

CASTLE RUINS AT DUSK

At dusk the sunset's fleeting afterglow
Softens the jagged outline of the walls.
A shrill arc of sound, echoing below
Pierces a casement where a screech owl calls.
The ruined hall looms on the fissured mound,
Inside a honeycomb of masonry,
Centuries' debris scattered on the ground
Strewn like some monumental shifting scree.
Raw power that once ruled lives in dust now lies
Bone mouldering below a chapel floor.
Above, heraldic sculptured in the gloom,
A knight stares up with pitted marble eyes.
And all that feudal pomp and majesty
Is purchased for a tourist's entrance fee.

Don Nixon