To little brown Sally
   With the mother-kind eyes:
May life always bring you
   Its glad surprise,-
And the Paradise earned
   By the innocent-wise.

Dear Sally, good bye;
   Go back home feeling glad
That with bright sea and sky
   A fine summer you 've had.

And re-join us, next year,
   To play on the beach
Where, to tickle your toes
   The waves' fingers will reach!

signed with a seagull's feather,

Harry Kemp

Aug. 30, 1950
Dear Sally, goodbye.

For home, feel glad

That with bright sea at sky

To see summer you in last

One next year

To play to bed

When the books my true

And to warn finger read

To tackle to the way

Of you many fact

To hit at Sally

Will to read mother long eyes

Any life always take by

As glad surprise

End to Paradise sour

By the innocent time
The Dedicated Day

I will make bright use of this day
With all the vigor I may -
Of this day so brightly begun
And full of the youth of the sun:
I will do the greatest I can
To fulfill the stature of Man,
That the poor, little ghosts of the Past
May all be banished at last!

Harry Kemp
The Dunes

Back from the wave-carved ramparts of the dunesbeach
Skyward the grey, enormous sand-dunes reach
Stippled with far-seen trails of wandering feet
That walk up distant summits, cross, and meet
And merge into the road where lies the town
On the small ships of which the dunes look down.
A jumble of sails and cluttered shawves and ropes
Shelved in a vista of gigantic slopes
Shining and sparkling in the burning sun...

The sand fleas, helter-skelter, skurry and run
And tumble, pick-a-back; the blown grass swerves
Circling its base with graceful sweeps and curves
And aros traced, delicate, which winds confer
Like an invisible geometer.

The ancient ocean, refluent on the shore,
Hurls, and draws back with a re-gathering roar
Its kelp and smooth-worn pebbles...

to and fro,

Shuttling their legs, the little shore-birds go
Following the shining foot of every wave.
Their hunger lifts their hearts and makes them brave.

The close, warm, salty odor of the sea,
Sweet as a woman's breasts, weighs heavily
On all the air...

...and now the sun goes down,
Laying its brightness on the seaward town
A farewell space, as parting lovers meet...

White-purple shadows steal on crowding feet
Over the brown kelp, up the slopes that lean
Skyward... they touch the fire to darker green,
Into black-green; space grows to infinite height
And leads up into avenues of night
From the abrupt foot of the dunes, that screen
Causeways that climb the parapets of dream...

A slipping edge of disc, a tiny span.
Gleams yet, hinting the sun Leviathan;
And where the west burns like a brazier yet
Dance small, grey fisher boats in silhouette.

The first great planet of the night hangs low,
So bright it makes our shadows as we go:
Each gulping hollow is a haunted dell;

Now the moon, risen, casts a silver spell
In a long ocean-path... has a god passed
Leaving a visible way? the dunes are vast
With moonlight; every ridge, by magic, grown
A mountain under stars...

the soul 's alone,

Whipped from the body to a stellar birth
Upon another landscape (not the earth)
Banked as with solid moonlight...

That was our earth... we walk a pellucide
The sea is rolling silver tossed a-far...
We walk upon the body of a star.

The Dunes

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1896
Wind of Change

There was a wind rose over-night:
Each wave became a burnished height,
Then fell to silver before it broke
In tufts of lapis lazuli smoke.
The tasselled dune-grass blew oblique;
Upon the dunes' remotest peak
I saw the grey sands scurry and run
Scattering diamonds in the sun.

My shack, that holds my books and me,
Grew like a ship that walks the sea:
I quite forgot I had been born
Before this bright, tumultuous morn:
I put all other days behind
And joined the forthright, voyaging wind.

You Wind of Change upon the world,
Bright gust from Man's infinity,
Let all the old, drear things be hurled
Clean from the earth; You Wind—blow free
The sick distrusts, the vampire ill
That stalks the embattled nations still!
Bring fresher breaths of life to range:
Become a whole world's Wind of Change!

Harry Kemp
A Few Rhymes Over The Cocktails
(For Phillip and Ruth's Party)

Only enough for the brightening of wits,
So that upon the brow no anger sits,
A darkening cloud to put us ill-at-ease;
Anger and quarrels are the mind's disease;
Just enough to free us from small cares,
But not enough to drive us to our prayers;
Just enough to achieve a generous glow,
And to assure us all good things are so;
With merry talk and story, humorous quip
And all belonging to good-fellowship:
But if we cannot these just bounds
Why, then, "the art of arts is, - to refrain!"*

Harry Kemp

*Anger is the mind's disease-Sir William Davenant
*The Art of Arts is to refrain- Sir William Watson
(Shakespeare's Death-Bed; as reported by Michael Drayton, a contemporary Poet, and his friend)

Last Scene

I saw a sailor die, once, safe a-shore;
His heart's last efforts led him to believe
Him hauling at the ropes, climbing the shrouds;
(So men's last acts bespeak their fondest hopes).
The coverlet he clutched, and not the ropes;
His bed, a ship in storm; its canopy, clouds,—
And in his ears he held the tempest's roar
(Could it be so life's dreams ourselves deceive?)

So Shakespeare died. But Shakespeare felt a pen,
His favorite, oft-pruned quill, within his hand.
He wrote imaginary lines on air
While his immortal stage o'erflowed again
With all those characters so true and rare
That only he had at his great command.

Harry Kemp
The Pilgrims on the Mayflower

There is nothing better in this human life
Than the thirst for great, clear action; daring all,
Expending all beyond the petty rounds
Of half-mechanic being; to take a ship
And seek out unknown lands, leaving the little
Comforts that teach the heart a humdrum beat!
Of all the adventures that stir the blood and wake
The soul, the Pilgrims chose the greatest one,
Leaving their surety of daily bread,
The security of roofs to shelter them;
In a small ship crowded with venturers
Daring the waves and storms; the unknown perils
Of the wilderness; her to build for themselves
And for their children's children after them
A Commonwealth more to the soul's desire!

signed with a seagull's feather.

Harry Kemp
Last Word

The Captain who puts boldly out to sea
And does not skirt the cowardly coast, has led
Ever, Man's long advance: speak not to me
Of cautious charts and old men's proverbs said
To drag against the soaring ecstasy.
Without God's fools, where would the Present be?
Bridegrooms who took Disaster to their bed
And gave the world a golden progeny.

To woo Destruction with so fair a face
Is better than to rot in one sure place:
Sometimes a Cause is nothing till it's lost.
For all this soon-dreamed, passing life of ours
And fear of thorns that guard consummate flowers,
Give me the man who does not count the cost!

Harry Kemp
Ocean Birthday

Here, sheltered in no city, close above,
I live, where tides return and gulls wing free;
There is no other place I'd rather be!

Bright with its fish beneath and bright above
Before my hut the great and glittering sea
Tumultuous with its crisp waves' drove on drove,
Suggests the round world and the might thereof
And dreams against the sky's infinity.

In cities' crowds what can a poet find
So great as this?—clouds, winds, wings drive their way
Above the waves' immense and rapid course!—
One gift I crave: to keep a morning mind
Brimmed with the first touch of the ocean's day
And strong as with its world-embracing force!

Harry Kemp
Eight Lines for The New Year

Hope can widen any street,
Love can clear the darkest blame,
And where honest spirits meet
Flowers spring that need no name.

Summer's blossoms spring and fade,
But the flowers of human trust
Are of such a substance made
That they never fall to dust!

compliments of the Province-town Publishers

and

Harry Kemp

signed with a seagull's feather
Dear Ruth:

My summer has gone on into the Fall;
It's just as if it had not gone at all;
The sky suffused with brightness, and the sea,
Striking a thousand sparkles mightily.

A place fit for a poet's last endeavor
This is the kind of life I want forever:

space by geographies and long dune days
space by geographies and long dune days
With millions of stars on their allotted ways

At night,- and waves where comical porpoises roll:

It good for body, both, and for man's soul.

faithfully signed with my seagull's feather,
HOT SUMMER DAY

Heretics from history and tonight.
We strip ourselves to scarlet noon, to now.
The moment is all, and all is valueless;
Diamonds glitter as glass, gold screams everywhere.
The sun bleeds us dry, we lie and watch
Our clever toes crumble in sand, our seeing fingers
Vanish.

So lie and stare, unmoved by memory or fear,
Flick off the buzzing future, and stone to the drawer's cry
See the swimming childless flung up on the shore.

Eve Monarch

Ouain 21 June, 1948