

In the vernacular gallery

by [David Wright](#) in the [October 17, 2012](#) issue

Hanging quilt and the gazes of the carved half-dozen  
prows of ships and this preacher, upright and upholding  
the opened and planed smooth Word of God in his lap,  
he fixes his hollowed eyes past the book, on a particular  
point of sight, devotional turn for the wooden minds  
in his care. Or recollects a work song from before the war  
and feels its hum in his brow and high cheeks that betray  
the grain of southern white pine, deep gouges of chisel  
and time. I am praying to him now, that the split in his spine  
will hold. That like his arms blessed tight to his trunk, he will  
keep his own counsel until the Spirit fires him alive as the free  
hand and eye of the vernacular maker whose sermon he is.