

Parade

Over an arch of light I call them home:
my burly, watch-chained, butcher grandfather
taking scant notice of the trout-filled Teme,
his delicate unhappy wife, a music lover,
stepping out as in their fleeting prime,
my mother's devout and tender-hearted mother
beside her husband, once paid to keep the game
on a grand estate and now a gardener there:

all of them radiant, unscarred by blame,
their long-imagined faces no more a blur
until they wave 'God bless you' and leave the stream,
broaching the cowslip lanes of Radnorshire

where the darkened bells of St. Edward chime
and the beautiful calamities unfurl.

MARK ABLEY