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Home Again

John P. McAfee

Appalachian Heritage, Volume 3, Number 4, Fall 1975, p. 1 (Article)

Published by The University of North Carolina Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/aph.1975.0024>



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HOME AGAIN

On these stones your father labored
To reduce living' moments to chiseled
Dates, names, and Masonic emblems.
And what did he have to show for it?
Swollen liver and vengeful wife.
On this town you labored to reduce
Humanity to Altamont and Dixieland.
And what did you have to show for it?
An unforgiving town and a hurt family.
Now, all lies stone-deep in the calm
Of daylight and dead; mountain empty
Of your mortal flesh; the air above
The grave empty of angel.
But I know what is here, what was.
This is holy, this ground which holds
The germ of my launching. Winter comes
Soon, old friend, and I breathe the fall air—
Talisman of your talent.

— John P. McAfee

John P. McAfee, originally from Texas, now lives in Asheville, N. C.,
and teaches there.