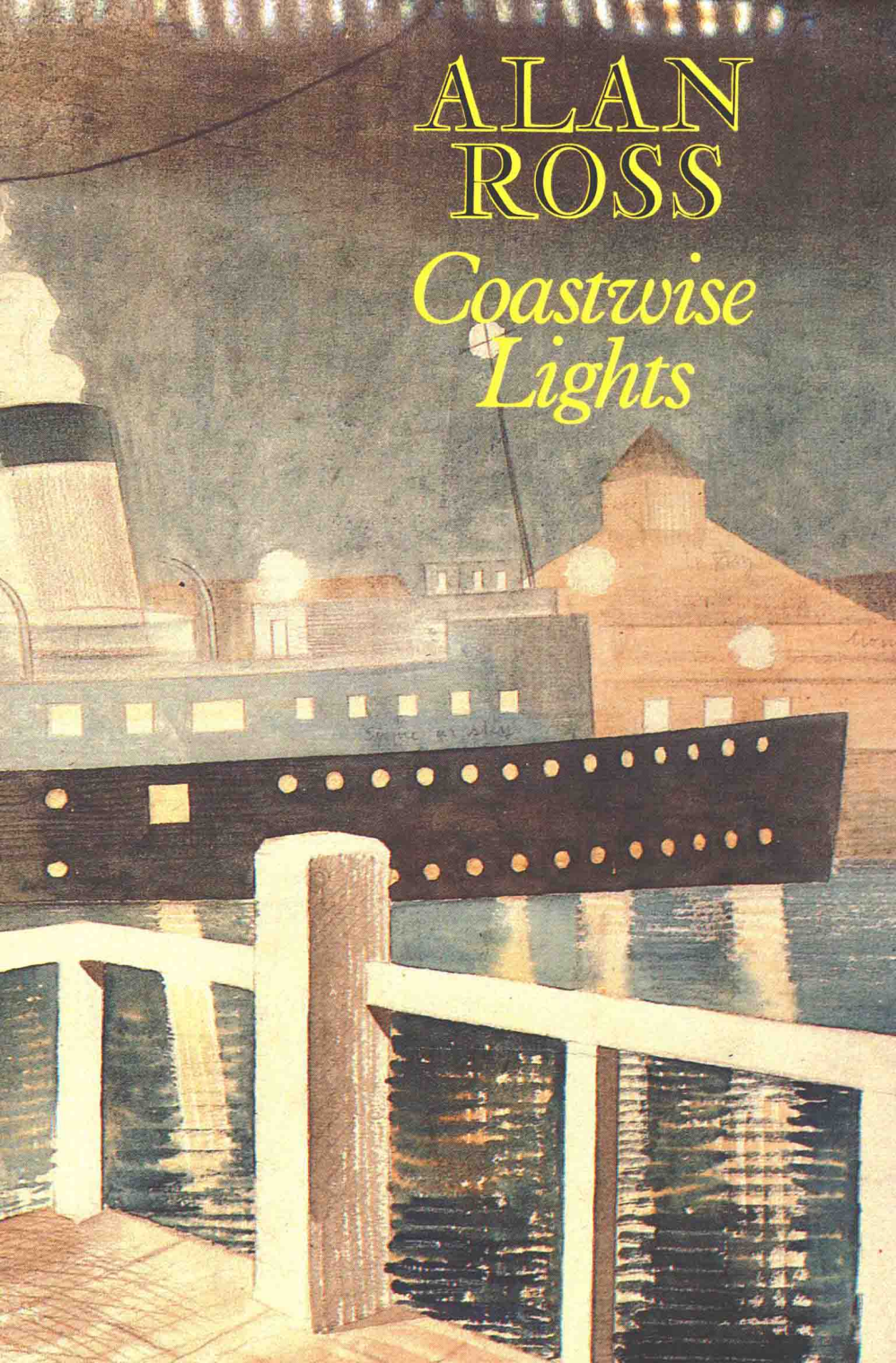


ALAN  
ROSS

*Coastwise  
Lights*



ALAN ROSS



COASTWISE  
LIGHTS



COLLINS HARVILL  
8 Grafton Street, London W1  
1988

William Collins Sons & Co Ltd  
London · Glasgow · Sydney · Auckland  
Toronto · Johannesburg

BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Ross, Alan, 1922-  
Coastwise lights.

1. English literature.

Biographies

I. Title

828'.91409

ISBN 0-00-271767-0

First published by Collins Harvill 1988

© Alan Ross 1988

Photoset in Linotron Baskerville by  
Rowland Phototypesetting Ltd, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk  
Made and printed in Great Britain by  
Butler and Tanner Ltd, Frome and London

For Jennifer, Jonathan and Victoria  
and in memory of these friends

Swift shuttles of an Empire's loom that weave us main to main  
The Coastwise Lights of England give you welcome back again.

**RUDYARD KIPLING**

## PREFACE

I described in its Preface an earlier book, *Blindfold Games*, as being only incidentally autobiography, but more accurately “the raw material out of which I began to write poetry”. The same principle applies here, at least as far as the autobiographical part is concerned. *Coastwise Lights* turns out mainly to be about friends – painters and writers – who were close to me and who have since died. I had not intended the book to take such a shape, but there it is.

*Blindfold Games* began in India and ended, after describing a Sussex adolescence, Oxford and five years in the Navy, in occupied Germany. It was about coming to terms with war and a hunger for writing replacing a passion for cricket.

The present volume takes the story from 1947 to 1978, when I returned to London after living in Sussex for twenty-five years. During most of this time I was working for the *Observer*, as well as taking over the *London Magazine* in 1961 and starting up as a publisher in 1965. As in *Blindfold Games* I have used poems written at the time as illustrations and to fill in a few gaps. Some relate to the text, others to relationships or derive from working journeys in Europe, Australia, Africa and the Caribbean.

A.R.

# CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	9
PART I Two Painters	11
PART II With Morgan to Baghdad	63
PART III Drinkers and Dandies	99
PART IV North Africa	145
PART V <i>London Magazine</i> and Publishing	169
PART VI Sussex Connections	189
PART VII The Racing Game	227

## COASTWISE LIGHTS



*By the same author*

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Blindfold Games

CRICKET

Australia 55

Cape Summer

Through the Caribbean

Australia 63

West Indies at Lord's

The Cricketer's Companion (Editor)

Ranji

POETRY

Poems 1942-67

The Taj Express

Open Sea

Death Valley

GENERAL

Colours of War

The Turf (Editor)

The Emissary

TRAVEL

Time Was Away

The Gulf of Pleasure

South to Sardinia

ALAN ROSS



COASTWISE  
LIGHTS



COLLINS HARVILL  
8 Grafton Street, London W1  
1988

William Collins Sons & Co Ltd  
London · Glasgow · Sydney · Auckland  
Toronto · Johannesburg

BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Ross, Alan, 1922—  
Coastwise lights.

1. English literature.

Biographies

I. Title

828'.91409

ISBN 0-00-271767-0

First published by Collins Harvill 1988

© Alan Ross 1988

Photaset in Linotron Baskerville by  
Rowland Phototypesetting Ltd, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk  
Made and printed in Great Britain by  
Butler and Tanner Ltd, Frome and London

**For Jennifer, Jonathan and Victoria  
and in memory of these friends**

Swift shuttles of an Empire's loom that weave us main to main  
The Coastwise Lights of England give you welcome back again.

**RUDYARD KIPLING**

## CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	9
PART I Two Painters	11
PART II With Morgan to Baghdad	63
PART III Drinkers and Dandies	99
PART IV North Africa	145
PART V <i>London Magazine</i> and Publishing	169
PART VI Sussex Connections	189
PART VII The Racing Game	227



## PREFACE

I described in its Preface an earlier book, *Blindfold Games*, as being only incidentally autobiography, but more accurately “the raw material out of which I began to write poetry”. The same principle applies here, at least as far as the autobiographical part is concerned. *Coastwise Lights* turns out mainly to be about friends – painters and writers – who were close to me and who have since died. I had not intended the book to take such a shape, but there it is.

*Blindfold Games* began in India and ended, after describing a Sussex adolescence, Oxford and five years in the Navy, in occupied Germany. It was about coming to terms with war and a hunger for writing replacing a passion for cricket.

The present volume takes the story from 1947 to 1978, when I returned to London after living in Sussex for twenty-five years. During most of this time I was working for the *Observer*, as well as taking over the *London Magazine* in 1961 and starting up as a publisher in 1965. As in *Blindfold Games* I have used poems written at the time as illustrations and to fill in a few gaps. Some relate to the text, others to relationships or derive from working journeys in Europe, Australia, Africa and the Caribbean.

A.R.



