

THE BANNERS OF THE COAST

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649196081

The banners of the coast by Archibald Rutledge

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ARCHIBALD RUTLEDGE

**THE BANNERS
OF THE COAST**

The Song of the Santee

From out the secret mountain deeps my yearning soul was
drawn,
I flow through violet valleys, and by languorous leagues of
lawn,
In the beauty of the mountains in the dusk and in the dawn.

There I saw the far blue mountains in the visionary west,
Saw the mist upon the mountains in the opal evening west,
Saw the clouds that labor for me o'er the mountains' misty
crest.

Then I journey through the midland where the cotton's in the
boll,
Where the stalwart rustling corn-ranks, like an army past
control,
March down upon my margin where my waters softly roll.

(Once I saw my queenly City, when the foe had stormed the
gate;
Saw my proud, defenceless City, in the brutal hands of fate,
And the land cried out for mercy on Columbia, desolate.)

But the ocean ever calls me in a solemn undertone,
Past the mountains, past the meadows where the waving wil-
lows shone,
Past many a pine and cypress standing sentinel alone.

And so I reach the Delta in the quiet closing day;
Through the reaches of the ricefields, stretching mistily away,
I go as a grey spirit through a throng of spirits grey:

By the sweet plantations old, where the silence seems to fold
Forms of Beauty in caresses with a love that is not told,
By the faces that are sleeping, by the hearts so dim and cold.

O the places that I passed, and the pictures that I glased,
And the loveliness I mirrored ere I came to rest at last,
From Waterhon to Wicklow, and from Wicklow to the coast.

There was Hampton on the shore, white and stately as of yore,
Seen glimmering through a vista as of years long gone before;
Then the desolate Montgomery of those who come no more.

Then Fairfield on the high bluff, where my waters gather wide,
With Navarino Island just across the yellow tide,
With the Wedge and Harrietta gazing from the southern side.

Then the ruined Eldorado, the monument to those
For whom no longer flame the stars, nor any lily blows,
Nor any flower of summer lands, nor any Southern rose:

Though the voices of its loved ones the haunted past enshrines
With the broken years of childhood and the light that dimly
shines,
Yet I hear their voices echo in the music of the pines.

By night I reach the coast-line, with its myriad creeks and
bays;
Where the dark palmettoes gather, and the blasted cedars gaze,
Lone watchers ever by the deep's tremendous thunder-ways.

And so unto the ending of my journey do I come,
The sea-wind blowing softly o'er the heaving midnight foam;
Within those luminous waters far, my spirit finds its home.

The Past

Here where the twilight trees
Gather strange darknesses,
One lies low;
And to her I must go,
Even as today glides into yesterday,
Not dead, but passed away.

Mysterious Past! how like a face I knew,
Long dreaming now:
The shadows of thy silent years
Sleep, as the tall dark firs
Over that dream of hers.

The warm hand and heart,
The loveliness of days,
Must needs depart,
Must go their ways;
God wills it so,
That they should go.

But in the Future's eyes
I read the unsurprise
Of wondrous things concealed
She holds to be revealed,—
The face that I have seen,
The land where I have been.

Mysterious Past! how like a face I loved,
Long sleeping now;
O'er thee thy grey and shadowy years
Dream, as the high dim firs
Over that sleep of hers.

The Holy Grail

Within your eyes are deeps of peace;
The sleeping stars above the trees,
The white moon dreaming in the skies
Are of your eyes.

The mystery of night is theirs,
And all the yearning of the years,—
A farewell and a sacrifice
Within your eyes.

Far deeds of valor shine through them,—
The Knights before Jerusalem;
A dying martyr's glorious spirit
Your eyes inherit.

The constant followers love has had,
Love-led, and by Sir Galahad,
Find in your face, when wanderings fail,
The Holy Grail.

A Deserted Plantation

Over the fields and the far lonely strand
The barren broom-grass waves, the lost winds sigh:
Grey-shrouded oaks and rustling laurels high
To sentinel the desolation stand.
The wild sweet woods are deep on either hand.
Beneath the blue and trembling Southern sky,
There is a beauty here that cannot die,
For love makes beautiful a ruined land.

I saw a mourner in that solitude,
And the still twilight seemed to search his face
With anguish dim. Faint with vain tears he stood,
A loneliness, and of that scene a part,
For he beheld the tomb of all his race,
And gazed upon the burial of his heart.

Good Friday Night

The hills are folded in a mist
By Galilee, on Galilee
A silence comes and it is night,—
The stars awaken tranquilly.

Night's beauty, mirrored in her dreams
In Galilee, in Galilee,
Sleeps, and the stars like spirit barks
Move softly on a spirit sea.

The winds sigh with immortal grief
O'er Galilee, and Galilee
Seems mortal and remembers all
That cannot be, that cannot be.

The palms are moving in dim waves
By Galilee, on Galilee
The starlight falls on motionless
Blue waters of a quiet sea.

The shores are hushed, the winds are still
On Galilee, o'er Galilee
The stars are setting far away,
And One has died for thee and me.

Southern Pines

The shadowy glory of remembering
Falls on those days whose light has never died;—
That light that lingers still on sea and shore,
Gleaming in fragrant woods and far away.
Beautiful with a beauty that is past.
The willows waving in soft mystery,
Seeming to lands of wonder marginal,
Breathe forth this spirit: ah, it is the song
Heard o'er the darkening twilight river's tide,
Or sweetly borne by aromatic winds
O'er pine and palm and dark green myrtle grove,
From languorous tumults of the dreaming sea.

O yet I knew not the pangs of loss,
Of splendor long departed, till I heard
In the dim Pines a sighing as of death,
Or sound of falling tears, or as the wind
O'er melancholy waters in the night;
Deep every breath was in slow anguish drawn,
And was released in mournful ecstasy.

I stood beneath those sounding purple spires
As down the pathway of her solemn light
The moon descended: through the vistas sad,
I saw old faces glimmer, burn and fade,
Full of a vanished power or so fair
That round them all a dreadful sweetness shone,
From parted lips and pitiful bright eyes.

As one returns from dreamland beautiful,
Or from a vision mystical with stars,
To desolate encounter with the Dawn,
To lamentable knowledge of the Truth,
So I awoke from visions of the Past,
And turned away, from wailings musical,
Through the lone land toward the setting moon.