

# Sweet William

In the middle of the Great Depression,  
William and his mom  
moved into the house on the corner  
to take care of Mr. French.

William's clear blue, pre-teen eyes  
smiled as he gave us rides in my red wagon.  
His soiled sailor's cap sat at a jaunty angle,  
flanked by tufts of sun-bleached hair.

In mid-winter, with nothing to spare,  
Mother spotted him,  
barefoot and without a jacket,  
standing in the frozen road.

In mid-summer, when Mr. French died,  
they drove across five states  
to harvest potatoes in Idaho's heat  
Where William died in the fields of a sunstroke.

