## When the past crowds in

When the past crowds in,

and images compete for foremost places in thoughts;

give patience now

to look and learn,

to name and know,

and to make sense of all I see and feel and try to understand.

When memories bring pain and joy,

and each one struggles for supremacy;

when now I feel up-beat, remembering well, and smile,

and then I am cast low for what I’ve lost;

give wisdom now

to understand that battle ground,

and know I will prevail.

When the future makes no sense,

and every step with leaden feet takes effort more than I can bear,

and when I fear the journey, uncharted and unknown;

give strength enough

to know that even slowness is a moving on.

When remembrance is for now and not for then,

and when I wonder if, when future days come round,

I will remember as I needs must do;

give hope when needed most,

to know and to believe,

that what is past is part of me that will not ever go,

and memories will hold the crowded past

 and unknown future

 in their tender hands.

And so I will remember,

now and then,

and hopes will be fulfilled.

(Dawn Allen)