

July Harvest

Born of Nature, shaped by Man,
Scattered on contoured carpet, gold on gold,
Each ring a monument to modern farming skill;
Monoliths

Temporary, recurrent,
As wheels from monstrous plant
They first transform horizons, then,
Displaced to field edge store,
They wall us out.

Fashion, profit, technical advance
Assured decline of customary bale
So handily squared for robust man.
Hayricks, cocks and stacks, welcome as houses,
Now scarcely seen except in photograph,
Have given way to densely - rounded battlements.

Through field's cut, symbol of high summer,
Salt sweat and muscle are replaced
By steel and grease.
Thus softly willowing corn becomes,
In whisk of time,
Short, spearing, prickly rough.

Mountainous machines
Cut, thresh, and truss, the job entire,
Advance in relay lines,
Bale out with easy force the golden coins.

Earth, shaved in economic time, appears;
Mighty wagons, seeming bottomless,
Have carted off to gainful store
The harvest seed.

And lustrous meadow, gleaming gold,
Takes its revenge when, keen to cross,
The feet of man, with friend at heel,
Lured on by vision of a welcoming warmth,
Encounter cutting stubble, rasping spike ---
Resurgent primal balance now resumed.