

These two poems by John E. Lane of Wofford College (LaneJE@wofford.edu) were written Saturday 3/24/2018 during the 2018 SEFOP field conference at the Calhoun Critical Zone Observatory.

The Well

Heirloom
jonquils
in stubborn
patches
at an old
home site--

Then the well,
stone-lined,
half-filled,
so missing
the deep
decreasing
darkness
that swallows
hunting dogs
and children--

Piedmont
woods can
seem past
tense-- if we
live among
the wreck
of used-up soil
and past lives--

Even peepers
down the hill
in the river
bottom can
sound elegiac
and desperate--

But I choose
the present,
jonquils over
ruin, see
future hope
in the land's
slow renewal--

I dig my well,
turn the windlass,
dip black water
from that
wooden bucket.

In Union County

The old white
preacher, nose
like a hawk,
walks me around
the cemetery,
a quarter section
marked only
by field stones
in neat rows--
"slave graves."

"Perpetual Care.
God himself
can't touch
nothing
but the
interest."