

## ***The BROAD BLACK BRIMMER***

THERE'S A UNIFORM THAT'S HANGING  
IN WHAT'S KNOWN AS FATHER'S ROOM  
A UNIFORM SO SIMPLE IN ITS STYLE  
IT HAS NO BRAID OF GOLD OR SILK  
NO HAT WITH FEATHERED PLUME  
YET MY MOTHER HAS PRESERVED IT ALL THIS WHILE  
ONE DAY SHE MADE ME TRY IT ON -  
A WISH OF MINE FOR YEARS -  
"IN MEMORY OF YOUR FATHER, SON," SHE SAID  
AND WHEN I'D PUT THE SAM BROWNE ON  
SHE WAS SMILING THRU HER TEARS  
AS SHE PLACED THE BROAD BLACK BRIMMER ON MY HEAD!

*IT'S JUST A BROAD BLACK BRIMMER  
WITH ITS RIBBONS FRAYED AND TORN  
BY THE CARELESS TWIST OF MANY A MOUNTAIN BREEZE  
AN OLD TRENCH COAT THAT'S BATTLE STAINED AND WORN  
AND BREECHES ALMOST THREADBARE AT THE KNEES  
A SAM BROWNE BELT WITH A BUCKLE BIG AND STRONG  
AND A HOLSTER THAT BEEN EMPTY MANY A DAY  
WHEN MEN CLAIM IRELAND'S FREEDOM  
THE ONE THEY'LL CHOOSE TO LEAD THEM  
WILL WEAR THE BROAD BLACK BRIMMER OF THE I.R.A.!*

IT WAS THE UNIFORM SO PROUDLY WORN  
BY MY FATHER LONG AGO  
WHEN HE REACHED MY MOTHER'S HOMESTEAD ON THE RUN  
IT WAS THE UNIFORM MY FATHER WORE  
IN THAT LITTLE CHURCH BELOW  
WHEN FATHER MAC, HE BLESSED THE PAIR AS ONE  
AND AFTER TRUCE AND TREATY  
AND THE PARTING OF THE WAYS  
HE WORE IT WHEN HE MARCHED OUT WITH THE REST  
AND WHEN THEY BORE HIS BODY DOWN  
THAT RUGGED HEATHER BRAES  
THEY PLACED THE BROAD BLACK BRIMMER  
ON HIS BREAST!