

The Meeting

A group parades the dusty road.
A Constant thud, maul splitting wood
To kindle mother's stove,
Serves as a metronome to pace
Their progress toward the gathering place.
There they will ratify this town,
Created from neighboring ones around,
So they will have more time on Sundays.
A meetinghouse has risen at the village peak,
Which, with land from his estates,
Was willed by one who feared, perhaps,
That he had not yet fully met
Requirements to pass the pearly gates.
He'd had too many chores to set aside
His Sundays whole, and ride
Elsewhere for absolution.
Included in the execution of his will,
A generous solution – to subsidize this building
On the half acre where it stands,
Bringing service to the farmers
As they daily work to feed their families
From their stony lands.

Presented by Adelaide Northrop as introduction to a short reenactment of the first Chaplin, Connecticut town meeting at the Chaplin Congregational Church meetinghouse on Saturday, July 2, 2022. She was appointed as the town's first poet laureate for the years surrounding the celebration of the town's 200th anniversary.