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Where I'm From: One

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Where I'm From: One

I'm from lightning bugs
in a tree-branch cave,
skate keys, jump rope chants,
and red rover, red rover,
send Johnny on over!
I'm from scabbed knees, stoved fingers, and
baseball without gloves
I am from hills and strip mining,
well water and cisterns,
peeps and pileated,
tulip poplars and alfalfa
cowpaths and lanes.

I'm from Pop Pops and Nan Nans
then Red and Jinx
Rigel's, the restaurant, and Eberle's,
Funeral Home and Furniture Store
with just one price and one just price
I'm from the Leatherwood God and
Zane's Trace
where folks warsh, swim in the crick,
and buy paper poppies on Memorial Day

I'm from lavender blue, dilly dilly, lavender green,
from stewed tomatoes in jars,
corn pone, and succotash,
from hand made clothes and hand-me-downs,
from two grades a room, quarter lunches, and
two by two lines behind Mr. Hughes after school
from penny candy at Lingo's,
dry goods at Ethel's, and
food from the Red & White whose credit system
was waitress pads stashed in a drawer, one to a family

I'm from all the books I wanted
from the library branch under the school,
from *Home Towner* "Musings by the Mrs" and reports that
"Mr. and Mrs. Charley Loveall, now of St. Petersburg, Florida,
visited Mr. and Mrs. *Ted* Loveall over the weekend"
from four folk festival days of bands and parades,
quilts and baskets,
musicians and artists,
people! in Pike Street

I'm from my mother's hands on the piano,
my father's breath in the trombone,
from shots at the buzzer Saturday night,
and hymns on Sunday morning

And I'm from stories
told on front porches and around tables
by kin now in Friends Cemetery
and housed in photo albums,
stacked on shelves,
in the old home place,
on top of the ridge

-- Beth Rigel Daugherty,
INST Symposium, Roots: Where I'm From,
March 14, 2017