

The Reenactors Line Up

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Honorable Mention

Men in wool costumes, born into them like they were born into this town
that asks for it, this town where gunfire and battles are poorly mimed
by father-son-brother outings and boy-groups earning felt badges,
death made fun in orchestrated cannon-fire and ghost tour, where dead flags
are resurrected along Main Street in the name of holy History, amen.
Men in costumes, smoking Marlboro Lights before marching off
to the parade line-up, playing at soldier and modern man all at once,
flicking away the modern in one easy motion, unbothered by dirt the butts
will call home in ten minutes and still in ten years, buried by time
and weather. Men in costumes, marching to drum beats they memorized
in air-conditioned basements, marching in the heat an annual route,
questioning halfway through why they sign up again and again, thinking only
of the promise that waits at the thing's end: fried chicken and beer, a soft couch,
the hum of summer laziness, green lawns, wives in bright dresses,
undisturbed rest, all the comforts of home.