

Emily Medforth - village School Teacher

I thought she was old when I saw her,  
Ancient to me only just reached four.  
I remember still those feelings as mam  
Deserted me to her at the old school door.  
She never grew any older.  
Just never seemed to age.  
Never treated us unfairly.  
Never punished us in rage.  
Just expected us to follow the rules  
To be quiet and good and obey,  
Then go home quietly and discreetly  
At the end of another school day.  
We were all taught our places  
In a world of black and white.  
She read my first faltering poetry  
Encouraged me to write,  
To do my best  
In life's race  
But to never never  
Forget my place.  
She lived to over 90 years  
Then suddenly was gone  
Never changing her standards  
In a world that had fast moved on  
I don't think any of us ever thanked her  
For guiding us as we grew,  
But most of us were grateful  
And I'm certain sure she knew.  
She was there when we scattered dad's ashes  
Over Granddad and Granny Barker's grave  
I think she nodded slightly to  
My acknowledging wave:  
But she didn't look any older  
Maybe she'd grown a little small  
Or maybe over the passing years  
It was me who'd grown too tall.