

A talk for a Creative Writing Group

How many of you remember the verse on Auntie Judith's, or Uncle Jim's Christmas card last year, and I don't mean this literally of course. What I mean is - can you honestly say that any Christmas card or birthday card verse has ever made such an impression that you remember the time of the card at least.

When you are next in town, browse through some cards, if I am getting through, don't browse too long or you may be sick, but an excellent way of finding out what is not poetry.

Staring at the house so poor
the feelings in my heart were sure.
Visions of the bleak cold hearth
what was all their labour worth.
Now no food to ease their plight
through the walls I see their fight
of sobbing mother, little ones,
who no one cares for, society slums.
Cold and hungry, ragged dress
is there no one there to bless.
This poor sad family, as they sit
in poverty's unrelenting pit.

Such a lot of words: far more effective is:

`.....and the bare bones of a fanlight, over a hungry door'
MacNeice Louis(1907-63)