

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SNOW

By Ian Welland.

My son went off to war that day
The day the snow blew from the north
And the Nene froze and iced for skaters
Like pillows encased in white linen.

On the day my son went to war
I walked to St Peter's to ask
When will thou save the people?
And January's primrose bloomed.

The day my son's letter arrived
A thrush sang brightly without rest
Though not yet springtime there was hope
Winter's white prayer closing silently

When my son returned from war
It was toward the end of March
Avenues of cherry blossom
And new lambs drawn to their mothers

So, my son left again for war
Children cast their rods once more
Into a river of plenty
New perch, roach and carp obliging

The day of my son's final letter
The wind came from the north once more
And the mission collected for
The Saved, the Cross and the Departed



On the day the telegram arrived
The snow chased the fields and folds
And his portrait faded dark brown
The garden tree and hawthorn hedge

For the day the cross came homebound
The Nene froze to welcome skaters
With their swallow glides and smiles
An effect of isolation

Joseph Mordecai (1851 – 1940), *Portrait of Edward, Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII)*, c1917, Oil on Canvas, 243 x 154cm, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry.

Image provided by and reproduced with kind permission of the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry.