

THE STANDING STONES
By Dennis Corcoran

It was a chilly winter's day,
Us at the hearth, our children, our family, out at play ...
shouts of joy, laughter, heard all 'round.

Those words, in our ancient tongue, "hearth" - "family" ... the same - teallach.

No one noticed the eastern sky ...
clouds of dark-gray smoke, gathering 'round the peaks near by.

The wind bore faint but ominous sounds ... a scent of burning ... of homes, of towns,
a ghastly clash of cannon's roar ... foretelling the terror soon to come o'er.

They stopped, the children, amidst their play
- stood, frozen ... not a word did they say
... only oppressive silence all around.

Nothing within them moved save their hearts, which beat in anguished fear,
As they waited, motionless, for these unseen horrors to appear.

Moments grew into hours - hours, soon to days – days to weeks, then months, and years.
Seasons born, then fallen away. Families, too, unable to stay, in a land, where hope,
a distant memory, cannot be lived, only held deep within ...
secreted away against this ruthless reign of blood, fire and tears.

Ó ghlúin go glúin

Still ... they stood, our children ... thru famine and foreign rule ...

Their bodies grew rigid ... features faded so faint as to not be seen.
Arms, legs grew into one, like Niobe, of old, grown into stone,
These, our human liths, now anchored in hallowed ground.

They stood there – they stand there still, these our children ...
watching, waiting for the sun to return
for the peoples' songs to be sung, and heard,
for our hearth-fires to re-kindle and burn
waiting for freedom, waiting there, still ...

these ...

The Standing Stones.