OAK LAND IN WINTER

Oaks

are talking

to each other,

by a creek,

saying

from mighty oaks

little acorns

grow.

An

oak

leaf

drift

so thick

it

even

covers

the old

Filets des Maqueraux

can.

A recipe

for a country road:

Plant some oaks

slalom style

between houses.

Let stand

sixty years.

Temperature:

can vary.

The wind

separates

by gravity:

one pile

of acorns,

another

of leaves.

 *(continued, stanza break)*

Cold

out-

lines

each

leaf

in

silver;

phase change,

reunion.

An

acorn

cup

falls

off

as easily as

the

acorn.

The

most

eminently

climbable

crowns

a hill;

its

bark

is

Noah’s

ark,

except

the creatures

come

definitely

more

than two by two.

The

red green

vine

shows

its best face

as it begins

 *(continued, no break)*

a long climb

up bark

to no

good

end.

Their

royal

roundnesses:

At branch end,

a breath-

takingly

symmetrical

ball

of a

gall

with a round

black hole

in,

or

is

it

out

of

it?

Leaves

all

tanned

the color

of a calf leather --

the gall

of it.

Dense

oak

shrubs

give

wind

voice.

A fly

lifts off

the ground.

Is it a truffle

oak?

Stunted

by

fungus

but

wanted

alive.

Oh,

colonial

dry land!

Your oaks

harbor

black gold.

And dogs

train

as pilots.

There

are

reasons

to pray

to an oak --

they say

before

one

a dog

will make

you kneel

longer

than

any

priest.

Some

green, live

year round;

some alive,

shedding.

Some holding on

to their leaves

‘til spring.

Some letting go.

Like the world,

trying

to have it

all ways.

Buds

will

swell,

buds

push

well.

Buds

can

with ease

do

what

no

wind

will.