

## **An Evaluation of Lowell's Poem "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" As a Pastoral Elegy**

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**Abstract:** *This paper attempts an evaluation of "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" as an elegy, one of the best poems of Robert Lowell, the leading American poet of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Though it may be considered as a pastoral elegy, it has again multidimensional qualities or multiple angles, which are characteristics of Lowell's poems. Written in the background of the Second World War (1939-1945), which saw the deaths of the millions of people and loss of human values and chaos of virtues all over the world, the poem is a universal appeal to all humanity to give up violence and murder of the innocent and destruction on Nature, so that the perpetrators of cruelty can avoid the punishment of God and humanity can survive. In this poem Lowell has made an extraordinary fusion of the secular humanism and the spiritual maneuver to rail against the atrocities and merciless killings of the innocent people in the Second World War and the violence committed by soldiers and Quaker sailors at sea and shore alike. This paper follows a comparative strategy and historical analysis to evaluate the poem as a pastoral elegy. Though the poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket", like other pastoral elegies, mourns the death of a single person, Warren Winslow, poet's own maternal cousin; it also contains universal themes of death, love, crime and violence, sin and punishment, God and religion, loss of human values and virtues. This paper argues that as an elegy this poem, having universal appeal, is no less attractive and appealing than other great pastoral elegies in English Literature. So this paper attempts an evaluation of the poem as a pastoral elegy in the light of the conventions of pastoral elegies in particular and elegy in general.*

**Keywords:** *Pastoral elegy, World War II, cruelty, violence on men and nature, God, sin and punishment,*

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### **I. Introduction**

After epic and lyric, perhaps, elegy has a very special place in English Literature for its being not only one of the oldest forms of literary genre but also for its capacity to appeal to human sensibility in the highest degree. As an elegy "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" has its special significance because, unlike other great English elegies, which were written generally in the context of the death and loss of one singular person having universal appeals, this poem was written not only to mourn the death of a single person but also to mourn the deaths of the millions of people during one of the greatest events of human history namely, The Second World War, which saw the excessive human cruelty and violence and decline in human virtue. During the Second World War human beings see the largest killing- fields in human history, along with violent animalism as opposed to universal humanism, virtues, and human values. The cruelty and atrocities of human beings in the war greatly shocks the poet as it is shocking for all human beings from the sense of humanity and sense of respect for human life. As the best of creation human beings, according to the poet, abuse their power and destroy and kill other human beings. They are also equally damaging and destroying other creatures and nature at sea and shore alike. The Quakers' killing of whales in large number and soldiers' blasting the sea and shore with weapon are the same acts of violence and cruelties. These violent and cruel activities are actually against the will of God who wants humanity to survive and live peacefully without violence. According to the Bible it is God who has given human being a superior position over other living creatures. But all the perpetrators of crime, by their violence and destructive activities, are rebelling against the will of God as if they were trying to oust God almighty from His throne. Thus inciting God's anger over them, the perpetrators of crime (mainly soldiers and whale hunters) are to bring destruction of all mankind. According to the poet God can destroy all mankind as house cleansing for their criminal activities and crime as He did once, mentioned in the Bible. Lowell thinks that God would not do it again as He promised not to do it again in the holly book. But human beings must pay for their sinful activities—violence and killings-- here in the world and the next world either individually though not collectively all the time. So now human beings are paying for their sin individually or sometimes collectively as in the war, but still it is the consolation of the poet's mind that God is not going to destroy all mankind and non-humans because He promised not to do it in the Bible. But the poet is shocked at the plight of mankind as he has seen in the war or the violent deaths of the whale hunters at sea. Therefore, the poet laments over the death of his soldier cousin, Warren Winslow, in the poem, who died in the Second World

War like millions of people. He also regrets the destruction of natural environment and killing of different creatures such as whales by the Quaker at sea. Thus, along with its single historical impact and background of the Second World War, the poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" can be compared and contrasted with other great English elegies such as Milton's "Lycidas", Tennyson's "In Memoriam", Shelley's "Adonis", and Arnold's "Thyrsis", Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" and so on. In this regard the paper follows a comparative analysis. Moreover, the poem can be evaluated as an elegy expressing poet's lamentation over the death of his beloved one, Warren Winslow, as well as the loss of human virtues and values in the world as he experienced in the background of the Second World War.

## **II. The Definition and Scope: Elegy and Pastoral Elegy**

An elegy is a sad "poem or song" written sometimes in the traditional elegiac form or in other forms "expressing sorrow" (Hornby, 1989, p. 389) or mourning the death of someone who is one's favorite. The mourner expresses deep sorrow of mind with excessive love for the dead person. However, the mourner gets sometimes a sense of consolation at the end of the poem upon a specific realization which may be a thought of the well-being for the dead person through his death or God's mercy over the person. Thus Elegy deals with mainly two very familiar but serious subject- matters of human life and human sensibility namely death and love. Besides lamenting over death and expressing deep love a poet, in an Elegy, regrets human loss of virtue and values. It also expresses a sense of loss, melancholy of heart and distress of mind on different occasions or incidents. In some elegies, the poets regret the transitory nature of everything in the world.

However; elegy is not a mere expression of a sense of loss. The elegiac poet engages himself in discursive reflections. Death, the primary theme of most elegies, is a vast evocative theme. It leads the poet to regions of reflections usually lying beyond the lyric imagination. The pastoral elegy uses the mechanism of pastoral convention-shepherds and shepherdesses, incidents from bucolic life, and rustic speech. Originally developed among the Sicilian Greeks, it was later developed by Virgil and introduced into England during the Renaissance. M.H. Abrams says, "in Greek and Roman literature "elegy" denoted any poem written in elegiac meter (alternating 'hexameter' and 'pentameter lines'); the term was also used to refer to the subjects and moods frequently expressed in the elegiac verse form, especially complaints about love" (Abrams, 1993, pp.49-51). Abrams further mentions that though in Europe and England elegy was used with some variables, finally "in the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the term elegy began to be limited to its present usage: a formal and sustained lament in verse for the death of a particular person usually ending in consolation"(p.49).

The pastoral elegy, an important subspecies of elegy, originated by Sicilian Greek poet, Theocritus and continued by Virgil, developed in various European countries throughout the Renaissance and the 19<sup>th</sup> century and produced different conventions. Pastoral elegy represents both the mourner and the one he mourns—who is usually a poet—as shepherds (the Latin word for shepherd is "pastor"). Pastoralism in literature is an attitude in which the writer looks at life from the view point of a shepherd. In classical literature, as already mentioned, this has been successfully handled by Theocritus of Sicily and after him by Virgil and Bion. In English literature it was popularized by Sir Philip Sydney and Edmund Spenser, but the dazzling star in the firmament of pastoralism is certainly John Milton.

## **III. Objective and Methodology**

The objective of this paper is to analyze the poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket", as an elegy according to the conventions and standard of pastoral elegy. To evaluate the poem as a pastoral elegy, in the light of the existing conventions, is required comparing and contrasting it with other great English Elegies. While comparing and contrasting the poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" with Milton's "Lycidas", one of the greatest English elegies in English literature, and other great English elegies in brief, the paper also focuses on the poem's having the important background of The Second World War to assess its real worth as a pastoral elegy. The objective of the paper is, also, to show how Lowell's elegiac poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" differs from other great English elegies in general.

## **IV. Review of Literature**

Besides some Old English Elegies such as "The Seafarer", "The Wanderer", there are some other great English elegies, for examples, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751) by Thomas Gray, Tennyson's "In Memoriam" (1850), Auden's "In Memory of W.B. Yeats" (1940). Abrams says, Milton's "Lycidas"(1638), Shelley's "Adonais"(1821) and in the Victorian age, Arnold's "Thyrsis" are great English pastoral elegies (Abrams, 1993, p. 50). David Perkins says, in "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" Lowell "aspired to rival Milton's "Lycidas", and for many of his readers he seemed almost to have done so" (Perkins, 2006, p.406.).

## V. Discussion

Robert Lowell (1917-1977) published his first book, *Land of Unlikeness*, during few months of his jail-life in 1943. He was imprisoned for several months in jail because of his rejection of a conscription notice from the US military, and for being one of the "Conscientious Objectors", who used to protest against civilian killings in the Second World War and spoke against the government of the USA (Thurston, 2015). Later he revised the book, *Land of Unlikeness* and published the second book, *Lord Weary's Castle* in 1946. Some poems from *Land of Unlikeness* were included in the second volume of his poems, *Lord Weary's Castle*. So, few comments of contemporary critics on *Land of Unlikeness* are very relevant to the poems included in the *Lord Weary's Castle*, especially "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket". The title of *Land of Unlikeness*, as Jerome Mazzaro points out in his "The Poetic Themes of Robert Lowell", is taken from a quotation of Saint Bernard and refers to the human soul's unlikeness to God and unlikeness to its own past self. In this volume, according to Hugh B. Staples in Robert Lowell: The First Twenty Years, the poet "appears so horrified by the spectacle of contemporary chaos that he can scarcely bring himself to comment on it in realistic terms. Cut off from the sight of God, modern man wanders about in his Land of Unlikeness, driven by greed and cruelty"(poetry foundation, 2015). But, as Mazzaro shows, some images of salvation also operate in these poems, images usually based on the figure of Mary or related in some other way to Roman Catholic beliefs. Therefore we can see all these religious issues in the poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket", a major poem of *Lord Weary's Castle*. In section-VI of "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" the image of Mary is presented as a way to salvation. The publication of *Lord Weary's Castle* forever established Lowell's reputation. This book found a warm critical reception from all sides especially from Randal Jarrell's appreciative review in *The Nation*. Randal Jarrell writes, in a collection of essays, about the poems of *Lord Weary's Castle*, these poems-

"Understand the world as a sort of conflict of opposites. In this struggle one opposite is that cake of custom in which all of us lie embedded. . . . Into this realm of necessity the poems push everything that is closed, turned inward, incestuous, that blinds or binds: the Old Law, imperialism, militarism, capitalism, Calvinism, Authority, the Father, the 'proper Bostonians,' the rich who will 'do everything for the poor except get off their backs.' But struggling within this like leaven, falling to it like light, is everything that is free or open, that grows or is willing to change: . . . this is the realm of freedom, of the Grace that has replaced the Law, of the perfect liberator whom the poet calls Christ "(Poetry foundation, 2015).

When the book was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1947, Lowell's position as a leading poet of the new generation of America was consolidated. The volume included such famous poems as, "After the Surprising Conversions" and "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket". According to Perkins "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" is an elegy written in the shadow of Milton's pastoral elegy, "Lycidas".

### 1. The Background of the Poem: Second World War: Cruelty and Violence

The elegy "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" written by Lowell belongs to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Almost all great English elegies save Auden's "In Memory of W.B. Yeats" (1940) were written in the previous centuries. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the world sees two great world wars of human history which produced the carnage of human beings that human beings had never seen. The reasons why the Second World War has an impact on the poem are violence and atrocities and brutality of the war. Lowell uses the occasion of the war to rail against human cruelty and violence against humanity and nature. A brief, not a complete account of the death toll, overview of the statistics of the human casualty in the Second World War can be enough to guess the biggest tragedy of humanity, and human history that took place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Encyclopedia Britannica says (Graham & Smith, 2014) the deaths of human beings incurred in the Second World War are about 40,000,000 to 50,000,000.

By the war's end in 1945, about 400,000 Americans had died in battle and 670,000 were wounded. In Europe, an estimated twenty millions Russians, five million Germans, 1.5 million Yugoslavs, and six million Jews died. The Second World War also presented the world with the largest killing fields in history: the Nazi concentration camps, where nine million were bureaucratically murdered, and the devastated cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where approximately 150,000 lost their lives immediately and 250,000 in the aftermath (most of them civilians) after the nuclear bomb-attack by the USA in August of 1945. Kyle (December, 20, 2011) writes that Germany was the third among the ten countries suffering the most casualties in World War II. The ignominious fire-bombing of Dresden in 1943 in which 100,000 German civilians were killed by the Allies, this incident of Dresden prevented Robert Lowell from joining the US military (Thurston, 2014). For his refusal to join the war he was imprisoned for several months in jail. Lowell commemorates the memory of his jail life in the poem, "The Memory of West Street and Lepke", where he presents the picture of a debased American culture, along with the fear of nuclear annihilation.

In addition to this, in "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" Lowell also refers to the contemporary whale hunting culture as a gruesome act of violence in line with the cruel murder of human beings in the war. The Quakers' whale hunting, as we see in Herman Melville's fiction, *Moby Dick*, is the same act of violence

against nature as the cruel killings of soldiers in the war. Thus Lowell draws a parallel line in the poem between the violent acts of the whale-hunter Quaker sailors at sea and the acts of soldiers in the Second World War at shore and sea alike. The world sees the lack of virtues, humanity and love which Lowell laments at, along with his lamentation over the death of his cousin, Warren Winslow, who died in the Second World War. Thus the background of the Second World War adds a strong impetus to the pastoral setting as well as the developments of the various themes in the poem.

## **2. The Conventions of Pastoral Elegy and "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket"**

A pastoral elegy follows some established conventions. "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" first, starts as an Elegy over the death of the poet's cousin, Warren Winslow, who died with other crews when their ship exploded and sank in a harbor in New York, during the Second World War. Gradually, then the poem turns into an elegy for all of creation. And in reciprocation, Lowell configures Nature grieving for drowned humans, an example of pathetic fallacy. This turn is of the many "digressions" of the poem and this digression is an example of the conventions of elegy. When the poem turns into a lamentation for whole creation, it also indicates a turn of the poem's private level into its universal phase. Though in an elegy the lyric poet invokes the Muses, goddesses of poetry, to help him to write about his sorrow; "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" does not seem to have such invocation. The tradition of invocation is rather a pagan or classical standard, which was used by many elegy poets, for example by John Milton, in "Lycidas". But Milton, as Lowell does, also combines Christian ethical and moral paradigm with the pagan ideas. "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" starts as follows without any invocation to the Muse:

### **[For Warren Winslow, Dead At Sea]**

*Let man have dominion over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air and the beasts of the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth.*

Immediately after the title of the poem, Lowell puts the phrases, "FOR WARREN WINSLOW, DEAD AT SEA", to relate whom he is going to mourn and how the person died. He says the person died at sea. After that he puts an epigraph (as above in italics) from the bible (Genesis 1:26) to establish the poem's religious connection with the moral points and the various themes of the poem. This epigraph ("Let men have dominion... upon the earth") is very significant in relation to humanity's treatment of Nature and other creatures. It indicates human beings, who are given superiority over other creatures, are misusing their power by destructive activities as in the second world and elsewhere. This epigraph also becomes important in terms of religious connotation and thematic developments of the poem. This use of epigraph by Lowell presents the turn of modernism in his poetry. In many other great English elegies are not found such usage of epigraph at the beginning. But here in Lowell's poem, the religious meanings largely depend on this epigraph.

Unlike other great English poets of elegy- Lowell directly uses the name of his beloved person, Warren Winslow at the beginning, whereas in Milton's "Lycidas" Lycidas stands for King Edward, in Shelley's "Adonais" Adonais stands for John Keats and in "In Memoriam" Tennyson actually mourns the death of Arthur Halam, his friend, without putting actual name. Likewise, In "Thyrsis" Matthew Arnold, the Victorian poet, who also wrote many elegies, mourns the death of his oxford friend, Arthur Hugh Clough without direct mention of his friend's name. As an example of such elegiac tradition Shelly's "Adonais" can be one which starts as follows:

I weep for Adonais—he is dead!  
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: "With me  
Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

When all poets of elegy mourn the death of a person they love, they bring up, at the same time, the contemporary moral, political, social or even literary issues, which they, either criticize or praise. In this regard Lowell is like them. Also, all poets of elegy do not follow the same verse style. Just as the meter of Milton's "Lycidas" is an irregular stanza-sequence and rhyme-sequence of a peculiar haunting beauty" (Albert, 2002, p. 136) in the same way Lowell writes his poem, The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket". Lowell seems to have followed Milton's vivid imagery and style. Lowell talks about his maternal cousin Winslow, who was drowned like Milton's friend Edward King, in Ambrose Channel, New York, during the Second World War. Edward King, Milton's friend, was drowned in the sea during his voyage to Ireland. Milton laments the death of Edward King as follows:

For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,  
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.  
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew  
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.  
He must not float upon his wat'ry bier  
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,  
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

When Milton blames the nymphs, who did not protect his friend, while drowning in sea water:

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep  
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?

And, Lowell's elegy does not follow the rhyme scheme of the elegiac tradition of hexameter or pentameter (Abrams, 1993, p. 49) together, but he tries to follow pentameter irregularly. However, Lowell extensively follows the elegiac convention of using reference to different mythological figures throughout the poem, besides his allusions to different characters of literary pieces, especially Ahab, the blood-thirsty whale hunter of Melville's book, *Moby Dick*. The first stanza of the poem begins with a reference to "a corpse", which latter becomes an important analogy to poet's cousin, Warren Winslow, and is also linked with Quaker sailors who die at sea during whale hunting. The first stanza (section-I) reads as follows:

A brackish reach of shoal off Madaket—  
The sea was still breaking violently and night  
Had steamed into our North Atlantic Fleet,  
When the drowned sailor clutched the drag-net. Light  
Flashed from his matted head and marble feet,  
He grappled at the net  
With the coiled, hurdling muscles of his thighs:  
The corpse was bloodless, a botch of reds and whites,  
Its open, staring eyes  
Were lustreless dead-lights  
Or cabin-windows on a stranded hulk  
Heavy with sand. We weight the body, close  
Its eyes and heave it seaward whence it came,  
Where the heel-headed dogfish barks its nose  
On Ahab's void and forehead; and the name  
Is blocked in yellow chalk.  
Sailors, who pitch this portent at the sea  
Where dreadnaughts shall confess  
Its hell-bent deity,  
When you are powerless  
To sand-bag this Atlantic bulwark, faced  
By the earth-shaker, green, unwearied, chaste  
In his steel scales: ask for no Orphean lute  
To pluck life back. The guns of the steeled fleet  
Recoil and then repeat  
The hoarse salute.

Nantucket, used in the title of the poem, is an Island, once was Whaling capital, which lies off the coast of Massachusetts, USA. Madaket is on the east side of Nantucket. One stormy night, when the narrator (shepherd poet) on board an Atlantic fleet was travelling with other crew off the coast of Madaket, in shallow water, they found a "bloodless corpse" that "grappled at the net". They weighted the body with heavy things and "heaved it seaward whence it came" as if they followed a funeral rituals and had buried the dead body in the sea. Here the sea also signifies primitive source of life. The "corpse" is also mentioned as "drowned sailor". Thus the dead body is used as an analogue for Warren Winslow and for all sailors including whale hunters who die at sea while hunting whales in Nantucket. Then the poet presents a terrible picture of the Atlantic with such terrible imagery as "chaste", "earth shaker", "green", especially with a reference to the Greek mythological sea-god Poseidon ("steel-scales"). The sea becomes merciless to all "hell-bent deity" (sailors, military and whalers) like Poseidon, and they die a violent death (like the 'corpse'). When the Atlantic becomes angry, there is no way to bring back ('pluck life back' or "no Orphean lute") life as Orpheus, the great Greek musician, who failed to bring back his wife from the underworld. The "corpse", indicating Warren Winslow, which is also a sign

("portent") of violent death of sailors, soldiers and whalers, is properly mourned and honored by shipmates of the poet with the firing of the guns:

The guns of the steeled fleet  
Recoiled and then repeat  
The hoarse salute

The "corpse" found does not only refer to Warren Winslow but also highlights the tragic end of Ahab, the whaling captain of Melville's *Moby Dick*. According to a critic, "Ahab sinned against Man and God" (Tilak, 2000, pp.114-15) by his violent and fanatic acts. Therefore, he deserves violent death. Ahab is both attacker and victim. Lowell, by highlighting Ahab's tragic end with *The Pequod*, the whaling ship, and its crew, wants to say that all Quaker whalers who are sinning against God by destroying Nature by killing Whales, and all soldiers who are killing innocent people in the Second World War, deserve the same violent death. Thus Lowell also develops the basic themes such as cruelty and violence, God, sin and punishment of the poem "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket". By the image of the dead body ('corpse') and its burial into the sea Lowell treats the sea as a graveyard besides the actual graveyard on Nantucket where Quaker sailors are buried after their death.

As a pastoral convention where all nature joins in mourning, there is a procession of mourners who participate in the mourning for Warren Winslow. In section II of the poem Nature grieves over the death of Warren Winslow. The Nature—seabirds and winds— laments Winslow's death. Nature is not one, since the wind attempts to strangle the sea where Winslow drowned:

Whenever winds are moving and their breath  
Heaves at the roped-in bulwarks of this pier,  
The terns and sea-gulls tremble at your death  
In these home waters. Sailor, can you hear  
The *Pequod's* sea wings, beating landward, fall  
Headlong and break on our Atlantic wall  
Off 'Sconset, where the yawing S-boats splash  
The bellbuoy, with ballooning spinnakers,  
As the entangled, screeching mainsheet clears  
The blocks: off Madaket, where lubbers lash  
The heavy surf and throw their long lead squids  
For blue-fish? Sea-gulls blink their heavy lids  
Seaward. The winds' wings beat upon the stones,  
Cousin, and scream for you and the claws rush  
At the sea's throat and wring it in the slush  
Of this old Quaker graveyard where the bones  
Cry out in the long night for the hurt beast  
Bobbing by Ahab's whaleboats in the East.

"Sea-gulls blink their heavy lids seaward" indicating the fact that sea-gulls sympathize the drowned sailors for their tragic and violent death. All sea-birds have ability to sympathize because they always witness the death of the sailors. Even the bones in the "old Quaker graveyard" express sorrow for the drowned sailors. The procession of mourners is not very big, however, as we see in other pastoral elegies.

What seems to be interesting about Lowell's treatment of the elegiac theme in "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" is that he starts blaming the person whom he has mourned for so far. By the time section III rolls around, he blames Warren Winslow, a soldier representing all soldiers in general who are responsible for violently blasting the ocean and lashing the shore. A link is forged between soldiers and the whalers who stab the ocean with harpoons. Soldiers and whalers are equally responsible for violence, and they are equally cruel. It seems to be unlikely in an elegy to blame the person who was just mourned. But it is clear why Lowell does so. Lowell wants to criticize soldiers of the Second World War and Quaker whalers of that time in particular and all types of violence and cruelty in the world in general. Milton, for example, gives us in "Lycidas", speculations on the nature of death, tributes to friends, as also literary criticism. He comments on the degradation of poetry and religion of his time in 'Lycidas'. And "Lycidas" would be a poor poem without its passage on fame, and the onslaught on the corrupt clergy of that day. Shelley wrote his long poem "Adonais" as an elegy for Shelley's close friend and fellow poet John Keats, who died in Rome of tuberculosis at the age of 26. The Greek legend of Adonis is a tale about a handsome youth who was equally admired by Aphrodite, Queen of Love, and by Persephone, Queen of Death. Adonais is the stand-in for Keats, for he too died at a young age after being mauled by a boar. In Shelley's version, the "beast"(boar) responsible for Keats's death is the literary critic, specifically one from London's Quarterly who gave a scathing review of Keats' poem "Endymion"( however, Shelley was unaware of the true cause of Keats's death). Tennyson highlights the problem of faith and doubt

and question in God and religion in "In Memoriam", which are characteristics of the Victorian period. Besides lamenting the premature death of his friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, Arnold also laments the loss of faith and his youth in his elegy, "Thyrsis". Lowell does the same in bringing the issues of his time into his elegy "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket", but he is unlike many other poets of elegy in his criticism of the person he is mourning. Lowell presents the third section of the poem as follows:

All you recovered from Poseidon died  
With you, my cousin, and the harrowed brine  
Is fruitless on the blue beard of the god,  
Stretching beyond us to the castles in Spain,  
Nantucket's westward haven. To Cape Cod  
Guns, cradled on the tide,  
Blast the eelgrass about a waterclock  
Of bilge and backwash, roil the salt and sand  
Lashing earth's scaffold, rock  
Our warships in the hand  
Of the great God, where time's contrition blues  
Whatever it was these Quaker sailors lost  
In the mad scramble of their lives. They died  
When time was open-eyed,  
Wooden and childish; only bones abide  
There, in the nowhere, where their boats were tossed  
Sky-high, where mariners had fabled news  
Of IS, the whited monster. What it cost  
Them is their secret. In the sperm-whale's slick  
I see the Quakers drown and hear their cry:  
"If God himself had not been on our side,  
If God himself had not been on our side,  
When the Atlantic rose against us, why,  
Then it had swallowed us up quick."

Lowell pushes some discursive sentences or "digressions", which are one of the significant characteristics of pastoral elegy, into section III until he produces more discursive sentences into section IV in which the blaming introduced in section III is more intensified. Through different digressions Lowell, however, develops his thoughts throughout the poem- from the beginning to the end. We see similar "digressions" in Milton's "Lycidas" in lines: 64-84 & 113-31. Lowell not only blames "warships" lashing the ocean, damaging Nature in the 20<sup>th</sup> century what Whaling had done long ago. In section III Lowell also raises the question of the Fate, the Providence or justification of the activities of Quaker Whalers who die ("these Quaker sailors lost, in the mad scramble of their lives..." ) violent death at sea while harpooning big whales. But the poet says he does not see the Quakers (an offshoot of Protestantism, a sect of Puritanism) understand their crimes of violence against Nature just as the soldiers do not. Lowell says they think that God supports their activities and God is on their side ("If God had not been on our side... quick"). But Lowell's anger is mitigated by his understanding that these people are like children who do not understand their crimes. Even when the merciless sea- god Poseidon, like blue-beard (a fictional character who killed his numerous wives), takes lives of sailors and whalers they think that God is on their side. There is no repentance of them as they do not accept error or blame. Here Lowell actually seems to be clarifying his own position as to the activities of the sailors and soldiers who are, according to Lowell, doing sin against humanity and nature or against God, and therefore are paying for their sin by their violent death. Thus through digressions, the poet focus on the corruption and criticize violence of his time in his elegy, like other poets of elegy.

While blaming the sailors and soldiers, Lowell also maintains the link between the Christian beliefs and secular humanism through his numerous biblical references in the poem. As to human being's treatment of Nature and war Lowell connects his Catholic beliefs in terms of sin, repentance and God's punishment for the sin. Lowell continues to blame the sailors and soldiers, and in section IV the blaming is intensified. He presents the futility of human actions as the actions of the sailors or the whalers with a reference to the Pequod, Ahab's whaling ship. He calls them "three- quarters fools" in section IV:

This is the end of the whaleroad and the whale  
Who spewed Nantucket bones on the thrashed swell  
And stirred the troubled waters to whirlpools  
To send the Pequod packing off to hell:  
This is the end of them, three-quarters fools,  
Snatching at straws to sail

Seaward and seaward on the turntail whale,  
Spouting out blood and water as it rolls,  
Sick as a dog to these Atlantic shoals:

Through his "prophetic denunciations" (Perkins, 2006,p.408) of corruption and crimes of his time, Lowell creates also a world of his own in his poems haunted by Christ, God, Mary, sea-monsters, different biblical and mythological characters. Through the evolvment of section V of the poem, the picture of violence and corruption is heightened; violence reaches its height as the whale is gruesomely harpooned and torn apart and, in its death thrashings bring the ship down with it. So, accordingly Lowell's criticism of crime and violence ("This is the end of the whaleroad and the whale... To send the Pequod packing off to hell") continues.

The whalers die, as Ahab with his Pequod, with the harpooned whales: violence begets violence, this is the equation. In other words, as you sow so you reap. Lowell writes in section IV earlier about the consequence of the sailor's action:

To send the Pequod packing off to hell:  
This is the end of them, three-quarters fools,  
Snatching at straws to sail  
Seaward and seaward on the turntail whale,  
Spouting out blood and water as it rolls,  
Sick as a dog to these Atlantic shoals:  
Clamavimus, O depths. Let the sea-gulls wail  
For water, for the deep where the high tide  
Mutters to its hurt self, mutters and ebbs.  
Waves wallow in their wash, go out and out,

Lowell wants to say that those who chase whales were fools, paying for it with their lives. They were "drowning men clutching at straws". But the sailors in utter ignorance pray to God and cry out ("Clamavimus," is Latin for "We have cried" similar to Psalm 130:1) for redemption and for life, which they will never receive ("ask for no Orphean lute" mentioned already in section I).The picture of violence is more intensified in section V of the poem thus:

When the whale's viscera go and the roll  
Of its corruption overruns this world  
Beyond tree-swept Nantucket and Woods Hole  
whistle and fall and sink into the fat?  
In the great ash-pit of Jehoshaphat  
The bones cry for the blood of the white whale,  
The fat flukes arch and whack about its ears,  
The death-lance churns into the sanctuary, tears  
The gun-blue swingle, heaving like a flail,  
And hacks the coiling life out: it works and drags  
And rips the sperm-whale's midriff into rags,  
Gobbets of blubber spill to wind and weather,  
Sailor, and gulls go round the stoven timbers  
Where the morning stars sing out together  
And thunder shakes the white surf and dismembers  
The red flag hammered in the mast-head. Hide,  
Our steel, Jonas Messias, in Thy side.

This section V above describes how brutally whales are harpooned and torn apart by the whalers. So the word "corruption" in the second line refers to the whale body corrupted by whalers' harpoons. Wood's Hole( in line-3) is the closest point to Martha's Vineyard on the mainland of Massachusetts. Here Lowell asks the crucial question of whether the military man of World War II is similar to the whaler of yesterday. With a lot of allusions-biblical or mythological- "like T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, (Perkins: 2006, P.408) Lowell produces a lot of implications in the section as he has already done in other sections. All implications in sections V are of violence and fierceness. Words and phrases such as "rip" swingle" and "dismembers" refer to basically brutal harpooning of whales. But here, whales are not mere victims, they are also avenger. Because they "drag" the ship with them and kill whalers, as Moby Dick took revenge on Ahab by dragging and sinking the Pequod, the whaling ship. Whales take revenge because they are savagely treated. The "red flag "comes from the last chapter of Moby Dick, where the Indian sailor, Tashtego---in a final human act of arrogance and foolishness--- tries to nail a red flag to the mast even as the ship quickly sinks. The implications of "red flag", here, therefore, are arrogance and foolishness of the whalers, sailors and soldiers, who are paying by violent death.

Through his treatment of the themes of violence and cruelty, sin and punishment, Lowell brings forth the universal question of the poem: why does not God destroy all of humanity for such criminal activities, of



sailors and soldiers? According to Genesis of the bible, once, God destroyed the vast majority of life on earth with a flood. So why does not God do it again? Now, He does not destroy all human beings for their crime and sin because in Genesis, afterwards, God promised to human and non-human animals that He would never do it again. Lowell's point is that ultimately the will of God survives in spite of human being's impertinence toward God like Satan by cruel acts. Lowell mentions this biblical assertion in the magnificent last two lines of the poem: "And blue-lung'd combers lumbered to the kill. /The Lord survives the rainbow of His will."

If the will of God (signified by the sign of "rainbow" in the bible) survives, and if God does not destroy the all human beings for their crimes, how will men, who kill whales and fellow humans, pay for their sin? The answer is that people who kill will pay by violent death individually and in the hell fire after death. Thus in raising the issue of the Providence of mankind in the ground of human being's crime and violence Lowell is not different from all other poets of elegy. Like Milton, Lowell is using Christian or biblical ethos besides mythological figures. While thinking deeply over death and fame, Milton thinks true fame rests on God and in heaven after death:

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
Nor in the glistening foil  
Set off to th'world, nor in broad rumour lies,  
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes  
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;  
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,  
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed."

Milton was a good puritan Christian. But, Lowell deals with the issue from his Catholic point of view. Like Thomas Gray's elegy, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" where Gray emphasizes 'virtue' (good actions) rather than ranks of people, or Tennyson's portraying of Hallam, poet's friend, in "In Memoriam" as a type of virtuous man, virtues and good actions are emphasized for eternal life or salvation by Lowell in "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket". What Tennyson writes in the final section of his elegy poem, "In Memoriam" is somewhat similar to Lowell's message in "The Quaker Graveyard in the Nantucket". Lowell wants to say men either pay for their sin in this world or in the afterworld in Hell fire when they die. In Tennyson's "In Memoriam" Man dies as Hallam dies, but a good man (like Hallam) is rewarded by God, to whom he (Hallam) or even the whole creation moves. Though the poet laments Hallam's death, in the end the consolation for the poet is that even if Hallam dies, he becomes immortal; Death is overcome by virtues, as Hallam's nobility has immortalized him and ensured a place for him in the lap of a loving God:

Whereof the man, that with me trod  
This planet, was a noble type  
Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
That friend of mine who lives in God,  
That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

Tennyson presents the image of a merciful and loving God with whom now Hallam lives. Lowell's treatment of the theme of God and religion, along with idea of salvation, is to some extent similar to Tennyson's in the sense that God all mighty, Who is also loving, is not destroying all human beings and the whole creation for their crimes of violence and cruelty (as crimes, in the second world war or on Nature as on whale). But human beings are paying for their sin (by violent death as Quakers sailors or soldiers in the war) individually. What Lowell suggests, for the way to salvation in the hereafter, which Lowell thinks the impenitent Quakers sailors would never get, is to repent properly and confess sin and not to repeat the sin. Thus like other pastoral elegy Lowell universalizes the themes of his poem, especially the lamentation over the death of Warren Winslow, with which he began his elegiac poem, into a lamentation of the whole creation. And Lowell is successful in presenting the issue of humanity's fate with their actions (good or violent) in terms of their relationship with an all powerful-mighty God, who has full authority and ability to either punish or reward humanity based on their action. In this regard, it may be said that God manifests his power in various ways as by powerful 'Storm' in the sea, and punishes perpetrators in different ways.

"The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" becomes a catholic poem, not Protestant, because it stresses salvation by one's actions, by "works". In other words, in order to be saved from hell or to be saved from violent death, the Catholic must do good. This may include the following acts: penitence, confession, or right behavior. If the Catholics commit sin, they are encouraged not just to confess and ask for forgiveness, but also correct their action. After section IV and V, in which Lowell presents so many images of human cruelty and violence, therefore, Lowell brings up the section VI of his poem with so many religious images as image of

Marry and other to show the way to salvation and to emphasize the issue of repentance and good action to avoid God's punishment. With a lot of biblical references section VI reads as follows:

**Our Lady of Walsingham**

There once the penitents took off their shoes  
And then walked barefoot the remaining mile;  
And the small trees, a stream and hedgerows file  
Slowly along the munching English lane,  
Like cows to the old shrine, until you lose  
Track of your dragging pain.  
The stream flows down under the druid tree,  
Shiloah's whirlpools gurgle and make glad  
The castle of God. Sailor, you were glad  
And whistled Sion by that stream. But see:  
Our Lady, too small for her canopy,  
Sits near the altar. There's no comeliness  
At all or charm in that expressionless  
Face with its heavy eyelids. As before,  
This face, for centuries a memory,  
Non est species, neque decor,  
Expressionless, expresses God: it goes  
Past castled Sion. She knows what God knows,  
Not Calvary's Cross nor crib at Bethlehem  
Now, and the world shall come to Walsingham.

The Walsingham is a famous shrine in Norfolk, England. For much of this section (VI) Lowell relied upon E.I Watkins's Catholic Art and Culture, where the author describes the lane leading to Marry as well as Mary's display and expression. 'Our Lady of Walsingham' refers to Mary's statue in Walsingham, which is divine, but the "expressionless face" of Mary without "comeliness" and somewhat sorrowful with "heavy eyelids" makes her more divine and less earthly, as if she knew what God knows. She has assumed Heaven. Penitents or visitors at the Walsingham, for their earthly and selfish gains, walk to the statue without real sincerity ("munching lane", penitents walk "like cows"). Visitors just visit the place to be healed by the grace of Mary. Lowell is unhappy with such rituals, because the penitents walk unthinkingly, like cows. Lowell wants to say that when people learn to do without gladness and cease seeking selfish ends such as being healed, then with deep meditation, the world will come to Mary and understand. A type of right Catholicism might then be achieved and God's creatures saved from humanity's war against itself and nature. With a reference to the shrine of Walsingham as a holy place of repentance, and by including other biblical allusions ("Shiloah's whirlpools": John 9:7 and "Sion by that stream": Isaiah 51:11), Lowell anticipates the Walsingham to be a place of acquiring true knowledge of Catholicism or correct knowledge of religion or God for all human beings. Here the peaceful image of whirlpools ("Shiloah's whirlpools": John 9:7) is a contrast to the turbulent image of sea in the previous sections. Just as the splash of waters of Siloam (according to the bible) can cure the blindness, all the perpetrators of crime can cure their diseases of violence and cruelty through their right religious knowledge, which can be acquired through their right understanding of Mary, visiting the Walsingham. Thus Lowell, though specifically suggests Catholicism and its teachings, generally emphasizes the fear of God to give up crimes of violence and murder. Further, by saying, "Sailor, you were glad / And whistled Sion by that stream. But see..." the poet refers to all human beings, who could change their behaviors and be glad again by right behavior and penitence, especially, "sailor" representing all perpetrators in the world in the poem.

The last, but not the least, established convention or feature of any traditional pastoral elegy is that the pastoral poet ends his elegy with a note of consolation on the part of him even if he has lamented the death of his beloved person so far. For example, Milton in the fifth section of "Lycidas" (lines 164-184) expresses his belief in immortality. Grief and sorrow are temporary. And though Lycidas is apparently dead, he has arisen from the dead: "Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves..." Lycidas is in heaven, and therefore "Weep ye no more." The saints there to entertain him in "sweet societies / That sing, and singing in their glory move." With a sense of consolation Shelley concedes the death of his friend John Keats in "Adonais" on the ground that Keats's "kindred light" will continue to inspire the universe forever. For Tennyson his friend Hallam is a type, so Nature will care for him after his death.

Though there is consolatory part like other pastoral elegies, Lowell ends his elegiac poem, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" rather in a very impersonal way, unlike other great poets of elegy, mentioned above. Warren Winslow, his maternal cousin, was mourned first in the elegiac tone, and then criticized because

Winslow represents soldiers and sailors who are the real targets of Lowell's criticism. Also, Lowell criticizes Warren Winslow, his cousin, because Lowell also targeted protestant faith in opposition to his Catholic faith. Warren Winslow, like Lowell, was one of the New England Puritan stock. Later, however, Lowell converted himself to Catholicism in 1940. So he presents his catholic point of view in the poem and does not hesitate to criticize Warren Winslow, which is very unlikely in other elegies. In this regard "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" is a different elegiac poem, contradicting with one of the very old pastoral conventions.

Then where is the consolation, which is characteristic of pastoral conventions, in the poem on the part of the poet? The answer is that, first, the Lord, despite man's wickedness, will keep his promise and not send down another flood. Thus God remains trusted protector. Secondly, despite human kind's attacks on nature, nature will perhaps endure and even be sympathetic to human death. In brief, whether humanity perpetrates war on itself or on nature, ultimately both will survive, even if humanity does not learn the proper attitude as shown by Mary, mother of Jesus, in the Walshingham in section VI.

The last stanza (section) of the poem is VII, which sees a shift from the peaceful picture of sanctuary as mentioned in section VI, to the scene of cenotaph and graveyard, and then sea with full of sea-monster and creatures signifying death and destruction. The sea, Atlantic, is like a knife that cuts life of sailors and whalers: "It's well; Atlantic, you are fouled with the blue sailors, Sea-monsters, upward angel, downward fish..." Though the picture of turbulent sea comes back, the will of God (signified by the Rainbow) will ultimately survive and humanity and nature survive: 'The Lord survives the rainbow of His will.' According to Lowell God is fair, he is not cruel and does not break his promise. The last few lines of the last stanza (VII) are as follows:

The empty winds are creaking and the oak  
Splatters and splatters on the cenotaph,  
.....  
In the old mouth of the Atlantic. It's well;  
Atlantic, you are fouled with the blue sailors,  
Sea-monsters, upward angel, downward fish:  
Unmarried and corroding, spare of flesh  
Mart once of supercilious, wing'd clippers,  
You could cut the brackish winds with a knife  
Here in Nantucket, and cast up the time  
When the Lord God formed man from the sea's slime  
And breathed into his face the breath of life,  
And blue-lung'd combers lumbered to the kill.  
The Lord survives the rainbow of His will.

## VI. Conclusion

The Pulitzer Prize-- awarded to Robert Lowell in 1947 for his book of poetry, *Lord Weary's Castle*, which contains the notable elegy, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket"—is the recognition of Robert Lowell as the leading poet of his time. The poem "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" is a pastoral elegy replete with vivid imagery. His images are here in the poem, as in his other poems, violent, telescoped, and bristling with ambivalent implications; meanings are difficult and sometimes impenetrable. Also, his verses have got mystical vision with sociological, historical and personal vision. We can see all these qualities in the poem "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket", written as an elegy lamenting over the death of his cousin, warren Winslow, who died in the Second World War. Like other pastoral elegy, "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" deals with universal themes besides personal lamentation. The poem has followed all established conventions of pastoral elegy. However, it has also a definite difference with those of other great elegies in the sense that the poet at one point starts blaming the person (Winslow) who was his subject of lamentation in the poem. This type of contradiction is not found in other great English pastoral elegies such as "Lycidas", "In Memoriam" "Adonais" and so on. But Lowell has done this to serve his own purpose in criticizing the contemporary loss of human values, cruelty and violence in the Second World War, and to rail against human destruction on Nature, especially whale hunting. Thus "The Quaker Graveyard in Nauntucket" which turns into an elegy of all creation from an elegy on the death of a person, finally creates an appeal to humanity for the cessation of violence on man by man and on Nature. Lowell wrote this poem in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the time of modernism in arts and poetry, so this poem, besides having pastoral element, also has elements of modern poetry with post modern turn. Thus "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" becomes one of the best poems of Lowell's career as a pastoral elegy.

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### Appendix (1): Full Text of the Poem

The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket

BY ROBERT LOWELL

[FOR WARREN WINSLOW, DEAD AT SEA]

*Let man have dominion over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air and the beasts of the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth.*

#### I

A brackish reach of shoal off Madaket—  
The sea was still breaking violently and night  
Had steamed into our North Atlantic Fleet,  
When the drowned sailor clutched the drag-net. Light  
Flashed from his matted head and marble feet,  
He grappled at the net  
With the coiled, hurdling muscles of his thighs:  
The corpse was bloodless, a botch of reds and whites,  
Its open, staring eyes  
Were lustreless dead-lights  
Or cabin-windows on a stranded hulk  
Heavy with sand. We weight the body, close  
Its eyes and heave it seaward whence it came,  
Where the heel-headed dogfish barks its nose  
On Ahab's void and forehead; and the name  
Is blocked in yellow chalk.  
Sailors, who pitch this portent at the sea  
Where dreadnaughts shall confess  
Its hell-bent deity,  
When you are powerless  
To sand-bag this Atlantic bulwark, faced  
By the earth-shaker, green, unwearied, chaste  
In his steel scales: ask for no Orphean lute  
To pluck life back. The guns of the steeled fleet  
Recoil and then repeat  
The hoarse salute.

#### II

Whenever winds are moving and their breath  
Heaves at the roped-in bulwarks of this pier,  
The terns and sea-gulls tremble at your death  
In these home waters. Sailor, can you hear  
The Pequod's sea wings, beating landward, fall  
Headlong and break on our Atlantic wall  
Off 'Sconset, where the yawing S-boats splash  
The bellbuoy, with ballooning spinnakers,  
As the entangled, screeching mainsheet clears  
The blocks: off Madaket, where lubbers lash  
The heavy surf and throw their long lead squids

For blue-fish? Sea-gulls blink their heavy lids  
Seaward. The winds' wings beat upon the stones,  
Cousin, and scream for you and the claws rush  
At the sea's throat and wring it in the slush  
Of this old Quaker graveyard where the bones  
Cry out in the long night for the hurt beast  
Bobbing by Ahab's whaleboats in the East.

III

All you recovered from Poseidon died  
With you, my cousin, and the harrowed brine  
Is fruitless on the blue beard of the god,  
Stretching beyond us to the castles in Spain,  
Nantucket's westward haven. To Cape Cod  
Guns, cradled on the tide,  
Blast the eelgrass about a waterclock  
Of bilge and backwash, roil the salt and sand  
Lashing earth's scaffold, rock  
Our warships in the hand  
Of the great God, where time's contrition blues  
Whatever it was these Quaker sailors lost  
In the mad scramble of their lives. They died  
When time was open-eyed,  
Wooden and childish; only bones abide  
There, in the nowhere, where their boats were tossed  
Sky-high, where mariners had fabled news  
Of IS, the whited monster. What it cost  
Them is their secret. In the sperm-whale's slick  
I see the Quakers drown and hear their cry:  
"If God himself had not been on our side,  
If God himself had not been on our side,  
When the Atlantic rose against us, why,  
Then it had swallowed us up quick."

IV

This is the end of the whaleroad and the whale  
Who spewed Nantucket bones on the thrashed swell  
And stirred the troubled waters to whirlpools  
To send the Pequod packing off to hell:  
This is the end of them, three-quarters fools,  
Snatching at straws to sail  
Seaward and seaward on the turntail whale,  
Spouting out blood and water as it rolls,  
Sick as a dog to these Atlantic shoals:  
Clamavimus, O depths. Let the sea-gulls wail

For water, for the deep where the high tide  
Mutters to its hurt self, mutters and ebbs.  
Waves wallow in their wash, go out and out,  
Leave only the death-rattle of the crabs,  
The beach increasing, its enormous snout  
Sucking the ocean's side.  
This is the end of running on the waves;  
We are poured out like water. Who will dance  
The mast-lashed master of Leviathans  
Up from this field of Quakers in their unstoned graves?

V

When the whale's viscera go and the roll  
Of its corruption overruns this world  
Beyond tree-swept Nantucket and Woods Hole  
And Martha's Vineyard, Sailor, will your sword  
Whistle and fall and sink into the fat?  
In the great ash-pit of Jehoshaphat  
The bones cry for the blood of the white whale,  
The fat flukes arch and whack about its ears,  
The death-lance churns into the sanctuary, tears  
The gun-blue swingle, heaving like a flail,  
And hacks the coiling life out: it works and drags

And rips the sperm-whale's midriff into rags,  
Gobbets of blubber spill to wind and weather,  
Sailor, and gulls go round the stoven timbers  
Where the morning stars sing out together  
And thunder shakes the white surf and dismembers  
The red flag hammered in the mast-head. Hide,  
Our steel, Jonas Messias, in Thy side.

VI

OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

There once the penitents took off their shoes  
And then walked barefoot the remaining mile;  
And the small trees, a stream and hedgerows file  
Slowly along the munching English lane,  
Like cows to the old shrine, until you lose  
Track of your dragging pain.  
The stream flows down under the druid tree,  
Shiloah's whirlpools gurgle and make glad  
The castle of God. Sailor, you were glad  
And whistled Sion by that stream. But see:  
Our Lady, too small for her canopy,  
Sits near the altar. There's no comeliness  
At all or charm in that expressionless  
Face with its heavy eyelids. As before,  
This face, for centuries a memory,  
Non est species, neque decor,  
Expressionless, expresses God: it goes  
Past castled Sion. She knows what God knows,  
Not Calvary's Cross nor crib at Bethlehem  
Now, and the world shall come to Walsingham.

VII

The empty winds are creaking and the oak  
Splatters and splatters on the cenotaph,  
The boughs are trembling and a gaff  
Bobs on the untimely stroke  
Of the greased wash exploding on a shoal-bell  
In the old mouth of the Atlantic. It's well;  
Atlantic, you are fouled with the blue sailors,  
Sea-monsters, upward angel, downward fish:  
Unmarried and corroding, spare of flesh  
Mart once of supercilious, wing'd clippers,  
Atlantic, where your bell-trap guts its spoil  
You could cut the brackish winds with a knife  
Here in Nantucket, and cast up the time  
When the Lord God formed man from the sea's slime  
And breathed into his face the breath of life,  
And blue-lung'd combers lumbered to the kill.  
The Lord survives the rainbow of His will.

**THE END**