

Johnny Fortni'ht – dialect

I remember when ev'ry other Tuesday, up the village square
The kind and gentle sawl of Johnny Fortni'ht w'u'd git off the bus
Carryen 'is lil wooden box with webbin' shoulder strap threadbare.
'E'd call on ev'ry house in the village and that included us.

'E'd knock the door politely, as 'e'd done many times before,
An' te the door if 'ome, mawther straight-a-way would go.
An' I wud stand 'longside 'er just inside the open door
As she chose a bit o' coloured thread with which she would sew.

'Is rheumatic fingers would flip things aver fer 'ee te see;
There wus 'lastic, bias bindin' an' niddles an' pins.
Silkos - fastenin's of ever'y kind and buttons there'd be,
Always with a friendly chat and a never endin' a grin.

'As I watched 'en talkin' 'is nawse was always runnin'
Runnin' right down inte and through 'is moustache!
But 'e didn't seem to mind where the muck t'was goin'
So long as he was pickin' up the smallest bit o'cash!

'E 'ad a strange kind o'accent; Plymouth, mawther thought,
And wore a long black coat that reached down te the floor
'Is well loved trilby was greasy and always worn a thwart
Each time 'e looked 'zackly as 'e'd always looked before.

When mawther 'ad finished buyin' an' 'er money was in 'is pocket
'Is lil wooden box he'd close and fasten afore 'e left the door,
An' with a puff an' blaw, would put the webbin' strap 'cross 'is jacket.
He'd say cheerio politely, **see**; in two weeks time he'd be back fer more!

I've often wondered, what 'appened te that dear ol' gentleman,
A grand ol' fellow, and the sort o' kind you don't see no more.
I Shan't find out after all this time; but I have got this 'ere plan,
To pray that he's up there in 'eaben, still goin' from door to door!

He may not be walkin''round sellin' the things he always sold,
Like Silkos,buttons, Zip Fasteners and all things like,
See, up there all the streets are paaved with gold,
So p'raps he's spreadin'God's love on a flam new bike!