

Raids 'a good few more'

Give me a beach where the boats will not grind  
And a steady nerve as we land;  
A sentry asleep or far away  
As we steal across the sand-  
Give me again those dunes and that road  
And as hounds that are scenting the trail  
We can reach our objective without waking the Hun,  
Even God could not make us fail,  
800 yards to the telephone exchange  
And 250 to the Commandatur,  
And Harry to get from the Lazaret  
Before we go back to the shore.  
But cut out that dog baying into the night,  
Remember how it started the fun,  
As the bastards came dashing into the streets  
Before the job was done.  
Remember the guns that were burning hot  
And the knives that were dripping with blood  
And the pals that we missed  
As they dropped away  
And crumpled into the mud.  
Remember it was already after four,  
The sky and the earth were splashed red,  
We had lost Tom, Fred, George and a good few more  
But the Hun had lost his head.  
At 0430 the commandatur blew  
And the exchange at 0457,  
The gas works, the bridge and the power house too  
Were blasted all over heaven.

At 0515 we were back in the boats –  
There was many an empty seat –  
Yet most of us thought of the English shore  
And some bloody good grub to eat.  
Remember the Heinkels who sprayed us out there,  
Thank Christ the clouds were low  
And we cheated the buggers with our bows to the wind  
And two LCA's in tow.  
Sure Pal, there were notches in the handle of my knife,  
There was blood on many a blade,  
There was many a smile on a salt caked face,  
As we reckoned accounts that were paid.  
Remember the hell it was while it lasted  
Remember Pal, one or two shit their pants, they were few,  
But what with them and all the others  
And a bit of luck, we got through.  
The old man was there and Jocelyn and Piet,  
Philip, Johnny and Martin and Bill,  
Flossy and Happy and Rose and the Doc  
And the others who are lying there still.  
Remember we said we would be back there again  
When they give us the griff and the gen,  
And there's only one prayer that hangs on my lips  
It's mine, and it's all number Ten:-  
God, give me a gun that is oiled and smooth  
And a knife that gleams not too bright,  
And a last look at the English shore  
As we glide into the night.  
Give me pals, as eager as I,  
To get guts out of the Hun,  
Who will fight with me and die with me and drink with me  
When its done.  
Give me a faith in the freedom of men,  
For which we went on that raid;  
Another few hundred round of lead  
And again I will go unafraid.

RAIDS from poetry by Gerard.H.Joan-Bendien.