

**ON FIRST LOOKING INTO A PHOTOGRAPH OF "THE ENGLISH"
(by Ian Berry, sponsored by the Arts Council, 1974)**

There will always be an England,
but not for me. Take this upland,
where one exclusive group trails down,
their inward-turning thoughts their own.
Another, equally discrete,
seated silent as tableau,
gazes on their place below,
its mills and spires and terraced streets.

Girded with tweed caps or frocks
blotched with homely blossoms, proof
not of promises of bloom
but of promise to conform,
still from my longing they must turn.
My sacrifices merely mock.