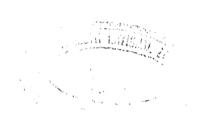
Verse by the same writer:

Gumtops (1935)
Forgotten People (1936)
Sun-Freedom (1938)
Memory of Hills (1940)
At a Boundary—in collaboration with John Ingamells (1941)
News of the Sun (1942)
Content are the Quiet
Ranges (1943)



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## UNKNOWN LAND

by REX INGAMELLS



ADELAIDE 1943 Thousands of miles of stern Australian coast will front the main when it is angered most, smashing moving mountains when they thunder in, and stand the sunlit conquerors of the din , . . Thousands of miles of seaweed beach will sigh contentedly as gulls are screaming high, silvered in sunglare . . . Then the leagues of caves will give unhurried answers to the waves; and sombre sandhills silently abide the drowsy heat from dawn till eventide, stirring but sometimes, when the warm winds lift a spray of sand to make an inch of drift . . .

Australia's long, lone coast of capes and bays, vast gulfs and pebbled inlets, steep arrays of salt-ribbed seaweed, shelly beaches, scarred cliff-granite, rock-jut, creamy sand-shelves, marred of smooth perfection only by rain-runnels or, at low tide, by tiny sea-worm tunnels . . . Australia's long, lone coastline will preserve an unassailable, secret soul, observe its own communion . . . into which will enter no whisper of strange empires where they centre: Australia will rebut a hundred races if such envision only alien places as source of truth . . . Though a hundred generations bestride this land, though here they set their stations and think them conquest-rooted, time will be when each shall see its dead philosophy as flotsam and jetsam, shredded into nought, rebutted and scattered by a power it sought to treat as non-existent—this land's heart of fervent dream, woven when pale stars start out of the sky, woven as parrots veer through tangled branches which the sunrays spear, woven of inland ranges and their streams, woven of wedge-tail eagles' paths in beams of sungold shafted through the zenith cloud, woven of boobook's taunting, of the proud silence of crow-still desert noon, of glints

on billabongs at night, of sun-up tints on mulga, mallee, gibbers, flints and dunes, of clear-eyed stars, of aeon suns and moons, of kookaburra laughter and commotion, and of the age-old conference with Ocean . . .

O Land, in whose high heart Divinity and Earth are one, when will our spirits see? As time goes on, and age piles up on age, Australia, be our race's pilgrimage!

## SING REQUIEM

Sing requiem for the aboriginal corroboree, for nesting songs of birds, for the massacred soft-padded animal driven off by hard-hoofed alien flocks and herds.

Sing requiem for brown men done to death by greedy cattle kings who grabbed their land, by selfish pioneers who stole their breath with waterholes and turned the bush to sand.

Sing requiem for simple ways of life. for trusting happy eyes of birrahlees, for tribal people watching all the rife delight of sunset round the hills and seas.

Sing requiem for such; and, by the powers, make what amends we can, for guilt is ours.

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birrohlees - small child

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