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R. R. Chapman

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— R. R. Chapman

The grass grew tall when the land was new —
High as a pony's back in the morning dew,
The prairie flowers in the spring grew
Monster daisies both white and blue.
Thickets of sumac and dogwood in canyons grew,
And quail by the dozens knew they grew there too,
As days grew shorter, there was no dearth of feed
Where quail gathered in canyons and grew fat on the seed.

The wind blew and snow covered the ground,
But the quail hovered under the bushes where the seed was found.
Prairie chickens cackled from their roosting ground.
They awoke and searched for the seed
As the land was devoid of the white man's weed.

Those were the days when a man felt free
Riding hills and valleys with his face to the breeze —
With the blue sky above where the bluestem grew,
Looking far in the distance, God's earth to see.
Where else on earth would a free man be?

Those were the days man can see no more
Where he will be spoken of as hence,
Those were the days without plow or fence.
Gone forever to be seen no more,
Those days of freedom where a man could roam,
Where he hung his hat, that place was home.

ILLUSTRATION BY DAWN DUNN

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