14.9.14 Heather-Avril Ovenden

**Backstreet Bricks**

(Inspired by a wall in Water Lane, Canterbury)

Earth. Clay. Mud.

Dirt-dust pressed, squashed,

shaped, baked, flamed, sundried.

Stacked and packed.

Staggered together

for a stronger bond,

connected offset. Cemented.

Trowelled into place.

Backstreet bricks,

Canterbury city.

Walls divide, support,

separate, protect,

build, buttress.

Dependable – he’s a brick

solid, foundational.

Then up against it – dead end,

insurmountable, impenetrable.

So stupid – a block head,

squared off, hard fired.

This wall is long standing,

red, terracotta, rubicund,

timeworn, some faces crumbling.

White lime mortar outlines

age furrows, around

oblongs, squares. Former

spaces bricked up, blocked out.

Backdrop for openings,

edging a window, arching the doorway,

frameworks. An art installation.

Creation.

Old wall weathered,

tumbled, toppled, crumpled.

Beaten by the rain.

Soaking up the sun.

Me on the other side,

dry and warm.

A brick in hand. Armed.

Riotous. Smashing, crashing,

thudding, throwing.

Another brick from the wall.