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# A Green Man

Nigel Wells

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small readership, which this "Symposium" will, one hopes, do a little to alter, and are all, at present, resident in the United Kingdom. But here, I think, the similarities end. There is no easy generalization to make about a "Symposium" that includes work by poets living, and writing, in North-East Scotland, Bolton, Devon, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge, Northern Ireland, Manchester, and West Wales. Their areas for concern vary, as do their environments—another reason for interaction, and a strong indication of the differing energies in British poetry.

The job as editor was, as it usually is, a combination of pleasure and frustration, but I hope the result will prove worthwhile to the reader, as it has been to those taking part, in whatever capacity. I must thank Jon Silkin for his considerable support, and, finally, I would like to thank all the eight for their willing cooperation and efficiency, which occasionally straightened my own erratic course.

## A Green Man / Nigel Wells

### (1) Squirms

Tasting the earth  
Out of the loam and the foliage come  
Some self to the wood from the ground  
Some stuff  
Feeling its life starts to stir  
Takes to the light  
With inkling eye marks its length  
Pants by and by to its height  
Strains  
From the crouch to the bend to the stoop  
Stands  
The finally straight  
The momentary pause  
Testing the breath  
Then  
Hares  
Through wild and the wonderwood flares  
The streak  
Loosely tears like a seam

### (2) Stalks

Seeing the world  
This thing sees but what it sees  
Fastens its feel to the needley mould

Soft pads  
Taking the sights to its heart  
Follows the path  
In tunnels and runs measures tread  
Moles through the whispery wood  
Hears  
The scurrying, patter and press  
Snakes  
Over leaf to advantage  
The silent approach  
The wriggly way  
So  
Snails  
Through tangle creeps crawly to peer  
The stealth  
Studies with stare the slight life as it teem

(3) Stamps

Taking a turn  
Blur in a spacey place sways  
Once more the reel and the round  
Steps out  
Shaking a leg to alive  
Quickly the limbs  
Nimbling shins toe the line  
Heels on the packed dirt drum  
Bound  
Over the falling and fallen and felled  
Twirl  
The onesome and ball  
The treefully leap  
Clearing the stumps  
High  
Jigs  
Through hedge hoops as when and as please  
The spring  
Bouncing bare in the air and lean

(4) See's?

Sweating it out  
Stupor of wood steam and drool  
Some stiff of a suddenly starts  
Sits up  
Sensing some sense to itself

Claws at perhaps  
With fingering think takes a chance  
Collars the maybe the way  
Makes  
For the outstretch of aim and idea  
Grasps  
The likely the truth  
Something at least  
The offered escape  
Slopes  
Off  
Through half light the faith heeled not what he seem  
The shade  
He grow rare but he grow God-green

### Saturnalia / Nigel Wells

For old uncle Cronus and barleycrow Bran  
This spirited lad  
Groomed to the throne of unreal  
As King of unreason got up in the guise  
Ass-eared for the reign of misrule

Made master of revels in elder tree time  
This jewel of the blood  
Picked of the many and more  
Decked in the garb for the seven day whirl  
This youth in the bloom for the fool

For the posture of God and the romp  
This sport of the locks  
Dolled in the holly green hue  
Draped as the keeper of festives and funs  
Daubed with the squeeze-berry blue

Oh lords of the sown and the sprouting seed  
In mime of your age  
This brightsome boy tread the dance  
Light steps tell the course and the briefness of rule  
Bright blood crowns the term of the prance