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Ipswich

Eugene Field

In Ipswich nights are cool and fair,
And the voice that comes from the yonder sea
Sings to the quaint old mansions there
Of "the time, the time that used to be";
And the quaint old mansions rock and groan,
And they seem to say in an undertone,
With half a sight and with half a moan:
"It was, but it never again will be."

In Ipswich witches weave at night
Their magic spells with impish glee;
They shriek and laugh in their demon flight
From the old Main House to the frightened sea.
And ghosts of eld come out to weep
Over the town that is fast asleep;
And they sob and they wail, as on they creep:
"It was, but it never again will be."



In Ipswich riseth Heart-Break Hill
Over against the calling sea;
And through the nights so deep and chill
Watcheth a maiden constantly,—
Watcheth alone, nor seems to hear

Over the roar of the waves anear
The pitiful cry of a far-off year:
“It was, but it never again will be.”

In Ipswich once a witch I knew,—
An artless Saxon witch was she;
By that flaxen hair and those eyes of blue,
Sweet was the spell she cast on me.
Alas! but the years have wrought me ill,
And the heart that is old and battered and chill
Seeketh again on Heart-Break Hill
What was, but never again can be.

Dear Anna, I would not conjure down
The ghost that cometh to solace me;
I love to think of old Ipswich town,
Where somewhat better than friends were we;
For with every thought of the dear old place
Cometh again the tender grace
Of a Saxon witch’s pretty face,
As it was, and is, and ever shall be.

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