

# 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 dwindle  
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