

I Lull Myself Asleep

I am obliged to conjure up the former occupants,
The laughter and the gossip of the old inhabitants.
Like many of my townsmen, their memories I keep,
And with such reminiscences I lull myself asleep.

East of my beanfield, 'cross the road, lived Cato Ingraham,
Who let the walnut trees grow up lest he have need of them.
The slave of a Concord gentleman, he lived in Walden Woods;
The goldenrod in the cellarhole marks where his dwelling stood.

Here by the corner of my field, Zilpha sat to sing,
Spinning linen for the town, she made the woods to ring.
Her house was burned down in the war and she was left alone,
Heard above her gurgling pot to mutter to the bones.

Down the road on the right hand stands Brister Freeman's hill;
The apple trees he planted are growing wild there still.
He tended them for a squire until he grew too old.
He's buried with his Fenda dear, she who fortunes told.

Farther in the woods than these and nearer to the pond,
Wyman the potter squatted, turning earthenware for town.
His family lived by clay and wheel, never rich in earthly goods,
But I am pleased to know their art has graced my neighborhood.

And their vivacious lilacs, for generations on,
Unfold their flowers every spring when door and sill are gone.
Smelling just as sweetly and blossoming as fair,
I mark their tender, civil, cheerful lilac colors there.

Little did the children think, when they stuck it in the ground,
That it would root itself so, till their house had fallen down,
And tell their story faintly to a wanderer besides,
After half a century since they had grown and died.

Thus I try to conjure up the former occupants;
The laughter and the gossip of the old inhabitants.
Like many of my townsmen, their memories I keep,
And with such reminiscences I lull myself asleep.

Lyrics and melody © 1993 by Dillon Bustin
Recorded on *Cross the Water*
Cindy Kallet and Grey Larsen
2007 Sleepy Creek Music SCM105
www.cindykallet.com