

THE SEA FOGS

PROSPECTUS



N A W A K U M



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A LIMITED FIRST EDITION FROM NAWAKUM PRESS

THE SEA FOGS

by Robert Louis Stevenson

With an introduction by Roger G. Swearingen

& illustrations by Gary Alphonso

'The Sea Fogs' is the tenth of fourteen episodes—narratives, character sketches, and extended moments—that make up Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Silverado Squatters*, one of the finest of the many essays and several books of travel and locale that he wrote during his twenties and early thirties.

Stevenson came to the Napa Valley in 1880 after nine months in California. He had by then achieved the most important of his goals for undertaking the 6,000 mile journey from Edinburgh, across ocean and continent to California: to resolve the impasse in his relationship with Fanny Osbourne, a married woman whose chronically unfaithful husband was a well-liked court reporter and member of the then-new Bohemian Club in San Francisco.

To escape the wet coastal weather, which was deleterious to his health, Stevenson honeymooned near Calistoga, squatting in an old mining camp bunkhouse on the side of Mount St. Helena. It was here that he started a journal of his travels in the area. When he drafted *The Silverado Squatters* in his notebook in June 1880, and when he revised it for publication at Davos in Switzerland during the winter of 1881–1882, Stevenson's most famous works still lay ahead of him. But the draft and the book both show that he was now fully in command of his art. This is the wonderful hidden dimension of 'The Sea Fogs'.

This short, lyrical chapter is the splendid literary success that it is above all because of a technique that Stevenson had developed through much discipline and practice, that of rendering a scene not just statically, as if it were a picture, but dynamically. It tells the story of the fogs from the ocean, changing appearances during the day, moment by revealed moment. And it does so through the dynamic, detailed, absorbing, and forever re-readable narrative that he called 'The Sea Fogs'.

"Even in its gentlest moods the salt sea travails, moaning among the weeds or lispng on the sand; but that vast fog ocean lay in a trance of silence, nor did the sweet air of the morning tremble with a sound."



ABOUT THIS EDITION

The book is 32 pages and measures 6-1/4 by 10-3/4 inches. The typeface is Ehrhardt, with Isadora for display. Patrick Reagh cast the type and printed the book on Zerkall Frankfurt at his shop in Sebastopol, California. Toronto based artist Gary Alphonso was commissioned by the Press to illustrate the text. Illustrations printed letterpress, with color triptych printed digitally at Black Cat Studio. Paste papers for the covers were created by Madeline Durham in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Hand-made end papers are from Andrea Peterson at Hook Paper. The millimeter binding and slipcases were produced by Lisa Van Pelt at her hand bindery in Philo, California.

This edition is published in one slipcased state of 55 copies, ten of which are *hors de commerce*. Copies are numbered 1–55, and signed by the artist.

Pricing available upon request.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gary Alphonso is an artist and freelance illustrator from Toronto, Canada. He attended the Ontario College of Art and Design in the early 1980s where he chose scratchboard as his preferred media. Scratchboard is an illustrative technique that uses line and shading tools for scratching into a thin white China clay, coated with black India ink. This method was well suited to the expression of those things he found so appealing in nature: stark contrasts, strong shapes, and open spaces. After years of perfecting his scratchboard style Gary adapted it to the digital realm where he now works entirely on a computer.

Gary's work has included book publishing, advertising, and editorial content. Commissions have included Time and Forbes magazines, The Globe and Mail, Orca Publishing, Microsoft, Labatt's and Canada Post. He has received a number of awards from Applied Arts, CAPIC, 3x03 Magazine, Communication Arts, Studio Magazine, and Environment Canada.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR [Introduction]

Roger G. Swearingen is a leading authority on the life and works of Robert Louis Stevenson. He is a graduate of the University of California-Berkeley, and obtained his Ph.D. from Yale University. He is the author of the authoritative guide to the writing and publication of Stevenson's many prose works, *The Prose Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson: A Guide*, as well as editions of Stevenson's *The Amateur Emigrant*, *The Hair Trunk*, and *An Old Song*—Stevenson's first published short story, published anonymously and discovered by Swearingen at Yale.

Roger has held fellowships at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale and the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. He has taught at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of California-Davis. His current project is a full-length biography of Robert Louis Stevenson for Faber and Faber Publishers, London. He lives in Santa Rosa, California.