Contents

Introduction xiii
Editor’s Note xxvii

Hill Daughter

Memoria 3
Warning 4
Blizzard 5
Snow Angels 6
American Boating Song (1939)
Mayapple Hill 9
Poet 10
The Dream 11
Lullaby 12
Aubade to Fear (Heavy with Child) 13
Second Sight (My Son’s First Springtime) 14
Hill Daughter 15

Wire Brier

Fox and Geese 19
Hill Song 20
Faldang 21
Fiddler (1976) 22
Mountain Corn Song 24
Moonshiner 25
Wire Brier 26
Involved (The Spider) 27
Overheard on a Bus (Woman with a Cleft Palate) 28
Chestnut Orchard 29
First Flight 30
Lost in Orbit 31
How to Unbewitch a Backtracking Hound 32
Ballad of Joe Bittner 33
Stories at Evening (A Suburban Mother Tells Stories to Her Son) 34
Ballad of Miss Sally 35
Ballad of the Rest Home 37
West Virginia 38
Garden Moment 39
Coal Fern 40
Ballad of New River 41
Gauley Mountain

Arrow Grasses by Greenbrier River 45
Gabriel MacElmain, Pioneer 46
The Clearing 47
The Flame 48
Cornelius Verner 49
Katchie Verner’s Harvest 50
Oil Field 51
Lydia Verner 52
The Son 53
Pioneer Lullaby 54
Granny Saunders 55
Granny’s Story 56
Martha MacElmain 57
Jane Renick MacElmain (1) 58
Jane Renick MacElmain (2) 59
Donna MacElmain 60
Susan O’Kane 61
Nora O’Kane 62
Tillie Sage (1) 63
Tillie Sage (2) 64
Tillie Sage (3) 65
Jed Kane 66
Sol Brady 67
The Turnpike 68
Traveler and Old Sorrel 69
Burying Field 70
The River 71

The Horsemen

Corner Tree 75
The Autumn Drives (Early 1800s) 77
The Horsemen 79
Timber Boom 81
Log Drive 82
Saturday Night (1890-1910) 83
First Train (1895) 84
The Spark 85
Deserted Lumber Yard 86
Reforestation 87
Saturday Night (1930s) 88
Stoic (Circa 1907) 89
The Company (Coal Miner) 90
Best House They Was Ever In (Retired Coal Operator) 91
Monongah (December 6, 1907, Marion County, West Virginia, on the Monongahela River) 93
Overheard on a Bus (Miner’s Wife)  94
Winter Day (Coal Country)  95
The Hard Road  96
The Roads  97
The Great Depression  98
Depression Wind (Winter 1930)  99
Pasture Line Fence  100
Threnody for Old Orchards  101
The Grave Creek Inscribed Stone  102
The Runway Team (Written a Few Days
  After John Glenn’s Space Flight)  103

Time Is Our House

Time Is Our House  109
Cassandra  110
The New Corbies  111
After the Blast  112
Potherbs (Of the Edible Wild Plants
  My Granny Taught Me)  113
Of Fitness to Survive  114
Life-Force  115
The Cave  116
“When”  117
When the Scientists Told Me of the
  Expanding Universe  118
To the Boys in Freshman History
  (Thermopylae, 480 B.C.)  119
The Hounds  121
Epitaph in the Imperative Mode  122
The Passage of Time  123
The Verb  124
Wife  125
Backward Flight  126
Over the Mountain  127

Author’s Notes  133
Bibliography  137