

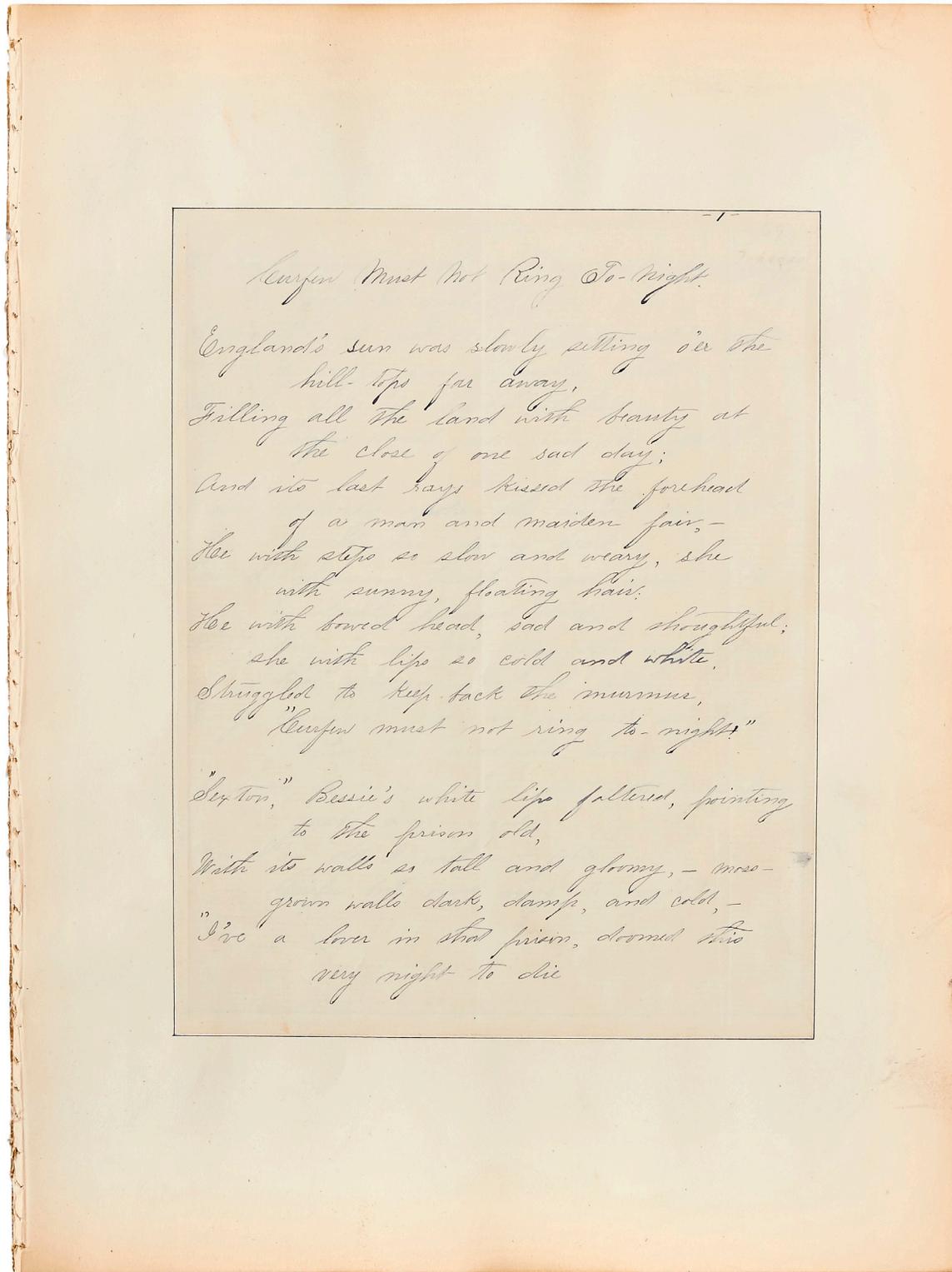
BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

112 Nicholson Rd, Gloucester City, NJ 08030 (856) 456-8008 betweenthecovers.com

Rose Hartwick Thorpe

[Manuscript Copy]: *Curfew Must Not Ring To-Night*

[circa 1920?]



Curfew Must Not Ring To-Night.

England's sun was slowly setting o'er the
hill-tops far away,
Filling all the land with beauty at
the close of one sad day;
And its last rays kissed the forehead
of a man and maiden fair, -
He with steps so slow and weary, she
with sunny, floating hair.
She with bowed head, sad and thoughtful;
she with lips so cold and white,
Struggled to keep back the murmur,
"Curfew must not ring to-night!"

"Sexton," Bessie's white lips faltered, pointing
to the prison old,
With its walls so tall and gloomy, - moss-
grown walls dark, damp, and cold, -
"I've a lover in that prison, doomed this
very night to die

Autograph Poem Signed ("Rose Hartwick Thorpe, 'Rosemere' Pacific Beach, California"). Seven quarto leaves neatly lined on folio leaves of laid paper. Old sewing in lefthand margin, presumably removed from a larger volume, just about fine. A sentimental narrative poem set in Cromwell's time about a young woman whose fiancee is to die when the curfew bell rings, and which she prevents and gains him a pardon due to her heroic actions. The poem, based on an old story was written by Indiana-born Thorpe in 1867 when she was age 16 years, was published locally a number of times, and was finally published in 1870 in the Detroit Commercial Advertiser where it gained far greater notice. Thorpe had written the poem after she read a version of the story written by Lydia H. Sigourney. Thorpe had neglected to copyright the poem, and made almost no money on it, to the point where after her husband's death in 1916, and her subsequent move to California, she was forced to charge \$5 to write out the poem in order to support her family. Once in California, Thorpe became an active worker for both Women's Suffrage and for the Y.W.C.A. *Curfew Must Not Ring To-Night* was reportedly one of Queen Victoria's favorite poems, and one of the most popular poems of the 19th Century, reprinted innumerable times, and often illustrated (by, among others, James Thurber, but more often by more sentimental artists). It was also the basis for at least three silent films. A handsome copy of a poem that rivaled *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* for the most popular 19th Century poem by an American woman.

[BTC#397789]

Rose Hartwick Thorpe.