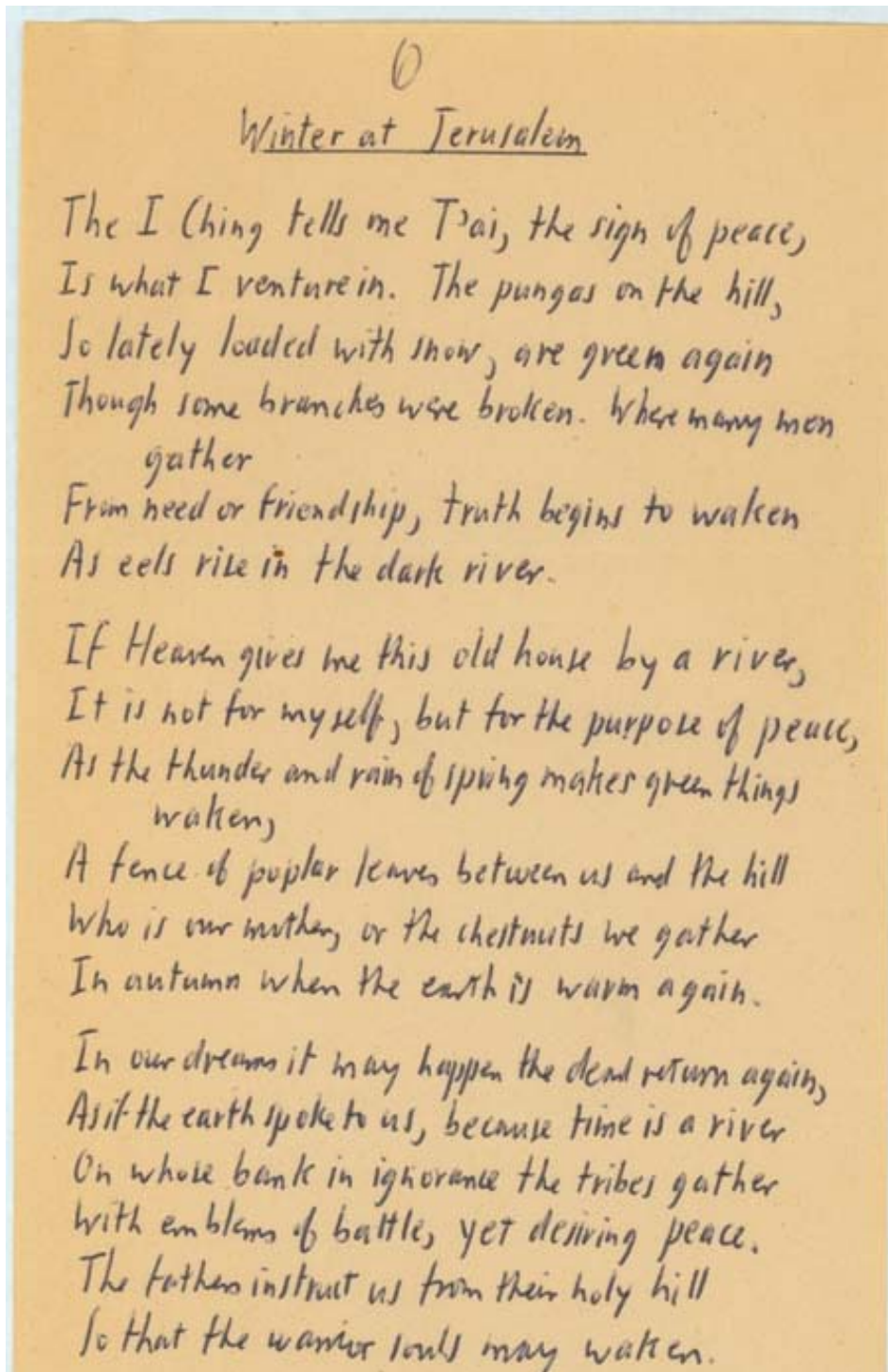


From the Archive

James K. Baxter, Winter in Jerusalem

Holograph manuscript (2 pp)



(2)

In winter with a heavy mind I waken  
And wait for the sun to lift the fogs again  
That bind Jerusalem. Like a bridegroom above the hill  
He touches with hands of fire the waves of the river  
Like the body of a woman. Our words are words of  
peace

In this house where the wounded children gather.

We can go out with Maori kits to gather  
Watererens, or some tough lads who waken  
Early, will break the veil of peace  
With gunshots, combing the bush again  
For young goats, or lift the eel-trap from the river  
As fog shifts from the highest hill.

The times are like some rough and roadless hill  
We have to climb. I do not hope to gather  
Peace in winter, or halt the flow of the river  
That buries in sludge the words who begin to waken  
And know themselves. Our peace can't patch again  
The cover that is broken, yet all men value peace.

Peace is the language of the punga on the hill  
Not growing for any gain. These images I gather  
As eels waken in the darkness of the river

WINTER AT JERUSALEM

The I Ching tells me T'ai, the sign of peace,  
Is what I venture in. The pungas on the hill,  
So lately loaded with snow, are green again  
Though some branches were broken. Where many men  
gather  
From need or friendship, truth begins to waken  
As eels rise in the dark river.

If Heaven gives me this old house by a river,  
It is not for myself, but for the purpose of peace,  
As the thunder and rain of spring makes green things  
waken,  
A fence of poplar leaves between us and the hill  
Who is our mother, or the chestnuts we gather  
In autumn when the earth is warm again.

In our dreams it may happen the dead return again,  
As if the earth spoke to us, because time is a river  
On whose bank in ignorance the tribes gather  
With emblems of battle, yet desiring peace.  
The fathers instruct us from their holy hill  
So that the warrior souls may waken.

In winter with a heavy mind I waken  
And wait for the sun to lift the fogs again  
That bind Jerusalem. Like a bridegroom above the hill  
He touches with hands of fire the waves of the river  
Like the body of a woman. Our words are words of  
- peace  
In this house where the wounded children gather.

We can go out with Maori kits to gather  
Watercress, or some tough lads who waken  
Early, will break the veil of peace  
With gunshots, combing the bush again  
For young goats, or lift the eel-trap from the river  
As fog shifts from the highest hill.

The times are like some rough and roadless hill  
We have to climb. I do not hope to gather  
Pears in winter, or halt the flow of the river  
That buries in sludge the souls who begin to waken  
And know themselves. Our peace can't patch again  
The canoe that is broken, yet all men value peace.

Peace is the language of the pungas on the hill  
Not growing for any gain. These images I gather  
As eels waken in the darkness of the river.

- James K. Baxter

John Petit, Photograph of Baxter at Hiruharama, December 1970



## The Baxter Papers at the University of Auckland Library<sup>1</sup>

While most of James K. Baxter's papers are held by the Hocken Library, individual manuscripts are located in several New Zealand repositories, including Special Collections at the University of Auckland Library. The papers of literary figures are often widely scattered across institutions, for a variety of reasons. Material may be deposited at intervals as circumstances change, such as moving house or changing lifestyle; sometimes individuals are prepared to let some of their papers go but prefer to retain more sensitive items until a later date; and in some instances, particularly where collections are sold, there may be an advantage in staggering batches of materials over time; another common instance is where papers are given to a third party, such as a researcher, family member or friend, who becomes a temporary custodian of the papers before eventually handing them on.

The Baxter papers at the University of Auckland are a good example of the latter case. The Library's records indicate that the papers were donated not by Baxter, but by Peter Dane of the Department of English, in 1981. Although there is scant information on the provenance of these materials, a number of clues are available. Accompanying the small collection of poems is a letter from Jacquie Baxter, dated 4 March 1973, thanking Dane for sending her copies of the poems which '...Jim gave you', and expressing interest in obtaining copies of any other extant Baxter manuscripts. Intriguingly, there are also two colour prints of Baxter at Jerusalem, one of which was reprinted on the cover of John Newton's recent biography of Baxter, *The Double Rainbow: James K. Baxter, Ngāti Hau and the Jerusalem Commune* (Victoria University Press, 2009). Newton dates the photograph at December 1970, but the prints the Library holds were printed in 1981, possibly by Dane.

A comment made at the time of Peter Dane's retirement in 1986 provides further insights:

When poet Jim Baxter, in his demonstrative guru phase, visited the English Department not long before his death, Peter, whom he had never met, was the first person he embraced, with an enthusiastic "Hullo, friend". I think he recognised someone whose experience of life was as broad as his own, and who shared many of his priorities.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Baxter, James K. (James Keir), 1926-1972. Literary manuscripts. 1970s. MSS & Archives B-30. [Accessible via link: <http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/manuscripts-and-archives/>].

<sup>2</sup> Jackson, Mac. 'Farewell Tributes: Peter Dane'. *University of Auckland News*. Nov. 1986: 32.

The ten poems which are undated but relate strongly to the Jerusalem period include 5 sestinas which were published in *Landfall* 103 (1972) under the titles: 'Winter in Jerusalem', 'Song to the Father', 'On the Shortest Day of the Year', 'The Dark Welcome', and 'Letter to Peter Olds'. The poems consist of an original manuscript (holograph), accompanied by a typescript version.

Stephen Innes

Special Collections Librarian

The University of Auckland Library