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## Gone Days

R. R. Chapman

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# Gone Days

by R. R. Chapman

— a disappearing act, now creaking —



ILLUSTRATION BY: Mitch Williams

School Days, where have you meandered?  
Where have you gone, you turbulent,  
peaceful days? How many times has  
the sun shone down on the prairie  
sod on the easy Western slope that  
ambled on down to a wide but  
shallow canyon which sprang out  
in disarray — turning, twisting  
towards the light of day with the  
narrow, bordered Washita River only  
minutes away?

Where are you, twenty feet of grayish  
boards nailed together by hands that  
looked only ahead and up? Where are  
you, playgrounds, limited only by  
the distance we could run or fight  
or play thinking little of what  
might or might not come some other  
day?

Where are you, great teachers of a  
former day that pointed each one of  
us along the straight and narrow way  
hoping that every scrambled one  
of us would remember half the  
words they had tried to say?

Where are you, all tumbled  
together boys and girls by parents  
striving to feed and clothe you  
while Teacher tried to show you  
to throw back your shoulders  
and face the world and call  
the shots? They knew each one  
from the inside out of the  
motley lot.

May the good Lord in his  
wisdom and strength grant me  
a term of those long gone ways  
to live once more those turbulent-  
happy wishful never to be again  
Old School Days.