

THE POET'S COLLECTED WORKS

Les, canvas-hatted countryman
clear gazing into the camera
with openness and optimism,
and the directness of a man of the land.

Les, pachyderm, never forgetful,
amazing multilingualist, sitting weightily
and pondering beyond distant memory,
tentacle trunk raised as if pencil-holding,
poised to jot yet another deep insightful thought.

Les, admirable and beloved, with
a little country girl, precarious on a stool
beside him, two-arm hug of
absolute affection around his enormous waist.

Les, farmer's handshake fore and aft,
signing his verse novel, recognizing that day,
my birthday, is also the Ides of March. ❁