

From the Old Dyke

By

George E. Merrick

When I was young I always dreamed that Life was Long.
...There was a dyke I often climbed: — to hear the song
Of Sea; — to feel on my hot cheek its breath blow free
— And dream of Life; and things that Were to Be.

My spirit roamed so far! To me that View
Stretched wide to endless shore. Upon its magic blue
I felt my self: ...And mine — its wealth of storied song,
— And space and time that but to changeless stars belong!

Upon that dyke I always dreamed that Life was Long!

Flowing swiftly twenty surging
Tide-waves go!
Southern landscapes mould my being.
(Northern visions always seeing —
Would they have yielded Larger Living?
Who can know!)

On Plymouth dyke I always dreamed that Life was Long!
And I am grown! — Again I came to view
The glowing greens: the magic Blue.
...Two easy steps; and I had climbed the dyke! — And then there lay
A scanty shore: — a tiny bay: ...not blue — but gray.
The self-same dyke where I had dreamed that Life was Long!

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My heart went faint and shrank in me. My cold cheek, too,
The dry hot wind oppressed: — as did the meager view
My sorrowed soul: ... Where of old rode ships of storied song
Ebbd now the sere sea-weed...
...And I have now no time to do
What I had hoped: —
...When once I dreamed that Life was Long.