

The New Criterion

Poems February 2022

Grant Wood, “Spring Turning”

by Alan Williamson

O undulations! Small hills that seem great
to those who work them, as the breast is
great to the baby, or a sudden wave
to the exhausted swimmer. But how the men

and their horses are tiny! You’d almost need a magnifying
glass to see them, in this reproduction.

“Spring Turning.” Not just because the perpendicular
turns of the plough make a great square closing in on

the hilltop green; but because the inner earth
is turned glistening to the sky. We do not feel
the grit on the men’s fingers. We see them
at work on the ancient task of squaring the circle.

—Alan Williamson

Alan Williamson’s latest book of poems is *Franciscan Notes* (Tupelo).

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