

The Ice Shoe

I happened upon this abandoned farm
And was taken by the land with all its charm.
I wondered who'd left this special place
Whose prairie blooms a colored embrace.

The house fallen down but sat by a creek
Up high enough so rains couldn't seep.
The yard was choked with weeds that swayed
Where once some children laughed and played.

I rebuilt the house with one of my own
'N I fixed the barns where stock once roamed.
This wavy land with the rappling creek
So peaceful here... I couldn't speak.

'N while I toiled 'n kept a doin'
I kept my eye on a field stone ruin
With crumbled mortar but upright still
And squarely dug in the side of the hill.
I wasn't quite sure what once took place
Within these walls that made this space.

And soon came the days to restore these walls
For they held but storied waste and all.
And while I rummaged 'n looked for clues
Well...right there it was... a horse's shoe!

The shoe was weathered with worn down cleats
That once gave purchase on icy sheets
To pull his ice-block laden sled
From the frozen lake to this ice-house shed.

And I think how hard it must have been
When things were done by horse back then.
They sawed and cut the ice in blocks
To cool and save their cherished crops.

And I love to picture that tall strong horse
Who wore this shoe and stayed his course
To where I stand in this quilt of stone
By the singing creek that no one owns.

By John Herm 2008