

Extract

Poetpourri *A Labyrinth of Wandering Thought*

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Beneath a Sheltering Willow Tree

Beneath a sheltering willow tree
At the edge of my newly-purchased farm I
stumbled upon what appeared to be
An encirclement of old wrought iron
Fastened together so carefully

Old bed posts from what I could see
The height of it was about three feet
Maybe ten feet wide and twelve feet long
Iron so rotten t'was almost gone.

Some kind of pen I first supposed
But when I saw some age-old roses
Twining round that iron on either end I
decided then twas a garden

I envisioned some early settler's cabin,
With this willow tree in their front yard 'n
Thought how lovely it must have been

But further examination proved it to be
A long forgotten cemetery
Tall grasses almost hid the stones
Marking out the family bones.

A jumble of thoughts rushed through my head
What to do with these newfound dead
I made my mind up, then and there --
God had put them in my care.
Each stone became a precious cause
Be they saints or be they outlaws

I determined to be their groundskeeper
Determined to dig a fair bit deeper
Just who were they before the Reaper
Lay them in their tomb?

I got down on bended knee
And began to weed beneath that tree
Seven stones I could clearly see
Within that wrought iron room

The stones were all remarkable
Each marble plaque was carved with skill
Each one told a unique story --
Father, Mother, two girls, three boys
Hard years of the family's history.

Cleared of weeds, I could finally read
The first, a tragedy, indeed:

*Mary Martha McKinley Ericksen Born May 5, 1807
Flood took her away from me
Along with little Jeremy April 23, 1842
And he only three...
Way too soon.*

As I toiled beneath that tree
I thought of scriptural prophecy
How bones would rise from out the mud
Join up with sinew, skin and blood
And I spoke aloud, as I pulled out weeds
To the seven waiting there beneath.

*"Yes, Mary Martha McKinley Ericksen
It was indeed Way too soon...
But, Mary, along with Samuel, Reuben
Of course, your little Jeremy,
David, Martha, and Lillian,
There'll for sure be a resurrection."*

I could see, then -- that entire family
Smiling up contentedly
Beneath that sheltering willow tree.