



CHARLES FLETCHER LUMMIS

Collected Poems

THE COMPLETE RECOVERED POETRY

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers | Los Angeles, 2026

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ARCHIVAL IMAGES

The poet and the material history of his books



Charles Fletcher Lummis, 1897. Photograph by Aemilian Scholl. Library of Congress.



Lummis writing at a roll-top desk, ca. 1902. USC Libraries Special Collections.



El Alisal, Lummis's hand-built stone home in Los Angeles, ca. 1898–1910. USC Libraries Special Collections.

INTRODUCTION

Poet, editor, walker, collector, librarian, and builder

Charles Fletcher Lummis made literature inseparable from a life of strenuous self-invention. He printed his first poems on slips of birch bark while at Harvard, walked 3,507 miles from Ohio to Los Angeles to take a newspaper job, reported the Apache campaigns, lived at Isleta Pueblo while recovering from paralysis, edited *The Land of Sunshine* and *Out West*, built El Alisal by hand, organized preservation and Indigenous-rights campaigns, founded the Southwest Museum, and served as Los Angeles city librarian. Poetry ran through all of those roles. The youthful lyrics of *Birch Bark Poems* test inherited romantic forms; the newspaper and magazine verse converts railroads, deserts, cowboys, missions, public figures, and Southwestern speech into regional performance; and *A Bronco Pegasus* (1928), issued in the last year of his life, gathers half a century of poems into a deliberately autobiographical sequence. The result is exuberant, uneven, theatrical, and historically revealing. Lummis could oppose federal abuses of Native people while still writing through the ethnographic and racial assumptions of his period; he could celebrate California's layered cultures while helping fix the mission romance in the regional imagination. This edition keeps those tensions visible. It resets the complete recovered text of *Birch Bark Poems*, five uncollected poems verified in the project's original periodical scans, and the full poetic contents of *A Bronco Pegasus*. Later reprintings are not duplicated when the 1928 collection supplies a complete reading text; significant earlier witnesses are identified in publication notes. The poems appear as poems rather than page facsimiles: true stanza divisions and repeated intentional indents are retained, while accidental wraps, centered source-page drift, page furniture, and OCR debris are removed.

Biography

Charles Fletcher Lummis was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, on March 1, 1859, the son of Methodist minister and educator Henry Lummis and Harriet Waterman Fowler Lummis. His mother died when he was very young, and the household's books, music, religion, and New England educational ambitions shaped him early. He entered Harvard in 1878, in the class that included Theodore Roosevelt. He wrote for the *Harvard Crimson*, pursued athletics and campus sociability with at least as much energy as formal study, and left before completing his final semester. In 1879 he hand-produced three tiny copies of *Birch Bark Poems*, printing eight poems on thin sheets of bark; Harvard later granted him an honorary degree in 1906.

In 1880 Lummis married Dorothea Rhodes and joined the *Scioto Gazette* in Chillicothe, Ohio. When he accepted work at the *Los Angeles Times* in 1884, he turned the move west into a public feat: a 3,507-mile walk completed in 143 days and reported in dispatches that later became *A Tramp Across the Continent*. He reached Los Angeles in early 1885 and became city editor of the *Times*. Newspaper work sent him through the Southwest during the Apache wars and introduced landscapes and communities that would dominate his books.

Overwork and illness led to a severe stroke in 1887, leaving his left side paralyzed. He recovered gradually, much of the time at Isleta Pueblo in New Mexico, learning Spanish and developing close relationships with Pueblo communities. Those experiences deepened his commitment to Southwestern history, archaeology, folklore, photography, and advocacy. They also placed him within the complicated history of salvage ethnography: Lummis defended Indigenous people against coercive federal schooling and other abuses, yet described and collected their cultures through assumptions that modern readers must scrutinize.

After his marriage to Dorothea ended, Lummis married Eva Douglas in 1891. Their son Amado died in 1900 at six, a loss that marked the family deeply. Lummis published prolifically—travel writing, history, fiction, ethnography, folk-song study, photography, and verse—and returned to Los Angeles magazine culture. As editor and eventual owner of *The Land of Sunshine*, renamed *Out West*, he made the magazine a major platform for Western writing, art, civic debate, preservation, and regional identity. Jack London,

Mary Austin, John Muir, and other prominent figures appeared in its pages.

Lummis's institutional ambitions matched his literary ones. He organized the Landmarks Club in 1897 to preserve California missions, founded the Sequoia League in 1902 to oppose mistreatment of Native Americans, helped establish the Southwest Society in 1903, and drove the long campaign that produced the Southwest Museum, incorporated in 1907 and opened in its Highland Park building in 1914. His stone house, El Alisal, became both home and salon, crowded with books, art, artifacts, visitors, and the traces of a deliberately staged public life.

From 1905 to 1910 Lummis served as librarian of the Los Angeles Public Library. He expanded reference service, encouraged children's access, promoted distinctive collections, and imposed anti-theft marks that became notorious. Conflict with the library board and the burdens of administration ended the appointment, but the episode shows how seriously he treated cultural infrastructure. In 1915 he married Gertrude Redit, his third wife. Spain recognized his work in 1917, one sign of the transatlantic reach of his Hispanic studies.

Music remained central to his later years. Lummis recorded and transcribed Spanish-language songs across the Southwest and California, collaborated with musicians, and published *Spanish Songs of Old California* in 1923. His final poetry book, *A Bronco Pegasus* (1928), arranges writing from boyhood through maturity in sections that move among portraits, epigrams, Southwestern ballads, comic dialect pieces, landscape poems, translations, and youthful experiments. Its self-conscious chronology makes it less a late miscellany than a poetic autobiography.

Lummis died of brain cancer at El Alisal on November 25, 1928. His papers, photographs, recordings, books, and institutional records survive in large collections at the Autry Museum of the American West, the Huntington Library, UCLA, UC Irvine, the University of Arizona, the University of Colorado, and elsewhere. The scale of the archive reflects the breadth of his work, but it also helps explain why his poetry has often been separated from the rest of his career. Read together, the poems show how regional literature, journalism, collecting, performance, civic institution-building, and personal myth converged in early Los Angeles.

EDITORIAL NOTE AND SOURCES

Corpus, source control, and reading-text policy

The edition uses original scans and page images as its textual authorities. It does not derive lineation or indentation from the project's earlier Lummis PDF. Every poem begins on a new page; true stanza divisions and intentional repeated indents are retained, while narrow-page wraps and page-centering drift are not reproduced.

The complete text of the privately printed *Birch Bark Poems* (1879) is followed by verified magazine poems not reprinted in *A Bronco Pegasus*. The full poetic contents of *A Bronco Pegasus* (1928) then appear in the book's own section order. Poems that migrated from magazines into the book are printed once from the later collected text, with publication history recorded where recoverable.

Obvious OCR corruption, isolated scan marks, broken words, false spaces, and damaged quotation marks are corrected against the scans. Book and periodical titles are italicized. Poem titles retain the series title style; subtitles, speakers, authorial notes, and epigraphs are distinguished from verse.

BIRCH BARK POEMS

The privately printed Harvard volume of 1879

Birch Bark

Web from a fairy loom,
Woven by starry light,
Or when the morning-bloom
Blossoms from night.

Shot thro' with sunny gleams,
Soft threads of amber light,
Fair as are summer dreams
Where all is bright.

Dyed in the golden flood
Forth from the sun that flows,
Stained with such ichor-blood
As throbs and glows

Deep in the blushing breast
Of the dew-dimpled rose,
When first, at Love's behest,
Love's thrill she knows.

Web from a fairy loom,
Woven in elfin glee,
Late, late may Beauty's doom,
Blight, fall on thee!

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Sonnet: The Old Man of the Mountain

Son of the tempest and the earthquake's jars,
From out the womb of Chaos wast thou born,
When the first sunrise from the gates of morn
Stepped forth celestial and drew back the bars
Of darkness, and the timorous youthful stars
Shrank back with Night, their mother. Thou hast worn
The centuries as jewels, and the scars
That time has left upon thee but adorn
Thy thoughtful brow with more than kingly grace.
Man's life-tide ebbs and flows as flows the sea,
But thy stout soul, as ever in thy place,
Thou lookest out upon Eternity,
Of passion or of sorrow shows no trace,
Crowned with a radiant immortality.

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Getreten

Alone on the meadow's brink I roam,
And watch its billows of restless green
Whose crests are capped with the daisy-foam,
While buttercup bubbles float between.

Amid their waving Her form I see
Coming across from the mossy stile,
And all the blossoms with tip-toe glee
Turn up their faces to meet her smile.

But ah! the daisies are lying pale
Along the path that her feet have trod,
And staining its dainty cobweb veil,
The clover bleeds on its bed of sod.

Ah, blooms, whose perfume in vain is shed
To win one smile as she wanders by,
I fear me under her cruel tread
My heart with yours in the dust shall die!

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Drifting

The night-winds whisper and shiver
As the ghostly clouds go by;
The stars are pale on the river,
And pale in the midnight sky.

My boat is drifting lonely
On the river's sombre breast,
And the splashing keel tells only
Of loss and of hopeless quest.

The lone banks yearn to the river,
And the tall grass whispers low,
But the stream, tho' its pulses quiver,
Stays never its fateful flow.

Ah, fain would the waters linger
To love and caress and dream,
But the buoy, like a fate's grim finger,
Points ever adown the stream.

And so I drift on lonely,
And I may not reach the shore
With my rudder lost, and only
One battered and broken oar.

My love on the strand is calling,
But I stretch my arms in vain,
For the tide, still falling, falling,
Sweeps out to the shoreless main!

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Song

A lonely bird is quivering
 Across the dark'ning sky,
And the faint west-wind goes shivering
 Among the pine-tops high.

The bird to her nest is flying,
 Where her brood impatient wait,
But the sad breeze wanders sighing,
 And has nor home nor mate.

My heart like the night-wind quivers,
 In a desolate, vague unrest;
And Hope in the twilight shivers,
 Like a bird that has lost her nest!

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Sunset on Profile Lake

The westward sun has left a wake of flame
Across the silent lake, upon whose breast
The stern, still Face, by wrathful tempests scarred,
Looks down impassive from the cliffs that frame
The crystal waters as they lie at rest,
Secure and trustful in his sleepless guard.

The regal trout, bestarred with gold and red,
Shoots headlong high above his native tide
In pure excess of joy, to greet the sun
Ere yet he seeks his far Pacific bed;
And from the copses on the mountain-side
The rabbit leaps, a living streak of dun.

Upon the Old Man's brow one lingering ray
Still clings caressingly, as if God's hand
In radiant benediction rested there;
And on the breezes' eddying currents, Day
Drifts out beyond the dim horizon strand,
And Night swims softly down the purple air.

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Quatrains

Clouds.

Wings of the elsewise viewless wind,
Sails o' the bark o' the drifting day,
Squadrons that leave no trace behind,
Mountains that crumble and fade away.

Mist.

Foam of the wind-waves, lightly driven
Thro' the blue æther and lower air,
Thou art like a stainless hope, in heaven;
On earth thou seemest a white despair.

Clearing Up.

The sun bursts thro' the scowling sky,
And glorifies the dreary wold,
Like hearts which Love's dear alchemy
Transmutes from iron to ruddy gold.

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

Canoe Song

Moonlight above and around and below me,
Drowning the world in a silvery sea,
Rippling and dancing its waves overflow me,
Flooding my soul with a rapture as free

Free and unrecking of care as the ocean,
Where he beats white on some Indian shore;
Free as the wind that with fetterless motion
Shouts his glad thoughts to the sky evermore.

Light on the ocean of sapphire above me
Float the soft stars—as unchanging and true
As the devotion of spirits that love me—
Drift as I drift in my birchen canoe,

Or lie astrand, on cloud-islands and beaches
Tide-marked by ripples of light from the moon,
Far Eldorados, gold-shored, and with reaches
White as a meadow of daisies in June.

Oh that to-night might be made a forever,
Or that Forever might end with to-night!
That, disembodied, my spirit might quiver
Under the thrill of immortal delight!

Genius of Poesy, sit here beside me;
Wrap me in æther impalpable, fine;
Bring me the peace that the world has denied me;
Lull me to rest in thy bosom divine.

Never to earth, with its heartache and sorrow
Will we return, but, with ecstasy rife,
Drift till we float in that golden To-morrow
Where life is poetry, poetry life!

Publication. *Birch Bark Poems* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: privately printed, 1879).

MAGAZINE VERSE NOT
REPRINTED IN *A BRONCO*
PEGASUS

1895

The Old Mestizo

Todos dicen que soy un viejo,
Yo no sé en que se puede fundar.

Old Folk-Song.

God give you good evening, paisano and yet unknowing
This land that you were born in, your land that has ceased to be!
Where is it gone—come tell us, you who have seen its going—
That slow, good, patriarchal world that was by the Western Sea?

Where? Quien sabe? But somewhere gone, and beyond our sifting;
Lost as the years behind you and the faces long unseen.
Under your feet you felt it—the very landscape shifting,
Ever the Olden withering, ever the New grown green.

Let, if he will, disprize you, the lofty latter comer
(Neither will learn from the other the thing that God knows best).
He, so much the wiser—shall he in his hundredth summer
Turn more steady and even-eyed his face to the shadowy west?

Publication. *The Land of Sunshine*, vol. 2, no. 3 (February 1895), frontispiece, p. 230.

The Cowboy's Valentine

Reprinted from Munsey's.

Say, Moll, now don't yo' 'llow to quit
A-playin' maverick?
Sech stock shud be corralled a bit,
'N' hev a mark 't 'll stick!
Old Val's a-roundin' up today,
Upon the Sweetheart Range;
'N' me a-helpin', so to say,
Though this yere herd is strange
To me—'n' yit, ef I c'd rope
Jes' one to wear my brand,
I'd strike f'r Home Ranch on a lope,
The happiest in the land!
Yo' savvy who I'm runnin' so,
Yo' savvy who I be;
Now cain't yo' take that brand—yo' know.
The ♥ MINE

Publication. *The Land of Sunshine*, vol. 2, no. 3 (February 1895), p. 239.

San Juan's Day at Dolores

Ay! Never was fiesta fair as good San Juan's today—
A thousand souls at mass this morn, and what a glory when
They ran the chicken-races! How Felipe swept away
The squawking prize—first cavalier among a hundred men!

How like a rock from off the cliff he thundered down the plain!
And how the chase behind him roared in a tumultuous flood!
And how he beat the grapplers off, with feathered blows amain!
And how his white teeth laughed thro' bronze besplashed with manly blood!

Ah, tall Felipe of my soul—Felipe of the vow!—
The princeliest and proudest and the bravest everywhere!
There in Don Pedro's portico they make the baile now—
Ay! how my heart is dancing, for Felipe will be there!

The candles, how they flutter on the snowy-whitened wall—
Coquetting with the shadows in the rafters dark above!
And yonder hobbles Crooked Juan, best musico of all;
And old Jose, with his guitar that knows the songs of love.

And now they come by twos and fours along the darkening street—
The señoritas all in white; in decent black, the men.
Ah, what a pretty, when with weaving arms and twinkling feet
We'll swing the sinuous cuna down the porch and back again!

And now the music kindles, and the 'dobe floor's awake
To pulse with eager feet—and still Felipe no 'st' aqui!
Ungrateful!—And I sit me here a laughed-at for his sake
Who swore to waltz the cradle-waltz with me—with none but me!

Ay, Holiest Mother! Here! With her?—Perdita on his arm!
So, perjurer and unashamed, ye know me? Stand apart!
Tu, little fool, run blameless, who couldst not withstand his charm.
But he—I love him—love him—and with this I claim his heart!

Publication. *The Land of Sunshine*, vol. 3, no. 1 (June 1895), pp. 2–3.

The Transplanting

A thousand years against the North the Saxon oak has wrenched
A livelihood from grudging soil; against a hostile sky
Uplifting its undaunted head, and mighty branches clenched—
Too storm-beleaguered half to live, too stubborn yet to die.

Impassively and stern it faced the bullying icy blast,
Half-mockingly smiled back when sham of sunshine smirked about—
The winter-thief that stripped it stark and froze it hard and fast;
The summer-cheat that coaxed it fight another winter out.

Slow circles counted up its years; the centuries were told
By inch and inch of rugged girth—and scars for every year.
For every year a deeper crop of wrinkles manifold,
And less of sap to stir its heart or give its leaflets cheer.

Aye! Strength is noble everywhere—but even it may wrong
The strenuous arms, the iron hearts, it bids forever strive.
For strength is meant for something more than merely to be strong;
And life is not a lifetime spent in strain to keep alive!

Bethink you—nay, but let it rest. For what was not, shall be.
The unbreakable grain of oak was wrought, in that embittered past,
Against the far, unreckoned day when Southern skies should see
The stern old giant's saplings set to kindlier soil at last!

Where Mother Nature smiles: "They called you oaks, at home, forsooth!
But wait—I fain would show you, now, my notion of a tree;
And what an oak was meant to be, that shall fulfill in truth
Its own potential, and the scope of acorns yet to be!

"The where it shall expand at will, unvexed and undeformed;
Nor curse the earth for miserly, nor count the sky a foe.
Shall set its leaves in certainty, and feel its pulses warmed
To joy of life and grace—and strength—its sires could never know."

'Twere well we let the mother-heart work out the mother-will—
Her face is sweet with fruitful years, with conscious mastery calm.
It may be she shall teach us here to keep the staunchness, still,
Of oak—the while we learn as well the evergreen of the palm!

Read at the annual banquet of the Chamber of Commerce, May 15.

Publication. *The Land of Sunshine*, vol. 3, no. 1 (June 1895), p. 34.

At Long Beach

I love the surf-beat down the shore,
The rhythmic, deep, recurrent roar
That lulls the weary evermore—
The echoing, cadent sea.

I love the tumbling breakers' play,
That leap and clap their hands alway
And laugh their joy as giants may—
The white-lipped, shouting sea.

I love the farther headland's light
That twinkles now, now fades from sight;
A memory in the heart of Night—
Of Night, that loves the sea.

Publication. *The Land of Sunshine*, vol. 3, no. 2 (July 1895), p. 73.

THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

Top o' the Hill

One rests here who still was young,
Still aflame with songs unsung;
In his threescore years and ten
Lived the lives of many men;
Lived to learn and learned to live—
Love—Achieve—Keep Faith—Forgive.
Worked and loved—and loved it best
After work, to work for rest.
Never turned away unfed
That long Hunger in his head.
Dreamed, and helped his dreams come true—
There's so much for Dreams to do!
Sorrow knew in every guise—
Found it came to make him wise.
Learned from Failure, all and each,
What Success could never teach.
Held the Old and faced the New,
Questing only for the True,
Serving the Future with the Past.
Turned a quiet smile at last—
As who should challenge the flickering heart:
'We Had Our Share—Did We Do Our Part?'

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 3.

Page One

'Memory? What is it?'
How should I know—
Who cannot say if yesterday
Was so or so?
Yet night by night there visit,
Behind mine eyes,
Such Presences that live again,
Lost scenes and faces, but so plain
I wonder which is true, which lies—
Now, or so long ago.
Life is come ripe with me—
Filled with Being and Doing,
Out in the Open and free.
I have taken my Heart's Desire;
I have met what any dares,
Have lost in the very winning;
And won from a lost beginning;
Played with—and tamed—the fire.
Brown sponsors call me 'Man-who-Cares'—
But not for fret of what might be;
Life is too short for rueing.
From the Andes' head to the desert's heel—
Every level of life and land,
All have been glad to teach,
I have been quickened to feel;
Joyed and suffered and learned by each—
Learned from Pain and the Face of Death,
Learned by the lives I have given breath;
Taught my Sorrows to lick my hand—
My Pleasure to know the Rein.
They all are somewhere in my book
Unpaged, unindexed and forgot—
Yet now and then some consciousness
Of fluttering leaves awakes my look
And there are pictures long ago,
The years that were and now are not;
A day when Someone whispered 'Yes!'
And the day my boy Went On.

But clearest, dearest of them all,
 And oftenest that I know,
The old parlor there across the hall,
 And Gran'ma's faltering little call:
"Your Mamma asks for you"—
 New England fifty years ago,
And I just turned of two.
White shutters by the whiter bed,
 And a whitest face therein;
A strong man pacing still and dread,
 And the tall clock ticking, ticking slow
Where little boys must never go—
 But now they led me in.
Thin fingers, like as petals, cling
 Cold to a baby's cheeks;
Big eyes so deep I cannot see—
 Till stars come up in them for me;
The shadow of a breath that speaks;
 'God keep my little boy!' And then
Slow lids—and—Nothing.
 And they bore me out again.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 3.

The Riddle

I planted a seed in my neighbor's garden.

(Fair, wee garden where Wonder grows)

Wet with a tear, that it may not harden,
Seed of a hope that the Dear God knows—
And for its cover,
I folded over
Five slim petals of a little Wild Rose.
O, Lady-Liege of the Wonder-Garden,
Riddle me, how is that seed to be—
Quick with the sun of thy smile and pardon,
Or dead and dust for despair of thee?
Wilt thou it bloom as a flower in Arden?
Wilt thou it perish before we See?
Will thy palm forget
Where my kiss was set
To grow for a thought of me?

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 5.

And Yet So Far!

Our thoughts run, hand in happy hand, together
As children—and all the ecstasy of wings
When our Ideals meet, in starry weather,
And soar accordant as the wedded strings;
Yet invisible as the winds that walk between us,
Impalpable as the moonlight on your brow,
Unfathomable as eyes that have not seen us,
Impassable as the Never to the Now—
What is it, Flower of my Dreams, that still divides us—
What Wall that we cannot see, yet may not pass—
What ‘Almost’ that demands us yet derides us,
As I were kissing you through a door of glass?

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 6.

Thomas Moran

With Turner's very brush—of Mist,
Of Pearl, of Rose, of Amethyst—
And Turner's Mystery he wrought,
And Turner's ecstasy of thought.
He caught the illusive light once more
'That never was on sea or shore.'
By fortune more than Turner blest,
He knew God's Wonder in the West,
And made forever all his own
The Cañon and the Yellowstone.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 7.

The Rivals

Invidious violin,
So cuddled to the wonder of her chin,
What dost thou know?
The teasing of her fingers
Makes thee cry?
Thou'rt shaken to a touch that lives and lingers?
That may easily be so—
For so am I.

Thy wooden shell resolved and wistful to her?
The very ecstasy is thine that shivers through her?
To sob, to laugh, to whisper unto heaven her thought?
True! And thou answerest worthily of her—
Translated and enforced interpreter
While I but choke and tremble and am naught.

But say! Thou canst not See!
The queening eyes that look thee up and down;
The smile that wings thy melody;
The brows that knit a tender frown
When one of thine appointed strings
A minim less than its bewitchment sings;
The cheek that flushes over thee;
The miracle of the fingers that create—
And then translate—thy soul;
The swaying figure tip-toe to her will of thee—
All the despotic tenderness of her control
Thou canst not See!

She gives thee voice, but cannot make thee Hear!
Thou canst not even listen to her laugh!
Nor Sarasate's self could show thee it,
With all thy strings, with all his wit.
A master workman made thy mortal half;
Thy deathlessness, She maketh how she will.
But He tuned Her that taught the stars to thrill
And laughter as the stars and birds were near!
God knows I can but envy—yet not overmuch of thee;
She does—who gives—thy share;

Half bride, half firstling mother in her touch of thee—
But He gave me to Care!
Thou canst not for her sake thy hope deny for her,
Nor hunger for her when she leaves thee dumb.
Thou canst not dream nor wonder—nay, thou canst not die for her,
To smoothe the way her little feet shall come!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 7.

Mary Garden

How full the lyric wood of birds that sing!
How jealous birds the worm of Fame to page!
But somehow—well, there is no other thing
When Mary walks—a Self—upon the stage!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 9.

Lost Child

The Little Girl that I used to know—
Tell me, what can have gone with her,
Here she was, but a jiff ago—
All my yesterdays shone with her.
Tiny feet that I taught to walk—
Wavering first little steps to me;
Balancing, laughing, eyes aglow,
Proud and safe when she caught my knee.
Baby lips that I tuned to talk—
How the dimples beset her so!
'Who is this that I sort o' found,
Pattering, puttering, projecting'round?'
'Papa's Comfy, that's who I be!'
Tall and straight as a sapling spruce,
Now over Daddy's head she sees.
But can she fathom the mysteries
Daddy hugs in a tired old heart?
What can she measure of 'What's the use?'
How can she know what herself she means—
Half-way immortality lent;
All the tenderness, all the smart—
To the Grizzled Chum of Before She Went,
Prophet that loved her Before She Came?
New thoughts flutter, and other scenes
Beckon her—and I cannot blame.
But only one thing in the world's the same,
Never shaken and never spent—
Daddy's love for the babe she Meant,
Love for whatso she e'er can be;
Change, nor Sorrow, nor very Shame
Can hide my child from me.
Leave her, best, to her own device,
Let her follow her conscious feet,
Wilful now, they can go alone
For the paths of Youth are sweet,
And Life must school its own.
And Daddy can Wait.
Some day, sure as the homing bird,

Sure as the sun on the glacier's ice,
Safe as Sorrow and Fixed as Fate—
Some day so shall her heart be stirred
And a dumb old man that waits afar
Shall hear the little feet—and a Word
'Why, Daddy! And here we are!'
Come she proudly, or come she bent,
Queen or outcast, or flushed or grey—
Time is only—Another Day;
Love—that it may be lent.
She will be but my babe again;
All behind and between shall be
Naught and naught as a dream of pain—
When she stands again at my knee.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 9.

The Daughter of the Pathfinder

Elizabeth Benton Frémont

November 15, 1842–May 28, 1919

Unsung and self-effacing third of two that thrilled the world;
The Daughter of their youth, the ‘Little Mother’ of their age,
First-born of Jessie Benton and of him who first unfurled
Our Flag atop the Rockies, and on our History’s page
Wrote roundly ‘California—the Pacific—and The West’
What heritage was hers of them! And of her Mother’s sire,
The Fate-propelling Benton, better prophet than the best!
What Paladins of Chivalry! What Ambient of Fire!

Right queenly-hearted (and in face twin to the Long-Crowned Queen),
Full heir of that Pathfinder-three, her quieter path she trod.
In life their Homely Angel of the Hearth—and now, serene,
She goes to sit with Hers beside the ample Hearth of God.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 11.

John Charles Frémont

Pathfinder—and Path-clincher!
Who blazed the way, indeed,
But more—who made the eternal Fact
where to a path had need;
Who, while our Websters set at naught
the thing that was to be,
Whipped out our halting, halfway map
full to the Other Sea!
'Twas well that there were some could read
the logic of the West!
A Kansas-edged geography,
of provinces confessed,
Became potential Union
and took a Nation's span
When God sent Opportunity
and Benton sent the Man!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 11.

Old and New

Whatever is Man in the sons of men,
 Whatever is staunch and true,
We draw from our sires, and their sires again
 And mothers of mothers who mated when
 The World and its Heart were new.
Whatever is Faith, in the human heart—
 And higher than human ken—
Is older than College or Church or Mart,
 Ordained to bloom from the very Start,
 In the Man who died for Men.
Whatever is Love in our life to-day,
 And longer than Life is long,
Is no new plot of a clever play—
 When Eden was lost, Love kept its way,
 As old and as sure as Song!
And we are measured ourselves at last—
 Faith, Love and the Strength unseen—
By naught we add to that templed Past,
 But only, how well can we hold it fast,
 How grateful we keep it green!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 12.

Cloud and Star

If I were a Cloud, like the white cloud yonder,
And you that Star that is peeping through,
How should I baffle the winds that wander—
Winds the more fickle as I grew fonder—

Pushing me ever away from You?
If I were the tide of a deep old River,
And you my Shore of the Eden Tree,
How at your side could I linger ever,
How my message to you deliver,
How dispute the Importunate Sea?
The River and Cloud, they shall go unmated,
For Shore and Star cannot follow free;
But Love may dare and be happier-fated;
For I, unshaken of the winds have waited,
And Star of stars—you could bend to me!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 13.

Faces

Mine eyes have fed them on a million faces—
And fasted, oft, at those acclaimed most fair,
And often feasted on the humbler graces
That had a dimple or a smile to spare.
For women's looks are in the eye that sees them,
And Beauty is as relative as Sin;
Some 'faultless features' hint of hearts that freeze them,
Some plain ones glow as Heaven were within.
And some are dolls of bisque, as hollow-pretty.
And some but ardent fleshings of Desire;
And some would seem for wise, and some for witty,
Some ashen are, some yet unbit by fire.
And some show happier by the hand of Sorrow,
Some ugly-bitter by the self-same touch—
For Life loans free but what we choose to borrow,
Its help or hurt, how little or how much.
And out of this satiety of phases
Of Eve in her most now-day avatars,
One stands alone, as in the midnight mazes
A young moon stills the multitude of stars.
The big-bent brows, with windowed Heavens under,
Brave nose, kind mouth where well a kiss might thrive—
And over all the womanliness and wonder
Of Her, meseems the loveliest thing alive.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 13.

Boomerangs

Thrown first at another language and caught back into my own

Oso Acebache

'Ensueño,' osito osado,
Díme, que vayas pensando,
Negrito bendito y feliz,
Allí donde estás reposando,
Tu con la Imperatriz?
Díme (que ya me deliro)—
¿Que está tu Almohada soñando?
A tí una lágrima dando—
Y al Oso Mayor un suspiro?

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 14.

The Old Brooch

Little jet bear on a bed of snow,
What are you thinking? As I would think
If I were trembling on that dear brink?
Or are you dizzy as I would be there?
What do you wonder? What do you know?
Are you too happy to know or wonder—
Her throat above you, her bosom under?
Tell me, what is your pillow dreaming?
Catch you ever a tear to drink?
Ever a sigh or a flutter, seeming
Maybe a Memory stirred for Me there?

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 15.

‘A-Cú-Ti-Ri-Mí-Ji’

A Pueblo Parting

‘A-cú-ti-ri-mí-ji!

Já-ru, hui-huai te-í-ji—

Jí-ri-u Bé-e-hua?’

‘In-i-a-mí-hue! Ta-í-ji!

Na-té-huem Ná-t’-ju.’

‘Fare thee well!

Wilt thou hope I return again?

Wilt thou wait till I come?’

‘Go not! But if thou must—why, then

Think me Thy Home!’

(The spelling follows the Spanish values.)

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 15.

The Two

‘But what would you do with a Butterfly?

(And she wavered awide of me)

If you had her sure in your very hand?

How would you hold her, and how command;

One so little and brittle as I?

And what should her Bible be?’

“Thou Shalt Not this, and Thou Shalt Not that,

And no other Gods but Me!

Wings are frivolous, Youth’s a snare!

Fold you! Flutter not! Have a care!”

You are afoot, and your world is flat;

What do you wot of the winged and free?’

Slow I answered—and weighed it sure!

‘Flat I am, and my world is so,

But you would round us; and flowers would spring!

Even you of the shimmery wing

Needs must light to their nectar pure—

Needs must rest when the day is low.

‘He that meant me—and made—to plod,

He that gave you the wistful wings—

Guess you not that He knew His way,

He that Rested with Night the Day?

Clod and cloud are alike of God—

Life is the mating of unlike things.

‘You were put to the Paths of Air;

I, to Wonder—and Understand.

He be Judge that devised us Twain!

Yours is yours till you give again!’

‘Ah!’ she fluttered. ‘But play me fair!’

And she came to my very hand.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 16.

The Four Horsemen of the Eucalypts

It took a bad hoss to unload ary one of'em,
 Four old cowpunchers on many a Border!
Many the chuck-wagon roared to the fun of'em,
Many close calls for each son-of-a-gun of'em,
 When there was what you might call a Disorder.
Will Rogers of the impulsive rope,
 Philosopher and Lincoln-wit;
Gene Rhodes whose Southwest stories lope
 A gait no other seems to hit;
Vesuvian Ibañez, too,
 That rode'em hard in Argentine,
Then roped a top-hoss in Who's Who—
 With jails and duels in between.
So there's your Three—
 And me.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 17.

The Sun Awakes to Wonder

The Sun awakes to wonder
With every dawn anew—
To wonder and to wander
 His trysting way and true;
Still faring yonder, yonder,
 To where the skies turn under—
Ay, where the skies turn under,
Where he shall come to You.
 O Morrow that hast not seen us,
 O Night so blind and blue,
 Shall ever a high Hereafter
 Re-live the Love we knew—
 The tender tears and laughter,
 And never a cloud between us,
 Nay, never a cloud between us—
 Just Heaven—and I—and You?

1926.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 17.

The Diva

Ernestine Schumann-Heink

When God had banished that first young pair
From Eden's Heaven-on-Earth,
Condemned to wrest from a desert's breast
Such bread as their sweat was worth,
He gave them—repenting their minds unlit—
Two seeds from the very Tree;
“Plant these,” He said, “that your souls be fed;
And the Fruits ye shall bring to me.”
So side by side in the sands of Life
Those mated seeds they set;
And the one was Hope, and the one was Love,
And here they are springing yet.
But their growing made that desert bloom
With the full-flowered Human Heart;
And their Fruit, which is dedicate to God,
That fruit is their daughter, Art!
Art—like the Soul—is of many lives.
And longer than Life is long;
Form, and Color, and Wedded Sound—
But the Flower of its flowers is Song!
Some Sing for Joy, and some for Gold!
Or Fame or to strut a Part;
But She wings sure as a homing bird
To Sing in our very heart!
Singer, who under her heart has felt
The stirring of men-to-be;
Wide-armed Diva whose mothering Art
Folds us for sons as free—
Sons-in-troth will we pledge us all,
Grateful in love and strong,
And memory green to our Great-heart Queen
Of the Motherhood of Song!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 18.

Love

The Sea to which my rivers run;
The Sky that borrows rain of it;
The hush of my dead little one,
My fledglings yet that laugh and flit;
All things I would that I had done;
And all that God hath lent or lit
Amid me from the torch above—
Of mercy to the small,
And thoughtfulness, an even hand
And level eyes for all;
Care for the Older Sanities,
Care for the Future and the Past,
Fist to the duties old or new,
To prick the Sham, to keep the True,
To Think, and Fear Not—and to Do;
To turn a quiet smile At Last—
That is not all of Love there is,
But maybe that is Love.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 19.

John Burroughs

‘Oom John’ o’ Birds—he saw as clean
As many another Seer has seen;
But more than any, his gift to give—
And millions through him see Nature live.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 20.

To a Common Thief

(The Retoucher)

Fie, pale Sir, with perfidious Faber
 Spoiling Time of his very Tooth!
Why for me your meticulous labor,
 Killing Character, forging Youth?
Do I look to you like this 'proof' you show me
 (Proof your humor is nothing brisk!)?
How, you reckon, should Gabriel know me
 In this impeccable Doll of Bisque?

How are my three-score years gone simple?
 Why this Jerry, my scars to mock—
Putting-over my buckshot dimple
 With his unbeardable cheek of chalk?

You out-pilfer Procrastination
 (Once reputed 'the Thief of Time'),
Cheating me out of state and station—
 Forty years of my rugged prime.

Little wonder the dames adore you—
 Making them look as they wish they did!
Granny's wrinkles dissolve before you—
 You would flatter a Pyramid!

Wind and Sun—and my Thought—have graven
 The frontispiece of my Siege of Years;
Desert-parchmented, leanly shaven,
 Scrawled with scars of the Three Frontiers—

Entry of bullet and knife and talon,
 Burn of glacier and crater's blast,
Tankard-tally of stoup and gallon—
 Cicatrices of passions past—

Crowsfeet left of the old-time laughter,
 Forehead furrows that Care has plowed,
Iron-bound lip, and the long lines after—
 Nothing humble—nor nothing proud.

Turn your pencil on end, De-facer!

Even the Facts of my phiz forgive!
De-retouch, with the kind eraser,
All you have prettied that negative!

Give me back my Experience, fellow,
Bought and paid and receipted plain,
Spare, oh, spare me this mask of Jello—
Put Me back in my Face again!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 20.

With a Bit of Old China

A Slender cup is my countersign;
But what it holds—canst thou divine?
Somewhat thou knowest the Sea.
Is it old enough, yet, to be Sure?
Is it deep enough, yet, to be True?
Is it fed of the rivers that water the earth?
Does it quicken the sky with the rains of their birth?
Dost thou think it is like to Endure?
Is it Wide and Surrounding and Free?
And only the Moon to pursue?
Now, dip it all up
With—this—measuring-cup!
And when it is Dropless and Dry—
Maybe then shall Love also be drained—
My memory emptied of Thee!
My thought no longer longing to its Sky;
My Heaven of Thee—the heavenlier, Unattained—
Turn to mere earthiness and die.
That all may be!
For part is mortal of me; and if part
Undying—thou wilt be its Heart.
And eitherwise, the last dear
 Cupful keep—
In memory that once there
 Was a Deep.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 21.

John Muir

Prophet of Glacier and of Peak;
Lean, solitary, shy to speak;
But friendly when his silence broke—
A more than Jeremiah spoke.
On rock and ice he bedded warm;
Exultant, grappled with the Storm—
Or lashed him in a Fir-top high
To whip against the howling sky.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 22.

An-Til-O-Pe

Maud Allan, the Greek Dancer

John Keats, awake! Your Grecian Urn
Is wistful with desire of you!
Bereft, bewildered—where to turn,
Save to the cold, white fire of you!
For one has loosed the virgin zone,
And from that pale periphery
Stepped forth—no more immortal stone,
But gladlier Humanity.
Aye, she divineliest that leapt—
As carven nymphs divinely could—
Found her Pygmalion while you slept,
And Sculpture woke to Womanhood!
But oh, my John! To see her now—
The Soul and Self of Greece restored!
And reverent ecstasies, as how
King ‘David danced before the Lord!’
Resilient as the bubble Hope,
Absolved of weight, nor effort signed—
As drift our Desert antelope,
Like thistledowns before the wind.
Her arms are as no other arms—
So living and giving and never spent;
Spell-weaving as the serpent charms,
Song-visible and magniloquent.
Her form the grace of flame has caught,
And wonder wings her feet anew;
Her face the gamut of her thought—
Her mind and soul are dancing, too!
A dream within a dream we see,
A song incorporate and exprest;
For she is Music bodily,
And Melody made manifest!

An-til-o-pe! How happier far,
 To move and laugh and love reprieved,
Than they thy marble sisters are
 Who ‘cannot die’—but never lived!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 23.

Love's Anthology

Thou art a thousand poems all in one—
Thy lips of laughter, and thy questioning brows,
Thy cheeks wherein Castilian Roses run,
And, God! How Life-and-Death is in thine eyes!
The baby feet, whose twinkling mysteries
So patter as a vestal at her vows;
The wizard little fingers
 That compel the Soul of Song,
The voice of Mirth that lingers
 In our ears and hearts so long:
The proud young neck, a dream beyond belief:
The night of hair above a brow of snow;
The wayward dimples dancing as they go;
The willowy form, a-flutter as a leaf.
A thousand poems bound in One—
Poems and Poet in a single self!
The very Queen, in essence of an Elf—
The artist and the canvas and the sun!
For more than all thy beauty is the Soul of thee;
More than thine eyes, thy laughter and thy grace;
More than the master-music owns control of thee—
Above them all I place
The heart of Youth and Fire and Spotlessness,
The unsullied spirit and the Poet's thought;
God keep thee So, and give thee never less—
To Live, to Laugh, to Love as Poets ought!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 24.

Beauty Is a Duty

The ladies that I wait upon
Are all so fair to see!
I cannot bide an ugly one—
They have no call to be!
The flower is as it holds itself
Ascendant from the sod;
And Beauty is a gratitude
A woman owes to God!
The ladies that I wait upon
Are lovely from within—
It is not all of dazzling eyes,
Or chiseled nose and chin.
Not all are dimple-fresh with youth,
And some are seamed and grey;
But all are beautiful—because
Of what their faces say!
The ladies that I wait upon,
Their beauty will not fade!
Let those whose features are their all
Await the years afraid!
But Mine, with eyes of Heart's Desire,—
Their charm shall ne'er depart—
The human warmth, and Cleanliness
Of body, mind and heart!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 25.

T. R.

Forty the years that we knew—
and then liked—and then loved—one another.
First when I saw him at Harvard
a Sophomore, lofty and awesome,
I the most callow of Freshmen;
so deep the abysm between us—
Spanned by a grin and ‘Good Boy!’
when I routed his classmates the hazers;
Bridged when he sent to his sister
my tiny Birch Bark book of verses.
Hatchet-head, spindle-neck, slim,
with the flatness of chest of the Numbered.
Nothing in look (but the glasses
and teeth) to ‘remind’ of the Future—
Why tell the handicaps? Why!
Only they are the gage of his Doing!
Half-understanding, we watched him,
his discipline smiling, relentless
Building this trivial body
to carry his soul and to serve it;
Taking himself by the collar,
and marching his mind and his muscles,
Weary or balky, no matter,
right up to the task he had set them!
Torso as of a young bison;
the head that had been as a hatchet,
Bulged to a leonine squareness
by Thought that had elbowed within it—
So the world knew him—unknowing
his miracle swap of a body!
East-born, but Grown in the West!—
and it’s most to the West he was debtor;
Breadth and far vision and tolerance—
All that he learned in the Open—
Also that Winning the West
was the crux of America’s makings!
While he was writing his Winning,
and I the Southwest I had christened,

Then came the clinch of two spirits
that looked on the West as an Omen
Looked on the West as our Hope;
and our Strength, and our Door to the Future.
Fearful of him in ascendant,
the King-Makers chuckled and Shelved him!
But the grim humor of God
tipped the Shelf to be door to the White House!
Then: 'See the arrogant egotist!
See him invent the Commandments!
Thinks he's the only American,
Patriot-last-of-the-genus!
See! Single-handed he'll salvage
the World and make over the Nation!'
Nay! He thought not he was Only—
he thought there were millions of others
True to the Founders' ideals.
'But what is the Use of our bucking?
Everything's "fixed" and "Machine"!'
and they knew not they waited the Challenge.
He was the Challenge—he knew it!
And fair in the face of Convention,
Flat in the teeth of the grafters
he flung his defiance—his Rally
Straight to the hearts of his Countrymen:
'Sure! There's a Use! We can do it!'
Aye! and we did it! Afire
with his Faith in the Right and his Fellows!
Never a hamlet from Tampa to Yukon,
from Bangor to Yuma,
Never a hamlet but borrowed
some ferment of Life from his leaven—
Never a town to this day
where his name does not ring as a bugle.
Oft when he called me in council
on things of the West or of Science,
Wrongs of the Indians, problems
of water for waterless acres—
Ever my wonder awakened;
for all he had read he remembered;

Any new fact, he took in
 with the sureness and click of a fox-trap.
No one has risen as yet
 who could compass his ultimate measure,
What does he weigh in his land
 and the world in his time and the Future?
This be Posterity's sentence!
 I speak of him but as I knew him
Fighter and Scholar and Leader,
 and kindler of Men and Ideals—
Still the High Pattern of young-hearted
 men of his land and of others.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 26.

Pasó por Aquí

A Lion of a Cliff in old New Mexico,
Two ancient fortresses upon its lofty crown
To guard the dim and barefoot trails that used to go
Between the Seven Cities and the Sky-hung Town;

And yet beyond to the Fierce River of the North
The very End of Earth, three hundred years ago,
Before our English Speech at all had ventured forth
To make a home in this Half World a century won.

See my Mesa, Cañon and Pueblo (Century), Chap. xxxiii.

But here! A weary line of tattered, haggard men,
Dry-bearded, hawk eyes red with alkali—and Yes!
The tongue of Spain, the New World's Mother—look again
Who are these specks upon this bitter wilderness?

And wherefore? High Emprise—the finding of new lands—
The lands we brag for ours to-day and hardly hear
That they were given us—nor what staunch and tireless hands
Wore down the three long centuries of the Hard Frontier.

No spot on earth is now so far as that was then
And thus far winning through five hundred leagues of hell
They leaned against the mighty cliff to breathe again
And with their daggers graved their word—most like 'Farewell.'

For in the blank Beyond, a thousand dangers lay
And every step was hardship as to be the last—
But other men shall follow this dim trail some day,
And here shall find the record of the first who passed.

'Here passed'—so wrote these gaunt and wayworn cavaliers—
A generation ere that Plymouth Rock was so—
And this grave page of stone has kept three hundred years
The roster of the Founders of New Mexico.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 29.

Santiago Naranjo

Elder of immemorial Kha-pé

(“Town where the roses by the river grow”)

By Rio Grande’s Chama-reddened flood
That drains the Sandstone Giants of their blood—
What see you in the West? The urgent day
When this our upstart, Panic Hour shall pay
The price they pay who fall from Reverence
And worship Smartness and the Present Tense.
Or see you backward until the world was young,
When here your fathers autochthonic sprung—
No immigrants, but First Born of the Soil,
Who wrought here through millenniums of toil,
That aristocracy was ancient when
Our forebears bruted in some British fen?
That culture, ripening body, mind and heart,
Profoundly rich in Drama, Music, Art,
In Imagery and Awe and Mystery,
In Justice, Reason, Faith and Equity,
In Ritual, and in living Reverence—
Unpoisoned by our latter-day pretense.
We see! That Poise of ages long is bred!
What statesman boast we of a nobler head,
Of Strength, Repose, and Sweetness to infer—
Of Poet, nor what Greek Philosopher?
Yet we forget you in the nation’s plan—
An Indian—The First American!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 31.

MAN-WHO-YAWNS

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

Man-Who-Yawns

Gray Tá-kli-shim begat a son
 (as gray Apache might),
Whose schoolhouse was the Border,
 and his teacher's name was WHITE;
His people called him Géy-ath-lay,
 the 'Man-Who-Yawns,' you know—
But no one ever yawned with him
 We call Geronimo!
A thousand years a Bedouin,
 a thousand miles to range—
And then, in one Apache's day,
 a thousand years of change!
The hawk to a canary-cage,
 the wild horse to the plow—
It took us a millennium,
 we grudge a decade now.
Said the Agent to Geronimo:
 'Get out and grub your hay!
I'll give you fifty cents a ton,
 a hundred ton, we'll say.
The Market's twenty dollars,
 we'll make the vouchers so—
The nineteen fifty's pie for me—
 'Ahnh!' said Geronimo.

(Yawn)

35°
Said the Agent to Geronimo:
 'Your ration is too fat!
I got a load of weeviled flour—
 we'll tone you down on that!
And meat just makes you ugly—
 I'll let the beef-herd go—
I see some pretty money.'
 'Ahnh!' said Geronimo.
Said the Agent to Geronimo:
 'Apache dog, be still!
Your labor to my pocket,

and your women to my will!
I run this Reservation—and
you've nowhere else to go,
You damn degraded heathen!'
 'Ahn!' said Geronimo.
They left the Agent sitting there—
 that is, the rest of him—
While round the Agency Parade
 through all the twilight dim
A laggard, grinning football
 they dribbled to and fro,
That late had been a tyrant's head.
 'Ahn!' said Geronimo.
Said the old men to the younger:
 'Apaches could no less!
Ye still are Chihuicahui blood,
 to rule the wilderness!
But Washington is mightier,
 and no mercy will it show,
That never showed us justice!'
 'Ahn!' said Geronimo.
They stepped up on their ponies lean,
 with water-baskets hung—
The women with their breasting babes,
 the old men and the young;
A rifle at each saddle-horn,
 a fist of food or so—
'To Mexico and Freedom!'
 'Ahn!' said Geronimo.
So ninety-two Apache squaws
 and children rode away
From Uncle Sam's too-circling arms,
 that fateful night in May;
And what array of warriors
 to fend them from a foe?
Eight boys and three and thirty men
 Besides Geronimo.
And forty leagues they rode at lope
 or e'er they drew a rein—
Save when to rope an alien mount

and leave the spent one slain;
And now and then a ranch-house
they sacked and left aglow—
And maybe took a scalp or two—
‘Ahn!’ said Geronimo.
The blue mirages lure and lie,
the sand-storms blind and sting,
And fifty bitter miles as hell,
from water-hole to spring—
From spring to rock Tinaja
as far again to go—
If that be dry, it’s buzzard week!
‘Ahn!’ said Geronimo.
The zopilote floats ahead,
and lean coyotes slink—
For when the Chihuicahui rides
there shall be red to drink!
The Turkey-Mountain People
are not a pretty foe—
Who found their women used and scalped—
‘Ahn!’ said Geronimo.
A slim, brown girl stepped down at dawn
to face her Hour alone;
Her mother rode right on—she held
twin sucklings of her own.
The morrow, safe below the Line,
where down they fell to rest,
A gray, slim girl came loping in,
her firstborn at her breast.
The Desert’s mighty Silence;
no fuss of man can spill
A hundred Indians whoop and sing,
and still the Land is still; *
But on the city drunk with sound,
the whisper is a shout—
‘Apaches on the war-path!
Geronimo is out!’
Brave rode our wiry troopers—
they rode without avail;
Their chase he tweaked it by the nose,

and twisted by the tail;
Around them and around he rode—
a pack-train putters slow,
And ‘horse and man of ours must eat’—
‘Ahn!’ said Geronimo.
They never saw a hair of him,
but ever and oft they felt—
Each rock and cactus spitting lead
from an Apache belt,
Where never sign of man there was,
nor flicker of a gun—
You cannot fight an empty hill;
you run—if left to run!
A year and half another year
our Blindman’s Buff he led;
Now lagging in the pass to swell
his toll of bluecoat dead;
Now camped to clam-bake his mescal.
or brew the corn tiz-win,
And pray, and make new Victory-Songs,
and dance the Thai-ai-nin.
Four hundred of his foes he slew—
he held us all for foe—
And never lost a warrior slain,
nor let a captive go.
Our hard Frontier and Mexico
with viewless raid he spanned—
A Fear as wide as Europe is
he laid upon the land.
We’re fighters and we’re stayers—
but Lord! we’re slow as mud!
We couldn’t fight Apaches
till we Hessianized their Blood!
Two hundred Chihuicahui braves
(our ‘loyal scouts,’ you know)
We hired to hunt their brothers down—
‘Ahn!’ said Geronimo.
These knew the hidden water-hole,
they knew the pathless peak,

And each could carry at his belt
his commissary-week—
Nor needed jingling trains of mules
with coffee-pots and cans,
And hard-tack, bacon, flour and beans,
and cups and frying-pans.
They hounded the Apache rear,
but no Apache slew;
They kept their faith to lead our chase—
but they were Indian, too!
Five miles with thirty hostiles drawled—
their wives ahead by ten—
Five empty miles—and then our scouts—
five more—our jaded men.
Such women, babes and weaklings
as wearied of the chase,
He sent them in to board with us
at Bowie for a space,
A gentle folk and kindly—
but war is war, you know,
While fourteen squaws and nineteen braves
hold with Geronimo.
A Prophet of his people, he,
no War-Chief, but their Priest,
And strong he made his Medicine,
and deep the mark he creased—
The most consummate Warrior
since warfare first began,
The deadliest Fighting Handful
in the calendar of Man.
He spared nor child nor womankind;
but Pagans never knew
How Christians wholesale—Like Cevennes,
or St. Bartholomew!
In years he killed of them about
a half the toll that we
Shot down of Indian squaws and babes
one day at Wounded Knee.
A Devil? Double! How could one
pretend a Patriot strife

No Native Land to fight for left,
fought for his Native Life?
Yet—not as bandit murderer
at bay to the police,
We met him as a Sovereign State,
and took his terms of peace,
We never caught nor conquered him,
He had no Waterloo—
Though Leonard Wood's Apache Scouts
and Lawton's boys in blue
(Our standing army at their back,
and Mexico's to boot)
Quite circumscribed his latitude,
his leisure and his loot.
'Of course we can't,' said Leonard Wood
who saw the hearts of men—
(From Scout to hostile ever passed
the word, and back again)—
'But you'll be old and tired of tag,
in twenty years or so—
And Washington is never tired!'
'Eh?' said Geronimo.
It was the Army pledged our word,
and so the Nation kept
(For once) good faith with Indians,
though Tombstone Terrors wept,
And not the scaffold nor the cell
he quit the warpath for,
But, with his kin interned, our Guest—
a Prisoner of War.
The Corsican, whose million men
bowed Europe to the dust,
Was whipped—and ate his heart away
in St. Helena's rust.
But G  y-ath-lay, whose breechclout score
two nations mocked at will—
Serenely yawned himself to death
in Sunday school at Sill.
The Desert Empire that he rode
his trail of blood and fire,

Is pythoned, springs and valleys, with
the strangle-snake of wire.
The Fence has killed the Range and all
for which its freedom stood—
Though countless footsore cowboys mill
in mimic Hollywood.
A Tragedy? What wholesale words
we use in petty ways—
For murder, broken hearts or banks,
and disappointed days!
But here an Epoch petered out,
An Era ended flat;
The Apache was the Last Frontier—
The Tragedy is that!

ENVOY

It had to be—it has to be!
The Primitive must go!
We keep the Ten Commandments—yes—
ten reels—a picture show!
Our life alike the movie mob,
all scurrying, bad and good—
Ahh! Give me back Geronimo—
the Border—and Leonard Wood!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 35.

THE LONGHORN HERD

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

Sartor Resartus

While the Train Stops at Albuquerque

The Pretty Widow:

‘Ah, what a quaint and interesting place!
Are you quite certain that the train won’t start?’

The Professor:

‘Ten minutes yet.’Tis pleasant thus to pace
The platform—and with such a kindred heart!’

The Pretty Widow:

‘Such striking types one sees on every hand!
Here the intrusive Yankee, there the Don—
The lord and the usurper of the land—
And furtive peons smoking on and on!’

The Professor:

‘Ah, by your side—

The Pretty Widow:

‘Ooh! What a sweet Pappoose,
Slung on its tawny mother’s back! And there
That stalwart brave—great Cooper! What a use!
The noble Red Man peddling pottery-ware!’

The Professor:

‘Would I might ever stray—’

The Pretty Widow:

‘Ah, what a man!
I mean yon cowboy—what embodied force!
What chest and neck, and what a lovely tan!
And such queer leathern—overalls, of course!
I love a Man—’

The Professor:

‘I think we’d best go back.’

The Pretty Widow:

‘He looks so out-of-doors! So brave—so hard!’

The Professor:

‘But hear his speech! How cultureless and slack—
“Hello, old maverick! How they comin’,
Pard?”’

The Pretty Widow:

‘Well, I don’t care! He’s lovely! And I hate—’

The Professor, savagely:

‘Those who do not so ignorantly speak as your Eureka?’

The Cowboy:

‘Sir, the aspirate!
You’ll find the word’s Heureka in the Greek!’

The Professor, quite losing himself:

‘Were you at Squantum University
I’d beat some information into you!’

The Cowboy, blandly:

‘Thanks, awfully! I collared one degree,
Summa cum laude, Harvard,’82!’

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 53.

A Strike in the 'Empty Pocket'

Pwist! Here, Rover, we must be going!
Sundown, and nothing to eat all day—
Ten miles back to the camp—and blowing!
But what's the odds, when we've struck the pay?
Glory! But it comes hard to quit it—
Even to leave it for overnight!
Clinch it, porphyry where we hit it,
With hard, black fingers, stingy and tight,
That little seam that means salvation—
Hope for me and a home for Sue!
Four lonely years of half starvation
Butt their heads into that streak of blue!

Ugh! How the cold flour-snow is sifting!
Curse on the wind that it comes just now!
Only my tracks for trail—and drifting—
And fourteen inches is tough to plow!
Hard work? That's what it is, Old Rover!
That mile was swelled to four times its size.
Trail plum-gone, and the daylight over,
And wind that cuts like steel in the eyes.
Whining, Rover! But that won't mend it—
Come, we must take it like men, you know!
One stop here in the cold would end it;
Our only safety is on the go!
Think who's praying in old Pequawket!
To-morrow the wires will tell her 'Come!
Struck it rich in the "Empty Pocket"!
See her laughing and crying? Well some!
What! You won't move? Then on my shoulder
I'll have to pack you, you rascal you!
Nn-h! You're a load! I'm getting colder—
There's a ton of lead in either shoe!
Down! O God! But we've got to make it!
Ah-h! How this piñon keeps off the storm!
Drowsy—drowsy—I cannot shake it—
And this is so soft and so warm!

What shall life and its cares be won for?
Sleep, the Forgetter, is kindest!
Come, old dog—we are done for!
Here—we—will—rest.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 55.

One That Was Paralyzed

Pent in a prison of myself,
My soul steps twice and turns about;
Or climbs upon its narrow shelf,
From bloodshot windows to glare out.
It beats upon the sullen clay—
The clay that breathes and still is dead.
It butts against the walls away,
And stamps around within my head.
The knotted arm that fought so well,
Is numb and knows to strike no more;
The legs that trudged the width of hell
No longer lift me from the floor.
My very tongue is touched of death—
A dog is not so dumb as I
Who love, and cannot give it breath;
Who hate, and must unspoken lie.
And Will, the captain left alone,
Sits dazed within his tent to-day
And sees his adjutants disown
The orders once they sprang to obey.
Aye, hard it is! And more for me
Who in this body gloried so—
A perfect body, good to see,
Become a byword and a show.
But no! This mummy be my shell,
But not my fate! Betrayed, bereft
Of followers, in the citadel
The master lives—the I am left!

In Los Angeles, December 5, 1887, I had a stroke of paralysis; possibly due to working twenty-two to twenty-three hours a day every day for three years on the Los Angeles Times. I went to New Mexico to recover, and there had two other shocks within a year.

For three years and seven months I had no use of my left arm; and for about six months (after the third shock) could neither stand up nor speak.

But I went to the Right Doctor—good old New Mexico; and took the Treatments. I hunted all kinds of

game, up to the largest, toted all over New Mexico and Arizona a ponderous camera and made thousands of glass negatives 5 x 8; and in the time of my one-handedness, broke twenty-three wild horses out of the mountains. Incidentally, it was during this partial eclipse that I wrote the majority of the Southwestern verses in this volume.

(See 'My Friend Will,' last chapter in *The King of the Broncos*. Scribner.)

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 56.

Captain I

I have to ask no courtesies of Fate,
Nor plead for quarter at her reeking hands.
My only fate am I; and soon or late
It is and must be but myself that stands.
Behind the coward skirts of Circumstance
I would not hide (if ever one be hid);
For man is more than putty thumbled by Chance—
For good or evil—what we are we did.
Nor stormer nor betrayer Fate can be;
None else than I can conquer my redoubt.
E'en I am more than all can happen me—
For happenings but hammer from without.
The citadel is small, but 'tis mine own,
Impregnable unless surrendered o'er;
Its gateway opens to Will's key alone—
A key I keep on my side of the door.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 58.

Mastery

Fate? I met her long ago—
Met and measured will and strength
Whipped of her, I came to know
How to whip herself, at length.
First I fought her, brute to brute;
Every blow she smote me sore,
Dazed, and mad with rage, and mute
Only struck I back the more.
Striking blindly, striking hard
And forever striking wide—
With a broken arm for guard,
With a broken head beside.
So she mauled me as she would,
So she bullied me the while;
Till I dropped my arms and stood—
Stood and whipped her with a Smile!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 58.

‘He Loves Me, Loves Me Not’

There in the long portal she stands—
My dainty, doubting Spanish fairy—
Counting the blush-rose in her hands
With ‘Si me quiere, no me quiere!’
She sees me not, nor knows me near,
Else she had surely been more wary
Than test my truth—the jealous dear!—
With ‘Si me quiere, no me quiere!’
But now the fateful petals fall:
There’s one—that’s ‘sí’; and two, contrary,
Says ‘no;’ and three repeats the call
Of ‘sí’; but four is ‘No me quiere!’
And four’s the last! The white teeth grind:
‘Será mi bien un embustero!’
But soft I whisper from behind,
‘It lies, mi alma! Sí, te quiero!’

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 59.

The Sidewinder

A lazy loop of lozenged gray,
 I stretch amid the sand and sun;
Or writhe a sullen yard away,
 The greasewood's creeping shade to shun.
The hot earth nestles to my chin;
 My lidless orbs outstare the sky
All unabashed; and dry and thin
 My unawakened rattles sigh.
The desert glare that does to death
 Pale human shirkers of the sun—
 Poor fools that court a colder breath,
 Nor know that heat and life are one—
It filters through my scaly still,
 It simmers to one drop of Fate—
 The mother-tincture of To Kill,
 Quintessence of a whole world's hate.
Content I dream; content is deep
For whom three mortal joys there be—
My lord the Sun, my ardent sleep,
And—sleep for him that wakens me!

1889

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 60.

With Reference to William

Never heerd tell o' Billy Martin?
Wall, now, stranger yo'r hoofs must ache!
Bill wuz the deadest shot, fur sartin,
In all Arizona—make no mistake!
Sized yo' up fur a tenderfutter
Soon ez ever I seen yo' hit
The Box S Range in sech a splutter;
But yo're the newest, I must admit.
I 'lowed ez how there warn't nobuddy
Hedn't hearn tell o' Pistol Bill.
'Cud he shoot better'n Carver?' Cud he?
Bill didn't monkey—he shot to kill!
None o' thet glass-ball foolin' in his'n;
Bill wasn't built on no sech plan.
Men's his marks, an' he knowed his bus'n—
Never but onst he missed his man.
'How wuz that?' Oh, the' warn't much to it.
We was down in the Gila Bend,
Ridin' the roundup—almos' through it.
All of a suddent ther' comed the end.
Bill got gone on a señorita
Livin' thar in a 'dobe town.
God! The angels never wuz sweeter—
Tall, an' big-eyed an' pinky-brown.
Bronco Jim, ez the luck would mix it,
He got gone on the selfsame bute.
Bein' great pards before thet fix-it—
Then o' course, 'twas a case o' shoot.
Hay? I reckon I seen the shootin!
Split my ear! But I tumbled him
Fair and square. Wot's that yo're tootin?
Sartin, stranger, I'm Bronco Jim.
Been lookin' fer me? Yo're Billy's brother?

Wall, I never did larn to run.
One time's all-so-same ez another—
Ex-cuse me! But yo're slow with a gun!

1888

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 61.

Et Nos Mutamur in Illis

Nita, come roll me a cigarette,
Just as you used to long ago
In the far, sweet days when first I met
My dark-eyed fate in New Mexico!
Do you remember those days, chiquite,
(Here's a husk) and the stranger pale
Your father's herders brought to your feet,
Dripping with red, from the Dead Man's Trail?
(Now just a pinch of the tamayá—
How it sweetens the poorest weed!
A coal for the lighting—Good! Allí 'stá!
Ah, youth it is that is life indeed!)
And how you won him to life again,
Bending over with infinite eyes,
Crooning the songs of your sunny Spain,
Fanning his forehead with softest sighs?
Deeper a hurt in his heart there lay
Than where the Apache arrows pried.
Twas a fair-haired playmate, far away,
With blue eyes traitors, and lips that lied.
I had a letter from her, to-night:
'John, I was wrong!' Twas a girl's mistake!
And time has humbled my heart to write—
Oh, love! Come back, for our old love's sake!
Go? Do you think I would go, mi flor?
With love like yours shall I hoard regret?
And our barefoot babes around the door?
No! Then a kiss and—a cigarette!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 64.

The New Missionary to Quijotoa

Pistol Johnny:

If yo're the new Parson thet come to-day,
Thar's a lay f'r yo' at the Total Wreck.
Yo' c'n cash-in prompt at the end o' play
Ef yo'll deal us the best thet's in yo'r deck!

The Parson, feeling his way:

What is the occasion, may I inquire?

Pistol Johnny:

Ax? F'r shore! I anteed; yo've got the call!
The boys they reck'ned ez they'd deesire
Yo'r help at the plantin' o' Tombstone Moll.

The Parson:

The planting? I hardly—

Pistol Johnny:

Her fun'ral, Pard.
We'low fr to have et did up in style.
Ef the camp goes broke, we mus' see Moll squar'd;
'N' thar ain't nobuddy's won't chip his pile!

The Parson:

But that names strikes me a trifle odd.
Why, surely she was not—

Pistol Johnny:

Oh, yes, she wuz!
But I tell yo', Pard, at the bar o' God
We sh'll take more chances than po'r Moll does.
Say! Jes' yo' unwrinkle thet nose a mite,
F'r yo'll get disliked ef it's seen thet high!
Ef we ain't no saints, we c'n size wot's white—
'N' Moll hed a soul like a sunrise sky.
She come in the summer o' '81,
Thet young'n' timid, yo'd never'a' 'lowed
Ez she wuzn't straight—sech a dif'runt run
Fr'm the rest o' thet scaly, tin-horn crowd!

'N' sech ez she come, she hez allus stayed,
Ez sad'n' ez still—'n' thet wis'ful face,
'N' eyes like opáls when they're sot in shade,
With them sof' deep wavers yo' cain't jes' place.
When the small-pox struck, 'n' a hundred down—
A-dyin' like rats at a pizened bone—
'N' them ez cud vamos hed jumped the town,
'N' Death'n' the sick played et out alone,
Et wuz Moll thet come like a timid ghost,
White-faced'n' sof'-fingered'n' everywhar—
A-nursin' the wives ez hed scorned her most,
Or layin' their babes to the graveyard thar.
Death ain't sech a cuss, when yo'r gun barks back
Ez sassy'z the best—but excuse P. J.
When yo'r soul lays gagged in ets rotten shack
Whilst the black flesh draps fr'm yo'r bones away!
But Moll! She wuz doctor'n' sexton too—
Not a man wuz left ez cud lift a fin; -
'N' them ez she cudn't no-ways pull through,
She dug their last 'ssessment, 'n' laid 'em in!

The Parson:

She died of it?

Pistol Johnny:

No—thet's a year come June.
Bad fire at the Widder Magee's las' night—
'N' Moll—she'll be planted this afternoon,
But thet hunch-back Kitty Magee's all right!
Wal, thet's the hull layout.

The Parson:

A strange, sad case!
Do you know of her home, of friends, at all?

Pistol Johnny:

No more'n thet she come fr'm the East, some place—
She never wud talk of her home, wud Moll.
Nobuddy cud git her to tell her name—
Cept 'Mary'—n'r why she hed runned away;
But they say'twas some college chap to blame—

Then he got religion, 'n' shook her! Hey?

The Parson:

I—will—go—

Pistol Johnny:

Keerect! But yo're sorter white—
Be yo' sick?

The Parson:

Heart-trouble—'T will soon be o'er.

Pistol Johnny:

Yo're heart? Thet's risky! Yere, jes' to the right
Now up this alley. Whoa! Yere's the door.
Step in. This yere casket's the best they hed,
But et ain't too good f'r—Now wot's to pay!
Down on his knees! 'N' I'll swar he said,
'Oh, God! Is it Judgment? My little May!'
1889;

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 65.

Jim

Climbin' the Mesa Grande,
 'N' the broncos fit to drap,
 With the sand hub-high, 'n' the white-het sky
 Like the breath o' hell! Git ap!
 Nary a pasagero—
 Jes' me'n' the stage; 'n' in't
 Thet Fargo box fr'm the P'int o' Rocks
 With dust fr the Frisco mint.
 Ten Thousan' cool, I reckon,
 Ten thousan' ef ther's a nick—
 'N' me on the drive at sixty-five,
 'N' the po'r ol' wife gone sick—
 Yo' Bill Green! Wot yo' think'n'?
 Be yo' locoed, or wot? I'llow
 Et's a purty bust, ef the Line cain't trust
 Ol Bill fr a white man now!
 Trust me? Bet yo' que sí, now!
 We're po'r ez the ribs o' grief,
 But the Boy'n' Sue—'t'd kill the two
 Ef Dad was to turn to thief!
 Ef Jim wuz only yer, now,
 F'r to sorter ease the road
 'Th his han's'me phiz'n' thet laff o' his—
 'N' to help to guard the load!
 Po'r Jim! Et gallds him awful,
 This rustle fr daily bread—
 'Th his mammy down, 'n' no work in town,
 'N' nuth'n to hope ahead.
 He says to me this mornin'—
 Thet quiet'n' despert-like—
 'Dad, I'm a-goin' to the Cabezon,
 'N' I'll die but I'll make a strike!
 'I cain't stan' this no longer,
 F'r'tain't nuther jest n'r right!
 'N' out he lit—Jim's wild, a bit,
 But yo' bet his heart is white!
 Ef only—whoa, yo' devils!
 A holdup, ez shore ez chalk!

‘Throw up my han’s?’ Why fr shore! A man’s
A fool to dispute sech talk!
Whoop! Then I ketched yo’ nappin’!
Thet box is a leetle more’n
A load fr one’n’ not drap his gun—
Now sposen yo’ throw up yo’rn!
Don’t tech thet gun! Yo’ ijjit!
Take thet! Had to tumble him!
Deader’n a rat! Why, thet’s my ol’ hat—
’N’ the mask—h-h-h! Christ! My Jim!
1889;

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 69.

A Frontier Bridal

The endless day is ended,
 The long, swift gallop done;
And night's dear arch is bended—
 Our night, my little one!
The pine trees purr and hover
 Above our first, first bed;
The moon, that loves a lover,
 Bends radiant overhead.
The world is far behind us,
 Our world is all to be.
The future that shall find us
 Shall find but you and me.
Alone—if they be lonely
 Whose arms their world enclose;
To whom Heaven's self is only
 A Now that never goes!
Soft hand in sinewy nested,
 And lips that sigh and croon,
And hearts that beat so close, so sweet,
 And eyes that drink and swoon;
Far from the human billow
 That breaks in white unrest.
Ah, happy is our pillow
 On the brown Mother's breast.
The morrow's way is weary,
 The springs are far between;
Yon bitter plains and dreary
 Forget their youth was green.
But not the utter desert
 Shall parch our inner June;
And everywhere our hearts shall fare
 With the pine trees and the moon!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 71.

5:59

Aha! There whistles Number One!
And down the tingling grade she grows,
Tossing her cloud of tresses dun
Back on the twilight's fading rose.
A mile—a moment—and my Kate!
From years, and half a world apart.
But now we'll snap our thumbs at Fate,
And keep our Kingdom of the Heart.
And—eh? The world is drowned in steam—
A volleying, billowing, deafening cloud—
And men there run as in a dream,
And through the thunderous fog they crowd.
'An open switch,' I heard one say:
An op——But that's a wreck! And she
A half a hundred yards away!
Ah, God! How ill from Fate we flee!
How curséd leaden drag my feet—
And yet the rest are far behind—
On thro' the misty winding sheet,
My God! I know not what—to find.
Ugh! That I tripped on moved and cried!
Ah! There she is! My Kate! My Kate!
Unscratched! Nor any soul beside
Is lost, of all that living freight..
But while the grumbling travelers hie
To crowd the station with their fret,
Here, Sweetheart, step a little by
To thank the savior they forget.
Nay, not in words—that dull ear cranes
Not even to your music, Sweet,
For that poor clay in greasy jeans
There come the stretcher and the sheet.
But of your pure heart's purest give
To him the Hungry Death that spied
Timely himself to leap and live,
But stayed—and stopped the train—and died,

And yon dumb clinger to the dead—
 Aye, weep for her who cannot! She
Upon the morrow should have wed
 With him that brought you safe to me!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 72.

In Camp

Skyward Pine, that saw it all,
Whisper never what thou knowest!
Many, many things befall
When the coaxing moon is tall
Through the tender shade thou throwest.
Blame me not, O Pine, too soon!
I—ye all beguiled me to it!
Had it not been night and June,
With the pine-breath and the moon,
I had ne'er been bold to do it.
Ah, her forehead was so white,
Where that soft ray came and kissed her;
Where the happy heaven's light
Lingered with her as of right—
As of sister with a sister!
All our little camp asleep;
Only I at midnight waking—
Waking to the moon—to creep,
Kiss her silent brow—and keep
Lips aye holier for that slaking.
She, O Pine, will never know—
Never blush amid her laughter.
She is nothing poorer so,
I so rich—as who shall go
Dreaming it forever after!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 73.

Just Happen So

Shirking the eye of the desert skies
Under a juniper's sprawling shade,
Weathered, and shaggy, and swart, he lies,
To sleep by the desert's breath betrayed.
The sun stabs down, through a lonely rift
In fickle boughs, to the sleeper's lids;
Their brown turns red, and the red as swift
Puffs livid gray where the hot brand bids.
The dull nerves nudge at the drowsy brain;
The slow brows knit to a sullen knot,
As slumber limps with the load of pain
And rallies sense to the burning spot.
He cheats the sun with a stupid hand;
Groans, sits him up in the glare that blinds—
Nor hears the H-H-H! of the warning sand
As a lazy length from the cactus winds.
Cursing the glare that has wakened him—
Wakened in time, if he could but know!
(But ears are dullard, and eyes are dim,
And Fate is pulling her puppet so).
Left-handed groping—ask Fate for why!—
He reaches back for his fallen hat;
And Death—that hurtless had passed him by,
Had the right hand reached—is his share for that.
That slow S flirts to a mortal Q,
The castanet for the death-waltz plays,
The fist of a head unclenches to
A bony palm for the slap that slays.
A flash—a howl—and the smould'ring brain
Flares up into white intelligence;
'My Knife! But, God it is on the vein!'
And brute despair is the heir of sense.
Shrieking and cursing with lips that swell,
Raving and trampling his writhing fate,
His heels instinct with the rage of hell—
Each answering bite but a spur to hate.

Two thin, dark streams from his nostrils break—
He staggers—the ghastly dance is done!
And, one hand clenched on a frayed-out snake,
He lies, lead-faced, to the swollen sun.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 74.

Bushwhacked

He stepped without his cabin door,
 The white moon cut his shadow tall
Waist-high in halves and spliced it o'er
 From ground to gray adobe wall.
The air that swelled his shaggy chest
 From peaks of snow drew fresh and free,
Two skyward miles that reared their crest
 Above the far, forgotten sea.
The bare, brown valley at his feet,
 The staggering mesa's cliff behind,
The spring's wee, wavering silver sheet,
 The cedar's lisping with the wind—
He claimed them all, in one wide glance
 Of eyes half careless, half content,
Of sky and moon-beguiled expanse;
 And half his heavy brows unbent.
He stretched, with thick arms overhead—
 The slow, half-yawn of powerful men
Ha! 'Click!' yon sullen cedar said,
 And spat a crash of fire—and then
A shadow sneaking down the trail;
 A still length sprawled upon the ground;
 A blot upon the forehead pale;
 A dark pool widening fast around.

1889

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 76.

The Lava Flow at Los Alamitos

It found a valley young and fair
And virgin of regret;
That laughed away the amorous air,
Nor dreamed of love as yet.
It left a valley wan and old
And outcast of desire,
When through her maiden heart had rolled
Its passion-flood of fire.
Her springs are dry; and dry between
Is all her flowery pass,
Save one wee strip of faithful green—
The friendship of the grass.
And black across her beauty's wreck—
Poor wreck, that may not die!—
Lies dead the flame she could not check,
Nor can revivify.
So, pale and shriveled in despair,
So, frozen black in stone,
They lie—the awful semblance there
Of lives that I have known.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 78.

In Tuerto Cañon

The white moon hangs on a tattered sky,
 A brooch on a beggar's breast;
A young wind laughs as it loiters by,
The credulous aspens reach and sigh
To its careless touch, as you and I
 Come clattering down the West.
Pwist! Alazan! Are you going to sleep?
 We are here at the four-mile tree!
And deeper the cañon gapes, and deep
The inching shade where the tall pines creep
To peer in the brook, whose windows keep
 Their shivering doubles—see!
Yon hectic star thought the night of pine
 That hangs on the Tuerto's comb!
Aha! And your ears perk up to line!
You know who waits there with eyes ashine—
Whose neck she will hug next after mine!
 I guess so! Then out for home!
A shot! Pe-yanng! And it burned my ear!
 Good cause for your shying so!
Apaches! Trapped! They are front and rear!
And Kate alone, with the hellions near—
My Kate—Alazan! Get out of here!
 Whoop! Through them! Over them! Go!
Off, in a whirlwind of iron heels
 That kindle the stony trail!
Aye! Let them follow the hawk that wheels,
Or chase the bolt when the sky-break peals!
The foam rains round, and the cañon reels,
 And—Safe! Do you hear her hail!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 78.

The Mother Moon

A legend of the Tigua (Pueblo) Indians of New Mexico, translated without liberties.

Once, when the Moon had two eyes
 (Who now has only one),
She saw as bright across the night
 As did by day the Sun—
The Sun for whom They made her,
 To share the giving life;
For first to be of maids was she,
 And first that was a wife.
The common sire and mother
 Of all the things that be,
Their growing brood with eyes they viewed
 That saw and gave to see.
The people aye were dancing,
 And ever birds a-wing,
And wakeful flowers, and wakeful hours
 For wakeful everything;
Until the light grew heavy—
 Their fond, mistaken light—
And heavy grew young eyes that knew
 No tender lids of night.
And then The Trues thought better,
 And said: 'We may not keep
The Moon and Sun to see as one,
 For so there is no sleep.
'Let one's one eye be blinded—
 But which shall be the one?'
But the Moon cried: 'Nay! take mine away,
 And do not blind the Sun!
'The Father, the Provider
 Has greater need to see—
Leave him the light of perfect sight,
 And darken only me!'
And so The Trues they made her
 Less seeing than the Sun;
And earth was blest with gentle rest
 When that long day was done.

So mother-pale above us
 She bends, her watch to keep,
Who of her sight dear-bought the Night
 To give her children Sleep.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 79.

The Fellow in Greasy Jeans

Whew! How the drivers hammer!
We are late by an hour or more,
We sway and swerve on the ringing curve,
And the bridges reel and roar.
Look how the engine lurches—
And out of its window cranes,
With gray eyes wed to the track ahead,
A fellow in greasy jeans.
Hardly looks like the person
To trust with so grave a care—
In that grimy face'twere hard to trace
The metal that should be there.
Faster we roar, and faster—
The hand at the throttle shows
Steady enough, if the face is rough—
And the landscape melts and flows.
Into the cut—'Good Jesus!
It's Death has the right o' way!'
The whistle wakes to a shriek for brakes—
And what does his swift brain say?
'Jump, for Moll and the babies,
And for dear life's love supreme!
Jump, from the doom of a crunching tomb,
And the hell of the howling steam!
'Stay, for the hero's duty—
The trust of a hundred lives!
Stay, for the sake of the hearts would break,
And for others' babes and wives!'.
'You bet!' With strong teeth gritting,
And with hands that snatch amain—
The monster reels on reversing wheels,
And the air-brake chokes the train.
We are safe with our scratches—
'There's only the engine wrecked.'
And the engineer? Ah, well, I fear
That's only what all expect.

But here in the torn steel's chaos
I read what our life ordains,
And shivering pause—for yon cinder was
The fellow in greasy jeans!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 81.

The Ball at Dolores

‘Ay, never was fiesta fair as good San Juan’s today!

A thousand souls at mass this morn! And ay, que gusto, when
They ran the gallo races! How Felipe swept away
The squawking prize—first cavalier of thrice a hundred men!

‘How like a rock from off the cliff he thundered down the plain!
And how the chase behind him roared in a tumultuous flood!
And how he fought the grapplers off with feathered blows amain!
And how his white teeth laughed through bronze besplashed with manly blood!

‘Felipe de me alma! Caballero sin rival!
The princeliest and proudest and the bravest everywhere!
And now they make the baile in Don Pedro’s long portál,
Ay, how my heart is dancing—for Felipe will be there!

‘The candles how they flutter on the yeso-gleaming wall,
Coquetas with the shadows in the vigas dark above;
And yonder hobbles Crooked Juan, prime musico of all,
And old José, with his guitar that knows the songs of love.

‘And now they come by twos and fours along the fading street
The señoritas all in white, in decent black the men.
Ay, que bonito, as with weaving arms and twinkling feet
We’ll swing the sinuous cuna, down the porch and back again!

‘And now the music kindles, and the ’dobe floor’s awake
To pulse with eager feet—and still Felipe no ’stá aquí!
Ingrato! And I sit me here a byword for his sake
Who vowed to waltz the cradle-waltz with me—with none but me!

‘Ay, Madre de Dios! With her! Perdita in his arms!
Perjuro! Sin Vergüenza! Do ye know me? Stand apart!
I spare thee little devil—how could’st thou withstand his charms!
But he—I love him—love him!’—And her dagger drinks his heart.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 82.

Dust of Every Day

Oh, God! The dust of every-day
How thick it lies on all!
How soon the rose has paled to gray
Beneath its stealthy fall!

It falls on life—whose name is Youth—
It clogs its generous strife;
And later years are but, in truth,
The memory of life.

It falls on youth—whose name is Hope—
It dries the crystal bowl
Till naught but sentient mummies grope
Where once was each a soul.

Ah, curséd dust of petty things
Our heedless footsteps stir!
In vain—too late—reflection stings
With what we are and were.

It is not years that turn us old,
Nor monster woes that blast;
But this, impalpable and cold,
That chokes the heart at last!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 84.

In the Mojave

The starved and passionate desert
Stares ever to the sky:
‘Oh, smile not so forever, love,
With lids forever dry!
‘In tears and not in laughter
Love oft shall dearest be—
My heart is thirsty for your tears
To come and comfort me.’
I breathe the desert’s passion;
The sun is hot above.
Oh, rain them down upon my heart—
The soft, cool tears of love!

1888

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 85.

MAVERICKS

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

My Spanish Cigarette

A Pinch of punche, a brown straw-paper,
Or bit of corn-husk, filmy, neat,
Rolled by fingers olive and taper—
Eye of my eyes! But this is sweet!
Lend me the loan of a light, Juanita,
Matches? Never! Your eyes will do!
There! allí 'stá! Good enough, Chiquita!
Now just double its mate for you.
Ah, how sweet is the morning splendor
Here in the alamo's quivering shade!
And, ah, how sweet are my tyrants tender—
Brown cigarro and brownie maid!
Easy, Juanita! Smother those flashes
Out of your eyes so deeply jet!
Do you want to turn my heart to ashes,
Here along with the cigarette?

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 89.

Competitive Drawing in the Arizona Schools

Which'll I marry? Aw, leggo, now!
Hef to choose? But I cain't, I say!
Like yo' both, but I jes' donno now
Which I'd cotton-to thet-away.
Sot on settlin' it'fore yo'r dinner?
Wot'd I say to a poker game—
Show-down—me to go to the winner?
I'm agreeable, ef yo'r the same!
'Ll I deal? In course I will, mos' cheerful.
Pete, yo' shuffle, Hank, cut for luck—
Thar's yo'r pasteboards. Discard keerful—
Half a minnit we'll see who's stuck!
Yer, yo' Pete, et's yo'r firs' say-so,
How many keerds yo' goin' to draw?
Four! Now et takes a gall to play so!
Yo' mus' think luck is yo'rn by law!
Wal, ef that Pete hain't drewed four aces!
Sort o' looks like ez ef he'd won—
Ex-cuse me! This pot's Hank Casey's,
Seein' ez Hank hez drewed—his gun!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 89.

Brother Burro

Good Afternoon, my long-eared brother!

I don't deny the relationship!

You're a donkey, and I'm another,

And neither one of us cares a skip.

All of us more or less are asses,

Whether admitting the fact or no;

And whenever a pretty lass is

Mixed in the case, we are doubly so.

Did you see me this morning bitten,

(You were in the placita, too)

When Rosita gave me the mitten?

Said she'd rather more use for you?

That's a complimentary showing,

After all she had brought to pass!

Hang these women! They're past all knowing!

Come, let's both of us go to grass!

'Haw-w-eek! Haw-w-eek!' Exactly! Jes' so!

Sympathy that must mean to be;

Sounds that way—at least, I guess so!—

I'll break your neck if you laugh at me!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 90.

The Passing of Pinto Pete

'Cain't hold no fun'rul obs'quies at the grave of Pinto Pete?'

Say, Parson, jes' come off the roof! Them Boston frills don't go!
'Yo'r servise is f'r Christians? Yo' ain't buryin' mule-meat?'

Wall, ef thet mule warn't a Christian, I shud agitate to know!

A Christian? Dad thet tenderfuted sarmon-trap o' yo'rn!

Why, Pete wuz straight-up orthodox, 'n' lived consistent, too!
'N' ez f'r sense—yo' hear me trill—he packed a cargo more'n
A half these wand'rin' Gospel-sharps 'n' heaven-promoters do!

Sense? Why, he savvied whiskey jest ez fur ez he cud smell,
'N' his gift f'r chawin' navy plug wuz beautifule to see!
'N' f'r dodgin' the Apaches—ef yo' 'low he cudn't tell
When the hos-tiles wuz a-raidin' 'round, yo're off yo'r axletree!

He didn't need no almanick to tell when Sunday come:
Them boys ez 'lowed to work him, oncet, upon the Sabber-day—
Wal, Bill's head still is in a sling, 'n' excavated some;
'N' ez f'r Jewsharp Johnny, he wuz planted right away!

But every Sunday mornin', when I sot to cinchin' Pete,
He'd give a sollum hee-haw, 'n' then strike out f'r—the mines?
Not any! Straight f'r the Las' Chance, 'n' promenayde the street,
Whilst I was buckin' aces-up with sevens onto nines.

How wud I 'a' navigated, when Ol' Simms 'n' me got slewed,
'N' tried Coyote Crick, bank-full? Thar warn't nobuddy 'round—
Pete bucked me off, 'n' broke my leg! That sense? F'r shore, yo' dude!
Simms, he sailed in—his horse bogged down, 'n' Simms—he sorter drowned!

'N' still yo' 'low yo' cain't assist? Say! See this forty-four?
Thar's six good reasons why yo' will! The bon' yard's over yan.
Now git a move, immeejit, 'r I'll start a lead-mine shore!
'N' yo'll be interested on the chief-stock-holder plan!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 91.

The Spanish Lesson

Wal, I'm yer fur to take my teachin'—
Lay down, Nina, thet soft guitar.
Got to l'arn Spanish, shore ez preachin'!
'Vamos! I show you that verb amar.'
'Amo, I love'—Thet's right'n' proper!
'Amas, thou lovest'—yo' bet I do!
'Ama, he loves'—Hold up! I copper!
He gits sore bones ef he dast love you!
Who is this 'him' that makes so free now,
Tryin' to jump my Sweetheart Claim?
Oncet I ketch him coyotein' me, now,
Yo' hear me twitter, Mud's his name!
Dad my buttons ef I don't hammer—
Hey? Yo're laffin'! Wot kin it be?
'Hain't no him? Et's the Spanish grammar?'
Wal, now, Nina! Thet's one on me!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 93.

To My Shadow

You sun-shelled, empty husk of me,
My shabby, shivering, doddering double,
Too downcast eye to turn and flee
From one who gives you only trouble;
Across the llano as I ride,
Across the cañon as I stumble,
Why dog you ever at my side,
You aimless, fruitless, shiftless jumble?
Why can't you stay and scowl at home?
I'm tired of this eternal tagging;
And you, I know, dislike to roam—
It's patent from your sulky lagging.
The horse you back is bad as you—
A sorry, stilted stack of angles.
If I were Bayo, here, I'd sue
The rack that so his figure mangles.
And as for what you make of me,
You shifting, shuffling, slouching slander,
I'm sure the libel-law should see
To such kaleidoscopic candor.
Come over on the left and ride;
And face the Sun's paternal searching,
Nor skulk upon my farther side
Like brat that dodges from a birching.
'You would, if you could be as bright
As I?' Oh, that's another matter,
'I cast you in the shade?' All right—
I'll stop, if you begin to flatter.
One wouldn't think, to look at you,
Your tongue could such complaisance borrow.
There goes the sun—what! Going too?
Well, then, good-bye—until to-morrow.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 94.

The Parting of the Hare

The Jack Rabbit Bears Out His Argument

Eh? 'How did I know that you hadn't a gun?'
Pooh! Ask me a harder one, Mr. Man!
My conscience told me—did you ever have one?
Not likely—you're built on the human plan!
Oho! So you think 'I've a gall, for a jack—
A donkey-eared rabbit—to talk abuse
To the biped King?' I might answer you back
That the biped's only a featherless goose!
It's entirely a matter of point of view.
Do you think I'd be such a fork-legged lump—
Such a bald-skinned, petty-eared error as you?
What do you know of a thirty-foot jump?
Oh! You 'take it out in superior brains!'
That's good—if you've got 'em! But then, you
see,
I've discovered on these Colorado plains
That legs are quite brainy enough for me!
Superior nothing! Aha! Look-a-there!
That grizzly comes timely to point my tale!
You just sighed for a gun that would bang the hare—
But now that it's 'Hang the bear!' you are pale!
Now I need no arms—d'you observe these heels?
He'd have his appetite for his run!
But I hate to disturb a bear at his meals—
So good-bye, King that is slave to a gun!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 95.

The Heavenward Hold-Up

‘Throw up my han’s?’ W’y, sartin, Pard!
Anything fr accommudash’n!
Don’t tickle them triggers quite so hard—
Buckshot’n’ me ain’t no relash’n!
I ain’t hunt’n no long-lost Bud
Strawbry-marked’n the left-hand bar’el!
Don’t keer to change my name to Mud—
Durn sight ruther we wudn’t quar’el,
I hain’t got much stuff’n my clo’es,
Only a span o’ big iron dollars.
In course yo’re welc’me, Pard, to those—
Et’s Jim-Crow luck us miners follers!
‘All I got?’ Yep! Sorry, Ol’ Socks!
Look’n’ see, ef yo’re jubous ’bout et.
Say, now! Don’t snipe thet little box—
I cain’t git on nohow without et!
‘Shet my jaw?’ Oh, shet et goes!
Only I hate to hev yo’ take et.
Don’t go spile et under my nose—
Wot? Yo’re tak’n a rock to break et?!?!?!!!

(To various aspiring fragments of highwayman:)

Oh, wal, good-bye, ef yo’ve dispersed!
Didn’t’llow yo’s en no sech hurry!
’F I’d thought, I might’a’ told yo’ first
Thet dynamite’s fr’m Jim’s stun-quirry?
By the way, ef yo’re com’n down,
Fetch my boodle’n’ thet thar double-
Bar’el—they’d spile’n yo’re new town,
But I c’n use’m’thout no trouble!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 96.

Coyote

Bohemian of Bohemians,
And vagabond of vags,
I care not who for office runs
Nor how the market wags;
But pit-a-patter through the sage
I trot—and then remote,
When night is high, unlimber my
Multiplicative throat.
I do but sing because I must;
Not, human-like, for pelf,
I am confest—or call it cussed—
A chorus in myself.
I'm modest and retiring still,
Man's greedy mob among—
A furtive-nosed gray streak, composed
Of mouth, brush, legs and lung.
The wan jack-rabbit's lofty ear
Unfurls when I am heard;
But vain he flees—I see that he's
Right decently interred.
And when spring mutton cometh ripe
I may remark I am
On hand to see—in fact—I'm the
Hic Jacet of the lamb.
I'm quite exclusive in my taste,
And give an icy shake
To advances in the ill-bred haste
Domestic barkers make.
To own relationship with them,
And collars, I would rue.
I'll have no kin outside my skin—
Dog-on me if I do!
In politics I run myself,
Like other folks of brains;
Unbound am I by party tie—
The Mugwump of the Plains.
I'm strong in favor of free wool,
But deem Protection wise

Against this shot-gun policy
Which I so much despise.
They call me petty larcenist,
But greet my pards polite
Who Wall-street prowl without my howl
But all my appetite;
Who, me-like, folly do rebuke
By leaping on the lamb—
That chump who'd tire a senseful sire,
And isn't worth a damn!
Man's inhumanity to me
Makes countless thousands laugh.
I'd like to trace upon his face
My mouthful autograph!
Of all the brutes in skin or suits,
In broadcloth or pelote,
That come to be as mean as he
I'd rather stay coyote!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 97.

An Arizona Industry

Buck? Him? Why, he wudn't be ketched dead
A-doin' or no sech bronco trick!
Peacef'lest hoss thet yo'll run across
In twenty year, is thet Buckskin Dick!
Jes' right fr an Eastern chap like yo'—
He rides ez smooth ez a rock'n'-chair.
Forty? Thet's right. Is them cinches tight?
Pete, hold his head while the gent mounts there.
(Leggo!) Dick! Wot're yo' good fur? Hump!
Bully! Dead-centered the moon, thet aim!
We'll jump the town afore he comes down—
'N' jes' forty ahead o' the game!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 99.

To My .44

Asleep against my 'dobe wall,
 It hangs in cobwebs deep and dusty;
Nor tickling spiders serve to call
 A protest from its larynx rusty.
M-m! It perhaps is just as well—
 And maybe better for outsiders—
As when it wont its mind to tell
 At less intrusion than the spider's.
Sleep well, Old Pard! Your day is done—
 No more you rank the common brother;
No more we sally forth to gun
 For him who hints at 'You're another!'
No more we deem it de rigueur
 To shoot-up towns that grow too solemn;
To set the tenderfoot astir,
 Or double-lead the pers'nal column.
The corn upon our hither hip
 Is gone—with many a callous bigger—
Since the Frontier has lost its grip,
 And ours forgets the fretful trigger.
There's nothing for you but to rest;
 These later fashions all combat you.
But once you starred it with the best,
 And—well, Old Man, here's looking at you!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 99.

To Nita from New Mexico

In sleeping or in waking,
 In pleasure or in pain,
While other hearts are breaking,
 And other hopes are vain,
I have a guest unbidden,
 But welcome none the less—
A hope from others hidden,
 But maybe you can guess!
My pony slow meanders
 Beneath a listless rein,
And thinks: ‘These human ganders!
 Poor Master can’t be sane!
He’s surely not been drinking,
 And yet his mind’s a mess!
I wonder what he’s thinking?’
 Now see if you can guess!
‘His feet are in the stirrups,
 His head is in a cloud;
And now and then he chirrup
 Some Spanish air aloud.
He knows not where he’s riding,
 And seems to care still less—
Where can his thoughts be biding?’
 Come, tell me, can’t you guess!
‘Last night he lay beside me,
 Wrapped warmly in my rope,
And with his blanket tied me—
 A rather narrow scope
For one that’s always scheming
 To graze well, I confess.
What could he have been dreaming?’
 I think that you can guess!
‘He wears a little locket—
 Quite precious I should say;
He pulls it from his pocket
 A hundred times a day.

He murmurs tender phrases
 'Horse language won't express—
I wonder whose the face is?'
 I'm sure that you can guess!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 100.

IN THE LAND OF THE AFTERNOON

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

Camulos

The stars above Camulos,
 How tenderly they shine!
The wind that woos its groves at eve
 Is like the breath of kine.
But tenderer and sweeter
 Than starlight or than breeze,
The deep, dark eyes that glisten
 Beneath the whispering trees!
The eager little river,
 Below Ramona's Tree,
Along its path of yellow sand
 Laughs ever to the sea.
But silv'rier than its music
 There floats a soft refrain
From out the garden copses—
 A song of sunny Spain!
Across the dim placita,
 Where passionate roses blow,
And sober cypress stand their guard,
 The fountain plashes low.
But softer than the perfume
 That loads the languorous air,
Or tiny tinkle of the spray,
 The lips that murmur there!
The memories of Camulos,
 How sweetly, sadly dear!
Here Alessandro found his love;
 Ramona's home was here;
And here the great, warm woman-heart,
 With others' sorrows filled,
Dreamed out the story to whose fire
 A careless world has thrilled.
Still in the little chapel
 Both proud and petty pray;
The torn and mended altar-cloth
 Hangs at its shrine to-day;
To-day upon the circling hills
 The tall, white crosses rise

The staunch Señora planted there
 To point men to the skies.
The mustard hazes golden,
 The almond-orchard's bloom,
The orange-groves, the fleecy flocks,
 The saints, the Padre's room—
They all are here, as true and fair
 As in Ramona's day;
And hearts as gentle as her own,
 But happier alway.
Self-centered, self-sufficing,
 A kingdom of its own,
While the new world goes jostling past
 It dreams along alone—
Alone in drowsy sunshine,
 Alone in amorous shade—
The sweetest spot where e'er Romance
 Abode, or Fancy strayed.
Untaint by greed of riches,
 That is our modern shame;
Unchanged as in those far old days
 When Zalvidea came,
Its white adobes face the sun,
 Its plaintive wood-doves call;
Its heart the heart of Mother Spain—
 Of Spain before her fall!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 105.

My Moon

Pá-hli-o sits in her sky, to-night—
 Pale and slender and poised above;
Dear and far as the virgin light
 Of the Pá-hli-o here I love.
Little bride of the ancient skies,
 Mother-maid of the stars that be,
Tell me—tell if Her wonder eyes
 Now are upturned to thee?
Tell me, is She at Her window now,
 Whispering to thee as sisters do?
Says She aught of a vesper vow,
 And a dream like Heaven come true?
Is She pale with thine own desire?
Wistful aye in Her lonely height?
Is Her face up-lit to a far-off Fire,
And soft with the tears of Night?

‘Pá-hli-o’ is Pueblo Indian for the Moon: ‘Water Maiden.’

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 107.

The Unbeliever

I know a castle lonely,
 I know a lonely maid;
It waits her coming only—
 And why is she afraid?
Not of the face of Sorrow,
 Nor stars adverse above,
Nor ghosts may ride to-morrow—
 She is only afraid of Love.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 108.

The Dream

Dear God, are you certain?
Can it—is All of it meant for me?
Did you not pass the right one by?
What can those bottomless eyes of her see
Back of this dull gray curtain?
Grizzled, ingrown and grim am I;
She is fair as the world began—
Radiant, tender and wonder-souled;
She that would queen the proudest throne,
She that should better its gems and gold,
Bending rosy to me alone,
Whispering, ‘My Old Man!’
Hers! Can she fathom so deep
Down to the heart of my heart,
Where the very I, apart,
My ultimate altar keep?
Hard is the shell—and thick—
Of a thousand scars it grew—
But at its core, and forevermore,
The quenchless fire is quick,
And Faith stands True.
Let Her come in!
Here all is free for Her—
No corner hid.
Here she shall find the Me;
The Boy that I used to be,
The Boy I’ll be for Her—
And Man, as she shall bid!
I cannot go astray,
With that slim hand in mine;
There is no holier way
Than where her true eyes shine.
There is no melody like her,
No star so high, no dawn so pure,
No joy so dear, no hope so sure.
Thou who hast loaned me such a spur—
Watch me, God, if I earn it not!
Help me unsaddle the heavy years,

Turn young-eyed to the Trail again!
All that hardened shall be forgot,
All the treacheries, all the tears.
Now, in step! And the Past, good-bye!
Up and away on the Open Plain,
Flower-of-my-Heart and I!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 108.

The Other Dream

I Dreamed a dream—and it's oh, we wander
Wide and free as the swallows will;
Verging yonder, and ever yonder;
Living, and loving, and learning still.
All the world for our bridal pairing,
Every sky for our wedding-day;
Every tide for our wayward faring,
All God's Wonder to joy our way.
Naught can fetter our wings or wooing—
Time, nor distance, nor frowning sky;
Daring, sharing, and ever doing—
Two days better for each gone by.
Storied lands and the folk unwritten,
Court and gallery, ancient hall;
Desert cañon, and plain sun-bitten,
Tropic jungle and glacier's thrall.
All shall serve us, and lodge and love us,
All shall quicken our twin-grown mind—
Under us, round us, and up above us,
All shall teach us, and all be kind.
Only of Spring shall our hearts be shaken,
Yearn our wings to our nest again—
Sure as the golondrinas waken
Ever in May to their Mother Spain.
Here, when the Month of Mary the Mother
Warms thy heart with a Life-to-be—
Home we'll welcome the Little Other;
Most truly One when God makes us Three!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 109.

‘Bob’ Burdette

1844–1914

A Tiny, tireless tenement
That faced the Long War’s gruelling Hell;
A lean, gray, homely face that meant
New heart to all his smile befell;
Head, heart and soul of well-spring Joy
That kept him seventy years a Boy.
And when at last he slept—
Their Mate so many years—
Wit sat aside and wept,
And Mirth ran back to tears;
And we that earthly walked with him
Found all our Day and Stars grow dim.
But the High Sunshine knew him best
Who was its vicar among men—
Who stored it, gave it out again
Though cloudy days and nights opprest;
And on the very mist that fell
Of tears for him from every eye,
It turned the Rainbow’s faith to tell
So Glad a Soul shall never die.
His life is in the millioned lives
His dear contagion touched with Health;
His treasure Over There derives
For that he taught the Truer Wealth,
God rest his gentle soul—and lend
His Spirit with us to the end!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 111.

A Song of Mexico

I know the Skies of Mexico,
Of dreaming, mighty Mexico
 Where snowy vast volcanos rise—
 The April skies, the opal skies,
The wonder-skies of Mexico!
I know the Eyes of Mexico,
Of fond and fruitful Mexico—
 The beaming eyes, the dreaming eyes
 Where Wonder sleeps, nor ever dies,
The midnight eyes of Mexico!
I know the Song of Mexico,
Of Music-living Mexico—
 The saddest song, the gladdest song,
 That steals the heart so sure, so long,
The Folk-flower Song of Mexico!
I know the Heart of Mexico,
Of grave and gracious Mexico—
 Its patience long, its metal tried,
 Its simple faith, its courtly pride—
Age-old, child-hearted Mexico!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 112.

At the Hacienda

A Sentry star peers off the dark sierra's parapet;
Across the almond-blossomed league the breeze is loitering yet;
And in the dim placita, where Castilian roses blow,
The cypress beckons-on the dusk, the fountain plashes low.
Along the old veranda creep the bolder shadows on,
Where wistful with the gloaming sit the daughters of the Don—
Their daylong tuneful laughter mute, their maiden hearts beset
With all the twilight's vague desire, with all its vague regret.
To-morrow—'tis another day!
Again their laugh shall wake
What echoes live forever young to laugh for life's young sake;
For gloom dare not o'erstep the night, nor wolfish care may roam
In this, the patriarchal life—the very home of Home!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 112.

The Rain

It rained, to-day!
The sorrow of the Sky was on the Earth—
The mother-tears, that of her pain
Give her flower-children birth.
But oh, it was Fair, for me—
For I could hold a shield above thee
Against whatever might befall My Flower
And shelter thee—God bless that rainy hour!
And whisper ‘Ay, Wa-u-wi, How I love thee!’
And underneath that little dripping roof
Was Home—for we were there together,
The world forgot, and all its weather.
The grayness of the day
Was tinged with rose—the dawning of thine
 eyes.
The mud along the city way
Was mud for others; but our feet
Walked where the violets are sweet
And glory in our skies!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 113.

Magic

What makes the Moon so glad, to-night—
 So fondly close and clear?
And all the world so wonder-white,
And breezes breathing as they might
 In a belovéd ear?
The mocking-bird with fuller throat
 Pours out his ecstasy;
The brooklet sings a tenderer note,
And airs of orange blossom float,
 And roses breathe for me.
Why is it? Why, what could it be,
 To turn the world so bright?
What miracle, what mystery,
But just—just what God let me see
 Deep in your eyes to-night!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 114.

Notice of Intention

I am going to move to the Land of Dreams
 As soon as ever I may!
This sneaking over by night, meseems,
 And leaving ere peep o' day
Is one of our silliest human schemes—
 So now I am going to stay!
Why waken at all to my exile long,
 To faces unloved and cold,
Where never my lips can fit to a song,
 Where ever my heart grows old—
When it's just as easy, and can't be wrong,
 To live in that Land of Gold?
I was there last night for an hour or two—
 The sweetest I ever passed!
I sat in the garden again with you,
 And my breath came thick and fast
When you whispered blushing that now you knew
 The meaning of love at last.
But then the sun, like a meddlesome clown,
 Climbed grinning above the sky.
My castle in dreamland came tumbling down,
 And tumbling down came I—
Just as I bent for a kiss to crown
 My longing, with none to spy.
And that is why I am bound to go
 And rent me a dream-house there.
For there you'll be waiting for me, I know,
 As blushing and fond and fair;
And we'll live and love in the Dream Land glow,
 The width of the world from care!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 114.

The Seas

How deep is the Sea?
And how wide?
How old? And Till When?
How shall it Cease and be Dried?
And what Then?
Why, Then shall the Deeper still Be and Abide—
Undying, unebbing, the sweep of the tide
Of the Soul of my Soul unto Thee.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 115.

The Exogynist

It minds me not if they be bifurcated,
Or as the highly proper Queen of Spain;
Or young or old, unmated or mismated,
Or Reno-vated—so they bear no stain.
I am graduate from all designs upon them.
Immune, as well, to their potential guile.
For all of me the traps they all set on them
‘May stay unsprung forever and a while.
My eyes no more are pitched to ready kindling.
The Department gets no fire alarms of me.
My taste for amorous arson has been dwindling
Ever since the holocaust of 93.
The love yarns on my tongue have come untwisted.
It can’t crochet those gossamers again—
Fit now to talk but straight and double fisted
To them that think the thoughts of very Men.
A heart of one time autotoxic ardor,
That jumped from zero to a boil and back,
Stands now somewhere midway, I hope no harder,
But certainly a safer therm to pack.
Nay think not I have lost them, nor forgotten—
I love and hold them higher now than then.
Not for a stew of Cupid’s juicy mutton
But as for gentler brothers unto men.
No real man but has a vein of woman,—
Nor father but is half-way mother too;
And she is finer as a fellow human
Than as a deal with dividends in view.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 116.

What's the Matter o' Me?

What's the matter o' me, I wonder?
What's the matter o' me?
Something in me will not stay under—
Something careless of blame or blunder—
Something crying to Be!
Why within me is Thought so shaken?
Why unrest in my feet?
Why such memories move and waken—
Wayward, wilful and unmistaken—
Wistful and bitter and sweet?
Thither surges my twofold being—
Body and soul be two—
Drop resistless with drop agreeing,
Tidal, primal, their haven seeing—
The Matter o' me is—You!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 117.

The Seal of California

Said the Grizzly Bear to the Miner: 'There
Are things I would fain be told—
And one of the first is why you thirst
For the funny dibs of gold?
'You grudge me space in my own birthplace—
I was here before you were—
And you keep me fed on gratuitous lead
Which ruffles my royal fur.
'Without your gun you would break and run—
But I never pick on you.
Why can't we play in a fair Brute way
In a Big enough State for Two?'
Said the Miner gruff to the bear: 'Enough!
No preaching—and don't you fuss!
God made us Men in His Image when
He had finished the world for Us.
'And He added Gold with its power untold,
Because it was most like Him.
And beast and all He has put in thrall
To wait on our lordly whim.
'Tho' you do no ill, you are Grand to Kill—
A brag for a score of men!
And you'll have to go—but even so
We are generous now and then!
'And Justice blent with Sentiment
We'll give you a Famous Fate—
For you shall endure (in caricature):
On the Seal of the Golden State!'

1928

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 117.

LEAST SAID—SOONEST MENED

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

Peacock Paupers

Mastery cannot come down to sneers,
Only the Small are Smart;
Menckens that tickle a million ears—
And never have warmed a heart!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 121.

The Tale of the Centuries

In Court 'The Sex' is Always Right—
 As Phryne was so long ago!
For that her Bosom was so white,
 The Judges held her Heart was so!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 121.

The Epigram

The epigram is the Wasp of Wit,
Of Letters the very Tartar;
Wee and wicked, it means to hit—
And the more it Stings, the Smarter.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 121.

Fate

A Child, by all of space offset—
A billion billion paths apart,
And only one to him—and yet
The random bullet found his heart!

1890

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 121.

Poco á Poco

Not so fast, my crowding blisses—
 Loiter an ye may!
Spend not all to-morrow's kisses
 On the swift To-day.
Love is laggard who possesses,
 Dearest is his Doubt;
Life is fed on golden guesses—
 Death is life found out.
Half in hunger let me linger,
 That my hunger last;
Lest some satiate Future finger
 At the glutton Past.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 122.

The Law

The law is like a cobweb high,
 Its meshes most adorn it;
It serves to catch the simple fly
And ne'er release him till he's dry—
 But it seldom holds a hornet.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 122.

Comparison

'I am free to confess,' said the positive Miss,
 'There is a comparison even in blisses;
A Mr. is only comparative bliss,
 Until he shall make me superlative Mrs.'

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 122.

Such Is Life

Say, Life is the deadly, deceitful disease!

No doctor can tell us the Whither nor Why of it;

We catch it contagious from father and mother;

We're likely to give it to some one or other;

And nobody cares to be Cured if you please—

Though you'll notice that all of us finally die of it!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 123.

To Father Time

What's your hurry, Daddy,
 with your sand-clock and reaper,
Marking a millenium each whisker on your chin?
Time, we say, is Money—
 but we really hold you cheaper!
Say, Where do you think you're Going To—
 and Why did you Begin?

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 123.

Clouds

Wings of the elsewise viewless wind,
Sails o' the bark o' the drifting day,
Squadrons that leave no wake behind,
Mountains that crumble and fade away.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 123.

At Timber Line

Their brothers, purring far below,
Are tall, and shapelier to the eye;
But these have hunched their backs to know
A Pine's last frontier with the Sky.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 123.

Rosemary

How easy for Youth to Forget,
 How certain of Age to Remember!
How longer remember the ash and the ember,
 Than the flame that they died to beget!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 124.

On Second Thought

Time flies—and through no fault of hours,
 But just for instants. I'm
Convinced, despite his flying powers,
 There are no flies on Time.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 124.

By Books

By Books may Learning perhaps befall,
But Wisdom never by Books at all.
Yet Thought shall shiver, at least, the less
With them to cover her Nakedness.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 124.

The Blade

The poet's anvil overmuch to-day
Is lent to tinkle with the goldsmith's art;
A jeweled hilt in the Review shall weigh,
But steel is more if you would prick a heart.

1894

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 124.

Labor Limæ

The slow, unheated file, 'tis fit
Should gnaw a finish on your wit;
But more beset the hammer, while
You forge a blade is worth the file!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 125.

Fireplace Christenings

In the Wife's Room:

Love and a Fire
They're easy lit;
But to Keep either—
Wood to it!

In the Den:

Spark, Ben-Resheph—'Son of the Flame'—
Like the Man of Uz we should
Look to thy Sire, the Given Fire;
But thy Mother is this our Wood.

In the Living Room:

Gather about me!
Who can weld iron—
Or friends—
Without me?

In the Daughter's Room:

If a dead stick and dry
Can think thus toward the sky—
Can't I?

In Your Room (when you come):

A casual savage cracked two
stones together—
A spark—and Man was armed
against the Weather.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 125.

An American Unrest

A Pessim-Optimist am I—
Content nor discontented never,
Undrugged of Ease, of Fear unfettered.
No thing on earth but has need to Try—
Nothing and nowhere and no-soever!
Nothing so vague that we cannot letter it,
Nothing so bad that it can't be bettered—
Nothing so good but we oughtn't better it.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 126.

Toast to the Absent

Dear God:

Have a care of them we love!
Be about them, where'er they be—
Far, or farther, or Gone Above—
Tell them to-night that we dream them Near;
Give us to know their Hearts are Here!
Wide is the world—but Love more wide!
Here shall they sit with us, side by side,
Gentle faces and tender-eyed.
All that ever we held for Dear—
God Loan us to-night and Here!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 126.

In the Southwest

Bent with the sun, and barren, here is New Mexico—

A grave, gray mother with palms out-held

To a hearth of the Long Ago.

Her eyes look back to the Ages.

And Dream of the Elder Art

But she gave me her Sons for Brothers,

And she mothered me to her heart.

1890

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 127.

JUST BOY

A division of A Bronco Pegasus (1928)

Cannibalee: A Poe'em of Passion

It was many and many a year ago
In an island near the sea,
That a maiden lived whom you mightn't know
By the name of Cannibalee;
And this maiden lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.
I was a child, and she was a child—
But her tastes were adult Feejee—
And she loved with a love that was more than love,
My yearning Cannibalee—
With a love that could take me roast or fried,
Or raw, as the case might be!
And that is the reason that long ago,
In our island near the sea,
I was forced to turn the tables and eat
My beautiful Cannibalee—
Not so much because I was fond of her,
As to check her fondness for me!
But the stars never rise but I think of the size
Of my beautiful Cannibalee;
And the moon never stares but it brings me nightmares
Of my beautiful Cannibalee.
And all the night-tide she is restless inside,
Is my still-indigestible dinner-belle bride,
In her quaking tomb, which is Me;
In her gloomy sepulcher Me.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 131.

Song—A Lonely Bird

A lonely bird is quivering
 Across the darkening sky,
And the faint west-wind goes shivering
 Among the pine-tops high.
The bird to her nest is flying,
 Where her brood impatient wait,
But the sad breeze wanders sighing
 And has nor home nor mate.
My heart like the night-wind quivers
 In a desolate, vague unrest,
And Hope in the twilight shivers
 Like a bird that has lost her nest.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 132.

To My Pipe

Alone at last! Those chattering boys
Have slammed the welcome door behind them,
And taken cigarettes and noise
Where some less cynic soul won't mind them;
And here beside the fitful fire
We're left, old friend, to dream together,
Without their restless tongues to tire,
Without their fumes like burning leather.
A fig for smoking in a crowd!
It's very much like making love there!
For pipes, like maidens shyly proud,
Who mask with formal fan and glove there,
Most sweetly burn, most softly thrill,
And yield alone their dearest blisses,
When no intrusive world can chill
Their glow, nor strangers count their kisses!
I had to smoke while they were here—
Sheer self-defense needs no supporting—
But now we'll leave our flirting, dear,
And settle down to solid courting!
Why is it that I think of you
As feminine?—Unless that gender
Alone fits one so sweet and true,
So soft, so blissful and so tender!
But be the reason what it may,
My sweetheart I am proud to own you;
And somewhat sadly smile, when they
Of friendship prate who ne'er have known you.
Such love as lives in poets' rhymes,
Such friendship as romance has painted,
Have played me false a score of times,
Since you and I were first acquainted!
Dim memories around me reach—
Of soft lips wreathed in billowy vapor,
As if to melt in dreamy speech—
Such words as never shone on paper!
White arms, and bosoms whiter yet,
To meet me bend, to lure me beckon—

Until, in sooth, I half forget
The tale of wiser years to reckon,
That stretch between my dreams and me—
Forget the lesson, learned in sorrow,
How little, loved to-day, can be
As loved and trusted by to-morrow.
And yet, to-night, I breathe no sigh
For days and hopes so soon departed;
And not one bitter thought have I
For loss that left me broken-hearted.
A safer trust your sway has taught,
A truer solace and a sweeter,
Than ever fickle comrade brought,
Or mooning lover set to metre.
Time's tooth gnaws vainly at me now,
Clad in my cloudy suit of armor;
Whate'er the lot the Gods allow
'Tis good enough for us, my charmer;
Content with such career as yours—
Dull care and surly Fate defying—
To grow in worth while life endures—
To burn so brightly out in dying.
Together may we lose our fires—
'Twere harsh indeed, such friends to sever!
And find, as life's last spark expires,
The parting whiff as sweet as ever!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 132.

O

Oh, say, have you seen Iggie Donnelly's Cipher,
Wherein he has figured our idol to zero
And pictured—the iconoclastical knifer!—
Our Bard as a bummer, the hog as the hero
(For certes the hog is the author of bacon)?
He deems Wayward Will no great Shakes of a poet,
And—proof that the world has so long been mistaken—
Says: 'Billy was Bacon—his bristles all show it!'

I. D. argues out, to I. D.'s satisfaction,
That we as a playwright a 'ham' have regarded;
And figures it down to the vulgarest fraction
That what we have lauded should only be larded.

Souse into our temple he jumps with his hat on:
'Bill's style's of the sty, and his pen isn't his'n;
The ribs of the plays have too much classic fat on
For aught but a Bacon-rind thus to imprison.'

Ig's choice of his meat is in no wise Jew-dish-us,
It's Billy, not Bacon, that all of us cry for,
Unmoved by his logic so vacantly vicious—
Its premise a Naught, its conclusion a Cipher.

The pork in his Cipher's too much for our shilling—
His nothing from nothing 'tis fit that he call so—
To swear off, with Moses, we're more than half willing—
Thinking Bacon a boar—and Ignatius also!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 135.

Farewell of the Chorus to Alcestis

Alcestis:

Pelios' daughter fair,
Now have I said farewell,
And thou hast left this upper air,
And dost in Pluto's sunless chambers dwell.
But let them know,
Gloom-vestured Hades, and that helmsman hoar
Who, with funereal oar,
Doth ferry souls beyond the Styx's flow,
That, when they look on thee,
By far the noblest woman they shall see,
That in the two-oared skiff of dun
Hath e'er been carried over Acheron.
And many a poet sweet
Shall sing of thee with seven-chorded lyre,
Or lyreless hymns of epic fire,
As rapt he lies before the Muses' feet,
When, over Sparta's rich estate,
The night-long August moon
Fills out her orb full soon,
Or yet in Athens, fair and fortunate.
Thou leavest poets, by thy death, such theme.
Would that it fell on me
From Hades' dungeon halls to set thee free,
And from Cocytus' stream:
From that grim shore,
And Charon's fateful oar,
For thou, of women blest, alone
Hast dared to ransom back from death,
Thy husband's soul by giving up thine own Life-breath.
Done in Greek-at-sight examination, sophomore year (1878),
Harvard; under Professor Anderson.
Lightly, lady, may the earth
On thee fall.
But if thy husband to his hearth
Another bride shall call,
Bitter will it be to me,

And to thy children all.
When she who gave Admetus birth,
And he, his sire of high degree
Refused for him to die—
Wretches with hoary hair—
Nor would for him, their offspring, bear
The blow of destiny,
Then thou, in bloom of youth,
Still fresh and fair,
Didst die to save thy spouse. Ah, would, in sooth,
That I might win such love from such a wife,
For this would be a lot most rare in life—
And long as life we'd live in truth,
Without or fear or strife.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 136.

Anacreontic

In the midnight watches dreary,
At the hour when Arctus weary
 Sinks upon Boëtes' arm,
And the hapless race of mortals
Leave behind, at Slumber's portals,
 Weariness and Life's alarm,
As I lay serenely napping,
To the door came Cupid tapping;
 'Who,' I cried, 'is at the door?
Why do you disturb my dreaming?'
Answered Love with gentle seeming,
 'Open for me, I implore.'
'I am but an infant tearful,
Weak and helpless; be not fearful.
 Wandering through the moonless night,
I am drenched with chilly raining.'
Moved to pity by his plaining
 For his melancholy plight,
Up I rose, with candle lighted,
Oped the door, and there, benighted,
 Saw I Love, a little child,
In his hand a torchlight bearing,
Wings and quiver lightly wearing;
 At his woeful look I smiled.
By the hearth my guest I seated,
With my hands his cold hands heated,
 Wrung the dampness from his hair.
When his chill had all departed,
'Come,' he said, as up he started
 With expression debonair,
'Hand my bow, and let me test it,
For I sadly fear me lest it
 Has been injured by the rain.'
Quick, he took and strung it tightly,
Notched a shaft, and drawing lightly
 Pierced my heart with feathered pain!
Up he leaped in exultation,
'Give me your congratulation,

For my bow is good as new!
So, I think, I'll say "good-morning,"
But, my friend, I give you warning
That your heart will trouble you!

1878

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 137.

To Aubrey Beardsley

Black-and-white (and scattering) Tarquin
Of luckily quite Impossible Shes,
Is't dyspepsia makes you that mark win?
Ever try Keeley for such as these?
Why must their nose be always failing?
Their joint sciatic an ache proclaim?
And a chopping-block of hair prevailing,
With never a forehead to its name?
Truly, their harms are not alluring;
Mightn't you teach them more temperate zones—
Make their equators less enduring,
And rather more so their frontal bones?
As for your more imagination,
Couldn't you kindly induce to it
A hitching-post—in compensation
Allowing room for our own a bit?
Bluntly, there is a gulf between us,
For Art is not—we may still dare think—
Weather-mapping a Quartier Venus,
Nor hunting a nightmare's-nest in ink.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 139.

My Cigarette

My cigarette! The amulet
That charms afar unrest and sorrow,
The magic wand, that, fair beyond
To-day, can conjure up to-morrow;
Like love's desire thy crown of fire,
So softly with the twilight blending,
And ah! meseems a poet's dreams
Are in thy wreaths of smoke ascending!
My cigarette! Can I forget
How Kate and I, in sunny weather,
Sat in the shade the elm-trees made,
And rolled the fragrant weed together?
I, at her side, beatified
To hold and guide her fingers willing;
She, rolling slow the paper's snow,
Putting my heart in with the filling!
My Cigarette! I see her yet,
The white smoke from her red lips curling,
Her dreaming eyes, her soft replies,
Her gentle sighs, her laughter purling!
Ah, dainty roll, whose parting soul
Ebbs out in many a snowy billow,
I too would burn, if I might earn
Upon her lips so sweet a pillow!
Ah, cigarette, the gay coquette
Has long forgot the flame she lighted;
And you and I, unthinking by
Alike are thrown, alike are slighted.
The darkness gathers fast without,
A raindrop on my window plashes;
My cigarette and heart are out,
And naught is left me but their ashes!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 140.

White Roses

Forgot, yet not forgetful—
 Unloved, yet not untrue—
These roses pale, regretful,
 I send, Beloved, to you.
Oh, kiss their wan lips—thirsting
 As his whose heart they bear—
Oh, cheer their faint hearts—bursting,
 Like his, with wild despair!
 14!
Give smiles, that they may think them
 The sunlight once they knew;
Give tears, that they may drink them
 As once they drank the dew.
Then tell them 'Love deposes
 All rivals to his reign'—
And send them back, blush-roses,
 To bid me hope again!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 141.

From Martial

Facile, yet unattainable thou art,
Bitter, yet sweet; I worship yet misdoubt thee.
A paradox I find within my heart,
I cannot with thee live—nor yet without thee!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 142.

My Star: A Fragment from Plato

Star of me, watching the mother skies
Where thine elder sisters be,
Would I were Heaven, with all its eyes—
All of its eyes on thee!

1878

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 142.

A Fragment from the Scholiasts

I would I were an ivory lyre
 To grace the Dionysiac Choir,
Borne by a ruddy youth,
 The dance directing;
I would I were a golden vase,
 Borne by a maid of matchless grace,
Her face more pure than purest
 Gold reflecting.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 143.

At Twilight

The fire that burned so high and strong
 Has burned away at last;
And we are left, who loved so long,
 The embers of the past.
And yet——We linger dumb and chill,
 With thoughts the dead may know;
And shiver o'er the ashes still
 That warmed us long ago!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 143.

Suppose

Suppose that you were Day, dear,
And I your love, the Sun,
What do you think I'd say, dear,
Before your sleep was done?
I'd kiss your drowsy eyes, dear,
Till blushing cheeks should give
Response; then whisper 'Rise, dear!
Now is the time to live!'
And when the dying West, dear,
Sent paling shafts above,
I'd whisper 'Come to rest, dear,
Now is the time to Love!'

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 143.

On a Sheet of Paper

White flutterer from a chrysalis
Of rags—a spotless soul of snow
Arisen from the grave, like this,
Of tattered outcasts, base and low;
Pure bride of Possibility,
The grim world's hap before thee lies—
To bear immortals, or to be
Wan widow of a hope that dies.

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 144.

On Decoration Day

The forget-me-not she gave him,
 Seven-and-twenty years to-day—
When all the city's full veins leapt
With patriotic blue that swept
 To pour itself away—
Its dust around the bullet lies
 That shut two souls apart,
Unwaked by Southern sun and shower;
But the flower itself—the true, true flower—
 It blossoms in her heart!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 144.

A Sunset

We sat upon the Bosque's crest,
The clouds across the sun and me—
And silent watched the smouldering West
For forecast of the Day to be.
Her face was calm, and mine was set
With ridges of the old, old pain
She could not know nor I forget,
Who loved, and lost, and loved again.
The dusk crept by the blindfold sun;
The ashen skies held out no grace
That light and love might yet be won—
Nor the cold heaven of her face.
And then a swift, soft flush there came
Athwart the sable of the sky;
A young star woke—and lo! Heaven's flame
And star were in her cheek and eye!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 145.

My Meerschaums

'A Host of meerschaums!' did you say?
Well, yes, it is a fair collection—
Tho' valued chiefly in a way
Not plain to casual inspection.
You'll see some dainty carving there
Upon those shelves, some curious fancies,
And many a color, deep and rare,
That well may tempt a stranger's glances.
Titania and her long-eared love
Are here beside a Venus lying,
And wan Mazeppa, just above,
Before the wolfish pack is flying.
Here Cupid hammers out his darts—
His roguish eyes of jet a-twinkle—
And here from his long slumber starts
The poor old dreamer, Rip Van Winkle.
And so throughout the varied tale
Of carven groups and forms and faces
Of man and brute and elfin frail—
From ancient myths and modern races.
But when you've seen them, turn you here
To this plain box, and in it shall you
Find treasures that my heart holds dear
Beyond the count of money-value.
Not half so rare they are, you say,
As those to which your eyes still wander;
Quite true! And yet my friends are they,
While those are but fine strangers, yonder!
This cricket, on an amber spear
Impaled, recalls that golden weather
When Love and I, too young to fear
Heartburn, smoked cigarettes together.
And even now—too old to take
The little, papered shams for flavor—
I light it sometimes for her sake
Who gave, with it, her girlish favor.
And here's the mighty student-bowl,
Whose tutoring, thro' and after college,

Has led me nearer Wisdom's goal
Than all I learned of text-book knowledge.
It taught me how to hold my tongue—
To keep alight, and yet burn slowly—
To break ill spells, around me flung,
As with the enchanted whiff of Moly!
This narghileh, whose hue betrays
Perique from soft Louisiana,
In Turkey, once, beguiled the days
Of some dark, dreamy-eyed sultana.
And this strange stone, whose mystic lines
And hieroglyphs the eye bewilder,
The love and patient art enshrines
Of some pre-Adamite Mound-Builder.
Speaking of color, do you know
A maid with eyes as darkly splendid
As are the hues that, rich and slow,
On this Hungarian bowl have blended?
Can artist paint the fiery glints
Of this quaint finger here beside it,
With amber nail—the lustrous tints
A thousand partagas have dyed it?
'And this old, silver-patched affair?'
Well, sir, that meerschaum has its reasons
For showing marks of time and wear;
For in its smoke, through fifty seasons,
My grandsire puffed his cares away;
And then, when done with life's sojourning,
At seventy-five, dropped dead, one day—
That pipe between his set teeth burning!
'Killed him?' No doubt! It's apt to kill,
In fifty years' incessant using—
Some forty pipes a day—and still,
On that ripe, well-filled lifetime musing,
I envy oft so bright a part—
To live as long as life's a treasure,
To die of—not a broken heart,
But—half a century of pleasure!

Well, well! I'm boring you, no doubt.

How these old memories will undo one!

I see you've let your weed go out—

That's wrong! Here, light yourself a new one!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 145.

A Breath of Boyhood

Beyond the clatter of the town,
 The surf-beat on the echoing strand;
The beds of sea-weed dead and brown;
 The ripple-etchings on the sand.
The wee sandpipers, as they sped
 Like shadows down the sandy waste,
Pursuing every wave that fled,
 And fleeing every wave that chased.
The isle from whose lone cottage soon
 The beacon light should flash aslant;
The wavering foam, the pale day-moon;
 The purple headlands of Nahant.
The twilight, flecked with fading ships;
 The passionate sea that wooed the shore
And kissed, with white and hungry lips,
 Her garment's hem, but could no more!
The night, with breaths of vague perfume,
 And breezes wandering fitfully;
And ever, through the tremulous gloom,
 The rhythmic thunder of the sea!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 148.

Helen

Lithe young Sphinx, whose very Youth
Seems determinate of Truth,
Seems instinctively to know
Work is not the Common Foe,
But our Self in Pattern wrought,
Showing and shaping of our thought.
What your girl philosophy?
Who can tell? Nor you, maybe!
And philosophy but cheers,
When we lose the Living years.
Better, Youth's unweighing Will
To Be—to Do—and playful still!
More from a helper who could ask—
Loyal and tiptoe at the task,
Little Lieutenant at my right
In my last and losing fight?
God bequeath you more than all
For which a maiden's dreams may call—
Home, and friends, and modest wealth,
Love and children and buoyant health.
But more than all, in the years that lurk,
God keep you Alive in the Joy of Work!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 149.

Colophon

My last months were upon me unawares before I began the hasty gathering together the best of my fugitive verse of the last half-century. Weakness and almost entire loss of vision complicated the task. I could not possibly have done it without the helpfulness of two people. Henry Herbert Knibbs, Poet Born, as well as novelist and critic—Westerner and Friend— was my right-hand man in this round-up, and helped me to cull from the big herd of strays, such Longhorns, Mavericks, and Jerseys as seemed fittest to include in my Bunch. He was perfectly frank in cutting out the poorest stock. I have never consulted any one as I have him on my verse—probably it is a pity that I did not know him forty years ago! And to Miss Helen Stevens, my little secretary, I owe a different, but as vital debt. Without her cheerful, patient, intelligent, and faithful labors on these dusty verses, in getting them into shape for me in my almost total blindness, the book could not have been compiled. To each, as the Mexicans say (in all sincerity), ‘Dios te pague! Yo no tengo dinero.’ God pay you! I haven’t money enough!

Publication. *A Bronco Pegasus* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p. 150.

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