

Pageant Field, Westford, MA: Poem by Tristan MacDonald



Inconspicuous and overgrown,
beside a narrow, old forest road,
bounded by colonial walls of stone,
a meadow lies forgotten and asleep,
its rusty gate's plaque reading "Pageant Field"
(a tiny sign so easy to miss
for anyone not looking for it).

At the foot of the town's tallest hill
(now wooded and likewise wild and still),
this space, about a hundred years ago,
stood proudly peopled, green and neatly mowed
to resurrect the local history
as a ten-thousand-person liturgy
rejoicing in the town's two centuries:

a mass of muskets, tri-cornered hats,
arrowheads, feathered headdresses, flags,
crowds blanketing the hill's grassy slope,
and their Model T's packed in rows below,
all now dreams, misty and residual
(mere memories with fading visuals)
from years without enfleshing ritual.

-Tristan MacDonald, Sept 2017