

Making History

CHARLES WEBB

Columbus didn't think, "I've discovered
America!" He was happy just to find dry land.

The men who won the Battle of the Bulge
were only trying not to die. Even

the man who collected rocks too round
for spear-heads, never thought the toy he made

would roll his offspring out of caves
into a world of Fords and Chevrolets.

When politicians bray, "Future generations
will look back..," I hope they'll see,

not some court full of hacks dismembering
the constitution—not corporations battling

to own the *Homo sapiens* genome—not even
doe-eyed aliens cooing mathematically,

“We come in peace”—but me: munching
chow mein and chuckling at *The Snopes Report*

while my wife watches *The Evening News*
with *Peter Jennings*, and my son stomps up

in a reeking diaper which I’m on my way
to change when, in the dark cave of my brain,

two flints strike sparks that fall onto a pile
of straw which I scoop up, then run

for my notebook, cradling the small light
in my hands.