

1944

Words Before Battle

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Recommended Citation

Deming Lund, Margaret. "Words Before Battle." *New Mexico Quarterly* 14, 3 (1944). <http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol14/iss3/23>

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IN THE MARKET SQUARE

The mortal unrest, begun among the rushes,
 Bore us the babe, in wicker, for our prophet.
 Now for our late emolument two verses
 Graven on the monument of earth:

He set up shop on the earth and died;
 Left shop, two daughters, and one cow beside.

JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

TWO POEMS

WORDS BEFORE BATTLE

Because I stand
 Because I seek
 (Music and truth set the people free,
 Guns and bread and poetry)
 Accept this hand
 Stroke this cheek
 (Frankly, because I am not dead,
 I heard what the dying prisoner said)
 Because I am not lying down
 Purple or a brittle dust,
 I set my feet and raise my crown
 (He made us hungry and prey of lust)
 (He made us empty.)—No more talk,
 Because I stand is why I walk.

And since I walk toward liberty,
 Death come take a walk with me.

THE LOST LIEUTENANT

They found his body after some months.
 A dentist, perhaps, identified
 All that was his from other on
 The old wrecked mountain-side.