

THE SOFT HEART A'BEATING

The Port huddles down on North Cornish shores,
Round-shoulder'd Roscarrock and Overcliff are its doors,
Hard men, stone walls, slate roofs and floors,
But beneath it a soft heart a'beating.

A warm Sabbath eve, and sea hymns fill the skies,
With a descant of surf, and sea birds cries,
Praying for men, with salt-weary eyes,
Voices of God, entreating.

Steep lanes that lead, from the stormy, grey sea,
Escape only upward, as ever twill be,
The heart-rending hill, can be broken in three,
With many a chat at a meeting.

Oft-mentioned names, on a cross on the hill,
Names that live on, in Port Isaac still,
Voices that melt a cold winter's chill,
With the warmth of a soft Cornish greeting.

I came as a stranger, you called me your friend,
With these humble verses, this 'thank you' I send,
God prosper your village, and still to the end
Keep your soft heart a'beating.

Eric Stokes