



T H E   T I T H E   M A C H I N E

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The perch

20 yards from where the willow fell  
Gills thrash an illegal net  
Halters of a river's mane  
Man and fish plunge into shadowy field

20 yards higher the new bridge is raised  
First-born of drill, pick and shovel  
From a hatchery of sand  
The first arch is spawned of brick and metal

Next morning whilst he reins the cattle in  
It stands. Bait to his motorcycle wheels  
For in raising the dark nights catch he dreamed  
Of catching all the silver clouds of England.

The tithe machine

As a boy of ten my father held his first horse  
Meekly he followed her plodding course  
My grandfather at forty had held many more  
From stable to field and back to straw

In a dank stable memory kicks at the door  
Stablelad's names from dead cavalry wars  
Bridles and straps, grooms hearts on the floor  
The eyes bound up like fetlocks in gauze

His body trembles where once it had sweated  
The steam machinery's gone the hard hand is softly resting  
On a nail the horse collars hang like stomachs spilling  
The top field is burning, he cannot see it

The ash falling around us  
Soft as rain.

The church bell

Rings  
I look out  
Your soft shivers  
Green  
Brush my father's hand  
As he pushes the root home  
Through black soil  
Like black paint

Another broody evening alone  
With words  
And friendly thunder

Out on the hills  
They have cut through the chalk  
The tarmac is being laid

Rings again  
Time to make my way  
Lines taught  
Down the trench

Dog's rising

Man and dog  
Sliding  
Through stile and straw  
A red machine  
Deep in it's nest  
Chokes down electric light

Man and dog  
Along a path  
Beneath sluiced trees  
Rain squirting from a black tin roof  
And ditching trees  
Stubble  
And tyres  
They climb

Man - breaks the hedge  
Dog - chasing hare

They both ride the pillion wheat  
To the shed

The valley

Flowers are brought to the country  
I stride with the servants  
Hooves disappear in wet earth  
Reins are made of leather  
In the orchard the crop ripens  
wind looses apples from branches  
before the ladders are properly positioned  
red and white blossom remembered

To open the window I lift the latch  
and push

There is an angel on the lawn this morning  
I smile

Winter quarters

Boots crunching grass  
I arrive at the huddle of cattle  
Water drips from lolling tongues  
Salting the trough with spittle

Numb fingers, udder red  
Tumble the bales

Over the rattle of the steel gate  
And the field's rim of brittle reeds  
The weir is roaring  
A water filled chest brimming

Cattle fed, I thread the bridge  
Arms beating like crows  
From the tall trees slapping

I scrape boot after boot  
Breath tracing the panes frozen patterns  
And glimpse the flame of summer wood  
In a grate darkly glowing

Coot hugging bank  
Pike twisting root  
Each holds it's own winter quarter

This is mine  
This vase of rushes  
Gathering dust above the fire.



Village - green

A journey  
A circle away  
A mansion, ivy-towered

In the light  
It burns  
Red and green

Four windows  
Facing south  
Across a village green

Blue and gold  
Reflections

Fledgling thoughts  
Rippling west

Rehearsal

Knock, knock  
The room I enter is wide  
Of white hills  
Which once upon a time  
Held the sea

In it  
A table and chair  
Smoke in a splinter sun  
Over  
Bleached floorboards  
And dust

In the room's grate  
Ashes and sand  
A feather that smoulders

Stravinsky

Geneva

Somewhere else



A crunch of gears

Doors gasping  
Windows tight on the latch

Silence  
Measured by drill smack

A tumble of bricks, askance, running down  
A suburban pattern of steeple and track

Breaking the tunnels  
Funnelled thunder swerves  
A shudder engine  
Sliding through walls

Winter hangs signals  
The wireless branch

Sudden  
A crunch of gears  
Soft leaves  
Falling hard

Two eyes swivel in two sockets  
Descend but do not rest

What heaps  
Rusts

The great exhibition

Two jays in tic-tac spinning

Cresting waves of lace curtain and linoleum

Two-stepping tarmacadam's invention

A century's first mast

The barge of the crystal palace

This gaping hole

Where the machinery ploughed into the past

The smell of smoke

Of ashes

The baitcatcher

Squelching by  
A clatter of clean bucket and spade  
Delving deeply  
In troughs of weed  
Wet wood and spray  
He stoops to prise  
The worm from the rake

Ploughing on  
The gravel face of fenland  
Gently stirring  
Salt seeping  
Through the chipped teeth  
To parched tongue beneath  
The sea stares  
Fresh water inland  
Starts to pour  
Through chalk and flint

Above it all  
The union tatters  
Tired grass  
Swallows shadow

So many distances  
Coasts to travel

Vesper

I survey with ink the arterial road  
The hour slit  
By the hum of automobile wings

Around me  
An entire nation's motion  
Of spun leaf and spinning wheel  
In my mind's eye  
Slows to zero

The first london brick comes to hand  
A flash of low october sun  
Illuminates a dark steeple

The perfect specimen  
I reach for my jar and pin

My notebook and pencil

Docker's dreams

I live under rooks  
In a city of bridge and water  
Mortar guides fin to sea

Two or three hover  
In breezes of sound  
Like branches afloat in  
A reach

Salt, cargo to peck

1983

Up north I have heard  
The salmon are leaping



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no 1

THE  
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Magazine

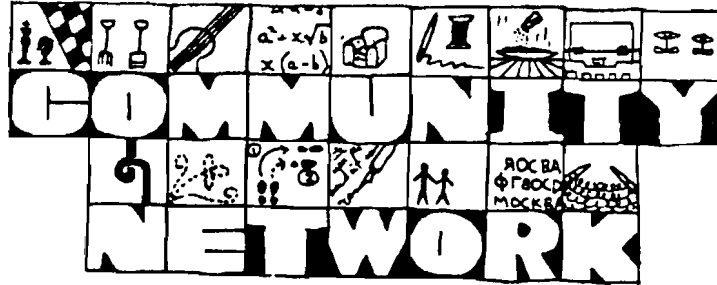
works by:  
Alan Cornelius,  
Jill Dawson,  
Rupert Mallin,  
and many more

plus: JETHRO PARK  
on the Bible and

Woodrow  
Scrubs



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THE NEW MAGAZINE

17th Jan. 1985

Dear David Bell,

thankyou very much for your contributions for our magazine. We have read them with interest and have decided that we would like to print: 'Winter Quarters', 'The Well', 'Valley', 'Dogs Rising'.

However, 'Canteen', and 'The Baitcatcher', we feel are not suitable and we are therefore returning them.

Thankyou for taking an interest in us and we look forward to reading some more of your work in the future.

A free copy of our magazine will reach you as soon as it comes to press.

yours sincerely

G.Woodward. B.Wilson.