The Review

Shared humanity:
a Jane Austen bicentenary

Iain Bamforth,

Memories of Holland
From the Dutch of Hendrik Marsman

Thinking of Holland
I see broad rivers
slowly churning through endless lowlands,
rows of implausibly airy poplars
standing like tall plumes against the horizon;
and sunk in the unbounded vastness of space
homesteads and boweries
dotted across the land,
copse, villages,
couchant towers,
churches and elm-trees,
bound in one great unity.

There the sky hangs low,
and steadily the sun
is smothered in a greyly iridescent smirr,
and in every province
the voice of water
with its lapping disasters
is feared and heartened.

This is my translation of the work which
was voted by Dutch readers as their
favourite poem of the century. Four years
after publishing it, Hendrik Marsman
drowned in the English Channel in 1940
on the way to Britain when his ship was
torpedoed by a German submarine.
The translation of Herinnering aan Holland was commissioned by the Written World Project and broadcast on BBC Radio Scotland in 2012.

Iain Bamforth,

For more details of the book please visit
www.carcanet.co.uk

DOI: 10.3399/bjgp13X665332

James Willis,
GP (retired), Author.

Checksum: E=48

British Journal of General Practice, April 2013 | 207