

Billy Bulson's farm

My mam used to clean at Billy Bulson's farm,
A magical place of mystery and charm,
With geese that cackled and hissed and every day.
Without my mam I'd have run away
As they charged with flapping wings.
I was really scared of those fierce big things
With their open beaks and lowered necks.
It really hurt if you got a peck.
But through the flock and into that house of joy
Where I was treated like their own little boy.
A passage was guarded by a stuffed dog fox
Watching the world from his glass walled box.
I knew he watched with his beady eye
And I always walked respectfully by.
Out in the orchard with their daughter Jill,
Amazingly we were never ill,
Stuffing our faces with fruit on the ground
Fallen from the trees growing all around.
Apples and pears and plums and cherries,
In the kitchen garden currants and berries.
Once a week was butter making day.
Mrs Bulson would separate and skim the whey
Then pour the rest in her electric churn
Driven by a rubber belt that made it turn
Producing yellow butter fresh and creamy
I can taste it still - so fresh and creamy.
She'd shape it all into little square pats
With a pair of special wooden bats
Sometimes there was a little pat for me
To carry it home and eat with our tea.
They still had Shires working on the crops.
Those old boys just never seemed to stop.
I can still feel the thrill deep inside
That first time Billy Bulson let me ride
Holding me on that Shire's back
As it plodded its powerful track
Turning the potatoes out of the land
To be grasped by the picker's hands.
The more they picked the more their pay,
Paid by the bag, not by the day.
Close my eyes and I'm back there still
Guzzling the fruit with my friend Jill
My mam used to clean at Billy Bulson's farm
A magical place of mystery and charm

