

# **THE BOY HUNTERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI**

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The boy hunters of the Mississippi by Mayne Reid

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**MAYNE REID**

**THE BOY HUNTERS  
OF THE MISSISSIPPI**



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EDITED BY ERNEST RHYS

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

THE BOY HUNTERS OF  
THE MISSISSIPPI · BY  
CAPTAIN MAYNE REID

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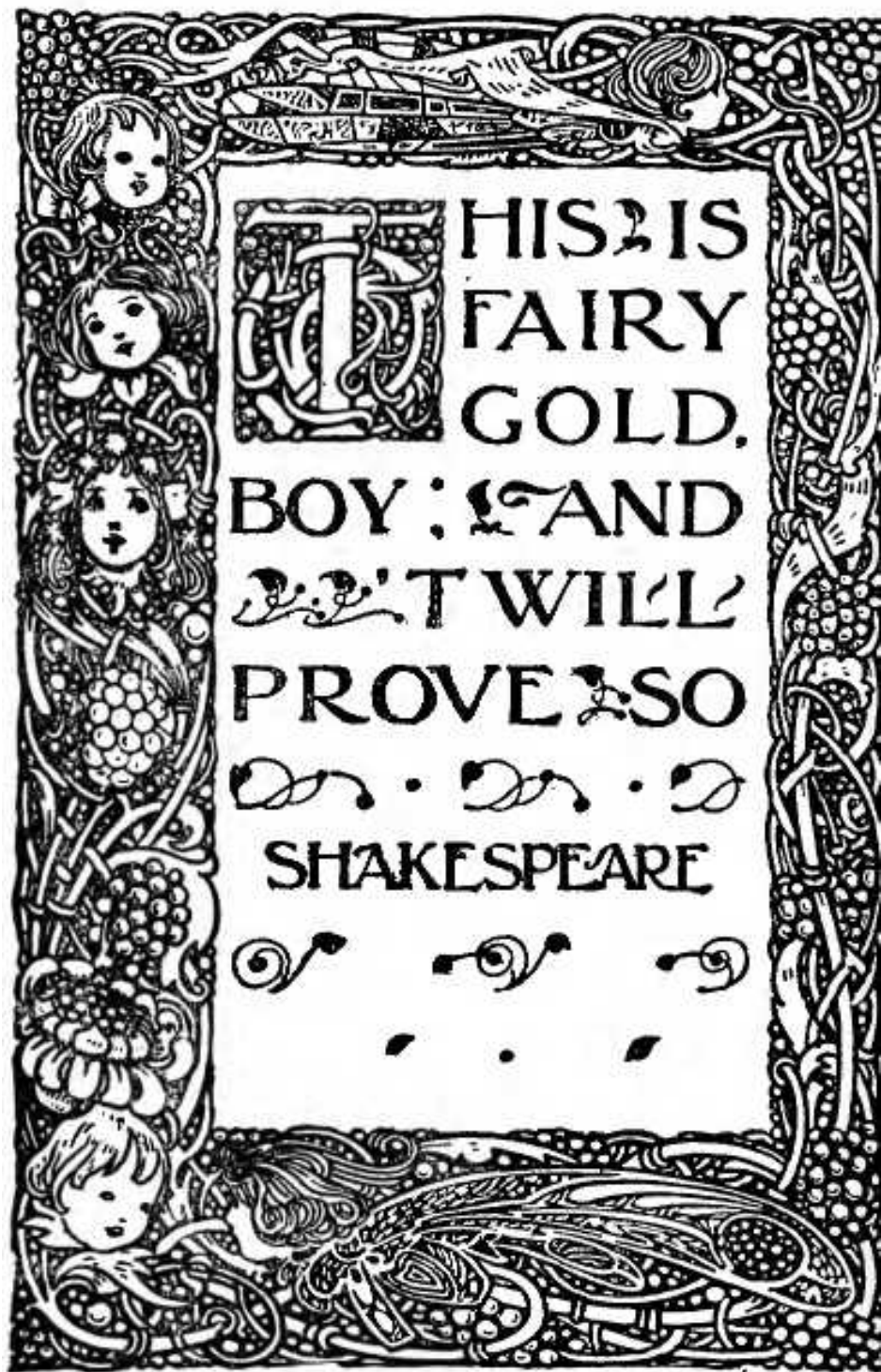
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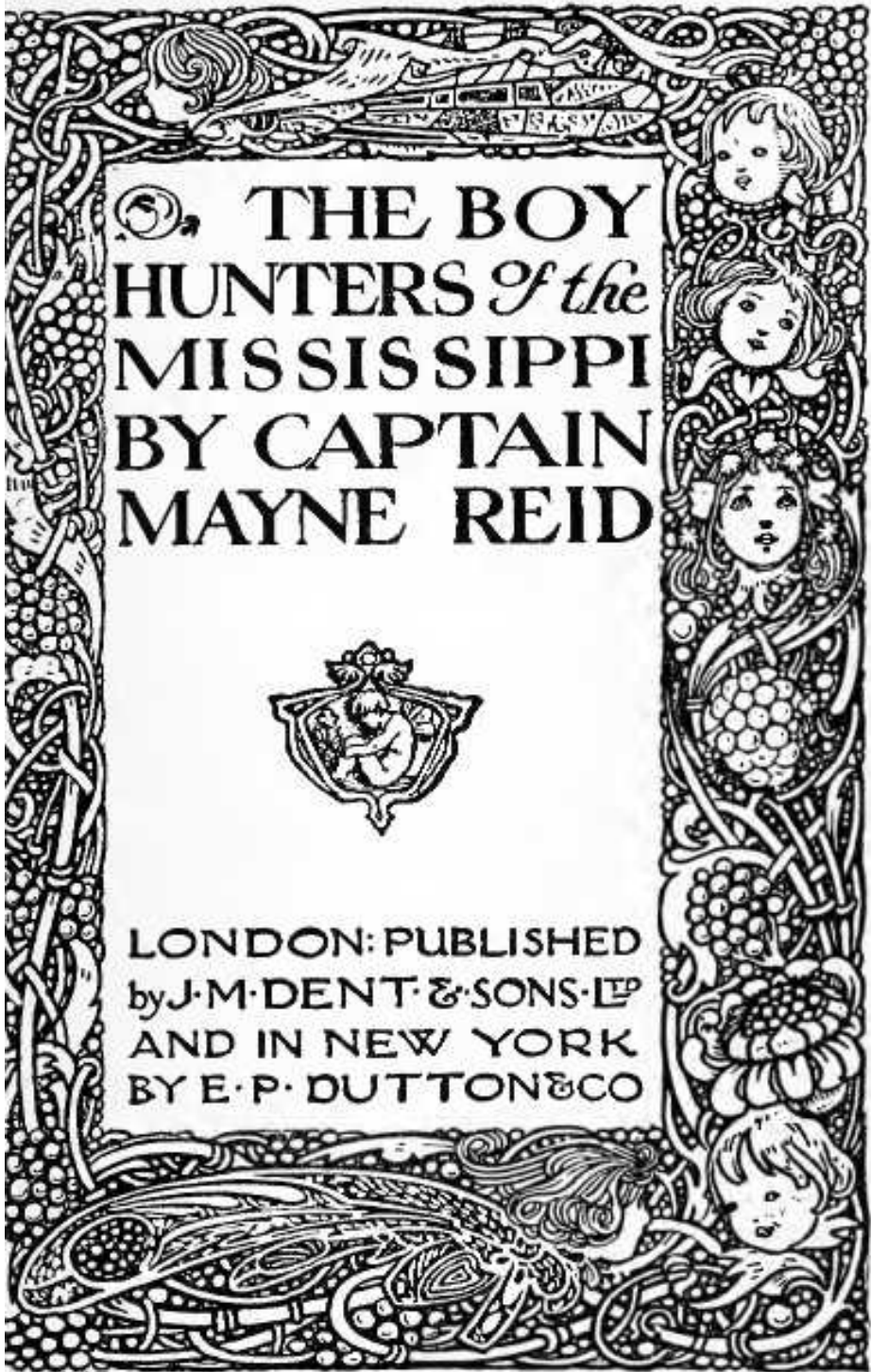
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**T**HIS IS  
FAIRY  
GOLD.  
BOY: AND  
BUT WILL  
PROVE SO  
SHAKESPEARE





© THE BOY  
HUNTERS *of the*  
MISSISSIPPI  
BY CAPTAIN  
MAYNE REID



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## INTRODUCTION

CAPTAIN MAYNE REID had one first-rate claim as a tale-writer who dealt with out-of-door things and the wild life. He had lived and fought and gone through red-hot adventures before ever he took to writing them down; and critic never made worse shot than when one reviewer accused him of having made up a well-known romance of his "from seven different authors." This was *The Scalp Hunters*, which was published in 1851.

He was born in 1818, of a family of Scotch divines settled in County Down, Ireland; and Ballyronev was his birth-place. On the mother's side he claimed descent from "the hot and hasty Rutherford" who figures in Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion*. This hot and hasty temper he is said to have inherited, and in no small share. When he was twenty-one, he left Ireland for New Orleans, and after many hard experiences and failures in some dubious forms of commerce, including slave-dealing in New Orleans, which revolted him, he settled for a time at Natchez. There he had good chances of getting to know at first hand something of the Mississippi, and the westward haunts of the buffalo, grizzly, 'possum, and wild horse described in the following story. The scenes like Point Coupée, the prairies of Opelousas, the Texan wilds, the streams like the Bayou Crocodile and the Sabine, are all drawn from his own experience, and by one who was a naturalist as well as a tale-writer.

In *The Boy Hunters* he laid especial stress on the truthfulness of the materials, and "the genuineness of the scenery and the natural facts" in their tale. He had taken no liberty in it, he said, with the laws of nature for the sake of effect. Neither bird nor beast, plant nor tree, had been lifted out of its geographical range, although he had in dealing with them chosen naturally their more marked characteristics.