

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



Rhythm Poems

By  
SISTER MAURA

JM&TM

*This is Chap-Book Number One Hundred and Eight.  
Cover Design by J. E. H. and Thoreau MacDonald.*

OF THIS EDITION OF *RHYTHM POEMS*, BY  
SISTER MAURA, TWO HUNDRED AND  
FIFTY COPIES ONLY HAVE BEEN PRINTED.  
THIS CHAP-BOOK IS A PRODUCT OF THE  
RYERSON PRESS, TORONTO, CANADA.

*Copyright, Canada, 1944, by  
The Ryerson Press, Toronto.*

SISTER MAURA belongs to the Institute of the Sisters of Charity of Halifax. She has given courses at Notre Dame University, and for Boston College, Dalhousie University and Fordham University. Her books and booklets include poetry, drama, and literary research. Sister Maura is now teacher of English at Mount Saint Vincent College in Halifax; she also lectures on occasion and contributes essays and lyrics to various magazines.

*The Ryerson Poetry*  
*Chapbooks*

---

Rhythm Poems

*By Sister Maura*

HAIL MARY

"HAIL, Mary!"  
Sings the joyous month of May  
The world around.  
The snowy fields of far away,  
The autumn glory of the south,  
And the bright promise of a northern spring  
Exultant sing  
Praise to Our Lady of the May.  
One month is all her own,  
The maiden Mother's,  
In gratitude that she  
Cradled the human race to be  
In her dear arms,  
When she clasped close  
The warm, wee body of her Son.

She stood beneath the cross,  
She bore the pain of Calvary;  
Our souls' gain was her bitter loss  
For three dim days,  
Then splendour came to light her life forevermore.  
Through death's dark door  
She passed in one fleet instant,  
And she dwells in radiance inaccessible;  
But yet, but yet, she listens to earth voices,  
And she sees  
The sorrows of her children and their joys.  
She notes their needs,  
As once in memoried Cana,  
And her word is mighty still  
Over the heart of God.  
At times, her love will brook no veil between:  
Fair as the moon,  
Once more she touches earth with pearl-pure feet,  
And makes her bounty known  
To children and to childlike hearts.  
Wide as the world, her love!  
It cherishes each journeying soul  
Foot-loose upon life's ways;  
All are her children.  
And when the final dark comes down  
Grimly upon their path,  
Ah! then,  
Star of the morning may she shine  
Out of a glorious sky,  
And smile her welcome  
To their rapturous cry,  
"Hail, Mary!"

## EIRE

[*Dance poem*]

DAYSRING over Innisfail!  
The dawn's bright portals part,  
And into the world of time  
Steps the maiden.  
The sunlight crowns her shapely head,  
And her grass-green garments flow  
In the morning air;  
Candour and innocence look from her eyes,  
And her soul,  
Like a flame in a golden lamp,  
Kindles her body's grace.  
Eire, the daughter of God!

Not unaccompanied is she,  
For the past throngs about her  
In glimmering beauty.  
Spirits of heroes of old  
Who have acted a part on her emerald stage,  
Then passed from its precincts  
Ere history fashioned a pen,  
And live as a story that's told  
On the lips of the people:  
Lo! they are with her.  
Deirdre is there,  
Her beautiful brow  
Encircled in sorrow.

Goll and his princess dree their weird  
Forever on an iron strand;  
Diarmid and Grania flee in the wind  
From a doom that relentlessly follows.  
The Hound of Ulaidh runs his course;  
He lives and loves,  
And bears away  
The palm of generous valour.  
And great Finn rules his realm harmoniously  
In the auroral hour  
When strength and skill and comeliness  
Make glad the land.

But who is it comes  
On the orient sea,  
Gracious and radiant?  
It is Christ the Master  
Of Galilee,  
The Son and the Lamb of God is He,  
And He comes to His Own.  
Oh! where,  
On this swinging ball of earth,  
Where has another welcomed Him  
With the heart of love that Eire gives  
As she kneels at His nail-pierced feet?  
From His hands  
She takes the torch of truth,  
And feeds it with her life.  
All Europe hears her clear voice teach,  
Melodious, beautiful,  
And Dante heeds her well.

Like an angel's song in the sanctuary,  
The music of her harp  
Thrills on the air.<sup>1</sup>

Then the splendour dims.  
Black grows the sky;  
The storm clouds lower,  
And flash,  
And crash,  
And mutter,  
And roll with a sullen roar.  
Where can she bide  
From the stinging rain,  
And the deadly sleet,  
And the perilous path beneath her feet?  
Where but beside  
The gray Mass Rock?  
Its Sacrifice  
Is Blood of the strong  
And the Bread of life  
For her.  
Dark Rosaleen and Roisin Dubh,  
Or Granuaile, they call her now;  
And the Wild Geese  
Wing their fearless flight  
Over other lands.

<sup>1</sup>*Fis Adamnain* and *Peregrinatio Sancti Brandani* formed part of Dante's heritage; and early rhymed hymns are, directly or indirectly, a gift of the Gaels.

Ah, but the sun must shine again!  
Slowly, so slowly,  
His shafts drive back  
The gloomy rack,  
And brightness rules the world once more.  
Once more she lifts her shining head,  
Once more her voice rings mellowly,  
And the western skies  
And the Southern Cross  
Know her steps of light.  
Fair is the present hour,  
There's no gainsaying;  
But what lies hid  
Beyond the further curtain?

Eire, the future is yours  
To shape as you will.  
Much have you given,  
And yet, who can tell  
If a greater gift be not to come?  
But let your soul lead you;  
And then,  
The angels who walk by your side  
In panoplied glory,  
The hosted saints of high heaven  
Whose prayers are your blessing,  
And Mary  
Whose word is commandment,  
They will be mighty to aid,  
To bend the event to your will,  
And crown your desire with fulfilment,  
O beautiful daughter of God!



## WHITE MAGIC

A CLEAR, cold dawn  
Has frozen the sudden downpour of the night  
To witchery.  
The soft skies beckon  
And the bright air lures me forth  
Into a world as white as purity.

Maple and birch  
That winter through  
Have starkly climbed the western hill,  
Now wear a pearly silver gown  
And flaunt in the sun  
Their gleaming plumes of glass,  
That in the shadow seem  
Dove-coloured ostrich feathers.  
The patriarchal pines are bearded,  
Pendulous and hoar.  
An ever-moving sea  
That gave the azure of the sky back  
Night-dark blue  
Or twinkled, dancing gold, in the sun,  
Now lies a wide snow meadow,  
Utterly still.  
Along the orchard paths,  
The spreading apple boughs  
Have diamond twigs  
And glitter here and there  
With rainbow radiance.

This is no world of workaday,  
Ah, no!  
It is a magic land;  
Its crystal wind can blow away  
All care and weariness,  
And refresh the human soul.

## AIRMEN'S PRAYER

O GOD,  
Father almighty,  
Eternal King,  
Direct Thou our way  
And prosper our flight  
Through the pathless immensity of the air.  
Thou hast given Thine angels charge over us;  
In their hands may they bear us up  
Lest we hurtle to death from on high.  
Lo!  
Under the shadow of Thy wings  
Will we trust  
In life and in death.

McGILL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



Y82P

M44rb

The Ryerson Poetry Chap-Book

Pam. not Acc.

Number

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. THE SWEET O' THE YEAR* [1925] | <i>Sir Charles G. D. Roberts</i> |
| 70. THE THOUSAND ISLANDS         | <i>Agnes Maule Machar</i>        |
| 81. REWARD AND OTHER POEMS       | <i>Isabel McFadden</i>           |
| 84. EXCUSE FOR FUTILITY          | <i>Charles Frederick Boyle</i>   |
| 89. CALLING ADVENTURERS!         | <i>Anne Marriott</i>             |
| 90. OUT OF THE DUSK              | <i>Mary Matheson</i>             |
| 91. TWELVE POEMS                 | <i>Nathan Ralph</i>              |
| 92. THE ARTISAN                  | <i>Sara Carsley</i>              |
| 93. EBB TIDE                     | <i>Doris Ferne</i>               |
| 94. THE SINGING GIPSY            | <i>Mollie Morant</i>             |
| 95. AT SUMMER'S END              | <i>Amelia Wensley</i>            |
| 97. SEEDTIME AND HARVEST         | <i>Barbara Villy Cormack</i>     |
| 100. SALT MARSH                  | <i>Anne Marriott</i>             |
| 106. SONNETS FOR YOUTH           | <i>Frank Oliver Call</i>         |
| 107. THEY SHALL BUILD ANEW       | <i>Austin Campbell</i>           |
| 108. RHYTHM POEMS                | <i>Sister Maura</i>              |

Fifty Cents

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7. THE LOST SHIPMATE                | <i>Theodore Goodridge Roberts</i> |
| 33. LATER POEMS AND NEW VILLANELLES | <i>S. Frances Harrison</i>        |
| 56. THE ROSE OF THE SEA*            | <i>Lionel Stevenson</i>           |
| 87. DISCOVERY                       | <i>Arthur S. Bourinot</i>         |
| 88. THE PIONEERS AND OTHER POEMS    | <i>H. Glynn-Ward</i>              |
| 96. LITANY BEFORE THE DAWN OF FIRE  | <i>Ernest Fewster</i>             |
| 99. FOR THIS FREEDOM TOO            | <i>Mary Elizabeth Colman</i>      |
| 101. BIRDS BEFORE DAWN              | <i>Evelyn Eaton</i>               |
| 102. HEARING A FAR CALL             | <i>M. Eugenie Perry</i>           |
| 103. JOURNEY INTO YESTERDAY         | <i>Irene Benson</i>               |
| 104. REARGUARD AND OTHER POEMS      | <i>Elsie Fry Laurence</i>         |
| 105. LEGEND AND OTHER POEMS         | <i>Gwendolen Merrin</i>           |

Sixty Cents

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 77. SONGS              | <i>Helena Coleman</i>   |
| 83. LYRICS AND SONNETS | <i>Lilian Leveridge</i> |

Seventy-five Cents

- |                                     |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 49. THE WANDERER AND OTHER POEMS    | <i>Nathaniel Benson</i>    |
| 52. THE NAIAD AND FIVE OTHER POEMS* | <i>Marjorie Pickethall</i> |
| 57. THE BLOSSOM TRAIL               | <i>Lilian Leveridge</i>    |
| 82. THE MUSIC OF EARTH              | <i>Bliss Carman</i>        |

One Dollar

\*Out of Print

