Sweeney, W., and MacNeacail, A. (2012) These Lands, This Wall. [Composition]

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These Lands, This Wall

Text
Aonghas MacNeacail

Music
William Sweeney

2012
This score is notated at concert pitch, with the exception of the Double Bass, which is notated one octave above sounding pitch.
B - I, TANTALLON...

Moderato $\frac{1}{4} = 96$

Narrator
I, Tantallon, want to know
if you are friend, if you are foe.

I have defended this cold air
for fickle centuries.

I have no mind to weaken now

You think me bare?

But listen to these walls - they breathe......

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto

B-flat Clar.

B-flat Clar.

Bass Clar.

Bass Clar.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

Pedal Bass Dns

Timp.
Rough wooings happened elsewhere,
but I've known besiegings and blockades -
ships have danced the firth below -

Beyond my shoulder there are other kingdoms -

we have lived in rancour.....

- and with love

If you're...

...for me, I will take you on a passage through wonders,
if aye, reflect that I have long engagement in the art of waiting

I hope that wisdom bids you measure the merit in my overture,

for then -
There will be witches, imprisoned ladies, burnings, dookings and decapitations - There may be ghosts, there will be saints
---draw on the pages of lore and history to float rafts of music and word which may collide and resonate through time's curtains.

Latin fragments will be heard...

Hear our ornate litanies, melodic tapestries.
Hear our dour precentors sketch the line their congregations wove into austere heterophonic inescapable.

(i) and snatches in Bry...
Narr. (iii) 

...banners of truth

This mair nor gairden was stuid proof, kep oul huilt regiments

But some will remember tranquil days, and all that grain
C - THERE WIS A TIME...

**Narrator**

**Soprano 1**

**Soprano 2**

**Alto**

**Bb Clarinet 1**

**Bb Clarinet 2**

**Bb Clarinet 3**

**Violin**

**Cello 1**

**Cello 2**

**Double Bass**

**Susp. Cymbals**

**Tam-Tam**

**Percussion**

---

There wis a time o in-no-cence a - fore we needed
See their stooped backs
as they follow the ploughs,
broadcasting oats, barley, rye -
They do not hear that upper window speak -
I am Authority. I own this place.
The face may change; my voice remains the same.
and you will do - precisely as I bid - I'll have my share
of all you sow and reap.
Con moto $\frac{1}{4}$ = 108

Narrator

Look at these lands
those fertile fields -
I am the wall between them
and the bloody tides
of lust and avarice

Bass-clar.1

Clarinet 1

Clarinet 2

Clarinet 3

Violin

Cello 1

Cello 2

Double Bass

Percussion

There's no other side of a bay
to shelter us -
only that thumb of rock
standing steadfast
in its swirling shirt of brine
and nothing will shift it, sentry stone,
but there are
beaching shores not far away
and if those longships move at night, they
may kiss sand, and let
their fell sword-bearing navigators
scorch and scour this land
But there were calmer times, long long ago, before the scythe and plough, before the need for hedge or wall:

I am the wall between those fertile fields........

and the bloody tides of avarice
A'm faur ower yung tae mind
when aw wis haffit ower wi
whin and bruis, and wee fowk
wi their hoots and spears cam
trachlin thow atween the thorns:

Then yin wha'd traivelled wide, wi
appent ees, cam back and thocht
tac plow anig it thon guid syle,
draft in a line o seed, gied it ane
coa o meatin shairn, kyned yird
and time tae grow, syne nourisht it
until it kist o maunrie provish corn,
and tae muk siccar they haed milk,
and meat and clath, a wheen o yowes.
There's thay who spak o muckle clouds daurkin the haid warld whan.......

Hekla, thon ice-hapt volcano spat its hellish.......

muta in B₃ Clar.1
muta in B₃ Clar.2
muta in B₃ Clar.3

19
...heark
aw rest and yeelae tungs o ralgje fire

\[ \text{Narr.} \]

\[ \text{Clar.1} \]

\[ \text{Clar.2} \]

\[ \text{Clar.3} \]

\[ \text{Vln.} \]

\[ \text{Cell.1} \]

\[ \text{Cell.2} \]

\[ \text{Db.} \]

\[ \text{Perc.} \]

\[ \text{Bell-tree} \]

\[ \text{Tam-tam} \]

\[ \text{Tom-toms} \]

\[ \text{Pedal Bass Duns} \]
The bold Gododdin thought they'd found the perfect lubricant: the good Aneurin was the bard who'd sing their march to halt and turn the Roman tide, as out they wove to turn that brute invader back, and send his gory scrolls of Latin grief back home.

Tempo Giusto \( \downarrow = 60 \)

\( \text{Narrator} \)

\( \text{Clarinet 1} \)

\( \text{Clarinet 2} \)

\( \text{Clarinet 3} \)

\( \text{Violin} \)

\( \text{Cello 1} \)

\( \text{Cello 2} \)

\( \text{Double Bass} \)

\( \text{Percussion} \)

\( \text{Tom-toms} \)

\( \text{Marimba} \)

\( \text{Pedal Bass Drum} \)

\( \text{Legato e molto marcato, senza express.} \)

\( \text{Irregular rit. and accel. of trem., also cresc., dim. ad lib} \)
Well-fed on mead, their prize and poison.
Three hundred were pleased to engage.
But after their fun followed silence.

Though attending their churches in penance
death would befall them, with ...............

......-- out reprieve.
Men went to Catterick, mead in their blood.
My shame if I did not offer praise, of them
and their dark scarlet massive swords -
how fiercely, resolutely, those war-dogs fought.
But had you been of Brennych's clan,
I'd have slaughtered every ghost of you.
They lost me a friend, though I escaped;
a fearless fighter against the brutal enemy -
nor did he insist a dowry be paid,
this son of Cian of Maen Gwyngwn.

Tempo Giusto \( \text{\( \frac{j}{8} \) = 60} \)
Men went to Catterick at dawn:
they were no longer afraid.

They were three hundred against ten thousand.

Although they were pierced and bloody
they fought as bravely as they could
against the armies of............. Mynyddawg Mwynwawr.
Narr.

Men went to Catterick at dawn:
they'd pay the price for their preparations:
the sweet gold mead they'd drunk ensnared them.

Those minstrels had caroused.....

Tempo Giusto $\frac{6}{8} = 60$

......for the year
Would that their swords were red as their plumes:
Their blades stayed lime-white, helmets split four ways,
in the face of Mynyddawg Mwynvawr's...
F - CATTERICK

Moderato ma con fuoco $\frac{3}{4}$ = 60

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto

Clarinet 1

Clarinet 2

Clarinet 3

Violin

Cello 1

Cello 2

Double Bass

Bell-tree

Percussion

Handclap

Moderato ma con fuoco $\frac{3}{4}$ = 60

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto

Clarinet 1

Clarinet 2

Clarinet 3

Violin

Cello 1

Cello 2

Double Bass

Bell-tree

Percussion

Handclap
Narrator

Three hundred sallied out
and only three came back
Aneirin saw it all
and brought back
all those wounds in verse

Within these walls
we shared recall
of what the old folks told us

Tranquillo  \( \frac{3}{8} \) = 56
There being shady corners, marriages were made and unmade here, shyly, slyly, stingingly as any in the tower.
poco piu mosso  \( \frac{1}{4} = 72 \)

inside these walls you'll find a town
brick industry in every nook.
Amærén to the busy laird
drafts missives to the captains of
external polities who may require
appeasement. Doormen, watchful,
take the measure of each caller
for the merest note of ominous intent.

\( q = 72 \)
Soldiers at their dice and squabble - 
Bored squaddies, looking for a bit of help to pass the time with maid-servants,
will find that there are butlers willing to confront their sad desires
with fierce and agitated fists.
Jyners, wrichts and masons monitor
the fabric o the biggin, fettlin faut.
Maids and flunkies attend their duties,
makkin beds and soopin flairs,
shewin and dichtin, shewin and dichtin -
shewin clath, and dichtin
adhet, hrowl and bicker.
and in the minstrel's gallery, before the harp and viol sang, a pipers' serenade...

... some thought was "like the bellowing of beasts"
Dance, Kat-ie Bear die
Kat-ie Bear-die had a wean
Was-nae that a dain-ty wean?

Dance, Kat-ie Bear die
Kat-ie Bear-die had a ben
Was-nae that a dain-ty ben?
They're a' Jack-ie Corns
Ah can tell em by their horns
An ah foond em brok-en oot
in the mee-nis-ters gair - den.

Irregular clapping

Sop.1

Sop.2

Alt.

Vln.

Cell.1

Perc.
And that black mass, the stark Bass Rock, 
dark beacon, sentry post and prison, 
has a plaid of histories to tell.
the way they climbed the stairs of rank, those Mormaers of Lothian, Jarls of Dunbar, and
Maol Choluim, Mòrmhaor Leamhnachd, dileas do Bhrus (who followed Brus), praised by John Barbour and John of Fordun,
Eadar Cluaidh is Foirthe (between Clyde and Forth)

whispered, very sibilant, urgent

Listen...

Iséabail Nic Dhonnchaidh, last of the mórmhaoir, imprisoned on the Rock:
who married Muireadhach Stiùbhart, Diùc Albanaidh,
who was, in 1425, executed along with his two sons and father-in-law, by James 1st.
- their heads sent to Iséabail in a sack…
in the hope of sending her insane.

Hear her, her spirit coming over the water to us… … cursing her King……
Rubato $\frac{3}{8} = 54 (\frac{3}{8} = 108)$

Lento, con moto $\frac{3}{8} = 36 (\frac{3}{8} = 108)$
Rubato \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} = 54 \) (\( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} \) = 108)

Lento, con moto \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} = 36 \) (\( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} \) = 108)

**Alt.**

chi - all chur air ru - aig: biodh mo chi - dhe na ghu - al, cha ghiell - ear mi

**Vln.**

(senza trem).

**Cell.1**

\( \text{p} \)

**Cell.2**

\( \text{p} \)

**Perc.**

rubato

**Alt.**

Ged a chaill mi mo thais anns na fir ud, mo bliath, to - bair ta - t - neis is mi - ri bu

**Vln.**

(senza trem).

**Cell.1**

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

**Cell.2**

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

**Perc.**

**Rubato**

\( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} = 54 \) (\( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} \) = 108)

**Lento, con moto**

\( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} = 36 \) (\( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}} \) = 108)
Lento, con moto \( \frac{4}{4} = 36 \) (\( \frac{4}{4} = 108 \))

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VA-

A Sheu-mais a Righ Bheir-readh bhaun-a mo shith, is a dh'ha-gadh mi'n dhith na bhu

Vln.

p >> pp

(senza trem).

Cell.1

pp

(senza trem).

Cell.2

pp p >> pp

(senza trem).

Perc.

p

```
I have seen the deep black mouths of cannons aiming their vehement tongues of death at me.
Those fields are wealth, and wealth attracts, attracts, it glitters in the minds of such as

Detune gliss on IV, usually around quarter-tone each way, no more than a semi-tone, irregular speed.

crave

outright possession brings,

governs all, not yield a scrap to share, to share -

and each word echoes on the tongues of all the plunderers who occupy such lands and those whose envy shapes invasions

All mine, he says, all mine, all mine - and each word echoes on the tongues of all the plunderers who occupy such lands and those whose envy shapes invasions.
The Romans came in striding.

-ro-lanx-they found a measured way through scrub the Vikings in their swift fio-nil-las sped toward the strands where prow might
Narr.  
beach, allowing kri-ga-re and kri-ga-re, and kri-ga-re to step a-shore but

Clar.1

Clar.2

Clar.3

Cell.1

Cell.2

Perc.

Narr.  
your approach, old neighbour, brings a screaming quarrel load of human rubble, tumbles, staggers over those ripe fields

Vln.

Cell.1

Cell.2

Db.

Perc.
eliciting necessity to take up arms...against your sour assault

very even, poco marc.

very even, poco marc.

very even, poco marc.

very even, poco marc.

very even, poco marc.

very even, poco marc.

very even, poco marc.
But while the bards sang glory to bold warriors
in all their painted words,
bleak widowhood was being carved
from lacerated hearts and skulls,
and guts were ribboned out
through scarlet breathing doors
in fallen human sides that pulsed
and trembled into death.
Although they were o high renown, the Douglas brethren's fecht and formed twa clans the
Narr. ramparts felt the heat of angry lead

(qquasi 24/16 time)

and so they

Clar. for greed and jealousy do not require an unfaeialil enemy:

(p (quasi 24/16 time)

Vln.  And sometimes face will confront face, when each may bring its regiments-

Cell.1

Cell.2

Db.

Perc.

Narr. fought

(qquasi 24/16 time)

And sometimes face will confront face, when each may bring its regiments-

Clar.1

Clar.2

Clar.3

Vln.

Cell.1

Cell.2

Db.

Perc.
those fields become a battleground
while those who hope to reap and sow
must live with mud.
And blood.
And blood.

very even, poco marc.

pizz.

p"
Each hive of marching bees believing it alone
possessed the Truth - each knew exactly how
the world should pray, each knew the straight
and narrow ditch its thoughts flow through is
rigid, adamant, correct, where all must swim
those chilled granitic certitudes, in multitudes
very even, poco marc.

Cromwell sent three thousand men to high Tan-tal-lon to lay siege: and
with George Monk as General, they may have thought to win with ease.

There's thousands there and we are few, the cast-let's stout defenders said but we will hold fast and defend until each breathing soul is
And Cromwell's marching hedge o' shot
and steel wad turn this laund we love

tae glair and gravel, sae we munn fecht as best we can tae hand, tae hand this annum cient fort
Though we are caught behind the wall a steadfast hundred strong, no more, we have the shot to see us through, and

plenty vitals in the store

They did not reckon with those guns that poured hot hell in through the walls, that

We poured hell through, the hell shot through, to see us through.

Though we are caught behind the wall a steadfast hundred strong, no more, we have the shot to see us through, and
Narr. dark-ened day and touched the night, that pumped black terror through them all. In all the talk of past blockades, they

had not fore-seen guns on wheels, great bar-rels launching mass and force, com-mitting death in mor-tar shells.
Narr. few held fast for full twelve days, and noone could destroy that soul........

Cell.1

Cell.2

Cell.3

Clar.3

Vln.

Db.

Perc.

Perc.

such ordinance battered ancient walls, and opened gaps through which men poured. Those......

Narr.
Dark thunder punched a starburst through that thick stone skin - there could be, and there was, no crouching in a safe retreat - and hear the hellish screech and roar of cannon-shot head in, while muskets bark as hound-packs bark and bark and bark: and for those days wild cannons pierced and gnawed.... the walls of history,
Free improvisation based on this material, up to *** : leave more space at first, then try to overwhelm the rest of the band
they rent, sliced, tore the flesh of warriors and innocents: they silenced song, and left a spectral narrative on brackish air -
Lento $q = 72$

LAMENT
No-one Could Destroy That Soul

And no-one could destroy that soul: its ghost still welcomes with a smile.
Those walls stand proud, affirmative,  
still salient, strong; still sentinel:  
still salient, strong; still sentinel:  
and nurturing the arts of peace.
Guid Gawn Douglas leikit oot
far that heich winnocks,
leaked and socht the hullion
waiven intil Virgil’s winds

To the,
honor, prasingis, thankis infynite

And sae he wrocht, and fed the mynd o
his ane laund, weel, thay wha coud read

and thi dulce ornate fresch endite,
Mast reverend

Virgill, of Latyne poetis prince,
Gemme of

ingine and fluide of eloquence,“
And here I stand, still solid, if benign, and willing to be born anew, to look out for an enemy that might approach, although today I only see, out on the firth, a patient fisherman, and freighters pass the Rock.
O, we know storms can rise, throw winds against this old, unshaking, face, or haar may parcel all in its gray shroud, against this old, unshaking, face, and harry friends away -

See how the plaid of fields transmutes from green through yellow into brown: time moves in leaves and petals here -

M
Narr.:

Broom will light its yellow fire, and in their waking seasons, daisy, buttercup and clover spread their signal conversations out across my banks and lawns, and see how still, in delicate insistence, bright as air, forget-me-nots declare their right to live with winds and sprays and suns...
Latyn po-rétis prince, Gemme of in-gine eloquence,

Latyn po-rétis prince, Gemme of in-gine and fluide of eloquence,

Latyn po-rétis prince, Gemme of in-gine and fluide of eloquence.
(and sprays and suns)
This place endures, 
proclaims its stark nobility.

We should not 
even let a memory of guns come in
A

(listen to these walls witches ghosts saints)

-------

B

I, Tantallon, want to know
if you are friend, if you are foe -
I have defended this cold airt
for fickle centuries -
I have no mind to weaken now

You think me bare?
But listen to these walls -
they breathe

Rough wooings happened elsewhere
but I've known besiegings and blockades -
I have had armies hem me in,
ships have danced the firth below -

Beyond my shoulder there are other kingdoms -
we have lived in rancour - and with love

If you're for me, I will take you on a passage through wonders,
if agin, reflect that I have long engagement in the art of waiting

I hope that wisdom bids you measure
the merit in my overture,

for then -

Sea-battles will be heard, and
may be glimpsed

There will be witches, imprisoned ladies, burnings, dookings and
decapitations -
There may be ghosts, there will be saints

We will draw on the pages of lore and history
to float rafts of music and word
which may collide, and will certainly resonate
through time's curtains

Latin fragments will be heard,
and snatches in Brythonic
(ta-nau a-law gwe-ryd dw-f'r)

Hear our ornate litanies, melodic tapestries
(though tonight we cannot offer unctious; partial or extreme),
you can give you saints though

Hear our dour precentors sketch the line
their congregations wove into austere heterophonic
inescapable banners of truth

This mair nor gairden waa
stuid prood,
kep oot hail regiments

an yet we plead that
brithers maun be freends
forbye thair micht be kemp
atween reid bluid, black hert

But some will remember tranquil days,
and all that grain
trachlin throu atween the thorns
Then yin wha’d trawelld wide, wi 
appent ees, cam back and throcht 
tae plou ane rig o thon guid syle, 
and tae mak siccra they haed milk 
and meat and claith, a wheen o yowes.

E
The bold Gododdin thought they’d found 
the perfect lubricant: the good Aneurin was 
the bard who’d sing their march to halt 
and turn the Roman tide, as out they wove 
to turn that brute invader back, and send 
his gory scrolls of Latin grief back home

Men went to Catterick, ardent for battle.

Well-fed on mead, their prize and poison.

Three hundred were pleased to engage.

But after their fun followed silence.

Men went to Catterick, mead in their blood.

Men went to Catterick at dawn:

they were no longer afraid.

Three hundred against ten thousand.

Although they were pierced and bloody 
they fought as bravely as they could 
against the armies of Mynyddawg Mwynvawr.

Men went to Catterick at dawn:

they’d pay the price for their preparations:

the sweet gold mead they’d drunk ensnared them.

Those minstrels had caroused for the year.

Would that their swords were red as their plumes:

Their blades stayed lime-white, helmets split four ways, 
in the face of Mynyddawg Mwynvawr’s onslaught.

Men went to Catterick at dawn:

and only three came back

Three hundred salled out 
and only three came back

Aneirin saw it all 
and brought back 
all those wounds in verse

F Instrumental

G
Three hundred sallied out 
and only three came back

Aneirin saw it all 
and brought back 
all those wounds in verse

Within these walls 
we shared recall 
of what the old folks told us 
There being shady corners, 
marriages were made and unmade here, 
shyly, stylily, stingingly 
as any in the tower

inside these walls you’ll find a town

brisk industry in every neuk.
Amanuensis to the busy laird
drafts missives to the captains of 
external polities who may require appeasement. Doormen, watchful, 
take the measure of each caller 
for the merest note of ruinous intent.

Soldiers at their dice and squabble - 
Bored squaddies, looking for a bit of help to pass the time with maid-servants, will find that there are butlers willing to confront their sad desires with fierce and agitated fists

Jyners, wrights and masons monitor 
the fabric o the biggin, fettlin faults.

Maids and flunkies attend their duties, 
makkin beds and soopin flairs, 
shewin and dichtin, shewin and dichtin - 
shewin claith, and dichtin 
ashet, bowl and bicker

and in the minstrel’s gallery, 
before the harp and viol sang, a 
pipers’ serenade ... some thought 
was “like the bellowing of beasts”

H Children’s songs

Eenity feenity, fickety feg, 
Ell, dell, dominell; 
Irky birky starry rock, 
An, tan, two’s Jock.

Jock oot, Jock in, Jock jumped ower the heckle pin.
Jock a-mell, a-mell a-mower, Ain twa, three, lower!

Katie Beardie 
Katie Beardie had a coo 
Black and white about the mou’ 
Wasnae that a dainty coo?
Dance, Katie Beardie.

Katie Beardie had a hen, 
Cackled but and cackled ben.
Wasnae that a dainty hen?
Dance, Katie Beardie.

Katie Beardie had a wean 
Widnae play oot in the rain.
Wasnae that a dainty wean?
Dance, Katie Beardie.

Eenity feenity, fickety feg, 
Ell, dell, dominell; 
Irky birky starry rock, 
An, tan, two’s Jock.

Hey Jock ma Cuddy 
My Cuddy’s ower the dyke 
An if ye touch ma cuddy
My cuddy’ll gie ye a bite

Who’s yowes are these?
Who’s yowes are these?
They’re a’ jackie Corns
Ah can tell em by their horns
An ah foond em broken oot 
in the meenisters garden.
the way they climbed the stairs of rank, those Mormaers of Lothian, Jarls of Dunbar, and
Maol Choluim, Mòrmaor Leamhnaich, dìleas do Bhrus (who followed Brus), praised by John Barbour and John of Fordun, Eadar Cluaidh is Foirthe

(between Clyde and Forth)

Listen...
Iseabail Nic Dhonnchaidh, last of the mórmhaoir, imprisoned on the Rock:
who married Muireadhach Stiùbhart, Diùc Alba, who was, in 1425, executed along with his two sons and father-in-law, by James 1st. – their heads sent to Iseabail in a sack… in the hope of sending her insane.

Hear her,
Hear her, her spirit coming over the water to us… cursing her King…….

A Sheumais, a Rìgh
A Sheumais a Rìgh
ged a b'uasal do chliù,
tha nimh na do chridhè
nach àichear leat -
Thug thu bhuam na fir min
bha cho gaolach dhomh fhìn
m' athair, mic is mo chéile
'g am fhàsachadh
Chuir thu mise an sàs
anns an Dùn ud mar bhàigh -
chuir thu iadsan gu bàs:
ni bu chianail dhomh
Thug thu 'n cinn dhomh mar dhuaís,
' n dòil mo chiall chuir air ruaidh:
biodh mo chridhè na ghual,
cha ghèillear mi
Ged a chaili mi mo thús,
anns na fir ud, mo lòths,
tobair tainteis i m'ùirn,
bu spéiseil dhomh
Rìgh nan Gaidheal is Gall,
dheanadh sgrìos air mo dhream
chuir thu mise tromh staing
nach sùmhlaich mi
Tha mo chridhè ro bhuhan
biodh mu chùis trom no cruaidh,
cha lug gearain no gruaim
riamh faochadh dhomh
A Sheumais a Rìgh
bheireadh bhuaamsa mo shíth,
is a dh'hàgadh mi 'n dith
na bha dèidheil dhomh
Chì mi cúl d'amaich lam,
do cheann roinnte bhò d'chom.
Chì mi thus fo d' thom
's cha b'èirigh dhomh

(O James, who are King

O James who are King
though noble your fame,
there’s venom in your heart
you can’t deny it -

You took those fine men from me,
who were much loved by me.
Although they were o high renown, the Douglas brither focht and formed twa clans the Black ane and the Reid, when kings wore each his separate Sabbath coat and brothers knelt apart, these ramparts felt the heat of angry lead - for greed and jealousy do not require a unfamilial enemy: and so they fought.

And sometimes face will confront face, when each may bring its regiments - those fields become a battleground while those who hope to reap and sow must live with mud. And blood. And blood.

Each hive of marching bees believing it alone possessed the Truth - each knew exactly how the world should pray, each knew the straight and narrow ditch its thoughts flow through is rigid, adamant, correct, where all must swim those chilled granitic certitudes, in multitudes alone.

Cromwell sent three thousand men to high Tantallon to lay siege: and with George Monk as General, they may have thought to win with ease.

There’s thousands there and we are few, the castle’s stout defenders said - but we will hold fast and defend until each breathing soul is dead.

And Cromwell’s marching hedge o shot and steel wad turn this laund we luve tae glaur and graivel, sae we maun fecht as best we can tae haud, tae haud this auncient fort.

Though we are caught behind the wall a steadfast hundred strong, no more, we have the shot to see us through, and plenty victuals in the store.

They did not reckon with those guns that poured hot hell in through the walls, that darkened day and torched the night, that pumped black terror through them all.

In all the talk of past blockades, they had not foreseen guns on wheels, great barrels launching mass and force, committing death in mortar shells.

Such ordnance battered ancient walls, and opened gaps through which men poured. Those few held fast for full twelve days, and no-one could destroy that soul.

Dark thunder punched a starburst through that thick stone skin - there could be, and there was, no crouching in a safe retreat - and hear the hellish screech and roar of cannon-shot head in, while muskets bark as hound-packs bark and bark and bark: and for those days wild cannons pierced and gnawed the walls of history, they rent, sliced, tore the flesh of warriors and innocents: they silenced song, and left a spectral narrative on brackish air -

L - Instrumental

M

And no-one could destroy that soul: its ghost still welcomes with a smile. Those walls stand proud, affirmative, still salient, strong: still sentinel: still salient, strong: still sentinel: and nurturing the arts of peace.

Guid Gawn Douglas leukit oot fae thae heich winnocks, leuked and socht the hullion wuiven intil Virgil’s wirms "Lauda, honor, prasingis, thanks infynite To the, and thi dulce ornate fresch endite, Mast reverend Virgill, of Latyne poetis prince, Gemme of ingine and fluide of eloquence;" And sae he wrocht, and fed the mynd o his ane laund, weel, thay who coud read.

And here I stand, still solid, if benign, and willing to be born anew, to look out for an enemy that might approach, although today I only see, out on the firth, a patient fishermen, and freighters pass the Rock. O, we know storms can rise, throw winds against this old, unshaking, face, and harry friends away - or haar may parcel all in its gray shroud,

See how the plaid of fields transmutes from green through yellow into brown: time moves in leaves and petals here - ignis - aether - tellus - aqua tanau - alaw - gweryd - dwfr teine - àile - talamh - usige lowe - aire - yird - watter fire - air - earth - water.

Broom will light its yellow fire, and in their waking seasons, daisy, buttercup and clover spread their signal conversations out across my banks and lawns, and see how still, in delicate inscence, bright as air, forget-me-nots declare their right to live with winds and sprays and suns.

This place endures, proclaims its stark nobility. We should not even let a memory of guns come in