

William Stafford

(1914-1993)

At the Robert Frost Memorial (1982)

We stand on marble here, the way he stood,  
Where trees grab hold and hills behind them rear,  
And hesitate – a million years.

They move, though, and his family moved, along  
The brook, out of the way – denim shapes,  
And organdy, daughter, wife, and son.  
They whittled whistles here that matched the birds,  
More songs than the one whose reputation in cement enforces us.

Not marks on marble, but marble itself, will stay:  
Let's pray our families will interrupt,  
Be brave enough to stand up to us – that  
What there is to say of how we lived, our children say.