**LONGBENTON**

mulch dug under keratinous spades

press palmately whorls on the spine

of *Your Garden’s Flowers Illustrated*

his tyres tear the Tyneside roads

to the Walton Nurseries to thumb

packs of bulbs, plugs and perennials

while she waves marigolds to McGredy

through single-glaze to climb clematis

to share a semi-detached pot of hybrid tea

then soaks in silken hues of Fenwick’s counters

staked cinnamon ribbons and holly boughs

decked canopy in the frosted window

he puffs and picks etiolated Wilsons

from the frost-damaged Callaghans

so as to plant pumpkin seedlings

for Cinderella weeps Port Stanley postcards

whistles *fweet!* the barrabravas off-side

flank the nutmegged Wallsend Boys

a Haws pipe tumefies Magnavox dials

its tricolour fog feints like a comic kite in swirls of Artex