

# Twelve River RIPPLES

## Members' Poems



### **A Walk in Guernsey**

I must walk a country lane again under a glorious Guernsey sky  
And all I ask is a comrade, a friend to greet passers by  
And our hopes high and the birds' song and balmy breeze blowing  
A gentle glow on an amative face and the first leaves of summer showing

I must walk a country lane again with a skylark's call as my guide  
It's a clear call and a curative call and not one that seeks to hide  
It could be by way of a house, where a Victor used to reside  
Stop somewhere for a pie, potato peelings cooked inside

I must walk a country lane again on my way to St Peter Port  
An old way, oft told way, of tales that will always exhort  
And get up a Guernsey sweat, find a place with a harbour view  
Enjoy ormer and a cassoulet, and perhaps a glass or two

*Hugh Lake*

(With apologies to John Masefield)

## Members' Poems cont.

### My Adlestrop

I've never been to Adlestrop  
and yet I know the name  
when once a fast train drew up there  
that place inspired a poet's brain

Long moments passed the steam train hissed  
in this 'small place' unscheduled stop  
Ed Thomas took out his pocket book  
and wrote a title 'Adlestrop'

the book was closed — then later found  
the one-word title underlined  
no poem underneath was there  
no 'by Ed Thomas' signed

so he relives that summer's day  
when stillness filled with blackbird song  
— and willow-herb. Ed dips his pen  
the poem's short — it's ripples long

Old England's soundscape is an echo now  
so feel the steam train-silence-birdsong synergy occur  
for each is in retreat throughout this land  
including Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire

*Caroline G Way*

## Members' Poems cont.

### Sighing the backstroke on grass

Clouds come, float away  
come again. Rhymes give cadence  
reason missing, don't say.  
Why should time care  
care what. Why should heaven  
oblige reason; merely teasing  
toying with the you, the me.  
The sun comes, go-goes  
comes again. Let's play with the moon  
the moon..., *on.., off...*  
I scribble with my eye in the sky, no pen.

*Jacques Groen*

# For a Ripple of Laughter

## Herschel's Moon, (1780)

*Polishing his special lenses, he announced  
he saw not green cheese, for sure, nor Diana,  
the huntress, but trees and certain habitation.*

Way before Galileo began to de-sanctify  
the heavens, the ancients thought that the gods were  
housed in high tors or the massy trunks of trees -

perhaps the safest place in the long run. It's all  
in the interpretation of what one perceives  
through telescopes, or echoes, or oracles. Viz:

in thanks to the gods for being spared in the flood,  
grounding safely at last on Mount Parnassus,  
it was not his mother-in-law's bones they scattered,

though Themis seemed to demand it, but Deucalion,  
in a delicate situation with his missus Pyrrha  
distracted, being understandably reluctant

to diss her dead mum, even for an oracle,  
interpreted Themis thus: "the mother is the earth,  
her bones the stones emerging from the mud" -

a lucky guess it turns out, for, blindly strewing  
the stones behind them, as per instructions,  
they did not see each one thrown softening

into flesh and blood and so begin the repopulation  
of the world. How much would it have profited Herschel  
to have lived two more centuries to discover his moon was

neither wooded nor peopled but barren and stony as  
the peak of Parnassus? Perhaps the aptest metaphor's the best  
we can hope for, as each new discovery trumps the last  
and renders redundant the certainties of the past.

*Col Farrell*