

Drawn to Much Wenlock – [perhaps a poem to be performed
astride a quartet of maps]

The next time I'm going to move to a middle of a Map,
Smack bang central, contourless, a place that's easy on the
thighs.

Not this harbour in the hills that's cemented its place in time
With its own limestone mortar.

Now, with Shropshire off the nation's radar

And Wenlock on the fuzzy circumference of the bleepless
screens

Even a short circular walk is at least a two map stroll.

I'm opening two maps at once , fighting with stringless kites
On Windmill Hill.

And now unfolding rectangles of runes and surveyed symbols.

I've deciphered a Sch. And Mus. A i and a windmill that never
opens,

A dis-solved priory , a cruel Tudor solution to Henry's dys-
function..

A dis-mantled railway line, a dis-used quarry , a dis-solved
priory ..a place well dissed through history..

But LOOK and the history seeps back through like in the magic
circle of October's mushrooms returning Milburga's Priory to
its Pagan Past..

And as for Shropshire's House Poet-

AE Housman should have read the maps

And not given the people of Hughley

The steeple that it lacks.

He could have walked the measured row of Canadian
Redwoods on the Gamesy, now still only in their spruced up
teenage years but already outlasted the railway line besides
that's returned to its steamless , sleeperless sleepy hollow.

Can you hear the echo of the last train, the final blast on the
Acme thunderer, the leather belted slam of the last carriage on
the final train.

Or was that the sound of the crowd at the first Olympian
Games, caught in the grooves of the Redwood trees.

Run your fingers on the bark like a needle on a record and hear
the captured flash of the limelight on Dr Brookes, caught upside
down on the camera's Victorian glass.

His image trapped , dressed , solid and captured in silver.

His entire Olympian life in just a score of images.

But did his buttoned down image want to pour watery scorn
on the returning Olympian flame , bussed in , encased in a
golden ice cream cone sat next to the one eyed furry caterpillar
of a meaningless mascot..

Did he pray for a squelching, quelching thunderstorm,

Was the bough that twisted from the black pine in the church
yard the same week just him wrestling in his grave..

But here's to the unphotographed faces, the undeveloped
details, the hewers of the landscape, the knitters of the
families, the limestone cowboys , the builders of the ruins who
are behind the symbols and the chartered runes in the four
quadrants of My Map.

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