



102nd CCC Company, Miles Standish Forest

## Miles Standish Forest, Plymouth, Mass, 1934

*'Tis good for men to love their present pains.*

Shakespeare, *Henry V*

Through the sepia tones of the cracked photograph they grin,  
their multi stocking caps at jaunty angles, tilted back, off and  
on the far right of the leg-crossed front row, everybody's best friend,  
the company dog, guarded by a hulking pilgrim with no front teeth.  
Cadre, second row center, two foresters, four regular army veterans  
in Smokey the Bear hats and puttees, arms folded, grim prophets  
lost in a memory of forfeited America. On the top row six cooks  
in white, you dead center, your indigo eyes smiling handsome.  
All this just a month before your first taste of home-made hooch  
made you run in naked innocence through the cold Cape Cod rain,  
a year before Mussolini became the white emperor of Abyssynia,  
and a decade before your life ran russet in the snow of Bastogne.  
How many others were signed to die? How many other sons  
search these ignored archives for fathers they never knew?