The Gift Outright by Robert Frost

The land was ours before we were the land’s. 
She was our land more than a hundred years 
Before we were her people. She was ours 
In Massachusetts, in Virginia, 
But we were England’s, still colonials, 
Possessing what we still were unpossessed by, 
Possessed by what we now no more possessed. 
Something we were withholding made us weak 
Until we found out that it was ourselves 
We were withholding from our land of living, 
And forthwith found salvation in surrender. 
Such as we were we gave ourselves outright 
(The deed of gift was many deeds of war) 
To the land vaguely realizing westward, 
But still unstoried, artless, unenhanced, 
Such as she was, such as she would become.

-Excerpt from *A Witness Tree* (1943)