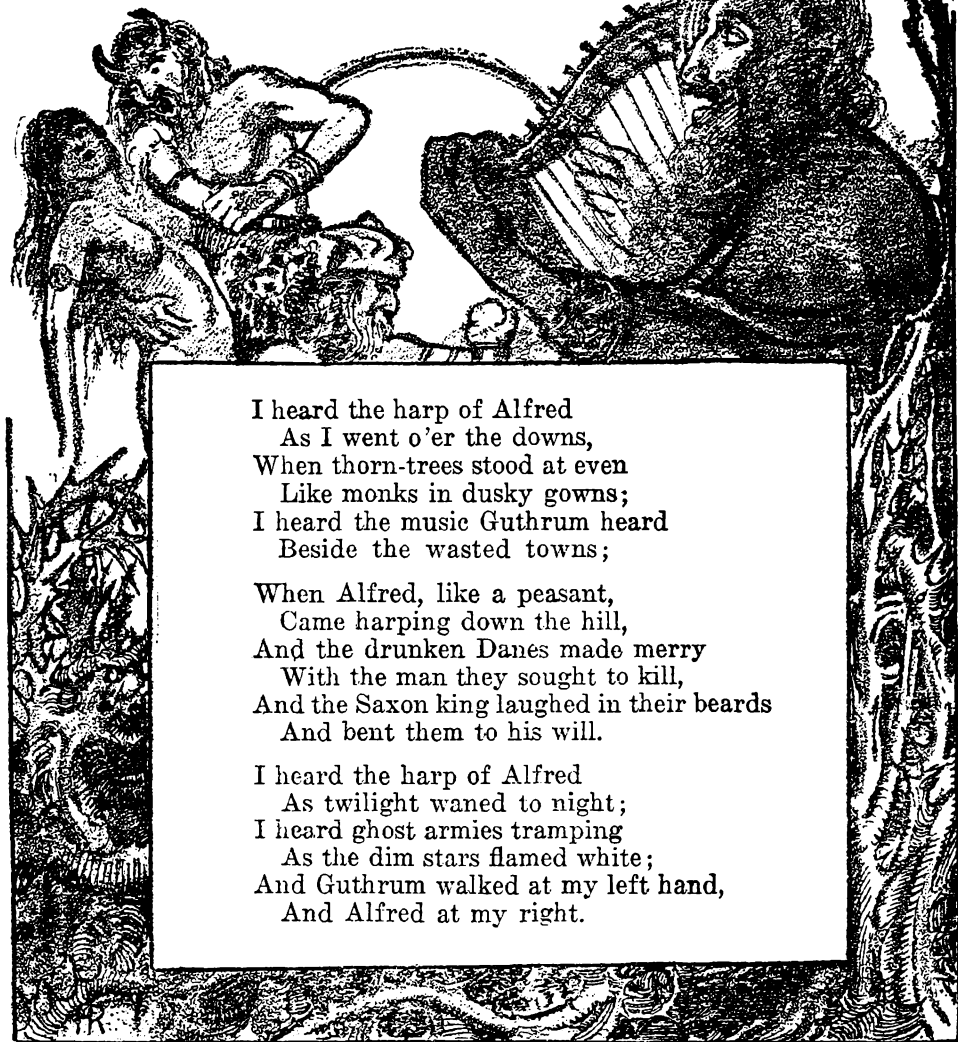


The HARP of

ALFRED

by ROBERT E. HOWARD



I heard the harp of Alfred
As I went o'er the downs,
When thorn-trees stood at even
Like monks in dusky gowns;
I heard the music Guthrum heard
Beside the wasted towns;

When Alfred, like a peasant,
Came harping down the hill,
And the drunken Danes made merry
With the man they sought to kill,
And the Saxon king laughed in their beards
And bent them to his will.

I heard the harp of Alfred
As twilight waned to night;
I heard ghost armies tramping
As the dim stars flamed white;
And Guthrum walked at my left hand,
And Alfred at my right.