

Thanksgiving

George Washington slept here
and a hard time he had of it:
hemorrhoids were just discovered
and the cold wind, like bayonets,
genuflected through the wood's cracks.
George loved no man, no bed.
The house is now a buzzard's motel:
wrecking ball, dynamite, then site
for scavengers, are the town's dreams.
Little the City Council knew
of the once-furious shuffling of deeds,
the modernized outhouse
and its coal-burning stove,
or the super selection of wine
from George's enemy Lafayette,
the frivolous lover of all mankind.

George waited his whole life
for Valley Forge. He would think,
O.K. No, but...What did I say?
Virginia was a distant, occupied land
and the Delaware froze over
like a modern leather jacket in sleet.
There were forty inches of snow in '77
so local hookers turned redcoat.

(Cont.)

("Thanksgiving," cont., no break)

Hermetic George talked in his sleep
of biting children's arms off--
the tired British had no chance.
Unable to see ten feet in front,
the hillbilly Colonists played cards,
drank tasty hard cider, and created
betting pools for George's shifty eyes
and disposition: what day,
what month, would he journey home?

Mail was much more reliable then
and still Martha's mailbox stayed empty.

Mt. Vernon's Jamaican workers
bitterly seeded lands
and slave girls never knew
how much dinner to prepare.
Leftovers always in this spooky house!
Spring thaw came early in 1778
and still no George. The farm animals
became hesitant to pull plows,
Jefferson couldn't fix the plumbing,
and Martha, on Sunday afternoons,
would skip grace, dinner, and dessert,
and run upstairs weeping,
splitting apart the boney legs
of her peasant lover, making wishes.