

THE VISITORS

By Ursula Oxley

Two Great Crested Grebes
came down to rest
On Alresford Pond.
where they built a nest
The nest was afloat
and surrounded by reeds
Not easy to spot,
that bundle of weeds -
With a layer of grass on the top.

Binoculars poised,
a head could be seen
Rising up now and then,
black and red against green;
The eye dark and watchful;
a long, pointed bill -
The 'Whimble shaped' crest
and a chestnut neck-frill
Like a Seventeenth Century fop!

T'was amusing to watch
her mate swimming near-
He'd be there for a minute
and then disappear!
To swim under-water
for quite a long bout,
Reappearing at last
he floated about
Like a square-bottomed bottle of 'pop!

I've written three verses,
there's one more I fear,
Which I'd rather not write,
and you'd rather not hear
But the truth of it is
that the Grebes flew away
From the pond and the nest
on that unhappy day
When the curious invaded the spot.