

A close-up, black and white photograph of a typewriter's keyboard mechanism. The image shows the intricate arrangement of typebars and typecases, which are the components that strike the paper to form characters. The perspective is from above, looking down into the keyboard. The lighting creates strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the metallic texture and the repetitive pattern of the typebars. The text 'EDWARD THOMAS' is overlaid in the top left corner, and 'LAST POEMS' is overlaid in the bottom right corner.

***EDWARD
THOMAS***

***LAST
POEMS***

Edward Thomas

Last Poems

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TO-NIGHT
SNOW

I NEVER SAW THAT LAND BEFORE

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I NEVER saw that land before,
And now can never see it again;
Yet, as if by acquaintance hoar
Endeared, by gladness and by pain,
Great was the affection that I bore

To the valley and the river small,
The cattle, the grass, the bare ash trees,
The chickens from the farmsteads, all
Elm-hidden, and the tributaries
Descending at equal interval;

The blackthorns down along the brook
With wounds yellow as crocuses
Where yesterday the labourer's hook
Had sliced them cleanly; and the breeze
That hinted all and nothing spoke.

I neither expected anything
Nor yet remembered: but some goal
I touched then; and if I could sing
What would not even whisper my soul
As I went on my journeying,

I should use, as the trees and birds did,
A language not to be betrayed;
And what was hid should still be hid
Excepting from those like me made
Who answer when such whispers bid.

THE DARK FOREST

DARK is the forest and deep, and overhead
Hang stars like seeds of light
In vain, though not since they were sown was bred
Anything more bright.

And evermore mighty multitudes ride
About, nor enter in;
Of the other multitudes that dwell inside
Never yet was one seen.

The forest foxglove is purple, the marguerite
Outside is gold and white,
Nor can those that pluck either blossom greet
The others, day or night.

CELANDINE

THINKING of her had saddened me at first,
Until I saw the sun on the celandines lie
Redoubled, and she stood up like a flame,
A living thing, not what before I nursed,
The shadow I was growing to love almost,
The phantom, not the creature with bright eye
That I had thought never to see, once lost.

She found the celandines of February
Always before us all. Her nature and name
Were like those flowers, and now immediately
For a short swift eternity back she came,
Beautiful, happy, simply as when she wore
Her brightest bloom among the winter hues
Of all the world; and I was happy too,
Seeing the blossoms and the maiden who

Had seen them with me Februarys before,
Bending to them as in and out she trod
And laughed, with locks sweeping the mossy sod.

But this was a dream: the flowers were not true,
Until I stooped to pluck from the grass there
One of five petals and I smelt the juice
Which made me sigh, remembering she was no more,
Gone like a never perfectly recalled air.

THE ASH GROVE

HALF of the grove stood dead, and those that yet
lived made

Little more than the dead ones made of shade.
If they led to a house, long before they had seen
its fall:

But they welcomed me; I was glad without cause
and delayed.

Scarce a hundred paces under the trees was the Interval—
Paces each sweeter than sweetest miles—but nothing at all,
Not even the spirits of memory and fear with restless wing,
Could climb down in to molest me over the wall

That I passed through at either end without
noticing.

And now an ash grove far from those hills can bring
The same tranquillity in which I wander a ghost
With a ghostly gladness, as if I heard a girl sing

The song of the Ash Grove soft as love uncrossed,
And then in a crowd or in distance it were lost,
But the moment unveiled something unwilling
to die