

R. M. LAWRENCE

In Harness

The sweat-stained wad of leather lay
Snarled at our boots in the granary bay.
Papa knelt and gently shook
Some dormant jingle bells awake.
I squatted for a closer look
And gave the bells another shake.

Rusty buckles, brass gone green,
Bridles, bits I'd never seen.
Tugs groaned and stretched
As he introduced the scraps
To me — a generation's work well etched
On steel, on wood, on leather straps.

He talked of Maude and Mabel C.
(Two Percherons his dad
Had had before the War.)
And told of Mag and Bib and Thor.

That day, collars and belly-bands bound
Our two blue denim lives around
A dusty shaft of dying sun:
A man, his boy, their land were one.

