

Old Soldier

Chris Barnett

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Old soldier wrapped in clay and newspaper,
Upside down in a waste bin in famous London park.
Brown shoes, dogs muck, two sizes too big.
Sally-Army trousers
Multiple lesions to the head and left leg,
Right hand partially eaten, by rats?
Found 6:11 a.m. Friday October twenty second.

“A drinker , always around, very cheerful,
No? no bother to anyone”.

Who drove the iron rod into his ear?
Who kicked the body until the lungs burst?

“He used to sleep in the tools hut,
I’d make him tea in the morning, what?
Oh, since the war, since the war”

And as they wrapped it in a canvas
A worm deep beyond his skull
Eat the reason why in a mouthful.