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# Passage / An Pasaíste

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JAMES MCGONIGAL



Mariscat  
Press 2004

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ISBN 0 946588 38 4

Cover design by Joe Murray (joe@emdee.freeseve.co.uk)

Printed by Clydeside Press, 37 High Street, Glasgow G1.  
Published by Mariscat Press, 10 Bell Place,  
Edinburgh EH3 5HT. e-mail: hamish.whyte@virgin.net  
Typeset by Gerry Cambridge

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*“Continue, then, to cultivate  
that brotherhood of affection, and an union of sentiment,  
with your neighbours of every religious persuasion . . .  
As I shall not have the satisfaction of dying among you,  
my wish is that even my bones should rest in Belfast;  
but that is also denied me —”*

James Coigly  
Maidstone Gaol, May 29, 1798

## Entrance

3/4 of a century gone  
 and the place and the men  
 under ground how can  
 I say what in truth  
 that work was? Picture

the legs of your bed  
 jacked to within 3 feet  
 of the ceiling — a neat  
 slot for sleeping  
 as long as you like

how you wd stretch  
 into it by ladder from  
 the wardrobe top maybe  
 reached from a chair  
 watching your head

when you woke with a start  
 in the dark. Your dreams  
 no narrower but rather  
 as a river in its estuary  
 brims into mudflat and reeds

yet carries in that sluggish  
 belly the full weight  
 of a lifetime's rain — so  
 here your dreams expand  
 and flow

except instead of sleep  
you are tensed low  
and flat on a board  
as your pickaxe cracks  
open compacted dreams of rocks.

Here's another way to see it.  
Children like to climb a tree.  
Well, take that ash or beech and fell it  
through an angle of 90° but push that  
90° again through grass and clay

so that its roots suck air untidily  
and the trunk is a vertical shaft  
descending. Branches and boughs  
you love for sky-gazing are hollow  
seams to follow

and find that here the view's not air  
but years — leaves fossilized in black  
flicker back in flame. The mind  
burns too when pick and shovel redd  
centuries into hutches and away.

The cost of this —  
a miner every 6 hours, so they say.

Look at my face and hands broken and gouged  
the long back twisted out of line utterly.  
It was the arcwall cutter in a narrow seam  
and badly tensioned chains. It was  
the cold shift of an April night in Foulshiels.

My bones were crushed in coal the body  
axed and blood rolled into bools of dross.  
No man's fault. It was my job: the fireman  
checks how close the belt and teeth are in.

You are still in the dark. Let me say again  
it was soldier-like to enter the ingaun ee  
with lamp and pickaxe and descend  
with other men to be raised at dawn  
and cycle home. I was not alone.

Men gathered up my body in a box  
and sealed it. Four days later  
a cousin wheeled the bike and tools back  
for my sons if there's no help for it  
and they must follow me to win their meals.

They did not, I thank God, in Foulshiels.

## Passage East to Portpatrick

Peat grains into the estuary we drifted  
silt from glens whose waters  
promiscuously sway under sea mist  
till Rinn Uí Choigligh vanishes astern  
and clipping swell  
the ferry shivers as if eager  
to be out on the Sea of Moyle.

Snow is falling inside my head  
*Tá an sneachta ag titm i mo cheann  
agus ag síobadh leis an ghaidh  
bhallaí an chloiginn.*  
and drifting against skull walls.

*We still have swarms from Ireland  
but have sent back as many, indeed more persons,  
than in strict law we are authorised to do.  
But we must not stop at trifles.*

In this extravagantly starry night  
who would not think their secret's  
safe enough? Folk shift a pace or two  
scanning coastline and sky. Trace of heather  
on coat sleeves, with tar nearer hand  
and the last curve of Ulster  
cut across the mystery of air.  
In Scotland they say it does not do at all  
to greet with a raised hand  
every man that you meet on the road.

*How ignorant, then, or how wicked  
must that man be, who attempts,  
through interested motives,  
to make us enemies for religion's sake.*

Gulls follow the boat. A heron lifts off from shallows  
flaps inland under the tumbled crown  
of a rath. Salt and weed and merchandise.  
Some men below have settled their first brawl.  
Lampglow of the wide west  
and eastward  
a grey blanket is unrolled on the deck.

Angels of the height fall backwards treading air  
with wrists still intricately fluent in the language  
ash trees speak in a breeze. Their wings open  
like atlases whose veins mark hills and carries  
of that tongue. Who could master it?  
Cattle lowing from the lower slopes are stuck  
in bogland mossy with the love of their Maker.

Green island asleep under cloud. Dwelling places  
breathing just so, and fields walled round.  
Townlands turn over before dawn to dream  
of signals flaring from the south.  
Gulls make us listen to their nightmare —  
wing-buckling gales — a bay  
blown sideways. Ships  
hoisted up on the sea's shoulders  
like bundles soon to be abandoned

a voice running like burnwater  
round the boulder of your ear,  
one note like gravel grinding  
*ag spíonadh an logáin i do croí*  
wearing out the hollow in your heart.

*I have been informed  
by persons of good appearance disembarking  
at Portpatrick that there was much reason  
to apprehend that many of the inferior Irish  
were either flying from the consequences  
of their conduct in the other side,  
or were in absolute poverty.*

Galloway  
*Ghallobhagh*  
*seo agam féin le mórán na cnoic chéanna*  
with something like the same hills  
with nothing like the same water.

We walked all the road down to the sea  
our ribs like kindling sticks.  
No ink but nightfall gave out  
news of us, the dew that runs on grassblades  
gossip enough, it drops without fail.  
Today was warm as an egg  
fetched from under a hen's wing.

The guns fell silent and all that blood  
soaked into dirt. The edge of the world  
was reached and then its rim  
turned round and crushed us.

Regarding the sun we have nothing to say,  
 it makes dust flourish from roadside grit.  
 All the gold vanished into different pockets.  
 Most days now ditches give out their blarney

and I think of Antrim men catching  
 the full force of the weather  
 out on the hill or along the shore  
 walking home in it  
*uisce baistí ag rith anuas*  
*a gcráiceann is ag bogadh a léine*  
 rainwater running down  
 their skin and soaking their shirt.

*Send me instructions as to others, who,  
 coming without passports, and landing  
 from open Boats, are plainly fugitives,  
 but who all pretend they come over for work,  
 and bringing no papers with them we can have  
 no evidence against them, altho' they may be  
 notorious Rebels, and well known in Ireland.*

Ferry whose cargo is theft and consumption,  
 barrels, sweat, the clouds rolling on for dear life.  
 Wash of waves along its garboard strake is planing  
 our rough work of night voices to a song.  
 Expecting silence or only lines of rain to read  
 we found the seawind clearing its throat to talk  
 without mercy — of the desire that is in salt water,  
 about the hunger deep inside fresh water  
 that swallows moss and gnaws at rocks.

What drives us? Work does not seep or sleep  
 but gouges out a course like water, and soon  
 is endless as the air we gulp, midnight or noon.  
 In Glasgow, hammer blows like heartbeats go  
 unremarked. The moon flies up to its nest  
 in high girders.

*32 Stockwell far back low door right.  
 Widow. Occ. washerwoman earns 2/- per week.  
 This woman applied very frequently before  
 both for herself and children before she had  
 acquired any settlement in Scotland, and I find  
 by former reports that her son Thomas should  
 now be aged 20 though she says 18 and herself 58  
 though she now calls herself 63, which her face  
 belies. I have always found her very unwilling  
 to discribe her family and at present she does not  
 know where nor with whom Thomas works.  
 He is a clothlapper and earns 10/- a week.  
 She has one other son and daughter in America  
 and two daughters still in Ireland.*

These nights we know it is a flame we lack  
 and smoke-tanned skin  
 with ash in every whorl and pore.  
 Smoke rises  
 but the cone of fuel is hugging heat  
 close to its chest.  
 Reins hang low and harness leather  
 from rafter and nails.  
 The weight of horses shifting  
 against stalls, hoof against cobbles.

Nights passed above their pish and clatter.

The snores of beasts and men, one dream.  
Dawn comes in rough enough and wipes  
its hands on our hair.

*Dr Campbell 2 Hamilton Cresc states  
that the applicant is not in good health, he is able  
to do a little work, has bronchitis, his dependants  
do not suffer from this, he requires immediate  
medical advice, is not of unsound mind,  
can walk and be removed to the Poorhouse  
without damage to health.*

The boat swung wide to drift in snug to the quay  
and we came ashore for work. Rain leaking in  
between different rafters catches new dirt  
on boots and collar — trash from cotton carding,  
boiler ash and fireclay, ironstone clinkers, coals  
picked from the Ell seam east of Wishaw  
crouching or lying fullstretch in the dark,  
or redding other roads, Splint,

Virtuewell,  
Humph, Drumgray  
or Kiltongue.

## Passage South to Stonyburn

The Irish of her songs  
like water on a blistered hand  
cool and clearing slowly  
as coal grains settle  
in the bowl of each verse.

Her lullabies are sung  
to a Scottish rhyme, her hair  
is hidden by a Paisley shawl.  
The room I'm working has no wall  
but stone piled mile on mile.

Nights governed by the moon's flywheel.  
Men cycle off. Kitchen hearths  
are banked with dross. The moon floats  
in the reservoir and on eyeballs  
of raindrops in kail leaves.

Rain in my face. By Shotts on moorland  
bings of ironstone, broken staves,  
rails thick as pythons. Then bearing south.  
Every weed's ochre  
and stunted with smoke.

Lights of Monkland's lava on the plain  
behind me smouldering. Chapelhall  
furnaces that our coal feeds. Into the roadway  
and all's black. Gems  
to be howked from their stems.

Coal sheers off in hot dust. Firing shots  
     men see as God sees trees  
 rear up and collapse in a blink.  
     Grit on the tongue or under eyelids  
 where no tears can shift it.

Not coal we've won, but coals.  
 Down the shaft you'll fall past  
 Millstone Grit, Leavenstone,  
 Orchard and Index Limestanes,  
 then seams of Lady Merton Coal  
 (that we cry Jewel)  
 down to the Bathgate Main.  
 That peters into Johnstone Shell  
 above Top Hosie Limestone.  
 I've shouldered some of those  
 as well as sandstone, fakes, blaes  
 and coarse fireclays.

I could tell you their fathoms  
 to the inch. This is the Fireman's  
 study and Certificate. Hours  
 building up to it like girders.  
 My brains did not buckle  
 and the heart was steadfast  
 in the gate of lamplight  
 shining on oilcloth.  
 What did we know of happiness?  
 All that there was and is.

Children clever at the father's knee  
 from their mother's broth and wit.  
 Pit trains clanked across Omoa Square.  
 We said our Rosary. All that there was  
 and is. I did not mention sulphur  
 in the Smithy Coal with a pyritous  
 blae roof containing shells  
 which weathers down to a clay  
 on which no vegetation strays.

But when the sun shines across chairs  
 we are content, through window squares  
 of blue or rain-streaked grey or violet.  
 This mystery of glass that searches heaven.  
 Our sky is rimmed some mornings  
 with blue and white like an enamel  
 bowl ringing with heat.  
 Grace before I earn our meat.

I bike it east 12 miles then south then  
 fall 1200 foot to walk back west beneath  
 the road to Fauldhouse. Whinstone  
 very hard blue, with fireclay and blaes.  
 Then coal with a 3 inch rib of fakes  
 called Wandering Coal. Bell Coal  
 10 foot ablow, then a rib o stane.

Ireland? You'd need to shovel west again  
 for years to reach Dungannon, Donegal  
 or Quigley's Point. There's small coal there  
 nor skill to win it. Their clouds of rain  
 fall here as sleet, God help us all the same.  
 If a professor excavated bings he'd find

we'd ripped the heart from the world's ribs.  
Clouds bare their arteries when we gaze  
across the bruised flesh of a bing. After snow  
these heaps are luminous a day or two.  
Mining in the earth and yet at times

we seem near independent of the earth  
in passages unreckoned by men's watches  
where muscles measure fire as well  
as the irons it forges.

This was the bath at which he knelt again  
to wash the grime before his back was torn  
by a longwall cutter flying free of its chain.

## Passage North to Armagh

Deciding after years to take the deep road to the narrow north  
 I soon passed a lake that seemed ornamental among trees  
 with one moorhen veering from its reeds at sunset  
 Nearby horses in a cropped bare muddy paddock  
 harried and bit The shoulder of a grey mare  
 was raked raw I recalled a poem translated  
 years ago now simplified by age

*Night peeps at day*

*through a horse's eyes*

Night was falling indeed across rolling fields  
 upon leaves and berries dying in the hedges

Harvest was gathered all safely in to trim barns  
 so that one observed with pleasure the last bird

*Dew-fall with a key  
 in her beak the blackbird swoops  
 past locking today*

But why did horses bite each other sectarian  
 hunger (was it) like flags on every lampost here  
 fibrillating in a southwind Darkness grew solid  
 so that all detail was lost For hours those flags  
 would flutter in the dark brave as dogs running  
 out to barred gates to curse at strangers walking  
 down their road so that I remembered

*Dogs bark at the risen moon*

*she just climbs higher out of reach*

and I went only half a mile more finding at last  
a room and some food for the night

Next morning came meditation upon peat smoke  
rising from a valley on the spume of waves bent  
back by gusts along the shore Signs that resemble  
us when we go aboard ferries to set small lives at risk  
We are like sparrows entering a hedge just as proudly  
as if they alone have knitted its scarf from generations  
of feathers their whistling takes a roll call of the air  
their landings are bright and mercenary Yet hawks  
or slingshot soon cut the stitching where birdies  
bind themselves with threads of green Better  
to be decorative as

*Three swallows on that telephone wire*

*a brooch on the afternoon's lapel*

Such birds arrayed like notes upon the stave strung  
between telegraph poles have been thought by poets  
to express what the sky would have to say for itself  
could we interview it for local radio could we peer  
over the hedge into its long grey garden Indeed  
it too seemed today as if it wanted to be expressed  
as kindly and useful as milk from a veined breast  
On other days of course

*Thunder comes bouncing  
like a ball down the wooden  
staircase of heaven*

and we find ourselves staring into a garden where  
bones or guns are buried

Next morning above mist I saw the city on a hill  
where our shrine was founded dark in the mirk  
then lost from sight in downpours In a teashop  
the seemingly autistic woman served us diligently  
and definitely we saw how far we were from  
the light behind her forehead Laddies in pairs  
were sent on easy errands

*This garrison town  
grey under autumn's drizzle  
slow boys serve us tea*

Sixteen prisoners went by cart from here to Dublin  
stared at in towns they passed shackled at night  
with beasts One swung at the outset from the arch  
of the garrison gate (sedition) One fled on the road  
The rest weighed freedom after years of transportation  
over seas Their songs rainy dreams broth pots  
Children of their children's children return with tales  
of corrugated roofs and lyrics featuring green

But we were off down a channel of road between  
hills rolling like waves towards the shore of the plain  
inland from fishing villages where

*Between harbour walls  
the sea's irrational moods  
are soothed like a child's*

Walking keeps us actively alone    horses pacing  
 under twin saddlebags    Leaving the saint's tomb  
 I remembered that when my old friend died I could  
 not write    Did not write    Sombre above the river  
 flooding from unstable banks    my shoes starred  
 with grass seed    Remembering his equanimity  
 now I wrote for him

*The force of the storm  
 was borne by each oak last night  
 with a different shrug*

The fields like sodden sponges leaked across roads  
 we trudged down    Later the sky was on fire and I  
 seemed to be rowing a cloud through its lake

Woke at dawn in a fever    a waterfall was coursing  
 below my window with the sound a whetstone makes  
 down a scythe blade    Recalling how a child is calmed  
 by the steady rise and fall of breath I thought of her

*sternum    little white cameo  
 of the heart*

Daylight    her advice was always to open whatever  
 presents itself    blue paper tied up with fine string or

*the first few drops of a rainstorm  
 just testing the lie of the land*

I wrote this half awake    alone in a strange country

Later I took winding roads through rain that fell all day  
Suddenly round the bend a jeep full of soldiers land  
in which we walk in expectation to be startled A verse  
came to mind

*Bluebottles buzz by  
singing their own dirty words  
to the flowers' chorus*

However far you walk there's no answer to the wind's  
mind leaves on the roadside trees are the colours of  
the memory of dried blood

A car drove past the foot of a glen and splashed  
through water spilling from the lough where

*Trout aimed for summer  
flies filling the pool's dark  
surface with targets*

Ripples like mouths of the dead widen into words  
spoken over their shoulders and ourselves unfit  
to make out what they say I remembered

*After summer showers  
roads are suddenly crowded  
with rain ghosts drifting*

Rogues and radicals on this road two hundred years ago  
They came where we live now They lent a weather eye  
angels at every shoulder

Thus wandering along lanes we soon enough begin  
 to yearn for kitchens and familiar chairs empty now  
 Remembering that

*Rockingchairs were made for this*

*to nurse babies at the breast*

In all of this journey north I've listened to the sky's  
 fine ribs of cloud which like a clavichord are struck  
 by the brass tangents of each passing thought

I might have said we need ancestors as roadmakers  
 need tar and grit and tar and grit need causey stones  
 to grip But someone sharper than I was at his age  
 told me (respectfully enough) to cut a new path now  
 And so I wandered on in silence recalling the set  
 of his head and the look in his eyes that said it Yet  
 stubbornly I still believed this

*The dead can read maps  
 white swans and stars use gliding  
 clear of Mourne Mountains*

And casting off in the ferry home I started to count time  
 as ancient mariners do in wave after wave after wave

## Passage West to Glencolmcille

### *Another Stormont*

Stormont was Kirkpatrick Dobie's house,  
 the oldest poet that I ever knew.  
 He was buried with an ancient Remington  
 balanced on his chest.  
 Its solid frame and rimmed metallic keys  
 are keeping the poet's heart compressed.

'Stormont' came with the title deeds.  
 The rock and stronghold of Psalm 62  
 flew to mind, that craggy villa  
 last on the ridge above Dalbeattie Road.  
 To walk the dogs, the golf course at his gate  
 and Galloway skies adrift, opaque  
 where stars or verses congregate.

Poems came at the kitchen window, late.  
 He'd hoodwink his own wariness of words  
 with a whisky neat —  
 then moonlit oaks took x-rays of applause  
 for ghosts of golfers on the 16th green.  
 Storms blethering at backdoor and gable  
 would hear an old man with a typewriter  
 rattle back from his scullery table.

Protestant and Catholic, we both looked  
 to the resurrection of the dead  
 and hoped to see each other surface, grinning,  
 typewriters easy in remuscled arms,  
 blank verse already coursing in the head.

*Eclipse*

Going out moongazing in Queen's Park  
to see the eclipse being held behind closed clouds

with a passionate hue and couples or threesomes  
all gazing upwards in silence

we saw no eclipse for the city of Glasgow  
its arclights more certain than moonshine.

Returning home along unlighted paths  
you spoke such poetry in prose

that I am happy not to plagiarise it here  
through a happy occlusion of memory —

except for your voice I remember your voice  
beneath the beech trees' branches

and someone's dog with an illuminated collar  
sparking rubies from the shrubbery.

We are never completely in the dark.

*Missing*

Patches of January snow that lie  
in corners of our garden  
where the sun reaches rarely

are like white memories catching the eye  
at inappropriate moments  
during a day of busyness and pressure.

*'S e th' annta cuimhneachain gheala  
'S iad a glacadh na súla  
Aig amannan gun a bhith freagarrach  
Ri linn driop is cabhaige.*

As we grow older in corners of our heads  
snow rags lie longer. They distract us  
as when a snooker player of great experience

can still find his best aim confounded  
by a lifetime's trajectories  
running at the merest of tangents

to the business in hand.

*March*

o it is life-giving to walk again  
by coastlands where a poet was raised,  
to see the granddaughters and sons of gulls  
she watched with a blue gaze

from rocks hereabouts little altered  
for all that turmoil of tides,  
the sleet occasional, days lengthening  
from morning to starlight

a child, she learned her secret  
by the Sound of Moyle,  
each ear must bend to catch the whisper  
of its own queer shell

*The Beds of Ulster*

A sharp word from Scotland  
    agitates ash trees and gorse

in the snowbirds' glen I'm listening  
    like a cat to their chorus

just two miles off on a runkled cloth  
    the sea has laid its crockery of skerries.

These afternoons the simple sound  
    of her concentration is what I miss

I take the car and drive on after  
    whatever the sky inhaled of us

peat reek on the lip of Glenshesk,  
    eggshells, whiskey, dulse.

We fell asleep in Ulster and woke  
    somewhere else — from rafter

to floor board each nail marked a parish  
    we passed on the road here.

Thin end of the wedge  
    of the moon in the skylight.

Waves tumble like clouds —  
    catch the glance of their salt

on the bay's shoulder blade.  
    Ullans the noise our breathing made.

*Dream*

A dream of flames at 5 a.m.

After three horses in a bunk on a rusting ferry  
 the Lutheran poet in his Wehrmacht grey  
 sees Jews being beaten on to trucks.  
 The first flakes of winter melt as they drift  
 near smoke from burning rafters. Fire,  
 the birchwood, allurements of flame.

I'm happy to wake to the arms of high tide  
 whose muscles fetch in slippery lumps of sea  
 and throw them at the foot of our wall  
 to hiss like new milled steel.

Blastfurnaces ablaze at midnight.  
 Sunnyside and Summerlee's  
 ash pastorals. Work sets you free.  
 Brothers and cousins indentured  
 to those flames. Guidsons an freens  
 indentured. Sisters and wives

turn over in lurid light

*Half Asleep in Antrim*

Dream of holding hands with women in an April bed —  
but in the morning check both arms for fractures.

At first light I still can't make out the shade  
of eyes that have been watching me all night

or what the words might be that they write down  
from time to time in Aisling copybooks.

Outside, the engine of the year jumpstarts  
when tough old hedges fire a spark of green

— and off we go. Fingers enfold mine on the wheel  
and feet tapdance on pedals, fast and slow.

Look, all too soon the window-glass of sunset.  
Let's drive on up and see who snores there now.

*Ceasefire*

At close of play, as senior civil servants have it,  
 in the gloaming when clouds come to a point  
 where separate leaves disappear and birdsong  
 is muffled by twilight the colour of oxhide,  
 with the big belly of Mount ——  
 flattened against it, touching and no more

that was when a man of my age with two dogs  
 stooped out of his farmhouse door and passed  
 through the glare from a workshop where his son  
 was still focused by arlight, holding the gun  
 up for appraisal, the stare from its single black eye  
 that ends in a blink —

‘Don’t be working too late now’ — and on he goes  
 with dogs down the darkening roads,  
 not pinning his hopes on that red globe of sky  
 not expecting a stained glass sky  
 not burning sky bridges behind him  
 nor stopping to watch how far back the clouds

have begun to manoeuvre for final possession —  
 but aware of his own mind reacting as slowly  
 as the sky itself does tonight,  
 so long on the field it can’t even be bothered  
 to stretch for the incurving  
 ball of the dark

*Neighbours from Heaven*

The smokestained sandstone  
of neighbouring houses  
like the pelt of old tabbies  
with black glassy eyes

behind those black windows  
the dark lives of neighbours  
become clearer as night falls  
and windows light up

and they contemplate dinner  
and hunting excursions  
through the bushes of telly  
and video undergrowth

above us the swallows  
type e-mails to heaven  
about life and death matters  
bright trivial swift

*Regarding Water*

I want to die looking at water  
 I want to die having regard to water  
 whose wrinkled face is supple for its age  
 I want to die smiling kindly on water

I want to die listening to water  
 to its slap on the shore's boney wrist to its sly  
 remarks on present-day pebbles and boulders  
 I want to die with an ear to the water

I want to slip away like the water  
 with no shape but this lough's elastic band of water  
 on which you could plunk out a tune for dear life  
 till a knife edge of ice cuts the water

For what is stranger than the world? The world in water  
 and ourselves the only eyes peering into the water  
 where Donegal hills as rough as your grandfather's jaw  
 turn smooth as white breasts in the water

I want to swim away out on the water  
 to buy a paper from the towncentre of the water  
 where the latest news of each drop of rain in 100 years  
 can be read in black and white on the water

oh I want to die reading the latest news of water  
 sitting here reading the latest news beside water  
 as the waves turn over broad and slow as pages  
 with more news on the other side — still water

with more news on the other side of still water

## Acknowledgements

The following texts cast light on Irish-Scots immigration, radical politics, coal mining and iron smelting in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and were the source of quotation or technical detail:

Dáire Keogh: *A Patriot Priest: The Life of Father James Coigly, 1761-1798* (Cork University Press, 1998).

Martin J Mitchell: *The Irish in the West of Scotland 1797-1848: Trade Unions, Strikes and Political Movements* (John Donald Publishers, 1998).

Henry Cadell: *The Rocks of West Lothian: An Account of the Geological and Mining History of the West Lothian District* (Oliver & Boyd, 1925).

Guthrie Hutton: *Lanarkshire's Mining Legacy* (Stenlake Publishing, 1998).

My wife's research into Census, Parish and Poor Law records tempered sympathy with accuracy.

In *Passage East* and *Passage West*, the lines in Irish Gaelic are translations by Rody Gorman of elements of my *Poems written for translation into an abandoned language*, including some previously published in *Across the Water: Irishness in Modern Scottish Writing* (Argyll Publishing, 2000). There are several lines in English from another of those poems that first appeared in *New Writing Scotland 18* (ASLS, 2001)

*Passage North* borrows form and tone from the Japanese poet Bashō (1644-1694), in particular from *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (translated by Nobuyuki Yuasa, Penguin, 1966). Some of the lyric lines are free translations of prose poems of Ramon Gomez de la Serna in his *Greguerías: Selección 1940-1952* (Buenos Aires, 1952). Two living poets also furnished models as to form: Gael Turnbull and Gerrie Fellows.

The poem 'March' in *Passage West* was published in *The Dark Horse* 14 (Summer 2002) as part of a tribute to Philip Hobsbaum's support for Northern Irish poets. 'Regarding Water' won second prize in the Davoren Hanna Poetry Competition, Dublin, 2002. In 'Dream', the East German poet is Johannes Bobrowski. Ruth and Matthew Mead translated a selection of his work in *Shadowland*, 1966. Kirkpatrick Dobie was born in Dumfries in 1908 and died there in 1999. His poetry was published locally and in *Selected Poems* (Peterloo Poets, 1992).

*Passage / An Pasaíste* was composed in Glasgow, Dumfries, Barra, Donegal, Antrim, Down and Wexford. Some of this journeying was supported by a travel bursary from the Scottish Arts Council.

*Passage / An Pasaíste* won the Deric Bolton Long Poem Award in 2003. Author and publisher are grateful to Duncan Glen and the Deric Bolton Trust for making possible the publication of the poem.

