

The Women From Wales (Chester, 1960)

The women from Wales talk in secret words
which lift and lilt and speckle
the solemn brown air of dignified Browns Of Chester.*

Words,
drifting between rows
of tweedy coats, camel coats...
raincoats with prim tight belts,
demurely waiting.....
like Ebenezer women, dressed for chapel.

Then the women (the women from Wales)
waft into English...
whisper how brown suits Bronwen...
how green's the colour of Gwenda's pretty Welsh eyes...
how black has its shades...
of coal, of night,
of Nain's lovely elderly eyes.

So I stand by the coats
and I watch and I listen
to the chattering, smiling women from Wales.

BUT then my mother says: "Come!"...
and she beckons me on, scurries me on...
away from the coats, away from the voices,
those beautiful trilling musical voices....
ushers me on from the women from Wales.

- *Browns of Chester: A long established Dept store, at its peak in the 50's/60's
- * Long visited by folk from Wales, particularly for shopping on Saturdays!

Jan Bengree

