

# Stephen Vincent Benet Quotes

*Writing, Men, Thinking, War, Book, Art, People, Heart, Names, World, May, Sky,  
Doe, Wisdom, Cities, America, Technology, Love, Interesting, Tired*

Bury my heart at Wounded Knee.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

We thought, because we had power, we had wisdom.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Dreaming men are haunted men.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Life is not lost by dying! Life is lost, Minute by minute, day by dragging day, In all the thousand, small, uncaring ways...

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Remember that when you say "I will have none of this exile and this stranger for his face is not like my face and his speech is strange," you have denied America with that word.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I tried to think of my knowledge, but it was a squirrel's heap of winter nuts. There was no strength in my knowledge any more and I felt small and naked as a new-hatched bird.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Money is sullen And wisdom is sly, But youth is the pollen That blows through the sky And does not ask why.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Truth is a hard deer to hunt. If you eat too much truth at once, you might die of the truth.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Broad-streeted Richmond . . . The trees in the streets are old trees used to living with people, Family trees that remember your grandfather's name.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I have fallen in love with American names, the sharp, gaunt names that never get fat.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

American Muse, whose strong and diverse heart  
So many men have tried to understand  
But only made it smaller with their art,  
Because you are as various as your land.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Seine and Piave are silver spoons, But the spoonbowl-metal is thin and worn

~Stephen Vincent Benet

We thought we were done with these things but we were wrong. We thought, because we had power, we had wisdom.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Books are not men and yet they are alive. They are man's memory and his aspiration, the link between his present and his past, the tools he builds with.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Honesty is as rare as a man without self-pity.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

One cannot balance tragedy in the scales Unless one weighs it with the tragic heart.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Defeat is a fact and victory can be a fact. If the idea is good, it will survive defeat, it may even survive the victory.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Grant us brotherhood, not only for this day but for all our years - a brotherhood not of words but of acts and deeds.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I admire the attention other writers can give to the world we're walking in.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Books are not men and yet they are alive.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

When Daniel Boone goes by at night  
The phantom deer arise  
And all lost, wild America  
Is burning in their eyes.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

The art finds kingdoms in a foot of ground.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Technology will never rescue anyone from being a bad poet, but if you're good, it has the potential to do a lot of exciting things.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Sometimes a sign or a quote is simply interesting by itself and does not require anything beyond being framed on a page.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

As for what you're calling hard luck - well, we made New England out of it. That and codfish.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I died in my boots like a pioneer  
With the whole wide sky above me.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Oh, Georgia booze is mighty fine booze,  
The best yuh ever poured yuh,

But it eats the soles right offen yore shoes, For Hell's broke loose in Georgia.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

If two New Hampshiremen aren't a match for the devil, we might as well give the country back to the Indians.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I had lost something in my youth and made money instead.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Go play with the towns you have built of blocks, The towns where you would have bound me! I sleep in my earth like a tired fox, And my bufdfalo have found me.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

You can take off your hats now, gentlemen, and I think perhaps you'd better.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

And Thames and all the rivers of the kings Ran into Mississippi and were drowned. They planted England with a stubborn trust But the cleft dust was never English dust.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

It is better the truth should come little by little. I have learned that, being a priest. Perhaps, in the old days, they ate knowledge too fast.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I am tired of loving a foreign muse.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Life was a storm to wander through.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Even in hell, if a man was a man, you'd know it.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Something begins, begins; Starlit and sunlit, something walks abroad,  
In flesh and spirit and fire. Something is loosed to change the shaken  
world.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

There's nothing compared to the history of writing about the city of New  
York that you get, say, in Charles Reznikoff.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I do think that the kind of writing that I do will always be around and  
printed in books, magazines, and now blogs.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Few people have written significant books about San Francisco. Robert  
Duncan was, in my opinion, often in the clouds. If he walked the streets  
a lot he didn't write about as such.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

It's to a younger people's advantage to work with evolving computer  
technologies that provide so many ways to explore the use and  
distribution of text, including sound, images and motion.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

The blog is also a way to continue to register what I see and hear in a  
day - no matter what the form. In fact, my blog is a complete mixture of  
forms.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

When I was in graduate school, my thesis included both poetry and  
essays. Influenced by the personal essays of James Baldwin and  
Norman Mailer, I loved the form, but pretty much stopped.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

I think a blog is a catalyst for a number of possible kinds of writing besides being its own medium.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

The other week I wrote a piece on a photograph I got at a flea market, and I got about 70 hits. I think a lot of people must be interested in flea markets.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Whatever poetry that was in me was coming out in the form of constructing art books!

~Stephen Vincent Benet

A phrase may come to me as I am walking, and, once I write it down in my journal, the rest of the poem will unravel from that catalyst.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Our fathers and ourselves sowed dragon's teeth. Our children know and suffer the armed men.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Occasionally I encounter people getting into their cars who will say, "Oh, you haven't been walking lately" - like I'm a symbol of the ancient art of walking!

~Stephen Vincent Benet

Basically when I'm walking I'm not consciously writing or intending anything. In the manner I have learned from meditation practice, I let things unfold.

~Stephen Vincent Benet

When my own writing needs a perk, I open Zukofsky and read from "A"

- particularly sections "22" and "23." It can be opaque, but I love the intensity.

~Stephen Vincent Benet



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