

## Tea Cup.

It all comes down  
to the old  
English bone china  
tea cup.  
flowered by hand  
coloured by years  
It tells so little of everything.  
fondled carefully:  
-fragile as cut roses  
petals fall  
around the room  
-held to the window  
you can see the sun.  
The tea cup is.  
The poem is the handle.

## Choir Boy

lace hangs limp in the window,  
the high summer sun now down,  
Grandmother sits in her parlour  
between the upright piano  
and the framed photograph  
of her dead husband  
Royal Engineer  
in full dress uniform  
she asks to hear  
the choir boy sing  
Silent night, Holy night  
All is calm, all is bright  
and hearing falls to the lullaby  
and dreams  
and it is her son  
the boy's father singing  
England and the village church  
stone cold and damp, it is winter.  
the organ stammers and mumbles  
into the opening bars of the carol  
the full choir rises, angelic,  
Anglican in surplice and cassock  
her William sings a solo  
the choir sings the chorus  
before the Great War.  
... Sleep in heavenly peace.  
the dream still warm  
is a water bottle  
she carries to bed.

## My Ladies Sleeping

Sarah sleeping  
folded in your arms  
Donna,  
my Donna and child.  
Breathing you whisper  
closely you move to touch her  
soft and warm  
as the summer dandelions  
she blows to the wind.

## Now is night.

I watch you in your sleep  
such is love  
cradled in your arms  
muffled to your breast.  
I cannot move to wake you  
or break  
the secret peace  
closed in your eyes  
parentheses mother to daughter.  
I did not feel myself today  
I felt my ladies' pulse.

