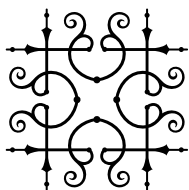


314 FRANKLIN



A MEMOIR IN VERSE

Hugh Henneidy

HOBBLEBUSH BOOKS
Brookline, New Hampshire

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Composed in Fournier MT at Hobblebush Books,
Brookline, New Hampshire

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-0-9845921-0-4

Acknowledgment is due to the editor of *Eastern Equerry*, where much of pp. 7 & 8 was first published as “Paddy First and Last.” Acknowledgment is also due to the editor of *Tar River Poetry*, where some of the material on pp. 5 & 6 first appeared in poetic form as “Frascati Tasting.”

Published by:

HOBBLEBUSH BOOKS
17-A Old Milford Road
Brookline, New Hampshire 03033
www.hobblebush.com

The driveway went down to the blacksmith shop
But if you pulled in to the right
Where the wall on that side stopped or curved
You could park in front of the doors of the garage
And then once out of the car you climbed
The steps up to the porch a fairly
Steep ascent and then you stepped
Onto the porch and across it to the door
Which opened on a short back hall
The kitchen being straight ahead
The pantry opening on your left
The door to the bathroom being on your right

That bathroom where one day Aunt Mary
Oversaw my handwashing after I'd more than peed
She oversaw and lectured too

On the absolute necessity
Of always washing after you'd gone
But what about Mother where was she then
And why did Aunty Mary think
I needed that lecture from her that day

That kitchen warm after Mass
The black and white linoleum squares
The sweet sweet coffee one got to taste
The soft-boiled egg runny in its cup
Runny as some home-made grape jellies
Runny and warm and salty in its cup

On your right from the kitchen the dining room
With a daybed underneath the window giving
Onto the back yard with its henhouses to
The right and grape and currant vines
Straight ahead and down to the left
The blacksmith shop where as the sign
By the head of the drive asserted Horse
Shoeing was a Specialty

Covered in some shade of blue that daybed
Below the window was where Grampa
Lay when he was tired or sick
And the chair across the room near
The tall black phone on its table was

Where he sat to read *The Globe*
And curse Johnny Bull and Mussolini

Then through the arch onto the thick
Plum-colored rug of the living room
Where on the right was the dark low
Bookcase holding all the while
Among others John Steinbeck
Thornton Wilder and Margaret Mitchell
Mice and men a bridge and wind

That plum-colored rug that told Aunt Mary
By footprint smudge something about
Her father's entertaining of friends
In that room some afternoons when he
Was not in his shop playing the anvil

Aunt Mary whose eyes were so good she
Could spot a speck on a sparrow's ass
In Buffalo her father said

That shop where just beyond the doors
Glasses declined on the thin man
Filing hoof between his knees
When he wasn't dancing hammer on
The anvil altar to a side of his forge
Where red lay banked under black