

ATLANTIC COAST

EARLE BIRNEY

Now as the waters grey, grace meets you
but only in gulls that hook on the wind,
are shaken easily loose,
curve to the curving wave.

Not here the Canadian *Geist*
but, through the sentry beat of bergs,
within each fortress fog your ship salutes,
where heads of Hebridean mould
toss in crusted dories, hard fingers
sift dour living from the amber fins
that fleck these longdrowned Banks.

Smell now the sweet landsmell, the spruce in the wind,
but see, and remember, how boxer waves
bully our shores, battling and billowing
into the stone's weakness, bellowing
down the deepening caverns,
smashing the slate with unappeasable fists.

See the crouched hills at bay with Boreas,
the old laconic resourceful hills.
Something of this in the Maritime faces.