

PARSONS POLE BRIDGE

a sonnet

Now I stand erect and face the sun;
no need to strike an attitude, nor shape
as a mood congruent with the falling tension
of the hills; nor at wonders gape
to document the novelty of leaves
showering counterfeit coins of brass and silver
at the dread horizon as it westward weaves
the thread of storm-tracks in the sky allover.

Alone, no need to barter words for heaven
since he who these feet thrusts and breathes this sigh
died reaching heavily for greatness graven
upon this premature stone.

It is nigh, circles me around, - that tranquil moat
between the living and the dead in which
all time is tumbled, and the scythed weeds float
beyond the bend of memory..... a twitch
in the long hedge-grass; an old man's greeting
hoe on shoulder; clack of crow's wing beating;
the keen cold grasp of wind around my chest; -
wipe out the conflict as I face the west.

(circa 1941)