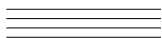


F O R E D W A R D T H O M A S



E L I S A B E T H M U R A W S K I

Easter Monday, Germans  
on the run, the Brits  
whoop and dance in mud  
and snow, celebrate  
the rout. A pause  
in the shooting, Thomas  
leaves the dugout,  
is about to fill his pipe  
when a stray shell  
whizzes past his post,  
nails his heart. He falls,  
unmarked, on each page  
of the war diary  
tucked in his pocket  
a bizarre arc of creases  
from the shock wave.  
Preserved in the poet's  
crabbed hand, a line he wrote  
just days before: *And no more  
singing for the bird.*