

A Tour Poem
by Caroline Preston

As fall to winter turns with longer nights
So turn our thoughts to curling's cheerful rites:
To shouts of "sweep" and "hurry hard" we play
Shake hands and raise a glass to end the day.
But now our band was restless to explore
And curl with friends beyond our BC shore.
So setting off upon the Friendship Tour
Minnesota, North Dakota now allure.
Our merry band of sixteen minus one
Lorraine, Elaine, Pam, Penny, June, Jay, Joan
With Mallory, Kathleen, Caroline, Sandy, Pat
And Laura, Karen, Darcy, off we set
To Minneapolis where Mollie, Anne
Took charge of us with mighty welcoming hand
And guiding us along our merry way
Assured the unfolding of each memorable day.

Or piped out at the venerable St. Paul
Or sweeping at Four Season's newest hall
Then sliding over four sheets at Grand Forks
Where Midwest potluck absolutely rocks!
Along the road the scenery unfolds
Lakes, rivers, forests, wetlands and rich fields
Or crystal-sugar plants with rising steam
Whence glucose-fructose syrups sweetly stream!

Itasca next, near Mississippi's rise
Again with welcome warm and sunny skies;
The Land of Oz and Dorothy are near
And yellow brick roads wondrously appear.
To Chisholm now the great John Shuster's home
Good curling, great pulled pork and pics with mom!
Then Hibbing next, where earth's rich iron heart
Its treasures yielded up to Vulcan's art
As school they raised a temple to the Muses
Where learning flourishes and arts amuse us!

We swept hard over Hibbing's icy sward
The finest turkey dinner our reward!

We saw the iron man by Chisholm town
Now iron range and Eveleth beckon on
with Curl Mesabi's lovely coffee break
A buffet of patica, squares and cake
With shopping opportunities to boot
To tide us out to luncheon at Duluth
Out on the ice the games were won or lost
By who best dealt with early season frost!

Then off to gitchee gumis splendid hall
Our evening full of elegance and style.
Whom did we play - where are they in this room?
We all clean up so nicely on the town!
We hope we're getting better at our song
Feel free to "shove this rock" and sing along:
This singing for our supper's lot's of fun!
Next day we made our fashion show debut
so many ways a buff can help you out
(Especially if you can't make up a skit)
This handy tube you use in many ways
Neckwarmer, sports bra, headband or knee brace!
John Shuster made us welcome to his home
And posed with Olympic medal, kids and mom!

We leave Duluth the mighty Great Lakes port
Whence riches pour out from the nations heart
The produce of rich soil and iron ore
Sent down the Great Lakes from Superior's shore
From lift bridge standing grandly at the start
For ports nearby and far the ships depart
So many mariners the Great Lakes brave
So many taken fiercely to their grave
This day we think upon the thirty nine
Souls from th' Edmund Fitzgerald rudely torn
This very month we mark full forty years
That they're remembered still with many tears.

So wheeling back full circle to St. Paul
The curling club now feels like coming home!
Our last game played and last performance done
thus as our tour started so it ends
good food, beer, curling, memories, and good friends
My poem like our tour now is done