beneath the pyramids the Sultan stands,  
Protecting ancestral lands Islamic  
From Ottoman conquest, his line expands,  
Across the sands strange muskets chambers *click*;  
Fathomless force  
That is the flow of time  
Electrifies his horseman on a charge sublime.

Those brave Aegyptians went to work,  
Yank back drawstrings on their bows,  
Their lust for bloodshed bled bezerk  
As fann'd one thousand arrows,  
But images of future lurk  
In the Turkish shadows -  
The Mamluk line withers as winter rots  
As masters of gunpowder blast their shots.

As Lion Kings must lose their pride  
When old worlds meets the young  
Lead-ball wall wide of genocide,  
Dead men from dead mounts flung  
& knowing he would be the last, their last Sultan was hung

**Cairo**  
1517

## Iberia

Magellan proves the world a moving sphere,  
Criss-cross'd & pin-prick'd by the flag of Spain,  
Who yields a restless king, whose lands appear  
As gardens of a globular domain;  
Unto him comes  
The Holy Roman crowns,  
The roll of Spanish drums resounds thro Europe's towns.

He was a very handsome king  
Fate had chose a special queen,  
& sent her an engagement ring  
Rows of diamondrie serene,  
Her flowing dress more angel wing  
Flooding the wedding scene -  
Alhambra Palace held the honeymoon  
Of warm love-making in the afternoon.

Don Carlos kiss'd his Isobel,  
With her scent delighted,  
Seductive smell, the sunset fell,  
Sweet verses recited,  
Then enter'd her with passionfire, with Portugal united!

**Granada**  
1525

### **The Seige of Vienna**

For Suliman, the Ceasar's sultan heir,  
This Istanbul a worthy capital,  
All creeds & races in her splendour share  
Where lonely wives worry after battle,  
Whose young boys dream  
Of stately tents of war,  
Where blazing colours stream & sharp the Zulfiqar!

Part of that Byzantine glory  
That was ardent Achea,  
Once more denied of liberty  
With Belgrade & Wallachia,  
North Africa to Hungary  
Thro Transylvania -  
Embassies of nervous western nations  
Profess cordial congratulations.

The Turks arrive at Vienna  
The French fear for their lives,  
But by winter's onset men were  
Loin-weary for their wives,  
& left the wall that all their force defiantly survives.

**Austria**  
**1683**

### **Monarchia Hispania**

Conquistadors view the Pacific blue,  
Cortez claims the nopal of Mexico,  
& the laurels for conquering Peru  
Go to gallant Francisco Pizarro;  
Strecthing the range  
Of Hispanic mandate,  
Thro lands & native strange, decorum to create.

Above the earth the sun was sent,  
Shining down on land & sea,  
From continent to continent -  
Volcanic Cotopaxi,  
Mozambique, Kerala & Ghent,  
Conjoin'd community,  
Whose peoples are powerless to resist  
The vigours of this white supremacist.

The virgin world desilverized,  
Building a bridge to Spain,  
Christianized & Hispanized  
To civilise the reign,  
Abuzz with swarms of Afric slaves in fields of sugar cane.

**South America**  
**1540**

## Opening the Orient

Among the islands of the coral sword  
Pink-faced traders find friendly harbourage,  
Lisboan captain meets with local lord  
& welcomes him into the modern age;  
Gold muskets fire,  
Bouy'd by their example  
The samurais admire these gifts from Portugal.

Swordsmen of armour'd cavalry,  
With battledress their pillow,  
Handle their weapons gracefully  
As poets play the koto,  
Epitomising chivalry,  
Personified Shinto;  
Not enough compliments exist on earth  
To bless the moment of their noble birth.

Persuasive parley was prepared  
As scent spread sensually,  
Opinions air'd, religion shared,  
Propounded in treaty,  
Portugal penetrates indigenious endogamy.

**Japan**  
1543

## Prophecies

Nature teaches us have aspiring minds;  
Fuell'd by the scholarly Byzantine drain  
The genius of Leonardo finds  
& unveils parts of our uncharted brain;  
Renaissance men -  
Tasso, Copernicus -  
Muse with alchemic pen, with them Nostradamus

Peers deep inside his brass tripod;  
Shiny, time-flickering eye  
Sees mushroom clouds, brash act of god,  
Pig-faced pilots heaven high,  
Men harnessing a lightning rod  
& houses scraping sky,  
Saw metal monsters spitting yellow flame  
Then saw a face, then heard a demon's name.

Knocking his tripod to the floor  
He shrank away in fear,  
Demonic roar flew thro his core,  
As visions dissappear,  
Fearing for Europe's future wrote '*Hister*' thro misty tear.

**Provence**  
1553

## Ivan the Terrible

As Mother Russia crown'd imperatrix  
Her ceasar has proclaim'd himself the Tsar,  
Power-drunk upon the streak sadistic,  
Sends men to die for his ascending star;  
    These tainted souls  
    Into Hell's pits are hurl'd -  
How cruel on men fate falls when madness shapes teh world.

Cross oceans flowers besprinkling  
    Tward the Sea of Caspian,  
Boiling, roasting & impaling,  
    Conquering all Kazakhstan,  
Constant drilling, constant killing,  
    Conquering Astrakhan,  
The puppet kings afraid in fealty -  
The Mongol Khans but foggy memory.

Fur traders from the Tudor court  
    Meet the '*Barbarian*,'  
Good contract sought, his highness bought  
    With wonderments western,  
Fusing cultural amity twixt Moscow & London.

**Russia**  
**1556**

## Canto 3

*The decline of the Spanish empire  
from the Armada to the rise of the Sun-King*

War is little more than a catalogue of mistakes & misfortunes

**Winston Churchill**

## Armada

English impressa dares the best of Spain,  
Tho feeble-bodied Alfred carv'd her heart,  
As Buccaneers ravage her golden Main,  
Castille plans to punish this bold upstart -  
    Vainglorious,  
    Armies pois'd for battle,  
Her fleet as numerous as Augean cattle.

Sea-fortresses threatening shore  
Was national squeakybumtime,  
Drake sent his navy out to war,  
    Soak'd in spenserian rhyme,  
    Fierce as erymanthean boar,  
    Proud men in scurvy prime,  
Bravely pouring blood from a British sky  
On those men who did not expect to die.

As day-by-day King Phillip's fleet  
Grew weary for the fight,  
On came defeat, with backbone beat  
    & battle-plan contrite,  
The spectres of those splendid ships more crops which locusts  
    blight.

**Irish Sea**  
**1588**

## Thistle & Rose

London laments the passing of an age,  
The virgin Gloriana breathes her last,  
As monarchs poet-moulded on the stage  
Proud Stuart blood is pour'd into the cast;  
    Britain reborn,  
    One king, one law, one land!  
The border gaurds withdrawn, the lords & ladies stand,

*"Deirest bretherin & friendis  
My two realmis I unite  
To endis all oor quarellis,  
Together wee must fyght  
All oor rascally enemis,  
Put them to common flyght,  
Letting oor contree prosper with the peese,  
& all oor revenues thereby increese."*

The feu de joie to Pendle flew,  
The Sumners saw the flames,  
An omen grew, deep-down they knew  
Of all the new-born names,  
First parents of a British boy should call their baby James.

**Sabden**  
**1603**

### Pilgrim Fathers

Far from the divine right of divers kings,  
*Mayflower* unburthens the purer faiths,  
Shores paradesean Polaris brings -  
No longer men but ragged, pale-faced wraiths;  
Indian chief  
Welcomes his white guests in,  
Advent of native grief, the sentence did begin.

In the land of the Sequana  
& the endless prairie plain,  
Where the buffalo & cougar  
Suckle Susquehanna's vein,  
Horseback tribes have lived forever  
Praising both sun & rain,  
Content to roam upon ancestral soil -  
Now aiding pilgrims in their meagre toil.

Seedling imperial takes root,  
The plant begins to spread,  
As shoot-by-shoot fresh towns recruit  
Life to replace the dead,  
Tough slaves are made to gather grain, rough soldiers guard  
the bread.

**North Virginia**

**1628**

### Closing the Orient

As families of monkeys hug the trees  
Away from the rambunctious jungle floor,  
& dragonflies hover on mountain breeze  
Like albatrosses gathering offshore;  
Tokugawa  
Shuns the approaching West,  
Views Europa's power more an encroaching pest.

The Shogun's temple throb'd intense,  
*"Send them back across the seas,  
About our harbours build a fence,  
All their goods & assets seize,  
& offer them no recompense,  
Even the Portuguese,  
No more their decadence must we endure,  
Let us free Shinto from this stint impure."*

Imagine if the pedalo  
Was thrown off Lake Nakki!  
From Tokyo to Kyoto  
Via Nagasaki,  
Old ports are cleans'd of foreign trade, trinkets deem'd quite  
tacky.

**Japan**

**1640**

## The Thirty Years War

As shepherds find pockets of anxious sheep  
Pull from the flock, & Rajput palaces  
Crumble with time, & when the pathway steep  
Descends from pinnacles & promises;  
Colossal Spain,  
Catholic continent,  
Lay challenged in her reign by northern protestant.

& so the great death-time begun  
Spoken across gypsy palms,  
These phrenzied wars of religion  
Only spilling blood becalms,  
Bouy'd up by Aztec bullion,  
Germany up in arms -  
As three hundred petty princes squabble  
Handsome burghers turn'd to brick & rubble.

The treaty of Westphalia  
Ends three decades of wars,  
When Europa has together  
Made conflict cause-by-cause,  
Prussian gentry muses, "*This is not peace but more a pause.*"

**Berlin**  
1648

## Nervous World

Masticating mellifluous parley,  
Men praise war & its pale, auspicious strain,  
Proving keystones of mortal history,  
Even the New World forced to know its bane.  
Setting the scene  
For godless, global rage,  
Deep things to be & been must pass upon this page.

The world has sewn its seeds of woe  
In the fertile bed of time,  
Every one a weeping willow  
Every one commits a crime,  
Ye free men of the future show  
Thro prose or rosy rhyme,  
How great world war was always meant to be  
For we have always worshipt destiny!

Warsaw, Berlin, Paris, Moscow,  
Valetta, Washington,  
Brussels, Cairo, Rome, Tokyo,  
Vienna & London,  
Pace round peace, this wolfish pack, approaching  
Armageddon.

**Earth**  
1656

## Anglo-Dutch War

The Hollandese & the Portuguese  
Freed from Hispanic yoke & them both stars,  
But Lisbon is descending by degrees  
As Amsterdam ascends the skies to Mars;  
Exchanging flags  
Round the Sril Lankan sea,  
Moluccans & the crags above Cape Colony.

The renaissance has clasp'd the Dutch  
Inspired her native vigour,  
Van Dyk & rubens painted much  
As Antwerp's banks grew bigger,  
& when Dan Haagen muskets clutch'd  
Prowess pulls the trigger -  
These mighty merchant masters of the wave  
Whose condiments a rival navy crave.

With England's continental wars  
Now fought upon the foam  
& foreign shores, they Dutch oppose,  
Stealing the settlers' home,  
King Charles claiming New Amsterdam as Romulus named  
Rome.

**New York**  
**1667**

## Sun-King

To be a Frenchman is to feel a king  
& if a king of France then feel a god,  
The fourteenth Louis, near life's fountain spring,  
Unnerving ancient nations with his nod;  
Thro cocksure steel  
& arrogant steel  
His legions conquer Lille, Alsace & Flander's field.

As godheads in their realmis reign,  
Build palaces in the sky,  
Upon the Parisian plain  
Would heaven on earth arise,  
Where cortiers sip dry champagne  
& chandaliers surprise;  
The sycophantic fervour of Versaille,  
Were men on earth ever esteem'd so high?

He builds a string of starry forts  
From Verdun to Gravelines,  
Then fills the ports with thrilling sorts -  
Many a tough marine -  
Combine these with her mountains & europa's queen serene.

**France**  
**1684**

## Seige of Vienna

Islamic spectres on Austria fell,  
Vienna must, for Europa, stand firm,  
Else Pasha & the Turkish infidel  
Into the west & thro their wies would worm;  
Aiming the guns  
At Allah's grand empire,  
More bonfires than are suns, the Kahlenburg on fire.

As constant as a perfect waves  
That rolls into Biaritz,  
The Sipahi slip to their graves  
In the death-deep city pits,  
Tho conquest human honour craves  
From these far-flung limits,  
Facing superior technology,  
Fled the apex of Turkish history.

The royal horses are preserv'd,  
Churches Hosannah sing,  
Islam unnerv'd, Europe preserv'd,  
Her internicine spring,  
When bleeding for ones empire breeds purpose in existing.

**Vienna**  
**1688**

## BOOK IV

### The First World War

*Au reuolu du grand nombre septiesme,  
Apparoistra au temps ieux d'Hecatombe:  
Non esloigne' du grand aage milliesme,  
Que les entrez sortiront de leur tombe.*

## Canto I

*The decline of the Sun-King & the rise of Prussia & Russia*

If you live among wolves you have to act like a wolf

**Nikita Kruschev**

## Glorious Revolution

E'er since Prince Henry with Rome schism made  
English Catholicism caus'd friction,  
But now the King, taunted by Judas' shade,  
Steers the land to papal jurisdiction;  
Hears angry shouts,  
Treasonous parliament,  
*"Send out our scouring scouts to find a protestant!"*

The laurels of London's saviour,  
The crown of the Norman Reich,  
Elizabeth's wunderkammer  
All await a timely strike  
Step forward the Dutch Stadholder  
Who drown'd France in his dyke,  
To land an army on the saxon shore,  
But wanting not another civil war

The zeitgeist puts King James to flight,  
Parisian a pawn,  
First Jacobite! without a fight  
Finding an empty throne,  
King Billy dons the triple crown on Scotland's ancyent throne .

**London**

**1688**

### Alexander MacDonald

Tho there is one great novel in us all,  
Some author's thoughts are raided by despair,  
Their masterpieces never start at all,  
Yet others grow too dull to sit & bare;  
    Only the best  
    Life life with conviction,  
Dreaming each earthly test perfect for non-fiction.

In Glen Etive was born a boy  
To walk my poem's pages,  
    Heroism akin to Troy  
    Echoing down the ages,  
Bringing his parents much more joy  
    Than the jigging stages -  
Calamity strikes this young MacDonald  
Baring witness to clansmen being cull'd.

His mother hid him in a tree  
    & finger-hushes lips,  
Then turns to flee, sharp musketry  
    Into her bosom zips,  
Tho' orphanized 'fore teary eyes him to safe silence slips.

**Glencoe**  
**1692**

### Blenheim

King William conjures an alliance,  
Boring the flesh of Louis to the bone,  
His sea-lions scuttle the fleet of France  
& cut the fuming Stuarts from the throne;  
    Now Scotland's kings  
    With England entangl'd,  
Whose majority brings matters saxon-angl'd,

For politics do prosper well  
    Courting the royal ego,  
When loyal kinship casts a spell,  
    Rarely letting fetters go -  
But on digress my verse has fell,  
    So on! on with the show!  
Marching along the sandy Danube shore  
The Sun-King sends fresh conscripts to the war.

Behold the Duke of Marlborough,  
John Churchill of great fame,  
Faithful leader of firm vigour,  
    Putting the French to flame,  
Forever leaves his descendants a very famous name.

**Germany**  
**1704**

### Treaty of Utrecht

As Peneus & Alpheus combin'd  
England & Holland wash the wound of France,  
Pour thwarting salts within, bloodthirsty blind,  
Into his dotage Louis did advance;  
Dictating still  
The quarrel of nations,  
Arse far from battle's thrill & war's degregations.

Then what has France gain'd from *his* war?  
Her town's depopulated,  
Enemy pirates at the shore,  
Her fields uncultivated,  
Country houses wick with the poor,  
Death unsatiated -  
At first with war men say tis more a sport,  
But by the end just horrors they report.

At last the Sun-King sues for peace,  
Paradise to preserve,  
By this increase Europa's police,  
Great Britain & her verve,  
Possess Pillars of Hercules thro which all sealanes swerve.

**Gibralta**  
1713

### A Woman's War

She met him in the hot flush of her youth,  
Working the lobster-pots of Port Appin,  
Tween creamy lips kisses scream passion's truth,  
So wed for love, her kinsmen took him in;  
She bore three sons,  
Each wore her husband's name -  
Now sounds of pipes & guns toward their idyll came.

Alexander away did ride,  
To join with the Jacobite,  
Tho calm she seem'd on the outside  
Tears drench'd her pillow by night,  
& trembling all her time did bide  
For news of distant fight,  
When certain words within her soul would burn,  
*"O mother, when will father dear return?"*

Her prayers answer'd happily,  
He stroll'd in with the mail,  
Balanced his three sons on each knee,  
& told them stirring taylor  
Of Highlanders proud marching for a cause that must prevail.

**Scotland**  
1715

## Peter the Great

As nature shapes races, races nations,  
Nations shape kings & these kings shape our lives,  
The Tsar commences his coperations,  
Cuts thro the cocoon with his psychic knives;  
As catwalks crave  
Corrective surgery  
The brave reformers wave wands of futurity.

His armies guarantee his fame  
& russify the Baltics,  
Now ready for the global game,  
Tri-fleeted imperatrix,  
Rival Sweden retreats in shame,  
Licking her cicatrix,  
Stockholm's ambit deflated by his lance,  
In coming wars she holds a neutral stance.

City meant to last forever  
Uprose with his ego,  
Marshy Neva's magic river  
Provides her vital flow,  
So she can match his majesty, watching from the window.

## St Petersburg

1720

## The Great Awakening

Halfling, hedonistic America  
Suckles herself on europe's throbbing vein,  
Vast heaven-sent land to tempt the settler  
Of Italy, Germania & Spain;  
Wee green towhee  
Love luminary dawn;  
Both fetterless & free by breezy morning bourne.

But when rocks by loose pebbles paved,  
In a time to try the soul,  
The groaning of the damn'd & saved,  
Encompass our very all,  
When voices raise for the enslaved  
& wages rise & fall,  
Where Indians push'd into wilderness,  
Land of plantations, politics & press.

As from slime crawl lizard-fishes,  
Whitfield makes his voice heard,  
Modern Jesus coryphaeus  
Stability has stirr'd,  
Entrench'd in th'indestructable good ground of Heaven's  
word.

## North America

1740

### Frederick the Great

As poet-kings by growing nations crown'd  
& expeditions gravid to expand,  
Teuton has a modern grandmaster found,  
Swept thro Silesia & Sudetenland;  
    *"Save Austria!"*  
Empress Maria screams,  
All thro Bohemia her well-train'd army teems.

Vienna treats with Downing Street  
As young Potsdam Paris charms -  
    With european war complete  
    Man's brutality alarms,  
As children orphan'd in the street  
    & snipers strafe the farms -  
Since Mollwitz & the Chotusitz affrays  
Europa plunged deep in death-hungry days,

In which this Brandenburger shines,  
    In open glory tore,  
    Lover of wines, libretto lines  
    & genius for war  
Bringing Prussian policies to the European fore.

**Berlin**

**1744**

### Culloden

From frilly sleeves France slips the Stuart sword  
& plays it like a Pittsburgh poker ace,  
Imperial wars being fought abroad  
To Inverness embattl'd armies race;  
    Alexander  
    Ran with his manly sons,  
Yelling altogether toward the English guns.

Clan Appin on the right flank fell,  
    Questing for King & country,  
Eye-slicing claymores faced Burell,  
    Gruesome ends of ancestry  
As highland hopes turn'd into hell,  
    Cumberland's butchery  
MacDonald fled, thro all the fire & noise,  
Haunted by those death-moments of his boys.

He comforted his grieving wife,  
    *"O my darlin' Clara,*  
    *We've too much strife, a better life*  
    *Awaits America,"*  
So sail'd, with their sons' families, from Scotland... forever!

**Oban**

**1746**

## Canto II

*The Seven-Years War & the formation of the British Empire*

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

Arthur Koestler

## Colonial War

Europe shapes peace at sleepy Aix-Chapelle,  
Paris & London, locking niggler-horn,  
Prepare to fence rapiers for a spell  
Within the nation where Washington born;  
America,  
Land international,  
Redskins & militia battl'd intol' rable.

Captian Franklin's squadron did push  
Thro a legend-haunted wood,  
Of tomohawk's whooping ambush  
Corp'ral struck with sick'ning thud,  
Onto his native soil did gush  
Hot, sacrificial blood -  
Young Washington winced at each scalping cry,  
Yells, "*Benjamin, let us to Fort George fly!*"

The French plan seiges from Quebec,  
The British from Boston,  
But both a freckle, tiny speck,  
On lands American,  
Where still exist the ancyent six nations of Indian.

**Ohio**

**1754**

### **Earthquake!**

Old Portugal still european prince,  
Lord of diamoniferous Amazon,  
Capital rarely match'd before or since,  
Watch'd golden sunrise, but by nightfall gone;  
Under the sea,  
Ground would groan & bellow,  
Sending the Tsunami to lay old Lisbon low.

First her famous towers topple,  
Now the flames follow the flood,  
Legacies lost in the rubble.  
Mass'd thousands slain where they stood,  
Bursting man's beautiful bubble  
As only nature could,  
Her message deliver'd with a shiver,  
From Rochester to the Guadalquivir.

The world wilts beneath the pressure,  
Doom-stricken with intent,  
France, Austria, Britain, Prussia,  
A brooding continent,  
All waiting for war's catalyst or one they would invent.

**Europe**  
1755

### **Pre-emptive Strike**

Musing at the Sans Souci, free from care,  
Fred'rick shall contemplate his nation's fate,  
A friend & confidante of Herr Voltaire,  
Thinks deep into the future of the state;  
The answers come,  
Great powers on each side,  
To solve the conundrum to warfare all must slide.

If he who laughs last laughs longest,  
Those striking first strike strongest  
Facing the self-inflicted test,  
Fred'rick proclaims the contest,  
Now men in battle must he best,  
No momentary rest  
For Russia, Austria & France allied -  
Only Great Britain tends the Prussian side.

He proves once more that genius  
Exists in martial arts,  
His warriors victorious  
For battle's many parts  
Like children kept; from ammo carts to patriotic hearts.

**Saxony**  
1756

### Struggle for Existence

Europe's princes provinces overwhelm;  
Sweden possesses Pomerania  
France mops the British from each German realm  
& Russians rules the roost in East Prussia;  
As Berlin falls  
To lion Budapest,  
The butchery appalls a new enlighten'd west.

Both Paris & Vienna slack,  
Thinking the war completed,  
Feeling Fred'rick would not attack  
With provisions outpeter'd -  
Such flash of lightning at Rossbach!  
Totally defeated,  
Escaping thro Thuringen forestry -  
A clueless, cannonless calamity.

The clawing winds of winter bite  
For warm climes birds are fled,  
Six hours of light, a stunning fight,  
Another field of fight,  
But for thick-feather'd carrion so viscerally fed.

**Leuthen**

1757

### Birth of the Raj

How arrogant is man that thro one war,  
Thinks contrees will subdue, but do indeed,  
When charismatic leaders to the fore  
Have work'd upon the natives private greed;  
Sir Robert Clive  
Leaves the Madras clutter -  
How many would survive the Black Hole of Calcutta.

The Nawab left Murshidbad  
With the barons of Bengal,  
They thought that Clive was raving mad  
To pitch camp & fight at all,  
Vastly outnumber'd, but he had  
The luck of that dice roll,  
The barons knew the balance of power  
Had shifted to the white man that black hour.

Commemorated victory,  
Mumbai renamed Bombay,  
Pondicherry storm'd from the sea,  
The French fled in dismay,  
From Ramadan to Diwali for peace the peasants pray.

**India**

1758

## Wolfe

The global visions of William the Pitt,  
See certain sections shaded Preston red,  
A puzzle with one piece struggling to fit,  
Like racing gates with horses poorly bred;  
    Chess-player sent  
    To North America,  
With one present intent, to conquer Canada.

Beyond my triple metaphor  
    Sit the pretty english fleet,  
Spit-snarling like the dogs of war,  
    Quebecois quake in the street,  
Night helps slip silent boats to shore,  
    Outflanking move complete,  
Stood with his officers at break of day  
    Chiaroscuro on a page of Gray...

*"I would rather have that composed,  
    Than gain the hot day's fame!"*  
The armis closed all problems posed  
    Brought down with shot & flame,  
*"They run, they run!"* tho dying his checkmate had won the  
    game.

**Quebec**  
1758

## Sumner & Stemmler

The Britons bless their miraculous year,  
When empire many hectares did increase,  
    Upon the continent her troops appear  
Set to remove France from her German lease;  
    With Prussian friends,  
    Sharing a common blood,  
March where the Weser wends thro wheatfield & wild wood.

*"This is fuckin' killin' mi feet,"*  
Jeff Sumner moan'd on the road,  
Once press-gang'd from a Preston street,  
    Now a well-paid blade abroad  
Helps to pursue the French defeat,  
    The borders are restor'd  
As lines of allied cavalry enshock  
Cuirassiers, as waves break on the rock.

While trawling thro those wheat-fields won,  
    Jeff saw a French 'corpse' move  
    & point a gun at some Prussian -  
    This threat Jeff did remove  
Death-shot that saved Paul Stemmler has commenc'd the  
    Karmic groove.

**Minden**  
1759

### Martial Romance

Paul call'd upon his cousin at Colditz,  
To pass the weeks that were his precious leave,  
To meet a woman having hissy fits,  
More beautiful than his heart could believe;  
With just one kiss  
He caught her flailing soul,  
A wooing world of bliss, a cooer to his call.

When he went off to the muster  
She was pregnant with his seed,  
*"I am in love,"* he told Blucher,  
*"Many soldiers we shall breed  
To maintain beloved Prussia!"*  
*"By god, them do we need,  
So many paid the full price at Zorndorf,  
Hochkirch, Maxen, Dresden & Kunesdorf."*

Tho men exigious, Frederick  
Puts Prussia on a par,  
But stream of victory phyrrie  
Has dull'd his warring star,  
Just ten thousand brave hearts await the martial coup de gras.

**Torgau**  
**1760**

### Exhausted Peace

The spring blooms of a generation gone,  
Some daisy-beds, some lucky to grow old,  
How many names bore *'La Guerre de Sept Ans,'*  
How many famous stories to be told?  
As lovers rest,  
Ladies tire of legend,  
Economies depress'd, folk will the wars to end.

Deft as gliding ballerina  
Sweden sidesteps the conflict  
With the new Russian Tsarina,  
This war too hard to predict  
For Tom Thumb & Thumbelina  
In thumb war cramp have click'd,  
Even Great Britain from the fight dost flit,  
Her new clown king closing the age of Pitt.

Loquacious diplomatic spree  
Warms up the winter hours,  
An unfriendly hostility  
Presses down the powers,  
Scratching their caps oer global maps as monkeys inspect  
flowers.

**Paris**  
**1763**

### Canto III

*The birth of Liberty from the American war of independance to the  
French revolution*

If they would meet us now for our kinsfolk  
High on the hilltop lets raise our ramparts  
Carry out faces over the shield rims  
Raise up our spears, men, over our heads  
& set upon Fflam Ddwyn in the midst of his hosts  
& slaughter him, ay, & all that go with him

**Taliesin**

### Catherine the Great

Namore should Europe fear the muslim march,  
The dreaded dengue Istanbul beswoons,  
Her ageing, plauge-ridden triumphal arch  
More insubstantial than the shifting dunes;  
The crescent furl'd;  
Conquest consign'd to shelves,  
Leaving the western world to war among themselves.

But first an empire must dissolve,  
As nature browns orange peel,  
Tsarina shows ceasar resolve  
& cleopatrian zeal,  
The Turkish question bids solve,  
Their territories steal -  
But first her navy to Chios did flow  
& seized Aegean harbours from the foe.

Russia rose in gargantua,  
Walks a world collossus,  
Moldavia, Wallachia  
Annex'd victorious,  
*"Fight for your contree,' Cath'rine chants, "& make us glorious!"*

**Russia**

**1774**

## American Revolution

Liberty is the watchword of the wise,  
The breeding-ground of modern progression,  
But skeleton keys fall not from the skies,  
Freedom rarely won without aggression;  
    Paul Revere peers  
    Thro hazy salmon sun,  
The enemy appears, rebellion begun.

*"... are coming, the British are coming!"*  
    The militiamen bare arms,  
Run toward that rhythmic drumming  
    Thro the thickets & the farms,  
Soon the redcoats boasts sent shtumming  
    & when the battle clams,  
The township of Concord all smoke & flame -  
Old world, new world, its all the bloody same.

    Upon the field the soft flutes play'd  
    Amid the broken spears,  
Thro death's parade the widow made  
    A well from all their tears,  
When born from such beginnings liberty must bleed for years.

**New York**

1775

## Liberty Bell

Green Mountain Boys are surrounding Boston  
    Storming hapless Fort Ticonderuga,  
An army rallies round George Washington  
    & his De Wessyngton insignia,  
    Those sparks & bars  
    Of English heraldry  
Become the stripes & stars of native liberty.

    Marion, a dashing Frenchman,  
    Shared hatred for Britannia,  
Midst the humid vegetation,  
    Of deep South Carolina  
Taught war to the American,  
    'Swamp Fox' his moniker,  
Star of a transatlantic story wrung  
By men whose blood from warring Europe sprung.

    As the fetterless bell echoes,  
    Restless grew a nation  
To smite their foes, to great applause,  
    Read the declaration -  
As each man signed he headlong plunged... death or  
    liberation.

**Philadelpa**

1776

## American War

Britannia is bullied into action,  
Sends men to fight a war three months from home,  
To furnish the king with satisfaction,  
Cornwallis views the Virginian seaboard;  
*"Tax dodging scum!  
Sons of gin-soak'd bitches!  
Their time for payback come, be it blood or riches."*

Regular redcoat regiment  
Reach'd the creek at Brandywine,  
As per se rules of engagement  
Devastates the rebel line -  
France offers timely refreshment,  
Treaty of friendship sign,  
Resume the death match of those sister thrones  
& send a fleet to bolster John Paul Jones.

The purr of the Parisian  
Adds to the hue & cry,  
With the demon American  
To Saratoga fly,  
In seizing it a message send, *"Liberty must not die!"*

## West Virginia

1777

## The Last Jacobite

Alexander commands a private clan,  
His wife & three gorgeous daughters-in-law,  
Each one a mother to a strapping man,  
Gone with granpaw to patriotic war;  
*"Let none survive,"*  
The old man hiss'd his hate,  
*"Ah maybe eighty-five but I can still shoot straight."*

Washington launch'd verbal attacks,  
*"Men of our wond'rous nation,  
Should we suffer a tyrants tax  
Without represeantation,  
Fight for your flag, both whites & blacks,  
Suffer depravation,  
For in the end it is our destiny  
To carve a contree fit for liberty."*

Each night 'Mac' told the famous tayle  
Of Bonnie Prince Charlie,  
Twas never stale, did never fail  
To rouse excitedly  
His proud grandsons, tho men now they seem'd perch'd upon  
his knee.

## West Virginia

1778

### **Britain Determin'd**

As the Sun-King stopp'd by coalition,  
Europe combines to smite man's arrogance,  
The British Empire in opposition  
To Prussia, Spain, the Netherlands & France;  
One mighty fleet  
Carv'd from myriad trees,  
Grown able to compete with those who own the seas.

Now that red sun of India's  
Rises with an angry shine  
& the Maharatta Rajas  
Stiffen independant spine,  
Raise the flag against their 'masters,'  
Britannia forms a line  
Sensing Delhi vital to her empire,  
Brings down the rebels with a hail of fire

Ten thousand ships beseige the rock  
To beat her to the knees,  
Their cannons knock, such red hot shock,  
But futile days are these  
Britain refuses to leave the Pillars of Hercules.

### **Gibralta**

1782

### **Independance**

As Essex battl'd Tyrone's Ulstery  
When chivalry was bogg'd down in the peat,  
Cornwallis seeks American mercy,  
Yorktown's surrender rendering defeat;  
British empire,  
Pitt's darling, lying wreck'd,  
Gunn'd down in hatred's fire, a time for retrospect.

The news whisper'd to MacDonald,  
Half-flickers of emotion,  
Tho body limp a mind so old  
Still swam across an ocean,  
Saw Glencoe's massacre unfold,  
Thought, "Revenge..." slow-motion  
Drops chin to chest as poppies plush with rain  
Decline their heads & drooping kiss the plain.

George Washington first president,  
E Pluribus unum,  
His government now re-invent  
The grecian theorum,  
Grand sentry of man's liberty from now til kingdom come.

### **The United States of America**

1783

### Convicts

As old soldiers earn a thievish living  
One sails home to Blaneau Ffestiniog,  
Defeated fates often unforgiving,  
Arrested for robbing bottles of grog;  
Transportation  
An endless, restless sea,  
Empire's new direction - the penal colony.

Thro the sea-whiff in his nostrils  
Rough perfume did pierce his heart,  
Buxom lass from the Buxton hills,  
Who stole from an apple cart,  
Their nights the grunt of passion fills  
& there new life did start -  
Pam was pregnant when they did disembark,  
As when Mount Ararat received the Ark.

They moved on from Botany Bay,  
Found a better harbour,  
Upon the way young Maggie Grey  
Marries Thomas Slater,  
Then on the beach at Sydney thrown into her hard labour.

**Australia**  
**1789**

### French Revolution

As children change a nation's attitudes  
The rights of man give reason to an age,  
When swinish lives of rough-hewn multitudes  
Have toss'd a straw out of their ancient cage;  
The straw blown east  
By breeze american  
What forces are released by the republican.

Are kings chosen by god alone  
Or more by human error,  
the commoners seize Capet's throne,  
Aristocratic terror,  
Their noble heads from shoulders torn,  
Life's fatal leveller,  
For golden lads & golden lasses must,  
Like chimney sweeps, return to cold & dust.

Below the Bastille soft flutes play'd  
amid the broke spears,  
Thro death's parade the widow made  
A well from all their tears,  
When born from such beginnings liberty must bleed for years.

**Paris**  
**1789**

**Book V**

**IMMORTALS**

**Canto 1**

*The rise of Jove, Satanus & Allah*

*La loy du Sol & Venus contendus  
Appropriant l'esprit de prophetie:  
Ne l'un ne l'autre ne seront entendus,  
Par sol tiendra la loy du grand Messie.*

As far as a man can peer thro' the mist,  
Sitting on watch, looking over a wine dark sea,  
So long is the stride of the god's thundering horses...

**Homer**

### **The Birth of Mars**

As warring mortals more for battle born  
Then deified when ride to victory,  
So many dying Aeneas did mourn,  
Earning him an honorary degree;  
As Hercules  
Join'd the pure immortals,  
First Roman holds the keys to bright Heaven's portals.

Said Juno, "Welcome to this place,  
See your skin suffers no scars,  
Having founded man's greatest race  
Thy name shall rise to the stars,  
Brave souls shall crave thy shaven face  
& worship thee as Mars!"  
She placed a broadsword in his shining hand,  
"Legion's of eagles thine own to command!"

"As faith remains," spake Jupiter,  
"Your faith shall never die,"  
Mars mused on the panorama  
With an ambitious eye,  
Throat thirsting for fresh victories for death had made it dry.

### **Olympus**

### **The Ambition of Jove**

O'er fields of light our Lord Jove did survey  
Kingdoms & Godheads of a greater mind  
Higher than his, musing on this display  
How Jove philosophized upon his kind;  
How faith & will  
Creates creationists,  
When gods with kudos fill like mystic alchemists.

He watch'd how glory could be won  
As Mars attack'd Olympus  
With an army made of Titan -  
Tho battle laborious  
Grecian gods slung in a dungeon  
Sparing but young Venus -  
"You too could rule!" Jove turn'd to see a witch  
Riding astride slithing Zmei Gorynich.

To hear old Baba-Yaga speak  
He paid her psychic worth  
"This fame ye seek comes from the meek,  
To eke a humble birth  
Wait planets fine-aligning when your kind may walk the  
earth."

### **Divinnia**

## Jove

Rays of pure stardust pulse across the Earth,  
According to some alien design  
When diety desires a humble birth  
& interplanetary spheres align,  
A starchild born,  
Warm his mellow manger,  
With writ the world to warn of the Devil's danger.

The virgin mother sent her child  
To a cult of strict Essene,  
With whom the Dead Sea scrolls were filed,  
Ancyent prophecies to glean,  
By them this little lad was styled  
Until he turn'd thirteen,  
When Mary's boy return'd to Nazereth,  
Naught but hell-burning brains & smell of death.

His followers proclaim him king,  
Trumpet their history -  
Sin-forgiving & storm-stilling  
Miracle ministry,  
The perishing ephemeron of Christianity.

## Jerusalem

## Accession of Mars

As weather-beaten boulders topple low  
From rocky crowns, lie servile neath the slopes,  
So many gods on Mars their swords bestow,  
Thro him now shown their faith, their fears, their hopes;  
Conquistador  
Constructs his capital  
God of destructive war instructs his grand council.

*"Welcome each blessed denizen  
Of my fabulous empire,  
Thou tall, broad-chested Gwyddion,  
My black-hearted Obiah,  
Ray-beaming Ra, one-eyed Woden,  
Lord Jupiter & Tyr,  
With the old godheads of Sumeria  
& this new diety from Divinnia."*

Jove took applause from heaven's pews,  
The brilliant new boy,  
Mars continues, *"I have some news,  
As Aeneas saved Troy  
My succession Venus secures!"* She rose in pregnant joy.

## Olympus

### Valhallan Victory

The young Aesir in battlegear assemble  
Launch on the backs of swans Siberian,  
Soaring rainbow streaks that so resemble  
Storming meteor swarms kasabian;  
A great city  
Would soon below them spread  
Disregarding pity they dived to mark the dead.

Mars muster'd all his minions,  
Lesser dieties adress'd,  
*"Drive darkness from my dominions!"*  
But protecting self-int'rest  
Most fled by foot or pinions,  
Leaving Venus depress'd,  
*"What will become of our babe, Britannia?"*  
*"Fly, my love, to Horselburg & hide her."*

One bloody hour of battle's fright  
Wide ruin would unveil,  
Choked by his plight the wargod's flight  
Left Odin to prevail -  
While Mars found sacred sanctuary where silver swallows sail.

### Mount Olympus

### Allah

Divinnia fed daily by the faithful,  
A palace amid celestial flowers,  
In Heaven's house an envious angel  
Watches Jove's work then desires His powers;  
Secret process  
To emulate the gods,  
He dons the wizards dress, wielding the lightning rods...

...Climbs mount Aetna's wrathful summit  
Heart pulsing with emotion  
Like some young, romantic poet,  
Sang, *"Lords of Fire & Ocean,  
Of Air & Earth, my soul is split,  
Quater'd in devotion!"*  
From deep infinitude a lazar beam  
Struck Allah, godhead twinkling in the stream.

This diety recognizing  
Angels flock like cattle,  
Prayers coursing thro His being  
Conjure a capital,  
Close to Jove's own, beneath both throne's armies prime for  
battle.

### Babylon

### Rise of Jove

The promise of eternal damnation  
Increases Jove's dominion as men pray  
For peace on earth, hopes of soul-salvation  
Ensures all hear whenever angels play;  
Like Cinque Ports  
When England puts to sea  
Heaven's myriad courts offer Him fealty.

As men know so many heavens  
There can only be but one  
Framed by wide, white cloudy mountains  
Paradises perch'd upon,  
Home to immortal denizens,  
Regnant, remember'd, gone –  
A continent carved from our earthly prayers,  
A world of worship, circles, song & layers.

Jove names his slice Divinnia  
The grandest of them all,  
Call him FATHER, this new 'Allah'  
Must to his mercy fall  
Upon the fields above the skies in fierce angelic brawl

### Divinnia

### War in Heaven

As thought is the shadow of sensation  
& action the raison d'etre of thought,  
Since Allah succumb'd to his ambition  
Heaven by desp'rate civil strife is caught;  
Ecephia  
This vital battle frames,  
Coruscus theatre of cataclysmic flames.

As greek meets greek in feats of war,  
Be they sacred games or real,  
Two angel armies leap & roar  
To the divine trumpet's peal,  
Archangels straining at the fore,  
The battlefield to steal -  
How proud grew each god of his lieutenant,  
Jove, Satanus & Allah, Tervagant.

Duel fought exhausted til standstill,  
The generals must meet  
Upon a hill, "Why do we kill,"  
Sang Jove, "When love so sweet?"  
"Then let us truce," sang Allah, "& deduce evil's defeat."

### Divinnia

## Hell

At Jove's goodness Satanus sneers disgust,  
Persudes war-loving angels to rebel,  
Marches them down beneath the planet's crust  
To banish Pluto from the depths of Hell;  
Locust conquest,  
Round Pandemonium  
From Grecia they would wrest faded imperium.

As big fleas attract little fleas,  
Sat on their backs to bite 'em,  
& fleas even smaller than these  
Find them & then alight 'em,  
So, in ever-dwindling degrees,  
On ad infinitum,  
Evil pulses thro gods, thro priests, thro men,  
Thro animals & back to fleas again.

More fallen angels fell thro air  
& left those realms of bliss,  
Descend to where his kindred share  
The cinder-swept abyss,  
Slow-filling with the sinful, dreadful in sulphuric hiss.

## Hades

## Canto 2

*The Birth of Liberty & the second rise of Mars*

Shall we renounce our ancient friends the gods?  
Powerful, undemanding, but unknown  
To the unyielding steel we fiercely breed.

**Rainer Maria Rilke**

### A Royal Tourney

Wide-ruling Jove ordains a tournament  
To celebrate the royal champions,  
Complimentary flatterings far sent  
Delivering Heaven's invitations;  
Godheads attend,  
& when the games commence  
All converse would suspend for action fraught & tense.

Toutatis represented Gaul  
As Thor honour'd Valhalla,  
The Lion ran Britannia's stall  
While Tervegant serv'd Allah,  
Great-hearted Pyerun gave his all,  
Scenes of sublime valour!  
& after they were prais'd with warm applause  
All settl'd down to watch the mortal wars.

We manlings are the preffer'd sport,  
Playthings of great powers,  
In whose wars caught, if frays well fought  
Rain down on us flowers,  
Or, if sensing half-heartedness, humus dows'd in showers.

### Europa

### A Royal Marriage

Lonely Venus had brought up her goddess,  
Spurn'd by a father who had craved a son,  
Now she has come of age, in special dress,  
Was sent to woo the prince of Albion;  
As love & war  
Thro her proud heart courses,  
Gwyddion did adore Britannia's resources.

So divorces his other wives  
& pledged their soul united,  
The wedding morning soon arrives  
& all the gods invited  
Bringing them crystal, wine & knives -  
With each gift delighted,  
But happy the couple loved most of all  
This cute & fluffy lion-cubling ball.

The love they made that honeymoon  
Was more the tyger duel,  
Venery runes & very soon  
They sire a true jewel,  
"What is his name," the druid asks, "We call him Samuel."

### Stonehenge

### Uncle Sam

Sterling whispers into Britannia's ear,  
"This is a perfect mission for thy lad,  
America can help him conquer fear,  
& conquer land, there is much to be had,  
When made mature,  
By continental shelf  
Your good son must secure an empire for himself."

As Jove recieved his regal guest  
He was moved by her splendour,  
By her demeanour much impress'd  
& so agreed to help her,  
Sent Neptune a polite request,  
"Aid this queen's adventure,"  
& so that old Poseidon of the deep  
Arose by Albion as if from sleep,

& carried Sam across the sea  
To his inheritance -  
Sublime contree, Areouski  
Was slain in its defence,  
While horseless Hino forced to kneel low in subservience.

### Americana

### Testamundi Imperatrix

Tyr sends Toutatis to America,  
Britannia sent her lion to assist,  
Amidst the misty lakes of Canada  
The Gaulish god rough-pomell'd by Sam's fist  
& so retires,  
Fleeing the Lion's roar;  
Whose thoughts turn to empires upon a global tour.

He bounded down the Andes length  
& swam an endless ocean,  
Impress'd the jungles with his strength  
Who soon knelt in devotion,  
& Saraswhati on her plinth  
Urged her husband's caution,  
Not wishing to lose her love foolishly,  
She offer'd the Lion their fealty.

Britannia sat, her pride to view,  
Beside her Gwyddion,  
From Lord Vishnu to Kangaroo,  
Empiric procession,  
That thro the valleys wended, happy friends of Albion

### Snowdonia

### Birth of Liberty

Britannia, the Gaulish problem sensing,  
Orders her son straightwise across the foam,  
But Bucks, the younger brother of Sterling,  
Hath Sam persuaded to remain at home;  
Nor would he budge,  
His mother scream'd fury,  
*"Let violence be our judge, our jury victory!"*

As Neptune swept the Lion's roar  
Thro wavy ocean's ripple,  
Sam watch'd the seas in silent awe,  
Before him rose a bubble,  
Which brought a goddess to the shore,  
Primed & arm'd for battle,  
Yet beautiful, Sam fell in love at once,  
Then heard a roar & saw the Lion pounce.

Britannia's brood fought bitterly,  
Befitting kindred kind,  
Til Liberty emphatic'ly  
Broke that embattl'd bind,  
& cast the lion cross the sea, but he had slash'd her blind.

### Americana

### Charming Mars

Far from the frozen mountain-tops of Gaul  
Toutatis found a festival of stars  
Accompanied by music to enthrall,  
The barren, wind-swept baritone of Mars;  
Warriors roar  
As night with fear divides,  
The mighty god of war in fullest fettle strides,

Clad in finest regalia,  
He address'd Tyr's lively court,  
*"Respect, my fellow emporer,  
For past battles fearless fought,  
Now let us ally together  
Our wider fame is sought,  
Allied, & then the world is but a pearl,  
We are the boy, the world a panting girl!"*

The Gods of Gaul now kiss the hand  
That once won Woden's sword,  
*"We understand that fate has plann'd  
The age of Rome restored,  
Our blades are yours,"* both bend & bow, the galleries applaud.

### Europa

### **Trials of Strength**

Tyr track'd deep wolf prints North & West & South,  
& found Fenir fuel-feasting in the East,  
Plunged his brave gauntlet thro the drooling mouth,  
To lose a hand but tame this famous beast;  
Mounting its back  
They gallop to Asgard,  
Leading a snarling pack of blood-hounds battle-scarr'd.

As all Valhalla dined & drank  
On the fare of Saehrimnir  
Tyr strutted in & broke a shank  
From the loins of Andhrimnir  
*"Good brethren I am pleased to thank  
You all for being here,  
Lord Odin I have sworn to challenge Thor  
& win thy favours as is Aesir law."*

He dons the magical gauntlet  
That Mars enfused with power,  
Forearms firm set, grunts, groans & sweat,  
The contest lasts an hour,  
A table smash! the Aesir cheer, Tyr did tallest tower!

### **Valhalla**

### **The Snowmaiden's Rape**

The rampant Cock'relle spreads her feathers wide  
The gods of Asgard gather'd at the breast  
Her phantasie by one goddess defied,  
Britannia knuckles earthward for the test;  
Her slender sea  
Defies this vast empire -  
Determining to free the tight'ning chains of Tyr.

Europa's immortal brethren  
Tend the golden Gods of Gaul,  
Dancing in the Leopard Garden,  
Dining in the Phoenix Hall -  
A salubrious snow maiden  
Is flung against a wall,  
"I shall marry thee afore ye cry rape!"  
The stench-kiss of Toutatis drench'd in grape.

Shock'd Ice-King cheeks blaze at the news,  
*"Gaul has stole my daughter!"*  
Said Tyr, *"Please choose... if you refuse,  
We shall sup your slaughter,  
But prospers amity if you let my brother court her!"*

### **Gaul**

## Defending Asia

Slept Gaulish Gods, & taken for a fool  
The Ice King swept his princess thro the night  
Escaped a life of rape & perfumed gruel,  
Tyr screams, "*We must avenge our friendship sleight!*"  
The bridegroom burns,  
Blind & broken-hearted,  
But when the lust returns armies are departed.

Tyr drives the bloodhounds thro the snows  
Up to the Winter Palace  
Where the Snowmaiden did propose  
A wedding with Toutatis,  
As toast-on-toast the stupor grows  
From a posion'd chalice,  
The gods of Gaul snore soundly in their tents,  
To be surrounded by ten thousand Ents.

As Pyerun sounds the battlecries  
His Treemen storm the camp  
Far Fenir flies, Toutatis sighs  
& follows at a scamp  
Leaving his wardogs howling - strangle-branch & root-gnarl  
stamp.

**Asia**

## Canto 3

*The Defeat of Mars*

What is a society without a heroic dimension

**Jean Baudrillard**

### Mars Rouses

Being forbidden to leave the abyss  
In angel form, Satanus sheds his wings  
& slithers to the feet of Toutatis,  
Hissing, *"Do not fret at what things fate brings,  
But try again!"*  
The god leapt to his feet,  
*"That war was not in vain, let us avenge defeat."*

A messenger was sent abroad  
To tell Mars of the story,  
How Pyerun & his golden sword  
Had robb'd them of their glory,  
"No longer can our pride afford  
This sleight of destiny!"  
Stirr'd by this taylor the war-monarch upstood,  
*"Tell Gaul we shall soon gorge on Pyerun's blood."*

Mars tool a massive battle-axe  
& thwack'd it in the ground,  
The Earth's crust cracks, unearths the tracks  
Where ancyent beasts did pound,  
& with a snort Conundrum rose, most fearsome of hellhounds.

### Mount Olympus

### Thor & the Angels

Two sky-saints sail'd, deep in conversation,  
Above the misty mountains of Midgard,  
Discussing the recent situation  
& how best to contest Tyr's latest card;  
The answer born,  
Valhalla rings her bells,  
While Heimdal blows his horn to herald Jove's angels.

*"Lord Thor,"* said Michael, *"Mars & kin  
Marches to the north once more,  
Dead are the days when he must win  
Any thought he put to war,  
Now is the time to shed your skin  
& settle an old score,  
No longer should we suffer selfish schemes,  
Join with our forces to destroy their dreams!"*

*"I love a fight,"* said Thor, *"I do,  
& this one would be fierce -  
But me & you'd be lucky to  
Such battle-order pierce..."*  
*"Fret not!"* said Saint George, *"Britannia has sent her lion tae us!"*

### Asgard

## Heaven's Anguish

As the great God of Gods from sleep awoke  
Up in the vast, reproachless paradise,  
The soundless voice eternal softly spoke,  
"Why does mankind heed not angel advice?  
Why is blood spilt  
All for the love of war  
When we could hear the lilt of sylvan troubadour?"

Jehova roves the OVERBRAIN  
For answers to this puzzle,  
A cloud hovers oer Heaven's plain  
Whose fine mist turns to drizzle,  
Descending as a rush of rain,  
Now the sky vaults sizzle  
As with a CRACK a flash of lightning falls,  
Striking his likeness on the temple walls.

*"This is,"* said all Divinity,  
*"A portent of the doom  
That comes to thee, humanity!"*  
Existence feels the gloom,  
From halls of faerie music to hell's fiery catacomb.

## Divinia

## Battlestorm

Landing upon the glowing Midgard shore,  
Mars is returning to the burning stage,  
To march with Tyr & Toutatis once more,  
Salvation only comes thro wars we wage;  
& on they march,  
The Cock'relle by their side,  
Thro Victoria's arch, voluptuous in pride.

Again the gods to conflict rous'd,  
Vital band of friends to forge,  
The Lion's heart, in broad chest hous'd,  
Bounded cross river & gorge,  
The fear of brutal battle dows'd  
By confident Saint George,  
Thor galloping below him on his steed  
They met the wargod & the Gallic creed.

A cry begins the epic fight  
To shake the spheres & stars,  
Thro pale twilight 'tween day & night  
Beams the broadsword of Mars  
Upon the road to glory that Archangel Michael bars.

## Europa

## The Defeat of Mars

Mars watch'd the wanton ways of war unfold,  
Both sides unmoving from positions held,  
But for Saint Michael, gleaming white & gold,  
Bolster'd & ready to the Cock'relle geld;  
Mars haul'd his reigns  
& drove Conundrum on,  
Across th'embattled plains, wide-waving his weapon.

The Archangel now turn'd to meet  
The Roman god advancing,  
& soon they steel & exchange feet  
Like three stallions prancing  
Beneath their grunts the earth did greet -  
Embattl'd entrancing  
They fought & fought & then they fought some war,  
Til Conundrum lay dead upon the floor.

The cosmic duel raged to climax,  
Midgard rang with thunder,  
'Cross starry trachts the war god backs,  
Broadsword torn asunder,  
Michael gleaming majesty - embodiment of wonder.

## Europa

## Divine Judgement

With Saint George facing Tyr cross the abyss,  
The Lion fought the Cock'relle to a draw  
& Thor clash'd blow-by-blow with Toutatis  
Great tempest of blade, beak, tooth, spear & claw;  
But vitally  
Michael triumphs oer Mars,  
A signal victory to end the Gallic wars.

The Lord of Battles brought to trial,  
Wise justice of Britannia,  
*"Noble god, your ways would defile,  
The good peace of Europa,  
& your actions we must deem vile,  
Deeds of a murderer,  
For without peace the world would not survive,  
You must be bound - & yet remain alive."*

The criminal was drugg'd asleep  
& handed to Neptune,  
Who cross'd the deep until a heap  
Of rocks rose to the moon,  
& there he chain'd his charge, stood semi-conscious swoon-on-  
swoon.

## Oceania

## Conversazione

The goddess Karma flew to Fairyland,  
Convers'd with Mab, Queen of the Pixie Glen,  
By loveliest daffadowndilly fann'd,  
Far from the prying eyes of gods & men;  
Sipping their brews,  
Rare teas of wildflowers,  
They share their recent news, minutes turn to hours....

A wood nymph with translucent wings  
Serv'd platters of bluebell cakes,  
Sang Mab, "*These new gods & their kings  
Seldom learn from late mistakes,  
Discontented with what fate brings,  
Each lusts more as he takes -  
In that I trust not Satanus & 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

## Death of Loki

Loki canter'd the clammy trachts of hell,  
Strange presences witnessing wyrd meeting,  
At first it seem'd their talk was flowing well,  
But moments oft, with devilment, fleeting;  
Be-elzebub  
Swings his tooth-studded scythe,  
Leaving a bloody stub, into the corpse squirms writhe.

Belial donn'd the Aesir skin  
Riding to Yggdrasil,  
Join'd the wild wind-hunt of Odin,  
Seven souls the days prize kill,  
Loki press'd home his masters spin,  
A bitter serpent's pill,  
*"Tyr & Toutatis now plot against ye!"*  
Soon on the march goes Asgard's grand armee.

The battle was a bloody one  
The Gallic forces fall,  
Whose submission draws derision  
From Loki, "*After all,*"  
He calls to Odin, "*Who can stop us when we stand up tall?"*

## Europa

## Prometheus

The great god of war wakens in the rains,  
Finding his arms tied to a crag of rock,  
In desp'rate rage him straining at the chains,  
Together held by a mystical lock;  
    *"Why hold me here?"*  
Shouts echo cross the seas,  
No rescuers appear, now dropping to his knees

He fills the cosmos with despair  
From dawn til the drop of night,  
At last the dark lord made aware  
Of the War God's desp'rate plight,  
& sends three harpies thro the air,  
    Craw-throated feral flight,  
From whose sharp claws they drop a golden key,  
What mass of slime now rises from the sea?

The key grabb'd by a tentacle,  
Lord Mars has been releas'd,  
Standing grateful he brands his skull,  
    The number of the beast,  
Him ready to do battle, Hell's hegemony increas'd.

## Oceania

## Book VI

### Napoleon

*Un Empereur naistra pres d'Italie  
Qui a l'Empire sera vendu bien cher:  
Diront avec quels gens il se ralie,  
Qu'on trouvera moins prince que boucher.*

## Canto I

*The rise of Napoleon from the French revolution  
to the emperor's crown.*

## Warrior Born

Our spirit touch'd by memories of man  
& how one man became a legend made,  
As restless time moves thro her milky span,  
His nerve shall never from our vigour fade;

Napoleon!

Name risen to the stars!

When Europa was won & Eagles march'd with Mars!

As other young men of his age

Upheld the revolution

Aristocratics assuage

This swift, sharp, cruel solution

He took a step onto the stage,

Some stocky Corsican

Watches the rues run red with royal blood,  
The fate of France by none more understood.

He waltzed thro each academy

With vision, verve & flair,

His masterly artillery

Wrought with a noble stare,

With will to engage warriors, of strategies aware!

**France**

**1791**

*"On dit que dieu est toujours pour les gros battallions!"*

**Napoleon Bounaparte**

## Republican Dawn

A vacuum forms where lived a lion's pride,  
Long line of Louis, lords of France & Spain,  
Prostrate beneath the coming regicide,  
Beg Bourbon cousins, "*Pray restore our reign;*"  
Thus Austrians  
French liberty to foil,  
March with friendly Prussians onto King Louis' soil.

One hundred thousand souls conjoin,  
Gather'd neath Valmy's steeple  
The Cockrelle cause the only coin,  
This Army of the People  
Draws steely barb from belted loin,  
Storms up the hard, steep hill,  
The spoils of victory soon theirs to wield,  
The Prussian phalanx driven from the field.

The King is forced to meet his fate  
With Marie Antoinette,  
Minos awaits them at the gate  
To answer for their debt  
Good souls died for their greed of gold, the guillotine is set...

**Paris**  
**1793**

## March of Napoleon

Promotion upon noble promotion  
Napoleonic fame on pinions rise,  
Opinion, from doubt to devotion,  
Purported in the populace's eyes;  
If heaven sent  
Then Fate must surely steer,  
From lowly Lieutenant to Gen'ral Brigadeer.

The revolutionary call  
Transform'd to one of conquest,  
Hapsburg Flanders & Holland fall  
With all of the Rhine Bank West,  
Then striking thro Cisalpine Gaul  
France faced vital contest  
At the battle of Tagliamento,  
His genius, unbridled, runs the show.

As Austrian retreats increase  
Vienna shrinks in fear,  
Then sues for peace, the muskets cease,  
His Aide-de-Camps appear,  
Heralding their great champion, in victory austere.

**Leoben**  
**1797**

### Eastern Complex

From Perpignan to Rheims & Brittany  
Napoleon claim'd as the new messiah,  
Cult of acolytic celebrity  
Forever man's endeavours to inspire;  
& now Egypt!  
The Pyramids beckon,  
Fabulous pharoe crypt beneath a seering sun.

At first the Tricolours prosper  
When Malta shrewdly taken  
& ancyent Alexandria  
'Fore fierce French foes foresaken,  
But facing the em'rald terror  
Of Admiral Nelson,  
Fleet crippled at the Battle of the Nile -  
Soon into prison boats the bluecoats file.

In youth being no new Pompey,  
Nor Alexander's kind,  
He reach'd Marseille in dissarray  
Leaving thousands behind,  
The oriental question milling still aghast his mind.

**France**

**1799**

### Imperial Intentions

Needing sharp sabres civil strife to quell,  
Gallic resolve promotes a Consulate,  
Three lofty men French treasure-chests to swell  
& stretch the Tricolor to Calicut;  
Tall in their midst,  
Fresh from the sojourn East,  
The prime Bonapartist, his eagles are releas'd.

Brought to war thro forced conscription  
Marching by the pretty Po,  
His insatiable ambition  
Drives them on to Marengo  
Lombardy taxed by Austrian  
Before this gory show -  
A field of rampant battle until dusk  
When shatter'd Hapsburg dreams now hurt & husk.

Promising a new world order  
Eagle surfs Alpen breeze,  
Nat'ral border of great Ceasar,  
Some Rhine or Pyrynees,  
Passes into Cisalpine Gaul with histrionic ease.

**Italy**

**1800**

## Copenhagen

Ascending in a ring of rising stars  
The great Horatio steers his native bark,  
From body mark'd by brutal battle scars,  
Lone arm points to a stubborn Denmark;  
Whose Northern League  
Defends neutrality -  
Parisian intrigue drives English fleets to sea.

Cleaving a path between the bouys  
Rare heart upon pinn'd sleeve worn  
These lads the adm'rality employs  
Oaks from a press-gan'd acorn  
Shall drape the Danes in death & noise  
From wrack'd ships sailors shorn  
Where Nelson's magnaminous ministry  
Rescues so many from that crimson sea.

From port-to-port the story flows,  
Legendary prowess!  
Consulate knows their ancyent foes  
Defy naval duress,  
Says Bonaparte, "*We must build fleets to beat the sea's mistress.*"

**France**  
1801

## A Nervous Peace

When only rust could halt hegemony  
Exists a stalemate of the warring lords -  
The British crown commands the rolling sea,  
Impervious to sharpen'd Gaurdsmen swords;  
As rust takes time  
A pact of peace is sought,  
Good chance to swerve my rhyme from battles fearless fought.

An element of pageantry  
Fills the roads to Amiens,  
Upstanding cathedral city  
Next host of the bandwagon  
*His* consulate arrives as three,  
In reality one -  
Napoleon snakes as the Grecian ghouls  
Taking the Saxon delegates for fools.

The beaugoisie leap on the float,  
With none foreseeing strife,  
Drunk with devotion most men vote  
Him *First Consul* for life -  
Now to succeed his succession he searches for a wife.

**France**  
1802

### Arthur Wellesley

How noble is the English sense of war  
Embodied in this servant of the realm,  
Fresh from taming the Tyger of Mysore  
He leads more heroes at the heated helm;  
    Aiming his guns  
    Across the sable horde  
What blast of hot death stuns the elephant & sword?

What brought him to this victory,  
Celebrated with French wine,  
Was a sense of common decency,  
The command of detail fine,  
Loving all parts of his army  
    & every supply line,  
Then stood upon a vital battlefield  
What cool head & intelligence revealed?

Maratha rajas & their men  
Melt to a mind's mirage,  
Since Plassey's zen all classes ken  
    The rising of the Raj,  
& fleeing French auxilleries must face the reporcharge.

**Assaye**

**1803**

### Emporer

The world intent upon a senseless wrath,  
London dares to oppose Napoleon  
Who has proclaim'd a cause, the starry path,  
As when Alexander left Macedon;  
    But first a bride!  
    Radiance rarely seen,  
Beloved by his side the fairy Josephine.

Their pious Pope appears from Rome  
Midst pomp & celebration,  
Neath Notre Dame & its great dome  
    Peforms the coronation  
Words before this Corsican gnome  
    Wane in hesitation  
    *"Do not worry I shall do it instead!"*  
An emporer crowns his own well-comb'd head.

*"Rejoice! Rejoice!"* from town to town  
    Flutters festivity  
Long purple gown & sparkling crown  
    Caried to Italy,  
*"Long live the King!"* this call fills up the halls of Lombardy.

**Milan**

**1804**

## Canto II

*The rise of the French Empire & her long-running struggle with  
Great Britain.*

Forsooth the men ye buy  
Will come back better soldiers

Horace

## Invasion's Verge

The Emperor fills up the Channel coast  
The Grand Armee's grand camp, & grander still  
His ambition to sail this eager host  
Across the tide to execute the kill;  
Two thousand boats,  
Two hundred thousand sons,  
Twenty-five thousand goats & a million guns.

Ambition turns to thwarted dreams  
When fishes out of water  
Thought naught could e'er avert their schemes -  
Britannia saved from slaughter  
As Nelson steers her steely beams  
Frown-afraid to fight her,  
Villeneuve diverted from these vital seas  
Into Cadiz, via the Antilles.

Dispatch ridden hard by rider,  
*"This is gross betrayal!"*  
With, *"Sacre Bleu!"* the Emperor  
Curses his admiral,  
*"Then we must march to Austria, I must have my battle."*

Boulogne

1805

### Glorious Autumn

The continent of Europe is a thrivè,  
Three man-mass'd armies march toward their fates,  
Only the keenest marksman may survive  
The death-wish of this warfare which awaits;  
The Grand Armee,  
Stood ready on the wing,  
Opposing Muscovy & the Viennan King.

While Russia cross'd the Polish plains  
Austria grew foolish brave,  
Facing the French in Autumn rains,  
Cavalry, wave-after-wave,  
Soon cripp'l'd heaps of dying pains -  
The Wurttemburger grave -  
As now the pale, drawn face of gen'ral Mack  
Grows moody as French marshalrie attack.

How soon the Austrian captain  
Garbled forth, "*Surrender!*"  
Napoleon, the day well won,  
Said, "*You have saved honour*  
& may go free to give my thanks unto thine emporer."

**Ulm**  
**October 19th**  
**1805**

### Trafalgar

The fleet departs Portsmouth in stately flow,  
Nelson's pure sword-heart pulsing for the game,  
Transglobal oars his name now slowly know,  
As one who sets a foreign flag aflame;  
Up in the van  
Signals the Victory,  
"England expects each man enact his own duty!"

Athwart all current theory  
This long line crosses the T,  
Divvying up the enemy  
Private conflicts in the sea,  
Conducted with cool energy  
One-sided killing spree,  
"Nous surrendons!" the French, half drench'd in gore,  
Kneel 'neath the Spartan Sea-Lion of war!

"*Kiss me Hardy!*" Lord Nelson croaks,  
"*Kiss me my dear old friend!*"  
Amid the smokeswept, creaking oaks  
England's angels descend,  
For death & heroism firm companions to the end.

**Atlantic Ocean**  
**21st October**  
**1805**

### Glorious Winter

How many miles had Stefan Stiltski march'd,  
Step-after-step, harsh-blister'd, ankle sore,  
Flea-bitten, sunbaked, freezing, flogg'd & parch'd  
Then rose the random slaughter of *real* war;  
Ageing musket  
Frozen with ice & snow,  
Fixing his bayonet, his unit next to go.

He left the crucial Pratzen heights  
With many lads befriended,  
The French looked weaker on their right  
But this was full intended  
As to the hill the Gallic might  
Claims them undefended  
Splitting the Russian forces asunder  
With cannon spitting murderous thunder.

Rounds sharply pound thro Ivan's ranks  
Gouging a trench of pain  
France crowds the flanks, old comrade yanks  
His arm in calm disdain,  
*"The battles lost, come brother let us fly back to Ukraine!"*

**Austerlitz**  
**December 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**1805**

### Jena

Formidab'ly defying sixty years  
Blucher led his brave soldiers from the front  
All thro the night his enemy appears,  
Thinking Napoleon a little runt  
He blows the horn,  
The order to advance,  
Grey ghosts of Fred'rick borne into the flanks of France.

History deems this not his day,  
The foeman's star still rising,  
His Prussians push'd out from the fray  
With deadly art devising,  
His boys face battle in dismay  
Death unappetising,  
Disorderly the panc-stricken grows,  
Leaving twenty-five thousand for the crows.

& now Blucher must watch aghast  
As captains of the state  
Sycophantastic'ly outcast,  
Meekly capitulate,  
Such hatred sticking in his craw as grows with Karmic fate.

**Berlin**  
**1806**

### Tilsit

Like some black hole in Europe's heart aswirl  
These wars of conquest draw the best men in,  
Two years of battle prattle with a whirl,  
Tsar Alexander knows he cannot win;  
Facing defeat  
Since Eylau & Freisland  
Two patriarchs shall meet across the Niemem strand.

Upon a little river raft  
All Europa torn in two  
Where godlike signatories craft  
Warsaw's freedom won anew  
& so they dined & drank & laugh'd  
Til evening twilight drew,  
Then parted as the firmest of firm friends -  
Of course this is not how their story ends.

But that is for another time  
For now let us suffice  
With this sublimely fashion'd crime  
Daring to roll the dice -  
The west was stolen by one man, a tiger amid mice!

### Poland

1807

### Peninsular Activity

By following his own soul's lonely lead  
An empire won yon young Corsican dreams,  
But restless minds often beset by greed  
& senselessly comit to tempting schemes;  
Vainglorious,  
Like seagulls aquiline,  
With gullets ravenous as gadarean swine.

Not yet contented with Paris  
Kudos gaining over Rome  
He grew determined to harrass  
Britain's Lordship oer the foam,  
Impressing on Europe's powers,  
*"Send English produce home!"*  
But Portugal does always court London  
& so Napoleon conquer'd Lisbon.

& as he rambl'd back thro Spain  
The emperor deposed  
Its Bourbon reign, an ancyent vein  
To be forever closed,  
Replaced by his own brother, another whim unopposed.

### Madrid

1808

### The House of Bounaparte

The childless Josephine weeps for her life  
Tempestuous as stormslash Vallombrosan  
& now her husband takes another wife,  
Some chubby, buck-faced princess Austian;  
For seven years  
Her table reign'd supreme  
Drying her noble tears she toasts the dying dream.

From Holland & Etruria  
To the states of Germany,  
The Zenith of an emporer,  
Brash nadir of majesty,  
Both Madrid & Westphalia  
Ruled by his family,  
& now the heir is born, the King of Rome,  
But looking at those hairs upon his comb,

He knew that he might conquer kings  
But never conquer time,  
The flutterings of eagle wings  
Drown out the churchy chime -  
Bells welcoming the evening like a Languedoccan rhyme.

**Paris**  
**1811**

### A New Frontier

Scarlet redcoats arrive in Portugal  
Securing Lisbon's laughter & treasure,  
Alas! events unfold here typical  
Tribute to bungled British half-measure;  
Until Wellington's  
Rising reputation  
Joins these celebrations of conflagration.

The French forces now wedged between  
The hammer & the anvil  
The first fighting for King & Queen  
From Galway, Leeds, Laargs & Rhyll,  
The latter battle forth unseen  
Darting from kill to kill -  
This daring, dashing Spanish guerrilla  
Or these fearless Portuguese militia.

From storming Badojozan walls  
To wild Vimeiro,  
Wellesley controls the hapless Gauls,  
Iberian hero,  
Securing Salamanca lets him cross the Ebro flow.

**Spain**  
**1811**

### Canto III

*The fall of Napoleon from the march on Moscow  
to his abdication.*

The disasters of Napoleon's Russian campaign have been portrayed by French writers, who were eye-witnesses of this signal defeat of blind ambition, & the insane lust of conquest. The whole elements of nature seem'd to have inspired against the once-favour'd child of victory.

*Segur*

### A New War

Napoleon's embargo at full strain,  
Belittled by those Iberian ports,  
With England gaining victories in Spain,  
Bourgoesie craving tea & petticoats;  
Alexander  
Opens the door to trade,  
His fellow emporer launch'd into a tirade.

*"How dare this peasant Muscovite  
Deny my sacred orders,  
The time has come for France to fight,  
Move men up to the borders!  
We must avenge this selfish sleight,  
Satisfaction owed us!"*  
Two purple brothers, once friendship serene,  
Hurtle to war like Guelf & Ghibelline.

*"To arms!"* six hundred thousand sons  
March thro the French Empire,  
The vista stuns, so many guns,  
Some vasty field of fire,  
An aide-de-camp arrives, *"Your Grand Armee awaits thee sire."*

**Poland**

**June**

**1812**

### Battle of the Moskva

Bouyantly rows of bayonets bounce east,  
Mile-on-mile the enemy defeated,  
But step-by-step their numbers are decreas'd,  
By disease & desertion depleted;  
Even Smolensk  
Hardly holds back the flow,  
Until the mood grows tense, pois'd at Borodino

Muscovy's aristocracy  
Combine for Alexander  
With all their stalwart peasantry,  
The miracle of Russia,  
Her scouts shout out, "*The enemy!*"  
Whose feverish leader  
Shows no stomach for such desperate fight -  
Day terrible til tolstoyan twilight.

As Kutuzov sounds the retreat  
Fatigue pours pandemic,  
The Tsar this treats not as defeat,  
But victory Pyrric,  
For like their weary leader the Grand Armeé has grown sick.

**Borodino**  
**September**  
**1812**

### Turning Tide

The path to Russia's heart hack'd Cossack clear,  
It's conquerer trots thro the old city,  
No Roman triumph will await him here  
As ghostly streets salute his victory;  
*"What is that smell?"*  
Flames flicker candlesque,  
Soon some dantean hell surrounds his writing desk.

A score of letters reach the Tsar,  
None in reply forthcoming,  
For his opponent's rising star  
Has retreated from the ring,  
*"This is no way to conduct war!*  
*What will this madness bring?"*  
& all around his far-from-grand armée  
Live life like dying men - desperately!

Rape rioting with ransack wild,  
Short autumn swiftly spann'd,  
This meek & mild abandon'd child  
Holds out her little hand -  
A pretty snowflake melted there (as Alexander plann'd).

**Moscow**  
**October**  
**1812**

### Retreat from Moscow

With rumours of gross treachery at home  
By dog-drawn sledge the emperor winds west,  
Leaving his soldiers in the wintry gloam  
New Bonnie Prince saying, "*Men do your best!*"  
Namore his French  
Shall dictate Europe's show,  
Thro thick unburied stench drove by Borodino.

The remnant of the legions tracks  
The ruts of that royal sleigh,  
Assaulted by vengant Cossacks,  
Only the brave Marshall Ney  
With one thousand fend the attacks,  
Combat both night & day,  
Giving the Grand Arme'e a fighting chance -  
Thro men like him flows the elan of France.

But ten thousand the ordeal last,  
With black, frost-bitten feet,  
The crowd aghast as phantoms pass'd  
Them in the silent street -  
Those gods that conquer'd Moscow - cripples doubl'd in defeat.

**Paris**  
**December**  
**1812**

### Eternal War

To North America the wars have spread,  
Great Britain drawn into a needless trial,  
Giving the French a chance to count their dead  
& find more fools to fill the rank & file;  
Then not too soon,  
The Russian recompense  
Sensed moment opportune, foe thrown onto defence.

Tricolors from their masts are torn,  
Bourbon banners form a band  
For Muscovy rides not alone,  
Together the nations stand,  
Ready to claim the revenge sworn,  
Men from many a land,  
Determin'd on Europa's liberty  
Advance against this late Grand Arme'e.

But these brave grognards drown beneath  
The weight of all their foes,  
From sheath to sheath is pass'd a wreath  
Of ivy & black rose,  
*"The battle lost!" "Retreat to France!"* what eerie feeling grows.

**Leipzig**  
**1813**

## Swan Song

Napoleonic necorambience  
Beseiges each Departmente of the French,  
A gloomy thrall pervades his arrogance,  
The whiff of grapeshot now a rapist stench;  
Still cannons pound,  
Still dying men advance,  
Still blood spilt on the ground, this mortal wound of France.

But flair is flair, elan, elan!  
Leading seventy thousand  
Protecting the vast border span  
In a noble final stand  
He meets Blucher in Prussia's van  
& beats him out of hand -  
From Champaultert to Chateaux-Thierry  
The god of war still toasts the victory!

*"Bring me more men!"* but now, alas,  
The well of conscripts dry,  
Likle fragile glass thro Alpine pass  
Fresh Austrians now fly,  
Marching on Paris, *"All is lost!"* the old romantics sigh

**France**  
**February 1814**

## Crossing the Pyrynees

The age of the Corsican now fading  
The cage he built steadily ripp'd apart  
The stage grown sick of his masquerading  
The page pick'd clean of ev'ry Bounaparte;  
One parting shot,  
*"Without Napoleon*  
*You certainly would not have Dukes of Wellington!"*

The name of this aristocrat  
Dours his days as does disease,  
Both Marshall Soult, Monseuir Murat,  
Push'd back oer the Pyrynees,  
Across the Bidasuan Ghat,  
An unstoppable breeze  
Pierced the soft underbelly of empire -  
Thro modernist manouvre, shock & fire.

Where puff'd-up fierce beside the flocks  
Of Spanish falconry  
& Lisbon's rocks, the fighting cocks  
Of the Allied army  
Brought battle onto Gallic soil proclaiming victory.

**Orthez**  
**February 1814**

### Fontainebleu

Allied armies surround the Paris wall,  
"We must fight on!" rallies Napoleon,  
Fluster'd with the fathoming of his fall,  
"But sire, all hopes of victory have gone!"  
Dispirited  
The Marshalls gather round  
On one point united, the solution is found.

"Never..." alas, to save his face  
Where the sleek Sun King once dined  
Now more morgue than lively palace,  
Noble abdication sign'd,  
"You must be exiled from your race,  
In comfort there confined,"  
The Allies dictate to the dictator -  
"Where shall I reside?" "Rot upon Elba!"

The Grand Duchess of Tuscany  
Dejected & alone,  
Her family's greek tragedy  
Rejected from the throne -  
She & her sibling cuckoos from their eagle's nests hath flown.

### Bagni di Lucca

1814

### A Challenge

Once, romance, regent ruler of an age,  
Dwelt deep in the beatings of great men's hearts  
Conjuring the captain that help'd to cage  
The grand thief of Europe, as woodland parts;  
He halts his ride  
At the edge of tall trees,  
Surveys a countryside of swaying yellow seas.

With knowing eyes he scann'd the scene,  
"I have seen its like before,"  
Then spurr'd his mount, the moment keen,  
& pauses upon the contour,  
Thereby thro' blue sky flew, serene,  
Doves of a lovely shore,  
On which Wellington, warlord of dead men,  
Says, "Swiftly, De Lancey, pass me my pen!"

Unto a dove the Duke did call  
While scribbling down one word...  
White wings in fall, how soon the scroll  
Tied to that gentle bird,  
Which flutter'd up to lofty heights where nothing mortal  
stirr'd.

### Mont Saint-Jean

1814

**Book VII**

**The Hundred Days**

**Canto I**

*The return of Napoleon, the march on Paris  
& his reclaiming of the crown*

*Par grand dangiers le captif eschape',  
Peu de temps grand a fortune changee:  
Dans le palais le peuple est attrape',  
Par bon augure la cite' assiegee.*

Though Mars himself, the angry god of arms,  
& all the earthly potentates conspire  
To disposes me of this diadem,  
Yet will I wear it in despite of them

**Christopher Marlowe**

## Messengers

France rolls restless beneath an eagle's wing,  
Graceful in flight as the soaring sonnet,  
Rippling oer the realms of a Bourbon king  
Imposed by the great British bayonet;  
Oft times sighing  
Before the memory  
Of her eagles flying thro' stunning victory.

With hawkish eyes it spies the prey,  
Swoops down from Appenine peak,  
Thro' ocean clouds bedappl'd grey,  
His elegant wings spread sleek -  
Til with one hurried, flurried fray  
Dove gored by bloody beak,  
Then clutch'd in an imperious talon,  
High oer the lush Mediterranean.

The little island emperor  
Came brooding into view,  
Sea-lock'd on the rock of Elba,  
Seething up to the blue -  
Saw dove's death-fall, its scroll unroll'd, there scrawl'd was  
*'Waterloo.'*

**Elba**  
**1815**

## Imperial Return

Three sailing ships swept thro a sunsunk sea  
To drift amid a mountain-armour'd bay,  
Flying flags studded with the honeybee -  
As anchors splash how calmly there they lay;  
Unsheath'd the sword!  
One thousand men of war  
Rejoice as they are row'd toward the stony shore.

Stoic upon the scything stern  
Stood the mortal soul of France,  
Whose soldiers sing for his return  
In an awesome reverence -  
With choric voice & eyes that burn  
Commands them to advance,  
Pinching each rough cheek as they pass him by,  
Adoring adulation makes them fly.

They march'd a musical parade  
Cheer'd by the underclass,  
While north they made a white cockade  
Silently watch'd them pass,  
Then raced away to warn the royalists who slept in Grasse.

**Cannes**  
**March 2nd 1815**

### To Arms!

Thro' the verdant Provençal mountain mass  
Wound a mile long, e'erclimbing martial train,  
Thro' the great, green gorge of the La Faye Pass,  
Past the chapel-capp'd crag of Castellane;  
In constant cheer,  
Tho' weary leagues pass by,  
Like tireless Gondolier neath a Venetian sky.

A fat Provençal family  
Sat gather'd & set to eat,  
Heard clattering cacophony,  
Swift uplifted from their seat  
They leapt outside, strange sight to see -  
Cavalry throng'd the street;  
Tall Polish horsemen with long, lavish lance,  
The vanguard of the fallen sword of France.

Her husband's loving breath was done,  
He donn'd the dusty blue,  
Her darling son, his little drum,  
& father donn'd them too -  
Thro' tears of pain & tears of pride she watch'd them glide  
from view.

**Barreme**  
**4th March 1815**

### Startling News

He who adventures tastes life's richest fruit,  
As do the kings, who, of the seven sins,  
Choose glutinous luxury as their suit;  
The fat King Louis' seven wobbling chins  
Settle to eat  
The peasantries long day,  
Fine platters of sweet-meat swill'd down with Chardonnay.

Clutching a despatch from Digne  
The blustering messenger  
Burst the royal serenity,  
*"The monsters escaped Elba!"*  
*"Has he landed in Italy?"*  
*"Non! On the Cotes D'Azor!"*  
Thro' the bay window the fluttering wing,  
Eagle's grim shadow cast across the King.

*"Go bring me Ney,"* the Coquin said,  
Away scuttl'd the page,  
How soon that head ablaze with red  
Strode warlike to the stage,  
*"I shall drag him back to Paris, sire, within an iron cage."*

**Tuilleries**  
**4th March**

### Soldiers' Passions

The violet pepper'd mountains turn'd to snow,  
In single file travers'd the icy track,  
Til at the pass an army stemm'd their flow,  
Five thousand Frenchmen pois'd for the attack;  
The royal corps  
Led by the loyal Ney,  
Who trembl'd as he saw that overcoat of grey.

He strode alone to meet the gun  
& face that fateful order,  
One bullet from oblivion,  
*"Will you shoot your Emperor?"*  
Great silence deafen'd 'til someone  
Bellow'd echoing *"Fire!"*  
He breath'd in relief, the beautiful sound  
Of five thousand muskets meeting the ground.

Pledging eternal devotion  
Surged the salutant wave,  
Ney's sword motion pierc'd the ocean  
But back the blade he gave,  
*"I salute thee, Prince de Muskova, bravest of the brave!"*

**Laffrey**  
**7th March**

### Grave News

Beneath the ancyent moon of Austria,  
Generals, emperors, statesmen, royals,  
Gather'd 'round the grand map of Europa,  
Are wolves who wait the diseas'd eagle's spoils;  
Squabbling rabble  
Discuss incessantly  
The murmuring babble of high diplomacy.

All talk cut short as from outside  
There peel'd a thundering boom,  
The doors dramatic'ly flung wide  
By the soul sunken in gloom;  
Twas Metternich, whose slick, slow glide  
Now claim'd the centre-room.  
*"Gentlemen, Genova sounds warning grave,  
The Corsican ogre has rode the wave!"*

As the atmosphere grew colder  
The hand of Russia's Tsar  
Grasp'd the shoulder of his soldier,  
Britannia's battlestar,  
*"Tis up to you to save the world - once more, m'lord, to war."*

**Vienna**  
**7th March**

### British Reaction

The morning sun scatter'd cross the Solent,  
A tranquil & yet deadly waterway,  
Where slept the ever watchful instrument  
That kept the Gallic conquerors at bay;  
Ye mighty fleet,  
Queen of the oceans vast,  
Thy duty ne'er complete while France still decks a mast.

In the barracks mess at breakfast  
Sat the half-dress'd soldiery,  
Freddie Johnstone yells joyous blast  
Tosses broadsheets flying free,  
*"Old Boney has broke free at last,  
Fink he'll face our 'ookey!"*  
As the room rose the whole company roar'd  
With thoughts of gaining glory by the sword.

The word spread round like raging fire,  
*"Great & glorious news!"*  
Time to retire thoughts of empire,  
Pack up those marching shoes,  
For once again brave Englishmen must battle with the blues.

**Portsmouth**  
**10th March**

### Return of Napoleon

Swept from the throne by mystical forces,  
On gouty legs King Louis lugg'd his frame,  
Shuffl'd out toward the waiting horses,  
His ancestors all clamouring in shame;  
Like bulging banks  
Pockets stuff'd with riches,  
With oer four million francs cramm'd in ammo boxes.

They fill'd the stony city square  
With many a tricolour,  
Seeming to flock from everywhere  
To witness their emperor,  
Who shush'd the cheers with one long stare,  
*"I'll restore our honour!  
Stolen by those nobles who kept their head,  
Gorging on thy back-break & daily bread."*

To an ancyeut saint's tall steeple  
High oer a Paris street  
The first Eagle of the people  
Observes the march complete -  
Without bloodletting France's Ceaser seizes back his seat.

**Tuilleries**  
**19th March**

## Portent of War

The winds of change have dwindl'd to a breeze,  
The first Napoleon resumes his reign,  
Renounces the lawless Bourbon decrees,  
A man more powerful than Charlemagne;  
Surrounded by  
A court of men he made,  
Who with a weary sigh prepare for war's parade.

*"All Europe declares war on you!"  
"One man becomes one nation!"  
"So be it! If peace shall not do  
Increase the realms taxation,  
A million muskets, Marshall Soult,  
Treble the conscription,  
Arm all the gendarmes, secure the borders,  
Allez mon marshalles, await my orders."*

The city cool'd as blue moonlight  
Shone with the tinkling stars,  
The eagle's flight span cross the night  
To sweep across old Mars,  
Who shone a little redder with the blood of coming wars.

**Paris**  
**22nd March**

## Canto II

*The outbreak of the Belgian war to the battles of Ligny & Quatra-  
Bras*

'A soldier's life is terrible hard,' says Alice

**A.A.Milne**

### Blucher

Of a spring-time morning Silesian,  
Midst the seedlings that sprout au naturale,  
A deep-snoozing septegenarian  
Retires into his calm idyllic shell;  
Yet one eye strays  
From his twilight slumber,  
For thro' the distant haze pricks a despatch rider.

The old man clasps the young mans hand,  
*"Vill you haf sausage or vine?"*  
*"Nein, mein prince, for the Vaderland*  
*Faces a perilous time*  
*& in your hands total command,*  
*Our army of the Rhine."*  
*"Vat is the reason behind this request?*  
*"NAPOLEON has return'd to the nest!"*

The fresh flight of that fearful bird  
Wings deep into his core,  
With but one word his mojo stirr'd,  
The great, unsettl'd score,  
How bloody shall the battles be in fields of mud & gore.

**Prussia**  
**24th March**

### War's Sinew

Behind the hustle of a bustling street  
The anglicis'd head of Europe's Jewry  
Invites his dinner guest to a retreat  
For an apertif of ten-year brandy;  
Midst rich décor  
The niceties dissolve  
Into stern talk of war's most delicate resolve.

*"Bounaparte must be defeated*  
*To ensure a friendly France*  
*& the German states united*  
*Shall hold Europa's balance...*  
*My cabinet has requested,*  
*Small matter of finance,*  
*That is to say, five millions in specie,*  
*Be handl'd by the Rothschild company"*

*"My firm accepts, the terms m'lord*  
*Are two percent interest..."*  
The golden horde sharpens the sword  
Plung'd in the Belgic breast...  
Upon a sure-fire favourite do true gamblers invest.

**London**  
**27th March**

## Wellington's Return

Kiss'd by the fair ladies of Vienna  
With calm countenance he waves them goodbye,  
Departing on another adventure,  
To claim a victory, defeat, or die;  
Young Lord Lennox  
Perch'd proudly by his side,  
As their plush carriage rocks beside the Danube's glide.

The Duke spoke of his duel with France,  
From the battle of Assaye,  
To the Peninsular advance,  
How many a bloody day?  
As talk drifted toward the chance  
Of him marching in May,  
*"I feel that month would be a month too soon,  
One would imagine the middle of June."*

In famous fields they paused for gin  
Where ribald Redcoat wit  
Effused like sin, *"Sir, shall we win?"*  
The duke observ'd them spit,  
*"Give me enough of those men there & I'll be sure of it."*

**Blenheim**  
**31st March**

## Romantic Interlude

Embraced by such a lovely summers day  
Brilliant Brussels sparkl'd in the sun,  
Along a gentle, tree-lin'd parkland way  
The doting De Lanceys, arms lock'd as one,  
Walk'd lost in love,  
Empassion'd feeling true,  
While lazily above clouds drifted cross the blue.

She whisper'd softly in his ear,  
*"Darling I am so happy,  
The city seems so far from here  
Midst this idyllicity..."*  
With one long velvet kiss so dear  
United heart flies free  
For one perfect moment of happiness -  
Pierced by the gruff voice breathless with distress.

*"Sir, you've been summon'd by his Grace."*  
Her pretty hearts flurry,  
With skin like lace she strok'd his face,  
Wash'd away all worry,  
*"Swift my sweet, I'll brew some tea & ink thy quills, now hurry."*

**Brussels**  
**15th June 1815**  
**15:00**

### A Very English Affair

The Duke of Richmond look'd down on his ball  
Enrich'd with English suave & gaiety,  
Ladies holding darling captains in thrall  
Amidst a swirling, twirling company;  
Fast thro' the door  
Burst the Prussian Muffling,  
Who struggl'd cross the floor huffing & a-puffing.

Wellington took him to one side  
& frown'd as the Prussian spoke,  
Then an aristocratic glide  
Swept them thro' the dancing folk,  
Deepest anxieties did hide  
Neath noble, smiling cloak...  
*"Richmond, do you have a map anywhere?"*  
*"Yes I do..."* They stole up the ballroom stair.

*"By Gad! That man has humbugg'd me!  
What nerve to choose Charleroi -  
Thus the army must speedily  
Converge on Quatra Bras...  
& if not there then Mont Saint-Jean must dowse his martial star."*

**Brussels**

**22:00**

### A Tense Affair

Wellington rode along the paved chausee,  
Cramm'd with each companies hot-marching crunch  
& wagons jostling with artillery,  
His head smarted from last nights party's punch;  
Til Quatra Bras,  
Where with a sweeping glance,  
He wills his men to bar the brave Gallic advance.

On he rode to meet old Blucher  
Below the Mill of Bussy,  
There survey'd the panorama  
About the spire of Ligny,  
The horizon fill'd with soldier,  
The ancient enemy  
Manouvering guns into position,  
*"Your Highness, I sense thy disposition*

*Will receive a damned good licking,  
Your forces too exposed..."*  
With time ticking, horses kicking,  
The conversation closed,  
He rode to Quatra Bras to solve the problems that Ney posed.

**Brye**

**16th June 1815**

**13:00**

### First Blows

With the 'Pas de Charge' a year of peace dies,  
Four hundred cannon sound the roar of Mars,  
Grey clouds of smoke darken the summer skies,  
Once more to battle, once more to the Wars;  
    *"Vive l'Empereur!"*  
    The fanatical scream  
Along the meandering, marshy Ligny stream.

All day beneath the searing sun,  
Round the villages & plain,  
Reverberating shout & gun  
As Death deals slaughter & pain,  
    All for holy Napoleon  
    Ten thousand now lie slain -  
As black flags flutter, no quarter given,  
Backwards, slowly, the Prussians are driven.

The old Mercurial gusto  
Observes the hour-glass sands,  
*"D'Erlon must show the killer blow  
Upon the Saint Amands,  
While Ney must know the Fate of France lies firmly in his hands."*

### Fleurus

15:30

### The Fog of War

Whilst two mighty battles raged & thunder'd  
D'Erlon march'd his corps thro' pleasant verdure  
T'ward the long, straight Roman road that sunder'd  
    The Belgic plain twixt Nivelles & Namur;  
    Ready to fall  
    On the flank of the foe,  
But some panicky Gaul prevents the killer blow.

From the farm at Gemioncourt,  
Lust drenching his Gallic blood,  
As tho' he rode at Agincourt,  
    The battle misunderstood,  
    Ney gazed into the fog of war,  
    Saw men in th'empty wood;  
But five thousand Belgians held the crossroads  
While his twenty-five stood sharp'ning their swords.

D'Erlon dropt the marshal's order  
    Cursing the confusion,  
    So to answer his emperor  
    Despatch'd two divisions,  
Then wheel'd West to Quatra Bras with the mass of decision.

### Marbais

17:00

## Canto III

### A Vital Battle

The Duke mull'd by the inn at Quatra Bras,  
The sweet skirl of pipes spun his thoughts around,  
A dusty cloud, a flash of red, Huzzah!  
The Highlanders have reached the battleground;  
To war at once!  
For thro' the sky high corn,  
The first assaults of France by pounding hoofbeats borne.

With blue cloaks streaming thro' the air  
They charged for death & glory  
To slay these Amazons who dare  
Challenge their supremacy,  
Smashing against each bristling square  
Slashing malice & fury -  
Green young recruits put to the sternest test,  
Boys become men within the wylde tempest.

Calm upon his chestnut charger  
The Duke espies a threat,  
By clouds of murd'rous canister  
The French columns hard met,  
& driven back toward their lines at tip of bayonet.

### Quatra Bras

17:30

*The gathering of the French & British armies  
at the fields of Waterloo*

The harder match'd, the greater victory

Shakespeare

### Miss'd Opportunities

Dawn illumed the carnage about Ligny,  
Napoleon stood proudly at it's heart,  
Discussing his strategy with Grouchy,  
The finest master of the martial art;  
*"You must now keep  
A sword in Blucher's back,  
Seldom relax nor sleep & keep on the attack."*

Aft' one last glance he rode away  
From the smoky rubble-town,  
Hard gallop'd west to Marshall Ney,  
Vicious was his dressing down,  
*"You should have took this yesterday,  
Fucking moronic clown!  
Wellington's been retreating all morning,  
France may be ruined thro' your dithering."*

Clutching his gut he scream'd in pain,  
Snuff'd from box of silver,  
Purest cocaine sped to his brain,  
Firing fading ardour -  
& galvanised to action pursues with renewed vigour.

**Quatra Bras**  
**June 17th 1815**  
**13:00**

### Wellington's Withdrawal

The Duke watches his army pass him by,  
Grumbling defeat, retreating from attack,  
Then took a longful look upon the sky -  
His heart leapt up to see large clouds loom black;  
Bright summer's day  
Transfigured by the rain  
That wash'd the blood away from the skin of the slain.

*"Just like the Salamancan storm!"*  
Said vet'rans of the army,  
By dripping woods & sodden corn  
Tramping disconsolately.  
In life's last moment, left alone,  
Writhing in agony  
Died vast numbers of sad, gallant fellows -  
Some shall be buried, some food for the crows.

*"Muffling, I beg thee, ride once more,  
Ask Blucher to provide  
A single corps to end the war  
& fall upon his side!"*  
*"I shall, my grace, I go straightway!" "Godspeed, my man, safe  
ride."*

**Genappe**  
**16:00**

### Rear-Gaurd

From ridge to ridge they cover'd the retreat,  
These cavalry disguised as an army,  
Blocking the passage of the Genappe street,  
Flank'd by the Royal Horse Artillery;  
So beautiful  
Along the long slopes length  
The Chasseurs de Cheval came charging in great strength.

Like some great rivers tidal flow  
The contest raged in the rain,  
The pendulum swung to & fro  
As the campaigns fought in Spain,  
After each charge their would follow  
Counter with equal mein,  
& with each skirmish fought, all the while,  
Wellington's army walked on one more mile.

How soon the roads that churn to ooze  
Delay the French advance,  
Allow'd to choose, thro' rain & ruse,  
The field to fight with France  
Wellington smil'd as Mont Saint-Jean appear'd in the distance.

### La Belle Alliance

18:00

### Battle's Eve

The Emperor reach'd the inn tward sunset  
With his footsore & rain sodden army,  
View'd the lush fields he would never forget  
Rippling yellow cross the shallow valley;  
*"Dare he stand here?  
The battlefield so small!"*  
A stench of secret fear did permeate his soul.

Thro' Heaven waltz'd the Evening Star  
As four French cannonballs fly,  
The grand, full-throated voice of war  
As sixty roar in reply,  
Thick blood puls'd thro' his throbbing scar,  
*"These English want to die -  
Have the troops bivouac here for the night,  
First light shall prove their stomach for the fight."*

Thro' starry climes the Eagle flew  
Oer each moon-sprinkl'd cloud,  
Then swoop'd down to the farm Caillou  
Close to the cheering crowd,  
For thro' them rode an Emperor, the father of the proud.

### Maison du Roi

21:00

### A Restless Night

Two blazing fire trails lined the vault black vale  
Where men sat cooking their meagre ration,  
Whiling the while with a glorious taylor  
Or some camp follower's lurid passion;  
The wind whipp'd rain  
Still slipp'd down in splashes,  
Drenching all in disdain, fram'd by lightning flashes.

The soldier slipp'd into a dream;  
*Stood face-to-face with the foe,  
The sun glint of his sabre's gleam  
Blinds his target to the blow,  
Who ripp'd his dreamspace with a scream -  
Is this truth tomorrow?  
He flows deeper thro' sleep's soft sanctuary,  
Where dwells no fearful mind nor enemy.*

Strange nightmares stalk Napoleon;  
*Some monstrous cannoneer  
Fired one great gun at Wellington  
Who held a burning spear,  
& hurl'd it down the cannon's mouth... he woke awash with fear.*

### La Ferme de Caillou

18th June 1815

1:30

### A Busy Night

All thro' the night the ammo carts trundl'd;  
Thousands of rounds of grape & canister  
With the black mountains of shot were bundl'd  
For to slay with musket, blade & sabre;  
O deadly sword,  
With edge as sharp as breath,  
Rough sharpen'd to accord the victims bloody death.

Wellington watch'd his Hussars que  
To send their sabres sharper,  
Then rode the road to Waterloo  
To try a little supper,  
Paced round the halls of his H.Q.  
Waits for word of Blucher -  
Til Muffling enters, fresh from the saddle,  
*"Good news, your grace, you may fight your battle!"*

All thro' the short midsummer's night  
Horizon's murky zone  
Shows hints of light, a tint of white,  
Faint traces of the dawn,  
That grew in strength, until, at length, the day of battle born.

### The Fields of Waterloo

18th June 5:00

### Waterloo Dawn

A soft sun crown'd the yonder eastern height,  
Gave birth to a dirty & dulsome dawn,  
Casting her blanket of watery light  
To wrap up the dismal & dreary morn;  
Some secret tear  
From sleeping tearducts pass'd,  
For many who are here this day shall be their last.

The eagle's golden gilded glide,  
Sweeps majestic thro' the sky,  
Surveys this stretch of countryside,  
Rolling seas of rippling rye,  
Brash bugles blared out far & wide,  
From woods the birds outcry -  
The clashing clatter of fluttering wings -  
Two armies wake to fight the fight of kings.

Unshaven & shivering blue,  
Depress'd the darkling mood,  
Soak'd thro' & thro' & filthy too,  
His hunger unsubdued,  
Freddie Johnstone search'd high & low for water, fuel & food.

### Frischermont

7:00

### Imperial Breakfast

The Marshalls received the summons to dine  
At a fine breakfast with Napoleon,  
Whose smile, soft as the Corsican sunshine,  
Settl'd their spirits, they knew they must win;  
*"Still he stands fast,"*  
Spew'd thro' some chew'd up fish,  
*"Then I have them at last, these whore's bastard English!"*

*"Attack at nine!" "It can't be done,  
The ground is as a quagmire.  
I cannot move all my cannon  
To the open fields of fire."  
"What do you think of Wellington?"  
"Strong when well posted sire."  
"Nonsense, you've all been beaten by a dick!  
This battle shall be but a child's picnic."*

With certain generals he did meet,  
Then spoke with his colonels,  
While for a sweet he sate to eat  
Plates of sugar'd mussels -  
Guzzl'd down, gracefully upstood, *"Tonight we sleep in Brussels."*

### La Ferme de Caillou

8:00

## French Optimism

How they march'd onto the field of slaughters  
With music & banners to daunt the foe  
As the Emperor's beautiful daughters  
Wheel'd into position, row after row;  
Plush cavalry  
Mounted on fine horses -  
In sight for all to see, the mighty French forces.

Along the front their leader made  
The grand tour of inspection,  
As tho' his men were on parade,  
Abundant with affection,  
Steeping upon his cavalcade  
Rapt'rous salutation,  
*"Before the sun sets we shall, together,  
Help France rise more glorious than ever."*

He sat at a small deal table,  
Down shone a burning sun,  
*"By a brutal assault frontal  
We must take Mont Saint-Jean,  
But first, to draw the reserves out, let us tease Hougoumont."*

## La Belle Alliance

11:00

## Book VIII

### Waterloo

*Le champ plus grand de route mis en fuite,  
Guaire plus outre ne sera pourchasse':  
Ost recampe' & legion reduicte,  
Puis hors des Gaules du tout sera chasse'*

## Canto I

*The course of the battle from late morning to mid-afternoon*

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

**Sagittarius**

## The British Lines

Down the length of an infamous army  
Of thieves, Irishmen, scoundrels & beggars,  
Rode the warrior Duke, Arthur Wellesley,  
With escort of officers & troopers;  
As tho' they were  
In England with the hounds,  
Chasing the foxes fur across the chalky Downs.

The artillery topp'd the crest  
Where the Chemin de la Croix  
Held his forces from East to West  
Like some scalded scarlet scar,  
Against the rearward slope hard-press'd  
So cannon would fire far  
Above their heads & safely out of harm -  
The bugles blare, the time has come to arm.

Cloud castles drifting, underneath  
Two armies knew silence,  
Breathing sweet breath before old Death  
Walks in waves of violence,  
A single shot echoes the end of this day's innocence.

## The Fields of Waterloo

11:30

### First Skirmish

Wild flowers swayed in the soft sommer breeze;  
Cloak'd by clouds of skirmishing Tirailleurs  
Columns of infantry aim for the trees,  
Toward pois'd troops of red-coated soldiers;  
Battle baptis'd,  
A hail of musket-balls,  
The blue-coats halt surpris'd, a whirl of wounded souls.

From tree to tree thro' that dense wood  
Dashing hordes of Jerome surge,  
Soil saturated with the blood  
Of many a murd'rous urge,  
The first Frenchman spat, sniff'd & stood  
At the foliage verge,  
Where the rickety chateau of his goal  
Loom'd large behind it's gun-lined garden wall.

L'Enforceur burst thro' the North gate  
With four & thirty men,  
Death dealt by Fate, before too late  
The gate was closed again,  
Sharp bayonets dealt to those few trapp'd in the Lion's den.

### Hougoumont

12:00

### Cannonade

With the sultry blaze of the mid-day sun  
Came the barrage of the Grand Battery,  
Shot & shell hurtl'd from a hundred gun  
Cross the vale with a volumous volley;  
Iron shower,  
Dealer of destruction,  
Falls to slay the flower of the Belgic nation.

Expos'd upon the forward slant,  
Close by the Papolette farm,  
The anguish'd moans transpose to chant  
As the devlish shells reek harm,  
Whilst some poor dashing Lieutenant  
Clutches his sever'd arm -  
Time abandons this terrible limbo,  
This howling hurricane's booming bellow.

Waiting for war behind the hill  
Men of Alban Highlands  
Led statue still beneath the shrill  
Each fearsome shell commands,  
Awaiting to do battle, muskets clutch'd in eager hands.

### The Fields of Waterloo

12:30

### The Prussian Advance

As cannonades echoe for miles around,  
Slowly, along theses atrocious back lanes,  
The Prussians hasten to the battleground  
Thro' marshland swollen by the recent rains;  
Knee deep in mud

Blucher waved high his sword,  
*"Vorwarts! My men, you vud not haf me break my vurd."*

On they march'd a murd'rous ordeal  
All thro' the glutinous goo,  
Taking three men to free a wheel  
While weary exhaustion grew,  
But with the great Germanic zeal  
Close to the battle drew,  
Emerging from the woods by Saint-Lambert,  
The battle spread below them everywhere.

Napoleon gazed hopefully  
Along the Eastern track,  
*"They could well be troops of Grouchy..."*  
*"Perhaps, sire, Prussian black!"*  
*"It makes no difference to us now, pursue D'Erlon's attack."*

### La Belle Alliance

13:30

### D'Erlon's Attack

The low, dense powder clouds drifted away,  
The bands struck up, notes melt 'cross the mile,  
Follow'd by juggernauts marching their way  
Across the valley in the same, old style -

War's arena  
Fills with the sound of drum;  
Rrum-da, rrum-dum...rrum-da, rrubba-dabba-dum-dum!

A mile-long line of skirmisher  
Drove the keen sharpshooters back  
So three grand columns of soldier,  
Five thousand from front to back,  
Could pass thro' the smoke & sulphur,  
Press glorious attack  
On the British, whose ignoble retreat  
Would consummate their eternal defeat.

A blaze of muskets strafed the flanks  
Flung out from La Haye Saint,  
The cannon clanks, plough'd thro' the ranks  
Screaming balls of iron,  
But still, regardless of their loss, joyously they march'd on.

### The Fields of Waterloo

13:40

### Death of Picton

Below the ridge in nervous ribaldry,  
Gin rations allaying real human fear,  
Ready to die the Highlander stands steady,  
As on the crest appears the Grenadier;  
    Their gen'ral's roar  
    Defies the glide of France,  
The tartan & claymore piped into the advance.

Whilst driving on those men he led,  
    *"At 'em you drunken rascals!"*  
A lucky shot pierc'd Picton's head,  
With force from his horse he falls,  
    But still that regiment in red  
    Sent forward musketballs,  
Scream'd on now by their rough & foul-mouth'd sarge  
    The bayonets are thrust into the charge.

Little do we know of courage  
    Til battle's lust takes oer,  
With fearful rage the fight we rage  
    Altho' we know not for,  
To kill or to be kill'd is the grim sacrament of war.

### The Fields of Waterloo

13:45

### Scots Greys

Lord Uxbridge watch'd the battle's lethal course,  
    Observ'd the gravitas of the melee,  
Spurr'd to face his fine phalanx of grey horse,  
    Order'd their sabers from rest to ready;  
    The bugle's peel  
    Cancels all distraction,  
Perform'd a perfect wheel, forth into the action

The earth-thumping hoofbeats propel  
    Centaur's of derring & dash,  
Bloodstirring the Britisher's yell  
    As into the Gaul they crash,  
    How many a gallant foe fell  
    Neath scything sabre slash  
& the hooves of the stamping stallion -  
Grave panic grips the forces of D'Erlon.

With the capture of their standard  
    Brave Frenchmen fled like sheep,  
    Fully routed or led founder'd,  
    Dead or feigning Death's sleep,  
While nigh three thousand prisoners lament the lives they  
    keep.

### The Fields of Waterloo

14:00

### Sanguine Stalemate

Drunk on rum & bloodshed the Grey's charg'd on;  
No voice nor blast could halt the lusty heart  
Careering round each small yet deadly gun,  
Wreaking revenge for those they blew apart;  
    Heroic fray,  
    Fought in that danger zone,  
Safety skulk'd far away as their mounts became blown.

He watch'd as tho' struck by thunder,  
    A terrible sight to see,  
    Then cast the Polish Lancer  
    Gin' the milling cavalry,  
    With the promise of no quarter  
    They spear'd the enemy,  
Slaying spent stragglers with furious zest,  
Oft times twenty lances punctur'd the chest.

The plain was litter'd with the slain  
    Like shrapnel from a bomb,  
While fresh cocaine sped to his brain  
    He rode back to Rossome,  
Screaming, "*Where the fuck is Grouchy? Where are these English  
    from!*"

**Rosome**  
**14:30**

### Wellington's Caution

The field lay taken by an eerie calm,  
But for the musketry's endless rattle  
Rising from the blazing Hougomont farm,  
A fierce battle within a fierce battle;  
    Across the ground  
    Ten thousand corpses strewn,  
Aft' that first frightful round e'en the stout-hearted swoon.

Young Ensign Stewart braved the crest,  
    Peer'd into the smoky haze,  
    Saw tranquil horses, riderless,  
    On bleeding leg-stumps graze,  
    Watch'd silent, white & motionless  
    Whilst wounded Death's knell raise -  
Til BOOM! thro' th'air cooling cannonball cuts,  
Punctures his belly, out trail white worm guts.

The ridge became a smoking pyre,  
    Th'army turn'd to spaces,  
    "*To dodge this fire we shall retire  
    Back a hundred paces!*"  
Breathing relief, that hot-spot left, war's pain on strain'd faces.

**The Ridge of Mont Saint-Jean**  
**15:30**

## Canto II

The French assaults & the arrival of the Prussians on the field

In seven great batailles semliche arrayed  
Sexty thowsand men, the sychte was full hugge  
All frightande folke of the ferre laundes

### Morte Arthure

### Ney's Attack

Half-a-mile from the eyes of his master  
Ney watch'd the scarlet enemy retreat,  
Gave the hordes of cavalry his order  
To claim the glory of England's defeat;  
In consequence  
The confederacy  
Shall offer no defence to French supremacy.

Tween La Haye Saint & Hougoumont  
The noble Cuirassier,  
His golden breastplate gleaming dun,  
With horse pistol & sabre,  
Came on, came slow & calmly on,  
Some sea-wave of sommer -  
A long, glittering line of man & steed  
Emanating granduer's will to succeed.

The Royal Horse Artillery  
Hard gallop'd to the spot  
There, with deadly accuracy,  
Unleash'd storms of case-shot -  
Carcass reduced to bloody pulp as tho' it's flesh did rot.

### The Ridge of Mont Saint-Jean

15:45

### Carvello Carnage

The entire army clamour'd into square,  
Form'd chequer-style for fire-fields to combine,  
The poignant whispers of an English prayer  
As onto the ridge surged the mounted line;  
    Out rings the scream,  
    One wild "*Vive L'Empereur!*"  
The Cuirassiers stream... Wellesley shakes off wonder,

    "*Prepare to receive cavalry!*"  
The front ranks of redcoats kneel,  
    Whose bayonets in company  
    Form a bristling hedge of steel,  
    Muzzles train'd on an enemy  
    Charging empassion'd zeal;  
Lucid blue horde meets the red, ragged host -  
    A stormy ocean & a jagged coast.

    "*Shoot at the horses!*" came the cry,  
    Down fell many a steed,  
    A human sigh dwelt in the eye  
    Of our most noble breed,  
Man's heavenly companions dying hell-bent for his greed.

### The Fields of Waterloo

16:00

### Rocks of Empire

They stood about the shot-tatter'd colours,  
    Driven to the limits of endurance,  
Defending their ground 'gainst the warriors  
    Driven by the spirits of ancient France;  
    Without a flinch  
    They took all France could throw,  
Nor yield a single inch to the relentless foe.

Each wave of brave sabres withstood  
    By the savage squares of red,  
    Melting into the Belgian mud,  
    Courtyards litter'd with the dead,  
Between each foam-fleck'd horseman flood  
    Descended deadly dread,  
For black balls from **BOOM-BOOMING** batteries  
    Cut carnage in swathes thro' the companies.

With each assault dwindl'd the foe,  
    Their dead litter'd the plain,  
The weighty blow did drain & slow  
    Tho' still they came again,  
Til the last spectres of this ghastly danse macabre wane.

### The Fields of Waterloo

17:30

### Fall of the Farmouse

With Wellington press'd hard to distraction  
D'Erlons rallied remnants swarm round this farm  
In the midst of a furious action,  
Show contemptuous recklessness toward harm;  
From shot-pock'd walls  
The Kings German Legion  
Pour'd streams of musketballs into the blue ocean.

As la rage steam-soak'd in despair  
Hurls men at the bold defence,  
The cold fire of the legionnaire  
Splutters to vanquish'd silence,  
Twas such a murderous affair  
The French claim recompense -  
Bayonets plunge into wounded soldiers,  
*"Take zat for being such good defenders!"*

On the key to the position  
The Tricolor waved free,  
The battle won! The division  
Of Wellington's army  
Must soon be follow'd by the Brussels march & VICTORY!

### La Haye Saint

18:00

### Echoes of War

Battle's grisly field was left to the French  
By a cowardly cavalry brigade,  
Galloping beyond the soul-searing stench  
Ankle deep 'bout each busy surgeon's blade;  
While to safety  
Wounded wagons trundl'd,  
Dejected to be free for Hell's beast still grumbl'd.

They bolted thro' the Namur Gate,  
Grave panic spread like wylde-fire,  
Fearful of their forthcoming fate  
For troops of the French Empire  
Oft wreak revenge upon a state  
With dastardliness dire,  
& rumor was rife that Napoleon  
Had promised two days pillage to his men.

She gazed toward the rumbling sound,  
Saw battles in her head,  
Wistfully found a spot of ground  
Where helpless there she led,  
Not knowing if her William was wounded, well or dead...

### Brussels

18:30

## Napoleonic Sunset

From thirsty throats shot a tremendous cheer  
For France, the Emperor & Victory!  
Faces contorted with pleasure & fear  
Like some black Parisian tragedy;  
Mountains of dead,  
The screams, the smoke, the smell,  
The dark, dantean red that paints this trophy hell.

Ney gallop'd to his emperor,  
Prussian shells fell on Rossome,  
Face blacken'd with face & powder,  
*"Sire the time to push has come!"*  
*"Fool! how can I manufacture*  
*Men, where to pluck them from?*  
*Back to battle & do the best you can,*  
*Spare not the efforts of a single man!"*

To secure Plancenoit he threw  
The Young Guard from his hand,  
Then rode back to the inn to view  
The battle's prospect grand,  
Sky painted black with evenfall, by smoke & ashes fann'd.

## La Belle Alliance

18:45

## A Desperate Defence

Gazing on the gathering enemy  
Calmly amidst the cannonball shower,  
Duke calls his last Aide-de-Camp, DeLancey,  
*"High crisis is on us, whence breaks the hour?"*  
*"Nigh on seven!"*  
*"By my bones I hope the*  
*Holy King of Heaven brings us Night or Blucher."*

With an eye on his investment  
Nathan Rothschilds quaff'd back fear,  
With a gruff, Germanic accent  
Offer'd services sincere,  
With vital timely orders sent -  
*"What remains of us stands here!"*  
The white cockade betray'd point of attack  
Where black round ploughs into DeLancey's back.

& as he scream'd for god in vain  
It seem'd his wife did hear,  
Sharing his pain her spirits wane,  
The moment too severe,  
& tho she clung to HOPE her grieving soul shed this first tear.

## Brussels

19:00

### A Deadly Pause

Across the playne prickest the lone hussar,  
Sate nobly on his magnificent Bay,  
Bellow'd forth a stirring "*Vive, L'Empereur!*"  
That held an entire army in it's sway;  
His sabre sweeps  
The long length of the line  
Like that grim scythe that reaps the mortal crimson vine.

He gallop'd away in a trice,  
After him musketballs flew,  
Such derring-do at what high price,  
Soak'd in hot blood thro' & thro,  
Singing the supreme sacrifice,  
*"My Prince...I die... for you..."*  
Utter'd with a spluttering gust of breath,  
The beauty & the agony of Death.

Along the line was pass'd the cry,  
*"Soldats voila Grouchy!"*  
A forlorn lie for those that die  
To seal his victory -  
A cause clutch'd in these scrawny claws, the crows shall feast  
for free.

### The Fields of Waterloo

19:30

### Imperial Guard

He led them upon the glorious way,  
His soldiers, of the Middle, of the Old,  
Once more handed the Fate of France to Ney,  
More precious than his weight in Bourbon gold;  
The grand guardsmen  
March musically as one,  
*"Forwards my brave children, A Bruxelles mes enfants."*

They march'd with splendour's cool élan  
Onto the field of glory,  
The power surging thro' each man  
To shape Europe's destiny,  
Brave bandsmen foremost in the van  
Stirring strain'd melody,  
They swept in solemn & savage silence,  
Th'espirit-de-corps carv'd from deadly violence.

On march'd th'immortal sons of France,  
Men who built an empire,  
The eminence of their advance  
Plough'd to a muddy mire,  
Two columns paced into the fray straf'd by a galling fire.

### The Ridge of Mont Saint-Jean

19:45

### Canto III

The routing of the Imperial Guard & the defeat of Napoleon

### Routing the Guard

*"Now Maitland! Now's your time!"* Swiftly upsprung  
One long, scarlet line of grimy faces,  
With one thundering volley forward flung  
Murderous musketry at twenty paces;  
Death's wind was blown,  
Driving men to their knees,  
Strange field of human corn all swaying in the breeze.

*"Up guards & at 'em!"* Wellesley cried,  
His men rush'd to the murder,  
Where brave blues stood fresh terrified  
Of death by English slaughter,  
The bayonet, coldly applied,  
Adds to the disorder  
A cowering coward yelps a wild shout -  
As one the beaten heroes turn & rout.

*"La Garde recule," "Impossible!"*  
*"Nous sommes trahis!"* the cry,  
Their spirits fell, broken the spell,  
To France these Frenchmen fly,  
So cruel & bitter tasting tears trickle from each proud eye.

### The Fields of Waterloo

20:00

*"The next worst thing after a battle lost is a battle won."*

**The Duke of Wellington**

### Wellington's Victory

As tho' to some pre-destin'd harmony,  
Black flags flying like vengeful, hungry crows,  
The hate-fill'd horde of Prussians show pity  
No mind as thro' the ruptured right flank flows;  
Sunsetting stream  
Dips neath the smoky clouds,  
Casting a copper beam upon the golden crowds.

The Duke shone black upon the verge,  
Sky red as an evening wine,  
Hat waving high his lads emerge,  
Form a mile-wide scarlet line,  
Who with one great glorious surge,  
With fleeing French entwine -  
Architects of this gallic tragedy,  
Empassion'd by triumphant exstasi.

& as he watch'd his rascals run  
He gave a poignant smile  
Napoleon had fired his gun  
At all his rank & file,  
Yet they stood firm, as did his nerve, forever France to rile.

### The Fields of Waterloo

20:15

### The Soul of France

Sheltering in the centre of a square,  
His loyal First view'd their leader blankly,  
Who, with the terrible rage of despair,  
Stood to save the honour of the army;  
Breathing a sigh  
Retiring in all haste,  
He left his men to die as on the Russian waste.

Befitting the call of glory,  
Steep'd in mystique 'til the last,  
Like islands in a raging sea,  
Screaming comrades streaming past,  
Swarm'd by hussars & infantry  
They fought fierce & steadfast -  
Freddie Johnstone pleads them to surrender,  
Dead silence feeds the defiant, "*Merde!*"

*"La Garde meurt mais ne se rend pas!"*  
Twelve cannon pack'd with case  
Administer the coup de grace,  
Death's scythe swept thro' the space,  
The soul of the Grand Armee duly vanish'd from Earth's face.

### La Belle Alliance

20:30

### Happy Meeting

Tho' the battle won & Europa saved  
Death doubles his efforts as night draws in,  
The mortal right to mercy clearly waiv'd,  
Frenchmen hack'd down in droves for kinsmen sin;  
In joyous rows  
Their vanquishers advance,  
As Allied pincers close about the throat of France

They meet with a gladsome greeting,  
Victorious embrace share,  
*"My prince, that was a damn'd nice thing!"*  
*"Oui, mon duke, une quelle affaire!"*  
& triumphant soldiers singing  
Blasted tall thro' the air;  
For twenty years the misery of France  
Full twenty years of bloody arrogance.

The simple north country farmer  
Heard english lyrical,  
Crept in terror from the cellar,  
Paced his ruin'd castle  
Stood forever at the threshold of a famous battle.

### La Belle Alliance

21:00

### Battle's End

Lone rider cross'd the scene, grave duty done,  
Counting the cost of his certain glory,  
*"Next to a battle lost a battle won  
Is the worst thing any captain could see;"*  
The tears he cry  
Whilst whispering wistful,  
*"I hope to God that I have fought my last battle."*

Mangl'd thousands cover the ground  
Like a shipwreck's rippling sail,  
Some dreadful organ piped hell's sound  
While the wounded shriek & wail,  
One stumbling, mumbling widow found  
Beloved husband pale;  
Shadowy ghouls sporting guns, helmets & coats  
Scavenge for booty, slitting gurgling throats.

Weary the Duke of Wellington,  
Bright is the moon & blue,  
He trotted on past La Haye Saint  
Where one lone eagle flew,  
Then glanced his last & turn'd his back on the fields of  
Waterloo.

### Mont Saint-Jean

21:30

### Napoleonic Fall

An eagle circl'd La Belle Alliance  
'Fore gliding by the chausee to Charleroi,  
Above weaponless warriors of France  
Begging madly 'neath the Prussian hussar;  
Nowhere to hide  
From Blucher's vengeful will,  
Combing the countryside for fleeing foe to kill.

Oer Genappe the Eagle's hover  
Coldly espied confusion,  
An army cramm'd tight together,  
Half-craz'd by fears contagion,  
Sabres sweep in civil murder,  
The tragic illusion  
Of one bridge spanning the deep Dyle's swift flow -  
That stream's tranquil amble, shallow & slow.

For forest flame flew the flyer  
To perch by Bounaparte,  
Who in the fire saw his Empire  
Ashen & wrench'd apart,  
Shed tears of loss pulsing from the well of his broken heart.

### Bois de Gosselies

23:00

### Death of De Lancey

She sat with silence in the jolting cart,  
It's horses screaming at Death's awful stench,  
Pangs of suspense hang heavy on her heart  
'Til Waterloo, where with a mighty wrench,  
Her joys outpour,  
Her husband is alive!  
Before a cottage door to breathlessly arrive.

She crept into the dusty room  
Saw upon a simple bed,  
Him waiting for his painful doom,  
How miserable there he led!  
Her love light true didst pierce the room,  
Bright halo hugs her head -  
A feverish vision or darling true,  
*"Magdalene, darling, is that really you?"*

She sat upon a broken chair,  
Into his slipt her hands,  
With kisses, prayer & tender care  
Helpless she watch'd time's sands  
Trickle from life's glass chamber to the one that Death  
commands.

### Mont Saint Jean

19th June

1815

## Spendid News

The carriage thunder'd oer Westminster bridge -  
Eagles poking proudly from it's window,  
Captur'd in the fight for Wellington's ridge -  
To wheel into Whitehall... the horses slow;  
Grime-faced major  
Brushes the guards aside,  
Interrupting dinner, words bursting forth with pride.

*"Great & glorious victory!"*  
Sang Percy to his Regent,  
Kneeling upon a bended knee,  
*"My liberty to present*  
*Twin colours pluck'd with gallantry*  
*From a French regiment;*  
*Representing Napoleon's downfall!"*  
Three long hurrahs huzzah'd by one & all.

Trophys display'd to growing throng,  
News flew round like lightning,  
They skipp'd along awash with song  
Singing, *"God save the King!"*  
While wide across the countryside ten thousand church bells  
ring.

**Saint James' Square**  
**21st June**  
**1815**

## Treaty of Vienna

Once more beneath the moon of Austria,  
Men gather in a mutual respect  
To readress the borders of Europe,  
But this time cautious & more circumspect;  
From them their lies  
The fate of future days -  
Some seek a merchant's prize, some seek a monarch's praise.

Wise Metternich takes centre stage,  
Napoleon derided,  
The threshfold of the modern age,  
His conquests were divided  
Tween signatories of this page,  
Nation states decided,  
& surely to some pre-destined design  
The Prussian borders brought up to the Rhine.

For as the great cities of Spain  
Founded by Moorish king  
& howling, rain-swept hurricane  
Whipp'd by butterfly wing,  
One day determines destinies long centuries shall bring.

**Vienna**  
**August 1815**

**Book IX**

**The Great Game**

**Canto I**

*The emergence of modern Japan, Italy  
& the United States of America*

*Le grand empire sera par Angleterre,  
Le pempotam des ans de trois cens:  
Grandes copies passer par mer & terre,  
Les Lusitains n'en seront par contens.*

We are made wiser by the age

**Erasmus**

## Downfall!

The poet's task to glorify the page  
With stories richer than the Golden Fleece,  
We stand upon the threshold of an age  
When doves of peace are chirping for release;  
The mind bewitch'd  
By warfare yet to come,  
The old sword's pibrochs pitch'd to thund'rous battledrum.

As Napoleon heard the strain  
Notes round his soul were wreathing,  
Now stood upon the Trojan plain  
When demi-gods were breathing,  
Hot blood pulsed thro his temple's vein,  
Angry, proud & seething -  
As Ishtar brings empire she brings the fall,  
Three long hurrahs huzzah'd by one & all.

At the mercy of the victor  
As the Sinean Kings,  
Montezuma & Mombaza,  
Gem-crust'd Moghul rings;  
An emperor forced to flutter with all the schmetterlings.

**Plymouth**  
**August**  
**1815**

## Death of Napoleon

Stranded on an unhealthy, sea-girt isle,  
The arch-felon of Europe stands alone,  
Bored of his garden, whiling every while  
With white sea-foam & smooth, wide skipping-stone;  
That pain again!  
His belly seems aflame!  
Poison in every vein he screams his doctor's name!

He woke up in a fev'rish state,  
Heard wailing in the ocean,  
Tempest thunders without abate,  
Soul pouring out emotion,  
*"More than Alexander the Great  
Commanding devotion!"*  
Til settl'd by the war-song of the sea  
He drifted, whispering, *"Where is Grouchy?"*

& in his final dream he saw  
Happy Italians,  
The Kentish shore, long days of war,  
Men, horses, flags & guns,  
Then dies & joins his golden soldiers shouldering weapons.

**Saint Helena**  
**1821**

## The Ottoman Decay

As just heroes raise the race of empires  
Heavenward, where even Jove hears his name,  
They set great sceptres, wasted, mid the pyres;  
Handsomely branding with a famous flame  
    Lord Byron stands  
    For Hellas & her sons,  
Landing upon white sands guides, horses, gold & guns.

Having lived with the Venetians  
    Neath the vile Austrian yoke  
    Having ridden with Albanians,  
Breathing songs thro campfire smoke,  
    Tasso-heart pours out ambitions  
    To eager Grecian folk,  
Inspiring them to seize their native soil -  
    By one mosquito-bite his blood aboil.

    & as the spirit of Romance  
    Fell at Missolonghi,  
The Greeks advance, seizing their chance  
    To win back Liberty,  
Sending the ageing Ottoman scuttling across the sea.

1832  
Greece

## Year of Revolutions

Like little catalysts do acorns grow  
Into great oaks, as conflict turns to wars,  
The German nations promise to bestow  
Her speech upon the Hanseatic shores;  
    Spreading the bind  
    To Sleswick & Holstein,  
From now on Elbe shall find her sister in the Rhine.

The wars spread mighty rapidly;  
    Fresh new French revolution,  
    While Venetia & Lombardy  
    Drive out the hated Austrian -  
    Seeds of a modern Italy,  
    A new Napoleon,  
Far from Metternich & old Vienna,  
Decrees himself, "*Guardian of Order!*"

As the Russians saddle horses  
    Britain looks on concern'd,  
Her resources & arm'd forces  
    Have many times return'd  
Across the straits & still the scales of balance not yet earn'd.

Europe  
1848

### Death of the Cavalry Charge

The peace of Europe shows a heavy strain,  
The Turkish Sultan rushes off to war,  
His fleet is driven from the glassy main  
By Russia off the Sinopean shore;  
Sending a surge  
Thro the power balance;  
France & Britain shall merge in lib'ral alliance.

Landing on the peninsula  
They face the Russian onslaught,  
Skirmishes play'd out at Alma  
Inkerman brutally fought,  
But battle at Balaklava  
Becomes a bloody sport,  
Despite a global glory truly earn'd,  
Of six hundred but two hundred return'd.

Being a charge to inspire men,  
Honour the Light Brigade!  
Never again, thro ink & pen  
Such foolish mistakes made,  
As step-by-step thro war's black net the horses hoofsteps fade.

**Crimea**  
**1854**

### Florence Nightingale

Sebastapol entrapp'd on every side,  
Beseig'd by land, bombarded from the seas,  
Five hundred thousand from good life divide,  
Some in battle, but mostly by disease;  
More redcoats rush  
To seize the citadel,  
With one brittanic push the Russian kudos fell.

She tread thro battle's detritus,  
The bleeding & the brittle,  
Convers'd with dying warriors,  
Coughing bile tinted-spittle,  
Deliver'd loving tenderness  
When man's lot meant little  
To poker players of the Greatest Game,  
Willing to gamble lives to further fame.

She left behind those days of war,  
Thanking the gods that be,  
Resumed her tour, beside the shore  
Of sheer Gallipoli,  
She sketch'd a scene so picturesque for her dear family.

**Dardanelles**  
**1855**

## Japanese Renaissance

They watch'd them steam into the Edo Bay,  
Grey smoking dragons, whose guns numerous  
Serv'd the querelous Shogunate's dismay,  
Saying, "*This matter does not concern us!*"  
White faces made  
Fair sail across the sea,  
Bringing the global trade of Commodore Perry.

Sensing the world had pass'd them by  
Japan open'd up her quays,  
World influxes revivify  
Evolution by degrees,  
The old masters this did defy  
& so brought to their knees,  
As bold Mutsuhito replaces school  
With palaces & his '*Enlighten'd Rule.*'

Directly from Yokohama  
The nation's first train flew,  
What calibre of Emperor  
Into the station drew,  
Inspiring such devotion as the lilies drink the dew.

**Tokyo**  
**1872**

## Risorgimento

No longer the montage of petty states  
Spiritus uprisen thro Italy,  
Austrians driven from the city gates  
By the stoic will of Garibaldi;  
Bravely fighting  
Where e'er his thousand ride,  
Beneath a native king the North now unified.

The Kingdom of Two Sicilies  
Rejects unification,  
Soon subject to hostilities,  
With grim determination  
Palermo lost her liberties  
& Naples her station,  
As with one fierce, jingoist show of force  
He enter'd Rome upon a flame-red horse.

From Brindisi to Lake Como  
A country re-appears,  
The foreign flow of soldato  
Lasted a thousand years,  
Now cast forever to the past by dashing cavaliers.

**Rome**  
**1864**

## Steadying the Ship

Conscious of a manifest destiny  
Tho barely yet a pawn of the great game  
The fledgeling eagle wings of liberty  
Spread oer the world & fan the flames of fame;  
But southern states  
Fat on their their slavish fee,  
Form band of vicious mates led by courageous Lee.

It was a very bitter war  
Where nobody was thinkin',  
But for the great conquistadour,  
Men voted for Abe Lincoln,  
Who won a country from the gore;  
All his folk were drinkin'  
Toasts of hope for the nation & her name,  
The Eagle spreads her wing oer the great game!

America is set to go,  
Vast resources to spend,  
The Alamo quell'd Mexico,  
With Canada her friend,  
The Old World now a no-go zone, Westward her thoughts  
would wend.

**USA**  
**1865**

## Canto II

*The Franco-Prussian War & the Age of Empires*

If I should die, think only this of me:  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is forever England

**Rupert Brooke**

### Otto Von Bismark

The German nations reach a higher gear,  
With industry & manpower supreme,  
Enter Von Bismarck & his vision clear,  
Mind Xiphoid proffering empiric dream;  
As thro his veins  
The Junker spirit flows,  
Where lust for great campaigns & martial glory grows.

Joining forces with Vienna  
Denmark driven from Sleswick,  
But bickering with Austria  
Leads to battle ballistic,  
A trial of strength at Sadova  
& Hapsburg has grown sick -  
World-status faced with Berlin's victory,  
Even Venetia lost to Italy!

Proclaim the hero of the hour,  
First of this epoch's men,  
With deep glower what keen power  
Glowing rushing thro his pen,  
Signing the scroll of peace, pronounce bloodshed not if, but when?

**Prague**  
**1866**

### March of Moscow

Praise the endeavours of Mother Russia,  
Once again her paterfamilias,  
Living as a second Alexander,  
Launches conquest, riding imperious;  
Swelling the roll  
Of empire's endless names,  
Scriven on Moscow's scroll, soul of the Tsarist claims.

As Ivan won the Caspian,  
Great Peter reach'd the Baltic,  
The Caucasus & Carpatian  
Cath'rine won thro politik,  
His father conquer'd Kazakhstan,  
Thro battles endemic;  
Georgia, Tashkent, Chechnia, Samarkand,  
Now southern aces in the Russian hand.

The Tsar's claims absorb Kamchatka,  
The eastern stakes are rais'd,  
America gains Alaska  
& leaves the game unphazed,  
While China & Japan upon the golden sickle gazed!

**Manchuria**  
**1867**

## European Struggle

The nephew of the first Napoleon  
Light-hearted bent on conflict, as it nears,  
What enmity ruffles thro the Prussian,  
Catalyst for a century of tears;  
An excuse found,  
Madrid's invalid throne,  
The buglers calls resound & brutal war is born.

Abandon'd by her enemies,  
Once vast manpower dwindling,  
France faced the conjoin'd Germanies  
Like a bee without a sting,  
United were her enemies  
Beneath a single king;  
Baden, Württemberg & Bavaria  
Merge with the North & its Prussian kaiser.

What mighty military rolls  
To Paris at a pace?  
Grand fortress falls, "*Surrender!*" calls  
The emperor's red face,  
Far from Jena a great power put firmly in her place.

**Sedan**  
**1870**

## The Defeat of France

"*Vive la France!*" gen'ral Gambetta's cry,  
New armies rais'd to save the capital,  
On ev'ry side great hordes of grey-coats lie,  
Willing moments when men would do battle;  
Now Paris meets  
Visions of Baudelair,  
Shapes grotesque grip the streets, folk starving everywhere.

While waiting for the diplomats  
They gorged on their resources,  
Then, after eating all the cats,  
Felt forced to eat the horses,  
& when the city free of rats  
In march'd Bismark's forces,  
Forcing humiliation on the French,  
Thro Gallic hearts avengeant thoughts entrench.

The gate went up at Brandenburg  
Praising Victoria,  
Crowns from Hamburg to Nuremburg  
Absorb'd by the Kaiser,  
A mighty friendship forged to face an unforeseen future.

**Berlin**  
**1871**

### Scramble For Africa

Rhodes brings a lamp to the Dark Continent,  
Postpones Europa's struggling mastery,  
Towards rough pencil marks all borders went,  
Ten thousand chieftans hear doom's augury;  
    Zulu, Dinhu,  
    Mashona & Masai,  
Spinuliferous threw sharp spears into the sky.

The French won North-West Africa  
When the Germans took Togo,  
British flags swarm'd into Kenya  
As the Belgians claim'd Congo,  
    & only bloody Adowa  
    Saw white faces red glow,  
For Abyssinia breaks Italy -  
Leaving her but Libya & Tripoli.

Few spears are falling on the foe,  
Mown down by modern arms,  
By diamond glow the rich crops grow  
    Upon the fertile farms,  
Settlers from the Old World set sail seduced by sultry charms.

**Cape Town**  
1885

### Victoria

Most rugous, longevous, famous of forms,  
Roll'd slowly midst her Golden Jubilee,  
Upon all sides the dotting empire swarms  
    Piloted by her growing family;  
    Sitting alone  
Her banquet shall begin,  
The whole world bares the throne of Britain's sovereign.

Europa's aging grandmother  
Attends her garden party,  
With crown heads of Romania,  
    Nippon, Siam, Hawaii,  
Plus dashing princes of Persia;  
    Many-a-majesty  
Pays homage to the splendour of their Queen -  
Her three grandsons play polo on the green.

A British crown prince lames the horse  
    Of a future Kaiser,  
His curses coarse, a show of force  
    From the prince of Russia -  
Petty is the bickering continuing thro supper...

**London**  
1889

### War's Progress

With Gordon's blood encrusted at Khartoum,  
Bit-chomping Churchill blushing vernal haste -  
    Advancing to an oblivious doom  
Brave Dervishes drift cross the desert waste;  
    Fifty thousand,  
    Led by bearded Emirs,  
Cross tiger-lily sand, raising courageous cheers.

Hail Maxim, military king,  
As the s'cockacoka glows,  
Death's mechanical chattering  
Scatters Dervishes in rows,  
Forms tangl'd heaps of suffering,  
But few foe come to blows  
As tho they wore tartan at Culloden -  
Dows'd in blood the desert sands grew sodden.

*"Well, war has chang'd,"* young Winston said,  
Watching with Kitchener,  
Sunset flows red, above the dead  
Rose a haunting clamour,  
*"La llaha illa llah Muhammed Rasul Allah!"*

**Omdurman**  
1896

### The Boer War

The last defiant tribe of Africa  
Launches a bold attack upon the foe,  
The empire's finest face a brave farmer,  
Finding themselves impotent from the blow;  
    Paddy Sumner,  
    The same day he quit school,  
Join'd the Queens Lancashire to sail from Liverpool.

He dug a trench at Spion Kop,  
Being more a shallow grave,  
Mausers did maim as kill did Krupp,  
    Avarice wave-after-wave,  
Harvest scythemen cut down the crop,  
The day such culling gave,  
That Churchill, watching from a safer height,  
Determin'd on the world to set aright.

To beat the Boer's pernicious sword  
Camps of concentration  
Proud women hoard, a chequerboard  
Of barb'd-wire fills the nation,  
British victory tastes bitter at the devastation.

**Vereeniging**  
1902

## American Empire

As the destiny of America  
Manifests with industrious resolve,  
Far from the treaty of Westphalia  
The Spanish Empire shudders to dissolve;  
While Washington  
Fortifies Havana,  
Forces American liberate Manilla.

Men like young Teddy Rooseveltd,  
With riders rough & ready,  
Conquer the plush Panama belt  
& exotic Hawaii,  
Across the world fresh fears are felt  
For world hegemony,  
What is this contree striding 'cross the stage?  
This new century seems like a new age!

& while the nobles of Madrid  
Wept for their relique lands,  
The Amerindian great bid  
For tribal peace now stands  
A cause consumed by modern goals, a goat in hungry hands.

**USA**  
**1903**

## Canto III

*The rise of European tensions leading to the Great War*

We have Napoleon to thank that a couple of warlike centuries  
can now follow on one another which have no equal in history,  
in short we have enter'd the Classic Age of War.

*Frederick Nietzsche*

### **Hakenkruz**

As little boys listen to their mothers  
With dewy eyes, an Austrian sat down  
Above his home, "Quite unlike the others,"  
Schoolmasters said, as now, far from the town,  
His mind would soar  
With fire & phantasie,  
What moment draped in awe, upon the monast'ry

A benedictine coat of arms,  
With salient swastika,  
Lull'd his artist soul to the charms  
Of its mystical aura -  
Alarum wildfires thro the farms,  
"Alois needs a doctor!"  
His son runs home; stunn'd & numb from crying,  
Adolf Hitler watch'd his father dying.

The haemorrhage was flowing fast,  
Doctors could do no good,  
Breathing his last his essence cast  
Back to the fiery flood,  
The father of a demon-child, fascinated by blood.

**Linz**  
**1903**

### **Morrocan Stand-Off**

Global tensions engulf another land  
Where xanthomelians live & recline,  
Swathe of Mohammed mystery & sand,  
More victims of imperial design;  
Both France & Spain  
Intend to share the spoils;  
But starved of cooling rain Europa's fever boils;

The Second Reich has realised  
Berlin now holds the balance,  
Whose Kaiser comes, cruel face disguis'd,  
& carries the scales to France,  
Where all the Moorish ports are prized  
For all their elegance,  
Stoical & certain the world must know  
Will the world go to war for Morrocco?

At loggerheads the powers meet,  
Til out of this discord  
Men sign a treaty to defeat  
The bloodshed & the sword,  
But peace is barely breathing neath a damoclean sword!

**Algeciras**  
**31st March**  
**1905**

## The Eastern Question

The Tsarist empire, driven asunder  
By fervour's hot revolutionaries,  
Now faces a new, vibrant challenger,  
Whose Dragonstorms & sweet Seacanaries  
Project their gaze  
O'er Manchurian skies,  
Caught in the Asian maze how national angers rise!

Moscow issues the Baltic fleet,  
Protects her Pacific base,  
But into this total defeat  
Her unknowing captains race,  
At Tsushima two empires meet  
Where one left in disgrace,  
Siberian steel sinks to the sea bed  
& ocean ripples with the Russian dead.

Silvery moon spreads thro the sea  
As fossils do a stone,  
The star-charts see golden glory  
As with a yellow yawn,  
Over the oriental dark rose the first flush of dawn.

**Port Arthur**  
**June 1st**  
**1905**

## Entente Cordiale

In splendid isolation London stands  
With all the varied vestments of her fame,  
A global empire in her gentle hands,  
Spectator of the continental game;  
The French envoy  
Driven from Waterloo,  
For Whitehall to enjoy high-level interview.

*"Our problem here is Germany,  
Her imperial intent  
Could win her the hegemony  
Over the old continent,  
Threatening our stability,  
This course we must prevent!  
If war must come then Paris is prepared"*  
Sentiment Britain's delegation shared.

One hundred years have pass'd away  
Since Nelson's grand demise,  
When every way that left Calais  
Was thick with tricks & spies,  
But in the face of danger ancyeent emnity allies!

**Whitehall**  
**1905**

## Battle Plans

"The Great Powers have guaranteed their pacts  
With pledges of mutual assurance,  
Why should we wait their concerted attacks,  
I have a plan to beat the alliance;"  
Von Schlieffen spits  
Intrigueing his Kaiser,  
"My second Austerlitz murders France & Russia!"

"Go on," said Wilhelm, "Sire, I feel  
The method of victory,  
One massive, military wheel  
Thro Belgic neutrality,  
Executed with speed & zeal,  
Cut Paris from the sea,  
& with French arms extinguish'd by the blow  
We shall turn all our strength upon Moscow."

The Kaiser nods, "We must grow strong,  
The struggle surely near!"  
A marching song, for right or wrong  
The white doves disappear,  
As Prussian milit'ism strides into a higher gear

**Potsdam**  
1905

## Dreadnaught

The Scramble for Africa completed  
The Kaiser-Reich bedeck'd with meagre spoil  
As a sense of destiny deep-seated  
Sets her expansive ambitions aboil;  
Proud German steel  
Must sculpt a High Seas Fleet,  
What grand designs revealed with British might to meet?

Admirals fill the Baltic seas  
With maritime manouveres,  
*"If they grow then by same degrees  
Must we improve our forces!"*  
First Sea Lord, Churchill, this agrees,  
*"Like Prince Rupert's horses  
We must ensure the kudos remains ours  
To strike great fear into foreign powers!"*

Rivalry slowly turns to hate  
(The hate that turns to war),  
With "We want eight & we won't wait!"  
The fisher-english roar,  
Their seat exalted challenged in the oceans yon the shore.

**Portsmouth**  
1910

## Death of Innocence

A new beginning floats upon the breeze,  
Annal of empire draws toward a close  
Like some rogue priest bent double with disease,  
Soon shall they quake! those cataclysmic throes;  
Full ninety years  
My tempers train shall delve,  
Thro all the blood & tears... Nineteen Hundred & Twelve.

The Kasier calls a konferenz,  
Large maps bespawl the 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 illumes the fight,  
INNOCENCE on her knees,  
Her grain-faced murderer administers 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,  
Those memories of bitter sleights  
Cleans'd by Bavarian dew  
Upon the winds the mountain kites  
In eagle fashion flew...  
"So fate has brought me here to Germany!"  
Thought swept upon the wing fluttering 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 Aryan & the anti-semitic roam.

**Munich**  
**1913**

## Assassin!

The Crown Prince peers out from the motorcade,  
His Hapsburg House gorging on fresh conquest,  
His tall, broad-chested soldiers on parade,  
Held back the Slavic peasantry oppress'd;  
Soft eyelids close,  
Flora fills the vision...  
The maiden sniffs her rose in the secret garden.

She laughs & they laugh together,  
Rows of roses grow & bud,  
Deep, red 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,  
His shot shall slay an Arch Duke, hear it echo round the world.

**Sarajevo**  
**June 28th**  
**1914**

## Book X

### The Great War

*L'ire insensee du combat furieux,  
Fera a` table par freres le fer luire:  
Les desparrit blesse', & curieux,  
Le fier duelle viendra en France nuire.*

## Canto I

*The course of the war from the opening salvoes to Gallipoli*

There will be wars such as there have never been on earth... an eclipse of the sun such as there has probably never yet been on earth... I greet all the signs that a more manly, warlike age is coming, which will, above all, bring valour again into honour.

**Frederick Nietzsche**

## Outbreak

From sylvan pool uprose the brooding Tsar,  
Gen'ralry waiting on the silent rise,  
Trusting his cousin not to start a war;  
He gave casual call to 'Mobilise!'  
That old word flies  
From the Romanov serve,  
Der Kaiser soon replies, seduced by conflict's verve.

Thus a moment'ry decision  
Our world with war's rug smothers,  
Epic duel of man & nation,  
Cruel dread of doting mothers,  
Crude destroyer of religion,  
Rude bandsman of brothers,  
Famed time of glory, honour, passion, pride,  
But days of shame as Hell's highways grow wide.

Mrs Stiltski wiped eagerly  
Her husband's glasses clean,  
"Read it to me, Anatoly..."  
& aft, "What does it mean?"  
"This looks like war in Europe, I may have to don the green."

**Moshny**  
**July 31st**  
**1914**

## The March to War

Families saw their loved ones to the train  
"Auflung nach Berlin!" daub'd by Galahad,  
How many Captain Scotts by future slain?  
Is this love that they have soon to be *had*?

*"Paddy don't go!*

*I've an ache in mi bones!"*

The carriages start slow, shrill hoots drown Freda's moans.

Russia march'd thro Eastern Prussia,  
There the Vistula to glean,  
& she march'd into Galicia,  
Gymnastirka olive green,  
Where bayonets of Austria,  
Defiant, mass'd & mean,  
Sunglint tarnish'd by allegro drumming,  
*"Cossacks! Cossacks! the Cossacks are coming!"*

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

**Europe**  
**August 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**1914**

## Tannenberg

The Russian Bear has scented Konigsberg,  
Herr Ludendorff promptly commanded East,  
At Hanover collected Hindenburg,  
Two titans bound to halt Muscovy's beast;  
Oer Sauerkraut  
The instancy discuss'd,  
Leaving them with no doubt, *"Attack! Attack we must!"*

As when the blessed Saladin  
Defied his land's invader  
& offer'd battle at Hattyn  
To the sacred Knights Templar  
The Germans drew that Slav host in,  
Encircled in terror...  
As once again the Prussian lancer nears.  
Shell after shell reduce stout men to tears.

*"Niet! Niet!"* the fibre fades,  
Hopelessly surrounded  
From ghoulish glades pour pale parades,  
Shapkaless, exhausted...  
Ancient, angry Teutonic shades harass the surrender'd.

**Eastern Prussia**  
**August 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**1914**

## Battle of the Marne

Such bitter seed sown by the Prussian deed  
What little need incites nations to war  
As once more into Flanders fields they feed  
Waggons & steeds & men marching foot raw;  
The Wehrmacht scent  
Parisian perfume,  
How proudly brave men went toward the front's dull boom.

As when Afghani toss'd Redcoats  
In tatters down the Khyber,  
Or Hannibal saw his stout boats  
Destroy'd upon the Tiber,  
The French, free from defence & forts,  
Show the famous fibre  
That threw back the invader in 'Thirteen...  
This century no Fontainbleus are seen.

Grey gen'ralry ride stallions  
To heights o'erlooking Meaux,  
Like Rome's legions battalions  
Are order'd to withdraw  
From the avengant Gaul... Moltke says, "*We have lost the war!*"

**France**  
**October**  
**1914**

## Seizure of the Seas

Hostilities commence upon the waves,  
Hochsenflotte christening the contest,  
But before Coronel could claim her graves  
The fleet is order'd South by South-Sou' West;  
Dolphins in train  
Yon dusky Spain they blow,  
Aim'd at the sailor's bane... Tierra del Fuego.

Grey wolves round Cape Horn near & Norse,  
Helmsman the gallant Von Spee,  
Lying in wait a vengant force  
Rais'd anchor at Port Stanley  
& sights the foe! sets fighting course!  
The battle-scar'd foe flee,  
Scatter'd amid grey-beards wide & rolling,  
Stern, Starboard, Port & Bow shellfire falling.

The Gneisenau, Von Spee's Scharnhorst,  
The Nurnburg & Leipzig  
Forming the toast of Churchill's boast,  
His sailors dance a jig...  
While England free to roam the waves the foe is forced to dig.

**The British Ocean**  
**December 8th**  
**1914**

## First Christmas

Wars of manoeuvre on their last legs stand,  
Warm maxims smoking by a mass graveside,  
Stalemate from the North Sea to Switzerland,  
Swathes of trench-works sundering countryside;  
One freezing night  
Der Wehrmacht think of home,  
O blaze of lantern light! O twinkling tannenbaum!

Sweet sung, "*Stille nacht, heilige nacht...*"  
Was the Hun's opening shell,  
"*Lads! Lads! we're not being attack'd!*"  
Tommy hums The First Noel,  
Before too long the truce had track'd  
All thro the trenches hell,  
Over the top & into No Mans Land  
Men went to shake another human hand.

As dawn broke over ghastly ground  
The love of life outpour'd,  
A football found, quick kickaround,  
A goal or six are scored...  
Shrill whistles drift the soldiers back - where they'd play'd  
snow had thaw'd.

**The Western Front**  
**December 25th**  
**1914**

## American Incunabula

"*Deutschland ganzlich einzukeisen!*" throats wail,  
Submerged terror revers'd th' Allied blockade,  
A liner spans the Old Head of Kinsale -  
Twin torpedoes - hopes of peace ever fade;  
Lone explosion  
Echoes back to New York -  
Ship listed & was gone, the world's press flock to Cork.

To Jerkwater the news soon spread,  
Hank hock'd a hooch with Harry,  
Those shocking columns shaking read,  
"*I have German ancestry,*  
*But our poor American dead*  
*Have rais'd the beast in me!*"  
"*Man, I don't think that we should get involv'd!*"  
"*But how else would that damn war be resolv'd?*"

"*Call off your wolves!*" Kaiserwards sent  
Wise by Woodrow Wilson,  
Threat keenly meant, the President  
Receives word from London...  
"*Zepp'lins have bomb'd the capital...*" grand moment of fusion.

**Washington**  
**May 10th**  
**1915**

### **The Last Grenadier**

An old man hobbl'd with his great-grandsons,  
Breath'd in the dust of the past century,  
The distant growl of the Hun's howling guns  
Awakening his vivid memory;  
Tho' barely sane,  
Driven half-blind with age,  
He shuffl'd his frail frame onto that famous stage.

Tween Hougomont & La Haye-Saint  
His raging nostalgia veer'd,  
Tward that panoramic lion  
All his stumbling footsteps veer'd,  
Fifty thousand phantoms upon  
Hades 'rison appear'd,  
Dogs braying fearful from the nearby farms,  
All round resounds the mighty clash of arms.

He watch'd his father hard impal'd  
Upon the scarlet square,  
& as he wail'd the Gaurdsmen fail'd,  
His Grand Pa-Pa led there,  
Shielding his cowering grand-child whilst bayoneted bare.

**Waterloo**  
**June 18th**  
**1915**

### **Gallipoli**

Kitchener's Churchillian conjecture  
Brings battle before Constantinople,  
Champagne thrill of Achaean adventure,  
The gentle savage, the savage gentle;  
"Where are you from?"  
"Melbourne..." "Why are you here?"  
Senses of soldiers numb led captive to the rear.

The soul of Rupert Brooke releas'd,  
Packs poetry for the trip,  
Byronic sortie to the East  
& mosquito-punctured lip,  
By volumes his visions increas'd,  
Death climb'd aboard the ship,  
For what seem'd a tayle, epic & Trojan,  
Now slowly sluiced with tragical poison.

From sandy cliffs to hills jagged  
Sloping from Chunuk Blair,  
Up ridge ragged, long trail hagger'd,  
Thro hot, wilderness air,  
Bluce Slater from Australia spat bullets ev'rywhere.

**Turkey**  
**August**  
**1915**

## Canto II

*The pivotal battles of Jutland, Verdun & the Somme*

Floating on the surface of the flooded trench was the mask of a  
human face which had detached itself from the skull.

**Siegried Sassoon**

## Rommel

With the French assault driven from Alsace  
Initiative is passing from the blues  
Unto the german greys, pushing en masse  
In fire-fight sporadic to the Meuse;  
Beside whose swell  
Midst the Foret d'Argonne,  
Bestrode Erwin Rommel, swooping as the falcon

Upon these five young sons of France  
Vigorous & rapidly,  
Three were shot in a keen instance,  
Now his magazine empty,  
Fixed bayonet, a hawkish glance  
But native bravery  
Is quelled by bullets brushing past his eye,  
Now the foe flee, "*Come back & fight!*" he cry.

Tho receiving the Iron Cross  
His contremen bogged down.  
Held at a loss before the schloss  
Defending Verdun town,  
A sunken vauban rampart, the tricolour on its crown.

**Fort Douamant**

**September 24<sup>th</sup>**

**1915**

## Deserter

There is a madness in the mind of man,  
The water torture of a constant war,  
Always for fighting, always in the van,  
Frank phantasizes of his native shore  
& left the trench,  
For him the war over,  
Pretending to be French all the way to Dover.

He ran home to his early life  
From man's terrors travell'd far  
& fell upon his pretty wife,  
Trousers mingled with her bra,  
But then there came the cruel knife  
To open up the scar,  
Cold 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... some sprawl'd deserter sports an insane smile..

**France**  
**January**  
**1916**

## Jutland

As decisive action draws ever near  
Britain's grand fleet given to Jellicoe,  
Ready to greet the gaze of Adm'ral Scheer  
From the Firth of Forth to the Scapa Flow;  
Collision course  
All thro a nervous night  
The day ready for force, the ocean kimberlite.

Alarm bells rung by sharp lookouts,  
Smooth seas grey & foreboding  
Aburst in mighty water spouts  
Range gauged, a swift reloading,  
Drowning the frantic sounds of shouts  
Are great ships exploding,  
Superdreadnaughts & Battle Cruisers,  
Into what monstrous clash this day fuses.

Both fog & smoke shall swathe the foam  
Trafalgar's broken spell  
Thro thick'ning gloam the fleets limp home,  
Bodies drift in the swell,  
The sea still loves his mistress, but the victor who can tell?

**The North Sea**  
**May**  
**1916**

## Verdun

There is a glory in the call to arms,  
Marshall Petain bestrode the sacred route,  
All galvanised by strong & simple charms,  
*"The city must be held here coute que coute!"*  
Firm-fisted hands  
Charcoal maps with action.  
*"Monsieurs, les Allemands sont toujours a Noyon!"*

*"The nation's first emergency,  
France with faith & fire... ATTAQUE!"*  
Jean Francois treads the Route Sacree,  
Two columns pass on the track,  
His marching up to Calvary,  
The other slouching back...  
& heeding an old soldiers wise advice  
Fought well & waiv'd the supreme sacrifice.

With Douamont another Metz,  
The war within a war,  
Recalling debts the Marshall nets  
The ruin'd Fort de Vaux,  
Scanty reward for days idled away in blood & gore.

**France**  
**June 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**1916**

## Battle of the Somme

The Top Brass dined in rich bigwigerie,  
*"An effort must be made to win the war!"*  
*For now we face a weaker Germany,  
The hell pits at Verdun her running sore!"*  
Over the top,  
Football leading the way,  
Thinking nothing could stop them on the Berlin way.

Brave captains, blades melded to hand,  
Lead the calm, steel-hatted rows  
Cross tangl'd miles of No Mans Land...  
*"Here they come!"* squawk sentry crows,  
From deep redoubts singed soldiers stand  
Tingling from head to toes;  
*'Das Trommelfeur'* offers a rare respite,  
*"At last der bastards have come out to fight..."*

The chatter of the Maxim gun  
Some violent thunderclap,  
*"No soul shall run toward the Hun!"*  
Not present on his map,  
Officers thinning on the field, *"Well cheerio old chap!"*

**Blighty Valley**  
**July 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**1916**

### The English at the Somme

The Magpies have abandon'd Picardie  
There mortal combat carried with aplomb,  
Pig-tail'd pickets inching forward grimly,  
The slow, slogging slaughter of the Somme;  
    Bligh's virgin flight  
    Skim's carnage far & wide,  
When great elephants fight suffers the countryside.

Graves met his friend by candlelight  
    In a cellar of Fricourt,  
    *"God, Sass, what poetry we'll write  
    When the battle shall be oer!"*  
To them the muses in their flight  
    Sole tonic of a war  
Throwing like-minded jongleurs together,  
    *Ah! lasciate ogni speranza.*

Pat join'd the brave Lancastrians  
    For Moo-Cow Farm to fall,  
    Australians, Canadians,  
    A wretched three-month crawl  
& at the last, the action past, heart pierc'd by shrapnel ball.

### Mouquet Farm

October  
1916

### Victory at Verdun

Somehow could Jean Francois still offer fight,  
Despite facing Death's gaze ten thousand times,  
    In ev'ry shell-hole slept a hellish sight,  
    At ev'ry turn the clamour of man's crimes;  
    Once more Petain  
    Has order'd the advance,  
Thou messianic man, thou saviour of all France.

Perch'd behind the barrage roulant  
    March'd many a division;  
Rough Provençal, bold Morrocon,  
    Sweet-scented Parisian,  
Clear-eye'd Vosges, hardy Gascon  
    & bulldog-toned Breton,  
    The poilus of a nation unified,  
Praising their precious Charlemagne they died,

As now some new triumphant urge  
    Pull's war's grey grimace taut  
    One final surge up to the verge  
    Of that hard fought for fort,  
Jean Francois plants the Tricolor, "*Victoire!*" screams from his throat.

### Fort Douamont

October 29<sup>th</sup>  
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?" strain'd wail  
Swept down the street  
With his next door neighbour,  
"Get summat on yer feet & go get yer mother!"

Beneath the rugged Hambledon  
Marching by the brown canal  
They morosely passed thro Hapton  
As at some dour funeral  
& came at length to Accrington  
To hear of their own Pal..  
'Patrick Sumner has died for his contree.'  
The Town Hall notice read small & coldly.

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

**Lancashire**  
**November**  
**1916**

## Of War & Men

There is a scented season men name Spring,  
Air slowly perfumed by a floral spray,  
Laburnam, Rhododendrum, blossoming  
By little lambs so sylph like in their play;  
O pleasant clime,  
Days of the Daffodil,  
But also times of crime, the urge returns to kill.

Death comes in droves, in droves I say,  
Imagine the Bernabau  
When Barcelona come to play  
& each fan slain... tell me how  
Men can allow mankind to slay  
His own as tho some cow..  
Now to the stadia the Yanks advance,  
Their targets are the painted dames of France,

Where Dillinger don't give a damn  
For his young wife Rita,  
A quick wham-bam, a 'Thank ye mam!"  
Five francs ring the meter,  
Despite his son was born at home that morn in Jerkwater.

**Paris**  
**May**  
**1917**

### Canto III

*From the entry of the Americans to the final defeat  
of the German Kaiser*

### Poetry of War

Seigfreid heard soften'd knocking at the door,  
Young Wilfred Owen stood there rather shy,  
Clutching *his* poems, not one book but four!  
Sass caught a special 'something' in his eye;  
How they show it,  
That special sympathy,  
*"I-I am a poet..." "Why, would you care for tea?"*

With Graves they form'd a company  
Of literary lions,  
Baring the torch of Poetry  
Thro this dark day's dalliance,  
Channelling sacred energy  
Thro most artful science,  
Rose milk & honey springing from within,  
*"These terrible times, times worth living in!"*

Lost on a stroll thro the garden,  
Life seem'd a better age,  
Brave deeds now done how Keatsian  
Men carved marvellous page,  
Ants, players, friends & stars performing on the greatest stage.

**Craiglockhart**  
**September**  
**1917**

The soldiers fight & the kings are heroes

**Talmund**

### **Soviet Dawn**

Two trains pass, two souls slumb'ring in the car,  
Entering, exiting the theatre,  
The last, the royal person of the Tsar,  
The first, emergant comrade from Georgia;  
Stalin breaks free,  
Siberia behind,  
He flutters on the freedom of the releas'd mind.

As the Commissars took their place  
All the Soviets now one,  
The Bolsheviks bore Hemlock face,  
Control the railway station,  
Banks, Post Office, Winter Palace,  
The city all but won -  
Their faustian Lenin seizes power,  
Resplendent in his magnificent hour.

Comrades offering obedience  
Kept him on a promise,  
This fresher stance, forget poor France,  
What new found wisdom this?  
A warring empire, humbl'd, probing for an armistice.

**Petrograd  
Oktober  
1917**

### **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,  
Walks on the wooden veins, two German scouts appear...

He shot 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 surly fight,  
Grapple & groan with grit..  
Til KARMA descends, bright crystal goddess,  
Parting the duel, men break in weariness,

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

**Flanders  
November  
1917**

## All Quiet on the Western Front

Tw'as 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 stood up & lost their head,

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

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 streak of red that might have issued from Christ's breast.

**France**

**March**

**1918**

## German Offensive

Reading Nietzsche, muse-immured in Homer,

Herr Hitler huddles in his solitude,

"*An allright sort of chap, but a loner,*"

His comrades say, "*Tho with spirit imbued!*"

One fitful dream,

One lord over it all,

Released with banshee scream Satanus caught his soul!

Herr Goering flies above the ground

Where stormtrooper religions

With one desire to kill & wound

Like diabolique engines

Roll thro stunn'd trenches, hard boots pound

Cats among the pigeons,

With camauflage & special torpedo

A surge of strength wherever they may go.

Max Stemmler's unit must advance

He kiss'd Aimee goodbye,

"*Our sweet Constance best left in France,*"

Their babe began to cry -

As off he rush'd up to the front a tender love did die.

**Flanders**

**June**

**1918**

### 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! kreig ist kreig!"*  
    All for family feud  
To tragical fatigue the world has bled & spew'd.

Naught could curtail the disaster  
Of this national disgrace,  
Men from dank holes surrender,  
Happiness on each blithe face,  
Ev'rywhere, it seems, Der Kaiser  
Has lost his crucial race  
To win the war before the sure deadline...  
America shall stiffen 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 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**1918**

### Ottoman Winter

Empires are born as glass is born of sand  
Then turn to sand, scarlet sands Syrian  
Are roam'd by one born of another land,  
Laird of the head-dress'd horsemen of Hejan;  
Fair Lawrence leads  
King Feisal's cavalry  
Upon fine, strong-thigh'd steeds behind an enemy.

Thro olive grove & fields of grain  
Wind the streets of Megiddo  
Blows bloody fall as stormswept rain,  
White the hot-edged sabres glow  
As dim-spawn'd devils deal in pain  
Angels honours bestow,  
As thro the battleground of the furies  
Tread the Fates with JUSTICE & her juries...

As Visigoths view'd the Tiber,  
Life left Alexander,  
Fat Emperor of Helena,  
& died Montezuma...  
The Turks are toss'd from Syria with all their vile terror.

**Arabia**  
**October 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**1918**

### Death of Owen

The choice & master spirits of an age  
Spread piety, think deep & deal in gore,  
Or lay their thoughts saoft spoken on the page...  
A poet knocks upon a poet's door;  
    *"Goodbye Seigreid,*  
    *My service is required,*  
*But thanks to you my mead of poetry inspired."*

With vitesse vigour freshly found  
He surged back to the battle,  
Back to the brawl, back to the sound  
    Of teeth gnashing eternal,  
It seem'd for him the world had found  
    A finer crucible,  
For here amid the bloodshed & the rage  
One could sense the poesis of an age.

He paced along the slowboat boards,  
    Urging men as they fell,  
Damocles swords & twanging cords,  
    The Captain hears the knell  
The old lie sounded, *"To die in battle is to die well!"*

### Ois-Sambre Canal

November 4<sup>th</sup>

1918

### Flight of Peace

From these mountains shielding Algeria  
From Saharan heat, 'stho beswept in dream,  
    An Eagle flew beyond the Meseta,  
Where once was warring peace will reign supreme;  
    Dog rough cloud rolls  
    Inspiral from the Earth,  
Lest we forget those souls who sacrificed their birth.

The tumult & the shouting dies,  
The world three armies receives,  
The first with murder in the eyes  
When a wounded heart bereaves,  
    The next already on the rise  
    As good men become thieves  
    & pity the last! forced to bear the mark  
Of battle... some cripl'd, some mad, some dark.

O slender bird, majestic mein,  
    Men watch ye as ye fly  
Up over Spain & in thy train  
    Men made contented sigh,  
Watching thee dance amid the burning tapers of the sky.

### Europe

November 11<sup>th</sup>

1918

**Book XI**

**Hitler's War**

*L'antechrist trois bien tost anniehilez,  
Vingt & sept ans sang durera sa guerre.  
Les heretiques mortz, captifs, exilez.  
Sang corps humain eau rougi gresler terre.*

**Canto I**

*The birth of the Nazi Party & the rise of Mussolini*

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

**Gwalchmai Ap Meilyr**

## Armistice

The War is over, namore the killing,  
Slain the lusty blooms of many nations,  
Peace mops the sodden brow &, god willing,  
All creed & contree shall be relations;  
Order'd to yield  
The Wehrmacht leave the trench,  
Behind, a bitter field & the ecstatic French.

The Hohenzollern dynasty  
Emulates the ancyent Czar,  
Forfeits the Kaiser's monarchy  
To the fortunes lost in war,  
The Junkers of old Germany  
Congregate at Weimar,  
There delegate a democratic air,  
This treacherous republic to declare.

By a rain-swept roadside seated,  
Sobbing for Germany,  
His dejected & defeated  
Yet wunderbar contree,  
Hitler sees her sad, lowly ebb, seizes her destiny.

**Pasewalk**  
**November**  
**1918**

## Homecoming

At the Douamont fort, by sunset shades,  
A vet'ran lay a wreath to heal Verdun,  
Pray'd for the souls of poor 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.

Climbing slowly click-clack'd the train  
Up thro the Alpine passes,  
Attack'd by sheets of driving rain  
He wipes his misty glasses...  
"At last! my heart is home again!"  
Beer & pretty lasses  
Wait the jubilant return of heroes -  
One quarter of Frenchmen left to the crows.

Smiles breath in pleasant atmosphere,  
A gasp! "C'est Jean-Francois!"  
He halts the cheer, orders a beer,  
Drenches thirst in nectar,  
"Deux francs," "Deux francs! C'est ridicule pour une Stella  
Artois!"

**France**  
**1919**

## War & Peace

As th' army of th' American nation,  
Curer of Europe's feverish violence,  
Shrivels daily into isolation  
These two gargantuans of her defence  
Settle to eat  
Well-planned home-made dinner  
Fanning the shady heat on the cool veranda.

Mrs Patton pours the red wine  
As discussion they frankly share  
Wise words draped in a 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 spread out defending the infantry."*

Upon Mrs Eisenhower  
Serving the last liqueur  
They both shower, within the hour  
Had left for the lecture  
On 'Pursuit of Routing Armies,' by a young MacArthur.

**Camp Meade**  
1920

## Baby Boom

Charlie Sumner stagger'd down Accy Road,  
Havelock lock-in for a quick whiskey,  
Into his crude two-up, two-down, tiptoed -  
To pounce on his young 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'!"

While she's 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,  
Mind pregnant with the forthcoming meeting,  
Leaves sporting the yellow 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 heckler dares to make a noise,  
Soon dragg'd outside by rough-mouth'd bully-boys.

All hail the hero 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,  
Behold the new media sensation,  
This 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  
Eastward with Teutonic sword,  
The Slavic chaff shall serve our grace  
& Sanhedrim abhor'd  
Be cut out like the cancer that they are -  
Then build 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 champagne expanse..."  
The 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;  
    Its government  
    Soon in Fascist control  
While Black-shirts implement the soundings of his soul.

Flush Ciano left the rush of Rome  
    To meet his lord & idol,  
    & stroll'd about his famous home  
    Beneath a crumbling castle,  
Saw 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, dust & rye;  
    Swooping the Downs  
    Went our stylish flyer,  
Tasting the coastal towns & circling Chi's tall spire.

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

With willowflash the ball is 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

## Canto II

### 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,  
Waves the flag for global prosperity;  
Along Wall Street  
Ford motorcades whizz by,  
Yale & Princeton compete for stock price rising high...

Whose shares, in one black instant fell,  
Portent of a global doom,  
Pain'd faces yelling, "Sell! Sell! Sell!"  
Herald the end of the 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.

*"So all dem good times dey over,"*  
Slaves cry from shore to shore,  
How ruthless the great leveller,  
The rich ride with the poor,  
Vortex of curses sucking up currencies by the score.

**New York**  
**1929**

*The rise of Hitler from his election victory  
to the Olympic Games*

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,  
His stride dejected, cursing cruel fortune,  
Each crashing bank his labour's theft repeats,  
His money might as well be on the moon;  
Upon a 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 ideology,  
Promises to make life better  
& today a rally!  
He asks for the bill, "Danke, that was nice."  
"Sir, since you enter'd, it's doubl'd in price!"

Accuser shouts out that the Jews  
Murder'd th'economy,  
Visions & views! Pairs of worn shoes  
In their stumbling phrenzie  
Sped home to spread the growing gospel to the family.

**Berlin**  
**1930**

## Seizure of Power

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 to 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 army did 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 with the cheers,  
*"We shall build up a Reich that must endure ten hundred years!"*

**Berlin**  
**January**  
**1933**

### Anti-Semitism

In the heart of European Jewry,  
Fair city of the Rothschild high finance,  
Moses Grunfeld is dismiss'd from duty  
Former friends fill'd with fiery arrogance;  
His old friends jeer,  
"Go scum, go spread the news,  
Your kind vil not vurk 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,  
Ran thro th' abusive gauntlet,  
Trying to buy some bread & jam,  
Grief was all he could get...  
On the horizon crept a storm of tears,  
He went to tell his father of his fears.

He wander'd thro the cemet'ry  
Between the Jewish graves,  
On bended knee, in misery,  
Tears streaming down in waves,  
The tomb of his parents some 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  
Constricts the feudal home,  
Machine gun muzzles wheel & lacerate his form.

His wife & daughter wail & gnash,  
Sons' weep tears of stinging pain,  
All toss'd aside like filthy trash  
'Brethren' burning all the grain...  
By slaughter'd cow, with puss-fleck'd rash,  
They stagger'd thro Ukraine  
To this modern city of cold concrete  
Where hunch'd, hungry man-shadows stalk the street.

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

**Kiev**

**1934**

### Oaths of Loyalty

Mid heaven's vale of operatic hearts,  
Hemm'd in by behemoths huge, hewn from stone,  
These cool, majestic mountains of the Harz,  
There dwells 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,  
Changed to men of the Third Jager,  
Lords of La Haye Saint's courtyard,  
"I have made my men a soldier  
Enough to hold Asgard!"  
Appealing to Hitler's warrior creed  
Not a mere gesture but resolute deed.

Awe trembles as his soul's captain  
The Honour Guard inspects,  
Draws devotion from ev'ryone,  
The solemn oath extracts,  
An ear is pinch'd & in that instant Rommel's all accepts.

**Goslar**  
1934

### The New Rome

Clutching crude spears & shields of Rhino hide  
Wylde beards defend homelands desperately,  
Overhead planes glide cross the countryside  
Spitting caustic droplets mercilessly;  
A lethal mist  
Poisons this thirsty land,  
The will to still resist erodes to dusty sand.

As shadows of Mount Antoto  
Drew long over Ababba,  
Such host of angry bullets flow  
From the fearless emporer,  
Choking the hopeless word to go,  
All hail the conqueror!  
As 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 sat idly by...  
Men melting into mountains underneath a bomber sky.

**Abyssinia**  
**March**  
1935

### Hitler Youth

Max Stemmler roar'd along the autobahn,  
Grand tribute to his resurgent contree,  
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 the 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 coming battle!

They ran & swam & fight & share  
The life of the soldier,  
Where mountain air rang with fanfare,  
They plant the swastika  
On summits for der glorious Fatherland & Fuhrer.

### Harz Mountains

1935

### An Evening with the SS

Oer the Prussian fief of Westphalia  
Some gothic Schutzstaffel citadel rose,  
Where dwelt an order & its grand master,  
Inheriters of the Teutonic cause;  
Himmler plays lord  
Far from his chicken farm,  
Sharp'ning the Fowler's sword to conquer Lebensraum.

Young Gerhart Buscher, blonde, blue-eyed,  
Pure deem'd in racial ideal,  
To each long days lessons applied  
His cool, fanatical zeal,  
Til one fine night, heart thumping pride,  
He sat at Heinrich'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 duel away, graceful ballet,  
Til with an uncheckt slash  
Stormblast of pain stung Buscher's brain, cheek sports a  
gushing gash.

### Wewelseberg

1936

## Olympic Games

The cavalcade of the Olympia  
Settled the sacred flame upon Berlin,  
Above the *Hindenburg* trails *our* banner,  
Below even the Juden are let in;  
Majestic roar,  
O scale Wagnerian,  
Where modern man does war in *his* coliseum.

As Jesse Owen took the track  
All eyes focuss'd upon him,  
Racist hatred of his skin's black  
Quadrupl'd the vigour's vim,  
A leaping cheetah from the crack,  
The stadium grew dim,  
A whirl of pounding thighs & bursting lung...  
How proudly, then, '*Star Spangl'd Banner*' sung.

See the pale, disgusted Fuhrer,  
This white supremacist,  
Watch some runner, some dumb nigger  
Win medals his men miss'd,  
Glance at his wrist, hiss, "*I must leave...*" blood trickling from  
clench'd fist.

**Berlin**  
**1936**

## Canto III

*The rise of European tensions leading to the Second Great War*

The fanaticism of the lust for power which was... in former  
times inflamed by the belief one was in possession of the truth  
& which bore such beautiful names that one could  
thenceforward venture to be inhuman with a good conscience  
- to burn jews, heretics & good books & exterminate entire  
cultures

**Frederick Nietzsche**

## Fascist Knot

Hitler receiv'd his conquering idol,  
A dazzle of banners & manoeuvres!  
Impress'd his hero with a 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.

Mussolini met mind-mystique  
Oer 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,*  
*Stealing Vict'ry thro all the pomp of war."*

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

**Berlin**  
**November**  
**1937**

## Jewish Wedding

Ribbon'd carriage trundl'd thro swirling 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 beloved daughter.

The rabbi's household receives them,  
To feast the celebration,  
Moses toasts, *"Shalom Alachem!"*  
Franz kept faithful tradition  
& stamp'd on glasses, cried, *"Lechaim!"*  
To the Hebrew nation...  
When into this sacred ceremony  
Burst a brash, brawling brown-shirted bully,

Whose filthy mouth spew'd forth abuse,  
Breath-stench of bottl'd beer,  
*"You heard the news, you filthy Jews*  
*No longer velcome here!"*  
Platters scatter'd, romance shatter'd, clatter'd by naked fear.

**Frankfurt**  
**1936**

## Pierre & Veronique

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

Pierre carress'd sweet Veronique  
Whisper'd "*Je t'adore ma chere!*"  
His hands stroking her slender cheek,  
Hers sliding thro' his soft hair,  
They watch'd the young communists speak,  
Jacquerie fill'd the square  
Sporting pitchforks & the sickle banner...  
"Vite!" gasps Pierre, "*We're late for lit'rature!*"

They rush'd into the lecture hall,  
Shush'd & took their places,  
The floral roll of Verlaine's soul  
Casting vernal graces,  
So few students heard his song haunting the classes spaces.

Orleans  
1937

## The Question of Versaille

Churchill lurch'd from his back-bench wilderness,  
Round his thick neck dangl'd the Dardanelles,  
& projects deep resonance to impress  
Upon parliament these 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  
& let us rouse our own contree  
Raising aulden vigour,  
Germany is re-arming at a pace,  
We must build air fleets & keep in the race!"*

The House laugh their indignant laugh,  
Chamberlain sat him down,  
A telegraph from the Berghof  
Pull'd 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 stept from the train  
He was thrust into a passionate sea,  
The religious fervour numbing his brain,  
His heart leaping up with the pageantry;  
The 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,  
The mighty fleet gracing the air  
& glorious armour,  
Past the Kongressbau's pulsing hypnotic  
To the Zepp'linfeld writhing erotic...

Where oratory masterful  
Draws the crowds 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 drew closer  
About the Kehlsteinhaus wild 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 place agreed  
Midst a piny, mountain wood,  
"The Sudetenland must be freed  
From spillage of German blood,  
It must be now if I muts lead  
In full stride of manhood,  
For never! never! never! shall I yield  
E'en if the 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 seccession?" "Si!"* such was that easy victory.

## Berghof

Septmeber 15th  
1938

## Conquest of Czechoslovakia

The famous Ides of March, der Fuhrer acts,  
Intentions imperial are reveal'd,  
Tastebuds whetted for further Tscheschienne trachts  
He summons Hascha to the battlefield;

*"Your poor contree  
Stands friendless & alone,  
You MUST sign this decree or 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,  
& faints! but is reviv'd again  
By Morrel's morphine shot...  
Thus half adream in the first flush of day  
One 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 tis 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 stream of lies  
The dream of this evil regime seems near?  
*"With bright hindsight  
Twas 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,  
The German's drawl, *"The Poles shall fall  
Beneath our battering!"*  
*"You crave Danzig?" "No, we crave war!"... Ciano's awakening.*

**Berlin  
May  
1939**

## Book XII

### The Second Great War

#### 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 Stalin 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!"  
    Said 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,  
    & kiss'd 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**

*Grand Paud, grand mal pour Gaulois receura,  
    Vaine terreur au maritin Lyon:  
    Peuple infiny par la mer passera,  
    Sans eschapper vn quart d'vn million:*

## Canto I

*The German conquest of Poland & the Allied response*

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**

## & Wars Begin

Dawn's grey warning creeps cross the Baltic Sea,  
A silhouette slow forming on the line,  
Rough broadsides disturbing serenity  
Belch'd from the 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,  
As they watch'd 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 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 slither'd to Hitler's side,

Transferring the ultimatum  
With hands that dug the hole,  
Great men struck dumb, "Den var hast come!"  
The English serve the ball,  
Goering whispers, "If we lose dis var den god help us all!"

**Berlin**  
**September 3rd**  
**1939**

## A New War

The Sumner clan gather'd round a wireless,  
Rose fiddl'd nervous with 'er wedding ring,  
Charlie shush'd the kids, "This is serious!"  
The crackling voice of their stammering king  
Grave parley spoke,  
A strange 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.

Cue ball crack sank the 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**

### Evacuees

Sue caught the child-pack'd coach out of Poplar  
Such sadness wrought, her tear-trachts filling up,  
Then the high pitch' d crowds at Victoria  
Heaving like when the Arsenal won the cup;  
She joined the rest,  
Sobbing sweet maternals,  
Prised from the suckling breast both her little angels.

Onto a squealing train they hop,  
Press noses gin the windows,  
Bursting their lungs at every stop  
Giggling as the whistle blows,  
Gulping down sandwiches & pop,  
At Buxton's fun repose  
They saw a real fresian for the first time,  
"Moo-moo?" Mavis cuts short her nurs'ry rhyme.

Tall tower lights up their faces,  
Sea-gulls sqawk thro the air,  
Small suitcases claimed by strangers,  
"We'll take the young lass there,"  
"NO!" shouts Kenny, "My mummy sez us two come as a pair!"

**Blackpool**  
**September 5th**  
**1939**

### The Agony of Poland

As a monstrous, mechanized juggernaut  
Pours in an endless torrent from the West,  
Seizing maladroit forces by the throat  
The blitzkreig theorum pass'd its first test;  
Poor Warsaw prays,  
Surrounded by the foe -  
As yet her anthem plays upon the radio.

Hitler steer'd his half-track rumble  
Thro the war-torn countryside,  
Brandishing a single pistol,  
& a whip of hard oxhide,  
Favourite aide-de-camp, Rommel,  
Made studies by his side -  
& come across a first hospital train,  
Refusing to see his soldiers in pain

They drove on thro the ghostly fog,  
Howls envelop 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 Amorica,  
Dodging periscopic glare,  
"We'll hang out our washing on the  
Siegfried line!" lightens the air,  
Human paraphernalia  
Landed at Saint Nazaire -  
Stretching cross the basin of a nation  
Strung those long lines of communication.

Tommy Sumner fingers the dust  
Coating the farmhouse grey,  
Bland ketchup must, bayonet rust,  
Hand grenade & Nestle  
Spoke volumes & invoke the occupants of yesterday.

**France**  
**September 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**1939**

### **Vae Victis**

Festival terms charming to extasi  
The breathless followers of his visions  
Hitler's voice soar'd up with the victory,  
"The Almighty Lord has blest our weapons,  
Surrender sung  
None shall suffer namore!"  
Poland our very young victims of total war.

Dark triumph rises as proceeds  
This modern-age conqueror,  
Ruling, he says, subhuman breeds  
Whose anthem plays no longer,  
"In these lands we shall plant the seeds  
Of the German future,  
But first we must defeat our Western foes!"  
He order'd an attack before the snows.

Toward the front the Russians race,  
Usurp the spoils of war,  
Two empires face in that same place  
Where they had met before...  
Today hands shaking warily like when you meet your whore.

**Brest Litovsk**  
**September 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**1939**

### Graf Spree

Albatross scythes thro the furrowing sea,  
Nine helpless British merchantmen her pray,  
Sinking each ship with a broadside fury,  
The Altmark streams the survivors away;  
In full steam haste  
The English warships sped,'  
Amidst the tackless waste hunter becomes hunted.

Three fast cruisers catch up with her  
Off the prize-rich river plate,  
Great krupps cripple the Exeter  
But to duel at this rate  
Could see the others destroy her  
She flees, but is too late,  
A shell from the Ajax blows the bridge sky high,  
Panic! mayhem bursts, "Shcnell! to Uruguay!"

She sails form the harbour's haven,  
The English lie in wait,  
An explosion, the scuttle done  
Herr Lansdorff shares her fate,  
In time honour'd tradition, for a captains shame is great

### Montevideo

17th Dec  
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!  
Th'ever nervous Allies content to man the forts.

Twisted steps are swiftly taken,  
Thro Nazi racial doctrine  
Those Poles told they are now German  
When their Ahnenpass stamp'd clean,  
Resisting pacification  
Leads to but one mean scene -  
Rotting husbands rocking at the gallows  
Bandsmen drowning the wail 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 judge of history.

Europe  
January  
1940

## Canto II

*The German attack on France & the evacuation at Dunkerque*  
*Defeat of France –*

To delight in conquest is to delight in slaughter

Lao-Tse

## Winter War

Christmas comes & goes without a victor  
The warring nations suffer a strange 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,  
Exhaustion etching those faces  
Working both night & day...  
Thro desp'rate days sisu held grimly on,  
But in the end, the brave end, war's are won.

Yes war! the ancyeat arbiter  
Of disputing nations,  
When the victor may cast censure,  
Politic extensions,  
For battlefield diplomacy drowns converse with it's guns.

**Helsinki**  
**February**  
**1940**

## Teutonica

Germany faces the decadent West,  
Bouyant as the fresh coming of the Spring,  
When leafy woods are at their loveliest,  
When bowers vibrant in their blossoming,  
When golden streams  
Sol sends set on the scene,  
Rose bright, glorious beams glinting off each machine.

Hitler boards the Amerika,  
Bright stars watch them trundle West,  
Stirring strains of his dear Wagner  
Lull him to a good hours rest,  
Time whirrs by... train reaches bunker,  
His bomb-proof Felsenest...  
"O God of Battles steel my soldiers hearts!"  
Der Fuhrer prays before his bloodshed starts.

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**

## Invasion

Aft shouts of war the shafts begin to fly,  
Most terrible of all the former 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.

The prime rules of modern warfare  
Are to possess full surprise  
& wholly dominate the air -  
Thro Ardennes a phalanx flies,  
Cheval-de-frise soon batter'd bare  
Beneath the Stuka skies,  
In three lethal lines of well-primed panzer  
As tho they faced the French off Trafalgar.

King Leopold laments the end  
Of his neutrality,  
Forced to defend, this German 'friend'  
Invading his contree...  
We learn from history we learn nothing from history.

**Brussels**  
**May 10th**  
**1940**

### Lightning War

Somewhere midst the forested Sedan gap  
Rommels panzers are re-fuelling for free,  
From some deserted garage steals a map  
To guide them thro the campaign to the sea;  
    The tanks are full  
    No time to hesitate,  
Breakneck into battle, fortune shuns those who wait.

As pontoons creak beneath the tracks  
    They blitzkreig all guns blazing,  
The French buckle neath the attacks  
    With morale e'er descebnding  
    At last the Gallic backbone cracks  
    Sedan's surrendering -  
Rommel photographs the ghostly fortress  
Where scenes of slaughter scream from each black cross.

Long rag & tag daggletail road  
    He thrust his lethal lance,  
The air explodes, carts & their loads  
    Crush'd by a swift advance,  
Once more Prussian milit'rism pierced gallic arrogance.

**France**  
**May 14th**

### 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,  
    There 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,  
    & took Nelsonian stance,  
Lookt out 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 defence lines 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  
Checkt chaos with their guns,  
"Form a queue you blighters, I'll shoot each swine that runs!"

The Sharks-Head with victory rolls,  
Her jubilant pilot gloats  
At two rickety, wooden moles,  
The pathetic little boats,  
These cold, exhausted, starving souls  
Grab anything that floats...  
"How long until Der Fuhrer vil 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!" shouts 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;  
Ful fierce they fought  
Like rigid rocks of Rome,  
For ev'ry second bought sends a son safely home.

After many an adventure  
Two poilus find safety's grace,  
Howling bagpipes call to muster  
The dregs of the English race,  
Out of many a wine cellar  
Fell 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 promist 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 the many empower.

The floating corpse of poor LeGrand  
Wash'd up close by Calais  
Above, huge band of gen'ral's stand,  
    Bedeckt in sylvan grey,  
Now view *those* cliffs... over the waves an eagle surfs the spray.

**France**  
**June 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**1940**

## Sorry Soldiery

Aspens shiver in the soft summer breeze  
Shade for this herd of riderless horses  
    Watching war's rlingering efugees  
    Evicted by pitiless world forces  
    They are fair game  
    To Italy's pilots  
Shooting hot spurts of flame, to live is to draw lots

With Hitler nigh victorious  
This bald, martial parasite  
Mussolini, vainglorious,  
Sends Alpini off to fight  
Mid snow-caps & ice crevices  
Far from the legion's might  
Millenia has diluted the gene  
That once won Europe for its own demesne!

Jean-Francois joined the local troop  
Of common folk in arms  
A hardy group of youth & stoop,  
Of farmers & gendarmes,  
Halting great Mussolini like the pancreas of Brahms

**Briancon**  
**June 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**1940**

### Canto III

*The surrender of France & the Battle in the skies above Britain*

### 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.

An ageing Petain chair'd the meet,  
His cabinet divided...

"The time come to accede defeat,  
To fight on is misguided!"

"Non! to Afric we must retreat,  
Fight like corner'd tigers!"

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

"Mais! prison camps will cloak the countryside!"

"What of our comrades, les Angliches?"

"They offer union..."

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

"Tis naught but corpse fusion,"

Said Petain, "Soon she shall have her neck rung like a chicken."

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

**Churchill**

**Bordeaux**

**June 17th**

**1940**

## Conqueror!

Clear as crystal in his reminiscence  
The world-historical adventurer  
Tours poppy fields, once his youthful vibrance  
Expended here as a despatch runner;  
"How good & true  
All our sacrifice seems!"  
He sighs while driven to the city of his dreams.

Embedded in his consciousness  
Were the palaces & rues,  
The operatic spaciousness  
Artistic essence imbues  
With electric vivaciousness,  
As tho she were a muse...  
Past Tower & Arc to the Invalides,  
Cameras following where e'er he leads.

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;  
The giant map  
Shews 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 for the Reich their fields are till'd,  
But first remember this,  
That only one pre-requisite is there,  
We must control the all-important air."*

Rewards for twelve favourite sons,  
The rank of Field-Marshal,  
Gifting batons & divisions -  
Goering's lust not yet full,  
His baton *must* be kingsize with ivory enamel.

**Berlin**  
**July 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**1940**

## 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;  
The 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 dawn's mistlorn twilight mystery  
A Bentley slink'd thro Royal Tunbridge Wells,  
To crunch up the gravel of Calverly  
The villa echoes to the butler's bells;  
Behold Dowding!  
Man at the Air Force helm,  
Appointed 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!"  
As the cathode BLIP grew louder  
Red bulbs scarlet the 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  
The danger 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!"  
Squeal'd Ginger 'cross to Squadron Leader, Bligh,  
At once! from speakerage would 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 prickt  
By Churchill's Tyrtaean touch.  
"You know, Nigel, we shan't be lick'd!"  
& both their spirits such  
That they were vehement for victory  
As tho they waited Spain at 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  
Where Phaeton's crashing chariot did scorch  
A splash of stars awash with Hera's spray  
Glittering in the trail of Luna's torch;  
Where Mondenschein  
Silters the cloudy seas,  
Where steel wing aquiline floats on propeller breeze.

Xaver basks in chic revelrie  
Infesting the late night bars,  
Vesta's disturb'd tranquility  
As sounds the siren of Mars,  
Flak throws up bright hostility  
Where searchlights sweep the stars...  
"Was a disgraceful form of var to vage!"  
Sleep-robb'd storm round the shelters in a rage.

He crawl'd outside to count the cost,  
Pickt up a dropt pamphlet,  
"The war is lost while you are boss'd  
By Hitler's cabinet!"  
"Now zey 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...  
& here they come again, the cross & grey!  
Twelve hundred planes  
In eight square miles of sky,  
Bringing the burning rains to churn the wide 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,  
As Andersson's defence  
Lies mangl'd in a corrugated heap,  
By the mess some charr'd infant seems 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 & hope for lonely homes.

**Kings Cross**  
**September**  
**1940**

### **Battle of Britain**

Paladin Goering hurls his armada  
Luring allied airmen to their demise,  
Another Phlegra, another Zama  
Unfolds upon blue meadows of the skies;  
*"Now is the time!"*  
Ringed fingers fist a THWACK!  
From Cherbourg to Trondheim the Luftflotten attack.

Nigh on ev'ry plane was scrambl'd  
As the bloody crux was fed,  
In battle royale entangl'd  
Thro the smoky swirl-skies spread  
& the fate of Britain dangl'd  
On such a slender thread  
That unless the loss of pilots was staunch'd  
Tomorrow would see the invasion launch'd.

Dantean surge of sulphurix  
Swept thro the streets aflame,  
Firedrake antics like sixty-six,  
But this time Lady Dame  
Stood hearty & defiant as wave after wan wave came.

**London**  
**September 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**1940**

**BOOK XIII**

**Barbarossa**

**Canto I**

*The defence of Britain & her war with Italy over North Africa*

*Bestes farouches de faim fleuves tranner;  
Plus part du champ encontre Hister sera,  
En cage de fer le grand fera treisner,  
Quand rien enfant de Germain obseruera.*

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**

## Destiny of War

Refraining from his guttural bombast  
Hitler convers'd calmly over luncheon,  
"The season for a sea=invasion pass'd,  
Then we must carry on bombing London..."  
The 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  
But with superior fire,  
Whose Raj precursors our Russia  
& a global empire  
Shall be destroy'd when all the fighting ends,  
When all I wanted was to be their friends."

"Russia?" said Hess in stark surprise,  
"Why yes, it has to be!"  
His starry eyes gazed to the skies,  
"Our one true enemy,  
Whose people must be swiftly slain or chain'd in slavery."

**Berlin**  
**October**  
**1940**

## Strange Meeting

Molotov admired the rich Reich heartland,  
Conducting his formal tours d'horizon,  
By Ribbentrop shook firmly by a hand  
Deftly concealing the escalation,  
Plush was the lay  
Of the painter's study,  
The helper sniff'd to say, '*Welcome to Victory!*'

As the Russian faced Der Fuhrer,  
He was never overawed,  
Outspeaking the master speaker,  
Slavic tongue the sharper sword,  
*"Tell me of this New World Order,  
What of your plans abroad,  
Stalin is concern'd while you court Finland...  
What will come of the duel with England?"*

Sirens fumigate the building,  
Grey shelter tense with fear,  
Explosions ring, awful thudding  
Comes falling ever near,  
*"De var is von!" "Then whose are those & why are we in here?"*

**Berlin**  
**November 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**1940**

## Desert War

The Generalissimo took supper,  
Sett'l'd in his leather with Chianti,  
Imagined he sat with Calphurnia  
'Fore pouring over maps & strategy;  
His brilliance  
Unecho'd in the field,  
Athenian defence offers a 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 -  
Push Italy's panic-stricken warbands.  
From Bardia & dune-sunk lunar sands

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**

## A Daring Escape

*"I must away into the big wide world!"*  
Sang survivors of the down'd Luftwaffe,  
Beyond the wire the last soil layers curl'd  
Calmly rose Oberleutnant Von Werra;  
As escapers  
Bids brave auf weidershein,  
He fends for fresh capers to steal himself a plane.

Brassy bold at the police station,  
*"My name is Captain Van Lott,*  
*I've crash landed my Wellington,*  
*Another plane must be got..."*  
To an airbase promptly driven  
But suspicions grew hot,  
*"I'll check your credentials with Aberdeen,*  
*There's a war on you know..."* our man unseen

Slips thro the toilet window slick,  
Sprints to a Hurricane,  
The mechanic starts th'engines tick,  
He leapt into the plane,  
*"Get out!"* the Duty Officer's pistol aim'd at his brain.

**RAF Hucknall**  
**December 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**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 vil take good care of my beloved?"  
"I'm sure they vil,  
All prospects beckons fine,  
Now if you could just fill these forms in & then sign..."*

Eleanor enter'd the abbey  
Of Nazi racial doctrine,  
Hippocratic morality  
Sacrificed to cleanse the gene,  
Guaranteeing supremacy,  
Small matter of hygiene,  
Feeble-minded deem'd unworthy to live  
By eugenists no doctor could forgive.

They took her for a contree ride  
With her fellow patients,  
Cold monoxide was pump'd inside  
They closed the precious vents,  
She died crying, "Momma!" her fingers scratching, scraping  
dents.

**Hessen  
Christmas Day  
1940**

### A Second Daring Escape

Train scythes thro Canada's Arctic semblance,  
Inside captured Germans clamour to 'go,'  
Persistence pays, Von Werra sees his chance,  
Knocks out cold bars, dives head first into snow;  
Such moments come  
For those who dare be bold...  
The sweet breath of freedom turn'd misty in the cold.

He treks thro freezing wilderness,  
Warm'd by determination,  
Twinkling lights his endeavours bless  
From the bank Amerikan,  
The long Saint Lawrence thaws her dress,  
Tween ice black channels run...  
He sole a rowing boat without an oar  
& set it drifting for a safer shore.

Footfall! to some old folk he drew,  
*"Is this Amerika?"*  
*"Why yes, but who the hell are you?"*  
*"I am an officer  
Of the German Air Force... I am... I was a prisoner!"*

**Ogdensburg  
January 24<sup>th</sup>  
1941**

### Desert Fox

As Rommel took first steps on Afric sand,  
All about servants of the fiasco  
Load ships, evacuation nigh at hand,  
Arms strewn as if by Trasimene's flow;  
He cock'd his cap  
& crack'd a riding whip,  
"Somevon get me a map, I vant to take a trip."

His plane flew lofty on the tour  
Of hot, simmering Syrte,  
Sang the nomadic troubadour,  
"What beauty & how ghastly!"  
Italians flee 'long the shore  
Yon mud-baked Benghazi,  
"We shall form a fresh defence line down there!"  
With that they whipt 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**

### Allies

Great Britain spends the last of her dollars,  
Threadneedle's twinkling bullion bled dry,  
If ever she should be victorious  
She must have means to barter her supply;  
What vision rest  
In Rooseveltdt's rare brain  
*"Tis in our best int'rests old England to sustain."*

The bold policy of lend-lease,  
Pleasant child of the New Deal,  
Reflecting climes of prosp'rous peace,  
Aircraft, shermans, ships & steel,  
Minerals, cereals & fleece  
Serve up much needed meal,  
Providing Britain's back bone with its meat  
The cost waived til she's til back upon her feet.

For without warfare's first sinew  
The bid for triumph fails,  
Magnate & Jew stitch wealth into  
Britain's heroic sails,  
Tis not the longest sword but deepest purse that e'er prevails.

**USA**  
**February**  
**1941**

## Canto II

### Balkan Conquest

As when she join'd the Kaiser's sorry fight  
Bulgaria bedazzl'd by Berlin,  
Selling her soul to please the Tripartite,  
*This* time a greater Germany must win;  
When midst the pack  
Howl with the wolves ye must,  
For fear of the attack worse than the bite I trust.

War shall expand his theatre,  
Ira furor brevis est,  
Russia's borders yield the panzer,  
Infantry peel'd from the West,  
Goering prepares his Luftwaffe  
& restless Budapest  
Hugs Hitler's Janissarian legions  
With men & arms to seize the calm Balkans.

Belgrade receives the Stuka lay,  
The reeling Serbs take flight,  
Melting away, some other day  
Continue shall the fight...  
Tito spat at the swastika then stole into the night.

**Yugoslavia**  
**March**  
**1941**

*Rommel's arrival in Africa & the  
German conquest of the Balkans*

All is ruin'd, for fire & the headlong God of War  
Speeding in a Syrian chariot shall bring you low.  
Many a tower shall he destroy, not yours alone,  
While over the roof-tops black blood runs streaming  
In prophecy of woe that needs must come

**Aristonice**

### **Bligh's Capture**

There is a heat at the heart of battle  
Which only the heroical can bare,  
Molder's aim perform'd a brutish rattle,  
Poor Ginger smithereening thro the air;  
A tortured cry  
Peal'd at that pilot's end,  
For Squadron-Leader Bligh had lost his bestest friend.

He fell upon the major's tail,  
A bleak red mist descending,  
Unleash'd a lethal eight gun hail  
The seconds ending,  
Yet rages are condemned to fail  
'Gin such skilful wending...  
For being blind in pursuit of vengeance  
He had flown almost to the shores of France.

Where sharp-eyed coastal battery  
Blasted both wings from Bligh,  
How readily the chute thwacks free,  
Drifts slowly thro the sky,  
Toward those waiting muzzles in the midst of rip'ning Rye.

**France**  
**April**  
**1941**

### **Family Tradition**

Bruce Slater struggled with the tractor key,  
His right arm nigh useless without a hand  
Whose bones lie pick'd clean at Gallipoli,  
Buried in Anzac Cove's more crimson sand;  
Then came on his  
Son Shane with feisty spring,  
"Pop, back down in Alice, the army's recruiting!"

Silent time overcame the scene,  
Broken roughly by Bruce spit,  
Altho the moment long foreseen  
Heart-strings may still twinge a fit  
& tho he'd barely known nineteen,  
"Go son, go do your bit!"  
Shane whoop'd with joy as he hugg'd his father,  
That night they tuck'd in the Bush together...

The fire crackles as the stars  
Sprinkle light thro the murk,  
They talk of wars, Bruce shows the scars  
Inflicted by the Turk...  
"Son, soldiery is one days fighting for five weeks of work."

**Northern Territory**  
**April**  
**1941**

## Rudolf Hess

Dreamer walk'd thro England's tapestried halls,  
Two famous Nordic nations to unite,  
On waking this burning impulse controls,  
Taking a Messerschmitt in solo flight  
Over the sea  
To the shores of Scotland,  
Bales out, floats prettily over immense highland.

To be captured by some hayfork,  
Prodded to the police station,  
*"You must allow me, please, to talk  
With the Duke of Hamilton..."*  
Churchill puff'd out his cigar smoke,  
*"This bizarre peace mission  
May never be permitted to prevail,  
Fob him off & leave him to rot in jail."*

As the bombshell fell on Hitler  
That the Reich Number Two  
Held prisoner, he squeal'd anger,  
*"His mind must be cuckoo..."*  
*I'm surrounded by idiots!"* the air turn'd black & blue.

**The Berghof**  
**May 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**1941**

## Ethiopia

A rugged patriot with fuzzy hair  
Stood waiting for his moment to defy  
Those mustard gas traces lacing the air,  
So raised up his rifle, let loose a cry;  
Thro' Halle's kingdom  
Echoes ten thousand fold  
Hoisted hearts for freedom, to break Benito's hold

Colonel Wingate answers the call,  
Crackling with warrior zen,  
Beside the Blue Nile's canyon'd roll  
Marches his gallant Queensmen,  
Behind whose step the tribesmen fall  
From secret mountain den -  
Together, with guerrilla strategy,  
To defeat an outwitted enemy.

All over Abyssinia  
Each gen'ralissimo  
Suits surrender, on white charger  
Wingate & triumph's glow  
Trot tween the eucalyptus in the shade of Antoto.

**Addis Ababba**  
**May**  
**1941**

### **Bismark**

At last the target ventures out to sea,  
Sister ship of the Graf Spree & Tirpitz,  
Queen of that unsinkable trinity,  
Enough to give any sailor the shits;  
She makes contact,  
Cutting her teeth in blood  
Furiously attack'd sunk is the shell-shockd Hood.

The loss of a capitol ship  
Strikes the English to the core,  
In response her engines let rip  
As a hundered men of war  
Converge upon the last known blip -  
She's sighted to the fore,  
The Home Fleet sends shells hurtling thro the air  
Their target wisely turns for St Nazaire

But a lucky hull-breach slows her,  
Bombarded from afar,  
The Dorsetshire administers,  
The toothy coup-de-gras,  
Her sailors leap into the waves as they swallow her star.

### **Atlantic Ocean**

**May 28th**  
**1941**

### **Death of Sue Johnstone**

London, diamond of civilisation,  
Now the hive of hornet activity,  
Sue Johnstone drifts to London Bridge station,  
Jumps on a train escaping to the sea'  
O balmy air,  
A lovely summer's day,  
The wind ruffles her hair, so good to get away.

Thro East Croydon & Three Bridges,  
Where she wipes the window clean,  
Rusted cars forming field hedges  
Signposts nowhere to be seen,  
At Brighton she hops on a bus  
Winding to Rottingdean  
To stretch upon the sunny pebb'l'd sand  
Alas! here all civilians are bann'd

She left forever English seas,  
How soon would death arrive -  
On flame-lapp'd knees, thro smoke-choked wheeze,  
*"At least my kids survive!"*  
Clutching their little teddy-bears, so slowly burnt alive.

### **Poplar**

**June**  
**1941**

## The Agony of France

The French welcome the Nazi supermen,  
Preferring peace to a resistant pain,  
Tho rare alters midst the 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 contree & what's worse  
Les cochons fou have raped Annette!  
Somebody has to be the first  
To challenge that 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  
Tween the covers, like a glove her  
Man thrust his must down there  
& tho her panting sweet still did she long for her Pierre.

**Orleans  
June  
1941**

## Orphans

Mister sleep misses Kenny & Mavis  
Kept awake by the rumbling punishment  
Shaking the distant cottonopolis,  
A dull, red glow its full blitz testament;  
While down the stairs  
This letter is discuss'd  
To share it with their cares or censure it in trust.

They wentout as a family  
To spend the odd, spare shilling,  
The ribb'd sands of the Irish Sea  
Bares green pilots for drilling,  
Quarter'd in ev'ry B&B.  
Oer the pack'd proms milling  
Young Mavis points out an approaching sight -  
Two fighters lock'd in sense-spilling dogfight!

For half-an-hour they fought anon,  
& none were barely better  
The duel done, all petrol gone  
Engines fail & splutter  
Both crash into a crush'd station, folk die altogether.

**Blackpool North  
July  
1941**

## Canto III

*The German invasion of Russia*

### A Letter Home

For six long months Lina's mind was awhirl,  
Still grievant for the loss of her daughter,  
"She always seem'd a fit & healthy girl,  
Then why would she die of pneumonia?"  
"My darling wife,  
We must give up her ghost,"  
His toast receiv'd the knife while Friedrich fetch'd the post.

"Papa, this is Khan's handwriting,"  
Max snatch'd it out of his hand,  
Such tensions serv'd the opening,  
Those too few contents soon scann'd,  
"All is well! But he is missing,  
Mama, the food's so bland...  
Ev'rywhere the army victorious...  
He's sure he vil be home before Christmas!"

"I'm the proudest I've ever been,  
My boy he ist so brave!"  
Xaver's eyes sheen film'd with dark green,  
Affection he did crave,  
So rush'd to join the U-boat arm, for action & the wave.

**Berlin**  
**June**  
**1941**

The most dangerous moment comes with victory

**Napoleon**

## Fog of War

Stalin toss'd the despatch to the fire,  
"Hitler prepares to invade, cries London,  
She just wants to plunge us into her mire!"  
Molotov read 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 old songs 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 pass'd a freight train  
Honouring the treaty,  
Loaded with grain from the Ukraine,  
Unaware completely  
Watching it trundle by them a stormtrooper company!

**Poland**  
**June 21st**  
**1941**

## War in the East

Gunflash invigorates the Eastern dawn  
Marking the onset of Barbarossa,  
One thousand miles of battle-lines are drawn,  
Scale dwarfing the grandstanding of Wagner;  
Molotov hears  
The hammer at his door,  
Such arrogance appears... the Reich embassadour.

*"... acts of Russian terrorism  
Shall be forced to pay the cost,  
Our rapport with communism  
Sadly now forever lost,  
Due to Jewish Bolshevism  
The Niemen have we cross'd..."*  
A formal declaration form'd the serve  
*"So it is war... a war we don't deserve!"*

Molotov's most precious regret,  
His honeymoon over  
*"Our armies set to meet your threat!"*  
*"We shall see, Heil Hitler!"*  
Quick-clicking heel spins round, struts out, warfare changed  
forever.

**Moscow**  
**June 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1941**

### Barbarossa

The scenery sheds a sepia sheen  
'Cross these battles of annihilation,  
The greatest march the world has ever seen  
Thrust three-prong'd, headlong thro Stalin's nation;  
Each kesselschact  
Tannenburg remembers,  
Desperate pockets packt with hordes of prisoners.

Like a destructive Tsunami  
Upon the shores of Asia  
The spearheads roll relentlessly,  
Spread thro Pomenaria  
& the Ukraine to the Black Sea  
As the poor defender  
Builds raw bastions from friable glass,  
Crush'd effortlessly as the Panzers pass.

The granges growing less & less,  
All round the brown steppes band,  
This vast, endless, vapid, friendless,  
Honey-rich feindesland  
Of a colossus empire in the palm of Hitler's hand.

### Byelorussia

July  
1941

### Close Run Thing

Stalag luft twelve bustl'd with goons & drones,  
*'How terribly boring this is,'* thought Bligh,  
Saunt'ring across to Flight-Leftenant Jones,  
Who thought, *"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 Black Forest three weeks spent  
They climb'd in the hay 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,  
Soon bundl'd out, fell'd with a clout  
They stood up to such sight  
Almost touching the slopes of many a Helvetian height.

### Hoch Finstermunz

August  
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 idealistic war;  
Those Jews penn'd in  
Now sad, Schutzstaffel slaves,  
*"Follow me you vermin, we go to dig your graves!"*

Nazi bestiality pours  
Over conquer'd territ'ry,  
Sanguinarius Quaesitors,  
Einsatzgruppen, kill for glee,  
Clipboards notch numbers for the cause  
So meticulously,  
Impressing Himmler with the murder's pace,  
*"I shall observe a mass shooting take place."*

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

**Byeloruss**  
**August 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**1941**

## Imperial Japan

Sitting midst the shuku-kei of Basho,  
Nibbling upon delectable sushi,  
Observing an engrossing game of Go,  
Cherubs topping up their cups of Saki,  
Chrysanthemums  
Scenting Septembral air,  
Gorgeous rainbow pom-poms in riot ev'rywhere.

In their casual Wafuku  
War seems very far away,  
Geisha passes round rich tofu,  
"What of Britain?" she did say,  
"Her empire sickly thro & thro,  
They won't survive the fray..."  
"True Kido-San," said Basho, "But you see  
America our one true enemy..."

Such cruel embargo set in place,  
Forbidden to buy oil  
We feel disgrace, arrogant race  
Setting my blood aboil!  
Friends! we must win an empire these machinations to foil."

**Kanazawa**  
**September**  
**1941**

## Prisoner of War

Cradle of Slavic Christianity  
Blown up Sergei Stiltski's own brethren  
Trudging slowly thro a deprest city,  
Close to the road resounds an explosion;  
Marching to war  
Yon Kiev's anxious hive  
Toward the front's dull roar, one rifle between five.

Despite the wors'ning misery  
That thro the regiment spread  
They kept alive thro poetry  
& the sawdust in their bread,  
A rare few cling to sanity  
With bellies barely fed  
Six hundred thousand survive the battle,  
Fenced off in roofless fields like dumb cattle.

"Food! Food!" Sergei sprang to action  
Sprinted to the barb'd wire  
Heaving legion of starving men,  
Moaning hunger's desire,  
Scrapping for scraps... he caught a bap, tho stale wolf-gorged  
entire.

**Ukraine**  
**September**  
**1941**

## Death Squad

Buscher rode to the gorge at Babi-Yar,  
Assistant of the 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 greivous pain  
Short-time danced upon the air,  
Nearby Dosia waits in train,  
Voluptuous & fair...  
Buscher trots slowly all along her line,  
Dismisses the rest, "Zis von vil be mine...

Send her to my house in Bremen!"  
Beady eyes undrest her...  
Young Konstantin boil'd up within,  
Sprinted home to mother,  
With tear-streak'd eyes there splurted 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 he calmly 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."

Mucky rasputizian seas,  
Thick, brown, froze ev'ry axle,  
The Wehrmacht sink up to it's knees,  
Jackboots suckt from the ankle,  
The throttle roar wastes to a breeze,  
What foundering battle?  
As Ollie rifles thro the Russian dead  
A sleeper stands & stabs him in the 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 friend-ship touches soul,  
Then glanced up to the heavens as the first snowflake did fall.

**Dorogobuzh**  
**October 7th**  
**1941**

## BOOK XIV

### RAGNAROK

*Les dieux feront aux humains apparence,  
Ce qu'il seront auteurs de grand conflict:  
Avant ciel veu serein espee & lance  
Que vers main gauche sera plus grand affiect.*

## Canto 1

### *The arrival of Balrog*

I suddenly saw that directly to the North, over Onkoul's Tunguska road, the sky split in two & fire appeared high and wide over the forest. After that such noise came, as if rocks were falling or cannons were firing, the earth shook, & when the sky opened up, hot wind raced between the houses, like from cannons, which left traces in the ground like pathways...

## Semenov

## Balrog

Across the wormy gyres of ceaseless time  
Close to Dogstar's sister, Sirius B,  
A soldier's table spread with ancyent rhyme,  
The sacred fables of the Sapaqi;  
Whose epic verse  
Recant how cosmic nets  
Cast thro the universe to catch living planets.

He read how Genesis & crew  
Flew far in star-vimana,  
How Mugulu & Mukulu,  
Seriell & Semyaza  
Once populated world so blue,  
Naming her Zahara -  
His trance disturb"d by Gen'ral Balthazeer,  
"Captain, a chance to further your career.

The Usgoth dance a dastard jig,  
Hot words of war were made!"  
Each dons a wig, mount fierce Tepig  
& rode off to parade,  
"The battle come!" drumrolls & roars, rais'd rows of plasma-  
blade.

## Dadgabbi

### Ambush!

Follow faint traces of light & lazar  
Along great lanes of space innum'rabable,  
To these twin systems of a distant star,  
Lock'd in mortal combat incurable;  
The Usgoth hordes  
Embattle Dadgabbi,  
Wielding electric swords in mystic chivalrie.

Upon the fringes of the fray  
Debonair leutenant rides  
Upon a stately steed of grey,  
That by the black vortex glides,  
She splits the skies with startled neigh,  
Assaulted on all sides,  
The Knight hauls reigns & gallops into space,  
Trailing his vapours three Gargants gave chase.

Upon a tapestry of stars  
Hooves of quartz crystal pound,  
The Usgoth Gaars, red battle cars,  
Steadily gaining 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,  
With the universe spread always preponderous;  
Where life & light  
Home 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 Hostillius -  
Two sets of triplets made affray  
For their populaces -  
Him, some last unwounded Roman son,  
Would face these three 'Quirini' one-by-one.

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

### Space

### 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.

Godhead senses his approaching  
From the Aesir of Asgard,  
To Allah's temples glimmering,  
& Jove's spacious milliard -  
Sad-faced inside a floral ring  
Mab though it all ill-starr'd,  
"We must discover an enclave serene,  
For life is changing," sigh'd the Faerie Queen.

Above all this our Dadghabbi  
Approaches, by degrees  
Planetary menagerie  
Of oceans, peaks & trees,  
Neath mega-lightning dancing on the tips of shipless seas.

### Earth

### The Visitor

Tho Balrog shaken off that fierce pursuit,  
His Grey Tepig still bleeding from the chase,  
But ever capable, of paths astute,  
He steers his steed to this resource of space;  
Their course complete  
With such a shrieking sound  
Plunge thro white-glowing heat toward the growing ground.

Wings shredded so they could not steer,  
Talon-slash trailing crimson,  
All thro the scorching stratosphere  
Fell the vampyre stallion,  
No wince, no flinch, nor cry of fear,  
Wreathed 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 the crater's smoking centre  
No beast of Eden stood,  
Hail alien! bulbous, bewing'd, fangs thirsting manling blood.

### Siberia

### The Sorceress

The Long Horn leads his steed thro Tulgey wood,  
On ev'ry side bewitching whispering,  
A phantom cry to curdle human blood,  
What fence of ghoulish eyes lights this clearing  
Where tooth gate grown,  
Fang'd entrance to her lair,  
This gaunt, dishevell'd crone with such a hellish stare.

He stept thro arms framing a door,  
Enter'd gloom as black as tar,  
"I have not seen your like before!"  
"I am from another star..."  
"Come sup this flesh, this putrid sore,"  
Cackl'd 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,  
The caterwauls defied,  
Before the serpent throne beat his fantastic glide.

"O suave, majestic demagogue  
Fate my form has brought 'fore 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 cursed 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 weaken'd  
horse.

### Pandemonium

### The Indifference of Jove

Saint Peter hoodah'd cross the skiey plains  
Upon a silver tusked Elephant,  
His seraph captain rhythmic with the reigns...  
Resplendent with immortal Amorant  
All sides lusted  
Roses celestial,  
Chasm clinging cluster'd oer clear terrestrial.

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

*"My Lord, Life & Sweet Sacrament,"*  
Saint Peter kiss'd the floor,  
*"This seems diff'rent, your sons invent  
Strange terrors by the score..."*  
*"Silence!" urged Jove, " & let them be, tis just another war."*

### Divinia

### Rousing the Aesir

Belial donn'd Loki's Nordic guise  
Climb'd the visceral stairwell to Utgard,  
Gallop'd his charger thro Wolkendurst skies,  
To hover o'er the grandeur of Asgard;  
Toward the sound  
Of heroes rejoicing  
He steer'd his steed to ground upon a graceful wing,

He strode thro those halls of glory,  
Acknowledged ev'ry table  
Serv'd by the lusty Valkyrie  
With meat & mead & fable,  
& was led thro a fine city,  
Cloaked with Roman marble,  
His mission hidden by a face of stone  
Enter'd Heaven & knelt at Odin's throne

*"Hullo!"* said Frigg, *"Why cometh here!"*  
*"The Gauls have called a 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

## Canto 2

*The attack against Britain*

O isplendor di Dio, per cu'io vidi  
l'alto triunfo del regno verace,  
dammi vertu a dir com' io il vidi

Dante

## Heroic Counsel

High upon the snow-clad slopes of Snowdon  
Britannia gathers in her family,  
Pacing by her husband, Gwydion,  
She waits to greet Neptune's emissary;  
Green Merman comes,  
Draped in coral'd sharkskin,  
The sound of horns & drums... the meeting may begin.

Drowsy Phoebus the scene illumines  
As serious parlance cooks,  
Zephyrs ruffle Ra's ostrich plumes,  
Her Majesty nears the crux,  
"I sense the harbinger of dooms,  
Some cancer fills the flux...  
The testing time forespoken draweth near!"  
Shouts St£rling, "Come the day whom shall fight here?"

The loyal company & true  
Cry ready for the gore,  
Violet Vishnu skims skiey blue,  
Ra sails for dusty shore,  
Neptune accomodates Dagon, the Lion roars its roar!

**Albion**

### Heavenly Counsel

Above the flight of Pegasean wing,  
In quintessential realms of majesty,  
Great God in Heaven, Jehova the King,  
Sate stupor'd in a state of apathy;  
The pinnacle  
Of his life's creation  
Has steer'd himself tward Hell's chasm of damnation.

Unto beauteous paradise  
Flew George, Denys & Michael,  
Before the gates of Heaven rise  
Twelve Saints & Peter's angel,  
Who grants passage, led thro' the wise  
By golden Gabriel  
To Jove, slumbering by the holy hearth,  
*"My Lord,"* chaunts Michael, *"We return from Earth..."*

*There are dark troubles brewing sire,  
Satanus plots a war,  
With daemon dire & dragonfire,  
The Aesir to the fore,  
Lord let us fight!"* Jove ponders, *"If ye must but just ye four!"*

### Divinnia

### Death of Venus

'Loki' steer'd his steed in ful freedom flight  
Over Europa's forest thick ranges,  
Landed upon the mountain of delight,  
Lone grey, loon priest ranting of its dangers;  
His limbs muscle  
Their way thro that dark cave,  
Down the long, moist tunnel on marmoreal wave.

To view a phantasie palace  
Midst the vale of cupid's art,  
Where the temptress of loveliness  
Held legs slenderly apart,  
O! the vision of her cestus,  
Temple's resplendent heart-  
What man could fight th'allurement of her charms?  
What god could fight her soft, *"Come to my arms!"*

Plunged was a poison-tipp'd dagger  
Thro Venus' heaving breast,  
By grey river the murderer  
Lay her fair corpse arest  
Hair willowing thro water, one breaks free from all the rest...

### Horselburg

## 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,  
Watching 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 was fearsome gale,  
Around the hoof hoarse horrors stream  
Pungent in noxious veil,  
A thousand Civiallos & their sneer  
Releas'd on Earth to furnish curse & fear.

These horsemen went forth galloping,  
The Daemons scatter'd wide,  
Lo! descending on downy wing  
Twin golden ladies glide...  
The angels HOPE & PITY with a sparrow as their guide.

## 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  
Who swung 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.

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

## Europa

### Battle Lines

So even Fate must pass upon Midgard  
The Devil's ruse had rusht the Gods to war,  
The Lion loosen'd from Britannia's yard  
Ferried by Neptune to a foreign shore;  
    To take his place,  
    With Tyr, the Cockerelle  
& Toutatis to face the fearsome hordes of Hell.

The air grows thick as evil scent  
Spread sickness abroad, applies  
A noxious cloud, the air is rent  
By night-black clusters of flies,  
Wyrð Dragonflights hath form'd a tent,  
Smoke cloaks the darkling skies,  
Some tromblast calls the legions to array,  
The armies of Satanus on display.

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

### Europa

### A Savage Affray

Cockerelle leapt across the grassy plain  
Assisting fellows tussling with Odin,  
Together Tyr & Toutatis lay slain  
& all the world was echoing the din  
    See Saint Denys  
    Transform'd into a Hart  
Chased by these great Boar three, hoof-pounding as they dart.

Now to the scene of desp'rate fight  
Enveloping Saint Michael,  
Some foulish serpents pois'nous bite  
The beautiful bladesman fell,  
Down to the morass in ful flight  
Saint George would dive pell-mell;  
Disappearing neath flailing tooth & claw  
To burst up with his kinsman, soak'd in gore.

All in the midst of thick melee  
The rampant Lion fought,  
Driven slowly toward the sea,  
Albion's precious moat,  
Deep gouges in its surly loins, wylde Harpies at it's throat.

### Europa

### Halting Hell

Satanus tried to set the sea on fire,  
Boiling the flesh of Neptune from his bones,  
Now the blade of Saint George, Jove's first flyer,  
Whips to safety the flames with brisk cyclones;  
But took a bite,  
With ichor gushing free  
He faced the dragonsflight in terrible fury.

In raging snick-a-snack attack  
Power dripping from his eyes,  
Three dragon skulls split with a crack,  
Then to the last monster flies  
& sliced its wings from bony back,  
One heart thrust & it dies...  
Groans of dismay erupt from the shore-side,  
The great day of darkness has been defied

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

### Oceania

### Love's Hope

A river courses thro Europa's plain  
Carrying the golden strand of Venus,  
On whose fibres rests a little bloodstain  
Carrying the best of her essences;  
The water roars  
To where Thetis makes play,  
This hair enchanted pours into a crescent bay.

A Merman scouts the outer seas  
Espies the willowing thread,  
Escorts it thro the coral trees  
To where old Dagon rested,  
Who plants it on the snoring wheeze  
Of Neptune bare chested,  
Lockin it in a lucid, airy dome  
& blows it spinning thro the underfoam.

To land inside an oyster shell,  
Jaws quiver as they close,  
Ambrosial mother of pearl,  
As soft as spring time snows  
Hushes her magic & the hair into a wylde rose grows

### Oceania

### Canto 3

*The spread of the Immortal Wars*

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

Goethe

### 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 the wing gigantic  
Hades sways to the surge of a force terrific.

Roaming over dismember'd souls  
Astrew the fiery cavern,  
Yon Caina & Judecca falls,  
Lands by the Anti-Heaven,  
To stride 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 was labour wheeling,  
Collect first few drops from the Jew  
Weeping from the ceiling,  
Singing Carmen Cruenta to the crude doom bells peeling.

**Pandemonium**

### **Stand of Pyerun**

The weather gleams golden & glorious  
Ever eastward, spoiling the countryside,  
Steam the banded legions of Satanus,  
Half-a-league in the van four horseman ride;  
Hooves grind to halt  
Before a vast prospect  
Lit by a thunderbolt, now by enemy speck'd.

The hordes of Hades charged & fought,  
A spirit army scatter'd,  
Pyerun conjured a fireflaught  
& many helms were shatter'd,  
Their armour caught a fireslaught  
& down a gorge clatter'd...  
Attackers halted as on either side  
What stormcraft repels the Stygian tide?

Great demons now surround Pyerun  
To deal the killer blow,  
They step upon the field frozen,  
The lake seems solid snow...  
The Ice-King makes it CRACK... dragging them to the black  
below.

**Asia**

### **Murder Momentous**

Three Rainbow Wyvrn, sleekly serpentine,  
Hear the entrancing chords of the Shinto,  
Summon'd to Fujiyama's sacred shrine  
Where waited Bishamon, coal eyes aglow;  
Astride the back  
Of rare, mystical steed...  
He orders an attack, over the seas they speed...

At the heart of a silver sea  
They came on a volcano  
Slumbering in tranquillity  
Was the eagle of Hino,  
The fell on him in wylde fury,  
Bird whimpers as they go...  
Three days later spotted by Gabriel,  
Stripp'd of plumage, voice tringing madrigal...

Neon-swath'd towers scrape the sky  
Beneath the spangl'd stars  
Hino's heart's cry, Sam's soulful sigh  
Swept from a throne of cars,  
"The time has come for battle & a war to end all wars!"

**Americana**

### Evil Empire

Midgard play'd host to the leviathan,  
The land Hydra Demagorgons held,  
From ocean trench surfaces the Kraken,  
It's tentacles have crept forth unrepell'd,  
To stand apart,  
Sucking fair islands dry  
Of harvest, hope & heart while watchful Wyvrns fly.

Satanus call'd a grand counsel  
To discuss the growing war,  
Along the high roads into Hell  
Rode the company of Thor,  
Announced by the doom peelant bell  
Led thro th'ivory door,  
Presented 'fore the princely throne of bone,  
Beast bids, "Th' Aesir shall fight Pyerun alone."

"We will be strong Lord Lucifer  
& compensate thy flanks."  
Lone warrior in black armour  
Strode clanking thro the ranks  
My name is Barbarossa, for this battle offer thanks."

### Pandemonium

### Warring Gods

Mars dons a breastplate of bronze bright gleaming,  
Sharpens his broadsword & polishes shield,  
Lowers his helm, sunny velvets a streaming  
He set out marching to the battlefield;  
Whose sharp echo  
Summons his snarling hounds,  
Bare canined fierce beasts go in long, muscular bounds.

Ra whispers ancyent sorcery,  
Tis the sacred call to arm,  
Round the rare & regal valley  
Lilts the chorus of that charm -  
Ragged mummies march steadfastly  
Below this locust swarm -  
Now thro their ranks strides the Scorpion King,  
The howls are now reduced to whimpering.

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

### Africa

### **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 a swastika..."  
For Gabriel, it seem'd, eternity  
Pass'd pleading with his master's vanity.

At last was heard the sovran voice,  
Rush of running waters,  
"Cast is my choice, send the envoys  
To the Saintly Quarters,  
We are to war, send for my steed, summon the Sky  
Daughters!"

### **Divinia**

### **Birth of Gryphon**

Uncle Sam harbours at the half moon bay  
With war engines & eagles for the flight,  
Gwyddion leads them on their lofty way  
Within the mountains clad in snowflake white;  
Where Britannia,  
Most splendid banqueteer,  
Has spread a grand dinner for battle draweth near.

As thunder clouds rumble & pour  
St£rling & Buck\$ recanting  
Employ an age-old astral lore,  
Centre of a magic ring,  
Where lions give a mighty roar,  
& eagles beat the wing,  
Sharp lightning struck those stone grey druid rods,  
Great gasps of wonder rush'd throughout the gods...

There before them stood the Gryphon,  
Wing sleek, majestic maned,  
The prime weapon, the stallion,  
Auld oracles ordain'd,  
Lit by an iridescent gleam, the divine blessing gained.

### **Stonehenge**

### **Defeating Valhalla**

The brave Aesir in battlegear assemble  
Launch on the backs of swans Siberian,  
Soaring rainbow streaks that so resemble  
Storming meteor swarms kasabian;  
Wave after wave  
Of Asgard's dead heroes  
Rush to a second grave where Pyerun's sylph suit glows.

From Heaven Saint Volodomyr  
Flew with an angelic guard,  
FEAR floated thro the pale Aesir,  
Panicking men's minds are marr'd,  
Swift did Barb'rossa disappear,  
Down the road to Asgard,  
Protected by Satanic riders four,  
Leaving the battle to the trust of Thor.

The twisting saint sweeps down & spurns  
Swan-flight of that hammer -  
Mjolnir returns, but handle burns,  
Disarm'd by sorcerer,  
Thor lost his life not cheaply rather than admit surrender.

**Asia**

### **Exotica**

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

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

In the desert 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**

**Book XV**

**Global War**

**Canto I**

*The German failure to take Moscow  
& the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour*

*Le chef de Londres par regne l' Americh,  
L'Isle d'Escosse tempiera par gelee:  
Roy Reb auront vn si faux Antechrist,  
Que les mettra trestous dans la meslee.*

To require of strength that it should not express itself as strength, that it should not be a desire to conquer, a desire to subdue, a desire to become master, a thirst for enemies & resistances & triumphs, is just as absurd as to require of weakness that it should express itself as strength

**Frederick Nietzsche**

## Emperor

Admirant Tojo lilts thro lush gardens,  
Lotus pools & fafalla commingling,  
Pass'd palace halls tapestried with legends,  
Bow'd by the throne of a line e'erlasting:  
Offer'd a prayer  
Unto his Emporer  
Sate on a dragonschair flank'd by vase & flower.

His excellency Hideki  
Had gain'd Hirohito's trust,  
"How long must we let them treat thee  
Like some coolie in the dust?  
We must attack the enemy,  
To strike first is a must  
& destroy the sleeping Pacific fleet,  
For which Yamamoto's plan stands complete!"

He thought awhile & with a sigh  
Hung low with weary nod,  
Many shall cry, many shall die,  
In service to this god,  
What murder may be justified by monarchaic rod?

**Tokyo**  
**Nov 3rd**  
**1941**

## Day in the Life

Dust devils swept the deadlock of Tobruk,  
Thou dead heart of this deadest of dead lands,  
The hostile, molten sky of the Menluk,  
Medusa's blood-serpents squirming thro sands;  
Just as dawn grows  
Eager for the slaughter  
Tommy Sumner arose... life short, the days shorter.

Out of some mess tin would he shave,  
Nobbly knee'd in his short pants,m  
Supported a Crusader wave,  
Carthaginian elephants,  
Steel citadels become a 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 shall build,  
*'Well, if mi number i'nt on it,' Tom thought, 'I sha'nt get kill'd!'*

**Cyrenaica**  
**November**  
**1941**

### Glimpse of Glory

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

Kampfwagon engine warm'd by fires,  
    Khan's company advances,  
    On reconnaissance's acquires  
    Most mythical of glances,  
In the near distance Moscow's spires  
    Golden flutter finches,  
Dreamtime disturb'd by the sounds of firing...  
A motley crew of workers come charging!

With the panzers frozen solid  
    A few leagues to the rear,  
& with Russian, his wrench & gun,  
    Clamouring ever near,  
With pishah sight the spires espied... mist shrouds... they  
    disappear.

**Khimki**  
**December 3rd**  
**1941**

### The Pendulum Turns

For those friends having fail'd to run the course  
    Willie's harp sang a sad & liling dirge,  
    Breakfasting on the flesh of frozen horse  
    Sweat froze to Khan at his madnasses verge;  
    Reduced to rags,  
    Barely untermenschen,  
O torn & tatter'd flags, O worn & shatter'd men!

Over Moscow's frozen river  
Came Zhukov's counter attack  
    Fresh soldiers of Siberia  
From many a hunters shack,  
    Spirits fortified by vodka,  
    Snowsuit upon the back  
Would pulverise the exhausted Germans.  
Supported close by warplanes & cannons.

Ah! thus descends the same retreat  
    That slew the Grande Armee,  
Across ice sheet, chok'd with defeat,  
    Trudging dejectedly,  
Burning homes & potatoes to allay the enmity.

**Russia**  
**December 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**1941**

### American Opinion

Rita clocks off another working day  
Making deadly acroutements of war  
Collected her ever increasing pay  
Then nipp'd for 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 Nineteen Seventeen,  
Pull'd Britain's chestnust from the fire  
In scenes like ya never seen,  
Just so that lousy old empire  
Remain'd our global queen!"  
A tear slipp'd from the corner of his eye,  
"Y'know I saw a lot of 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 –  
Its front page once more dominated by Mister Hitler!

**Jerkwater**  
**December 6<sup>th</sup>**

### Pearl Harbour

Sol's fiery portal rose from silken sea,  
A fleet illumed thro mellow morning mist,  
Upon the flat-top of the Akagi  
Yamamoto crush'd pearl in shaking fist;  
The airwaves fill,  
"Tora-tora-tora!"  
Streaming in for the kill, screaming "The Emperor!"

They dived down to Battleship Row  
As Samurai steeds charging,  
Twin-streak'd a speeding torpedo,  
Dropping bombs from whizzing wing  
& how spectacular the show,  
Noble ships exploding,  
Day of Lusitanian proportions,  
Echoes resounding round the world's oceans.

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

**Hawaii**  
**8.15 AM**

### First Strike

Barb'd hornets flew all over Ohau  
In lethal waves honing in on the kill  
Too slowly the realisation grew  
"We are being attack'd! This is no drill!"  
Amidst the hell  
That burnt at Hitcham Field  
A Yankee gave a yell, Browning rifle his shield.

This all-American hero  
While pals hugg'd nearby ditches,  
Spread lead fed with dealy gung=ho  
"Ya yella sons of bitches!"  
A cracking shot plunged some zero  
Into football pitches,  
Crash landing & smashing into a post,  
*"God damn! That slant-eyed mother fuckers toast!"*

The morning's destruction over,  
No more death left to spread,  
In good order an attacker  
Atop the white wave sped,  
Leaving Hawaii belching smoke & Hirohito's dead.

### The Pacific Ocean

December 7th

1941

9.30 am

### America Goes to War

A veil of snow covers the capitol  
But for the wide flow of the Potomac,  
A pageant of the pleasantly peaceful,  
Oblivious to perfidy's attack;  
Rooseveltdt dines  
Within those Whitehouse walls,  
To eerieness resigns as his telephone calls.

The news tickers were read out loud,  
What words to be receiving,  
Great shock electrifies the crowd  
With jaws dropt disbelieving,  
A single tear slips sad & proud,  
Portent of her grieving,  
Leaving his bag on the roof of the car  
Carlton raced off to tell the news to Ma.

His tongue babbles 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, but 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,  
Deprest with this present unpleasantness,  
No way to win the war in mortal sight;  
    Stuff'd from dinner,  
    Half-cock'd cheeks all aglow,  
He orders the butler to fetch a radio...

“... attack'd the Hawaiian islands...”  
Splash & splurt, out burst his drink,  
Dark clouds throttling his ambitions  
Pierced by the oft 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 end a 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 utters with a sterner drawl.

**London**  
**December 7th**  
**1941**

## Canto II

*The further rise of the Axis powers on three continents*

The Japanese are, to the highest degree, both aggressive &  
unaggressive, both militaristic & aesthetic, both insolent &  
polite

**Ruth Benedict**

## Sunrise

From Singapore, oriental sapphire,  
The 'Repulse' & the 'Prince of Wales' full steam,  
Unsinkable crow-keepers of empire,  
Purveyors of the frangipani dream;  
    But as they skulk  
    By Zero's set upon  
Turning them both to hulk, to bubbles, & then gone.

From Cathay down to Mandalay  
From the Kotan surf to Guam  
Bold orb burst with a roaring ray  
    Over colonial calm,  
Cheap stars of tin hacking sharp way  
    With masterful sword arm,  
Lit by the waxen fury of those rays  
Th'entire Western Pacific set ablaze.

The set of stars Basho commands  
    Have roll'd in on the tide,  
His legion lands upon the sands  
    With gladness in their stride,  
So orders his soldiers advance, heart bursting with much pride

**Malaya**  
**December 10th**  
**1941**

## World War

With Rommel retreating to Gazala,  
    'Barossa nearing annihilation,  
Hitler ponder'd within Amerika,  
    Reflecting upon the escalation;  
    With timely blow  
    An ally ne'er vanquish't  
Has stept into the show in ways he would have wish'd.

He summon'd the Reichstage android  
    Adress'd them virulently  
    "Rooseveltd's war we can't avoid –  
    The responsibility  
    Of his half-Judaize, negroid,  
    Capitalist country!  
Thus now, side-by-side, with the emporer  
I have declared war on Amerika!"

As the claque joy demonstrated  
    A twinge shook Goering's gut  
    Ever fated, long awaited,  
    The World War is nail'd shut,  
The Reichmarshall soft whispering, "Germany is kaput!"

**Berlin**  
**11<sup>th</sup> December**

## Resettlement

The Star of Poland stitch'd in yellow band  
Order'd to mark the arm of every Jew,  
Upon the pack'd platform the Grunfelds stand,  
Cattle wagons clattering into view;  
Peasant & priest  
Into that cramm'd space sent,  
The trains lurch to the East, toward resettlement...

Poland's pitiful freight trains flow,  
Desp'ration stagnates air,  
One welcome smile softens the blow  
As Jakob stands calmly there,  
Then led them thro the grey ghetto,  
A flat for all to share -  
Two rooms & one tiny lavatory  
To serve this 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,  
Driven by revenge, Stalin & Smirnoff,  
It seems once more the ghosts of Bounaparte  
Flee the cannon command of Kutuzov;  
Adolf aghast  
Thin hair flecking with grey,  
"The army vil stand fast, ve must not fight like Ney!"

Standing firm with heavy losses  
They slow down the grand Russian,  
But the invincible hubris  
Turns to defeat's depression  
As on Sargon's dies supremus  
With the Kullumaeon -  
Without his fingers, toes & half a nose  
Khan staggers, dying, thro the drifting snows.

CRACK! CRACK! writhing he falls in pain,  
Snow stain'd red where he bled,  
Consciousness wanes, the bloody mane  
Of a befang'd wolfshead  
Brusht cheek while ripping thro his throat... today the pack  
well fed.

**Russia**  
**Christmas Day**  
**1941**

## The Final Question

Heydrich receives Hitler's whim thro Himmler,  
Schutzstaffel konferenz to Wansee borne,  
Yachts dallying on a gentle water  
& sumptuous luncheon laid on the lawn;  
Aft finger licks  
& champagne guzzl'd hard  
They step thro the dorics of the 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 these fellows share,  
Adds Eichmann, *"At last we shall breath 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**

## Leningrad

Snow falls with a blizzard-bitter harshness  
As onwards, ever onwards, rolls the war  
See mighty canon-Krupps sent to oppress  
The celebrated 'Venice' of the Czar  
Constant shellfire  
Rains down on every side  
No redoubts to retire, no bunkers for to hide.

Despite worsening misery  
Of the cold, hungry half-dead  
Men kept alive through poetry  
& the sawdust in their bread  
But few hold on to sanity  
With bellies barely fed  
Soon only pets allay the frozen tear  
Then first few little children disappear.

*The great square fills with men & guns  
Oktober's famed parade  
Revolutions' glorious sons,  
But this was no parade  
Saluting Lenin's statue off to fight the foe they made.*

**January**  
**1941**

### The British Ocean

The waters of the world form a whirlpool  
Sucking ships into sub-infested seas  
Where wolfish packs of hunter-slayers rule  
Through convulsing convoys, wasting disease!  
But on the main  
The Germans second best,  
Like fleets of France & Spain, & bottled up in Brest!

Theree German warships & their men  
Make a break for home waters  
Scharnhurst, Gneisnau & Prince Eugen  
Dash up the Channel waters  
Courting no man with nelson's ken  
Command Britain's forces  
For with English radar cleverly jamm'd  
They run a flimsy gauntlet to Deutschland

Amid Hanseatic safety  
& the Norwegian fjords  
Hitler's navy rejects the sea  
& slowly rot the boards  
Imprinted on their psyche the sharpness of Deptford's swords.

**Feb 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**1941**

### Clash of Empire

The martial star in morning glory rose,  
With each fresh victory his beams were robbed,  
Streaming thro conquer'd archipelagoes,  
Malaya, Laos & Burma soon absorb'd;  
Where foemen wilt,  
The rains staining with blood,  
The Western empires built on soft, tropical mud.

Shane Slater fed into the fight,  
A total, bloody shambles!  
How soon Shonan, O southern light,  
Cauldron of the world peoples,  
Meekly bows to the Tyger's might  
Tyrant without scruples,  
Strips prisoners of common dignity  
For those who surrender deem'd cowardly.

How mis'erable that mob of men  
On the road to Changi,  
None have eaten, shot & beaten,  
Defeated & weary,  
Facing uncertain futures & jungle captivity...

**Feb 16th**  
**1942**

## The Agony of France

The French welcome the Nazi supermen,  
Preferring peace to a resistant pain,  
Tho rare alters midst the 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 contree & what's worse  
Les cochons fou have raped Annette!  
Somebody has to be the first  
To challenge that 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  
& tho her panting sweet still did she long for lost Pierre.

**Orleans**  
**April**  
**1942**

## Canto III

*The pivotal battles of Guadalcanal, El Alamein & Stalingrad*

O soldiers! For your ain dear sakes  
For Scotlands & her land of cakes  
Gie not her bairns sic deadly pakes  
Nor be sae rude  
Wi firelock or Lochaber aix  
As spill their blude

**Robert Fergusson**

## The Pendulum Turns

The winter offensive melts with the snow,  
Two great enemies lay down exhausted,  
The roads dissolving to a muddy flow,  
The front is fixt, time swung to count the dead;  
The German's score  
A million underground,  
The Russians many more, what first titanic round!

*"Comrades of the fascist Jihad  
We must combine our forces,  
Strike from the Southern launching pad  
Then conquer the Caucasus,  
A prompt capture of Stalingrad  
Cuts off Red resources,  
Following we roll up the Volga's banks  
Then penetrate Moscow upon all flanks!"*

The pendulum swings back due East,  
Red Armies hard pounded,  
Reserves releas'd, the net increas'd,  
Yet more men surrounded...  
To hoard this feast of prisoners twelve fresh death camps  
founded.

**Kharkov**  
**May 12th**  
**1942**

## Burma

Thro fetid swamps Basho drove his forces,  
A filthy bunch of Scousers fell upon,  
Had them bound up at their soft surrenders  
Order'd them bayoneted one-by-one;  
Wiping blades clean  
Neath a tropical moon  
They prest on thro the steam to liberate Rangoon.

Thro monsoon & malaria,  
With barely a bulldog stand,  
The British army in Burma  
Thro a jungle nightmare fann'd  
*"Yer on yer own fer India!"*  
The one clear-cut command...  
The retreat, in fullness of confusion,  
Leaves a trail of chaos & destruction.

Basho cross'd the Irrawaddy,  
Drove yon the border line,  
Eyes solar see raw junglerie  
Upon the hills recline,  
Forming the nervous Raj far-reaching neath Lord Siva's shine.

**India**  
**May**  
**1942**

## Midway

Nippon probes the fog-shrouded Aleutians  
    & the last islands before Hawaii  
Where three flat-tops led forwards by the guns  
    Of the fourth, Yamamoto's Akagi;  
    From their messes  
    The pilots now running  
To baunt their dauntlesses, propellers full spinning

The dateline cross'd from east to west  
Men steel'd their hearst for valour  
    Apperaing the the rison's crest  
    Was a gleaming carrier  
In single file they faced the test  
    Twas like Balaclava  
As the gunners response was amplified  
    To crescendo – was surely suicide

The Akagi slips neath the waves  
    The others soon follow  
To sunken graves, slain by these braves  
    Who back to runways flow  
These precious airstrips safegaudred, defending tomorrow!

## Pacific Ocean

## Death of Heydrich

King Wenceslas' crown adorn'd the Hangman  
    Of Prague, ruling his province arrogant  
    Enough to be guarded by no real plan...  
Thus went his Mercedes, his doom's advent;  
    Two patriots  
    Plot assassination,  
Their bomb back'd up by shots... fear waltzes thro  
    Tschechienne.

While all around the manhunt raged  
    Killers refuge in a crypt,  
But still ruthless Gestapo gauged  
    Their whereabouts & thus tipp'd  
    Soldiers of the SS engaged  
    The church as bullets ripp'd  
Rank on rank from desperate defenders,  
    *"Reserve your last bullets t'avoid tortures."*

Einsatzgruppen deal the disgust  
    Of the German peoples,  
Beaten & cuss'd, male peasants thrust  
    In cellars & stables,  
There set alight, their homes destroy'd, their wives shot thro  
    the skulls.

**Lidice**

**June 9<sup>th</sup>**

**1942**

## FC Start

Kizmenko was march'd into the warehouse  
Given the name Bakery Number Five  
His countrymen as quiet as a mouse,  
Just happy to be working & alive;  
With joy he saw  
Friends from the Dynamo,  
& by them on the floor, Lokomotiv Moscow!

As certain persons of this world  
Live life as they are meant to  
The flag of FC Start unfurl'd,  
Russian red & Ukraine blue,  
Into training the team was hurl'd  
& expectations grew -  
That in the end whatever might befall  
These dusty kickabouts did soothe the soul

Then came a happy summer's day  
When dreamer's lived the dream,  
Having their way they got to play  
The Romanian cream,  
& goal-by-goal dismantled them, such was their splendid team.

**Kiev**  
**July**  
**1942**

## Treblinka

Life weary, yet all life shall linger on,  
At least in Warsaw some know family,  
But one noon the SS form a cordon  
& take away the old ones forcibly;  
*"You vil be sent  
To safe & special camp..."*  
If they but knew they meant to extinguish life's lamp.

The Starbearers are packt without  
Water nor ventilation,  
Days trundle by til the rough *"Out!"*  
A primitive train station,  
Old Hersz is fill'd with gnawing doubt  
At the explanation  
That for the showers they must strip to skin,  
He kiss'd the Kaiser's cross & crept within.

The Harikvah soon screaming roar!  
As hissing swirl'd the gas,  
Squirm, writhe & claw... alive namore  
They search'd each mouth & ass,  
To form possession-mountains, ditching deep the warm  
corpses.

**Poland**  
**July 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1942**

## Desert Surge

On a day suffocating & stormy,  
Resplendant bloom'd the Rose of Jericho  
Crush'd beneath the 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  
Over hard & calcin'd earth,  
Battle's hot, 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 Afrika.

To Alamein the Eighth withdraw,  
Shoring her defences,  
Mid Cairo's war th'embassadour  
Urns his secret papers,  
The fleet, from Alexandria, flees for safer harbours.

**Egypt**  
**August 7th**  
**1942**

## Game of Death

*"Come mother, the match is kicking off soon!"*  
Shouts Konstantin, blood-rushing FC Start,  
Whistling a happy Ukranain tune,  
The strains of which were nestled in his heart;  
& so they merge  
Behind their Trusevich,  
Upon the grassy verge as teams spread round the pitch,

Eleven versus eleven,  
Hitler white & Stalin red,  
As the Russian Number Seven  
Scores a bullet with his head  
Konstantin was shot to heaven,  
& with their fears far fled  
Great free kick from the foot of Kuzmenko,  
Who later kick'd the ball to Klimenko,

Who dribbles it round the goalie,  
But choosing not to score  
Now hoofs it screaming skillfully  
Back to the midfield four -  
What roar sent up! in such moments does Russian pride  
restore.

**Kiev**  
**August 9<sup>th</sup> 1942**

## Stalin's City

The Sixth Army thunders to the Volga,  
The swastika hoisted over Elbrus,  
In front, unending acres of Asia,  
Behind, the passage of the conquerors;  
Resting their flank  
Upon the deep, dark Don,  
Onwards advance the tanks, 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 is set to fight again.

Above shored-up defences pour  
Fourth Richtofen Air Fleet,  
Planes by the score bringing the war  
To level ev'ry street,  
The will man gains to resist ills is temper'd in the heat.

**Stalingrad**  
**August 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**1942**

## BOOK XVI

### The Maltiad

*De l'Orient viendra la coeur Punique  
Facher Hadrie & les hoirs Romulides  
Accompagne' de la classe Libyque  
Temples Mellites & proches isles vuides.*

## Canto 1

*The history of Malta from Biblical times  
To the fall of Fort Saint Elmo*

By the will of the Mediterranean people  
The 'British Episode' in this sea is finish'd

**Il Mediterraneo**

## Montgomery

The world is at arms, the world is ablaze,  
Nigh ev'ry human forced to choose a side,  
What days are these? These are darkest of days,  
Stripping a soul of dignity & pride;  
The battle lines  
To breaking point pull'd taut,  
Der Fuhrer's grand designs to be or be distraught?

Churchill threw thin, pink-skinn'd Monty  
On imperial mission,  
Stood before the beige Eighth army,  
*"We must win by attrition,  
Defend the Nile from the blue sea  
Down to the Depression..."*  
His troops enter'd an oasis of calm  
'Neath whose auspices they must face no harm.

All round the village rose the purr  
Of Shermans beautiful  
With knowing burr, the spirits stir,  
*"Sole way to slay Rommel..."*  
*Dig 'em in along Alem el Halfa at the double!"*

**El Alamein  
August 25<sup>th</sup>  
1942**

## Digression

I pledge a motion for the grand digress  
Which poem's of this nature may include,  
Some may question its appropriateness,  
Yet others think the moment rather shrewd;  
To all accounts  
I offer further gloss  
Bless'd by those faithful founts, the Crescent & the Cross.

As we walk among these pages,  
With a mind to phantsize,  
Ghosts have willow'd down the ages  
Forming phantoms in the skies,  
As the cataclysm rages  
Twixt Axis & Allies,  
We find the legacies of former times  
Have influenced the essence of these rhymes.

What stormblast has shipwreck'd Saint Paul?  
Fated or randomly?  
His holy thrall converts the soul  
To Christianity,  
A moment that must one day build a fortress in the sea.

**Melita**  
**60AD**

## Warrior Knights

Now, how did such a griggle of the tree  
That is the world, & all its fertile isles,  
Become a keystone in its history?  
Then let us to Jersusalem's defiles;  
When Crusader  
Fought for Jehova's fame  
& Knights Hospitaler were founded in his name.

The Knights of Saint John & their swords  
Driven east when Acre fell  
& took up residence on Rhodes  
For to fight the infidel –  
Three centuries on those whale roads  
Held Turkey in a spell –  
Til Suliman destroy'd their sanctu'ry  
But through youth's mercy let them leave freely.

Ther Order begg'd the King of Spain  
For a new naval base  
To start again & ease the pain  
That is defeat's disgrace  
& thus from this wee treeless rock they pirate at a pace.

**Malta**  
**1530**

### War's Promise

The Peacock of the world rose from his throne  
Wishing our land-lock'd sea a Turkish pond,  
"The fish of Malta is the stepping stone  
To Sicily & to the world beyond,  
That obscure rock  
Insults us & our queen,  
Then from this viper-dock we drive the Nazarene.

My finest force I shall employ,"  
Added Allah's deputy,  
"These sons of dogs ever destroy,  
Tho they earn'd my clemency  
When I was young & full of joy  
Thro my first victory,  
& I allow'd them honour after Rhodes -  
But no more shall we suffer their marauds.

Our scimitars their throats shall slit,  
Now men, prepare my fleet!"  
Seeking credit, yearning merit,  
Gen'ral's kiss jewell'd feet,  
Leave the divan, then plan the heathen's ultimate defeat.

**Istanbul**  
**1564**

### Call to Arms

Grave news flies to Grandmaster De Valette  
The day of armageddon clamours near,  
Yet from the fray his faith shall never fret,  
To him the infidel inspires no fear;  
*"Prepare the walls,  
Cancel every corso!"*  
The clang of cannoballs rang thro Saint Angelo.

Across the world the summons sent  
By ship & sweat-stain'd horsemen.  
"Brave knights fly back to the Convent  
& fight beside our brethren!"  
Soon many-a-foreign accent  
With one voice sang, "Amen,"  
As men, determined to die on Malta,  
Renewed their vows at the Sacred Altar.

Outside, in strangest summer rain,  
Four thousand strong Maltese  
Shall march & train with men from Spain,  
As on the ocean breeze  
Soft scent of Turkish incense wafted slowly overseas.

**Birgu**  
**May**  
**1565**

## The Muslim Landing

From watchtowers the warning cannon ring,  
The Sultan's fleet arrives as a vast fan,  
With livestock & the still-green crops of spring  
Many to Birgu & Mdina ran;  
Dead beast & dung  
Poison'd the Marsa wells,  
Songs of devotion sung as witches flung their spells.

That amarda sail'd round Gozo,  
To show that the sea was closed,  
Then at the Marsascirroco  
Made anchorage unnopposed,  
As skiffs ferried his war-cargo  
Their old commander dozed,  
Untroubl'd by the course of coming days,  
Sure on him, soon, the Sultan should heap praise.

Dreams were woken by Mustapha,  
First sword of the army,  
*"My young Pasha, what's the matter?"*  
Yawn'd adm'ral Piali,  
*"This is no time for sleeping, we must seek the victory."*

**Marsaxlokk**

**19th May**

**1565**

## The Siege Begins

Scimitars glinting in a seering sun  
The darlings of great Suliman advance  
Cannon announcing that his seige begun,  
Has on the Sciberras took lethal stance;  
To aid the fleet  
First Saint Elmo must fall,  
Then its capture repeat beneath the Birgu wall.

Begins the thunderstorm of fire  
Oer a starry, sandstone fort,  
Best bombadeers of an empire  
Such brutal destruction wrought  
So much, defenders, doom & dire,  
The safer shore now sought -  
*"Impossible!"* the Sacred Council sigh,  
*"Go back to battle & for Malta die."*

Toni Bajada took his knife,  
Pistol & poisson-dart,  
*"God bless your life,"* whisper'd his wife,  
Kissing him as they part,  
Then watch'd him ride toward the guns with sad, stonecutter's  
heart.

**Mdina**

**May 26th**

**1565**

### **The First Breach**

The angel of death, yellow arms spread wide,  
Welcom'd the waving blades of Islam in,  
How many in her wild inferno died  
Whom, as they did, mused would they ever win;  
Imflammable,  
Those loose robes blazed with flame,  
As fort 'untenable' still struggles to their shame.

For thirty days that crumbling star  
Shone brighter than crescent moon  
Tho defenders relentless are  
Slain by snipers with impune  
& those who fill'd the three-fold bar  
Soon limbs & bowels strewn -  
Replaced by fresh christians every night,  
Skiffing the harbour eager for the fight.

The Turk now stronger efforts made,  
& cut that artery,  
Thro enfilade & escalade  
& gunfire from the sea,  
Rubble & gaping breaches pave the way to victory!

**Fort Saint Elmo**  
**June 21st**  
**1565**

### **The Fall of Fort Saint Elmo**

Dawn lifted rosy wave-breaks to the shore  
& lit a sickly moment of slaughter  
For stubborn struggles, say the laws of war,  
May never be allow'd normal quater;  
The Knights prepare  
To make their final stand,  
One crippl'd in his chair, tho sword still in his hand.

Breachward the Janissaries pour'd,  
Pride of the Sultan's power,  
Putting all inside to the sword  
But not one Knight would cower,  
For still the Maltese lion roar'd  
For one long murd'rous hour,  
Until its throat was cut, then stone-dead fell -  
Mustapha stepp'd into that groaning hell,

*"So small a son has cost us dear,  
Then what price the father?"*  
More shots men hear, them very near  
Five knights fled thro water,  
Guided by Toni Bajada safely cross the Harbour.

**Birgu**  
**June 22nd**

## Canto 2

*The siege of Malta*

Malta of gold, malta of silver, malta of precious metal,  
We shall never take you!  
& from her ramparts a voice replied,  
I am she who has decimated the galleys of the Turks  
& all the warriors of Constantinople & Galata

**Badajoz**

## A Fresh Seige

Piali sail'd the Sultan's precious fleet,  
All settl'd in the Marsamuscetto,  
Men toiling in the fierce midsummer heat,  
When sweat streams down & every labour slow;  
Soon disease rose  
Adding to the slaughter,  
Spread by black mosquitoes spawn'd in filthy water.

Full many vantage points were found  
Round Birgu & Senglea  
From whence the Turkish gunners pound,  
"God help us!" & "Ostia!"  
& every cannonade was crown'd  
By trumpet, shield & spear -  
Minute-by-minute, through that hot July,  
The smoke of battle blotted out the sky,

& when the foe tried to destroy  
The deep creek pallisades  
The knights employ their handsome boy,  
Bajada's crack team wades  
Into the sea, their shark-like knives put paid to all those raids.

**Grand Harbour**

**July**

**1565**

## Desperate Days

From Norman halls to this majestic ville,  
A city rose to rival those of Rome,  
Where as the Kinghts offer their line of steel  
The Maltese now defend their hearth & home;  
A lanteen bridge  
Links them to Senglea  
As on the smoking ridge more Sapahi appear.

& charge like an electric shock,  
Sanguinary the slaughter,  
On knife-point pois'd to run amok  
All thro the Knight's headquarters,  
Tward Armageddon tick'd the clock,  
Mothers, sons & daughters  
Rush'd forth to join the menfolk in the fight,  
Yoked to the swords of Rhodes, each one a knight.

They heard the sound in Sicily  
& pray'd for De Valette,  
Tho seventy his energy  
Many-a-Muslim met,  
A sea-rock in a raging storm, the scourge of Mahomet.

**Birgu**  
**August**  
**1565**

## The Pivotal Point

By boat & tower came the next assault,  
The Port of Castille reeling neath the blow  
& all seem'd lost, but for that thunderbolt  
The gods upon our mortal minds bestow;  
Hospital horse  
Roll'd down Mdina's ramp  
Set on a killer course to burn the muslim camp.

As every able-bodied Turk  
Rush'd toward the walls in waves,  
The christians perform'd such work  
On their wounded & their slaves  
That thro the smoke of battle's murk  
A road of error paves -  
When verged on perfect triumph Pasha hears  
*"Relief is sent,"* fulfilling all his fears.

He march'd his army back to base,  
Of enemy no sign,  
His fuming face wick with disgrace,  
Neck-heckles, shiver-spine,  
*"Where are these men from Sicily, the victory was mine!"*

**Marsa**  
**August 7th**  
**1565**

### **The Last Assault**

As mines explode in animosity  
Toni Bajoda shot up in his bed,  
Tho' wounded he discover'd energy,  
Men from the sacred infirmary led;  
All gallant friends,  
Tho most could barely stand,  
Upon their strength depends the future of the land.

Knight shields fill'd-up walls warp'd by mine,  
Courageous Callachio  
Join'd by the Maltese at the line  
With equal corragio,  
Toni took toll of twenty-nine,  
His knife well-loved the foe,  
So much an arquebusier took aim,  
& sent shot flying in a flash of flame.

Tho wounded, in a world of pain,  
Toni would not falter,  
Round his knife's fane still heap'd his slain,  
Sacrificial altar -  
Til muslim bleeding white no monarch dared fight for Malta.

**Senglea**  
**August 18th**  
**1565**

### **Gran Sossorso**

One hundred days of daily hearing, "When?"  
Sicily's Viceroy sends vital relief,  
Below Mellieha disembarks his men,  
Mustapha stroked his beard in disbelief;  
"How many ride?" "Nigh twenty thousand sire,  
Combing the countryside!" "The army may retire."

All thro the night the camp was struck -  
As the Maltese heard them yell  
For more attackers them mistook,  
Standing ready to repel,  
Then saw to sea the foe had snook,  
So rang triumphant bell,  
Amplified across the purple clover,  
"The infidel has fled, the siege over!"

Come the dawn were bells still ringing,  
Folk stepp'd outside the wall,  
Some dance, some sing, some tear-shedding  
On bleeding knees did fall,  
As all about black bodies burst, curs'd by the murd'rous maul.

**Birgu**  
**September**  
**1565**

## The Relief of Malta

Mustapha heard the news he had been fool'd,  
Just six thousand form'd Sicily's relief,  
Piali's caution was soon over-ruled,  
*"Land ten thousand & meet us up the coast!"*  
How felt the Turk  
When forced back onto land  
For more of war'd black work, with peace so close at hand?

Dispirited once brave men are,  
Heads filling with dying fear,  
Hard galloping down from Naxxar  
Swerve the fresh-faced Chevalier,  
Men from Mdina & Mgarr  
Now on his flank appear,  
Enough to finalise his rising doubt,  
Cohesion turns to rabble turns to rout.

Some with his friends, some limping lone,  
Crawl to the coastal crack,  
Shelves of sandstone bare blood & bone,  
Christ-sword plunged in their back,  
The Turks plunge toward safety to a shrill, *"...& dont come  
back!"*

**Saint Paul's Bay**  
**September 8th**  
**1565**

## Victorious Valetta

As back to Turkey gloom-cloak'd galleys glide  
Let it forever cross the world known  
How one small island majesty defied  
Plucking much feathers from the Peacock Throne,  
How Christendom  
Triumph'd oer the Crescent -  
From Europe's old kingdoms gold-gratitudes were sent.

Auberges of Auvergne & France,  
Aragon & Germany  
Castille, Portugal & Provence  
Pour wealth into the kitty  
Fortune enough to help finance  
A fortified city,  
Join'd forever with its founding father,  
*'Humillima Civitas Valettae.'*

This was the Ottoman High Tide  
World conquest incomplete  
Now Maltese pride with Rome allied,  
O grand, Christian fleet  
Slaughters the Turkish navy – irriversable defeat.

**Lepanto**

## Napoleonica

Come let us ramble on two hundred years  
Now Maltese curse the grand Knights of Saint John,  
Whose raison d'être slowly disappears,  
The long decaying of the Ottoman;  
Valetta's chests  
Bulging with Muslim gold,  
While decadence infest their noble poise of old.

Upon his complex to the east  
Napoleon here pauses  
Finds auberges spread like a feast  
Of roci, exotic courses  
& so upon Malta released  
All his hungry forces –  
Maltese taking Libertie as a wife  
The island fell without the loss of life.

Alas she was no bedfellow  
Of our love romantic,  
For blow by blow crude taxes grow  
Sending men all frantic,  
Pleas sailing to Lord Nelson patrolling the Atlantic.

**Malta**  
**1798**

## Rock of Empire

While Boney battl'd at Aboukir Bay  
The English have enclosed Calypso's Isles  
Fierce ring preventing vessels, every day,  
From provisioning the French rank & file;  
Valetta's walls  
Immune to cannons' shot,  
But not those hungry holes which growling stomachs knot.

To haples, "Vive Napoleon!"  
The garrisons surrender,  
Abandon'd on the hard ocean  
To starve & scarlet fever,  
Majestic London, from now on,  
Malta's first officer –  
& even Mdina's nobility  
Happy to join Britain's community.

So in a skirl of pipe parades  
Portsmouth has flagg'd the Med –  
The vision fades... fourteen decades  
Into time's train are fed –  
The grand digression over, let us fell the day instead.

Malta

### Canto 3

*The Italian Seige of Malta*

"To honour her brave people I award the George Cross to the  
Island Fortress of Malta to bear witness to a Heroism &  
Devotion that will long be famous in history.'

**King George VI**

### 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 Valletta defence offers a meagre yield.

Wily Britain builds strength in stealth -  
East of Cyrenaica  
The forces of the Commonwealth  
Cross Egypt's ancyent border,  
In fiery line & perfect health  
To claim an Uttica -  
From Bardia & dune-sunk lunar sands  
Push 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**

## Bombing Malta

As when muskets ended the age of swords  
From henceforth oceans controll'd from the air,  
When swooping hawks patrol the old whale-roads,  
Drop lethal loads on all who venture there;  
    Illustrious,  
    The Axis lust to sink,  
Now batter'd furious, but one blow from the brink,

She limps into the Grand Harbour  
    & sleeps a sitting target,  
    Regia Aeronautica  
For the coup de grace was set  
    But as they reach the arena  
    By hell-let-loose were met -  
Attack after ack-ack attack was made  
More brave, more foolish than the Light Brigade.

The heart of these hostilities  
Was pounded long & hard  
    The Three Cities fatalities  
Spread round the wreck'd dock-yard -  
What took the Turks three months to raze by one night equal  
    scarr'd.

**Senglea**  
**16th Jan**  
**1941**

## Afrika Korps

Rommel took first step on the Afric sand,  
    All about servants of the fiasco  
    Load ships, evacuation nigh at hand,  
Arms strewn as if by Trasimene's flow;  
    He cock'd his cap  
    & crack'd a riding whip,  
*"Somevon get me a map, I vant to take a trip."*

His plane flew lofty on the tour  
    Of hot, simmering Syrte,  
Sang the nomadic troubadour,  
    *"What beauty & how ghastly!"*  
    Italians flee 'long the shore  
    Yon mud-baked Benghazi,  
*"We shall form a fresh defence line down there!"*  
With that they whipt 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 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**1941**

### Fortress Malta

Mussolini blames his woes on Malta,  
"Allow this hornet's nest no hour of rest,  
An unsinkable aircraft carrier  
From now all her activity depress'd;  
She is the knife  
Press'd on lines of supply,  
Her people full of life, then they will have to die."

The Maltese met Il Duce's rage  
Determin'd on liberty,  
Prisoners in an island-cage  
They dug themselves to safety,  
A second neolithic age  
For faith's first family  
Living life in a limestone catacomb,  
Prayer & candle lighting up the gloom.

Fighting for their little contree  
They help'd a global cause,  
Tween Italy & Tripoli  
Attack'd the Axis stores,  
With submarines & wellingtons & all the wrack of wars.

**Mediterranean**  
**November**  
**1941**

### Malta Silenced

Once more Christmas has pass'd without a victor  
Now Hitler too has blamed Calypso's isle  
Where from short airstrips served by Valetta  
His convoys are attackt mile after mile  
Thus Rommel starved  
Thus Suez kept open  
Thus his vast forces halved twyx Saxon & Russian.

Malta besieged by brutal means  
By Mussolini's navy  
As when bloodthirsty Hagarenes  
Had throttl'd her from the sea  
Old churches blown to smithereens  
By Codotteiri  
Its airstips by Luftwaffe pulverised  
The threat to Hitler's supplies neutralized!

From the shores of Sicilia  
The merchant vessels flow  
Topless sailors take siestas  
On deck-tops tranquilo  
Ferrying tanks & petrol to fuel Rommel's coming blow.

**4 Jan**  
**1942**

## Malta Starved

There was no spring in Malta, forty-two,  
For what grows on an active volcano?  
When fresh water was but the dusty dew  
Blown in by the sense-seizing Sirrocco;  
No food to spare,  
When pets gaurded by guns,  
When just the prickly pear replaced the sunken tonnes,

When sirens sound incessantly  
& rampant typhus fever,  
When fighters came from Italy  
& no-one dared relieve her  
With rats wining their liberty  
Even the believer  
Grew weary at the hunger & the stench  
Til mass restored her heart with stoic wrench.

How long can an island nation  
Bide her tongue & suffer?  
Both starvation & salvation  
On the future hover -  
But lacking arks of oil & flour she must soon surrender!

**Malta**  
**August**  
**1942**

## Desperate Convoy

A convoy pass'd the safety of the straits,  
Sailors survey'd the scene as once did Scott,  
But his soiree was not left to the fates,  
That tranquil sea tempest of shell & shot;  
No man dared bunk  
The plan steam'd on & on,  
As ship-by-ship was sunk twixt Skerki & Cape Bon.

The war roll'd on right furious  
An entire harvest afloat  
Now set on by swarms of stukas  
& Davidian E-Boat  
Driving against the destroyers  
& carrier support  
In one long running battle thro the Med  
Where murderers were murdered there instead.

They flew out from Valetta's fields  
Into the boiling sky  
Mere Spitfire shields, to save the yields  
They could but only try  
As on into the jaws of death those brave men fly & fly.

**13th August**  
**Mediterranean**

## Black Gold

A flight of spitfire falls from sommer sky  
To land on an oil fields welllaid remake  
Of isle astride the highway of supply  
All alone in an hostile Axis lake  
Thro constant fire  
Urged on by their belief  
That the heads of empire must send to them relief

Harbours expectant with children  
& weary with sad farmers,  
Cut short nervous conversation  
To cheer for the Port Chalmers,  
The Stars of Melbourne & Brisbane,  
With their shatter'd armours -  
Survivors of this keystone of the war,  
Then the Rochester Castle made them four!

The convoy limp'd, or tow'd to port,  
Join'd by vital tanker,  
Tho ten ships short brave sailors brought  
Salvation to anchor,  
Soon submarines refuel, scent an Axis ship & sank her!

September 15<sup>th</sup>  
Mediterranean

## El Alamein

Driven by the dreams of his dear Fuhrer,  
Weigh'd by th'expectation of Germany,  
Ill with the air of the Nile's wide delta,  
The Pyramids in immediacy,  
Rommel orders  
His neurasthenic men  
*"Boys rev up the panzers, advance them once again."*

They drove North of the Quattara  
In iron-clad caravans,  
Rode the ridge Alem el Halfa  
As the Somuan Shermans  
Send their shells from sandy shelter,  
Wreak havoc with his plans...  
He paus'd, the pale moon growing paler still,  
From the warm south came sandstorms thick & shrill.

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

Jabel Kalakh  
September 3<sup>rd</sup>  
1942

**Book  
XVII**

**Allied Advances**

**Canto I**

*The defeats of the Axis Powers at Stalingrad & Guadalcanal*

*Depuis Monach iusqu'aupres de Sicille,  
Toute la plage demourra desolee:  
Il n'y aura fauxbourgs, cite', ne ville,  
Que par Barbares pillee soit & vollee.*

The best laid schemes of mice & men gang aft a-gley

**Rabbie Burns**

## Guadalcanal

At last America offers battle,  
Lucent volcanic isle rainforested,  
Stagnant & strange, humid, pestilential,  
By crocodile & insect infested;  
The bugles blare,  
How bold goes the attack,  
Banzais scythe thro the air, silenced by CRACK! CRACK!  
CRACK!

Men fought in a furious rage  
Mid the giant hardwood trees,  
Mottl'd by squawking foliage,  
Warm swamp waters tickling knees,  
Fell'd by a war distant men wage,  
Ful riddl'd with disease...  
Chrystals shrieking a fanatical gleam  
The last thing many marines would have seen.

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

**Solomon Islands**  
**September 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**1942**

## Prisoners

Humiliated by subhuman skill  
The master race enacts its casting vote,  
Feeling unsatisfied with a quick kill  
They choose instead constriction by the throat;  
So drag their prey  
To Korolenko Street,  
*"Lets make them rue the day they damn'd us in defeat!"*

Kuzmenko is the first to cry  
Bull-clubb'd to the ground & shot,  
Around Klimenko nail-fists fly,  
Til left by bullets to rot,  
Shouting, *"Red sport will never die!"*  
Trusevich marks his spot,  
Stood proud & tall in his goalkeeper green,  
Soon blood-stain'd in the Babi-Yar ravine.

The news filter'd to the outside,  
Dishearten'd Konstantin,  
Deflated pride went to confide  
With his mum in an inn, (???)  
*"Worry not,"* mused wise Christina, *"The final we must win."*

**Kiev**  
**September 1942**

### Arctic Circle

The ice-encrusted look-out grew entranced  
    Blinking rosy-ice hyperborean,  
The glowing polar coast capp'd the distance,  
    Darkling realms of half-light Cimmerian;  
    These shadows plough'd  
    Northerly with due care,  
Roll'd & pitch'd thro grey cloud, spray freezing in the air.

Jack Sumner shouts day in day out,  
    His convoy runs the gauntlet,  
    Batter'd & scatter'd y the kraut  
    With many a sinking threat,  
But well the British gunneres fought,  
    Bursting the minefield net,  
To be spotted by their Russian raven,  
    To escort them safely to this haven.

They enter'd the ghostly harbour,  
    Discharg'd their martial bread,  
    To help Russia hack down Hitler  
    In terrible bloodshed -  
Then drown'd their thin-fray'd nerves with vodka in a drinking  
    shed.

**Archangel**  
**September 1942**

### Urban Crucible

Paulus put down the phone on der Fuhrer,  
Turn'd to his gen'ral, "*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,  
    Around the huge, grey grain silo,  
    Held by ragged defenders,  
    Dread lingers in ev'ry shadow,  
    Wylde shots blast at noises -  
Rages a vicious hand-to-hand combat  
In sewer, stairwell, cellar, shop-front, flat.

Pity the poor civilian,  
    Courageous troglodyte,  
    Who has chosen subt'anean  
    Defending thy birthright,  
This is thy city, thy property, thy striving, thy fight.

**Stalingrad**  
**September 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**1942**

## **Crux**

The Kremlin's air grew heavy with the fate  
Of Russian empire & Joe Stalin's fame  
As tho stood at the Corinthian gate,  
*"We must save the city, she bares my name...  
Not one step back!"*  
The motherland's last hope  
Shall beat back the attack, some sumo at the rope.

Many a penal battalion  
Ythrust into the battle,  
Trapt twixt a foreign machine gun  
& the Kommissar's pistol,  
How they charged in desperation,  
Miracle survival...  
Getting to grips as quickly as they could  
Ev'ry second shedding Soviet blood.

The lucky few punctured the lines,  
Cold steel coldly applied,  
The siren whines, th'assault resigns  
& when the blood had dried  
One hundred vermin slept breathless but ten schweinhunds  
had died.

**Stalingrad**  
**October**  
**1942**

## **Nuclear Advent**

Einstein has warn'd Roosevelt directly,  
*'The unspeakable fury of the Bomb,'*  
A project given top priority,  
To harness the power of the atom;  
Stately support,  
Not Bounaparte's error -  
*"Fulton, how can a boat travel underwater?"*

To desolate New Mexico  
Mid arid Los Alamos,  
Best science of the Allies stow,  
Clergy of the compound cross,  
Blending together all they know  
& pitch it on a toss...  
Compiling theories & equations,  
Creating the ultimate of weapons.

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

**Chicago**  
**December**  
**1942**

### Maltese Falcon

From nettle-danger flowers safely drawn  
With Monty on the roads to Tripoli  
The Maltese felt them less & less alone  
As day-by-day was nearing victory;  
Valiant light  
Brave Malta saved the world  
When Hitler's evil might was at Valetta hurl'd.

That once more yearn'd their homes to raze,  
In an action of sheer spite  
The heavens, for eleven days,  
Full of sound & fire-sprite,  
When spitfire its design displays  
Lord of the azure height,  
So many Axis pilots by them slain,  
They never would return in force again.

With winter comes increas'd rations,  
& mail from overseas,  
Latest fashions, famous passions  
Sets people at their ease,  
Small semblance of normality & sweet-fill'd christmas trees.

**Malta**  
**December**  
**1942**

### Counter Attack!

How brutal when two granite wills collide,  
Men kickt 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,  
A petty dictator in the time of Stalin.

The Russians & their countersway  
Cross the wide Don's ice floe pitch  
Tween old Kletska's russet clay  
& stark Serafimovich,  
Blizzards a-bluster claim the day,  
Fell workings of a witch...  
"Achtung!" the Wehrmacht's Italian flanks  
Replaced by lethal rows of Russian tanks.

As PANIC acquires grave station  
She spreads a pungent breeze -  
Chain reaction, six months gains gone,  
How the conqueror flees,  
But for the Sixth, that wounded Knight, trapt on his bleeding  
knees.

**Stalingrad**  
**December 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1942**

## Nippon Noon

Sanguine waters surround the Solomons,  
Sun of empire begins her long descent,  
Humb'l'd & hurt by these Americans,  
Epitomised by one hardy sergeant;  
The big, bald Al,  
As rough as gruff could be,  
Stuck on Guadalcanal from Hicksville, Tennessee.

He watch'd the vaulting perseids  
Cause the foe's vapouressence,  
At times was forced to close his lids  
To starbrite phosphorescence,  
Struck by th'enchaining 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**

## Canto II

*The course of the war, enacted upon the Atlantic  
& three continents*

Where there's life there's hope

Terence

## Imperial Dementia

The pursuit of unbridl'd ambition,  
Wildly bezerking thro' civilised lands,  
Oft leads to phantasie as the vision  
Of empire crumbles to glitter-bone sands;  
Hitler muses  
Midst his mythopoeics,  
So serenely wonders, '*O what should I do next?*'

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

Retiring to his humble bed,  
The nightmares draweth 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**

## Convoy

America! republic young & free,  
Where liberty is the supreme touchstone,  
Keep safe the arsenal of democracy  
Til by thy fleets to battlefields are borne;  
The shore recedes,  
Soon lost in hoary mists,  
Merseywise flow the needs to feed Allied int'rests.

Our fleet in constant motion ploughs  
Thro a ceaseless sea of silk,  
The ocean crashes oer the boughs  
Of Elizabeth & her ilk,  
Gigantic herd of scatter'd cows  
Laden with vital milk,  
On all sides nothing but the tawny blue,  
Sometimes an iceberg lumbers into view...

Jack blew into his freezing hands  
Tho barely thawable,  
Vigilance stands watching Iceland's  
Grand cliffs formidable,  
By nature's beauty nobly touch'd... thou portent of battle.

**The Atlantic Ocean**  
**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  
Is flung into Warsaw,  
Grand flagellant unveils his ghoulish threshing floor.

What faith rises with the Torah  
& the flesh of Hebrewdom,  
Moses lights up the Menorah  
Kinfolk hold hands as they hum,  
Proclaiming a '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'rywhence attacks!  
Cold & enpearl'd  
The submariner rides,  
Bellum Navale swirl'd beneath the whirling tides.

With heavy beard & nerves half shot  
Xaver cursed his dank abode,  
Often times his stomach would knot  
As the depth charges explode  
But when a new course would he plot  
& the foe torpedoed  
He felt his place with the warring nations...  
Claxons caterwaul ... to action stations!

Th'Elizabeth sinks! Jack Sumner's  
Clothes th'ocean saturates,  
Haul'd by shoulders, he joins t'others,  
Last lot of his shipmates,  
Cramm'd in a bulging, wooden boat to contemplate their fates.

**The Atlantic Ocean**  
**February 1st**  
**1943**

### The Pendulum Turns

From the depths of the tractor factory  
Lowly corporal makes one last 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, here endure only men.

Ivan came in ev'rywhereness  
*"Hund wollt ihr ewig leben?"*  
Kingly heroism his 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,  
Consents to surrender,  
How glad that captured mass of men meant for Siberia.

**Stalingrad**  
**February 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1943**

### Death of Jack Sumner

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

Sight of 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 -  
See a Stemmler slay a Sumner,  
Now unambivalent  
The goddess KARMA flit the scene & to another went.

**The Atlantic Ocean**  
**February 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**1943**

### Penalty Shoot-Out

Partisans attack the camp at Siretz,  
To avenge this impertinent action  
& answer for their grotesque karmic debts,  
Every third prisoner faces the gun;  
Now name-by-name  
The men of FC Start  
Have play'd their final game, placed three persons apart.

Kuzmenko is the first to cry  
Bull-clubb'd to the ground & shot,  
Around Klimenko nail-fists fly,  
Til left by bullets to rot,  
Shouting, "*Red sport will never die!*"  
Trusevich marks his spot,  
Stood proud & tall in a goalkeeper green,  
Soon blood-stain'd in the Babi-Yar ravine.

The news filter'd back to the street,  
Dishearten'd Konstantin,  
Sick with defeat he went to meet  
His mother in an inn,  
"*Worry not,*" mused wise Christina, "*The final we must win.*"

**Kiev**  
**February 1943**

### Colonel Wingate

Burma... fresh bane of the British army,  
Catalogue of defeat & disaster,  
Receives a maverick visionary,  
Determin'd to restore his land's honour;  
Daring designs  
Regaled with sure surmise,  
"Let me break thro the lines & harass their supplies..."

He enlisted common scousers,  
La, full of life & gobby,  
Alchemied with Nepal's Ghurkas,  
Busked in dusky khaki,  
He put them thro their strict paces,  
Three months purgatory...  
Gen'ral Wavell visits one stormy day,  
Inspects them then salutes them on their way.

The vanguard of the re-conquest  
Fords the Chindwin river,  
Chain'd to the best, by good lord blest,  
Sporting an umbrella,  
"You never know when you'll need one with tropical weather!"

**The Raj**  
**February**  
**1943**

### Death of Xaver Stemmler

E'er since the battle of Trafalgar Bay  
These 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

Deep submarines are toss'd about,  
BOOM-BOOM-BOOOOM & BOOM again,  
Some sub-aquatic boxing bout...  
Like fountains in a garden  
Seawater spouts will fill with doubt  
Entrapp'd & frighten'd men...  
Sailors coating trousers in cruddy goo,  
Their ship ript up & simply flipt in two.

The mighty ocean rushes in,  
Thetis astride the bull,  
Cat'clysmic din, Xaver aspin,  
Such weight crushes the skull,  
To sleep the deep forever in the cold crypt of that hull.

**The Atlantic Ocean**  
**February**  
**1943**

### Canto III

*The invasion of Italy by the Allies  
& the subsequent fall of Mussolini*

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

**George Scott**

## Rebel Mountain

Mid the shaggy hills of Montenegro  
Hid the Bandit & his apparitions,  
One hundred thousand Reichsmarks for Tito,  
Tying down thirty German divisions;  
Force fed on zeal,  
Typhus on sick parade  
Despite desp'rate appeal Stalin shall send no aid.

A Wellington pass'd overhead,  
Cough'd drifting parachuter,  
Dangling upon a nylon thread  
A tall English officer  
Donn'd the red & promptly said,  
*"Take me to your leader!"*  
Tito laugh'd p'litely at that daft beret -  
*"You have put on a wizard show, I say!"*

*I'm from Secret Operation's  
Special Executive  
With permission, your position,  
To London I shall give  
Follow'd by airdrops & enough for you & yours to live!"*

**Yugoslavia**  
**April**  
**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 Arab's boon, both sten to spoon,  
Bedecks the caravans,  
As nearby naked corpses rot forgotten in the sands.

**Libya**  
**May 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**1943**

## Lost at Sea

Rose & Freda arrive at the butchers,  
Sov'reigns & ha'pennys stretching round the back,  
But as they went shuffling to the counters  
Freda froze at this vision of 'er Jack;  
Pellucid glow,  
Flan'd by blue guardian,  
"Rose, love, we've gotta go... forget bloody bacon!"

Boy soldiers play'd war in' sandbags,  
Cog Lane watch'd the telegram,  
An Azrael along the flags...  
Maggie dropt 'er jar of jam,  
Flusht hot, slipt on her pumps & rags,  
Rush'd out to find 'er mam...  
Collar'd with granny flapin' down the street,  
For sev'ral seconds cold hearts lost their beat...

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

## Burnley

May  
1943

## Chindits

Thro delphic idyll of watery shades  
A Japanese lackey treads sweat-streaming,  
A mountain Gibbon's gibber flies & fades,  
God's artistry mortal sense o'erwhelming:  
Sly Ghurka stands  
Up from the ground, unseen,  
Sticking his dagger'd hands thro windpipe, throat & spleen...

The day's bland meal had just been pann'd,  
Bamboo shoots & curried snake ,  
Wingate joins his brave battle-band  
Lazing on a well-earn'd break,  
With blade & bible in each hand,  
*"The fourth course we shall take!"*  
In theior wake the jungle's neutrality,  
Here only monkeys possess mastery.

They hack'd their way thro jungle dense,  
Thick webs & drooping snakes,  
Tho tired & tense the fine-tuned sense  
Always the right road takes,  
Til one-by-one they burst upon their goal as thin as rakes.

## The Irrawaddy

May  
1943

## Secret War

At England's heart there stands a splendid house  
Twixt Oxford & Cambridge equidistant,  
Grounds hush'd more than a sleeping harvest mouse,  
The fine façade stately & innocent;  
But step within,  
A new world is reveal'd,  
The day's work shall begin for England's unseen shield.

Crack team of elite specialists  
Work hard on the ENIGMA,  
Chess masters & cryptologists,  
An expert crossword puzzler,  
Math'maticians & star linguists  
Brought from America  
To decode the unbreakable machine...  
If Germany but knew she would go green!

*"With but one panzer division  
Reserve in Sicily,  
The battle's won before begun!  
She brew'd a pot of tea,  
As Sun Tzu said, "To win a war first know the enemy."*

## Bletchley Park

June  
1943

## Kertsch

According to the well-tried strategum  
Hitler arrays his army's fair flower,  
Attacking the pendulum's momentum,  
This salient, central peninsula;  
The panzers roll,  
The blitzkrieg underway,  
The first defenders fall this hot & sultry day,

Where aggression was confounded  
Mid the orchards & copses,  
Their panzers punisht & pounded,  
Fields thicken with fresh corpses,  
These killing grounds, litter'd with dead  
& staggering losses  
Weeping for this clash of superegos  
Molten aluminium thro crackt vent flows.

Death roam'd about the battlefield  
Between each pock-mark'd ridge,  
No slope or shield, nor those that yield,  
Were spared his privilege,  
From life's bloom bodies shrivelling, withering river-sedge.

## Prokhorovha

July 9<sup>th</sup>  
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?'  
Mused three old crones sat down at the station;  
A 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 the sands of Sicilia  
Neath luscious Sommerskies  
& overwhelm the unprepared beaches  
Of the stunn'd, co-axial defenders.

The scenery invokes the gleam  
Of the first Punic Wars,  
When the Tireme first brought the dream  
Beyond the Roman shores,  
Spreading the Grecian legacy - learning, culture & laws.

**Panormus**  
**July 10th**  
**1943**

## Escape from Colditz

Bligh lookt upon the verdant Molden vale,  
Serenely sheer schloss firmamentward shoots,  
So foreboding he grew a chloric pale,  
Heart sinking to the bottom of his boots;  
Oflag IVC,  
Cold castle for bad boys  
Great gates bolted firmly with such soul-seering noise.

Oer the claustrophobic courtyard,  
After evening's cramp'd apell,  
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,  
Dropt where the flashlights comb,  
Brush'd off the dust, saunters outside & set first foot for home.

**Germany**  
**July**  
**1943**

**Book XVIII**

**Axis & Allies**

**Turning Tide**

Kertsch morphing from hope to emergency  
Its little instigator kept his cool,  
Musing upon the news from Sicily,  
*"It must be a feint, they think me a fool!"*  
*Turn from assault,*  
*From now spurn all attacks*  
*& in the Balkans halt the Allies in their tracks.!"*

With all of their reserves withdrawn  
The Wehrmacht cuts its losses,  
Upon whose line barrages thrown  
Then sliced in two by sappers,  
All round the enemy hath grown,  
Asiatic faces -  
A Turkestani waves the red flag high,  
Storming the bridge shrapnel splices his eye,

So drops the flag, soon flying proud,  
Held by some Kamchatkan,  
Pick'd from the crowd a bullet cloud  
Decimates him within -  
Flag claim'd by an Irkutski, always forward to Berlin!

**Suska**  
**July 12th**  
**1943**

*Les dieuz feront aux humains apparence*  
*Ce qu'ils z'eront auteurs de grand conflit.*  
*Auant ciel veu zerein e'z'pue & lance :*  
*Que vers main gauche z'era plus grand afflit*

## Canto I

The course of the war enacted  
upon the Pacific Ocean & two continents

All the world is a stage & all the men & women merely players

Shakespeare

## Ousting Il Duce

Italia! nearest heaven on Earth,  
To poetry thou art the perfect foil,  
Here Rhea's sacred sons suckl'd from birth,  
Time & again to tread thy blood-stain'd soil;  
Thy capital  
Suffers bombs mid beauty,  
The Grand Fascist Council has summon'd Il Duce...

The coup chair'd by Badoglio  
*"Our contree is in turmoil  
Thus Mussolini, you must go!"*  
Fat man's blood begins to boil,  
He look'd around, *"Et tu Ciano!?"*  
The rod return'd royal...  
Summararily dismiss'd by the king  
Then arrested, *"You will pay!"*... spittings ring.

His prison was a pirate isle  
Of coves & cliffs & peaks,  
To while the while in strict exile,  
Here but the soft sea speaks  
& reliques of the former ways slow aging to antiques.

**Ponza**

**July 27<sup>th</sup>**

**1943**

### **The Theft of Europe**

A train pulls into the stazione,  
Out steps Goering in green, silk pantaloons,  
To kommandeer the art of the country  
& pocket more of Europa's dubloons;  
    These bandit runs  
    To Reichsbank coffers lieu,  
For when they hold they guns would one dare to argue?

Our man mountain of perfumed flab  
    About Golconda lurches,  
Conducts a graceful smash & grab  
    On galleries & churches,  
    This Raphael, that marble slab  
    Well-groom'd taste entices -  
With gifted eye he trawls thro gilded stalls  
Collecting sep'rately for his own walls.

He loaded stalwarts of rare art  
    Into his carriages,  
As engines start, to ease his heart,  
    Thro thick ringed fingers  
Bright gems cascade for men self made need re-assurances.

**Rome**  
**August**  
**1943**

### **Piercing the Continent**

Where these twin swirling ancyeent oceans meet  
    Charybdis whirls by the rock of Scylla,  
Today sail stout ships of the Allied fleet  
    Across the sunsunk straits of Messina;  
    Led by th'English  
    Invading the mainland  
Where enslaved peoples wish safe passage for the band.

They cross'd in hush'd tranquillity  
    Unoppos'd & without fear,  
Stood in motor boat led Monty,  
    Lush shore drawing ever near,  
    The sloshing sea, the jollity,  
    A picnic atmosphere...  
To cheers they plant the old union flag  
& tread the Cardini to the Reichstag.

From the Blue waters of the Nile  
    To swelt'ring Tripoli,  
Mile after mile of Afric trial,  
    The surge thro Sicily,  
The Eighth army has finally set foot in Italy.

**Calabria**  
**September 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**1943**

## Conquest of Italy

Languor usurps the last coragio,  
A 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,  
Bringing Berlin's fascists, those vicious packs of crows.

Ah! once again the Roman's fall  
As at Decadent Pompeii,  
When ash & aethon cover'd all...  
To the common folk's dismay  
They find themselves the fresco wall  
Parting the global fray...  
Lives lying in the lap of deity,  
Uncertain futures spread thro Italy.

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.

**The Third Reich**  
**September 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**1943**

## Dramatic Rescue

Humming Heinkels drew gliders in their tow,  
Releas'd them on the buxom welken swell,  
Floating to the Gran Sasso, far below,  
Capp'd by snow patches & this white hotel  
Where splintering  
Crash the flimsy gliders,  
See the men outpouring like fierce gladiators!

The bungling gaurds jump'd out of bed,  
Caught in canine siesta,  
Il Duce shouts down, "No bloodshed!"  
From window of his tower,  
Gen'ral fetches goblet of red  
& toasts "*To the victor!*"  
*Down'd in one gulp by Otto Skorzeny,*  
*"Now, sir, take me to see Mussolini!"*

*"Der Fuhrer bids form a fascist*  
*Republic North of Rome...*  
*Also arrest Ciano ye must,*  
*E'en from your daughter's home..."*  
He mumbl'd, humbl'd as a sunken shadow in the gloam.

**Abruzzi Appennines**  
**September 23rd**  
**1943**

### A Game of Chess

The workers spent their hard-earn'd half an hour  
Gather'd around blindfolded Botvinnik,  
Barely exercising his chess power,  
Beating some young patzer with a fork trick;  
Purposeful cough  
Disturbs the ego show,  
He takes the blindfold off, a message from Moscow!

His foreman perused the pages  
Of that amazing letter,  
*"It seems, Mikhael, you are famous  
No more a mere sheet cutter,  
With you lies our future in chess  
When the war is over..."*  
*"Yes,"* said the master, *"a war we shall win..."*  
& nobody could doubt his knowing grin.

As he work'd upon the Dragon,  
Sharp Yugoslav Attack,  
White's H pawn on the sixth... *"White's won...  
What's this?"* An exchange sac -  
Forth with furious energy broke the forces of black.

**The Urals**  
**October**  
**1943**

### War's Shadow

Armour'd car swept up the serpentine road  
Of the mount of Saint Benedict's abbey,  
The general steps out, clutching a sword,  
Eyes saccading cross the Liri Valley;  
The position  
Rules a wide area,  
*"Twill have to be taken afore Casilina..."*

Boot nails echoed round the cloisters  
Where stood Dom Gregorio,  
Flank'd by seven very pious  
Monks of Montecassino,  
*"To stay here vud be dangerous..."*  
*"No! no! we must not go!"*  
*"Very well, but may I suggest promptly  
Transport thy treasures to safe sanctuary."*

They placed gold-laced legatura,  
Coral, tapestries,  
Mellin, Conca, Solimena,  
Great bibles in lorries,  
Each guarded by two monks drove north for Roman galleries.

**Italy**  
**October 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**1943**

### Savage Rape

*"At last! At last! The bastards are going  
& we shall know freedom!"* sang Christina,  
All round th'evacuation full flowing,  
Rejoicing she turn'd the road's calm corner...  
    & froze like clay,  
Four grey soldiers stood 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 the Germans were long gone  
    & there his mother died,  
An old Russian offer'd a gun,  
Clutch'd tightly as he cried,  
*"I shall avenge my family!"* such hate to rage inside.

**Kiev**  
**November 6th**  
**1943**

### Savage Battle

As tho sailing on dreamy manoeuvres,  
The majesty of air-space deem'd complete,  
Protected by twelve aircraft carriers  
America has launched a battle fleet  
    For the Gilberts,  
Where surged the young marine,  
Tween cool volcanic spurts yclad in em'rald green,

Lush saplings rush in from the sea  
    & plunge into the cauldron,  
Tho courageous mamertini  
They moulder by the dozen,  
Boys screaming out *"Mommy! Mommy!"*  
Held pendulous chaudron...  
Safe only in the space where Amtrak rolls  
Unless, above them, snipers in the boles.

The twin-cylinder'd flamethrower  
Blazed thro holes & trenches,  
*"The Emporer!"* no surrender,  
Such a grisly business,  
Barely a handful faced disgrace, the rest sable corpses.

**Tarawa**  
**November 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**1943**

## Canto II

*The course of the war enacted upon the European continent*

Older men declare war, but it is youth that must fight & die, &  
it is youth that must inherit the tribulations, the sorrow, & the  
triumphs that are the aftermath of war

**J E Hoover**

## Home Run

Bligh gazed upon the golden coast of Spain,  
Close to the end of his great adventure,  
Only friendly faces sat on the train,  
Far from those at the start of the saga;  
Back in Colditz  
Nervy, knife-edge moments  
When Fritz checkt his 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 & quart of cheese  
Young Miguel guides him cross the Pyrenees.

The holy grail! O empire 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?"*

**Gibraltar  
December  
1943**

### End of the Dream

Encaved in a distant reality,  
The blood of good Germans upon his hands,  
Entranced by ghosts & Himmler's theurgy,  
His officious imperium still stands;  
Yet one-by-one  
Timeless cities destroy'd  
The Allies prime weapon dragging him to the void.

As Hercules donn'd that tunic  
& died by his own poison  
Throughout the Reich, full bubonic,  
Has spread *his* war's contagion,  
Reducing homes to ash & brick,  
Morbid devastation!  
A bulletin! For him a worse bombshell,  
Most of the VI sites destroy'd as well!

He rampaged with his jaundiced eye,  
*"This must be treachery!"*  
Drugg'd blood-supply soaring sky high,  
The traitor, *"Who is he?"*  
Clinging sadly to slender threads of dwindling destiny.

**The Wolf's Lair**  
**December**  
**1943**

### Return of Rommel

Hitler summon'd 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."

He tour'd the sea defences,  
Twitchy gen'rals form his 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 vil be lost!"  
His voice grew deep, concern'd & edged with frost,

& waved his Field-Marshal's baton  
Like wizards weave their wands,  
Cunning vision foxed one-by-one  
Obstacles in the sands,  
To cause death & destruction as the occasion demands.

**Le Vivier**  
**January**  
**1944**

## Slave Labour

They drew them from the children of Dachau  
Four corners of a suppliant empire,  
Mere animals to pull the Nazi plough,  
Dragg'd thro a steadily stagnating mire;  
Slow work'd to death,  
"Such waste to slay early,  
When til it's dying breath it can make you money."

Thetis spat out a freezing spray  
Soak'd those thin rags on Sergei,  
Whispering to himself each day  
"You must survive... do not die!"  
Busying round a windswept bay,  
Sand sticking in the eye,  
Burying scores of deadly little mines  
According to Rommel's murd'rous designs.

How girding was each night to hear  
This sweet canary sing,  
End drawing near, thro death & fear,  
Patient & enduring,  
"Turn it up Stiltski..." "...World service... the Russians are  
winning!"

**Bolougne**  
**Jan 15th**  
**1944**

## Death of Ciano

How the fluctuating fortunes of war  
Can be embodied in a single soul,  
A prince addresses emperors no more,  
Condemn'd to wallow in this bourbon hole;  
But one more day,  
For his strong insistence  
On toppling Il Duce has earn'd a death sentence...

So he put a pen to paper  
& he started to confess  
How his idol & Herr Hitler  
Plunged the world into this mess...  
Smuggled out by his sweet Edda,  
Tuck'd in her peasants dress,  
The truth salvaged for all posterity,  
She enter'd Switzerland so secretly.

He sat with his fellow 'traitors'  
Facing the gangster law,  
Those poor soldiers, dreadful aimers,  
One shot him in the jaw  
& fell groaning... before he'd died they'd shot him five times  
more.

**Veronah**  
**January 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

## Monte Cassino

From white morning mists rose the Ausini,  
Weaving his magick Lord Sol clear'd the scene,  
Spreading thro the streets of Saint Germani  
The Allies pressed in khaki, beige & green;  
Such handsome men  
Met that crack mountain troop,  
Again, again, again returning with a stoop.

Altho the abbey pleach'd sublime  
Above the battle's terrors  
Centuries shatter'd in short time  
By waves of Allied bombers,  
Twas heinous this human crime  
Repeated thrice before...  
Those tons of dust thrown up settl'd to show  
Batter'd monks weeping for Gregorio.

They left this bastion of faith  
Like rippers leave a whore  
Some ruin'd wraith, stone sunk in Lethe,  
Til she will rise once more,  
A mass of grey stone sleeping in the trail of Total War.

**Italy**  
**Feb 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

## Escape in the Jungle

Shane Slater sat cracking his teeming lice  
Emaciated, weakend with fatigue,  
Sustain'd by friendship & handfuls of rice,  
Laying this damn'd railway league after league;  
*"You are cowards!"*  
Brave men told ev'ry day,  
Ramm'd home with fists & swords slicing ensanguin'd spray.

Poor Alfred, half dead with disease  
(most thought he'd nearly had it),  
Was shown some rocks, *"Coward! move these!"*  
He tried but could not do it,  
So tied between two supple trees,  
A sweep... the rope is split -  
Terribly tearing his torso in two  
Back upright went those bent trunks of bamboo.

Shane snapt, ghost looking on aghast,  
Soul sharing his friend's pain,  
He broke & dasht, the bullets pass'd  
A bee's dick from his brain,  
Three miles of jungle flasht by 'fore he saw his thigh's  
bloodstain...

**Thailand**  
**March**  
**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;  
A ghastly smell,  
Foul & nauseating  
Shouts welcome them to hell, "*Line up for delousing...*"

They came to where the Grunfeld's stood  
Choosing the two old fathers  
& pale Heidi whose thinning blood  
Which daily weaker courses,  
All hugg'd & kiss'd the best they could  
Until they kickt Moses,  
Yanking these three from a good family,  
March'd down the path leading t'eternity

& stript naked, they walk'd 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 on embattled Earth,  
Loud the sennets resound for Liberty,  
This generation's sacrifice her worth;  
Hebe's darlings  
From valley, peak & shore  
Are lull'd by valour's wings & poetry in war.

To do her bit Maggie Sumner  
Sign'd up with the Land's Army  
Threshing 'Down South' in hot weather,  
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 young, 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**

### Canto III

*D-Day & the Allied invasion of Normandy*

### Traitors!

With certain gen'ralry new thought took hold,  
With growing doubt comes disillusionment,  
Der Fuhrer naught but bemustach'd cuckold  
Upon der Fatherland's destruction bent;

*"Soon Stalin comes..."*

*"We must conduct a plan..."*

*"Wrench our petty kingdoms away from that madman!"*

Having lost both an arm & eye,  
Tho mind in prime condition,  
Von Stauffenburg, willing to die,  
Gneis'nau's dashing great-grandson,  
Responded to the sacred cry  
Of this secret mission,

*"I'll do it if you guarantee the coup!"*

*"Assured, but first there's one thing we must do..."*

Von Falkenburg & Steulpagnol  
Pour'd Rommel a fresh Schnapps,  
*"Just your name vil avoid civil  
War & Deutschland's collapse!"*

He thought awhile then gave it, *"He'll be martyr'd"* *"Yes,  
perhaps..."*

**Herlingen**

**May 27th**

**1944**

In the track of great armies there must follow lean years

**Lao-Tse**

### Love's Bond

The moon was full & the night rippl'd fair  
For the homecoming of Monsieur Merlot  
    Drifting gently on a cushion of air,  
Dogs barking in the farmyard dark below;  
    Piercing the night  
    Was his secret beacon,  
The bright, flicking flashlight of his destination.

    With wonderful euphoria  
    Feet set back on native ground,  
    Poetical adventurer,  
Great-grandchildren to astound...  
    Welcoming their 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 a desp'rate cling,  
While passions race the jaundiced face  
    Of Constance simpering  
Distorts to monstrous maelstrom blister'd with twisted feeling.

France  
May 29th  
1944

### Agony of Command

Two empires allied since the Peace of Ghent  
    Combine to strike a rival from the Earth,  
    Into low landing crafts their soldiers went  
    With rifle, helm & ammo-belted girth;  
    Reading, smoking,  
    Enjoying life's sweet breaths,  
Of their loved ones thinking or conjuring their deaths.

    Eisenhower bore cognizance  
    Supreme Allied commander,  
    His charge ready to invade France  
    Depending on the weather,  
    "Jan Mayen charts the likely chance  
    Of skies becoming clear  
    Upon the sixth... to risk it don't know...  
What do you think Monty?" "I would say... go!"

    The sirens of the Norman shore  
    Broke his indecision,  
    "But war is war, I won't say more,  
    My thanks to everyone"  
& looking at his wrist-watch in an instant he was gone.

Southwick House  
June 4th  
1944

## Denial & Destiny

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

From the auld Roche Guyon castle,  
Duke Rochefoucourt's stately seat,  
Bounded happy, bouyant Rommel  
Like the cat who got the treat,  
With the promise of no trouble  
Drove smiling down the street  
To see his son & wife on her birthday,  
How pleasant & light-hearted was his way!

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 do come  
Then Calais it must be,  
No need to beat the drum alerting Normandy!"

Veronique's Maquis & Pierre  
Are gather'd in a stable,  
English newsreaders grace the air,  
"The dice are on the table!"  
What moment's majesty they share  
Profounder than fable...  
Six patriots switch off the radio  
& slip into the night to start the show.

Hastening to the sabotage,  
Rail bridge soon river rocks,  
Across the stage a pent-up rage  
Administering shocks,  
Resounding in resistance from down'd pylons to wrackt docks.

**France**  
**June 6th**  
**1944**

### Piercing the Atlantic Wall

So we come to the end days of this war,  
Grand finale of the Age of Empires,  
A story drench'd in misery & gore  
As Liberty attends to Hades' fires;  
Aft, "Three-two-one,"  
Leapt first paratrooper,  
Vanguard for th'invasion of Festung Europa.

Tis night & the bright moon outglows,  
Laird of the silvery scene,  
Blossoming from droning shadows,  
Drifting earthly-wise serene,  
Sank the 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  
Of shell-blast & mortar,  
& yet to reach the bluff, to breach  
Ways thro awful slaughter,  
Men bray, their brethren bodies bobbing in bloody water.

**Omaha Beach**  
**June 6th**  
**1944**

### Death of Freidrich Stemmler

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

Dusty Friedrich dropt down his gun  
Hoping quarter, hands held high,  
Stept out by a dying Frenchman  
& his spike-entangl'd thigh,  
Surrender'd to an Englishman,  
They stood there eye-to-eye...  
Tho good of soul Pat's anger fail'd the test,  
Rais'd his rifle & pierc'd the 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 chosen in a half-dream;  
His love fashions  
The vestments of their core...  
Firm knocking bursts passions, their young son at the door...

All the world gain'd confirmation  
That the invasion was on,  
"Great & timely operation!"  
Say the newsmen of London,  
"Sev'ral miles of penetration,"  
Charlie thought of his son,  
"Longissimus dies cito conditur!"  
He told his wife, mother & young daughter.

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

**Burnley**  
**June 6th**  
**1944**

### Beach=head

Commanders relax on the Augusta,  
Sooth'd by the narthex of the evening star,  
The bridgehead secured in hard-fought order,  
The British beaches linking with Utah;  
Confidence high  
Replaced the day's fray'd nerves,  
The Allies shall supply the war at those thin curves.

From the beach at La Madelaine  
Shall venture Liberty Road,  
The mulberries are floated in  
With many a bulging load,  
Amid the gruff, curse-pepper'd din  
Thes vital piles are stored,  
Food for the armies of the Alliance,  
To fuel their progress thro the fields of France.

As Welshmen march'd to Agincourt  
& Scotsmen Fontenoy,  
Within this awesome seat of war  
Canadians deploy,  
To live or die in Europe in imperial employ.

**La Deliverande**  
**June 6th**  
**1944**

**Book  
XIX**

**Axis Implosion**

**Canto I**

*The Allied advance on the Third Reich upon three fronts.*

*Quand la poisson terrestre & aquatique,  
Par forte vague au gravier sera mis:  
Sa forme estrange sauve & horrifique,  
Par mer aux mure bien tost les ennemis.*

I have no rest, no peace;  
What has come is agony

**The Book of Job**

## Revenge!

A secret smile spread to each Departmente,  
Himmler determines one must soon grimace,  
The frustrations that damn'd day wrought soon vent  
On some fair village t'where his monsters race;  
    Black Shutstaffels  
    Chain their choking cordon,  
Shouts stern & steeple bells pale people to summon...

Menfolk maliciously murder'd  
Beneath beaming barn arches,  
Their women & offspring herded  
Within one of Jove's churches,  
Tram trundles toward the massacred  
    From nearby Limoges;  
It's occupants harried cross the convex,  
Exits seal'd off, some firebrand burns the hex.

Wylde shrieks leap from a holy place,  
    Whole village up in flame,  
What witch-wound trace etch'd in the face  
    Of those who know no shame,  
To them bestial savagery is but a bullish game.

**Oradour-sur-Glane**

**June 10<sup>th</sup>**

**1944**

## Battle of France

Felix Crimin'bus non erit hoc diu;  
The Allies press on to the Sequana,  
The Stars & Stripes, the Jack, the Tricolor,  
Flutter with the liberation's ardour;  
    Each shaven pate,  
    Collaboratrices,  
Receives a four-year hate splasht cross angry faces.

But offensive bogs down & gropes  
    Thro the Bocage chequerboard,  
Round Kalvarienburg's red slopes  
    Battle blunts the Saxon sword,  
Tho outmann'd, outgunn'd, 'gin the ropes,  
    From th'airways slash'd & claw'd,  
The Wehrmacht fight with heart so bold & big  
    As with the master after pass'd Leipzig.

A token force of six Tigers  
    Met fifty times their size,  
What warriors forged in Russia's  
    Rough fields of snow & flies,  
No matter, tis certainty they'll be snuff'd out from the skies.

**Villiers Bocage**

**June 13<sup>th</sup>**

**1944**

## Doodlebug

The grand Nazi plan is less grand than deem'd;  
From sites diminisht by the Allied bomb  
Pilotless ballistics strataward stream'd  
To shatter London & her saintly Dom;  
The Blitz returns,  
Death-tipp'd eagles flying,  
Once more a city burns, once more good souls dying.

In heaven-scented Calverly  
Stood chief Air Marshall Dowding,  
Gaea's golden serenity  
Burst by th'ear-splitting roaring  
Of some Vee-One's hostility,  
Bent on mindless killing,  
It seem'd to laugh flashing above his head  
Towing a spitfire with determin'd tread,

Poised neck & neck, tipp'd wing-to-wing,  
Perform'd a graceful tilt,  
Wise unhinging... missile spinning  
To corn fields at full hilt,  
A ruthless killer thwarted, it's quest's nemesis well built.

**Kent**  
**June 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

## The Soviet Advance

Hitler has led his Greater Germany  
Inside the nightmare of a three-front war,  
Vast arms defend his eastern 'victory,'  
Just mere handfulls protect the Norman shore;  
From post to post  
Nail'd a rigid defence;  
The English army toasts his frigid martial sense.

Immense courage reers for the fight  
In the Feste Platze fortresses,  
Without water, hope & daylight,  
Led by thought-numb'd officers,  
Roll'd over by the Russian might  
Leaving these sepulchres  
Of fead & dying drifting with disease -  
A young Thuringen pleads on beeding knees...

Pity's protestations ignored,  
Konstantin prefers force,  
& draws his sword, anger outpour'd  
Treading the darker course,  
From ear-to-ear he calmly cut that throat without remorse.

**Byellorussia**  
**22nd June**  
**1944**

### **Betrayal!**

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

The sound of jackboots on the stair  
& rough Teutonic clamour  
Drove Veronique to clutch Pierre  
With the zest of her amour...  
The door burst ope, this noble pair  
Shied captivity's floor,  
Shooting those shapes daring t'enter the room,  
Pierre leapt on the sly stick grenades <BOOM>...

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

**France**  
**July**  
**1944**

### **Bomb Plot**

Noblesse oblige, when duty outranks praise;  
Stauffenburg slips the oath's constrictive grip,  
Mindful of valour of the former days  
Prepar'd to strike at the dictatorship -  
Not at the tail,  
Aft' which ye face the bite,  
But thro the hissing veil the head conjures in fright.

He stept into the conf'rence room,  
Hitler glanced a curt "*Hello!*"  
The situation maps cry doom...  
Black briefcase placed calm & low  
Beneath his feet, sly as a fume  
The Colonel, quick yet slow,  
Did take a timely leave of the compound,  
Shaking as his bomb raged with violent sound.

From rubble limps first of figures,  
All round was smoke & hush,  
Shredded trousers, his shirt tatters,  
Hair tangl'd toilet brush,  
*"Fate has saved me, now I decree such treachery we crush!"*

**Wolf's Lair**  
**July 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

## Vengeance!

Tis said in the night all the cats are grey,  
Suspicion rests on all but his closest,  
The 'coup' fizzling to naught by close of day,  
A circle of usurping now deprest;  
*"I am OK!"*  
Grateful Volk hears the voice,  
*"Providence has display'd 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 stature as he's shot,  
I wish you could have seen his death-pale face,  
Twas free of doubt, weightless & full of grace.

Tied to a blood-stained wooden rack  
Sorrowful Stulpnafel  
Screamed 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**

## 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  
Stept onto the platform,  
He paus'd, roll'd up a fag & hobbl'd his way home.

He was a simple, honest man  
Pluckt from streets ordinary,  
Serving out the ferocious span  
That was his 'Tour of Duty,'  
But home was where the hate began,  
Twas alien contree -  
The fate of Western civilisation  
Depends on spam, suet, jam & bacon.

Tommy carried little Lucy  
To bed & said, *"Goodnight..."*  
*"Goodnight,"* said she, innocently,  
*"Why do we have to fight?"*  
*"To save the world from one bad man, now sleep or he might bite!"*

**Burnley**  
**August**  
**1944**

## Canto II

### Death in the Jungle

Having swapp'd one prison for another  
Slater conducts a bloody one-man war,  
Slaughtering patrols, breaking for cover,  
From septic sores his weak white blood cells pour;  
From makeshift camp  
Devilry deliver'd,  
While fixing an old lamp his whole body shiver'd.

He knew that his life was slipping  
So he thought of his father,  
Sweat in rivulets was dripping  
When slain by Malaria,  
Thro the bloated, blue corpse ripping  
Came the Calliphora...  
Attracted by a quiet, scratching sound  
Some giant Sloth, three days aft, sniffs around.

She sinks her teeth, the body warm,  
The brittle, black flesh splits,  
O see them worm, O feel them squirm,  
Awful trove of maggots,  
The Sloth coughs up her rotten meat, nose-snorting as she flits.

**Thailand**  
**August**  
**1944**

The course of the war from the liberation of France  
to the Battle of the Bulge

*Manu 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**

## Last Days of the Reich

Some vale East of the Lakes Masurian  
Bleak Prussian homesteads clad in sober grey  
Refuse to flee in face of the Russian  
Though murder is the order of their day;  
Huddl'd in song,  
Shells smash through cottage wood  
Slaying a peasant throng, soil drinking native blood.

Throughout the Nazi satellite  
Roam doubters for eversion,  
Bulgaria gives up the fight,  
The Baltic states beseigen,  
Finland leaves Hitler to his plight  
As the Romanian  
All land & liberty to Stalin yields -  
Seizing the vital Ploesti oil-fields.

How darkly disgusting is war  
When war's ways rumble home,  
The drumbeats are frightful afar,  
The Volk of Berlin's Rome  
Crucified... an Appalachian Way of the Reichstag dome.

**Germany**  
**August**  
**1944**

## Revolt!

Stalin urges his sister race to rise;  
A city still in ruin since its fall -  
Sad emblem of defeat - defiant flies  
The indestructable soul of the Pole!  
Muzurek charms,  
The Russian tanks draw near,  
The citizens take arms, abandoning all fear.

The war's grey incunabula  
Contested to no avail,  
As the majestic Luftwaffe  
Dowses hopes with lethal hail,  
*"This revolt!"* insists the Fuhrer,  
*"Can only ever fail !"*  
Yon the suburbs Stalin's tanks sat idle  
Watching two old foes wilting thro battle.

The Nazis reaffirm their grip,  
Unleash a savage hate,  
This sinking ship, this rubbish tip,  
The Poles evacuate,  
Raggedly shuffling westwardly, cursing their contree's fate.

**Warsaw**  
**August 1944**

## Liberation

Aux Barricades! with patriotic surge  
Fifty thousand French form a new Bastille,  
Waltzing upon the crest of freedom's verge,  
The Swastika torn down with frantic zeal;  
Sees grim return  
Of collaboration,  
Stripp'd, hung a la lanterne with mass indignation.

One gorgeous day in late summer  
Spidel, praetor of France,  
Has defied Herr Hitler's order,  
Preserves gallic elegance  
By the beautiful Sequana -  
Allied soldiers advance  
Into streets advance in celebration,  
Awakening in realisation.

Proud spines stiffen'd by battlestarch  
The Allies did parade,  
Thro triumph's arch the young guns arch,  
The Marsaillaise is play'd,  
No time to rest in revelry, off to the front they made.

**Paris**  
**August 26th**  
**1944**

## Rousing the Reich

"Is Paris burning?" whisp'd wistful Hitler,  
Sad face so pale & puffy, taut & tense,  
Disturb'd by entry of Gen'ral Molder,  
"It can't go on... the war is lost..." "NONSENSE!"  
Chasing rainbows  
A vision is devised,  
His deity still flows, the 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 winged horses  
Back to the Reich as the Ultramarxist  
Breaks ranks with the Ultracapitalist...

& we shall fight upon the Rheine  
As did Fred'rick the Great,  
No Nineteen Nineteen shall define  
The future German state..."  
Molder says, "I shall try again..." for that man was his fate.

**Wolf's Lair**  
**August 31st**  
**1944**

### Market Garden

The drive resumes to claim fortress Holland,  
But three bridges to seize by land & air,  
For many miles the rich offensive spann'd  
Thro bright Autumnal weather fine & fair;  
Ah! best laid plans,  
Shatter'd spears, batter'd helms,  
As optimism pans ailing thro defeat's realms.

Operation Market Garden  
By cross'd bazookas pounded,  
White seeds of the Dandelion  
Soon outgunn'd & surrounded  
Beyond the bridge at Njimagen  
Hopes of relief flounder'd...  
Procuring death, sad flora of the field,  
Yet still these hardy Tommys shall not yield.

Mutual respect runs to confound  
The hatred born of war,  
The streets around this killing ground  
An ill-starr'd bridge too far,  
For those whom survived Stalingrad the foe fought on a par.

**Arnhem**  
**September 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

### Death of Rommel

Two automons knock'd on a legend's door,  
Charge their target with the highest treason,  
But for his services throughout the war  
Der Fuhrer hast permitted him poison;  
Serenity  
Succumbs his famous wits,  
"Speak with your family, for just fifteen minutes!"

He told his wife of his life's debt,  
Embraced his beloved son,  
Donn'd old Afrika Korps jacket,  
Attired 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,  
Pathetic'ly he cry,  
"Death by the hand of one's own land  
So hard," stript of all pride,  
He wheezed his last, closed gemmy lids, thought of his wife &  
died.

**Swabia**  
**October 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

## The Hungarian Question

Hoffa tries to broker a sep'rate peace,  
The rats shall leave the sinking Axis ship,  
Hitler's furies fresh treacheries release,  
Sending reserves to reaffirm his grip,  
    Motoring 'cross  
    The Pannonian Plain,  
Racing t'avert the loss of all that blood & grain.

At Captain Skorzeny's command  
    The citadel was attack'd,  
Thro weak guards went his elite band,  
    Pecking schmeissers passage hack'd,  
He strode upright, took Hoffa's hand,  
    *"Your statement you'll retract..."*  
Then utter'd speech when all the shooting ends,  
    *"We are not enemies but loyal friends."*

*"Hungary fights to the finish!"*  
    Faith restored Zapolyan,  
    *"We have one wish, your Jew rubbish..."*  
    Hoffa leant to Eichmann...  
*"Yes?" "You must give them all to me for their expurgation!"*

**Budapest**  
**October**  
**1944**

## Autumnal Blood

Eisenhower clutches his purple hearts,  
Each Axis soldier murder'd where they stood,  
    Rapid progress reduced to fits & starts,  
Bogg'd down, autumnal dirge of rain & mud;  
    That precious oil  
    Trickles from port to front  
As onto German soil the first assault troops grunt.

Thou art harsh hell, once green Hurtgen,  
    Pure primevil forestry,  
    Where with native dedication  
    Men fighting desperately,  
    Their spirits bolster'd with iron,  
    Sieg Heil & loyalty!  
The going brutal & the killing dark  
Grave battle rules amidst the ancyent bark.

The liquid roads, the freezing snow,  
    The boobytrapp'd ambush,  
Have stemm'd the flow, some vertigo  
    Dizzies the Allied push -  
His front secure Hitler withdraws his Panzers wrapt in hush.

**Ardennes**  
**November**  
**1944**

## Canto III

### 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,  
Twisted vales wrapp'd by snow-capt hills  
Are flush with many panzers,  
No vernal cluster'd Daffodils  
Shall escort these soldiers,  
Attacking Allied lines desperately,  
How different from triumphal 'forty.

All-in for the Fascist menace,  
Three aces... all is 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**

*The destruction of Germany & Japan by the Allied armies*

It is Magnificent, but it is not war

**Marshall Canrobert**

### Defeating the Wehrmacht

Men shuffled thro the snow with frozen feet,  
Beshawl'd as hags, thick whiskers wire & grey,  
The gamble fail'd! an army in retreat  
Avoiding another bloody Cannae;  
While in the East,  
To the cruel Katyusha,  
The Russians are releas'd across the Vistula.

Tw'as less an offensive action  
More the milt'ry parade  
As Berlinward went the Russian  
With the Saragozan maid,  
Narr'eyed avengers talion  
Primal instinct obey'd,  
Zhukov commands the Mazovian plain,  
The Wolf's Lair now diminisht of Wolfsbane.

The freedom of the world at stake,  
The Wolves of war abroad,  
Riding the Snake the Russians take  
The Moscow-Berlin road,  
Pursuing hated enemy to put them to the sword.

**Warsaw**  
**Jan 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**1944**

### For Japan

How light the hearts of men summon'd to die,  
The time to please the Emperor soon come,  
Pride forms blue spinning crystals in the eye  
Serene as the floating chrysanthemum;  
From Kyushu  
To Soya-Misaki  
Tojo's warmongers drew their lethal infantry

& pour'd them thro the harbour quays  
To fill the honeycomb caves,  
The Kimigayo on the breeze  
Superpatriotic braves  
Heard strange whispering in the trees  
'Stho some mad sermon raves,  
Proclaimer of the advent of the storm,  
Should not be long before the war comes home.

Basho climb'd gorgeous Mount Shuri,  
Open'd his heart & pray'd  
For victory, his great army  
Snoozed in the evening shade,  
Waiting to be awoken & to draw the Empire's blade.

**Okinawa**  
**January 1st**  
**1945**

### Death of Frau Stemmler

Karolina sigh'd as beautiful spires,  
Their medieval majesty streaming,  
Untouch'd by this damn'd war's destructive fires,  
Strode proudly to view, dazzling & dreaming;  
Her cousin Klaus  
Awaits at the station...  
Soon in a coffehaus, drunk on conversation.

Bligh flew over Franconia  
Til the target rose to sight,  
Gothic temple of the Fuhrer  
One moment before midnight,  
From the belly of the bomber  
Came the poor people's plight...  
A thick 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 off' selected to *please* the doctors...  
Young Ludwig gains six inches with a brick;  
They pass him by  
Fing'ring a surgeon's knife,  
With silent, joyous sigh, another day of life!

*"If you're content with a little  
Enough's as good as a feast,"*  
But poor Joseph dropt the kettle  
& could not digest his yeast,  
Bones were wasting ever brittle  
As flesh bore he the least,  
Today the grey guards would drag 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...  
Those rainbow stars driven from Hell to march the snowy fear.

**Auswitz**  
**Jan 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**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;  
With surly sighs  
Grandfather & grandson  
Have donn'd the Jager's guise 'stho lived Napoleon.

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

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

**Berlin**  
**February 3rd**  
**1945**

## Dresden

Squadron Leader Bligh completes his home run,  
Now Archie Day so he may fray again,  
For those who return, if fell'd from the sun,  
May yield the network up with torture's pain;  
He took control  
Of brand new Wellington,  
Performs a pinpoint roll & join'd the formation.

Skimming the cloudrealm wing-to-wing,  
Fokker flights well push'd aside,  
The ack-ack air a shuddering  
Brutal bombs fell far & wide,  
The noble art of murdering  
Efficiently applied...  
Streets & churches with bleets of terror fill,  
The rare few reach the safety of the hill.

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.

**Germany**  
**February 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

### Death March

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

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

From town-to-town two worlds collide,  
In ginger bread houses  
Clear tears belied the warmth inside,  
Grown cold the flesh freezes  
Those dewy drops, the shockt Volk now that murder's  
witnesses.

**Germany**  
**February**  
**1945**

### Setting Sun

Eph'meral empire nears obsolescence,  
The Towers of Tenshu straddle the sky,  
As Tojo arrived for his audience  
The pale moon sang a sunset lullaby;  
Hurrying thro'  
An iron-studded gate,  
The evening hours, he knew, drew heavy with their fate

Fast from darkening, Southern sky  
Silver Superfortresses,  
Eagles hunting hungry on high,  
Rain'd doom upon the masses,  
How many children have to die  
Til the fury passes...  
His city like a paper lantern burns,  
Of war's horror at last th'emperor learns...

As they watch'd the flames & flashes  
To raging maelstrom fann'd,  
Stonework crashes into ashes,  
Tojo rais'd fisted hand,  
*"Sacred nations must combat on & heed honour's demand!"*

**Mount Karvizawa**  
**March 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

## General Patton

The star-marked open jeep screech'd to a halt,  
Georgie spat out globule of cigar phlegm,  
"Boys!" he address'd the 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 to 'em good!"

As gen'ral's adore glory true  
His rampant passion for war  
Ran thro LUCKY, his plucky crew,  
The Third Army's matador,  
"Advance over, under or thro!"  
They reach Remagen's shore  
There claim a rail-bridge worth it's weight in gold...  
Battles won by the brave & wars the bold.

Patton pauses upon the Rheine,  
Perching on pontoon plate,  
Arching his spine, piss flows like wine,  
Hissing with pent up hate...  
Zips up his fly, claims th'eastern bank to slay the Nazi state

**Emmerich**  
**April 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1945**

## Book XX

### Endlosung

*Par faim la proye fera loup prisonner,  
L'assaillant lors en extreme detresse.  
Le nay ayant au deuant le dernier,  
Le grand n'eschappe au milieu de la presse.*

## Canto I

*The deaths of Hitler & Mussolini,  
& the defeat of the Axis powers*

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

Within warm springs courting tranquil Georgia  
Into a life's last breaths time has thrust latem  
His legions falling on Okinawa  
The President prepares to share their fate;  
Whispers complain  
Of headache terrible,  
The soldier's spirits drain, he bows & leaves battle.

Being flesh & mind a human  
But in stature an oak tree,  
The wily lieutenant, Truman,  
Bequested presidency,  
The ultimate American  
To rule them sensibly  
& what a time to take that foremost seat -  
The Axis Powers vergant on defeat.

Debriefing heard 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... pray go on."*

**Washington**

**April 12<sup>th</sup>**

**19**

**45**

## Death Camp

If this is life then life should welcome death,  
Forty thousand abjects thro wraithdom tread,  
Despair & typhus pungent on the breath,  
Grey, ghastly heaps & gutters full of dead;  
    Bestarv'd of meat  
    To stay his certain end  
Some priest prepares to eat the dead flesh of his friend.

At once the rough guards up & leave  
    Before all the GI's arrive,  
What haunted eyes could e'er believe  
    To see such thin rakes alive,  
All that these green men could achieve  
    Was feed those whom survive,  
Swamp'd by skeletons with clear skin stretching  
& moaning moans... what spectres... what retching.

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

**Belsen**  
**April 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

## Hitler's Birthday

Entombed in the dark end-game of his time,  
    Within der Fuhrerbunker he withdraws,  
From geocentric Wolkenkuck-kuck-sheim,  
Projecting, still, the truth-hood of his cause;  
    While strangers wage  
    The wars he brought to Earth  
Within Egyptian cage they celebrate his birth.

Tho upon him hangs a shadow  
He invokes the 'Good old days,'  
    "*For he's a jolly good fellow!*"  
    The sober jamboree raise,  
Soon complexion yields to sallow,  
    By him but one soul stays...  
His little siren, the lovely Miss Braun...  
He orders scorched Earth policy by phone

& exhales with the extasi  
    Of fearsome syphilis,  
    "*For without me this Germany*  
    *Must certainly perish...*"  
Outside the comfort of those rooms *his* bleak necropolis.

**Berlin**  
**April 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

### Death of Il Duce

As paths of glory lead but to the grave,  
On haunted men hist'ry the 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, behold Mussolini!

They furnish'd him with briefest trial  
Summararily was shot,  
Hard driven from the Alpine pile  
To be strung up at a spot  
Where hungry subjects could revile  
The 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 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

### Death of Der Fuhrer

From glory's peaks to trenches of despair,  
Dreamy, defiant & unrepentant,  
Determin'd his dead friend's fate not to share  
Der Fuhrer coins a lasting testament;  
Yet still he hiss'd  
The cold core of his cause,  
*"Global Jewry resist! uphold the racial laws!"*

After simple ceremony  
Two lovers are join'd as one,  
But one hour of matrimony  
As her husband clutch'd his gun  
& stept into eternity...  
She swallow'd the poison,  
There dying plants a kiss on fingertips,  
*"My darling!"* last words to slip from her lips.

Men paus'd awhile before the sight,  
Then dowsed them in petrol  
& set alight, firedrake flight,  
O Viking funeral...  
The captain of a sinking ship, the king lost in battle.

**Berlin**  
**Mayday**  
**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,  
The one light reflecting from this white horse;  
Great Zhukov sits  
Proudly in the saddle,  
What majesty emits from masters of battle.

He drove his men into the fray  
With one last ferocious spurt,  
Resolute that following today  
His soldiers will face no hurt,  
Let loose is the last bullet spray,  
Foe bleeding in the dirt...  
With one sweet cry, "*The fighting is finish'd!*"  
Prussian militarism extinguish'd.

Thro Brandenburg victorious  
Men sang in Zhukov's drag,  
Pallid soldiers stand glorious  
By the ruin'd Reichstag,  
Upon whose roof a-fluttering Russia has raised its flag.

**Berlin**  
**May 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1945**

## Flight of Eichmann

Messerschmitts motoring thro morning sky  
In their desperate effort for safety,  
One weary man with yet wearier sigh  
Looked low upon the burning Germany;  
No sun, no birds,  
Just smoke, just hate, just hell,  
Namore those mystic words shall fuel Der Fuhrer's spell.

Below, a soldier saw the plane  
Wishing it was him within,  
Instead, manhandl'd off the train  
By avengant Konstantin,  
Black memories flood boiling brain,  
The scar brought back the sin...  
For what this slug did to dear Dosia  
He drew his knife & slew Gerhart Buscher.

Above, 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 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

## War's Tragedy

First the High Seas Fleet then the Luftwaffe  
Have fail'd to stave the shame of Germany,  
The mad adventure finally over  
But for one pilot, lone & full fury;  
Flying beyond  
The islets of the Danes  
To skim the glist'ning pond that is the North Sea Lanes.

*"How could my contree lose this war  
When victory was promist?"*  
In front span the enemy's shore,  
Lindisfarne & the North East,  
Anger's malice swept thro his core  
As man becomes the beast...  
Seeking some random English street to strafe,  
How sad for those who deem'd themselves so safe,

Not knowing it was enemy  
Approaching them in flight,  
How casually they stop to see  
Til scatter'd in ful fright  
By this appalling pointlessness, man sicken'd by his spite.

## North Shields

May 6<sup>th</sup>  
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,  
The bees & birds are back where they belong;  
Nature disturb'd,  
The sound of a staff car,  
The callous clime soon curb'd... come men, come end the war.

Monty receives the Nordic guest,  
Unphased by their arrogance  
On behalf of the New World West,  
Great Britain, Russia & France  
Offer'd the Reich a firm request  
With stoic elegance...  
On tabletop the armistice appears,  
Small moment to cut short the Thousand Years.

Admiral Doenitz signs his name  
Upon a poignant page,  
Accepts the blame, the guilt, the shame  
Of his destructive age  
& with a last, "Heil Hitler!" murder exeunt from the stage.

## Friesland

May 8<sup>th</sup>  
1945

## Canto II

*The defeat of Japan & the dawning of the nuclear age*

buckling in the heat  
where the A-bomb burst  
a marathon

**Kaneko Tota**

## VE Day

Ful fragrant with the buttercups of June,  
Deep Summer's musk still sunset lingering,  
When all of all Selene's harmony in tune  
Reflected in a warm-fringed mellowing;  
When woods in leaf  
By nature gently nurs'd,  
Suede moment of relief afore the golden burst.

In a whirl of wars & truces  
The pageant of history  
Has walk'd well with all the muses  
& therein the poetry  
Pays good homage to Confucious'  
Peaceful testimony,  
For surely this a moment of sublime  
When dawn's lush calm is flush'd across all time.

From Belfast to Casalino,  
From Budapest to Lourdes,  
From Palermo to old Oslo,  
From Archangel to Rhodes,  
A whisper of sweet silence as the priesthood scabbard swords.

**Europe**  
**May**  
**1945**

## Okinawa

The greatest armada in history,  
Far from that horrific Hawaiian day,  
Tho besieged by swarms of Kamakaze  
Was nothing but the fleet that came to stay;  
Each fit GI  
Surged forth victorious,  
All times supported by these forty carriers.

Seeming chivalric pilgrimage,  
Mere meters transform'd to miles,  
Foxholes, fatigue & foliage  
Flung across these lizard isles,  
From anguine path to rocky ridge  
Defenders heap'd in piles  
For fanatical snipers tied to trees  
Bring the advancing Yankees to their knees.

Within his divine death place sat  
An angel from the sky,  
Some vampyre bat, the ship's deck spat,  
But fail'd to swat that fly  
Breaking, exploding bestial to high-pitch howl'd "*Banzai!*"

## Sea of Japan

May  
1945

## Death of a Reichsfuhrer

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

"Are you Himmler?" Our man defies  
Gentle interrogation,  
Soon stripp'd & search'd, the doctor tries  
A small dental inspection,  
Dull glimmers prise the narrow eyes,  
Beacons of decision...  
Crushing this 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 noose in cruellest  
misery.

Lueneburg  
May 25th  
1945

### Death of Basho

The messenger sprinted across the sand  
    Baring the loss of the *Yamamoto*  
Before the noble soul of his command...  
Basho's senses were stirr'd by Bushido;  
    Unsheathed the blade,  
    Finger'd the grip's shark-skin,  
No longer, now, afraid... he drew his charges in.

Grubby cheeks rubb'd powder-rouge red  
    Reflecting the bloody glow  
    Flaring upon each soldier's head  
    When sever'd from it's torso...  
    Stood surrounded by loyal dead  
    It was his turn to go,  
Smiling the grave grimace of Seppuku  
Across his side his sword he slowly drew.

Dragonfly thron'd on lotus claw,  
    Sat by a bonsai tree,  
Intestines pour, white waves of gore,  
    Honour Hari Kari!  
Serving the soul with mystic realms of tryptych chivalrie.

### Mount Shuri

June 21<sup>st</sup>

1945

### A New Bomb

Strolling carefree thro the Sans Soucci,  
    Poet garden of the playboy Kaisers,  
    Relaxing by the royal Jungfernsee,  
    Stalin these fresh strategies devises  
    For Molotov's  
    Superb post-conflict plans,  
Schloss Cecilienhoff's grand gathering of clans

Awaits the occident chieftans,  
    Tongue-together they appear,  
That truth-charged comment of Patton's  
    Still barging round Truman's ear -  
    *"Why should we stop, when the Russians  
    We also too could clear!"*  
Now with the Allies distinctly divided  
How cautiously was their converse guided.

With Poland diff'rently shaded,  
    The time for frankness come,  
Truman traded glances & said,  
    *"We have forged a new bomb,  
Intended to smite low Japan,"* fresh devils beat the drum.

### Potsdam

August 1st

## Royal Awakening

Calls for unconditional surrender  
Emanate from that stately Postdam room,  
Tojo pleads, "*Terms too harsh Lord Emperor...  
The nations honour depends on her doom.*"  
Majestic, "No!"  
How Hirohito sigh'd,  
*"The time has come to grow, too many, now, have died."*

While Tojo slid away to brood  
At the Yasukuni shrine  
The Emperor explored his mood  
With a glass of Saki wine,  
His vision ev'ry vista view'd  
From Saipan to the Rheine -  
A broken fortress at an empires fall,  
Events spiralling far from his control.

He sent forth his meditations  
Upon their fastest steeds,  
*"Fly, fly my sons, for the Russians,  
Fly to the Swiss & Swedes,  
Let peace rush once more round the world as water does the reeds!"*

**Tokyo**  
**August 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

## Nuclear Dawn

On flexing his muscle Truman insists,  
Despite frighten'd Japan proffering peace...  
B29 whines thro dense morning mists,  
A break in the clouds... the great bomb's release;  
Her mission done  
She turns & banks away...  
Flash brighter than the sun washes Th'Enola Gay.

Nippon's fair skies were ript 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 Phoenix pyre  
As in horrific instant Balrog comes  
Bestride a million, billion atoms.

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

**Hiroshima**  
**August 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**1945**

### **Killer Blow**

Molotov meets with the embassadour,  
"This morning we attack'd Manchuria  
As a formal declaration of war!"  
"How things have alter'd much since Tsushima!"  
With its red wreath,  
The Soviet Jackal  
Sinks perfidious teeth into this carcass skull.

As soldiers seize the higher ground  
To win the battle below,  
Pilot pierces his veil of sound,  
From the fuselage lets go  
Another moment to astound,  
The next Nagashino -  
Now forming the noise of many waters  
Nuclear phrenzie swarms as she slaughters.

Liberty's vision calmly drew  
Closer magnaminous,  
With quick one-two victory flew  
Yon that black wilderness -  
Gaunt skeletons amidst the ash meaning total success.

**Nagasaki**  
**9th August**

### **Victory in Japan**

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

War brands a mark upon the slave  
& hurls him to the slaughter,  
Then pins a badge upon the brave  
Whose names are writ in water,  
Respects are carved upon the grave  
Remember'd forever,  
Forever, ah! forever but to be  
Forgotten like the Spanish Tragedie.

The most devastating conflict  
In human history,  
A many victim forged edict  
To man's stupidity,  
Trumpets fresh bloodlet knowledge of his capability.

**Tokyo Bay**  
**August 14th**  
**1945**

### Canto III

*Selected scenes from the survivors of the war*

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**

### 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 fam'ly girl without a family:  
Her thought ascrew,  
Her soul too shock'd to grieve,  
What Anna had pass'd thro could anyone 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.

**October  
Germany  
1945**

### At Home with the Windsors

As morning blossom fluffles oer the grange  
The Scottish Highlands caught the ocean breeze  
Whipping in o'er the hoary Wicklow range,  
Catching the seaswans in their perfect ease;  
Blending with snows,  
Wylde winds of Helvellyn  
Bear pair of mating crows toward the royal kin.

BANG! BANG! shot squawking from the sky,  
For two partridges mistook,  
The day was late, the king's throat dry,  
Gusty autumn fairly shook  
The ailing trees, with trailing sigh  
The Queen put down her book  
To tenderly stand by her husband's side,  
*"Still beautiful..."* he thought & blest his bride.

*"George, I'm glad those days are over,  
After all that has been,"*  
Stood together, angel daughter  
Scampering cross the green,  
*"Glad Lizzie will inherit a free land when she is queen."*

**Balmoral**  
**October**  
**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,  
Sea-crisp waters cool & clear,  
Jean descended as if adream,  
Startl'd herds of roving deer  
Sent scattering by friendly beam  
& as the inn grew near,  
He thank'd his god, his land, his liberty  
Cursing th'eternal name of the Nazi.

He stept into 'Les Montemar,'  
Where life lazed at a pace,  
Walk'd to the bar, "Stella Artois..."  
"Huit francs..." said with straight face,  
"Huit francs! Huit francs pour un Artois, ah! c'est un grand  
disgrace!"

**France**  
**December**  
**1945**

### Meeting the Parents

Where cotton he would grow would know it's weave  
To the vale twixt Pendle & Hambledon,  
Carlton Dillinger rail'd his Christmas leave,  
Stept into an alien environ;  
Ah! thence she stood  
Like some broad from the farms,  
Countenance calm & good, his daughter in her arms.

She led him thro those slummish rows,  
Bubbling in community,  
Where cloth cap, cobbles & torn clothes  
Work'd hardest for victory,  
On the front door-step stood 'er Rose  
Waiting with 'er Charlie,  
Glowing in his grand-paternal summer,  
"Yer may be a Yank but yer a Sumner!"

Despite six years of hardship past  
Christmas found the Sumners,  
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**

### Friends & Family

Across the dusty bush the long ways wind,  
Inside the bus young Danny thought of 'things,'  
His best mate, Slater, mainly on his mind,  
The driver drawl'd, "Welcome to Alice Springs!"  
Where whites mingl'd  
With Aboriginee,  
Along his spine tingled a questing energy.

He bumm'd a lift in Richie's Ute  
& hurtl'd thro the outback,  
Neath powd'ry wheels pink lizards shoot  
As a road soon turn'd to track,  
Tween rusted shears & gnarly boot  
They park'd by Slater's shack,  
"G'day," said Bruce as he stept from the truck,  
Dan shook not human hand, but shook a hook.

They spent the evening downing beer  
& reminiscing Shane,  
The stars appear, they toast a cheer,  
"In sunshine, wind or rain  
He ran those bastards ragged!" "That's my boy!" but private  
pain.

**Australia**  
**1949**

## Grand Palace of Justice

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

Stand faced with counting for their crimes,  
Long hours drain'd men would appear  
As scapegoats for those crazy times  
Oer the best part of a year,  
But daily with his honour climb'd  
One dashing cavalier...  
With ever present energy Goering  
Still preaching loyally for his darling.

Judgement pluckt from the fearsome shell  
Of Allied opinion,  
Harken! Doom bell! the Reichmarshall  
Swallow'd secret poison,  
His comrades don the sack... noose... trapdoor... <THWACK>  
oblivion...

**Nuremburg**  
1947

## Edda

With the shadow presence of the obscure  
A woman walk'd thro Roma Centrale  
Boarded the train unnoticed & demure -  
& no-one knew she was *Mussolini*;  
Dress'd all in black  
With grief of pale widow,  
Desp'rately needing back her beloved Ciano.

Among the riders of that train  
An old man recognised her  
& told the rest, they tut disdain  
Torturing the outsider  
It truly was a dreary bane  
Bequeath'd by her father -  
A legacy shared thro this bitter land,  
Stain'd by his blood, shamed by his violent hand.

The train traverses Tuscany,  
Beside the fair Arno,  
Where galleries are half-empty,  
Pick'd by the Nazi crow,  
But Italy lives on thro works of Michaelangelo.

**Florence**  
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  
Slow returning to the Jews,  
Victims of wild witch-hunt purges,  
Reviled for sacred values,  
Having since the march of Titus  
Wander'd Europa's views,  
Millennial persecution endured,  
Yea now the cause of all those woes stands cured.

Anna Grunfeld got off the train  
End of the torrid line,  
To start again, despite the pain,  
Beneath a pure sunshine -  
After two thousand years her faith returns to Palestine.

## **Jerusalem**

**1948**

## **The Berlin Air Drop**

Into strain'd streets a cool breeze buck'd & blew,  
Tho deep in Russia's sphere of influence  
The old Reichscapitol is split in two,  
Red Army making felt a firm presence;  
Blocking the roads  
Feeding the Western store  
But for the vital loads in skiey corridor.

Our squadron-leader led the way,  
In the MIGs on either side  
Saw foreign pilots keen for fray  
If he but stray'd from his glide  
Thro that pale, paltry passageway,  
One measly, short mile wide...  
But on he flew, lithe Falcon of the sky,  
Never fading from duty... Nigel Bligh.

Such schism betwains the Allies,  
The world shall cast a frown,  
From anxious skies fall safe supplies,  
The Soviet backs down,  
War oer the Nazi graveyard would be Hitler's posth'mous  
crown.

## **Germany**

**1948**

**Book XXI**

**The Cold War**

**Canto I**

*The Russian developement of nuclear weapons  
& her growing friction with America*

*Les fleurs passe's diminue le monde,  
Long temps la paix terres inhabite'es:  
Seur marchera par ciel, serre, mer & onde:  
Puis de nouveau les guerres suscite'es.*

Some to the war, to try their fortunes there

**Shakespeare**

### Another Game of Chess

The North Atlantic enjoin in treaty,  
With Benelux the Western bloc is seal'd,  
In the face of future hostility  
Its signat'ries shall ally in the field;  
In bold reply  
The Russians have reveal'd  
A sky swarming fungi, holy weapon to wield.

From the vast Eurasian heartlands  
Went that blast's solemn echo,  
Swept yon the watch-wire rimlands,  
Thro the corridors of Nato  
Back to the secret in the sands  
Of Alamogordo;  
Through all mankind is sent a sad shudder...  
There'll now be two stood by Doomsday's rudder.

Stalin thrust forward his H-pawn  
*"When will they be ready?"*  
An manly yawn, Molotov's moan  
(He sees the mate in three),  
*"As soon as we can supply systems of delivery."*

**Moscow**  
**1949**

### U.N.

There is a city high upon the hill  
Where swollen on notions of high ideal -  
Liberty, in all peoples, shall instil  
When with a foreign master never kneel;  
Unfetter' grip  
Binding man's destiny;  
Indefensible ship of sovereignty.

The world is glad to hear the birth  
Of this United Nations,  
Myriad races of this earth  
Send eager delegations  
To strut like kinsmen round the hearth,  
Airing protestations -  
Man's many colours bask in assembly,  
Grand semblance of mankind's maturity.

There comes a hint of bullish tone  
These old empires receive  
*"Give up your throne, the day had grown  
When nations do believe  
Leaders cannot be foreigners, this fact no man should greive."*

**Geneva**  
**1951**

### Blood-Ties

By sleeper train the war-haunted Constance  
Traverses southern plains of Germany,  
A mind confused left miles behind in France,  
His family but half a family;  
One letter read  
So much the folds were torn,  
The man he thought was dead alive & all alone.

He steps in from the busy street  
To see a portly butcher,  
What moment when the boy shall greet  
The man that is his father,  
Max turns around, puts down his meat,  
Sees another Stemmler;  
*"Guten Tag!"* utter'd in broken German,  
*"Guten tag,"* a pause, *"Herr, I am your son..."*

They close the shop & take a walk,  
Four decades of suspense  
Allay'd in talk, at this fair fork,  
Two rivers confluence...  
Aimee's fair smile, Der Fuhrer & the death of innocence.

### Donauwurth

1953

### Viet Minh

Some to the wars to try their fortunes there,  
In Indo-China Ho Chi Minh arise,  
Still the Frenchman wears his arrogant air,  
Not knowing what lies 'neath the slanty-eyes;  
This 'Republic'  
Scoff'd at as bon hommes pour  
Into a fresh conflict, but grand unfinish'd war.

Thro trees surrounding Dien Bien Phu  
Men equipt by the Chinese,  
Those Viet Minh, a ragged crew,  
Close the distance by degrees,  
Steel thunders blew airstrips askew,  
The foe starv'd to les knees,  
Eighty thousand parachutes cloak the ground,  
*"Zey 'as no wheels, 'ow do zey move around?"*

Paris once had an Empire here  
& now Paris has none,  
In flight & fear they disappear,  
The *Uncle's* war is won,  
Freeing his race from servitude looks Southwards to Saigon.

### Hanoi

1954

### Arms Race

Desirable of Peace prepare for war;  
The march of arms in place, Stalin's last wish  
To match American efforts & more  
As when Kaisers outsail'd Nelson's English;  
Dream science burns,  
The first Hydrogen bomb  
Well-tested & upturns the equilibrium.

Soon righted as each treasury  
Drain'd of dawdling billions,  
Men like Zhukov forge an army  
Of resolute millions,  
To the rude conquest of the sea  
Go monstrous galleons,  
While ready to unload mankind's first fears  
Are long-range bombers patrolling the spheres.

The members sign'd to Moscow's pact  
Have form'd an Eastern bloc,  
If one attack'd by all be back'd,  
Murdering & amok,  
When mach-ballistic missiles shall unleash the vengant shock.

### Warsaw

1955

### Siberia

Forgotten far beyond the icy Ob  
In gulags choked with undesirables,  
Shabby ghosts for emancipation sob,  
Those thin-faced exiles of many peoples;  
Altho' the war  
Fading from memory  
Still no-one would restore their human dignity.

A screeching siren rang across  
This stark & freezing wasteland,  
In stagger'd human dustbin dross,  
Spoons splint'ring in trembling hand,  
This meal of theirs seem'd more a loss  
As thinning porridge pann'd  
Barely continued the half existence,  
At last! One hero dares sow resistance...

Upon a flimsy raft they float,  
Keeping the cold at bay  
With stolen coat, they cross'd the moat,  
Facing an Arctic grey  
They set foot South for India three thousand miles away.

### Vorkuta

1957

### A Game of Ten-Pin

It seems the Warsaw Pact has drawn the lines,  
America looks underneath her bed,  
Searching for proof of Moscow's dark designs,  
From now on anyone could be a 'Red;'  
Full of belief  
Witchfinders bind the air,  
Negrodom breathes relief, hatred channels elsewhere.

*"Have fun!"* call'd Maggie Dillinger  
To her love & his new pal,  
The Solokov from Croatia  
Port'ring down the hospital,  
The boys joined their happy driver,  
The chubby-cheek'd Big Al...  
Together they went roaring off to bowl,  
The coins are toss'd, the 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'd play'd a  
game.

**Jerkwater**  
1959

### Capturing Eichmann

The modern world from violent spasms born,  
Of which one has scarr'd man perhaps the most,  
Forever by a single word was known,  
The horror which surrounds the '*Holocaust;*'  
Deck'd with virtue  
Of good Sir Galahad  
To Argentina flew a crew of young Mossad.

They found him living out his life  
Gutter'd below his station,  
A nothing job, a plain, old wife,  
Meaningless & suburban...  
In quiet street, sharp as a knife,  
Men pounced upon Eichmann...  
Without resorting to hostility  
They drew from him his true identity.

Nervously shaking, coffee spilt  
Upon the hotel bed,  
Tho' weigh'd with guilt voice would not wilt  
When naked truths were said...  
But even he could not explain why so many were dead.

**Buenos Aires**  
1960

## Maggie Dillinger

They flew to English skies via Heathrow,  
From Euston took the train to Manchester,  
The steeps round Rawtenstall were brush'd with snow,  
A strange sensation, home to Lancashire;  
Drizzle soaked air,  
Winds roaming all achill,  
She aim'd a poignant stare, "Kids, that there's Pendle Hill!"

Up Manny Road bi Shanks' Pony;  
As Trafalgar flats amaze  
Instead of tender history  
Small pockets of the old days,  
Soon jesting with her family,  
With all their jokes & ways,  
The bungalow housing her mam & dad  
Soon full of booze, soon riotous, soon mad!

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

**Burnley**  
**1963**

## Canto II

*The end of the age of empires  
& the birth of the modern world*

Americas  
oscuras  
inclinada  
hacia nosotros surge  
la estrella de los publicos  
nacen heroes

**Pablo Naruda**

## JFK

As the all-American democrat  
Sat gently on the presidential throne  
The world, it seem'd, was free from, '*All of that!*'  
Those new tensions of the nuclear dawn;  
How high hopes grew  
When crimson-cheek'd Russia  
Missile silos withdrew from communist Cuba.

Alas this world is like the mind  
Bears unveiling iceberg tips,  
When the cruel cabalistic kind  
Holds our fate upon their lips  
& global forces in a bind  
That never, ever slips -  
For this is the way of the world my friend  
A sham to pay their daily dividend.

Thus when that peaceful president  
From Vietnam did sway  
Assasins sent, angers to vent,  
None shall stand in their way,  
& everyone remembers where they were upon that day.

**Dallas**  
**1963**

## Saddam Hussein

Iraq, old lynchpin of the Arab sphere,  
Black nectar by oil-global barons sought,  
Importance of thy kudos rising clear,  
The CIA lend sacchirine support;  
The Communist  
Courts the Prime Minister -  
Like some malignant cyst arrives his young slayer.

A man of violent thought & vain,  
Betann'd as the devlish Moor,  
Has come to end his leaders reign,  
Steps thro the rubicon dooor  
Aim'd pistol at his victims brain,  
But then the aim was poor  
So turn'd & fled into the eastern night,  
Uprescued by a secret service flight.

As climate changes with time's span  
The migrant may return,  
No common man, his simple plan  
Awaits the fateful turn,  
To join the Ba'athist party & the presidency earn.

**Baghdad**  
**1963**

## Death of Churchill

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

But age is age & to us all  
Must pass eventually,  
Forver he resigns the role  
    & travels to Sicily,  
There breaks his hip, a clumsy fall,  
    Pain hidden stoic'ly,  
Croaks to his darling wife, taking 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,  
    The civic oak in state;  
E'er buried in the grounds of his grand ancestor's estate.

## Blenheim Palace

1964

## Imperial Independance

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;  
    Cairo regain'd,  
    Move back'd by Washington,  
The old empires restrain'd by promise of sanction.

Crisis on crisis in the fold,  
    *"Algerie Algerienne!"*  
French settlers down the river sold  
    By distant Parisienne,  
As slowly broken is the hold  
    By haughty Arab men,  
Those tortured & repress'd by glory made  
Martyrs with bomb-blast & the barricade.

Britain deserts the ashen sands  
    Of desert, palm & tomb,  
Across the strands, scrubbing their hands,  
    Fresh republicans groom  
Unfetter'd leaders in the suction of power vacuum.

## Africa

1967

## Modern Warfare

The Viet Cong receive the Viet Minh,  
Regime topplers, subversive element,  
Into a war they sense they cannot win  
The young sons of George Washington were sent:  
One of them sniped  
Three days since at some farm,  
The whole area wiped with murder & napalm.

Tho' orphans weep & women wail  
Determin'd the pervader,  
Along the vine, Ho Chi Minh trail,  
From Communist supplier  
Vital hardware flows from the sale  
With varied courier  
By footpad, slow-barge, bicycle & cart...  
All set in place, the Tet assaults may start.

Guerrilla groups roam ev'rywhere,  
No Clausewitz classical,  
A grievous glare or simple stare,  
O chaotic battle!  
Proving war must serve conquest not th'ideological.

**Vietnam**

**1968**

## The Six Day War

Hebrews are settling in Philistia,  
This Zion which the Lord gifted Moses,  
This erez held in trust by the Yahweh,  
This holy land, this garden of Roses;  
America  
Sets her swords with scarabs,  
Some Western area en-niched amid Arabs.

Mossad urges pre-emptive blow;  
Swift as the Harmattan breeze  
Mirage jets terrify Cairo  
Put its airforce out with ease,  
Then to an ancyent conflict flow  
As when the Maccabees  
By light of the ark of the covenant  
March'd to oppose the Syrian ascent.

They fought & they dismiss'd fatigue,  
Surfing the battles high,  
By bold blitzkreig the Arab league  
Gives up the Sinai,  
The Golan heights, the West Bank, hear, "*Landowners move or die!*"

**Palestine**

**1969**

### Conquering the Moon

Sol shines on his planetary minions,  
Thou fraction of fractions, sliver of space,  
Still more than a million Marathons  
Bequeath 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  
Glew bright & far away,  
How lucky was that little crew who knew the moon that day.

**Sea of Tranquility**  
1969

### A Third Game of Chess

In auld times of distant genius  
From Araby would spring mankind's prime game,  
A treasure & a skill to all of us,  
Of infinite wonders, then tis a shame  
It's adherents  
Such heavy burdens bare,  
Two icy opponents game in the global glare.

When Washington's Bobby Fischer  
Met Moscow's Boris Spassky  
The sixty-four squared arena  
Bristled with such energy,  
Mind & legend drawn together,  
Match of the century,  
Move after move of caution & attack,  
America sits down to play with black

& claims the point with fev'rish play,  
A new world champion!  
Hair all a-fray & fleck'd with grey  
Scuttl'd home the Russian,  
The day seeming vainglorious, tho toasted by Nixon.

**Reykjavik**  
1972

## World Cup

It seems mankind has found a safer war,  
Better for conducting trials of nations,  
Those sticky, congeal'd pools of blood no more,  
Just a ball & a contree'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 seems a new Pele,  
A penalty to finish!  
But steel'd by the patriot bray  
The 'Wehrmacht' accomplish,  
Tuetonic spirit coursing thro the side,  
A win to fill the prussian soul with pride.

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

**Munich**  
**1974**

## Canto III

*Continuation of the war until  
the dissolution of the Russian Empire*

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

*Aeschylus*

### The Last Soldier

The one-man war of Hiroo Onada  
Cometh to end one honour-bursting day...  
Wielding his war flag at the surrender,  
The sword still sharp, his hair now gushing grey;  
With high-held head  
He leaves a life behind,  
His civilian dead untroubling his mind.

He stept into another age  
& could hardly recognize  
Fierce teenagers, crime waves a-rage  
& women painting their eyes...  
The sacred lands wear new image,  
Severing ancient 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**

### Vietnam

Contumelious, beastly, bull-brain'd war!  
Plague of all nations, nigh for thirty years  
Swamp churn'd on the once lush South China shore,  
Now moment of the vindication nears;  
Embassy roof  
Awaits the spinning steeds,  
Setting a silver hoof atop the cam'ra leads.

A four-star gen'ral shook his head,  
His reputation tatters,  
How could jungle & paddy bed  
Bless prestige as she shatters?  
The power of his fair kindred  
Less than that which matters,  
For men instill'd with vigour & belief  
Will always share the spoils of their relief.

Those lost unequivocally  
Whirly bird to a fade,  
Tanks roll to free the embassy,  
By Kharkov's workers made,  
An orphan wanders homeless here his mother's gun to trade.

**Saigon**  
**1974**

## Toyboy

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

Jack met her by the crystal caves  
& kiss'd her in the moonlight,  
Then took her down to see the graves,  
Evidence of shameful fight  
When the white white man came on in waves  
To claim a satellite -  
Pipping both Cuba & the KGB,  
Beneath the grey banner of liberty.

*"Now dollars have replaced cannon  
& still they come!"* he said,  
*"Let's 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**  
**1976**

## Imperial Soviet

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

From Cuba to West Africa  
Men promote the Marxist creed,  
Libya to Ethiopia  
Accepted the 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 America sold  
Brave acumen for each weapon  
To prise the Russian hold...  
Sewing a fresh Knockehahn of the Teutoburger Wald.

**Afghansitan**  
**1980**

### **The Last Reichsfuhrer**

Pearl searchlights comb the auld walls of Spandau,  
Mann'd by Russia, th'Anglo-Saxons & France,  
A point in time that is forever now,  
Last actual of the grand alliance;  
Hospitable  
To this strange hermitage,  
Solitary eagle behind an iron cage.

Withdrawing from this living hell  
Of a nightmare waxed absurd,  
He shews the world a silent shell,  
Weeks pass by without a word,  
He held his captors in a spell  
Like some liltant songbird,  
For thro his soul melts runisch mysterie,  
Draping der Fuhrer's friend & deputie.

The door slamm'd shut, the midnight nears,  
The Twentieth is come,  
Counting the years, a rain of tears,  
Salutes beat to the drum,  
Tho slipping to senility fidelis ad urnam!

**Berlin**  
**1981**

### **Shadows of Empire**

Between the oil fields of the Malvinas  
March the chosen soldiers of the Junta,  
Proving too strong for these scant defenders  
They raise the sun-flag of Argentina;  
Britannia reels  
From this rare perfidy,  
But she whom in words deals must court calamity.

Protecting this rock of empire  
Thatcher throws in her first team,  
That sturdy throat & steady fire  
Of the British Army cream,  
Whose sharper aim, keener desire,  
Shatters the Junta's dream -  
For centuries her expertness in wars  
Has flown her flag oer ever distant shores.

As commonwealth islands now throw  
The dice of liberty;  
Vanuato & Tuvalo  
& quaint Kiribati -  
The Britisher still British even down in Port Stanley

**Falkland Islands**  
**1982**

## Star Wars

From the knocking at the world's ending  
The Avatars have begg'd to justify  
Th'excessive circus of defence spending,  
The tragedy of infinite supply;  
Fresh sattelites  
Up to the heavens go  
With laser locking lights some Catennacio!

Below them, crawling in the dust,  
The starving Afric masses,  
Are hidden by the filthy crust  
Which cloaks the banker's glasses,  
Him who invents accounts of trust  
For the middle-classes  
While ev'ry day the missile docks increase -  
Famine! forfeit of this imperfect peace.

In the vast shadow of the day  
Those silent snipers wait  
For soaring prey, sleek missiles grey  
The threat shall dissipate.  
Waiting for fingers quivering, tis folly or tis fate!

**Space**  
**1984**

## Weidervereinigung

Admiration puffs-up the defeated  
Walking the long road of recovery  
Economic foundations completed  
Witness the rebirth of a great country;  
Now fully grown  
The world shall heed her call,  
Focused on that cold stone, the cry, "*Bring down the Wall!*"

These new German generations  
Break the shackles put in place  
By the crude, disgusting actions  
Of the so-call'd master race,  
Long last the celebrations,  
The Wall becomes a space  
Where creeps the dollar imperialist  
Thro those wide holes lain low by freedom's fist.

Into the east bleach'd talons reach  
Draped in a smiling guise,  
Blood-swollen leech, strange adverts teach  
The tongue to phantasize,  
Dissolving hard-earn'd roubles in a BigMac, shake & fries.

**Moscow**  
**1989**

Book XXII

Glasnost

From permafrost to burning Crimea,  
Russians embrace communist theorem,  
Has shared the vision of utopia,  
But with a paradise but one problem...  
The human mind,  
Volatile & unwise,  
Possesses self-designed seeds of his own demise.

Latvia & Uzbekistan,  
Ukraine & Lirgizia,  
Moldavia & Khazakstan,  
Elegant Estonia,  
Azerbaijahn, Jadzhhikistan,  
Byelorus & Georgia  
All ballot independence as the Wall  
Crumbles to make Germany once more 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

Jihad

*Par le cinquiesme & vn grand Hercules  
Viendront le temple ouurir de main bellique,  
Vn Clement, Iule & Ascans recules,  
L'espee, clef, aigle, n'eurent onc si grand picque.*

## Canto I

*The rise of religious tension from the first Iraq war  
to the rise of Al Qu'aida*

The great, the jewel & the mother of all battles

**Saddam Hussein**

## Desert Storm

Still bleeding from the ayahtollan dead  
Saddam Hussein discards his contrees debt,  
Why pay why you can invade them instead?  
An ancyent raid of nomad chieftans set;  
In but one day  
They claim an emirate,  
The world shall have its say on the rape of Kuwait.

Scud missiles scurry thro the sky  
To Riydah & Tel Aviv,  
But the heated Allied reply  
Made bomb'd Baghdadis bereave  
Lifes lot, & still great gryphons fly,  
Fresh carcasses to 'reave,  
Like turkeys twitching in a field of wheat  
The lethal reconquista is complete.

Old herdsmen clap the holy sign,  
The oilfields set alight,  
Like crimson wine we see the shine  
Of day all thro the night,  
Sticky sludge slicking to the gulf to strip the seamews flight.

**Kuwait**

**1991**

### **The Last Grunfeld**

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;  
But still her soul  
Strides thro the world's affairs,  
"Free Palestine!" the call, it seems nobody cares.

As in the heart of Araby,  
With Isreal victorious,  
Elderly Anna Bukowski  
Helped herself onto the bus  
& although well over ninety  
She did so without fuss,  
When the wild-eyed martyr from Palestine  
Charged tween the seats with steep, religious whine

& pulls the cord, corpse blown apart,  
End of the Grunfeld clan,  
The peace talks start, an armour'd cart  
Faces the caravan,  
With both sides hunting justice from any partition plan.

**Gaza**  
**1993**

### **Modern Holocaust**

Back in the city where the Arch Duke died,  
Murder heralding many millions more,  
Man's thoughts returning to his genocide  
Fed by another bloody civil war;  
The great schism  
Of Yugoslavia  
Petrifies the Muslims 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;  
& reaching a warehouse in Glogova  
From their forces flies the goddess KARMA.

What wrath so many Muslims feel?  
Machine guns & grenades  
Whip, whoom! & wheel, what murd'rous meal?  
Soon thousands join the shades,  
Corpses pit-hoarded with their widow's photos in parades.

**Srebrenica**  
**1995**

### Invocation

There is a glade in an ancyent forest  
Where pools lie glitteraund molten azure,  
I wade within the one most moonbeam blest  
To bathe in blissful dreamtimes gleaming pure;

Attended by  
The nine naked maidens  
Like a lost lullaby liltng thro' love's garden.

She harps a song, she summons stars,  
She waltzes round the waters,  
She treats these tender battlescars,  
She paints the floating lotus,  
She strums the summergold guitars,  
O loxian daughters!  
As thro the wood was cast a flood of light,  
I pluck'd & dipp'd reed & 'gan to write.

The muses weave their tryptych tone,  
O rich enchanted chime,  
The music of their mystic moan  
Inspires my soul to rhyme,  
Thus clutching hopes of poetry Parnassus' slopes we climb.

**Brighton**  
**October**  
**1999**

### Al Qu'aida

There is a new threat to the Allied world  
Outwith Europe, from the Afghan passes,  
After the mats of morning prayer furl'd,  
Soldiers of Jihad tend to their classes;  
What power reign'd  
Thro their spirit's guide,  
"Paradise can be gain'd thro holy suicide!"

"We are watchmen of the pure way,  
Guardians of the martyrs,  
Sons of brave Hossein Fahmideh,  
Drinkers of god's elixirs,  
Bringing death to the USA  
& the non-believers,  
This weapon unassailable & good  
Defends the faith with our last drop of blood!"

America fraught with unease,  
But fear cast far away,  
From cross the seas a poison breeze  
Flies into JFK,  
Two sleeping agents float thro customs onto the subway.

**New York**  
**1998**

### When Mavis met Tommy

Tommy Sumner shuffl'd with the old dears  
Into the mini-bus outside their home,  
The driver sets off to three rousing cheers,  
All off to idle by the Irish foam;  
An old penny  
Is won within the hour,  
Claimd by bingo Betty, first to spot the tower.

They book'd into a B&B,  
Tour'd the same old streets & sights,  
By-the-sea was far too windy  
So they tram'd along the lights,  
Then all the ladies left Tommy  
For chips & early nights,  
So he walked' down to the Winter Gardens,  
Sat on the bar-stool of Mavis Johnston's.

*"That's my chair!" "Sorry, love, di'nt know!"*  
They hit it off at once,  
Warm talk would flow to long ago,  
Rich in reminiscence,  
When nights were filled with love & life, & served up with  
suspense!

**Blackpool  
Christmas  
1999**

### Epiphanies

There is a wonder in an epic muse,  
Once tasted nothing earthly may compare,  
Where else may such diverse sciences fuse  
In such a soft exultation 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 - not counting the Prelude,  
Hyperion, Juan - don't think me rude!

Phrenzies pursued, oft fuell'd by wines,  
Waltzing with poetry,  
A mind designs ten thousand lines  
Offer'd in fealty,  
To Clio, Lord Apollo & sacred Calliope.

**Bognor Regis  
2000**

### **Terrorist**

As Atta travell'd 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,  
If they but only knew they lectured with terror.

He was the first of the nineteen,  
Ful 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,  
Scared mission! the decision  
To instigate the plan  
Was theirs & theirs by birthright like the death-flights of Japan.

**Florida**  
2001

### **Epyllia**

I stretch'd to grasp the gross orphean lyre,  
These fingers on the fringe with fuga fraught,  
When en-plein-air perfumed whispers transpire  
Hyblean murmours of prophetic thought;  
Exultation!  
Donning the tangl'd mane  
I offer my nation a poem of the vein.

From the corpus of tradition  
Carv'd a stanza of my own,  
Engaging in composition  
To the continent was borne,  
Where from La Route Napoleon  
To Berchtesgaden dawn  
I suckl'd on the Parnassian vein  
With all the myrtl'd Becchentes in train.

Returning to my native land  
I found a pleasant spa,  
Ambition grand, ballpoint in hand  
I mused on Homer's star  
& threw my days thro poesy's maze, tho 'rison rose afar.

**Tunbridge Wells**  
2001

## Canto II

*The destruction of the World Trade Centre*

### Twin Towers

Tw'as early morn across America,  
New day gracing the Atlantic seaboard  
Four separate Death Squads, vers'd in terror,  
Prepared to unsheathe Allah's sacred sword;

*"Can we help you?"*

The stewardesses sought,  
How deftly swift 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!

The red head-banded arabs cry  
Above the engine whine  
*"Tis time to die!"* their dreamy eye  
Seem'd blest with the divine

As thro the windows rose the distant manhattan skyline

An eye for an eye blinds the world

**Ghandi**

**Flight 11**  
**September 11th**  
**08:40**

### The North Tower

How vastly the capital of the Earth  
Outroll'd her concrete sprawl without debate  
To such famous monuments given birth -  
Liberty's vision & the Empire state -  
dwarf'd by the twins  
That tower to the sky  
The world zodiac spins around the Gemini

Peering upon the ants below  
From the hundred & first floor  
She froze...for looming at window  
White, majestic wings in roar,  
Her life flash'd by before the blow,  
Then she was there namore...  
Caught in Dantean incineration  
On all sides surges the devastation

The tower struck stood like a rock  
Then shook with a shudder,  
The aftershock spread block-by-block  
*"There's been a disaster!"*  
*"Man a god, damn 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 flockt  
To watch from wide windows  
Mystified & shellshockt... a roar of engine grows

Airplane ploughing kamakaze  
Blows up inside the tower  
So ferocious is this fury  
Not felt since Okinawa  
Parts of bodies, luggage, debris,  
Fall in grisly shower -  
While smoke & flames lick'd from that 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**

## The Pentagon

The roaring Boeing honed in for the kill  
The Al Quai'da's chosen war weapon,  
Ignored the White House & Capitol Hill  
Preferring this five-sided bastion  
Symbol of might  
Beside the Potomac  
A simple morning flight becomes a bold attack

It crash'd into a helipad  
& slid into a building  
The fuel rich tanks of the Jihad  
In violent 'WHOOM' exploding  
From Moscow to Islamabad  
On the spot reporting  
A universal moment on TV  
Not one attack, not two attacks, but three!

The firestorm fell fury daubs  
The scene in smoke-swabb'd paint  
Thro blue, white strobes, assail'd earlobes  
Sev'ral survivors faint  
Behind, a crawling officer, arm cast up as a saint!

## Washington

09:46

## George Bush

An aide whisper'd in the president's ear  
*"Sir, there has been an incident..."* struck dumb,  
'Ministrations defining moment here  
Time to hopnour his nation's faith now come  
Stood Cowpoke George,  
Subject of so much scorn  
A chance for friends to forge & image be reborn

For like Thatcher, Mussolini  
& his father before him  
Votes can be won thro victory  
& healthy jingoism  
He spoke with calm assurity  
It is our contree's aim  
To bring all these terroristst to justice  
& blow them sky high off the Earth's surface

The dawn of realisation  
Th'unimaginable  
Fortress nation is fired upon  
Alll this unthinkable  
How can her good civilians be caught up in battle?

## Somewhere over America

09:57

### Death of the Towers

From musing-ground around old Rusthall Wood  
I dallied home to fetch my da  
A spot of morning strolling to the good  
My house-guest offers 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  
Thousands fall down to their doom -  
Sending the global aftershocks  
From that dusty mushroom  
Dropping onto a sea 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 we condemned to ever live our lives in fear of war?

### Royal Tunbridge Wells

10:17

### All-American Heroism

There was another Boeing in the air  
On which an all-American hero  
Had rallied four passengers to the dare  
Then phoned his wife, *"I love you!" "Yes, I know!  
You must do it  
Or they may murder more..."*  
They went to do their bit in this most modern war

The phone left on so his dear wife  
Could listen to the action  
He picket up a sharp, butter knife  
Simple but deadly weapon  
& took his first & only life  
Savage the blade thrust in  
The other guard is wrestled to the floor  
& now the rest burst thro the cabin door.

As men commingled in melee  
The Arabs lost control,  
Phyrric vic'try as suddenly  
The plane began to fall,  
Crashing into some farmer's field, the furnace fried them all

### Pennsylvania

10:25

## Aftermath

Myself? I watch'd as the world watch'd with me  
Tying to comprehend what I just saw,  
A new, dark chapter for humanity,  
The onset of another bloody war;  
Sick of the news  
I switch'd off all their talk,  
Put on my coat & shoes & return'd to my walk.

From Greenwich down to Harisson,  
From Mamoreneck to Rye,  
From these pleasant streets suburban  
Streams of anxious phone calls fly,  
Denying the television,  
The truth they would defy,  
A phone rings, "*Hi babe!*" "*Thank god you're all right!*"  
But many shan't be coming home tonight

Around the police perimeter  
People waited for news;  
Father, Mother, Sister, Brother  
Muslims, Catholics, Hindus,  
Protestants, Presbyterians, Jove's Witnesses & Jews.

## New York City

11:15

## Osama Bin Laden

Hidden by hills half-way around the globe,  
Black beard bounty rising by the second,  
His sheikish eyes offset by pure white robe,  
Stood the Moor, less man more the legend;  
Laughing out loud,  
Clapping his hands in glee,  
Wax'd jubilant & proud of mental artistry.

Within a secret desert den  
Was 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 on the attacks  
Henchmen hand him Saddam's Hussein's fresh fax.

His guards proclaim a victory,  
Kaleshnikov salute,  
In exstasi, across country,  
To sunswept skies men shoot,  
Bask not in triumph Qu'aida... thou art far too astute.

## Afghanistan

11:30

### **Canto III**

*The Allied invasion of Islam  
& the subsequent terrorist response*

### **Revenge!**

The Allies muster a massive reply,  
Cluster-bombs fall from stratofortresses  
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.

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

**Tim Robbins**

**Afghanistan  
November  
2001**

### Peace March

They march'd en masse into the capital;  
Hippy, citizen, socialist worker,  
Heavy-hearted with forthcoming battle,  
How could our world still unleash war's terror?  
From age to youth  
The vast majority  
Choose not the dragonstooth of Hell's hostility.

O world, sweet world, sweet world of mine  
& six billion others  
Dost thou not wish a sun to shine  
Upon a world of brothers,  
Why would ye wish to hear the whine  
Of our wailing mothers?  
For surely those cruel lessons have been learnt  
When Prague fell & the streets of Poplar burnt.

I wander silent thro the roar  
That rumbles thro the crowd,  
*"What is life for" "Make tea not war!"*  
The gentle clamour loud,  
The later portions of my task with firmer thought endow'd.

**Hyde Park**  
**February 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**2003**

### Invasion of Iraq

The Saxons reach the beach'd Shatt-al-arab,  
Where Tigris & Euphrates stem their flow  
& scimitars sharpen for the scarab,  
Amicus est tamquam alter ego;  
The serpent's head  
Call'd the fight for heaven,  
Wielding a gold-plated AK forty-seven.

As when the brave, young Persian Shah  
Defied Queen Victoria,  
The Anglo-Saxons sail to spar  
Amid the streets of Basra,  
With better guns & battlestar  
Marched the desert soldier,  
Joining opening batsmen at the crease  
To end the wars with this more perfect peace.

He slipt away into the night  
That man men call Hussain,  
For from the fight if ye take flight  
Ye live to fight again  
Like Washington's irregulars & Wellington's young Spain...

**Baghdad**  
**May**  
**2003**

### Regime's End

Pursuing the 'most wanted' deck of cards  
Two faces caught in a lavish mansion,  
Reduced, their father's kingdom, to mere yards,  
Fresh focal point for the world's attention;  
Four-hour fire-fight  
Til Odai & Qusai  
Are finally in sight, mark'd by the sniper's eye.

Only the Ace of Spades remains,  
The very ultimate goal,  
First target of the Allied pains  
Now ten minutes from his fall,  
Namore the tyrant hydra reigns,  
They find him in a hole,  
Without an army & without a plan,  
Just dishevell'd & ignoble old-man.

He was led up into the light,  
Glanced across the river  
Where shines the sight, fabulous bright,  
Spinal spinning shiver,  
One of his golden palaces commandeer'd forever.

**Tikrit**  
**September**  
**2003**

### 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 whim has thrust them to the fore;  
Entrusted tasks,  
With bomb-laden ruck-sacks,  
The citizen unmask, the terrorist attacks.

It seem'd another routine day  
As the rush hour receded,  
*"Death to friends of the USA!"*  
Words thousands wish were heeded,  
Both Eta & the IRA  
Truly superceeded  
As pack'd trains blow at Atocha station,  
Striking horror thro the Spanish nation.

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

**Legures**  
**2003**

## Suicide Bomber

As Al-Jazeera shows brave Muslims bleed  
& Mosques of Leeds incite his deep passions,  
Young Hasib abandons the British breed -  
Pop music, hedonism & fashions;  
For Pakistan  
Nursery of Islam,  
For Allah, the Quran & the blessed Imam.

*"We are watchmen of the pure way,  
Guardians of the martyrs,  
Sons of brave Hossein Fahmideh,  
Drinkers of god's elixirs,  
Bringing death to the USA  
& the non-believers,  
This weapon unassailable & good  
Defends the faith with our last drop of blood!"*

On the flight home the martyr sees  
The flowers of heaven,  
Customs a breeze, drops to his knees  
At the railway station,  
Life amplified as one young man plots our devastation.

**Manchester**  
**2004**

## A New Blitz

As Londoners rose glorious & gay  
The thirtieth Olympiad was theirs,  
Their families now 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.

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

**London**  
**July 7th**  
**2005**

### Death of Saddam Hussein

Since Tilsit's raft two centuries are pass'd  
& all has been remarkable sithen,  
They thought that peace, now peace settles at last,  
Upon the warring winter-time of men;  
Saddam Hussein  
Has melted with the snows,  
By Allied justice slain, the doors of Janus close.

Tho conflict shall still haunt Iraq  
His hanging symbolizes  
The age of Mars tied in a sack  
With all his crude disguises  
& toss'd upon the Potomac,  
Drowning with the Kaisers -  
So this is the way that the world wars die  
Not with a bang, but a whimper, a sigh.

How many fought? how many died?  
Man's future to secure,  
Tyrants defied by lands allied  
Made living lives more pure,  
Far from those ravages of war our ancestors endure.

**Baghdad**  
**December**  
**2006**

### Poeticus

I am a man, many have gone before  
& will come yet, to thee I trust this song,  
Pray let her be a bright & open door  
Shewing the world how once the world went wrong;  
My soul enisled,  
Occasionalism!  
Some gentle spirit smiled on my monumentum.

I would the world should hear this song  
& sing it down the ages,  
So when the epic, proud & long,  
Renaissance ever stages,  
Fresh poets may wander among  
All these antique pages  
& find a thing or two that they could use  
In their own conversations with the muse.

Namore shall Homers chaunt war's praise  
Or Owens curse it's game,  
Halycon days or psychic craze,  
Man's glory or his shame,  
An ever-living testament to what our world became.

**Malta**  
**March**  
**2007**

**BOOK XXIII**

**ARMAGEDDON**

**Canto 1**

*The Defeat of the Valhalla & Satanus*

*Pres d'un grand pont de plaine spatieuse,  
Le grand lion par forces Cesarees:  
Fera abbatre hors cite' rigoreuse,  
Par effrai portes lui seront resere'es.*

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**

### Holy Waters

Uncle Sam sat enthroned with Liberty  
Upon the voyage East to Albion,  
Entertain'd pleasantly elegantly  
By his royal emissary, Dagon;  
Relaxed despite  
The stern vein of that day,  
How soon the vital fight, how soon the deadly fray?

Little did those deities know  
Then 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 appear'd & checkt progress  
With trident, crown & shield,  
Grim devils press their gruesomeness,  
But great gods rarely yield...  
Now corpses float around him & his is the battlefield.

### Oceania

### Divine Voyagers

On this day of days the reckoning comes  
& all her preparations are complete,  
Shore shaking to the sound of kettledrums  
To battle's dark embarks Britannia's fleet;  
Snow-plumed swan  
Flew behind her army,  
Where ladylike upon her back sate Liberty.

She lookt proudly upon her crew  
Riding bravely to battle,  
The passion for her husband grew  
At this test of his mettle,  
Beside the mighty Gryphon flew  
George & armour'd Michael,  
While Gwyddion by Viking longship row'd,  
His battleaxe painted with pungent woad.

Sam routed all his enemies,  
Proud blood pouring thro veins,  
Archangels free pale Saint Denys  
From starbarbaric chains,  
"Pyerun awaits our armies, come we march to Asgard's  
plains."

### Europa

## For Liberty

Between the mists cloaking immortal spheres  
& realms of aether soak'd in luminous,  
The twinkling of a candelabrum nears,  
The capital of the vainglorious;  
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,  
Seven heads cross Lake Averno,  
Seven roars spitting wrath...  
As Seraphim loose bows of golden fire  
Thro hell's deep gates that fell beast did retire.

At the long, thick-scaled, horned tale  
Gabriel took keen aim...  
A whoosh, a wail, a gushing flail,  
The severage grew lame,  
Angels smear'd in the dragonsblood & stept into the flame.

## Hell

## Gargantua

Dragonsflight bares the brunt of the Gryphon,  
Below their fight, embattl'd in the surf,  
Celtic braves commanded by Gwyddion  
War 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.

Shell after shell his guns did throw  
To destroy & invalid,  
Driving 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,  
Blood sweet'ning in 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,  
Wounds attended by prancing succubi,  
From magic flute the notes of loving fount,  
Receives sweet-musty Venus with a sigh;  
Softly seduced  
She guides him from the war,  
With one kiss were reduced Bellona & Ishtar.

Odin withdrew to Valhalla,  
Multitudinous the throng,  
Brought the Aesir all together,  
Speaking truths with wounded tongue,  
"From both East & West comes terror,  
Our time will not be long,  
Step 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 thee swift course to fetch a force  
That stands in the good stead  
Of our friend Lord Satanus..." hard hoof to the master sped.

### Asgard

### The Assault of Hell

Fine-linen'd Jove drove his wool-white army,  
Each step heralded by the trumpeter,  
Some say the descent to Hell is easy,  
But not if harken'd from Divinia;  
Cerberus chain'd  
They cross 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  
The carcass clear'd from the path,  
Those Daemon lanes defending Dis  
Suffer'd the Holy Wrath,  
Unleash'd by the Ark of the Covenant...  
On to the Phlegethon the pure souls went.

Balrog detects Satanus' face  
Is laced with ancyent fear,  
"A desp'rate race, at fearsome pace  
The Hosts of Heaven near!"  
Claws rais'd a gourd... "But my side of the bargain hold I  
here..."

### Pandemonium

### **The Last Battle**

The foe advancing thro the Muspellsheim  
Loki intrigues with Odin to fight on,  
Demagorgons withdraws into Nilfheim,  
Its beastly banqueting now almost done;  
Valkyries sang  
A rare Bragian lay,  
For those in the Thrudvangs magnificent array.

They stood upon that oak-fringed field  
With powerful, bulging thighs,  
Sparkling sea of swan-helm & shield  
& narrow, determined eyes,  
The king of countless trumpets pee'd  
Into the Aesir skies,  
Slow darkening to the dead scenes of night,  
Odin seem'd jaded in the fading light.

They took their places cross the vale,  
The time to die was come,  
In blew a gale, slow as a snail  
Was heard the kettledrum,  
The battlelines drew daggers, Uncle Sam unflagg'd his thumb

### **Valhalla**

### **Stand of Satanus**

Mid 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  
The first attack he foils  
With swift, sulphuric wind & sore, malignant boils.

Alas! FEAR sweeps his rotten core  
As Jove, bright & beatific,  
Gallups unto his army's fore  
Victory academic...  
The sovran voice calls off the war,  
The Beast thinks it a trick,  
But in the arts of peace angels excel  
& how can there be heaven without hell.

The Devil swivels to his seat  
By Balrog & Belial  
Odin's defeat deem'd now complete,  
"Then we have pass'd the trial  
& honour has been satisfied, Balrog the promist file..."

### **Pandemonium**

## Twilight of the Gods

How gruesome is the Gotterdammerung  
Fought for 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  
Behind 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,  
    Uncle Sam, Gryphon, Gwyddion,  
    Took leave of the Aesir,  
Those land & lives beneath a rising ocean disappear.

## Asgard

## Canto 2

*The Trial & Exile of Mars*

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

**Iris Murdoch**

### Passing the Trial

On the solitude of a mountain slope,  
Silent but for the buzzing of a fly,  
Fair Gwyddion is fill'd with fresher hope  
Watching the vapours vanish from the sky;  
The beast was gone  
The cause of all his woes  
Altho the wars were done gulf-tide of sadness flows.

Down the mountain tall bounds leading  
Went the great god of the Celts  
T'where Oxslip & Love-lies-bleeding  
Intermingled with wolf pelts,  
By the Golgoth grass receding  
Demeanour nobly melts,  
Wailing a wylde wail with a doleful sound,  
Here INNOCENCE lies dead within a mound.

Britannia potter'd solemnly  
Thro dew-drench'd bluebell wood  
T'where Liberty had carved a tree  
With names of famous good,  
Supping the toasts of heroes from a cup of Vishnu's blood.

### Albion

### 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 a crackling, azure jewel  
& giddyupp'd  
Yon the highways of Hell  
To violently erupt mid Midgards cloudy swell

& shoot beyond the stratosphere,  
Summer twinkled with the stars,  
Satanus watch'd them disappear  
Then made slouch behind his bars,  
Stroking technological gear  
To aid his future wars,  
Placing the diamond in sockets to glean  
Secrets mysterious filling the screen.

The Grey Tepig pass'd Jupiter  
Uranus & Pluto,  
Her remarkable passenger  
Haul'd reigns so she would slow  
So he could look his last at Earth, that distant blue-green glow.

### Space

### Striking the Allies

Cocytus shimmer'd with frozen half-light,  
Outstepping from a lurid limousine,  
Satanus saw his sable satellite  
Beam vision of Midgard onto the screen;  
His sceptred will  
Americana strikes,  
An Imp changes channel, "Sire, more this one thee likes!"

The Four riders trot into view  
Before the house of Sterling,  
There grew into a wrecking crew  
Of calamitous killing,  
From that destruction then withdrew  
When came the beating wing  
Of Saint George patrolling Britannia's skies,  
So slipt to hell beneath the Pendle rise.

They gallop'd down the cinder tracks,  
Past Pluto & all that,  
Yon mofette cracks & torture racks,  
Til Hell spread icy flaT,  
Where on a master throne in jubilation Satan sat.

### Cocytus

### The Indifference of Allah

Hino mounted the marvellous Gryphon  
& with Saint George took to the trembling skies,  
An important diplomatic mission,  
Before their wings a thousand towers rise;  
Atop the sky,  
The city of the Djinn,  
A flight of Pegasi escorted them within.

They were formally presented  
To the court of great Allah,  
But their presence there resented,  
"In your fight with Valhalla,  
When deity was demented,  
I shunn'd the theatre!"  
"My noble king," said Hino, "We protest -  
Agents of thine did strike us in the West!"

Great Allah grew indifferent,  
"But nothing can be done,  
As evil scented devilment  
Exists beneath Heaven,  
I cannot control all accounts... our discourse here is done."

### Babylon

### Faerie Exodus

The realm of the immortal quiet grows  
A first few weeds have climb'd into the scene  
From Europe's plains to Asgard's tumbling snows  
It seem'd like the great battle had not been,  
But for the pyre  
Lit by the firefly,  
Where Toutatis & Tyr make ashes in the sky.

Sprinkling upon the faerie way  
Her procession fell silent  
What once was floral turns to grey  
& the trees lay bare & bent  
They come at last to this cold bay  
No longer innocent  
Where in the wake of ravaging excess  
They boarded barges for the exodus

& left with tender memories  
Of ruby Europa  
Her energies, her soft beauties  
& her blessed nature  
Yes left for safer gardens, both far off & forever...

### Oceania

### Judgement of Jupiter

Jove reach'd the ruins of a city lost  
Long time ago, when Mars was in his prime,  
There call'd for Jupiter as echoes toss'd  
His name thro temples with a monorhyme;  
Some ghostly shade  
Namore by faith sustain'd,  
Slouch'd humble & afraid, by ev'ry breath bepain'd.

"Old god," said Jove, "Look in my eyes,  
Tho your body crippl'd, weak,  
Your mind is still so very wise,  
& I am come to hear it speak,  
Of better life I phantasize,  
A finer age we seek,"  
Jupiter thought awhile, & then did say,  
"Bring Mars to trial & fling him miles away."

"Wise words," mused Jove, "My thanks, old friend,"  
& there thrust out a palm,  
Mid-air suspend, the greek legend  
Instead did grab his arm  
& squeez'd it tight, "Put him some place he can do no more  
harm!"

### Olympus

## Heavenly Judgement

Jove greets the gods, campus-stella seated,  
Upon those 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 hearts.

*"But we need him," sang Liberty,  
"When tyranny uprising,"  
"Surely not," sang Saraswhati,  
"His wars aid each tyrant king,"  
"He should keep his divinity,'  
Offer'd Bucks & Sterling,  
"I disagree," said 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  
& made their choice, angels rejoice,  
"Guilty!" proclaim'd the court -  
Gurgling upon congealing blood, "NO...." groans the war-god's  
throat.

## Empyrean

## Prisoner

With Jove's archangels hovering above,  
Mars was allow'd to kiss his last goodbyes,  
Thro bloodshot eyes Venus would beam her love  
As he was led beyond her thro the skies;  
Deep into space  
Iniversal frontiers,  
Where sable pits replace the suppermassive spheres;

They found an ancyent galaxy  
Where supernovae flashes  
Implode in awesome density  
& turn diamonds to ashes,  
They cast Mars to that gravity -  
*"Tho he yells & thrashes  
He will never be able to escape  
To fill us with killing, pillage & rape,"*

Said Mab, sipping her herbal mead  
Of soft-scented flowers,  
KARMA agreed with quaint, "Indeed,"  
Age of Aquarius  
Enters the harbour of the world, a bay so beauteous.

## Shangri-La

## 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,  
Dhadgab-at-arms tethers grey-feather'd horse;  
Shock & relief  
Sweeps thro his regiment,  
Their chieftans now debrief this 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  
Valleys of our vision..."*  
*I press on you the need for an attack,  
To win the day & fling those rascals back!"*

Balrog's Grey Tepig join'd a horde  
Of dashing cavalry,  
With plasma- sword he proudly pour'd  
Into the enemy,  
To be soon slain for from war's pain tragedy comes only.

## Dadghabbi

## Canto 3

*The final battles of the Gods*

Fear not; I am the first & the last;  
I am he that liveth & was dead;  
& behold, I am alive for evermore

## Revelations

## Heavenly Schism

O there must pass a time, some far off time  
When every palm should bare the devil's mark  
    & Mammon, like a Jabba in the slime,  
    Shall gorge on human labour like a shark;  
        Til gutted full  
        All monies must explode  
The divine lights grow dull as all accounts zeroed!

    This was the epic leveller  
    Of faiths of all the ages  
    No evangelic reveller  
Could match men's monthly wages  
    Only the Devil cleverer  
    Than immortal mages  
As all now beggar to the pagan rite  
& even Jove will vanish in the plight!

    Through passages erebian  
    The hordes of Hades roll  
    Sing stygian stinging paeans  
    Searing through screaming soul  
Singing anti-hosannahs for the first prince of the fall.

## Hell

## Rescuing of Mars

The stars surrounded Mephistopoles  
Upon his mission into deepest space  
With Balrog's tools he rode the astral breeze  
    Into a black hole's terrible embrace;  
        & there was found  
        The tortured soul of war  
It seems forever bound... & yet to march once more

    Seeing the devil's messenger  
    Romulus cries for release  
    & in a flash the passenger  
Sett'd in a spaceship's peace  
    That swif as shinobi ninja  
    Makes lawful physics cease  
    & spiralling into a gyring worm  
Soon finds itself afoot on terrafirm.

    Now as the ship ceases to roar  
    Down from the fuselage  
The God of War the Fate's restore  
    Clad in fierce equipage,  
Ready for rude revenge is if rais'd by a recharge

## Midgard

### Rise of Satanus

Updripping 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;  
Such flaggy wings  
Stretch from his brazen back  
While innum'able things hiss thro a fissure crack.

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

To battle goes the Lizard King  
Across Vesuvo's waste,  
Now half-footing, now half-flying,  
To Heaven in his haste,  
The hordes of Hell behind him in the scum of hate encased.

### Ausonia

### Fall of Heaven

As Satanus marches across Heaven  
Like scuttling rats all gods flee from his feet  
Their treachery Mars has not forgotten  
& thrust-by-thrust his vengeance out did meet;  
A black-cloth sun  
The moon a bloody red  
Such mad devastation, such deadly deicide.

As a third of Earth was burning  
& a third of seas now blood  
The Four Riders are returning  
To lay low all mortal good  
All man's pleas for mercy spurning  
As prophets knew they would –  
The dawning of the devil's grand empire  
When all demolish'd in a reign of fire.

Now Heaven is a hellish place  
Hissing with stenches vile  
The angel race flees in disgrace  
Their leader in exile  
& every trace of Jove removed by Judas & Belial!

### Divinnia

### Power of Faith

The Gods gather'd round Saint Ignatius  
To pray upon the Bark & on its Cope  
A solemn song led by Quirinius  
As if this were Saint Pauls & him the Pope;  
*"Where art thou Jove?"*  
The congregation yearns,  
Melodious they strove as every hymn-note burns.

*"Who lives in love loves least to live  
& a long delay dost rue,  
If Him we loved will us forgive,  
Him to whom all praise is due,  
Then evil from our souls shall sieve  
& give those souls to You –  
Come show the world your spirit still is strong!"*  
The Aesir interrupt this sacred song...

"Brave Allah pray take up the task  
& with JEHOVA plead  
Vitaly ask him to unmask  
The fresh messiah breed  
For without faith on Earth no god can halt infernal greed.

### Shangri-La

### Birth of Saffia

Now, at the time that was before agreed  
The gods assembl'd all on Arlo Hill  
& at their heart upon a jasper steed  
Jove sat rescipiscent in silence still;  
The Muslim prince  
Sat smugly on his right  
For Allah had convinced his friend to join the fight.

*"My new saviour," said Jove, "Shall free  
The virtue of Orlando,  
Agamemnon's nobility,  
The goodness of Godfredo  
Bare Gloriana's chastity  
Ethics of Rinaldo,  
Like Aeneas adventure overseas  
With the persistence of bodl Ulysees."*

From heavenly hyacinthine  
Saffia slow descends  
The scared queen of all that's been  
Her beauty never ends  
Not knowing that the universe upon her worth depends.

### Midgard

### Before Armageddon

Jove counters with the verve of renewal  
All gods & creatures meet behind his drum  
& she with him, shining like a jewel,  
Who was, who is & who is yet to come;  
His daughter rides  
Upon the divine lap  
As angel army glides marching to thunderclap.

*"Hosannah to the King of Kings!"*  
They sang for him on higher  
Whose face shone full & flash'd lightnings  
Beaming for sweet Saffia  
Sat giggling neath soft seraph wings,  
*"Praise our young messiah!"*  
Sang angels, til silenced by trumpet blast,  
As on they plains of Heaven they held fast.

Where once was aether tripping sweet  
Now valleys of dry bones,  
Two armies meet, their leaders seat  
Themselves on divine thrones,  
Perch'd oer the final conflict as if playing Lewis Stones.

### Divinnia

### Defeating the Devil

Perhaps a year, perhaps a century,  
Swerv'd battle with many an inroad gored  
Until all heroes of the heresy  
Are dealt full low as Heaven is restored;  
But for two ghouls,  
Satanus stands by Mars,  
Fed on the fat of fools, sporting ten trillion scars.

Saint Michael at the dragon flies  
& chains the grand betrayer  
Now Jove flings light from divine eyes  
Toward man's first destroyer  
Who neath these death-swipes groans & sighs  
Always & forever  
The Age of War now over with the guts  
White-spilling from a thousand bleeding cuts.

Jove turns to his first enemy,  
Now of his great wings shorn,  
*"I once love thee, now... no mercy!*  
*Of Eden quite forlorn,*  
*Ye shall be cast into the pit & there become unborn!"*

### Divinnia

### New Begginings

Jove flung Satanus into the abyss  
The pure perdition of nihility  
Those penal fires now pucker up & kiss  
The promised prince into lost memory;  
The deadly jaw  
Of some Venus fly-trap  
The Devil's dying roar drown'd by a thunderclap

With that the happy Gold Age dawns  
For Adam's race in raptures  
An angel each of them adorns  
Affluent, voluptuous,  
Then blow the hallelujah horn  
As numbers numberless  
Are rising from the rivers of the soul  
That flow'd thro time & flow'd thro one & all.

As men were once Neanderthals  
They one day surf'd the skies  
Our fate fulfils when bright angels  
In all our spirits rise,  
O race of superenergies! O dashing enterprise!

### New Jeruslam

### BOOK XXIV

#### The Raj & the Rose

*Soubs le terroir du rond globe lunaire,  
Lors que sera dominateur Mercure:  
L'isle d'Escosse fera vn lumineux,  
Qui les Anglois mettra a` deconfiture.*

## Canto 1

*The Poet's journey to India  
from Scotland to Calicut*

## New Beginnings

I had assumed my quillerie was done  
Until my soul exhumed the 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  
Such 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, his Holy Land,  
Rises to rouse & rile Islam's command.

I clambour's through thick thornbush throng  
Veins pierced by splinter-pin  
Not sucking tongue nor needle long  
Could pluck it from within  
Destined to bubble septic, a new Israel neath my skin.

Poetry wants something enormous, barbarous, savage

**Denis Diderot**

**East Lothian**

**May  
2008**

## Departures

Accompanied by Appollonians  
Those mystic ladies of these sentences  
I gallivanted from the Lothians  
& its coetanian acquaintances  
To India  
In silence I shall fly  
Musing poesia amid the breathless sky.

About us atmospherics sailed  
In an endless energy  
& I a Wellesley as he sail'd  
To a growing destiny  
Beyond Iraq...beneath me pailed  
The Sea of Araby  
& now I was a poet in the East  
As Byron rode to Ali Pasha's feast.

As Wellington stood at Assaye  
I stept out of the plane  
& met Bombay, O cloudless day!  
Far sultrier than Spain,  
The Raj all fanned before me like the wisdom of the Jain

## Mumbai

## Bombay

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;  
Our senses drowned  
In native hue & cry,  
We swathe thro sight & sound sweat-streaming, lips parch'd  
dry.

*In tortured droves the Hindu pours  
From Pakistan's cruel Koran,  
The VT's gothic gargoyles rose  
Oer many a fam'ly man,  
No rooms, no work, no peace, no laws,  
No pity & no plan -  
Could those men who plied the Empire's vision  
Have seen the suff'rance at its partition*

Squallid, one-room'd, tarpaulin lives  
Smile at me thro' the glass,  
Human beehives, men, spawn & wives  
E'er buzzing as we pass  
Identical, dark shanty streets choked with the underclass.

## Dharavi

## Golden Goa

We trace the outline of the Western Ghats,  
Dawn stirs the steaming jungle from her sleep,  
Goa gleams! Golden garden of ex-pats,  
Dream shores Iberian...what Dolphins leap  
From wave to wave  
As deft as nymph on lyre -  
Last lingering enclave of Lisboan empire.

*To oust this upstart invader  
The Marathas marched in mail,  
Stout ramparts at Fort Aguada  
Fearsome wrath fails to avail,  
A hiss...allowing another  
Elizabethan pale,  
Assault abandoned, acceptance express'd,  
Obeyive message given to the West.*

We revv'd n masse to the Nine Bar,  
My mount a twin-wheel'd steed,  
Thro' sunset sha to Shangri-La  
Twirl'd with the techno creed,  
On LSD, blues, ecstasy, beer, dexys, weed & speed.

## Vagator

## Seasider

Waking up in Goa I must admit  
Its nice to get away from it all  
The rainy days, credit crunch, news & shit  
Eking out existance from work to dole  
Come cruise the road  
& set the spirit free  
Four thousand miles from home thro hill-gouge junglery.

*Sacred Lord Parashurama  
Striding mighty mountains high  
Drawing on the force of karma  
Letting cosmic arrow fly  
Landing with much melodrama  
As Gods on Earth apply -  
No business but obeyance has the land,  
Pure, perfect stretch of sand like summer spanned.*

The dragon's moon gazed on Goa  
The guest houses all full,  
Half-built villa! homeless squatter,  
The dogbark silence dull,  
& when I woke the waves rolled white, the sun's rays  
wonderful,

## Benaullim

## Idyllicity

A little further down the Konkan tide  
I found a beach & bay of perfect pitch,  
Curvacious coconut groves ridged its side  
Divided by the sunset's tribal switch  
Alive by night,  
The days lazed solarful  
Or motorbikes alight on quests historical.

*Oporto's general strode along  
The red rampart ramshackle,  
"The moat is deep, the walls are strong,  
The terrain tough to tackle,  
Still... tell the men in three-fold prong  
Teach the East of battle!"  
Another day of bloodshed to appal  
The Raja of Soonda surrendred all.*

Cocktails at the Cafe del Mar,  
Shark meat at Palolem  
The beach, the bar, the Greek guitar,  
The sweet peace at Patnem,  
The cosmopolotania, life's cool creme de la creme.

## Canacona

## In Search of Wellington

Beside the rushes of the Kaveri,  
Yon the silicon crush of Bangalore,  
Lies the capital, lost to history,  
Of Tipu Sultan, Tyger of Mysore;  
An elfin town  
Its ruin'd fortress wall,  
Once keeping safe a crown, testament to it's fall.

His Highness storm'd the British breach,  
Precious pistols in each hand,  
Teeth clench'd, show'ring curses to teach  
This heathen to leave his land,  
But royal flesh feels soft as peach,  
At this, his final stand,  
Troops of scarlet Scots, drunk on blood & rum,  
Made murder to the beat of Wellesley's drum.

We skirt the spot where wailers found  
Bejewell'd Raja spread  
On crimson ground 'neath mangl'd mound  
Of proud & loyal dead -  
"Drive on," my pony carriage whipt, to other beauties sped.

## Sringapatnam

## Saint Thomas

My soul's boatman cuts thro Karnataka  
To burst once more atop these feisty Ghats  
Crowning the lush jungles of Kerala,  
Where crucifix, idol & muslim mats  
Share in delight,  
Harmoniously furl'd,  
Rare bastion of light in this conflicted world.

*The swanhelm'd ship came in to sand  
Bearing bearded apostle,  
Stunn'd naked natives watch'd the hand  
That stroked the Lambs own temple  
Fish levitate from sea to land,  
Faith inspiring symbol -  
From this day hence the sound of Jesus' name  
Shall burnish certain Asian hearts with flame.*

A space in some young side I fill  
Amid the Toddies tall,  
They sense my skill, a tense nil-nil  
Til as the shadows fall  
I slink'd past six defenders (two were trees) - the winning goal!

## Kodangallur

## Kerala

Thro groves of coconut boles we venture,  
Stand where the epic Lusiad lay ceased,  
Fisher village where Vasco de Gama  
First sank rennaissance gaze upon the East;  
Further along  
I find a fair city  
Furnish'd with friendly throng & AC library.

*They palanquin'd embassadours  
Thro crowds wide-eyed & gawping,  
Depositing those pale litters  
At the ring'd toes of their king,  
Decadent Zamorin glitters,  
What did these envoys bring?  
Strange instruments of medicine & war,  
The winds of trade blown to his spicy shore.*

The latest one-dayer play'd out  
Twixt England & our hosts,  
Sehwag bowl'd out, my single shout  
A meal of lonely toasts...  
Flintoff fires off the final runs...clientelle fade like ghosts.

## Calicut

## Canto 2

*The Poet's journey round India  
From Calicut to Plassey*

Muse, speak the man, who since the siege of Troy  
So many towns, such change of manners saw

**Horace**

## Hippy

Sailing between these tranquil backwaters,  
Palm-fring'd horizon burst all around me,  
Before this treasuregold of Kerala's  
All made to stand in stark humility,  
For scenes like these  
Reveal wond'rous nature -  
We slipt with sweeten'd ease into Kollam harbour.

*The beatnik & his blues guitar  
Stumbl'd on this perfect place,  
Clift portion of the Malabar;  
Sand, ocean, sun & solace,  
But secrets are soon scatter'd far,  
The Western tourists race  
To plant their towel standards on the beach  
Round which limpet rest'rants & hotels leech.*

I dined with maid Slovenian  
Talk'd art, Trieste & Rome,  
Slow flirtation! Our supper done  
I walk'd her half-way home,  
To make love mid the wave-breaks while the moonbeams  
snaked the foam.

**Varkala**

### Three Seas

At last the Ghats have peter'd to their end,  
Sole, savage witch-peaks all which now remain,  
Until we reach the grand Cormarin bend  
Where ends Amritsar's forty-eight hour train;  
Join'd eclectic  
In one wylde, chopping squall  
Waves from the Antarctic, Araby & Bengal.

*Ashes scatter'd on ocean stream,  
Last remains of Mahatma,  
Opponent of London's regime  
Nurtured in South Africa,  
Returning preaching freedom's dream  
With soft satyahara -  
This half naked fakir's staff thin & long  
Ensorcell'd his multitudinous throng.*

Ghandi guides a blood red bindi  
To rest upon the line  
Slipping slowly into the sea,  
The sky an evening wine,  
I turn left face, step forth for North & Himalayan pine.

### Kanayakamari

### Tamil Nadu

I winch in each pinch of a varied view,  
Shaking to this train's novelty suspense,  
After six sardine hours I'm plunged into  
Some busy little city street intense;  
Here to sample  
Some scene which I was told,  
India's best temple bosom'd in urban fold.

*The heart of the Dravidian  
Fell to Vijayanagar,  
Who built a Hindu pantheon  
Taller than its rising star,  
Each kaleidoscopic mountain  
Melodic without par,  
Enough to urge grown women shed their tears,  
Still painted heavenly ev'ry twelve years.*

Opium! Coleridgian wish  
Heeded by bloodshot man,  
Dark, oily dish, crunch..."What is this?  
*Liquerice!...*" My mind's span  
Blew interspatial round the room as thought flew with the fan.

### Madurai

## Indiana Byron

Gorgeous Coromandel, crown prince of coasts,  
My wanderlust has earn'd thine ancyent treats,  
Meagre are glimpses of the Gallic ghosts  
Dwelt within this grid of well ponder'd streets;  
An antique chair,  
Deep tann'd Gendarmerie,  
All that retains the air transported from Paris.

Discovering rare poetry  
Is the poet's shooting star,  
Like at Kannayakamari  
Where stands Thirruvallavar,  
Sri Aurobino's Savitri,  
On gand Miltonic par,  
Words wonderful, more wondrous to behold  
Than Cortez did with Moctezuma's gold.

I wafted in on inland scent  
& left by soft, sea breeze,  
Before I went...bemustach'd gent...  
*"A cool kingfisher please!"*  
I nearly piss'd myself when he hiss'd, *"Twenty six rupees!"*

## Pondicherry

## Madras

My driver sure don't know the highway code,  
Thro vast, suburban, lawless sprawl haring,  
Thirty kilometres of ribbon road,  
Shops, neon signs & chi stalls commingling;  
A diff'rent class  
Of Indian City,  
Formally Queen Madras, maid of an English sea.

*Into the caves of Mylapore  
Hot blood gusht from the doubter,  
Dragging himself across the floor...  
Savage loin-cladded hunter  
Hath thrust a spear into his core...  
Whispering last prayer  
He saw the sweet beatific & he cried,  
"Thou art fulfill'd..." the martyr smiled & died.*

By Fort Saint George such church stands tall  
As English as the Downs,  
On sacred wall writ the roll call  
Of heroes & of towns,  
When London's lackeys grappl'd with & toppl'd Hindu  
crowns.

## Chennai

### Andaman

I dawdl'd four days on the *Nancowry*,  
Small taster of the voyages of yore,  
Fodder'd on a bland, suspicious thali,  
My heart leapt up to see Hanuman's shore;  
Some deep & sheer  
Mountain range submarine  
Thrusting it's summits clear in shades of leafy green.

*The cellular jail built to last  
Thro good ol' British know how,  
Where Freedom Fighters earn repast,  
Some collonial Dachau,  
Where bull whips crack'd & rough sticks flash'd  
Guantanaman know-how  
A place where proud blood flows for liberty...  
How could my contree build Kalapani?*

I took a boat to Ross island  
Accross clear water'd bay,  
Wylde Banyans stand on buildings grand,  
Imperious Pompeii,  
Where now the White Man's Burden is a ghost town in decay.

### Port Blair

### Bengal Bay

We sail'd from the comforts of Port Blair  
Into the wide-wave level loveliness,  
We men have conquer'd mountains, moats & air,  
But never on deep ocean made impress;  
We watch'd the fins  
Of silver fish skimming  
Where flipp'd slick-back Dolphins ribbon'd in star-swimming.

*Empiric British ambition  
Found a human pulse in Clive,  
Whose self righteous indignation  
Blazed triumphant to arrive  
And address the situation  
Within this Nawab's hive,  
His tiny fleet transporting all his boys,  
These royal redcoats & loyal sepoy's.*

We sighted land on the fourth day,  
Sunder'd by a river,  
Naiad gateway to the wide way  
Of th'AryaVarta -  
I have travers'd from South to North via the Nirvana!

### Hugli

## Colonial

*Akbar's* passengers rush from the harbour,  
Haul'd by rickshaw thro' wacky racer streets,  
Power'd by pedal, petrol or runner,  
Til once again the Western posse meets  
Mid Sudder's share  
Of the Imperatrix  
I felt without a care, bouy'd up by British bricks.

*Magnificent Pax Mughala  
Declines into decadence,  
The Nawab, Siraj-ud-Daula  
Grows in scope & confidence,  
His army march'd to Kolkatta  
& English arrogance -  
Abandon'd, but for those too late to leave...  
Slamm'd in the hole...dawn breaks...few left to breathe.*

Grand ocean of humanity,  
Sea of friendly faces,  
From to native tea, & black taxi,  
Betting down the races,  
An excellent community garnished with English graces.

## Calcutta

## Forgotten Fields

Life simple mid familiar surrounds,  
But senses of adventure grow depress'd  
So I set forth, a hunter with the hounds,  
In pursuit of other interests;  
A battlefield  
Lies died for to the North,  
If feeling it shall yield a call may be of worth.

All in this monsoon of Indra's  
That growls with the guns of France,  
Go rhino shields, glint curv'd daggers,  
Howdah'd behemoths advance...  
Rudely halted by Clive's soldiers!  
Mir Jaffa sees the chance,  
His mass of decision led from the field,  
This treachery the Nawabcy must yield.

My cycle rickshaw gliding hies  
From the glean of battle,  
A poets prize...dark dragonflies  
Dart oer the arable -  
My guide plants me on northbound bus roaring at full throttle!

## Plassey

### Canto 3

*The Poet's journey round India  
From Plassey to Mumbai*

King falcons of Britain, your chief song I fashion  
Your chief praise I bear:  
I'll act as your bard, your judge  
Your support, it befits me

**Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr**

### Bus Crash

I awoke in a strange, white-sheeted bed,  
Fellow passengers moaning in sev'ral ways,  
Soak'd in blood & clutching a concuss'd head  
I stumb'ld to a taxi in a daze!  
*"Driver, just drive!"*  
I fled that hospital  
Lucky to be alive, the crash had been fatal.

Why am I in a strange white bed,  
Woke by moans? to my amaze,  
Bags lying by my concuss'd head,  
Stumbling out in blood-soak'd haze,  
In old, odd rickshaw off I sped  
Such are our brave young days,  
Though fill of life oftentimes we feel faint  
When thunder breaks & goddesses our saint

I took a room to convalesce  
Mid palatial surrounds,  
I was a mess, for more or less  
A week of sleeps & sounds,  
Until half-heal'd I took the sights, great palaces & grounds.

**Murshidabad**

## Sacred City

Alluvial flatlands roll ever West,  
The Ganga Matha shimmers into sight,  
Here came the British banquet of conquest  
To dine on the age old City of Light;  
Siva's domain  
Beside her fragrant flow  
Where marigold & grain ash-daub'd ascetics throw.

*To Sarnath, thou deer park of bliss,  
Stretch'd by the Holy River,  
He came, gave men a kiss,  
"No longer I Siddhartha!"  
They knew not what to make of this,  
"Call now me the Buddha!"  
They sat & listen'd to the first sermon  
Soft on the lips of the enlighten'd one.*

Hypnofixed on that bamboo bier  
Down by the riverside,  
The pyres appear, fire'd atmosphere  
Reeking for those that died  
Their blessed death, Kashi lit up as Vedic chants men vied.

## Varanasi

## Mutiny

Countryside chiming like a park of Kent,  
No wonder here they chose to stamp the Pax,  
Alas, civilisation really meant,  
The ignorance, the excrescence, the tax;  
Shame struck the Oudh,  
Their noble kingdom next,  
Shamed as their Nawab bow'd while the British annex'd.

*The North declared the battleground,  
Focus for a mutiny,  
Fifty thousand aggriev'd surround  
Eurasia's residency,  
All day & night the cannon's pound  
The dreams of Dalhousie,  
Til Redcoats, march'd under merciless skies,  
Bring redemption, slay those who dared to rise.*

Regent ruins as red as dust,  
Cupid's nuzzling couples,  
Are held in trust, coated with dust  
From those desp'rate battles,  
They form symbolic sepulchre of empiric shackles.

## Lucknow

## Delhi

I stood tall as the mountains for a week,  
Better tall than a tourist at the Taj,  
Each morn spent with the Empire's highest peak,  
The summit of my soiree round the Raj;  
With dew-eyed wretch  
I ride back to battle,  
The noise, the heat, the stench cloaking the capital.

*From the steppes of central Asia  
Camest Nadir Shah, great guest  
Of mickle-minded emporer,  
Th'ancestral riches to wrest,  
Twas a festival of slaughter,  
Blood splasht on treasure chest  
As seized from the fabulous peacock throne  
He gripp'd the Koh-i-Noor, Babar's bright stone.*

As a hundred Sunday innings  
Spreads round the grassy mile,  
Tricky spinings, wicket winnings,  
Each man an Anglophile,  
For cricket is to India as Egypt needs the Nile.  
New delhi

## Old Delhi

## Taj Mahal

To lead good life is to leave no regrets  
& so, despite cursing the tourist trail,  
That glory-monument to man & wife  
Over my wanderlust must now prevail;  
Oer crowd & lane  
The Taj Mahal arose  
France, Italy nor Spain could match her matchless poise.

*The house of Shah Jahan grew hushed  
His grief was overbaring,  
But chieftans prosper best when crushed,  
The weeping wreath outwearing,  
He briefly with the heavens's brushed,  
All who saw were staring,  
A testament to beauty's deep adore,  
The Taj Mahal, Cupid's conquistador.*

With prime Indian Icon  
Tick'd from my tourist box,  
The North was won, tour almost done,  
As workers watch the clocks,  
Downloading my flight details as the homeward notion  
knocks.

## Agra

## Cricket

This short, Byronic sortie to the East,  
Sometime tourist, sometime adventurer,  
Sees sublime sunsets as each new night pieced  
    This myriad India together;  
        Yon Udaipur,  
    The honeymooner's dream,  
I trundl'd to Jaipur to watch my native team.

*Some worship Christianity,  
Or pray five times to Mecca,  
Perhaps Laxsmi, Saraswathi,  
Krishna, Lord Vishnu, Siva,  
The Buddha, Kali, Parvati,  
Durga or Ganesha,  
But all thro India one god is king  
Sachin Tendulkar at the opening.*

With friends I met at Andaman  
We watch'd a thrilling game,  
With swifty ton K Peiterson  
Cunning spin bowlers tame,  
Each stroke aplauded by our hosts, the batsman flashing flame.

## Jaipur

## Kipling Country

Reaching the eastern edge of Rajstahan  
The stands abandoned fortress goblin-hewn  
While wandering within & round its span  
    I wondered if it was some vedic boon;  
        Neath red rampart  
    I Kipling'd for a week,  
For poets slowly part from places quite unique.

*Drom a dying Satis' final words  
Flew an ancyent prophecy,  
"When princes meet hunting the herds  
Born of Mewar & Bundi  
One must die!" Ajit aim'd at birds,  
His arrow flies keenly...  
Whether by chance, by fate, by secret gain,  
Rana, the prince of Udaipur, lay slain.*

I took a ride thro villagery,  
Sought out a waterfall,  
It seemed to me like ecstasy,  
Immersing body's all,  
& driving back, dried by the breeze, felt burdens lift from soul.

## Bundi

### Desert Fortress

My camel treks thro' realms of chivalry,  
Follow'd barefoot by this gypsy player  
Conjuring scenes upon his Sarrangee,  
Charming the desert night with sung prayer;  
    Ah! Completed  
    Is our nomadic flow,  
An ancycnt city stood on tabletop plateau.

*At the steep walls of the fortress  
    Insatiable Akbar stared,  
Those soldiers in their saffron dress  
    Say Jauhar has beenm declared,  
    They rode to die in gentillesse,  
    A martyrdom soon shared...  
As wives & children step in to the fire  
Chants of victory climb with the empire.*

The sun hoists flame up oer the walls,  
    A cruel & hostile red,  
My contree calls, fresh footstep falls  
    By dry Ghamberi's bed,  
Aim'd at Burnley, on the dusty Daksinpatha I tread.

### Chittorgarh

### L'Envoi

I pause in Ratlam for a two night stay,  
My long tours's circle drawing to a close,  
An obscure spot to while the last full day  
    Of this, the latest triumph of the Rose;  
    One last sleeper,  
    Neath overarching sky,  
Yon the pale Narmarda, pulls back into Mumbai.

I saw so many miseries  
& saw so much beauty too,  
All of mankind's categories  
Thro a single contree drew,  
What mixture of cacophonies  
Climb'd with the morning dew -  
Them to mine ears did seem a morning choir,  
The chantings 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!"

### Mumbai

**BOOK  
XXV**

**Mumbai**

**Canto 1**

*The initial movements of the terrorists*

*Mabus puis tost alors mourra viendra,  
De gens & bestes vne horrible deffaite,  
Puis tout à coup la vengeance on verra,  
Cent, main, soif, faim, quand courra la comette.*

De todo  
un Poco  
tengo para todos

**Pablo Naruda**

## Bollywooder

Some say Bollywood is monotonous  
Verdict of thirty thousand King & I's  
But life is better led monogamous,  
Too many fingers & too many pies;  
Pluck'd from the street  
An extra was I made  
Thro fancy dress & heat & thousand rupees paid.

I met her in a dressing room  
Fair actress of the Deccan  
Both hearts beating a little boom  
As though we duelled at Tekken  
The jewels of romancing bloom  
Well, that's what I reckon,  
For from this pretty princess of the Raj  
An invitation to dine at the Taj.

My life blended with India,  
O diamond in the crown!  
The hag-beggar, the emperor,  
The pale-face & the brown,  
The gutter-dwellers looking up the godheads looking down

## Mumbai

26<sup>th</sup> November 2008

19.00

## Angels of Death

The *Kuber* grew dense with the stench of death,  
Decks sticky with the dead crews bloody pool  
Their captain panicking breath-after-breath  
Before these bullies barely out of school  
"Tis Allah's will  
& , with Allah willing,  
Five thousand we shall kill & then keep on kiiling!"

Each lad was born in poverty  
From the slums of Pakistan  
Where each was bought for no small fee  
Meagre pawns in some grand plan  
That in Thatta's rugged country  
Hard train'd with Talliban  
Where keen & cold Lashkar-e-Taiba  
Melded these young footsoldiers together.

When they were ten miles from the shore  
They cut the captain's throat  
With bag & oar ten 'students' pur  
Into a dinghy boat,  
To fling Islamic retribution cross the Mumbai moat.

## Arabian Sea

26<sup>th</sup> November 2008

19.30

### First Landing

Night nestled midst the vast financial core  
Of the 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 their lives in living link'd.

Three old men watched the rubber craft  
Slip into their slummy quay  
Ten kempt lads leapt ashore & laugh'd  
Shaking off the liquid sea  
An old man thought this rather daft  
& ask'd who could they be?  
"Mind your business," spoke a lad in blue  
Not in Mharati but in deep Urdu...

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

**Mumbai**

**20.30**

### A Last Supper

Full unaware he bore Death's messengers,  
Their shifty ambience so strange & cold  
Mohammed dropp'd off his young passengers  
Outside the bustling Café Leopold;  
A famous place  
Racing with western dress  
Whose smiling, happy face would soon be bloody mess.

At first a hand grenade goes off  
In momentary stunning  
Unpitying the gunmen scoff  
At cowering & running  
Aiming their train'd kaleshnikov  
At them all down-gunning –  
If you were eating in this place that night  
A bullet would have been your only bite!

The gunmen smugly stroll'd outside  
Into an empty street  
The shutters slide as all folks hide  
& fleet are fleeing feet  
As two young Muslims move along these murders to repeat.

**Colaba**

**21.35**

### **Antisemitismus**

The Rabbi kiss'd his napped son to sleep  
Whose nanny said he'd been quite strange all day  
Now down a squeaky staircase he did creep  
Protecting infant dreams of cakes & play  
What loud KERBLANG!!!  
No all is roar & spin  
As arm'd with claw & fang twin demons roam within.

As the Jews are band of brothers  
So their enemies are too  
A young couple & their mothers  
Slaughter'd without ado  
For they feel that fifty others  
Balanced by one dead Jew;  
But some still live, the Rabbi's family –  
His wife Rivkah, their son & his nanny

Like actors in a tragic play  
The gunmen centre stage  
Whose bullets crazy ricochet  
In quaquerversal rage  
More murder in the streets, below these lions in their cage.

### **Naruman House**

9.45

### **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  
As 'mang 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  
Pleasure amplified by infidel 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

### **A Small Matter of Timing**

As gunmen from the sanguine Leopold  
Make contact with a fellow battleteam  
For the next part of the raid to unfold  
They must now strike at Mumbai's social cream;  
Security  
All gunn'd down at the dawn  
Such brash militancy the world has never known!

So, as I felt a movie star  
Soaking up the superb views  
Some Maharajah at the bar  
Sparkling in his 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

### **Death of a Bell-boy**

Inside the Trident Oberoi hotel  
The bell-boy stuck to his old, strict routine  
Of guest & bag & lift & room & bell  
That he had ground out since he was sixteen;  
What was that sound,  
Like cars caught in a crash?  
He fearing spins around to see the front doors smash

& caught a bullet in the gut  
& fell like Balfour pheasant  
Losing sensation in his foot  
His vision deliquescent  
He slowly let his eyelids shut  
His heart grew hesitant  
Then beat its last & as his limbs relax  
His brain shuts down like wick-flame doused in wax.

As gunfire rattled floor to floor  
All the guests grew fearful  
Phoning the law, bolting the door  
For something horrible  
Was happening in their hotel, something incredible.

**Trident**  
22.00

## Random Murder

A taxi stopp'd for Laxmi Narayan  
A businessman now several minutes late  
With hindsight twould be better if he'd ran  
& put escaping death down to good fate  
For just too late  
Kasab's black bag was seen  
That with bull bellow great proceeds to smithereens!

Five taxis had quite random fanned  
Throughout the conurbation  
Each getting up a fire brand  
& spreading devastation  
A Muslim Iman lost a hand  
In some petro l station  
Shewing how conflict in religion's name  
Is cunning ploy to delegate the blame

She was a happy citizen  
& now she has no legs  
Another sundown denizen  
To join the gutter-dregs  
Like blind & tuneful eunuchs or the waddling leper-pegs.

## Wadi Bunder

22.20

## Canto 2

*The further continuation of the Terror in Mumbai*

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

**Boccaccio**

## **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 oppulence  
Takes peasant minds aback,  
Then gathering their senses went on the attack.

They split their murder squad in two  
One vaults the cantilever  
& every movement into view  
Soon dying non-beleiver  
Now into my own space they flew  
Like the swine-flu fever,  
Unwelcome & unwanted & unwell  
We sweated til a bullet broke the spell

Aff' shots ripped through my upper arm  
I fell death pretending  
No magi psalm, no pagan charm  
Could prevent death's pending  
So held my breath until I heard those murderers descending

**Taj**  
**22.35**

## **Bleeding Streets**

With policemen reeling like headless chickens  
Ismail & Ajmal leave the groaning hall  
Where so many sticky bodies sickens  
This was no movie-shooting, not at all;  
A baby wail'd  
Beside its dying kin  
As when the Ak-Ak fail'd across weeping Berlin.

By GPS these gunmen roam  
For to perpetrate more crimes  
Moving through lamplit monochrome  
As if marching neath the limes  
& take three potshots at the home  
Of India's own Times  
Then pass Hazad Madan where Police force pride  
Locks gates & switches lights off terrified

They choose a hospital instead  
To carry on the cause  
To crudely spread the growing dead  
Across the social mores  
But found their prospects block'd by doctors locking all the  
doors.

**Cama**  
**22.45**

### Death of Heman Kukari

Ajmal felt Ismail was a Hashemite  
& Mumbai a modern Acaladama  
A trail of bumbledom bled through the night  
& now, as they exited the Cama,  
A car appears  
Four policemen trapp'd within  
That as their chassis nears is shot into a spin

Mumbai's first counter-terrorist  
Flung unbreathing from his seat  
Two more top cops dragg'd by the wrist  
To bleed to death in the street  
The fourth cop quickly got the gist  
& barely breath'd a beat –  
Awkward, wounded, pretending to be dead  
He hoped he could be useful as he bled.

As Ismail sped a getaway  
Ajmal got out his gun  
A silver spray, a ricochet  
Cut down a Cath'lic nun  
For tho these were his ending-hours god damn he'd have some  
fun!

23.15  
Cama

### Modern Battles

The terrorists secured room 632  
A perfect stronghold for the coming fray  
For India's fury at them, they knew,  
Would soon be flung as Cossacks heckl'd Ney;  
Steroids, cocaine,  
Syringes, LSD,  
All weariness would wane to unhinge enemy.

They gathetr'd silken mattresses  
To set the Taj aflame  
Giving the world such images  
As to match Bin Laden's fame  
The sixth floor soon blazed glorious  
Alight in Allah's name  
A sight soon strewn from London to Lahore  
An instant twitter'd shore to distant shore.

I stagger'd in a bloody daze  
Up to the rooftop high,  
Watching the blazing fingers raise  
Their angers to the sky,  
& waiting for my rescuers sat down & wondered why?

Taj  
23.30

## Captured

Finding a bullet had a back tyre blown  
Ismail & Ajmal some fesh car hijack  
Behind, the bleeding cop took out his phone  
A witness to their terrible attack,  
*"But that was then!"*  
He cried, *"& this is now!"*  
*Warn, warn, warn all the men, they're headed for Gilgao!"*

His comrades built a strong blockade,  
The Skoda toward it sped,  
Spinning before this barricade,  
Like a weaver works a thread,  
Before he could use his grenade  
Ismail was blasted dead  
Now Ajmal gets out feigning surrender  
Gun hidden for one last senseless murder.

Noble Ombli leapt on Ajmal  
& took shot-after-shot  
As he did fell his comrades yell  
& soon the gunman got  
A vital living clue with whom to unravel the plot.

**Girgaun**  
**September 27th 2008**  
**12.15**

## Reactions

Far from a local policeman's lethargy  
Delhi's commandos flown into the fray  
The bullish fervour of the NSG  
Designed to keep Bin Laden's dogs at bay;  
Relief at last  
With the hardware grounded  
Before an hour has pass'd each flashpoint surrounded.

Mumbaikers bolted every door  
Their streets are mostly empty  
They'd never felt such fear before  
Tho fear they'd had & plenty  
Incredulity through them tore  
As down at CST  
Bodies now tow'd away on porter cars -  
A city under siege & under stars!

The tailor sat glued to his set  
Old head held in wise hands  
Weary & wretched sensed the threat  
Fro mwindow-smashing bands  
A Muslim in the Hindu sphere, 'Revenge!' Mumbai demands.

**Dharavi**  
**1.30**

## Mumbai Musings

I sat upon the rooftop of the Taj  
All fire & brimstone in the floors below  
Strange place to find my soiree round the Raj  
A moment no other would surely know;  
When 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 wagons  
& wonder'd how many were dead  
Fell'd by these terror guns  
& in stiff heaps of twisted sleeping piled –  
It seem'd as if Laxsmi on me had smiled.

As action all about me swirl'd  
Of it I felt fatigue  
For to my world was rudely hurl'd  
Life's militant intrigue  
& felt a Flemish landholder before Hitler's blitzkrieg.

Taj  
6.30

## Sandra Samuel

When morning broke the Rabbi clung to life  
His hope the hand that clings to clifftop ledge,  
"As hostages," he sooth'd his antsy wife,  
"They never would cast us across the edge!"  
Just one phone call  
Demolishes their dreams  
Parents shot at the wall, their little Moska screams.

His nany left her hiding place  
When the gunfire moved elsewhere  
& charging up the back staircase  
Took the babe back in her care  
& looking at each parent's face  
That blankly back did stare  
She rush'd outside quite antilochus-fast  
Through courage & quick-thinking danger pass'd.

The operation's master-throne  
Watch'd these events unfold,  
"The telephone!" the gunmen groan,  
Their slackness they did scald,  
Then hear, "*You're very close to Heaven, brothers please be bold.*"

Naruman House  
8.30

## An Unusual Wedding

With Mumbai's grandest icon all aflame  
The government's resolve set to sternest  
The chief of police at last defends his name,  
    "Begin evacuation in earnest!  
    The terrorists  
    Trapp'd on an upper floor!  
All round them lie the lists, poor casualties of war!"

Though our weddings soul inspiring  
    & them we never forget  
Guests are huddl'd from the firing  
    Like tuna caught in a net,  
Happy song & dance desiring  
    Not this Russian roulette –  
Breathless, blinkless, scatter'd in shatter'd rooms  
Nerves shredded & hearts jumping to the booms.

The groom was safely led outside  
    Eyes blinking in the light  
& now they cried, his sweet, young bride  
    Stood there in sari white  
Though stain'd with others bloodhed & her own eyes full of  
    fright

**Taj**  
**10.30**

## Canto 3

*The mopping up operation  
& the poet's journey to Tamil Nadu*

Homer first taught the world in epic verse  
To write of great commanders & of kings

**Horace**

## Mopping Up

As Berlin drank the degs of Hitler's war  
With Allies all-denuding on all sides  
The denouement of sixty hours of gore  
Closes on two lads with no hope to hide;  
Their final stand  
Beneath blades helibourne  
Sought out by death's dread hand their manly vigour worn.

A rocket flew into their room  
Half-a-second 'fore demise  
That with a flash & crash & BOOM  
Blew the brains out of their eyes  
Twas an instantaneous doom  
& as the battle dies  
The city streets all beeps & cheering pup  
As if Tendulkar had won the World Cup.

They brought ten bodies from the shell  
Prayed for the lost rabbi  
For when war-hell on humans fell  
A few Jews too must die  
Like when to Auswich Berlin diverted her gas supply.

**Naruman House**  
**27<sup>th</sup> November**

## After-Storm

The glitz & 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  
No more howling hellhounds Mumbaiers must endure.

Like infant hearing lullaby  
To ease the stormy weather  
A soothing motion calms Mumbai  
Grand city of endeavour  
All thinking wildfire swings to why  
& lives changed forever  
Namore the aulden normalcy parades  
A city haunted by those tortured shades.

Sunil sketch;d out a synopsis  
Then made a hunch of calls  
From actresses to researches  
Before the camera rolls  
"This fucking stuff is dynamite, we'll fill the movie halls!"

**Bollywood**

## Inspirations

I was not yet prepared to wander west  
For these events had shook me to my soul  
Confused, bemused, excited & depress'd  
All these are passions of a poet's soul;  
Who soon extends  
His visa, funds & flight  
As strange sensation sends him Tamilwards to write.

While stand in the CST  
I closed my eyes a moment  
Imagining the liberty  
Of murderous militant  
& then the extreme agony  
Of screaming innocent  
& felt my heart begin to palpitate  
Full ruminating on a friendless fate.

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

## Mumbai

## Oasis

As Ghats give way to wide Deccan plateau  
Hard is the journey - dusty, hot & dry -  
As into view wyrd mounds of boulders grow  
Ruin'd pillars that yore-since bouy'd the sky;  
An Eastern Rome  
Once soar'd amidst the stone,  
The great King Krishna's home now rubble, husk & bone.

*This was a place to muse on man  
In the ruins of his past,  
Far from the world's tobacco ban  
& it's television mast,  
Was this part of a divine plan  
Or mortal plaster cast -  
Scenery settled in serenity,  
A haven from human hostility.*

Gliding by graceful coracle,  
Serene as English spa,  
Aft brief ramble, robust scramble,  
Claim summit...from afar  
Pastel lustr'd sunsets muster'd oer Vijayanagar.

## Hampi

## Civilisations

As truck on truck announced wide cityscape,  
With glassy towers scraping hazy sky,  
I hoped immediately to escape,  
The modern world where monies multiply;  
Where east meets west  
This valley silicon  
Like some ten-headed beast born for armageddon.

*A whirl of British companies,  
Thought it better to offload  
Its highly taxed dependencies  
Sending British jobs abroad  
Computerised communities  
Spread down the KH road  
Eye of the vortex that is man's progress -  
Sports complexes, xerox & western dress.*

As I tried to leave the city  
The streets were cramm'd gridlock,  
Grimy, gritty, slimy, shitty,  
Til well past eight o'clock  
A vision of commuter hell, confusing ragnaraok.

## Bangalore

## Reaching Arunachala

As busses thunder over Tamil plains  
I wonder why my muse has brought me here  
Until, out of the misty monsoon rains,  
Strange, solitary mountainscapes appear;  
Them mystic climb  
& one especially  
Inspires my 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 all the written scrolls of things to come  
Like when Chyren took Greece from Pergamum!”

I snapp'd out of that sayer-trance  
& stept down from the bus  
Into a handsome human dance  
Of poori, fruit & fuss,  
& faced the mountain as Saint Paul first sail'd from Ephesus

## Thiruvannamali

## Commando

Ajmal lay frighten'd in the grey-white bed  
Interrogated in native Urdu  
This was no paradise, he should be dead,  
His promised concubines a camera crew;  
"Why are you here?"  
"Which group calls you member?"  
Ajmal's voice answers clear, "Lashkar-e-Taiba!"

Since Babri Mosque was set aflame  
Setting KARMA in arrears  
All Mumbaikers mused on that name  
Terrorized for fifteen years  
& with that name death always came,  
Blood, suffocation, tears  
BEST busses blasted by the teeming trains  
On anniversaries as vengeance reins.

Ajmal thought of his family  
Back home in Faridkut  
How they would be when they could see  
His part play'd in the plot  
The vital bit of give to unravel a sailor's knot.

## Mumbai

## Mystic Mountain

As I ascend those smooth, bouldering slopes  
My spiritus smouldering with desire  
All history & all my heartfelt hopes  
Kindle fresh sparks of man's immortal fire;  
My lips slow parch  
As patterns they rehearse,  
The long resounding march of old, heroic verse.

I have reach'd the sacred summit  
Oer Thiruvannamali,  
With the inkpen of the poet  
& a mind of the Magi,  
Awaiting some untroub'l'd fit  
That deities supply,  
To gently come into my feeble breast  
& this too-high-a-flight feel it infest.

I sit 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 sayer-stars abide.

## Arunachala

## **Annagalactica**

Peering deep into planetary shift  
Blisses man's mind with Anaxagoras  
Seeing events as they sway wide & drift  
Thro happening's full unexpectedness;  
Pelagius  
Defined the same seer-tricks  
As divine Dante does descrying Beatrix.

& so, as strands of time converge,  
On a space up in the spheres  
Strange visions of events emerge  
Far across the span of years  
That flicker to & fro & surge  
Til nearer each appears –  
Strange omens of Jehova & the Beast  
& that last battle in the Middle East.

When all these scenes eclampsian  
Are driven off by dawn  
Some laurel-mantl'd dragoman  
On Siva's sacred throne,  
Etching grand mythopoeics, turn two cantos into stone.

## **Arunachala**

## **Book XXVI**

### **Heaven & Hell**

*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*

## Canto I

*The poet's journey thro Hell*

War is energy enslaved

**William Blake**

## Invocation

I sat alone singing the Song of Man  
& every beating heart swam through mine own,  
A swirl of swans sang in the summer's van  
For I, a sentinel on Siva's throne;  
His lingam flows  
Before me in a flame,  
As lovely as the rose Persophone became.

Strange lights & stranger sounds rang out  
Above the global babble,  
My spirit turning inside out,  
The mage in me must dabble,  
Assuaging all my deep-felt doubt,  
'Rise up from the rabble,'  
& hope beyond all hope my soul might pass  
The last oppression of the poet-class!

This is no simple shepherd's song  
Once sung in Sicily,  
For right or wrong we bards belong  
In stranger company,  
Sat at the feet of godhead, pledg'd before infinity.

**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 what hells reserv'd  
    For man's evil actions -  
    This question to be illuminated,  
Thus my mortal form rejuvenated."*

We walk'd the Pennines to Pendle,  
    Old Grendel's cenotaph,  
Wild winds that chill this brooding hill,  
    Carry a witches laugh,  
As from the tree that leads to Dis we made impromptu staff.

### Lancashire

### 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;  
    How deep distance  
    Echoed a frightful sound,  
Sonambulants advance cautiously underground.

*"Pray, Dante, stray not far from me,"  
    As into Hades we go,"*  
Soon rose a black cacophony,  
    The muted groans of limbo,  
Where Acheron glutted vile sea  
    In stagnant, livid flow,  
Where Charon waits to ferry fools & kings,  
His haunted face bloated with hornet stings.

With old proverbs our pilot paid,  
    Who blinkless gave no thanks,  
But silent stay'd, the boat obey'd,  
    Sliding tween fetid banks,  
Scudding beside a sorry shore, rats scuttling on the planks.

### The First Circle

### Ancyent Wisdom

Girdling circles of this infernal world  
Spiral before us to a point unkown,  
Thro womby vaultages shriek'd anguish swirl'd,  
Like spinning pennies grating round a cone;  
Lone fortess rose  
A thermaeshetic throng,  
Where pagan bards compose in schools of eaglesong.

We stepp'd within those rustic walls,  
Pleasant portion of Hades,  
Where wise old tribes of gallant souls  
Shared the wealth of their degrees,  
But as none Gesu's faith enthalls  
Satanus did them seize,  
Being too good to wallow in the dark  
Condemn'd to dwell within Hell's only park.

I convers'd with Virgil, Shelley,  
Ceasar & Cicero,  
Then Homer spoke of poetry,  
We listen'd to him flow,  
Discussing epic simile til time had swung to go.

### Pagan Park

### Hell's Generals

We pass three praetors of human dross;  
First Minos, watcher of the lustful breed,  
Cerberus of the wretched gluttinous,  
& Pluto, master of the violent creed;  
*"Pray pause our course,  
I know many by name,  
Who used god-given force to punch & wound & maim."*

This was a strange segment of Hell,  
Peopl'd by men of violence,  
Who revell'd when their soldiers fell,  
& deem'd killing thrilling romance -  
I saw Monty, Patton, Rommel  
With three Marshalls of France,  
Where now, instead of battle's thumping drum,  
They were consign'd to a constant boredom,

Who sat, it seem'd, a mile apart  
Upon a dull, wide plain,  
& when they start to drift or dart,  
Good converse to obtain,  
A thick mist falls & when it rose sat far apart again.

### Fourth Circle of Hell

## Just Desserts

We further delv'd, by wolves, neath carrion,  
Crossing the Styx its sewer made us spew,  
Singed by the lava-flowing Phlegathon  
The fells of Hell rose darkling into view;  
Pangs of terror,  
An angry nest of thieves,  
Once joyous with honour now forced to fend for leaves.

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,  
Who 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,  
Sulphur stings those that shirk,  
*"Let us move deeper,"* said Dante & led 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;  
A 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 contree  
& 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 in heinous pain,  
Then for the next renews -  
Leaving him screaming, *"Mercy!"* we drudged deeper thro the  
ooze.

## Caina

## Heart of Hell

The Tuscan singer brings us further, far,  
The way was swift, once walk'd by him before,  
Cross icy swathes of the Cocytus scar,  
Where sediments of ev'ry slavish shore,  
Tear-cluster'd salts,  
Muster ungodly bridge -  
My master climbs then halts upon its midway ridge,

There saw a ghoulish city,  
Walls of flesh, contorted bone,  
Shewing murderer's no pity  
Body's used for building stone,  
Eternity of agony!  
Above them thrust the throne,  
Perch'd on a mile-long citadel  
Where Satanus would sit & survey Hell.

Above the slime of swarmy things  
Dark demons foul the air,  
Drumm'd summons brings them beating wings  
Toward that craggy chair,  
Our staffs shone light upon the path circling the spiral stair.

## Pandemonium

## Dis

She-vampyres crowd around us as we climb,  
At last we reach the shrieking citadel  
Demons of the dark recesses of time  
Swirl round Satanus in a carousel;  
Hell's parliament  
One egocentric stage -  
The dark lord must lament the passing of an age.

*"My brave, proud comrades of the fall,  
The mortal wound is changing,  
No longer must war be our goal,  
Agenda re-arranging,  
Mars should be sent to some black hole,  
Interstellar ranging -  
Where gods are in council there I shall go  
Archangel midst that archipelago."*

*"Now we are done here,"* Dante said,  
Down from Dis descending,  
Hells' phantoms fed our clammy dread  
Til the stairwells ending,  
& there we part as I to heaven watch'd my friend ascending.

## Pandemonium

## Canto II

*The poet hears the song of the Ramayana*

Seize all the spirits of life, & bind  
Their warbling joys to our loud strings!  
Bind all the nourishing sweets of Earth  
To give us bliss, that we may drink  
The sparkling wine of Los

**William Blake**

## Two Poets

Back on Arunachala I did poise  
This Cadair Idris of the eastern rhymes  
& there it was I chanced upon a noise  
Then watch'd a hermit to the summit climb;  
"Aalvaar," said he,  
"Valmiki is my name,  
*Perhaps... could ye tell me of worlds from whence ye came?"*

"Alas," said I, "My world seems shorn  
Of Universal Values,  
Despite all things tis still wartorn  
Battles splatter'd cross the news,  
Tell me, has ever there been born  
A soul that all this rues,  
Brimming truth, honour & corragio  
As Florence was a thousand years ago?"

"There was," replied old Vaalmeeki,  
"Such a man of Karma,  
Love, honesty, heart, loyalty,  
Of righteousness & dharma –  
*Now sit ye down & listen to the legend-lines of Rama."*

**Arunachala**

## Noble Births

I sing of Rama & his noble way  
Of humans & animals, queens & kings,  
Of monsters, heroes & that dashing day  
That keeping faith in heartfelt belief brings;  
He was no lad  
Of ordinary birth  
For in him Vishnu had hidden godhead on earth.

Born in most ancient Ayoudha  
Midst the first sprigs of the Spring  
In the kingdom of Kosala  
Where the Vedas Saddus sing,  
His father was Dasaratha  
& him, too, Rama's king,  
Outshining men as moons outshine the stars  
First patron of this prince of avatars.

Graceful Laxsmi, Lord Vishnu's queen,  
Born as Princess Sita,  
Both grew unseen til aged sixteen  
Rama first did meet her,  
Feeling their love eternal leap twyx them like a cheetah.

## Ayoudh

## Exiles

As Sita was a child of divine glow  
Many had tried to win her hand in vain  
For only the bending of Siva's bow  
Shall King Janaka's tender sloka gain;  
Now Rama tries  
& with a heave at last  
Into the cloudy skies now fires an arrow fast.

As two souls are reunited  
So their woes on Earth begin  
Ancient promises recited  
Sends Dasa-Ratha aspin  
His soul's debtor laughs delighted  
The toothless crone doth win,  
For with all of Ayoudh aflood in tears  
A king banish'd his son for fourteen years.

As good sons ever dutiful  
Rama enter'd exile  
His Sita follow'd beautiful  
With somner in her smile  
As did his brother, Lakshmana, brave for the coming trial.

## Kosala

### **Magic Weapons**

As exiled are these captains of a race  
Just leaves & deerskin cover modesty  
Thro pathless forest wand'ring place-to-place  
Meet many rishis pledged for tapasvi;  
Of that number  
One close to Rama drew  
& said, "*Young wanderer I have three gifts for you!*"

*Here is Brahma's shining arrow  
Its target never misses,  
& this is Vishnu's sacred bow  
Shaped in heavenly blisses,  
I, thee, Indra's quiver bestow  
& such a gift this is  
That when to thee the Rakshasas appear  
Thou art the only man that foe will fear."*

With that the rishi elsewhere drifts  
As tho he'd never been,  
Now Rama lifts these precious gifts,  
Admires & spits them clean,  
For each man's destiny leads him down strange paths  
unforeseen.

### **Chitrakoota Hill**

### **Khara & Soorpanakha**

Now comes the start of all Rama's distress,  
Ravana's demon-sister him would woo,  
Yet for no shameless female he'd undress,  
Lakshmana's honour into fury flew;  
Her nose & ears  
Soon sliced oiff to the floor  
Wailing away in tears savage revenge she swore,

Returning with a brotherhood  
Fourteen thousand Raksha' strong  
Each braying to spill Rama's blood  
Stood defiant as King Kong,  
Whose arrows flung forth true & good  
Great carnage set among  
Those demons as he dodg'd their rocks & trees –  
His arrow strom the spray that swats cat's fleas.

When at last the murder over  
Raakshasas second best  
& Ravana's younger brother  
Lies dying with the rest –  
Quaking the king of Lanka like nuclear climax press'd.

### **Dandaka Forest**

## The Golden Stag

Despite his chief advisor full of fear  
Lord Ravana sworn his own vengeance  
Transforms Maricha to a little deer  
So beautiful in tender innocence;  
    Its lovely face  
    By raptured Sita seen,  
Forcing Rama give chase & satisfy his queen.

Now aiding cries of false distress  
Flies demon-trick'd Lakshana,  
Leaving lovely Sita helpless  
    To the wrath of Ravana  
Who comes to her in hermit dress  
    Feigning humble manner,  
That with a laugh is thrown off with his guise,  
Ten heads are rais'd burning with blazing eyes.

By mule-drawn golden chariot  
    Them off to Lanka flew,  
Tho Sita sweats she does not fret  
    Down to a summit threw,  
Her jewels... hoping mountain monkeys would know what to  
    do.

**Karnataka**

## Hanuman

After five weeks of searching Rama flopp'd  
    Exhausted, by Sugriva, monkey king,  
Who shows him the necklace his Sita dropp'd  
    & promised to help him in her finding;  
    Thus monkeys all  
    Across the world divide  
From Mandalay to Gaul to find Prince Rama's bride.

Soon Hanuman, of Monkeys great,  
    Whose name was writ in water,  
Learns of the grievous Lankan fate  
    Of King Janaka's daughter,  
    & hoping he was not to late,  
    Leaping as he sought her,  
Bounded the Ocean to Ravana's isle –  
A single leap sheer vaulting mile-on-mile.

Once landed he transforms feline,  
    Soon Sita came in view,  
O weary whine, O pining pine,  
    Til faith she does renew,  
Sweet news from this whispering cat, "Rama shall recue you!"

**Asoka Park**

## The Battle of Lanka

As Hanuman relays happy report  
Rama is charg'd with strength fantastical,  
Now with Sugriva & his immense court,  
Hurries to Lanka & a grand battle;  
    Into the waves  
They fling great rocks & trees,  
Enough for monkey braves to skip across the seas.

Soon conflict flurries night & day  
In the mountains & the plains,  
Morasses of mad melees sway  
Streaming blood like summer rains  
Elephants swerve thro dusty fray  
    As Raakshasas grow pains –  
Until, at last, Ravana faced Rama,  
Promising his life & wife to Yama.

The duel raged, all mercy gone,  
    Both sworn to each attack,  
Maul marathon as one-by-one  
Shorn ten heads growing back  
Til Brahma's barb pierced demon heart with wild, climatic  
    CRACK!

**Lanka**

## Sita's Virtue

As demons die so do the skies grow dim  
    No longer lit by fine heroic fire  
Indra himself could never vanquish him  
Who now lies lifeless on a burning pyre;  
    Denounced by drums  
    Shadow'd by dishonour  
To Rama Sita comes, tainted shame upon her.

& quoth, "*My love, if ye doubt me  
I, too, shall go to the flame,  
For tho I bare full purity  
I hear gossip of my shame!*"  
Thus Sita stepp'd up happily  
    Onto that burning blame  
But not to ashes did her fair flesh fall fair  
For she was honest – Agni heard her call

& saved her from those lethal burns,  
    Her faith her fate embalms,  
& justice earns, now she returns  
    Into her chosen's arms,  
As when a Trojan poem ends & all that fuss becalms.

**Lanka**

### **Canto III**

*The poet's journey thro Heaven*

I want to be remembered as a guy who sings peace to all  
nations – not as a soldier

**Harry Patch**

### **An Old Friend**

Aslant Arunachalas's ancient height  
All was snow white, the summit, slope & sky  
Merged in one mass, where like a satellite,  
About the mists a flight of falcons fly;  
I heard a voice  
Familiar & free,  
*"Poet you have a choice, descend or rise with me."*

*"Having heard of the godly race,  
My desire to meet them strong,  
My mind turns to a gentle grace  
Mine ears tuned to angel song,  
Heaven's infinitesimal space  
I wish to drift among,  
Tho fear my faith - or lack of one - may prove  
A difficult division to remove."*

*"It matters not if you believe  
For all has been arranged -  
Pens may truth-scrive, but when ye leave,  
With memory deranged,"*  
Said Dante, *"From divinity your soul must grow estranged."*

**Arunachala**

### Pearly Gates

A golden stairwell in our hearts appears  
& so we rose into those realms of bliss,  
O stunning clock of seven spinning spheres!  
The perfect paradise that Heaven is;  
We reach the pearl  
Of our eternal moon,  
Where blessed spirits swirl & wide-eyed mortals swoon.

When I reclaim a conscious stream  
White gates loom tall before us,  
Purer than new-born baby's dream,  
Than the Taj more glorious,  
About us queue man's karmic cream  
Awaiting Saint Peter's  
Judgement upon their presence upon earth -  
Some may enter, some must suffer rebirth.

He perused us with pious eye,  
"Pass poets!" stepping thro  
I bliss'd-out high, kissing the sky  
My world did seem so blue,  
As streams & rivers feed the seas & daisies drink the dew.

### Divinnia

### Rest in Peace

Beyond the vault of the slow-moving moon  
The wonder of the second sacred sphere,  
Where Mercury & Venus dance in tune,  
More beautiful than all I hold so dear;  
But for one soul,  
My beloved grandma,  
Who shunn'd the mortal fall for the immortal star.

*"My son, tho ye are far away,  
From our troubles upon earth,  
I still recall the special day  
That we call your day of birth,  
Still for your safety I shall pray  
Beside the astral tirth,  
To see you up in Heaven makes me proud..."*  
Her sweet voice falls, her face cover'd by cloud.

I watch'd her fading with a pang  
& whisper'd true yikor,  
The angels sang, their fanfares rang,  
But still I wanted more...  
*"Go on my child,"* her voice was mild, grief lifterd from my core.

### Ring of Lesser Spheres

### Heavenly Passage

Light illimitable thrusts in plenitude,  
The extravagant rising of a star,  
All minds on earth sophisticate & crude  
Awaken to the worlds these rays unbar;  
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,  
Sit with pious & religious  
Men of education -  
All of mankinds endeavours still exhume  
Whenever literary minds exhume.

*"Tis such a perfect walk,"* I said,  
Mine eyes awash with tears,  
On my friend led, all fear had fled,  
As higher heaven nears  
Omniscient immensities of thought-created spheres.

### Sphere of the Sun

### Beyond War

We climb into the crimson sphere of Mars,  
Where all the relique idols of his reign  
Dismantl'd victories, redundant wars,  
Shall never raise the grace of god again;  
An old sword stands  
On battle cairn of bones,  
Pearl pibroch in his hands straining the noble tones.

Souls join'd him in his lofty song,  
Triumphant in harmony,  
Exalted voices deep & strong,  
Charlemagne & Duke Godfrey  
But two cantari in that throng  
Of dashing chivalry,  
The music of the soldiers of the cross,  
Lamentation-tinged for their war-gods loss.

Now the long page of peace begun  
& legends live namore,  
Thro gore & gun our world wars won,  
Wisdom sent to the fore,  
When modern human automons may only *read* of war.

### The Ring of Mars

### 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, their splendour manifold.

*'DILIGITE JUSTITIAM.'*  
Form'd 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  
With 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 all 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 cicumambient,  
I saw Christ on his triumphant progress;  
Saintly nation,  
Forming translucent flame,  
Graciosu congregation chanting their saviour's name.

I reach'd a sacred area;  
Biblical biblioteques  
Contain'd ancyeant apocypa,  
& angels studying texts  
To help divine Divinnia,  
One claim'd the name of rex,  
Threshing thro the epic of Gilgamesh,  
Here Allah found how to return to flesh.

Then I left those crowded cloudlamds  
& the holy library,  
For where thousands of air-islands  
Float on a crystal sea,  
Spinning aswirl a palace carv'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 close my eyes  
'Til finger-tips touch beach,  
Above such walls did rise, paradise within 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,  
O beatific vision!  
My senses bath'd in light & swath'd with awe,  
That as I write can recollect no more.

I woke up with rose-wreathed crown  
Gliding by angel wing,  
She set me down above the town  
Upon a mountain king,  
Then soar'd thro sky, shrinking to raven, thrush, fly, then  
nothing.

## Aranachala

## Prophecies

As mist envelop'd this ancient volcano  
I sensed my verse unravelling no more,  
These moments of mine ultimate canto  
Preserve the moral message that was war;  
One line for all,  
One tryptych for each sort,  
One poem to recall the aeronaut of thought –

Which turn'd my mind to poetry  
As the sun broke on the plain,  
As Homer etch'd his Oddyssey -  
This rocky kshetran fane  
Guards all my focus wonderf'ly,  
The last link in that chain,  
Twenty seventh of the twenty seven  
Unfolding on the blank fields of Heaven

I saw a flock of braver bird  
Move yon the western glow,  
Bringing the word, wings undeterr'd,  
To where all futures flow,  
Til, "Nihil humani a me alienum puto!"

## Tamil Nadu

**BOOK XXVII**

**World War Three**

**Canto 1**

*The final wars on Earth, from the rise of Chyren  
to the conquest of England*

*Un chef du monde le grand Chyren sera :  
Plus outre apres aymé, craint, redouté :  
Son bruit & los les cieux sur passera,  
Et du seul titre Victeur, fort contenté.*

Fair goddess, lay that furious fit aside  
Til I of wars & bloody Mars do sing  
& Briton's field with Sacracen blood bedyed

**Spenser**

### **Ave Futura!**

What of man's progress, when the bees die out,  
Crude oil dries up, cliffs melt & oceans rise,  
When flooded lands are plunged in dark & doubt  
& places populous are shrunk in size;  
When biofuel  
Outranks the belly's growl  
When zeal controls the school & robot policemen prowl.

As copies of silver & gold  
Swell coffers with inflation,  
Problems presented manifold  
To every human nation,  
Soon every cent is three times sold  
To debt's dissipation,  
Til in a moment of a console's glow  
Each bank account reads zero-point-zero.

The sciences are first to fall  
With all nuclear things,  
As engines stall & homes grow small,  
Lacklustre clips Man's wings,  
Swapping his lasar blasters for barb'd arrowheads & slings.

### **Earth**

### **Fall of Faith**

As Man undiscovers technology  
All knowledges are given up to faith,  
Lost science cover'd by theology  
The holograms an angel, ghost or wraith;  
Til one strange year  
When false prophets arise  
Charming & chevalier with calm, prophetic eyes.

Ancient pagan idolatry,  
Barbaric biblioclast,  
Serpentine ophiology,  
Vestal vein & heathen fast,  
Have driven Christianity  
Into the mountains vast –  
Where stood in each scatter'd, rock-strewn stronghold,  
They kindle, still, the rites & runes of old.

This was a nazi-like zeitgeist,  
Confucious set aflame,  
The many Christs are sacrificed  
& Buddhas slain the same  
& even Mohameddians denied their master's name.

### **Eurasia**

### Rise of CHYREN

Far from those libertine, libatious lands  
Beyond great Tartary was born a son,  
Thick, coarse hairs woven through his cloven hands,  
The seer-sign of the long-awaited one;  
Ophiuchus  
Ascendant at his birth  
Third known Antichristus is born upon the Earth.

It seem'd another Golden Horde  
Hard upon the world releas'd  
With Herme's hoof, Achilles sword,  
Epochs conquer'd in the East  
Now CHYREN over all dost lord  
& on their bones will feast -  
Through Samarkand & on into Iraq  
The hordes of Asia squall on the attack.

In Saddam's bunkers underground  
Lies bio-weaponry,  
Then black gold found, its flow unbound  
Out in the Arab Sea  
Enough to fuel a massive fleet & martial industry!

### Baghdad

### Infernal Love

As Selin's carriage trundl'd into play  
This young, red, black one pluck'd his beard of lice  
The heads of agitators line the way  
To Naksh-I-Kystan & its paradise;  
Pungent inside  
Beyond bold pilaster  
Awaits his sultry bride & all Asia's master!

The wedding feast saw roasted dogs  
Serv'd with blood-swollen leeches,  
Them finish'd off with fig-fill'd frogs  
& sheep joints boil'd in peaches,  
Now Selin CHYREN'S converse hogs  
Speaking Grecian beaches,  
*"Too good for nothing but an Asian king!"*  
*"Then you shall lead my armies come the Spring."*

Massia got her lust alone  
Late on their wedding night,  
Thro must & moan, thro grind & groan  
He tunell'd in delight  
Thrice times their pleasures for her husband was  
hermaphrodite

### Perseopolis

### Fall of Greece

The Asian hordes, crown'd Selin at their head,  
Attack Turkey to claim the salt-sea ports,  
Now sprinkling hare's blood on their barley-bread  
They one-by-one lay low the Grecian forts;  
A toxic cloud  
Of bio-chemicals  
Dissolves each martial crowd soon clapt in manacles.

Into fabl'd Phoenician seas  
Pour forty hordes of Asia,  
Seizing the lands of Hercules  
& all its poesia  
From deep, squid-crowded Cyclades  
To Cephalonia,  
Advance the sins of Selin as a flood,  
Th' Aegean, th' Adriatic fill with blood.

CHYREN triumph'd thro Macedon,  
Lord of a ten-mile line,  
To thank his son, the Parthenon  
A perfect place to dine,  
*"Well done my daughter's husband, now Italy must be mine!"*

### Athens

### Fall of Italy

All in a blazing flash of bravado  
Italy's defences dissipated  
Selin seizes Syracuse, Salerno,  
Th' Appeninnes entirely subjugated;  
His legions pour  
In song along the ways  
Where fear was never more nor darker were the days.

Selin enters the streets of Rome  
Collossal & triumphant  
Lies prostrate at Saint Peter's tomb,  
Some new Papal incumbent,  
Declares the babe of Mary's womb,  
Sweet Jesus, Heaven-sent,  
Who is, once more, enthroned in Italy -  
Strange renaissance of Christianity!

This new Licinius Crassus  
Soul-power emanates,  
Builds chiasas for fresh crosses,  
Puts down the petty states,  
Uniting all Ausonia below the Alpine gates.

### Rome

### Fall of Spain

Lean, young & handsome, evil to the bone  
Raypoz is charg'd with Africa & Spain  
CHYREN had never seen his like before  
A warrior bless'd with a wizard's brain;  
In panther trance  
He leads the clanking crush  
As Asia's hordes advance from Cairo the the Kush.

As topp'l'd old Tunisia  
Pagans hung by neck & feet  
Then vexing golden Grenada  
Where the oranges grow sweet  
Thousands cross'd Guadalquivir  
& Spaniards retreat,  
Then turn their tails as Ebro fails to hold,  
All centres swift collapsing as flanks fold.

The passes of the Pyrynees  
Offer no defiance  
Brave Raypoz sees brown eagles breeze  
Above the plains of France,  
A warrior upon the rocks, a sorcerer in stance.

### Saint Pierre Du Port

### Fall of France

For seven hundred years the lands of France  
Commanded by a strong of petty kings  
Long centuries of bloodshed, grisly dance  
Of death, neglect & poison in the springs;  
Into Agde  
Three foreign fustas sail  
Germinating madly, a million will wail.

After the plague pods comes the arms;  
By Mount Ceris Selin surged,  
Raypoz storming Provencal farms  
& Marsellie by pirates purged –  
Three captains blood conquest embalms,  
Them on Lyon converged  
To drive a stake into the heart of Gaul –  
Soon conquer'd as if Ceasar led the fall.

CHYREN comes to vist *his* war  
Where French kings lived & died,  
A bear-hug for his son-in-law  
& for Raypoz deep pride  
A diamond for his Pirate King &, "I am satisfied!"

### Blois

## Fall of England

As France lay panting neath the Asian heel  
Deep in the Grampians a girl was born  
Beside her cradle half a village kneel  
The other half sway to & fro like corn;  
Bloodabbl'd bairn  
Hears her Angels humming  
Led on the pictish cairn of the Second Coming.

As CHYREN & his family  
Ate at his royal table  
Massia was the first to see  
The morning sun turn sable  
Forecaster of calamity  
Found in song & fable,  
& urged her father to conclude the war,  
*"My child, this morn we reach'd the British shore."*

Selin lands in old Anglia  
& Raypoz western Wales  
Them together inspire terror  
Dover's defender fails,  
Soon coast-to-coast the Saxon ports are fill'd with Asian sails.

## Newcastle

## Canto 2

*The Battle of Whittinghame*

Study the past, if you would divine the future

**Confucious**

## Councils of Conquest

The hordes of Asia scorch green countryside  
Drouth every river dry they strive to ford  
As on the right a thousand galleys glide  
The fleeted shield of CHYREN's wielded sword;  
Zingara drum  
Bending hypnotic beat  
Mesembryanthamum tarmp'l'd beneath their feet

Raypoz left Selin's council-tent  
By the banks of bonnie Tweed  
To meet a message typhoon sent  
By Massia's secret steed,  
Reveals nefarius intent,  
*"Conceal the vital deed  
& we shall be free to love forever  
My future prince, brave be in endeavour!"*

He watch'd black flames consume the scroll  
Then thrice his bugle blew,  
Toward their goal in martial crawl  
The flags of Asia flew,  
Like fields of golden daffodils sprinkl'd with sundawn dew.

## Berwick

## Gathering the Clans

Lord Caledon surmounted Traprain Law  
To fill his maps with prospects spanning free  
This was a proper place to offer war  
Defending Edinburgh land & sea,  
On this old rock  
The Scottish clans descended  
To fighta ragnarok & all their flocks defend.

They brought their saviour down from Fife  
Hoped her spirit would inspire  
Their sacred pride in land & life  
Soundly sung on shepherd's lyre,  
A pride concealing sharpen'd knife,  
Drawn for their Saffia  
Now nestling in fair Whittinghame's tower  
Her presence soldiers' energies empower.

Lord Caledon order'd his fleet  
To guard the Forth's great gate  
Then captain's meet in council heat  
To save their common state  
From many murd'rous minions advancing without abate.

## East Lothian

### Invading Scotland

Raypoz met Selin in the keep at Duns  
Discuss'd the nodus of the coming wars  
Both kenn'd it would be best to train the guns  
Above the foes, height-firing from the moors;  
    Splitting forces  
    Selin march'd for Dunbar  
Leading all the horses in his battle-car.

Raypoz took to the wilderness  
Where the Herring Road once ran  
Spent sunset in Longformacus  
Then proceeded with the plan –  
A night march dark & devious  
    A 'cannon' caravan  
His Africans yomp neath a moonless night  
Only discern'd by eyeballs blinking white.

The Pirate King took to the boards  
Beside the Berwick shore  
& cuts the cords, the fleet unloads  
    Its galleys from the shore  
& sails toward the Firth of Forth its flagship to the fore.

### North Sea

### A Long Night

Rumours of battle's tragic aftermath  
Runs raging through old Hektor's family  
Who leads his genship up to Stoneypath  
To share that ancyent towers sanctuary  
    Clanging within  
    The clamouring of arms  
Resounding with the din of soldier's singing psalms

The burnish'd warsteed of Dunbar,  
    Brawn-furnish'd for the battle  
By night appear'd a twinkling star  
    As soldier's fireside prattle  
Reel'd through the steely shpiel of war  
    Roasting scrawnly cattle –  
A scene repeated tween the Forth & Clyde  
Line of auld keeps by brave men fortified.

Raypoz paus'd by Whiteadder side  
    Reflecting glinting swords  
The loch soon dried, as deep thirst wide  
    Fills up the water gourds  
Then set off through a dawn-tinged land of heather, lambs &  
    fords.

### Lammermuir

### Battlelines

As rosy morn unbars the gate of light,  
Sedentary, men praise the morning sun  
Then focus on the widely-rising fight,  
The Battle of Whiitinghame is begun;  
While warhorns wail  
Selin approach'd Doon Hill,  
Nearby Raypoz unvels his tanks & clank-shank drill.

As slowly to Tintallen's shore  
Oer a thousand galleys came  
Lord Caledon stood on his Law  
Some chessmaster 'fore a game  
& pray'd to Heaven as he saw  
The Lammermuirs aflame,  
His army strech'd, his southern flank exposed,  
& Firth of Forth by few ships barely closed.

Through pony, foot & pigeon sky  
He put out messages  
To resupply & fortify  
The Halls & villages,  
Bidding his Scottish soldiery, "*Brave be, & courageous!*"

### Traprain

### First Assaults

As galleys skirmish'd round the white Bass Rock  
& into Spott burst Selin's cavalry  
The sullen Lord of Caledon took stock,  
This was the season of catastrophe;  
Now Haddon Hill  
Was taken by the foe  
Advancing kill-by-kill through Clint & mint Yarrow.

On Stoneypath the Afric fall  
Hektor fled from the melee  
Back to the wide Whittinghame wall  
With half of his family  
For their they sens'd their saviour's soul  
So faced the enemy  
As tho at Acre in the old crusades  
When Hospitalers mann'd the barricades.

The cottage was a choking stone,  
Black cancer, ochre rift,  
Weak Libyans moan, Egyptians groan,  
This was a new Rourke's Drift,  
A fortress of negroes few white faces cannot shift!

### Heather Lodge

### Trojan Horse

Selin stepp'd through Stenton's demolish'd street  
The cannon of Raypoz had done grim work  
So many Scottish bodies round his feet  
Like sillhouettes of mountains in the murk;  
This dreadful day  
Was drawing to its end  
But still the foe affary & still the foe defend.

All day had Raypoz pulverized  
The painted host before him  
Now tanks mostly immobilized  
As men curs'd his strategum  
But well-a-day he realized  
The walls of Whittinghame  
Could be bypass'd, not above, but under –  
His TROJAN's tracks turn & its drills thunder...

Wily Hektor was listening  
To that curious sound  
& sensed something was burrowing  
Some distance underground  
To burst into a narrow glen as moles peep from a mound.

### Whittinghame Water

### Saving Saffia

As ancyent vegetation fell'd by fire  
Lord Caledon saw carnage in the woods  
& knowing he must rescue Saffia  
He rode into that commingling of blood;  
There found the child  
Swaddl'd in silken robes,  
*"Carry her to the wild far from these christophobes!"*

Horsemen sped her to Berwick Law  
Where they found they were too late  
For only Asia's semaphore  
Parley'd cross the great Forth gate  
& so they rode along the shore  
Racing the chasing spate  
Where only the bridges of Queensferry  
Could carry off Saffia sure safely!

Those vital men went galloping  
To save their saviour's life  
Found steely string of girder'd bling  
For Inverkeithing, Fife,  
& cross'd the forth charge-carrying far from the battlestrife.

### Dunfermline

### Death of Selin

All night the battle raged from tree-to-tree  
The mansion house another La Haye Saint  
Its ancyent Yew decimated sadly  
Berries bleeding on dead Lord Caledon;  
His Scottish host  
Finds nowhere safe to hide  
Fleeing tween hill & coast entrapp'd on every side.

As the savage Saracens search'd  
The woods for Scotch survivor,  
Selin enters an untouch'd church  
& prays for man's first saviour,  
An ochre crow took up a perch  
For men never waver  
In death, deceit & all the gore of war –  
A ninja shadow slips in through a door...

As Selin pray'd, silent, serene  
A knife slit cross his throat,  
Wiping it clean, Raypoz, unseen,  
Rejoins the battle fought,  
For midst chaotic melees murderers are seldom sought!

### Whittinghame

### Canto 3

*The Defeat of Chyen, from Scotland  
to the field of Armageddon*

A 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**

### CHYREN's High Tide

Raypoz steps ship-by-ship across the Forth  
Leaves Edinburgh besieg'd & Glasgow ash,  
Pursues the Scotti deep into a North  
Of thunderplump, stormslash & levin-flash;  
Rain-lash'd terrain  
Ends of Eurasian Earth  
Where straining Scottish slain defend their saviour's birth.

The hordes of Raypoz, year-on-year,  
Masticate the mountain miles,  
Til Red Ones & White Ones appear  
Gather'd by the submerged isles  
& such a front united steer  
The foe soon corpse-piles  
Beneath this awesome breeze, thou Arctic knot  
Of Russian, North American & Scot!

From auld Ben Loyal to Criffel  
They drove the sun-tann'd host,  
A shrinking shell of once great swell  
That ravaged coast-to-coast,  
For '*Tempus edax rerum*' & the arms of men the most!

### Scotland

### Invasion of France

Saffia on every front is feted  
As blade-by-blade the grass of England bought,  
The leaders of Londono re-instated  
& now the Allies cross the Gallic moat;  
A new D-Day  
From Dartmouth to Penzance  
Long wave-steeds mount the spray & point their bows at  
France.

From Amsterdam to Aquitaine  
The continent invaded  
The blood of Chyren's armies drain  
Ophichius has faded  
Even the Allies show the strain  
Soldiers aged & jaded  
Urged by Saffia these plagues to resist  
Blessed blissbringer singing in their midst!

The great incursions soon bogg'd down  
By Winter's rain & frost  
Then turn'd around, from town-to-town  
The Nortehr forces toss'd  
As once again the salt-sea ports are to the Persians lost

### La Rochelle

### Reconquest of France

CHYREN comes to lead his men in person  
But better emperors veer from the field  
Their tactics often met with aversion  
By men of war with brighter knives to wield;  
His first mistake  
Unlide Pandora's box  
Soon forces fade & flake, his fleets fast on the rocks!

Hektor march'd with his two strong boys  
In the Clydebank company  
Halting the Africans at Troyes  
& the Persians at Paris,  
Far-spread the rumour of his noise –  
Pure piper's melody –  
A talent pass'd down his long, proud bloodline  
Its whining pibroch tingling down the spine

As CHYREN fled to Italy  
He rampaged ville-on-ville,  
Yet Tyranny breeds Liberty,  
The jaquerie bare steel  
Against their Asian masters with a messianic zeal

### Provence

### Reconquest of Spain

Russia recieves the third reconquista  
Charg'd with unravelling the serpent's tail  
As Spain had been promis'd Selin's sister  
A million or more shall guard its soil;  
But scatter'd wide  
& piecemeal clapt in chains,  
Snaking sierraside in long, sun-taunted trains.

*"Tell me how can ye die better  
Than when facing fearful odds  
For the ashes of your father  
& the temples of your gods  
Dying with your kin together  
United anthropods  
For every heart in synch bulwarks the cause  
To stand as one despite the debt of wars!"*

As Morrocans finish'd their song  
Libyans start another  
Thirty lines long, the thirsty throng  
Tongue-join'd with each brother,  
For soldiers share a spirit-bond, whomever the mother.

### Grenada

### Reconquest of Italy

The empire of CHYREN is imploding  
From Denmark to the Pannonian plain  
Europe's defences daily eroding  
Just Greece & Italy defy the grain;  
The Alps are cross'd  
The Chyrophile brought low  
The flat Veneto lost as Raypoz holds the Po

Milan, Ferrara & Turin  
Put unhappy to the flame  
Now three-pronged warlords march to win  
Cities of eternal fame  
Firenze falls, to save his skin  
Sly Raypoz flees in shame  
But drifting town-to-town in serf disguise  
He's captured by Massia's secret spies

Her former lover chain'd in gold  
Pack'd off toward the sea,  
Clamp'd in some hold, where CHYREN cold  
Scoffs his begging mercy  
*"Let us first escape Italy, & then, lad, we shall see."*

### Brindisi

### Reconquest of Greece

As Saffia is triumph'd all through Rome  
Barbaric leagues in Greece still held quite out,  
So once again the Allies surf the foam  
& fill the skies, armisonant the shout;  
Arcadia  
Namore shone aurulent,  
Some crowblack theatre, war-worn belligerent.

Now Greece, proud race, once glorious,  
Sick of this umstandspinsel,  
Forms rebeldom victorious  
To aid the Allied battle,  
& like terrible Mardinus  
The Asian horde expel –  
Soon isle-on-isle across th' Aegean green  
Feels liberty, & sings it from the spleen.

The Knights Hospitaler return  
From thousand year exile  
All tides must turn, the ramparts burn  
Above the corpsey pile,  
A pulseless Turkish garrison phlemg'd with a vengeant bile.

### Rhodes

### Reconquest of Turkey

Across the whale-road & the long land's edge  
From whence Saint Peter sail'd to save the world,  
The Allied host swarms with its precious pledge  
    To fight for sweet Saffia & her birth;  
        From ridge-to-ridge  
        The Persian Peacock fled  
Th'incredible carnage of evil massacred.

Hour-by-hour the Seven Churches  
Rise, haunch'd a proud gorilla,  
Rise Pergamum! Rise Ephesus!  
    Smyrna! Laodicea!  
    Rise Thyatira! Rise Sardis!  
    Rise Philadelphia!  
Rise up & break down CHYREN from the rear  
As all to final cataclysm steer!

Upon the banks of Araxes  
Asia, at last, shall stand  
Two armies freeze, a falcon breeze  
    Awaits the curt command  
To launch this armageddon in the hot Median sand.

### Armenia

### Cheramonayora

As Raypoz roasted on a brazen spit  
CHYREN flings his gross host into the fray  
The game would be more of a king's gambit  
    Of sweeping strikes & chevalierish play;  
        Lines charging meet  
        & in that meeting merge  
The dull, scream-pepper'd beat of violence in a dirge.

This was the winter of man's wars  
Resolving ancycnt KARMA,  
From landings on the Norman shore  
    To slaughterfests at Zama,  
From mighty camel-mounted Moors  
    To shining knight's armour,  
From cattle raiders battl'd by the Nith  
    To Alamo's Texan creation myth!

This was the swansong of mettle  
    Tested by bloody brawn  
    As stars settle Asia's fettle  
    Lies better'd, tatter'd, torn,  
Surrounded as at Cannae come the colouring of dawn.

### Achem

## **Final Victory**

The Wars are over bar the final blow  
Just CHYREN & his bodygaurd remain  
Of armies vast that not so long ago  
Camp'd at Cuulloden & reconquer'd Spain;  
With one last thrust  
An Antichrist is slain  
At once the bloody dust dissolves in morning rain.

Saffia steps onto the field  
Singing rejuvenessence,  
Her promised paradise reveal'd  
Upspringing in her presence  
A gentle greenwood fills the field  
Foaming effervessence –  
Then levin flash! & she, a lightning rod,  
Lit up to lift the very veil of god.

Ending with all thats legend'ry  
My fable ably told,  
From poetry & prophecy  
The future must unfold,  
Until a new messiah breaks man's bellicosol mould!

## **New Jerusalem**