

Armistice Day, Skibbereen, 1919

And everything stopped.
The shop lad running over Mardyke
caught mid-stride, the cart
he might have dodged, laden with churns –
Stopped.

And the town is hushed.
The crows sit silent on the rooftops,
down below,
dogs wait their masters.
Still.

The Maid of Erin
towers above the men who left.
Widows and orphans wear
the medals of the dead.

Yet, further back, and almost out of mind
by the Post Office, drawn by mules,
a gun-team, and its carriage draped
in Union flags.

The men who left, and those who stayed,
will not forget.

Jenny Brien