PROJECT MUSE®

John Ward From a Lost Gravestone

Charles A. Swanson

Appalachian Heritage, Volume 36, Number 1, Winter 2008, p. 54 (Article)

Published by The University of North Carolina Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/aph.2008.0011>

➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/237277>

JOHN WARD
FROM A LOST GRAVESTONE

Charles A. Swanson

I love this land. I say it now in knots—
Loveknots of coralberry, greenbriar,
Honeysuckle. Wild profusion of roots,
Stems, vines. I was once inspired
To say it, but could find no lyric voice.
I said it with a bullet in Caleb's back.
I said it with springhouses where the moist
Cool walls would hold sweet milk back
From going sour. I said it by coming back
Here where I shouldn't come, where I couldn't stay
Away. I said it cruelly, I said it fiercely.
Now milkweeds transmute wild milk-down
Into a comforter for my bed. Sweet clay.
And birds will play about my feet freely
As my bones rot to bring up another dawn.