

*The* RYERSON  
P O E T R Y  
C H A P - B O O K S



Rich Man  
Poor Man

By E. H. BURR.

*This is Chap-Book Number Sixty-four*

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## *Everett Harold Burr*

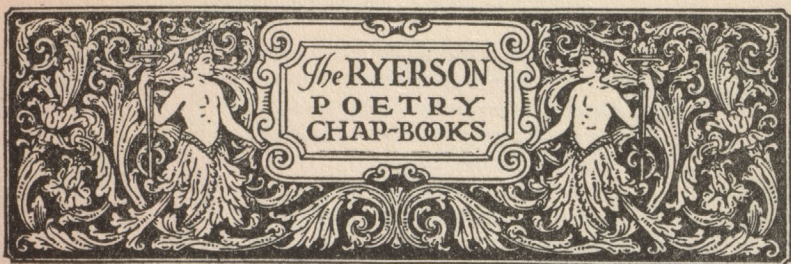
FINELY TOUCHED to all fine issues, Everett Harold Burr, born in 1894 in the village of Bloomfield, Prince Edward County, to which his Loyalist ancestors had come a century before, was a rare combination of Galahad and Puck. To honour, cleanness and humour delicately whimsical, he added an understanding of Nature, observing accurately and minutely, seeing, hearing and learning, very fully, the things that Nature has to teach because of the poet heart and brain which he possessed. He was tender toward all living creatures, intolerant only of sham and cruelty.

Everett Burr, who died as the result of war service, in Christmas week, 1931, went overseas in October, 1916, and was gazetted second lieutenant in the East Lancshires in 1917. Severely wounded in Flanders, he was invalided to England, rejoining his battalion early in 1918. He was captured shortly after and was a prisoner till the Armistice. It is characteristic of him that no bitterness ever crept into the few and reticent references he made to his experiences at that time. This sheaf of poems, gathered as a tribute to his memory by some young men who were his friends, gives a glimpse of literary promise extinguished all too soon.

G. C. MARY WHITE.

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# Rich Man, Poor Man

By E. H. Burr



## RICH MAN, POOR MAN

I HAVE brought you the royal velvet of night,  
And the rustling silk of full noonday;  
The shimmering spray of waterfalls  
I have brought  
To make a cloud about your shoulders;  
And the first-gathered pearls of morning  
To place about your throat.  
All the perfumed wild flowers  
I have heaped in your lap,  
With fern fans for coquetry;  
And brought the high hills  
To echo your laughter,  
And the shingly streams  
To make low, sweet music;  
Cloud fleece for slippers  
And the silver-clear pools  
To mirror your beauty.

Now I offer you love;  
Let me wrap you round with love  
That your heart may be warm  
And mine.

## MATINEE

A LIGHT wind ran along the beechwood;  
A little shiver quivered through the fern;  
If we had only been there, you and I could  
Have seen a very special magic turn,  
When a thousand twisted notes  
Shaken out to lily throats  
In green-pointed petticoats  
Danced the ballet of the trilliums in May.

How they fluttered in the forest-filtered sunlight  
To the merry birds' ecstatic shy applause,  
To the hushed things that scuttered from the grasses  
To watch and clap delighted, furry paws!  
For their dainty flower grace,  
Chaste as snow and rare as lace,  
Stirred the quiet woodland place  
To a homage that is beauty's own reward.



## "AND THE LITTLE HILLS LIKE LAMBS"

I N March, when evenings wear the flush of dawn  
And eager winds are posting north and south;  
When sullied snows, impatient to be gone,  
Dissolve in floods to mock a summer's drouth;

When sun and rain are partners in dispute  
And skies are higher than we ever knew,  
Where riven clouds, so swiftly involute,  
Disclose a heaven of intenser blue;

When willows show a lively-greening stem  
And little furry paws are thrusting out;  
(I run a careful finger over them—  
Their innocence of claws I fairly doubt.)

Then, when the earliest bird upon the bough  
His bright, perennial matins has begun,  
I tune a jocund song with him as now,  
Because the age-old conquest has been won.

## SUNSET IN ALGONQUIN

THE day had held supreme content;  
I, pensive, watched the shadows slip  
From crag to crag; saw tall pines dip  
Their crests in ruddy element.

Away where hill and sky were blent,  
Those age-old lovers, lip to lip,  
Paid tribute to their comradeship  
And drank the fiery sacrament.

A loon rose, dripping crystal gold  
In the glare lake; a flight of geese  
Cut sharp triangles in the fold  
Of one low cloud of fulgent fleece,

All lapped with flames, still blazing high,  
Like some Norse king set sail to die.



## JUNE FESTIVAL

NOW June is cradled in a verdant field,  
Where morning-glories lift toward the sun  
Pale lucent goblets, only half concealed  
By woven grasses; here a web is spun  
Of gossamer, enfrosted with the blue  
Gemmed moisture of a still and starry night.  
A bobolink will sing his song for you;  
Repeat "the little phrase" for your delight,  
As if unmindful of the hidden nest,  
The eager brood of fledglings who await  
The day they, too, the plangent winds will breast  
To find their meed of song inviolate.

This path is beaten by the patient feet  
Of cattle, heedless of a cloud-flecked sky;  
With muzzles buried in the meadow sweet,  
No problems harass, such as you and I  
Have left behind to gather this short bliss,  
Set in a space between a morn and eve,  
While fragrant airs caress with one long kiss  
The flawless jewel of a day's reprieve.

## LAST RITES

THE earth is drained of life  
And lies under tired skies  
Like a quiet old woman  
With a grey sheet drawn  
To cover her eyes;  
The earth is an old, old woman,  
Weary and wise.

The harvest is gathered now,  
After a summer of toil,  
For the quiet old woman,  
Whose body is withered  
And shrunken with toil,  
Has paid for contentment and rest  
In fruit of the soil.

The leaves are brushed with frost;  
Scarlet and gold tarnish fast—  
They will fall, like this flight  
Of alighting starlings,  
To bury the past;  
And fold the tired, old, old woman  
In peace at last.



## THE CUCKOO'S NEST

I AM the cuckoo  
And my song  
May haunt you  
As you pass along  
The dewy hedgerows  
When the May  
Is blossoming  
At the close of day.

I am the cuckoo  
And I sing  
Of love and life  
Upon the wing;  
And times when far  
Afield I've flown  
Another's nest  
I make my own.

## THE GALLEY

A BAR of sunlight through the murky pane  
Of office windows, dim with winter's grime,  
Lights up the agitated dust again  
And stirs a cosmic rhythm into rhyme.  
Those tiny motes that float in writhing sheen  
Are emanations of a mortal clay  
Now hung suspended for a space between  
Recurring life and ultimate decay.  
They settle on my desk and on the files  
That hold the records of men's gain or loss  
From shop and factory, shipping, forest aisles,  
And gild with living gold material dross.  
I have no part in all the strain and sweat  
To wrest a living from reluctant earth,—  
How, from a maze of figures, can one get  
The thrill and shock that gave their commerce birth?  
While others venture I must count the gains,  
My desk a galley on a stagnant sea,  
And, though I am not bound, I feel the chains  
And hear the long lash hissing over me.



## ENCHANTMENT

I WALKED one day when the sun was high  
Out where the grass is cool and sweet,  
And the weald, aquiver in the heat,  
Rolls up to meet the sky.

And as I strode the path along,  
Stole beside me a slender form;  
Her hand in mine was soft and warm,  
So there it must belong.

I dared not turn to scan her face  
Or search those eyes I knew so kind,  
Nor test the quality of mind  
Within the body's grace.

I only knew at last I'd found  
My mate for all the years to come;  
Her oft-dreamed beauty held me dumb,  
For I was spirit-bound.

## WAYFARING

AHEAD the road winds up and up,  
Behind the road winds down  
And I can see above the brow  
The chimneys of the town.

What cheer awaits me at the inn,  
The fare be coarse or fine?  
Go, landlord, air your softest bed  
And draw your choicest wine!

For I am on the road since dawn,  
The climb was steep and long;  
And since a beggar has my purse  
I'll pay you with a song.

This morning from the valley's depths  
I saw your highest spire;  
The finger-post was pointing to  
The town of heart's desire.

But still the road winds up and up;  
It's farther on, you say;  
Ah well, to-night I rest content,  
To-morrow, on my way.



## THE YEAR ADVANCES

A CHILL strikes at the heart of summer—  
Still her outposts she defends;  
Bitter sweet the time of harvest,  
August ends.

Through forest ranks has passed the whisper:  
"Strike your tents, the time is come!"  
Scudding leaves provide the runners,  
Pass it on.

Plunging down to Pluto's regions,  
Now Persephone again  
Leaves behind a garnered bounty,  
Golden grain.



## SONG AT SUNRISE

EVERY new morning that  
flames in the skies  
Burns out the light of  
the last from my eyes;  
Visions I've treasured as  
perfectly seen  
Dazzled to phantoms that  
never had been.

In every petal that  
falls from the rose  
Something of splendour  
is brought to a close;  
In every leaf that slips  
down from the tree  
Turning to earth there is  
something of me.

I would remember and  
I would forget  
Wisdom I've won and  
the end is not yet;  
Savour the zest of it:  
only the "why"  
Inscrutable, and the  
rest, is to die.

## A BAD BALLADE

**D**URING the half-forgotten strife  
When nations mustered out their sons,  
In France I led a soldier's life  
And shared the traffic of the guns.  
When those grey ranks, then called the Huns,  
Advanced, I meant to win or die;  
"A prisoner," the cable runs—  
Adventure always passed me by!

Romance once beckoned me to take  
A world-encircling ocean trip;  
I thought my fortunes on the make,  
And then I had to let it slip.  
I missed my berth upon that ship;  
(Too long a tale to tell you why)  
Home ties have a tenacious grip—  
Adventure always passed me by!

Adventure may her sails unfurl  
On planes of high or low degree:  
To-day a most attractive girl  
Rushed up, in haste, to speak to me,  
And I responded graciously—  
(She thinks I'm someone else, thought I.)  
"Oh, won't you buy a tag?" said she—  
Adventure always passed me by!

### ENVOY

I've always dreamed of high emprise  
And feats of derring-do to try;  
And that's the reason, I surmise,  
Adventure always passed me by.

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Lorne Pierce—Editor

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