

*These two poems by John E. Lane of Wofford College (LaneJE@wofford.edu) were written Saturday 2/24/2018 during the 2018 SEFOP field conference at the Calhoun Critical Zone Observatory.*

## The Well

Heirloom  
jonquils  
in stubborn  
patches  
at an old  
home site--

Then the well,  
stone-lined,  
half-filled,  
so missing  
the deep  
decreasing  
darkness  
that swallows  
hunting dogs  
and children--

Piedmont  
woods can  
seem past  
tense-- if we  
live among  
the wreck  
of used-up soil  
and past lives--

Even peepers  
down the hill  
in the river  
bottom can  
sound elegiac  
and desperate--

But I choose  
the present,  
jonquils over  
ruin, see  
future hope  
in the land's  
slow renewal--

I dig my well,  
turn the windlass,  
dip black water  
from that  
wooden bucket.

## In Union County

The old white  
preacher, nose  
like a hawk,  
walks me around  
the cemetery,  
a quarter section  
marked only  
by field stones  
in neat rows--  
"slave graves."

"Perpetual Care.  
God himself  
can't touch  
nothing  
but the  
interest."