

THE ROAD TO CLONBARRA



James Simmons

Boulders and heather at my shoulder,
below the stoney bridge was narrow,
above I glimpse the moonlight smoulder
the night we crossed the Owencarrow.

I took the road map from its folder
and kissed my wife, "Goodbye to sorrow.
Bold we have been and will be bolder
now we have crossed the Owencarrow."

Old Muckish, beyond rocks and heather,
loomed. We would wake at home tomorrow.
Look for the bleak house ruined by weather
then right. Is that the Owencarrow?

"What of the Council of Belfast now?"
"Like the old sow who eats her farrow",
she laughed. "We're free of them at last now.
Tonight we've crossed the Owencarrow."

Like Garibaldi we've surged North,
not Southward like the men from Jarrow.
We knew what charity was worth
before we crossed the Owencarrow.

We sang what had been cramped within us,
neighbours brought whiskey in a barrow
with sandwiches and wines and Guinness
that night we crossed the Owencarrow.

We've burnt our boats and built our dwelling,
drawn the good bow, released the arrow.
Plant trees for shelter, flowers for smelling,
new born beyond the Owencarrow.