The Granary 1787-1987

Brick upon brick, stone upon stone,
This grain store was built in 1787
By the workers of Limerick
For Philip Roche, a merchant prince.

He exported flax and cereals
In his father’s cargo ships,
And fed the huddled poor
Here beside the Abbey River.

After his death in 1797
The store was leased
By his nephew, Thomas Kelly,
As a bonding warehouse.

Today the renewed Granary
Offers a public library
And a college of design,
Above a tourist office and tavern.

Now behind the deep windows
Students grapple with grids and graphics,
Book-lovers browse in the airy library,
And tourists bask in the bar below.

As we stroll under the archway
And into the courtyard,
Let us pause on the way
To stand and take stock.

Come, let us go into the tavern,
And drink a toast to
Brick and stone, grain and grog,
And to all who laboured here.

For more than 170 years
The city took its fill
And paid its duty
On lock, stock and barrel.

Jim Kemmy