

## A Hundred-Fifty-One Years

Gently innocent, spring skips by—playing unaware  
winding a wildflower chain.

Darkening clouds trailing a lapis threat of shadows,

Flat, thin roiling clouds bulk up,

billowing rise—as smoke rises, tinge green, glowing wanly,  
embers in ashes, black as hats, veiled

bonnets in a funeral procession, marching as a dirge;

claps of thunder like a gunshot--

“the war has started”.

Rain falls dark from the bottom of the sky,

pelting through sieve holes in its' bucket.

Wind lashes saplings to the ground, even sturdy grown trees kneel.

Day needs a candle to see by

and rippled lightning is snagged at the distant horizon's edge.

Harder, sharper, relentless, the rain falls, pounding--

the compliant earth stretches back, accepting the assault.

Rainwater washes the hands of the trees,

washes the faces—those marble stones,

those granite stones--of the tombstones

in the green meadow at the edge of the green corn;

forgotten village--disappeared into departed memory,  
the dusty bricks gulping the cold water,  
the rivuleting tears flowing the brick face of the departed.  
A memory stirs, ghostly and pale, dim,  
of lives lived, loves pursued, breaths taken,  
clasps given...  
shouts, whispers, silences.  
Steadfastly the old stump endures,  
but, longing, just about to rot away,  
clinging to the moss  
which cannot support it.  
...shouts, whispers, silences,  
Voices, in a silent song.

– J. F. Lowe