

Gadfield Elm Chapel

First meetinghouse owned by the Church in Britain

Tucked obscurely in the corner
Of some farmer's field
The small, stone chapel dwindles
With no apparent honor.

The walls are crumbling, slowly,
Flooded by a rising tide of slender weeds.
The grey slate roof lies slumped upon the floor
In uncontested disarray.

It is a pale, unlikely sanctuary
For the word of God.

That spoken word
Once transformed itself into the air
Our forebears breathed,
The blood, that even after several generations,
Pulses quick in recognition
Of the mildest echo still abiding here

A gently simmering catalyst inviting us
To witness
And to praise.

—Randall L. Hall