



6-15-2005

Dr. O'Rourke Ponders the Badman John Sprockett and the Late Reverend Burden

Robert Cooperman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

 Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), [Photography Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Cooperman, Robert (2005) "Dr. O'Rourke Ponders the Badman John Sprockett and the Late Reverend Burden," *Westview*: Vol. 24 : Iss. 2 , Article 40.

Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol24/iss2/40>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.



Dr. O'Rourke Ponders the Badman John Sprockett and the Late Reverend Burden

by Robert Cooperman

Sprockett's an enigma,
able to quote more lines
of verse than I can,
but a temper deadly
as a cornered wolverine.
I'd known men like him
back in Galway,
who looted and burned
in the name of Sacred Ireland.

As for Preacher Burden,
he never saw me in the street,
but stopped me—his forefinger
harder than all the cannons
at the Boyne—and warned
I was a damned Papist.

I'd quote Scripture verse,
but he'd fire back
with a chapter of his own;
then I'd spout Gaelic poetry,
to convince him
I spoke in demon-tongues.

I examined his corpse,
smashed up from its fall,
stuck to one fingernail,
a thread of a bandanna:
Sprockett's,
though I don't know why.

My duty's to the living.

